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## SETON YOUTH SHELTERS CONTINUES EMERGENCY HOUSE HUNTING TO KEEP BOYS OFF THE STREETS THIS WINTER

### Organization Looks to the Community for Help in Search for New Shelter

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**Virginia Beach, VA**—The search continues to find a new Boys’ House at Seton Youth Shelters. The deadline of December 31, 2020 is fast approaching and Seton must find a new place to shelter youth at its Boys’ House. Seton Youth Shelters has been sheltering homeless, runaway and trafficked youth at the Lynnhaven Road location since 1985. In April of 2020, while Seton was rapidly adapting to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Catholic Diocese of Richmond informed the organization’s Executive Director that the 35-year Boys’ House lease would be terminated at the end of the year. When the initial news broke, a few community members stepped up with possible rental properties, however, none of the structures met the space requirements needed to maintain the current level of services provided by Seton Youth Shelters. “We have some challenges related to finding a building with enough space for our boys, and also related to the state licensing requirements for how the space is configured,” explained Jennifer Sieracki, Executive Director of Seton Youth Shelters, “but with the help of the community, we can find a new place for our boys. We hope someone hearing our story may be able to assist us on securing a building.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Seton is facing an unprecedented budget shortfall. With a revenue deficit in the hundreds of thousands of dollars over the next year from loss of annual fund, event, and corporate donor donations, Seton is bracing for what may come. While services have not yet been interrupted, Seton Youth Shelters is working hard to raise funds in order to continue providing uninterrupted services. While COVID-19 is presenting local non-profits with difficulty, more importantly, it’s creating stress and hardships on youth

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and their families, and this stress and hardship continue to bring those youth onto the streets and into Seton’s shelters and related programs. Relocating the Boys’ House, along with developing creative fundraising solutions, is now Seton Youth Shelters’ critical focus. The current shelter is approximately 4,600 square feet with room for 10 boys. Sieracki says that Seton could work with two buildings, or possibly renovate a building to meet state licensing requirements for housing youth. A virtual tour of the current Boys’ House can be viewed on Seton Youth Shelters’ Facebook page and YouTube channel.

Seton Youth Shelters has been an indispensable resource for the Virginia community—without pause—since 1985 and is the region’s only organization devoted exclusively to providing shelter, outreach and mentoring services to youth 9 up to 18. Each year hundreds of boys and girls, ages 9 up to 18, arrive at our two Virginia Beach residential shelters—often in the middle of the night, and in the middle of extreme difficulties at home or on the streets. Seton’s professional staff welcomes them with food, shelter, clothing, school supplies and the counseling and support necessary for them to either return to their families or to continue on to another safe, home environment. Seton’s Outreach Program, visits area schools, events, and neighborhoods, reaching out to thousands of youth, offering crisis intervention, counseling, and shelter options—a lifeline for this vulnerable population. The Mentoring Children of Prisoners program gives children of incarcerated parents or caretakers the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to reach their full potential.

To take a virtual tour of the Boys’ House, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE9VaK2Cqik&t>. For information about how to help, contact Jennifer Sieracki at 757.963.5795 x 105 or email [jsieracki@setonyouthshelters.org](mailto:jsieracki@setonyouthshelters.org). Learn more, donate, and support Seton Youth Shelters by visiting [facebook.com/setonyouthshelters](https://facebook.com/setonyouthshelters) or [www.setonyouthshelters.org](http://www.setonyouthshelters.org).



Exterior of Boys’ House.



Downstairs, Common Area of Boys’ House.



One of the Bedrooms at the Boys’ House.

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