



**Mercy Center for Women** is designed to transition women and children between emergency housing and a permanent place to live. Women must be homeless, motivated and committed to changing their lives.

Everything starts with an interview with a case manager who goes over the woman's personal history to determine her needs. To be accepted, she must be at least 21 years old and show that she:

- Is committed to life-changing actions for physical, psychological and emotional growth
- Has no history of violence against herself or others
- Has no serious mental issues
- Is in recovery from drugs and alcohol for at least thirty days

If she has a criminal record, it must be resolved or in a stage of resolution—parole or probation. Similarly, if drugs or alcohol are an issue, she needs to have completed her rehab program or have a positive recommendation to our program from her counselor.

**Mercy Center for Women** is a 501c(3) charitable organization that was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1994 by bringing together the services of Hope House, a transitional housing facility for women and children, and GROW (Grass Roots Opportunities for Women), an advocacy center. Since the beginning we have served more than 8,000 women and children in our community.

We are open 24 hours, seven days a week and can comfortably accommodate 17 families. The Center is a family setting with 17 individual bedrooms. We are handicap accessible, and have an accessible bedroom and bath suite on the first floor. We have a large fenced-in backyard with a playground.

**For more information or if you are interested in volunteering, call 814-455-4577.**

### **Mercy Center for Women**

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### *Our Mission*

*Mercy Center for Women is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy and is committed to enhancing the dignity of each person it serves through the healing of body, mind and spirit.*



*Committed to enhancing the dignity of each person  
we serve through the healing of body, mind and spirit.*



## The Women We Serve...

Being homeless is a description of a current state of affairs; it does not have to be a defining label.

We empower women to become self-sufficient:

- Helping them increase their income and reduce their debt
- Helping them improve their self-esteem
- Working with them to complete the life skills program

## How the Residential Program Works

When a woman enrolls in the Mercy Center for Women residential program, she becomes an active part of the house's daily upkeep. She will share in the preparation of evening meals on a rotating basis, and she will also attend house meetings, where staff and residents exchange ideas about house activities. She will work one-on-one with a case manager to complete the program designed for her. As a woman successfully completes the program, she will show progress in de-veloping basic life skills:

- Budgeting and restoring credit
- Social interaction
- Accountability
- Emotional maturity
- Honesty
- Positive attitude
- Household management
- Personal care
- Gain self-sufficiency



## Self-improvement Classes

- **Self-esteem** is the degree to which we feel confident, consider ourselves valuable, and respect ourselves. This group teaches the participants to practice self-care, identify triggers to low self-esteem, and develop skills to feel good about self which greatly affects our well-being.
- **Healthy Relationships** Find out what constitutes a healthy relationship and the things you need to keep a relationship healthy. There are reliable tools that can be used to create a healthy relationship, many of which have not been taught in our culture.
- **Effective Communication** skills are fundamental to success in many aspects of life. Many jobs require strong communication skills and people with good communication skills usually enjoy better interpersonal relationships with friends and family. Effective communication is a key interpersonal skill and learning how we can improve our communication has many benefits.
- **Relapse Prevention** is to help individuals continue on the road to recovery by identifying stressors, problems, and solutions so that they will not go back to unhealthy behaviors.
- **Anger Management** is the process of learning to recognize signs when you become angry, and taking the necessary actions to calm down and deal with the situation in a productive way.
- **Critical Thinking and Creative Problem Solving** Participants will learn how to make better decisions by asking questions, defining a problem, and examining evidence. *"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."* - Albert Einstein

## Other Programs...

- **After Care Program** — Provides residents with one year of follow-up upon leaving Mercy Center for Women. They are encouraged to join our alumnae support group and volunteer in helping others.
- **Mentor Program** — Volunteer mentors help women develop coping skills and serve as role models.
- **Clothing Store** — Clean used clothes for women available for purchase at very affordable prices.



**DRESS FOR SUCCESS®**  
ERIE

- **Dress for Success Erie®** — Promotes the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.
- **Professional Women's Group** — Job retention support group

*"As I walked through Mercy Center's doors,  
I was broken and scared. I was not sure how to  
be the mother my children deserved.  
With MCW's support, guidance and direction,  
I can now be the woman and mother my  
children need me to be!"  
- A grateful Client*