



Building bridges between families and those that can help.

OUR MISSION

To build bridges of support, anchored in Christ's love, between families in the Lakes area and the community assets that can help them thrive and gain hope.

OUR VISION

Bridges of Hope links families to community supports and resources. It creates partnerships within the broader community to help strengthen, stabilize and support families in the Lakes area, sending a message of hope and empowering families to thrive.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Christ calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- Healing happens best in the context of community.
- Faith communities are in a unique role of offering relationships to those who are in crisis.
- Families can be strengthened by both formal and informal support.
- Having an active faith makes a difference in a person's life.
- We respect diversity, individual needs, beliefs and values.

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Every family in crisis who approaches Bridges of Hope is facing a unique challenge. By providing a **single point of entry** for a family in crisis, we create a system that looks at the **strengths and needs** of each individual family and connects them to the supports they need to thrive. By continuing to identify all of the assets that exist within our community and **mobilizing the community** to collectively utilize those assets, Bridges of Hope impacts the lives of both individual families and **transforms the community** as a whole. Bridges of Hope goes beyond resource and referral, however; not only finding resources but **linking** families to resources and following up to ensure they are connected to services most helpful to them.

In 2010, Bridges of Hope served approximately 2,200 households (around 6,000 people). Approximately 75% of the requests we respond to are regarding **children and those who care for them**. While our mission is to serve children and their families, we do not turn away individuals seeking information about resources.

Whatever kind of crisis a family is facing, Bridges of Hope has the community expertise to walk them through it. Whether we work with a family over a few weeks or several months, the goal is always to prevent child abuse, maltreatment and neglect; reduce isolation; increase family stability; and promote stronger, healthier families. Bridges of Hope has four program services:

Crisis Nursery Services: free, short-term childcare for children ages 0-12 during family crisis. This program is a partnership between Bridges of Hope and Crow Wing County Social Services.

Financial Resources Program: a single point of entry in the community for families experiencing a financial crisis, connecting them to viable community resources, in order to improve family stability.

Mental Health Program: access to a vast database of area mental health providers and their specialties; assistance establishing an emergency/immediate appointment; and financial assistance for an initial session for under- and uninsured children and parents.

Family Support Services: longer-term supportive services; working with families to set goals and to connect them to community-based supports; with the goal to reduce child abuse and neglect and to empower families to access support in the future.

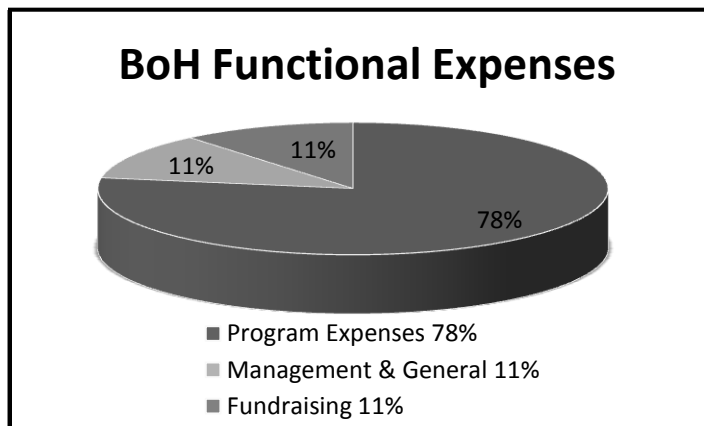
Volunteers increase Bridges of Hope’s capacity to serve those in need without dramatically increasing organizational expenses. Volunteers come in a variety of names, including *Intern, VISTA, Work Training Staff, Community Volunteer*, and more. BoH has always utilized volunteers to assist with its services and has had partnerships with the ACT Team, Rural MN-CEP, ISD 181, The College of St. Scholastica, AmeriCorps VISTA, and others.

COMMON GOODS

In the fall of 2009, Bridges of Hope launched a new thrift store named Common Goods. Common Goods was created for the **community-minded shopper**, offering high-quality goods at reasonable prices, including a range of clothing, high-end fashion accessories, casual and one-of-a-kind home furnishings, and unique furniture pieces. Our goal is to have a major impact on the number of products leaving our area or entering landfills. We work to **recycle and redistribute these goods within the community**, extending their use. As a result, local donations stay local and proceeds from the store serve local families in need. After its first year of operations, Common Goods generated \$40,000 for our human services work. Common Goods was created to be **a venue for community members to give their time, talents and treasures**, and **all proceeds support the ongoing work of Bridges of Hope**. Volunteers are always welcome: call for current opportunities.

BOARD, STAFF & ORGANIZATION

Bridges of Hope is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, incorporated in 2002. The organization has a 10-member Board of Directors, made up of a broad cross-section of community members. The Board provides leadership and oversight to the ongoing formation of Bridges of Hope in planning, budgeting, fundraising and community networking. The organization employs four full-time staff at its human services location, and one full-time staff along with four to seven part-time staff at Common Goods. Bridges of Hope’s organizational budget for 2011 is \$547,910. Bridges of Hope spends approximately 78% of its budget on Program expenses; 11% on Administrative (Management & General) expenses, and 11% on Fundraising.



To be part of sharing the gift of hope with local families, contact:

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