

UUAA Alpha House Committee annual report 2021-2022

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Overview: IHN at Alpha House is an emergency shelter for children and their families, who are experiencing temporary homelessness and is the only family and children shelter in Washtenaw County. The shelter helps these families in finding and maintaining their own home and securing their financial independence, going forward. 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, February and April, and in 2021 we added a special host week in August. Volunteers donate financially and cook dishes for the dinner each night, prepare hot breakfast on weekends and school holidays, and supervise children's activity time when it is safe to do so. Committee members help with tasks like coordinating children's activity volunteers, or purchasing meals when necessary, and dropping off groceries and supplies for the host week.

Key accomplishments:

- Full Thanksgiving dinner during November 2021 host week.
- Easter dinner during April 2022 host week.
- Customized art kits for children in shelter.
- Reduced food waste by serving leftovers one night per week and freezing fruit for smoothies, when feasible.
- Members donated financially and the congregation delivered scrip gift cards for Holiday Wishes program.

Supporting Alpha House during COVID-19:

We updated our sign-up genius online to keep up with changing needs and update in-person volunteers with the IHN safety guidelines. Dozens of UUAA donors sent contributions to UUAA or donated online on UUAA.org in support of our committee.

Over 70 volunteers filled 457 unique spots on our signups. Thank you to all of those volunteers! Check out IHN Volunteer Coordinator [Zachary Crutchfield](#) speaking about Sharing the Collection at the service [April 3rd - Living Into Radical Welcome](#).