

UUAA Alpha House Committee annual report 2019-2020

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Overview: Alpha House is an emergency shelter for children and their families, who are temporarily experiencing temporary homelessness and is the only family and children shelter in Washtenaw County. This is a key component to the priority of the congregation identified in the vision 20/50 report: **anti-racism and anti-oppression work**.

UUAA hosts four weeks each year: June, November, January and April. Volunteers donate and serve dinner each night, make hot breakfast on weekends and school holidays, and supervise children's activity time after dinner. Committee members help in the social hall to sign up volunteers and collect funds; and purchase groceries and supplies for the host week.

Key accomplishments:

- Full Thanksgiving dinner during November host week
- Added two more days during November host week
- Seasonal activities and crafts led by volunteers or the 7th grade SGD class
- Instituted leftovers night in February 2020 to reduce food waste

Supporting Alpha House during COVID-19:

Worked with IHN staff to buy COVID preparedness supplies for the shelter in March. For the April host week, we changed volunteer roles to keep residents and staff safe. We updated our sign-up genius online to keep up with changing needs. Dozens of UUAA donors contributed financial contributions to support our host week (these were sent to UUAA or donated online on UUAA.org). We spent over \$1000 of fundraised dollars on groceries and COVID supplies plus prepared meals to support the April host week. Committee members searched the internet for fun and engaging content to share with Alpha House parents, and we commissioned the creation of coloring pages drawn by Debra Golden to share with the kids. We hosted three movie nights at the shelter and collected DVDs for them to use to continue the tradition!