What It’s Like
A Message from Co-Founder, Steve Smith

In 1998 a song was released by Everlast that has haunted me to this day. The song is entitled “What It’s Like”. It tells three stories of people going through trying times. The singer asks us to put ourselves in the shoes of each of the people and their situations. Here is part of verse two:

“Mary got pregnant from a kid named Tom that said he was in love
He said, “don’t worry about a thing, baby doll I’m the man you’ve been dreaming of.” But three months later he say he won’t date her or return her calls.”

There’s obviously a fourth line but I didn’t print it. Honestly because the emotion expressed is raw. As it is with people who find themselves in these situations. This young women finds herself in an unimaginable place. She’s alone, pregnant, and rejected. The song continues:

After 8 years of hearing the stories of women who have come to St. Raymond’s Society, I may not be able to “walk in their shoes” but I understand better than I ever could have before meeting these amazing women. We want to be the people that understand and help them through a process of first coming to terms with their current situation. Second we want to be there to help them transform their life and that of their children. Over the last 8 years we have helped the women do both of those things. Our services are expanding. We are doing more work in the communities with women who don’t need to be in one of our homes. Oh, our houses stay full, we’ve just expanded. That’s what your generosity helps provide.

Let me finish with a different story than the one the song represents. I attended a presentation for St. Raymond’s at a friends home. It was a way to educate the public on what we do and to raise funds. We had one of the women who lived with us for several months there to present. When we were almost done a question came from one of the guests. The question was “Do you know of any cases where an abortion was forgone because of our work”? In unison our speaker, two St. Raymond’s employees and myself all said at once “YES”. I gave a couple of examples. Next our young mom who had been with us (whom I’ll call Sarah) shared a story. Recently a friend of Sarah’s discovered that she was pregnant. Because this woman already had an older child, she was ready to abort. Our fearless ex-resident Sarah told her friend that abortion was not the answer. Sarah explained to her friend how much she would regret the decision. But it wasn’t just talk. Sarah helped her friend resources in the community. Sarah, had been there. She knew how to help. Sarah introduced her friend to St. Raymond’s Society. She wasn’t able to move into the house because of the older child. However we are helping her with our outreach program. Then Sarah ended with “and my friend had her baby on August 15th and she couldn’t be happier”. Sarah’s friend will be aided. She will make it. We rejoice with her in the birth of her baby. We rejoice that a young woman who had been in the same situation a little over a year stepped up. We rejoice that we have supporters like you to make these transformational dreams come true!
Expanded Services for Community Clients

We are very excited to announce that SRS has expended their services and support for single moms in the community who do not need to join the transitional home facet of our program. Since SRS was founded, we have offered temporary emergency support like rent and utility assistance, but now these clients can choose be part of a three month goal setting and attainment program where they will receive weekly coaching. They are also invited to take part in the special group activities and events offered to residents of the St. Raymond’s House.

Client Success Coach, Jessica Luetkemeyer, was instrumental in developing the new program. “I was motivated to create the community client program to assist women with creating new, positive habits. I hoped to assist the women in learning to manage their finances, set attainable goals, and give them accountability. By creating this program, I hoped to help women move from living moment to moment to planning their futures.”

Overall the response to the new program has been positive. Luetkemeyer explains, “The women in the program get excited about the materials they are given and have been thankful for the skills they have learned, specifically in regards to managing their finances. Every mom we serve wants to create a better future for her children, and these women recognize how changing their habits now, will impact the future for their children.”

Where are they now?

It’s has been over a year and a half since Caroline and her daughter, Celina, lived at the St. Raymond’s house, and they are truly flourishing! Caroline is doing great in college and has just two semesters left to complete her degree in French Translation. She hopes to build a career in management in the future, and with the perseverance she has shown, we have no doubt she will do it! Celina loves daycare and is learning new things every day in the classes they provide to toddlers. With the help of a local family who got to know them while volunteering for SRS, Caroline and her daughter have been able to make two summer trips to Vanuatu, her home country, to visit loved ones. We feel so fortunate to have been part of the beautiful story of this special little family!
FORMER RESIDENTS - LOOK AT THEIR SUCCESSES!

Celebrating Christina earning her GED

Alexandra’s commencement ceremony in June

Household Budgeting Workshop:

Volunteers Beth and Jeremy Morris recently visited the SRS House to educate the residents about following a family budget. The evening included a delicious dinner, time for fun and fellowship, and some very practical tips for living within your means. The Morrises have offered this workshop to SRS before and explained that one of the reasons they enjoy it is because “it serves as a great refresher for us, as well”, making the point that household budgeting is something that needs to be revisited frequently in order to be successful!

New Residents

Our Jefferson City St. Raymond’s House recently welcomed three new residents! We ask for your prayers for Michelle, Mary Beth, and Christina as they work to become self-sufficient and build amazing futures for their families!

COMING SOON

to cribs near you
SRS Partners with Local Churches

SRS has a proud history of partnering with area churches of all faiths to support single moms in the community. We recognize that all Christians are called to serve, and we have been blessed and humbled by the volunteer and financial support we have received from many churches in the Central Missouri area. During the month of October, recognized by Catholic churches as Respect Life Month, SRS will be speaking at masses and organizing youth group activities in several parishes to encourage support for women who choose life for their babies.

SRS Co-founder, Steve Smith, and Program Director, Mary Chen, recently met with Bishop Shawn McKnight of the Jefferson City diocese, and were very encouraged by his expressed support for our organization. “He has a clear understanding of the need for services for pregnant women and new moms in our community and is sincerely committed to supporting our efforts. Partnering with area churches during Respect Life Month was a natural fit.”

Any churches interested in supporting the work of SRS should contact Headquarters at (573) 893-2067.

Our Tax Credits

A Great Return on Your Donation

Any donation to St. Raymond’s Society over $100 qualifies for Missouri State Tax Credits. The chart below demonstrates the power of these tax credits.

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Here’s how it works:
50% State Credit +
6% State Deduction +
Federal Deduction