



With Hands As Open As Her Heart

Kathy DiFiore Mothers Girls in Need

She peered into the backseat of a car to see a teenage girl sleeping. She saw the girl lying beneath a single blanket in a community where such a sight was startling. Yet in this girl, she saw herself. The girl reminded her of the time when she'd experienced homelessness after leaving an abusive relationship, a time when the few hands that reached out to help her made all the difference. And Kathy DiFiore knew what God was telling her to do.

So she tapped on the window, reached out her hand, and helped a girl that nobody wanted. She let the girl into her house—where the fridge was full of fresh food, the bedroom full of clean clothes, and the shower full of warm water—while she spent the day at work. The girl, it turned out, was pregnant.

Kathy started with one, and soon more arrived. She took pregnant homeless teenagers into her own New Jersey home, giving them shelter and warm meals and what they needed most—a support system. “I came from an Italian-American dream family that gave me all the education and love in the world,” Kathy reflected.

With these values instilled in her, she continued to reach out, incorporating as Several Sources Shelters in 1981. But just a few years into her work, the State of New Jersey threatened to fine her and shut her down for operating an unlicensed boarding house. But to her rescue came a tiny woman, someone



Kathy holds baby Liza as she tries to grab Mother Teresa's nose.

from the other side of the world who knew a little bit about the work Kathy was doing, Mother Teresa.

With a letter to then-Governor of New Jersey Thomas Kean, Mother Teresa convinced him to rescind the fine and amend the New Jersey laws so that Kathy's work with preborn children and their mothers would be legal. Her house expanded, more shelters opened, and in 1988, Kathy stood in the Oval Office to be honored by President Ronald Reagan.

More than thirty years after its first steps, Several Sources Shelters now consists of four residential shelters, a 24-hour national hotline for pregnant women, and five informational websites that receive a million visitors a year. It also has a fifth shelter that offers daytime help to women who are experiencing homelessness.

Last year, Director Ron Krauss released a full-length motion picture called “Gimme Shelter,” which was based on a pregnant teenage girl (played by Vanessa Hudgens) who found refuge at Several Sources Shelters. With a cast that includes Rosario Dawson, Brendan Fraser, James Earl Jones, and Ann Dowd (who plays Kathy's role), the movie illustrates that with a caring support system, life will, indeed, flourish.

To help Kathy keep the shelter doors open, visit www.severalsourcesfd.org and click the 'Donate Now' button.



BASED ON THE INSPIRING TRUE STORY
Gimme Shelter

The prequel to “Gimme Shelter” is currently in the production stage.



At Several Source's Charity Golf Outing last year, Kathy holds “saved” baby Zamir. Sitting at right is “saved” baby Isabella and standing is “saved” baby Liliana.