



## Finding a Foundation

Kendra was on track to graduate from high school a year early and had dreams of getting a degree from RIT. But that all came crashing to a halt when her father passed away. Family and home issues caused her grades to slip, along with her dreams for early graduation. Kendra didn't know what each day would bring—if she would be able to go to school or if there would be enough food for dinner—but she also didn't know what to do. She thought about going to a shelter, but could only picture a cold, dark room filled with strangers. That vision kept 15-year-old Kendra from seeking help.

Kendra took a leap of faith and found herself at a Community Fund partner shelter for homeless teens at Center for Youth. It was there that Kendra found what she began to describe as home. Her own bed, a dresser all to herself and structure and support to help her thrive.

"I didn't just get a bed, I got a foundation," Kendra said. "Coming to the shelter was the best thing that could have happened to me. It opened up so many opportunities that I wouldn't have had before."

Most teens don't choose to be homeless—a bad situation at home forces them to leave. And according to Elaine Spaul, Executive Director at Center for Youth, most of the teens that come to the shelter are facing abuse, neglect or both at home. This can cause them to do poorly or drop out of school altogether, making them more likely to live in poverty.

Being at the shelter allowed Kendra to focus on school. She improved her grades, entered a long-term housing program to live on her own and eventually fulfilled her dream of becoming an RIT graduate.

United Way's mission is to unite the good will and resources of the Greater Rochester community so that everyone can thrive. We address critical challenges, like homelessness and abuse, by connecting local people in need with evidence-based programs to help solve our community's toughest problems. United Way Community Fund partner programs give teens a safe place to stay while giving them rules, structure and accountability for their actions. Each year, the Community Fund gives hundreds of kids a foundation to work toward a successful future.

United Way helps our entire community thrive. To help us find solutions to critical challenges and support local people in need, please donate through your workplace campaign or at [uwrochester.org/give](http://uwrochester.org/give).



United Way  
of Greater Rochester

# Why United Way?

## Because we bring thousands of people together to:

### INVEST IN SOLUTIONS.

You donate to United Way's Community Fund. We invest in local programs that use research and prevention to get the best results for babies, kids, families and elders.

### MAKE CONNECTIONS.

You connect with us through campaigns, events, leadership societies and more. We unite the good will and resources of our community so that everyone can thrive.

### SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.

You help our community by donating to the causes you care about and by volunteering during Day of Caring (on Thursday, May 11). We serve our community by using best practices, joining key initiatives like the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative and partnering with service providers to help people in need.



When you Fuel the Fund you do so much more than give a donation. You ignite a passion for helping others and keep the Community Fund fire burning so together we can:



Provide 800 new moms a flicker of hope for a happy, healthy future for their babies.



Spark curiosity for 4,700 students who fill their out-of-school time with music, science, reading and more.



Give a glow of wellness to 13,000 local elders.



Turn up the heat for 33,000 people who need warm beds, hot meals and a helping hand.