**Freedom From Abuse #Care4Christmas 2021**

The last 18 months have been tough on everyone but one of the things that got 10 ladies (who are senior leaders or run their own companies) through, was the power of their female network.

This network consists of Jan (from Rift), Lyndsey (Gallaghers ), Julie (Rap Interiors ), Mei-Ling (Brachers), Anita (family Business Place, Claire (Spatial Dimensions) Josephine (Kent Community Foundation), Dina [CAF Bank), Sally (Baldwins Travel), Emma (Global)

This year and together with their network of contacts the goal is to raise **£20,000 by 20th December** so the mission can be accomplished in time for Christmas to help families who have fled from domestic abuse.  If you would like to make a donation to this appeal you can do that by clicking on this link  <https://kentcf.org.uk/give/care-for-christmas-appeal>

**Domestic Abuse – the facts :**

**Over the last 18 months there has been a reported 50% rise in intensified domestic abuse in Kent alone. During that time charities supported over 1,000 families across Kent & Medway. There were 1874 children associated with those adults.**

**Read that again please**.

Imagine if you had nowhere to turn and you were experiencing abuse as well on a regular basis, affecting your mental well-being, your confidence, your ability to see light at the end of any tunnel, to being controlled so much you couldn’t and weren’t allowed to think for yourself and watching the effect this all had on your children and even pets.

Together we wish we could end abuse but sadly we probably never will, however, we are hoping this year our Care4Christmas campaign will create more resources for charities that support victims of domestic abuse that they can find strength from and know there is a way out and where to find help. Together we want to make a difference to the hundreds of families in Kent currently who have sought help and deserve a fabulous Christmas.

The impact of this on women, children and animals is catastrophic when you start to listen to real life stories.

It doesn’t always have to mean sexual abuse, but it sometimes is, but it’s definitely about excessive control and with this follows the victim losing all confidence to pack up and leave. This is the question on many people’s minds when they hear about domestic abuse ***is “Why didn’t they just leave?”***

Many women and children have thought they had to live in this abusive life, because it’s the norm. **Imagine that**. Trying to live with an abuser, placate situations for the sake of others in the household and this is how it becomes the “norm”.

So this year with **YOUR** help we would like to bring a smile and support to those trying to find a way out and even those that have tasted freedom and are being supported into the first step which is Refuge. It’s not what any of us would want away from our homes is it?

So take a moment to think that if your choice was to stay at home, where everything is, or to leave with sometimes nothing but the clothes on your back, in haste, at an organised time for escape and you’re off to live with often more people who are escaping and you will all live together until separate housing can be sorted ...would you be **ready?**

**There are currently over 200 children in Kent waiting for mentoring psychological help, victims of domestic abuse.**

**2 women a week are being killed through domestic abuse**

**Families often are too scared to leave without the family dog because the abuser will threaten to harm the pet “ if you leave”.**

**Without open supported conversations mums and children have to find a way to understand that was not “the norm”.**

**41% of those that leave will continue to be harassed by the abuser, threatened and even murdered, for leaving.**

Liaising with 4 charities that help the process for victims of domestic abuse we have chosen to raise money for

**Rising Sun Domestic Abuse charity Kent**

**Oasis -Refuge Support Kent**

**Dogs Trust Fostering Freedom project Canterbury Kent**

**NSPCC Medway**

We have teamed up with **Kent Community Foundation** to ENSURE the monies will be distributed accordingly.  **Donations will be used for:**

* £15 could pay for a set of pyjamas and underwear for a child who has fled violence
* £20 can buy a set of plates, bowls etc, for a young mum moving in/out of sheltered accommodation
* £30 could provide an hour of counselling for a child or mother to help deal with their trauma
* £40 will pay for the costs of fostering a dog for a month
* £50 can buy arts and crafts needed for one of our children’s recovery programmes or a kitchen starter kit for a family resettling from refuge
* £100 can fund a fun day out for children and young people who have lived with domestic abuse or a pre-loved bed and new mattress for a client resettling
* £150 could pay for 10 hours of counselling to help someone recover from the trauma they’ve experienced

**If you would like to donate a gift rather than money then you can choose from the following:**

* A voucher for a day out if you wish to nominate specifically (Legoland, Kent Wildlife trust, there’s many more)
* New Toys for children who may have left the family home and their belongings behind. (we must specify NEW ONLY PLEASE as part of the pandemic rules)
* Books – David Walliams, Jacqueline Wilson, lift the flap books, touch and feel books
* Diaries and calendars – to help adults with planning for the future
* Vouchers from Sports Direct, Primark, ASDA, Tesco, Sainsburys so that we can purchase clothing in the correct size
* Bedding for single beds
* Boxed toiletries, for any age

**Any of the above can be dropped off at the designated places below**

There are many ways you can help and we are appealing to you and your company’s Corporate Social Responsibility to help where you can if this has struck a chord with you.

**Here’s the link again to make a cash donation link**  <https://kentcf.org.uk/give/care-for-christmas-appeal>

or

**Drop off gifts at the following offices:**

**Rap Interiors, 6 Orchard Ind Est Maidstone ME15 9YE**

**Gallagher Construction, Leitrim House, Aylesford, ME20 7NS**

**Spatial Dimensions, Unit 17, Wealden Place, Sevenoaks, TN13 3QQ**

**Rift Group, The Cobolt Building, Biz Place, 1600 Lower Pemberton, Ashford, TN25 4HX**

If you would like any more information or have any ideas you would like to pledge as part of the Care4Christmas Appeal don’t hesitate to contact ***us.***

***Last year our Care4Christmas campaign reached over 24 Care Homes, bringing over 1100 presents to those lonely and vulnerable during a pandemic lockdown. Run by Rap, Rift and Gallaghers you can read more on how this was achieved and delivered with your amazing donations and help . Thank you***

***Please help this year as part of our Freedom from Abuse 2021.***