

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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## **Mimi's House Closes Permanently, Donates to United Way**

After three years of providing services to unaccompanied homeless youth in Central Wyoming, the Mimi's House Board of Directors announces its permanent closure effective immediately. The board is taking appropriate steps toward dissolving the organization. This decision follows what began as a temporary suspension of services several months ago.

"The decision to close did not come easily," Board Secretary Chynna Dobson said. "As individuals, the board remains committed to the vision our founder Miamie Sleep had toward helping these young people."

The suspension of services followed the departure of their Executive Director. The board devoted the time to seeking sustainable funding, addressing issues with the property, and updating policies and procedures; however, a perfect storm of extenuating circumstances prevents reopening.

"This is not the outcome we wanted," board member Crystal Bratvold said. "We have done some awesome stuff in the last three years but were simply unable to secure the funding needed to sustain services. Mimi's House was awesome at raising community awareness regarding the harsh realities homeless youth in Casper and Natrona County face, and how our community could help. With that new awareness, we were able to generate significant grass-roots community support."

The board's continued commitment to the organization's vision can be seen in their decision to ensure organizational assets will continue to aid homeless and/or at-risk youth in our community. Following the liquidation of Mimi's House tangible assets, the board is excited to donate their funds to The United Way of Natrona County.

"United Way has agreed to distribute our donation in a way that will continue to reflect the mission of Mimi's House," Board President Lisa Scroggins said. "We want this donation to honor our amazing donors and have asked United Way to restrict it to assisting organizations that target youth who are either homeless or at risk of facing homelessness in Natrona County."

"We are deeply honored & humbled to have been selected as the recipient from Mimi's House," said United Way Executive Director Nikki Hawley. "We work with 35 nonprofit organizations in Natrona County, and each manages to support or collaborate with other nonprofits as they work to serve our community. This donation will not only help youth at risk in Natrona County, but it will also help United Way shape the future of our community. This sets an example of generosity and commitment for others to follow."

When Mimi's House opened its doors in December 2019 it was seen as a '*cry in the wilderness.*' Prior to Mimi's House, the options for long-term housing and guidance for unaccompanied youth in Natrona County were very limited. Since that time, Casper has seen another similarly missioned organization join the cause for homeless and unaccompanied youth in the local area.

In addition to being a champion for homeless youth, during its three years of operations Mimi's House also provided essential services to its residents in a supportive, home-like environment where these vulnerable youth were taught essential life skills and were guided toward more stable lives.

While Mimi's House is closing, the homeless youth in our area still need our support. The Mimi's House Board of Directors appreciates the support of our community over the past three years and encourages our donors to support the United Way of Natrona County. For more information on the United Way, including how to donate, please visit their website at [www.unitedwaync.com](http://www.unitedwaync.com).