



As you prepare to celebrate the holidays with your families and loved ones, please think about this:

What would you do if you lost your job? And you lost your home? And your two children were living with you...but you had no place to live?

Where would *you* go?

Ashley* actually had to face these questions. Earlier this year, we told you about Ashley. She was working full time and living in a nice home in Snohomish. Due to circumstances beyond her control, Ashley lost her job, and then her home, and ended up living in her van with her two children.

But she believes, as you probably do, that **children shouldn't be living in vans**. So she came to First Place. With your support, we provided Ashley and her children with hope, home, and education. Your gift to First Place will ensure that we are able to help the next family that comes to us. Here's what Ashley has now, thanks to the services of First Place—thanks to you:

- **Hope:** When Ashley walked through the door with her children, they discovered that First Place is *where hope begins*. Their case worker Tina told them about their options for housing, for school, for work, and for so much more—at a time when it felt like they were out of options. We helped them take their first hopeful steps into a better future.
- **Home:** Ashley and her children moved into First Place transitional housing. They can stay there for up to a year while they search for long term housing.
- **Education:** First Place helped her enroll both children in school. The younger one is thriving at First Place School, paired with a dedicated mentor. The older one is at a local middle school.
- **Clothes:** First Place provided both children with clothes that fit, and that they liked, from our well-stocked clothing bank. The children also got shoes, backpacks, and school supplies.
- **Work:** First Place helped Ashley find work. She started in a temporary, part time job, and she quickly transitioned to a full-time, permanent job. Unfortunately, she was recently laid off, and she is looking for another permanent job. While she's looking, she's found temporary work doing interior house painting, and cleaning houses.



**Name has been changed.*

Ashley's story continues on the back...

- ***Hope remains strong:*** Here are all the steps Ashley is taking so that she won't slip back into homelessness: She found and held a job, and even got promoted—until she got laid off. She didn't give up hope, even then. She is working at temporary jobs until she finds full-time, permanent work, and she is confident she will find a job. **Most importantly, she is advocating for herself and her children, because she has hope, and she believes that she and her children deserve a better future.**

Ashley's family still needs our help, and we still need yours. Ashley's family is just one family; so many additional families have walked through our doors this fall needing similar support. First Place serves over 1,000 mothers, children and families every year. **We honestly can't continue to help Ashley and her children, and the other homeless families who come to us, without your help.**

Because homeless families need more than a school. They need a home and regular meals. They need clothes, backpacks, school supplies, shampoo and a haircut. They need transportation to school. They need mental health services, a nurse, caring teachers and supportive case workers who understand their struggles.

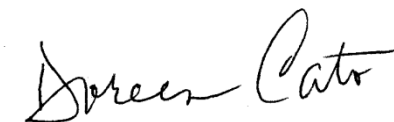
With your support, First Place provides this – and more. Ashley's entire family—and many other families, with their own stories—receive supportive services in order to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness for themselves. **Because of you and First Place, Ashley and many other recently homeless families have new skills and resources, so they can advocate for themselves.**

What would *you* do, in Ashley's shoes? What will you do to help mothers, children, and families facing homelessness?

You can help with a gift to First Place.

Your gift of \$100, \$250 or \$500 to First Place today ensures that children and families receive the support they need to have a home, a job and an education—and hope. Any amount you can give this holiday season helps homeless families step into a better future.

Happy Holidays,



Dr. Doreen Cato, Executive Director

P.S. Remember: your gift today is keeping children from living in vans. Thank You!