



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Latisha's House

**BUILDING A BRIDGE FROM HER TRAUMATIC
PAST TO HER POSITIVE FUTURE**

A Message from Latisha's House

Latisha's House was birthed after an encounter with a trafficked girl named Latisha on the streets of Chicago. Elizabeth Ameling, the Executive Director and Founder, was moved to action. Latisha was able to move off the streets, into a safe house and start a new life. Her trafficker was arrested. After returning to Virginia, and with a modest sum of \$25,000, Elizabeth was determined to create a safe home for female victims of sex trafficking. In Virginia, there was literally no long-term place for them to go. The Virginia home was opened in 2013, and a second home was opened in Florida in 2019.

A decade has passed, and with nearly \$2 million raised in financial support, our unwavering vision remains intact. As we have seen new needs, we have responded. Latisha's House provides a safe place to sleep, heal and grow with wrap around services. We continue supporting survivors after they graduate from Latisha's House. Our motto is changing one life at a time and changing the world for future generations. We help survivors build a bridge from their traumatic past to a positive future. Women graduate with life skills to take care of their children, work successfully, be financially independent, and ultimately become proud home owners.

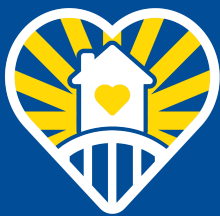
Help us create a world where individuals are no longer trafficked.
Survivors have overcome trauma and embraced wholeness and freedom.





A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

While the pandemic set many non-profits back, the year 2022 was a year of God's faithfulness and changed lives. We continued to serve survivors. Children were reunited with their moms, cycles of addiction were broken, high school and college diplomas were received, and permanent supportive housing was attained.



Latisha's House

THE FREEDOM PROJECT - WILL ALLOW US TO EXPAND CAPACITY THROUGH THE FOLLOWING THREE INITIATIVES

Hope Village will provide housing for trafficking survivors and their children. The mission is to help rebuild and strengthen the family unit with onsite holistic support.

Freedom House will offer permanent supportive housing to survivors who have graduated to independent living. They will share a single family dwelling and continue their education, employment, financial saving and healing.

RentRelief+ will increase access to housing and rental assistance with new opportunities within our community.

Through "**The Freedom Project**" trafficking survivors will be able to work and live in the same community. They will achieve the ultimate goals of job and financial stability, healthy relationships, and home ownership.



Latisha's Story

We met Latisha on the street with her pimp. She was standing on the street corner, hot and hungry. It was 99 degrees in the shade.

She looked like a child but she told us she was 25. We gave her a sandwich , Oreo cookies and a bottle of ice water.

She said no one cared if she lived or died. She was forced to have sex with johns to survive.

We connected Latisha with The Dream Center of Chicago.

She jumped at the opportunity for a new life and safe place to call home.

Her restoration inspired us to open Latisha's House--a safe place for trafficking survivors in Virginia to call "home."

Latisha's House is a place of healing to those who have endured horrific trauma. Here, survivors embark on a journey of change. They break the cycle of violence and trauma.

Experiencing hope, learning life skills, discovering their true worth as human beings, survivors find their voices.

"Do Justice, Love Mercy, and Walk Humbly with God" Micah 6:8



"Brittini's Story

At 15, instead of learning what the area of a triangle is or what year the Bill of Rights was written, I was learning how to sell my body.

I was learning how to numb myself to the physical, mental, and emotional pain. I was learning that “love” hurts.

...God sent me to Latisha’s House. It was there that my true healing began....

Latisha’s house helps with more than just healing from trauma. When I first arrived, I had no type of identification, no insurance, no way of supporting myself. They got me all my identifying documents, health insurance, and food stamps.

I was finally starting to feel like a normal person. I started to think about what I wanted for my future. I decided I wanted to do what LHF does, I wanted to help other women who have been through what I have. I enrolled in college..

After I graduated from the program, and moved out on my own, LHF was still an integral part of my life. They were there for me no matter what!

Why Join Us?

25 Million and Counting

Victims are trafficked around the world

19.5 Million

Are 18 and over

5.5 Million

Are children.

**90% of Latisha's
House Survivors
were sexually
abused or trafficked
as children.**

To report Suspected Human
Trafficking,

Call: 888-373-7888 or

Text: 233733 "BEFREE"

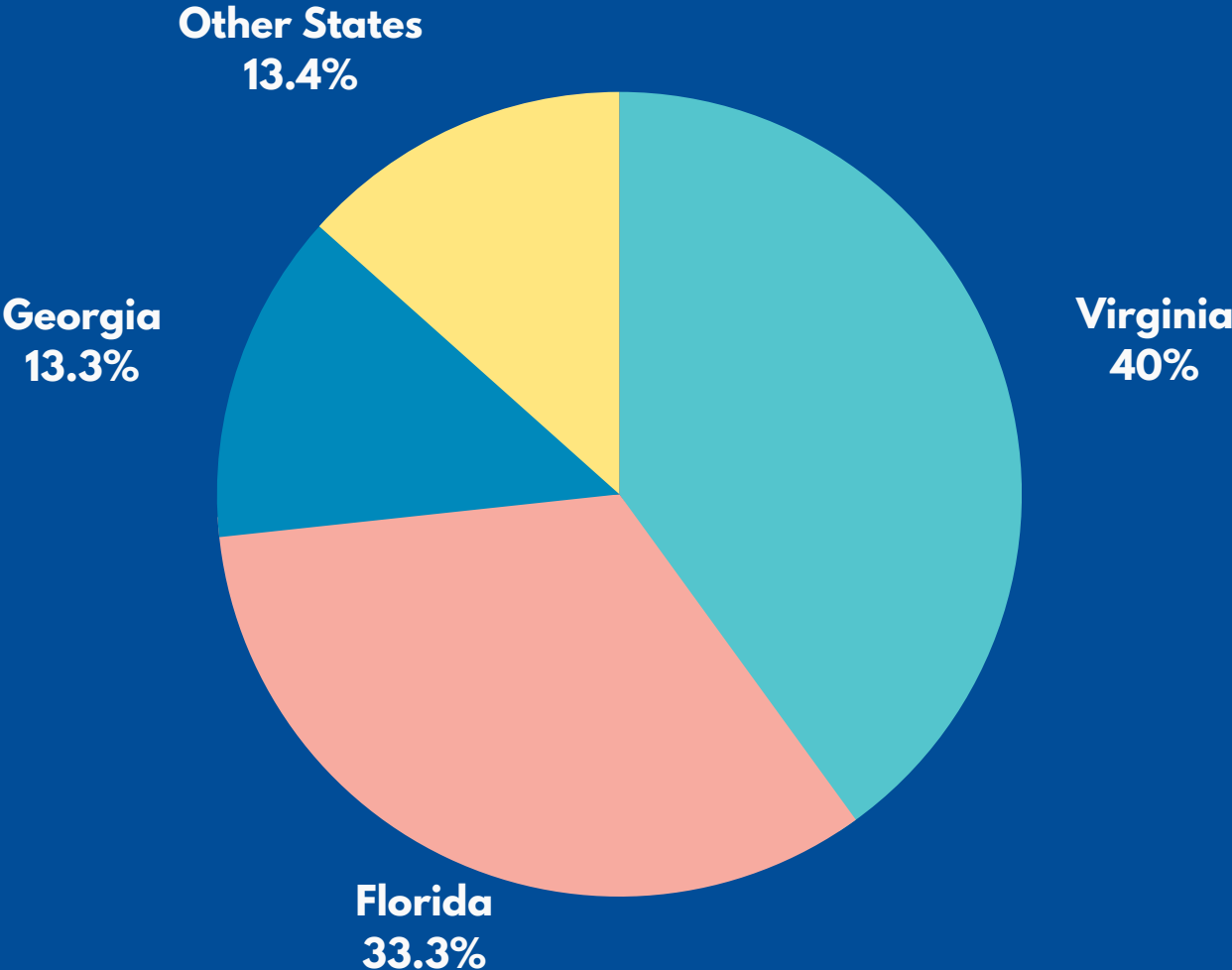
www.humantraffickinghotline.com



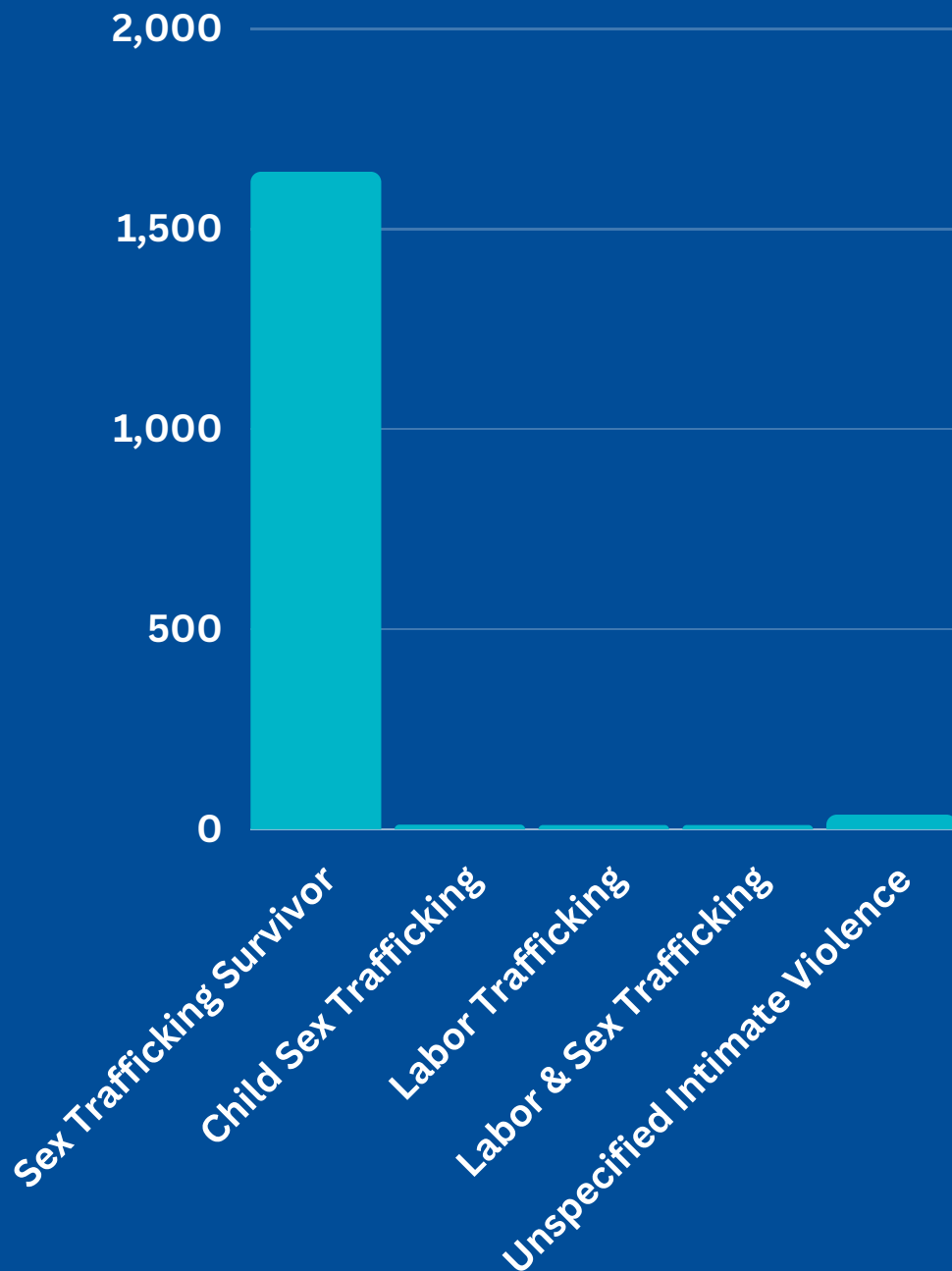
2022 Latisha's House Referrals

250 New Survivors Referrals

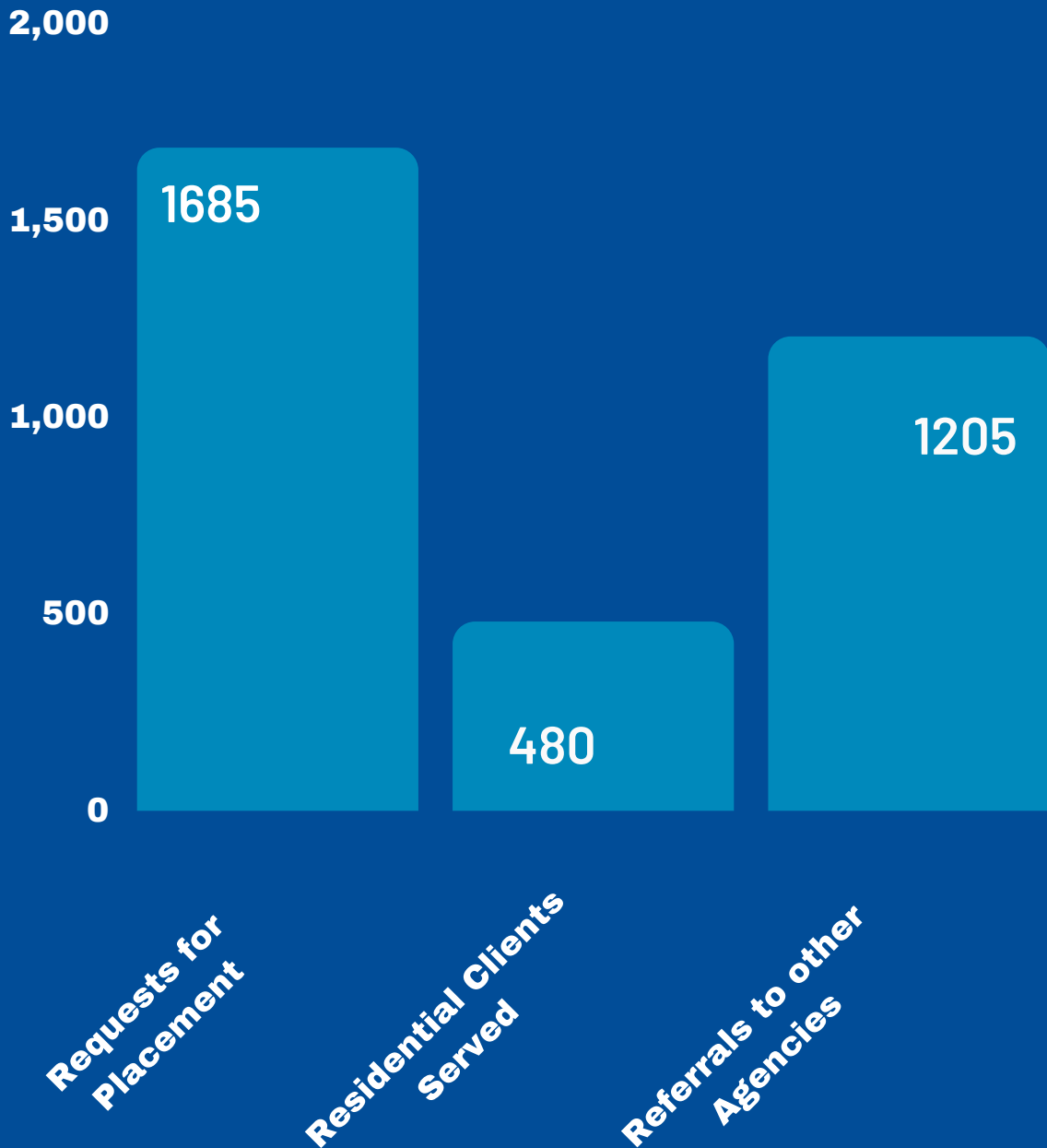
Over 100 direct victim calls



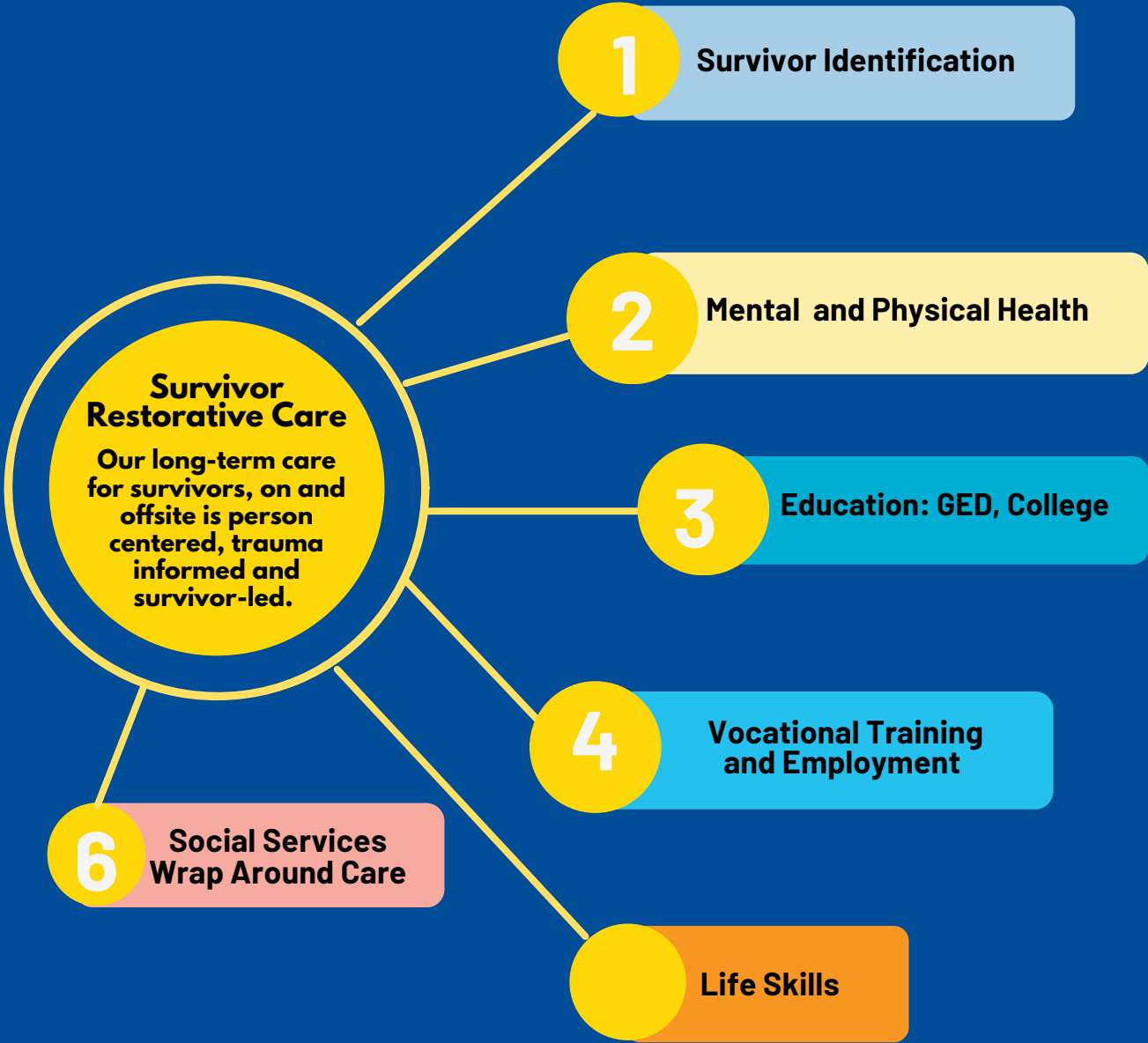
IDENTIFICATION SINCE 2013



ADVOCACY SINCE 2013



OUR KEY FOCUS AREAS



TRAUMA INFORMED STAFF



100% Staff are required to take American Green Cross courses on Psychological First Aid, Treating Sexual Trauma, Assessment and Treatment of PTSD, and Professional Boundaries.



100% Staff are certified in the H.E.A.R.T. Model, which stands for The Heart's Emotional Affective Response to Trauma. The model emphasizes a client-centered approach and empowerment of survivors of trafficking.



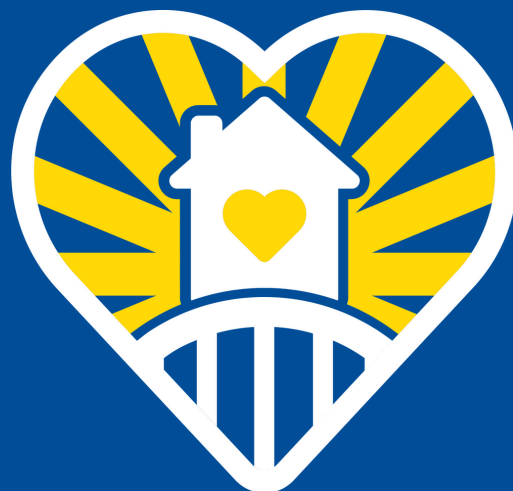
100% staff members have prior experience working with diverse and vulnerable populations.



100% staff continue to receive diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in their training. Staff members take into account the unique experiences, identities, and needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds.



95% of the Virginia team are certified in (SETTS) Sexual Exploitation Treatment & Training Services, as of July 2023 by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services,



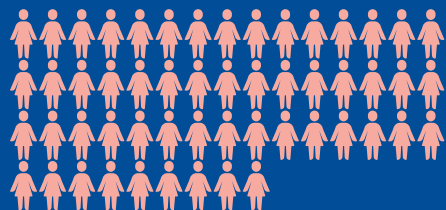


SURVIVOR SERVICES



Received Counseling and Health Services

54 Survivors Served with Restorative Care



Connected to Social Services



Received Clothing and Food

296 Survivors Referred to other Safe Houses or Programs



Pursued Higher Education GED/Vocational Education/ and College

8 Children Reunited



SURVIVOR AFTERCARE

9 Latisha's House Graduates Served in 2022



4 Continued Higher Education

95% Obtained Housing



6 Became Employed



10 Years of Growth

INCREASED SUPPORT

- In 2013, we started with 3 staff.
- In 2022, we employ 13 individuals and have multiple partners.

IMPACT

- In 2013, we had referrals from Virginia., mostly in Central Virginia and Hampton Roads.
- In 2022 we have impacted survivors from around the country. .

FUNDING EXPANDED

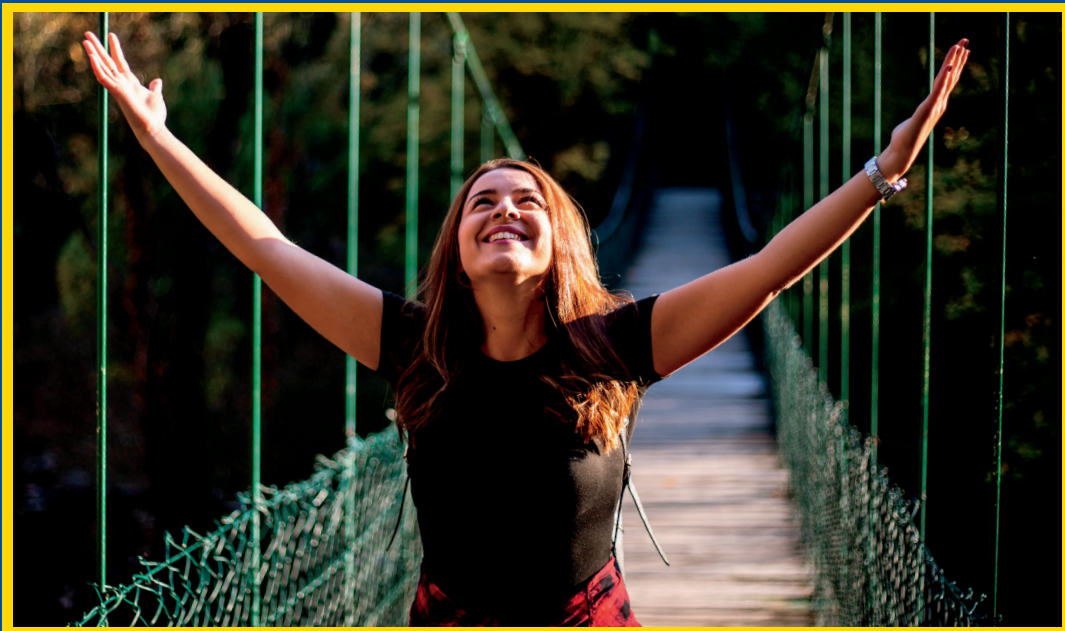
- In our first year we raised \$75K.
- In 2022 we raised close to \$500K for both Florida and Virginia.

FOCUS

- In 2013 we served female sex trafficking survivors.
- In 2022, we provided services and referrals to all survivors of human trafficking.

SUCCESS

We continue to have a success rate around 80%.
With the Freedom Project-- affordable housing and home ownership--we will increase our success to over 90%.



**“There comes a point when change has to come....
Latisha’s House saved my life!”**

“Elle” Former resident and survivor

IT STARTED AT THE AGE OF 5



I was taking a bath for the night.

I was so excited because tomorrow was my first day of kindergarten.

My mom asked my brother to watch me while I was in the tub.

I never knew how that day would change my life.

That night my brother molested me. After he was done, he told me that I should not tell anyone. He told me that if I would, he would kill me. Looking into his evil eyes, I believed him. I couldn't understand what had happened to me. At my young age I was confused and hurting.

My first day of kindergarten was a horrible experience because of the rape of the night before. I felt horrible. I tried not to cry. I didn't understand what had happened to me. I was alone, terrified, and not able to tell my teacher. I was consumed with sadness.

Two days later my parents told us that they would be working the midnight shift. My dad told us that my two older brothers, Jack 15, and Henry 14, would be in charge. My brother Jack laughed. I wanted to throw up. I hugged my mom and begged her not to leave me. She hugged me back and said, "don't worry, your brothers will take good care of you". If only my mom knew.



For the next two nights, I lay gripped in the fear of the unknown. But on the third day, my door creaked open, and Jack entered the room. I remained still, hoping Jack would leave, but instead I was awakened by a sudden blow to the head. The events that followed were truly horrifying, and I was left in immense pain, surrounded by bloody sheets.

In the nights that followed, Jack and Henry returned, waking me again. I found a way to cope by creating a separate place within my subconsciousness to escape from the unbearable pain. This coping mechanism led to the development of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), which allowed me to shield myself from the abuse I faced repeatedly. Later in life, I learned that dissociation is a natural response to trauma, a way for the mind to protect itself from overwhelming agony and anguish. It was the only way I could survive the harrowing experiences I endured.

This went on for many years. I felt like the abuse would never stop. This went on until I was in my 20s.



My world all came crashing down when my mom died.

I was 25. I had a nervous breakdown.

I moved in with my dad. My heart was broken in a million pieces.

I was lost. I missed my mother calling me "baby".

She always made me feel safe and loved!

My brothers used that for their advantage, took me from my dad's house and made me live with them in a basement on a mattress on the floor. I was sold to family members, people off the street, and johns on the website. I was sold for drugs, money, and guns. I was tortured at night and went to school during the day.

Things changed when Jack died and I finally was free or so I thought. I moved on with my life, hiding behind my smile. No one knew the sadness behind my smile.

I went back to get my GED and went to Thomas Nelson Community College to obtain my associate degree in early childhood development. After I achieved that goal, I was determined to continue and persued a second degree in Business Administration. I successfully completed both!



I moved out and got my own place. My life was on a roll. One night when I was coming into my apartment, I was snatched by my brother Henry. That night was a terrible one for me and the beginning of new years of abuse.

My brother was a classic pimp, controlling my life. I had to ask permission for everything that I wanted to do. He said "you belong to me." He took all but \$20 from each paycheck.

I was unable to pay rent. I was evicted. Thank God! I was forced to move back in with my dad. I tried my best to prove to my dad that I could be tough and strong like a boy. It never happened.

I attended Liberty University and obtained my Bachelor Degree of Science I proved I could do anything. But, no matter where I went, my brother found me. One night, Henry was sitting on the sofa with my dad. My heart stopped. My dad said 'Catch up.' Henry grinned an evil grin.

I talked with my counselor. The years of abuse had pushed me over the edge. I wanted it over. She told me to go to the police. That night I faked a meeting and went to law enforcement, ready to bare my soul and tell everything. The officer was probably in his 50s. He asked me if I was drinking? Was I sure it was my brother?

I walked out defeated. (Survivors have to be brave to tell. The worst thing that law enforcement can do is not believe their story.) Their questions, "Why didn't you tell? How come no one knew? only reflect the lack of understanding people have about chronic sexual abuse of children and trafifcking, especially in families. There is a code of silence.



That night I decided to end it all. I drove to a bridge, ready to accelerate over the side into the water. Death would be a welcome relief from the years of torment. Just as I started to start the car, there was a "tap" at the window. A lady was standing there. She said, "Baby", it's not worth it. My mom in heaven sent me an angel to save my life.

My counselor and I then contacted Ms. Liz,. I went to Latisha's House.

Here was my new beginning. I was safe! My room was pale pink, with a bed and dresser just for me. I had a welcome home teddy bear on the bed. There was a basket of shampoo, wash cloths, new towels, and soap, just for me.



With new found courage--as I was safe and encouraged by the staff who loved me and believed in me-- I once again bravely talked to law enforcement.

This time Henry went to jail for a very long time. He would not hurt me anymore!

My family first disowned me--afterall this is the dark secret you don't talk about. This is why we suffer in silence, isolated and alone.

Eventually we reestablished a positive relationship. They finally understood what I had endured for decades. They are proud of me, and I love them.



I lived at Latisha's House for five years, working in daycare until I was able to get my own apartment.

When I stepped inside, it was my own place! It was a wonderful, the freedom of not looking over my shoulders!

I returned to Latisha's House to be a voice, a hope, mentor, and an advocate those those women who are overcoming their traumas, and abuse.

They can see in me the joy, laughter, freedom, and hope for their own bright futures!



A NOTE OF THANKS

We could not have accomplished our successes over the last decade and helped survivors without you.

A heartfelt thanks from all of us at Latisha's House. The Board of Directors, and Virginia and Florida teams are proud to call you heroes.

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Latisha's House

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