



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26th, 2026

Media Contact:

Sarah Swiston, Media & Communications Manager

W: 847.519.7820 ext. 230

C: 708.533.7577

sswiston@wingsprogram.com

WINGS Metro Safe House Recognizes 10th Anniversary *Serving Domestic Violence Survivors in Chicago*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago, IL – January 26, 2026 – On Valentine’s Day 2016, WINGS Metro Safe House opened its doors to domestic violence survivors. Over the past 10 years, **WINGS Metro has provided over 125,000 nights of secure shelter to more than 1,700 survivors**, ultimately helping clients find hope, healing, and stability.

Raquel, WINGS Metro’s Kitchen Coordinator, has been an important part of the Safe House since its opening. She shares, “I’ve been here since day one. Though I have a culinary degree, I feel like I am in hospitality and social work. A lot of times, people will come in looking out of it. I like to create a family atmosphere. Food is comfort. **Food heals the mind and emotions.** When moms come in overwhelmed, I remind them: ‘You did the best you could.’ **Guests often say, ‘I can taste the love in your food.’** My wish every day is that they heal through this food.”

The anniversary comes at a time when domestic violence in Chicago is on the rise. In 2024, the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline received nearly 60,000 contacts. This represents a 140% increase since pre-pandemic 2019. **For over a third of the year, 130 days, Chicago domestic violence shelters had no available beds for 130 days.**

Rebecca Darr, WINGS President & CEO, shares, “The most dangerous time in a survivor’s journey is when they make the difficult decision to leave. WINGS Metro Safe House helps survivors at that critical point in their journey. To help meet the need and truly end domestic violence, **more funding is needed so that we can help more survivors.**”

WINGS graduate X shares, “After my marriage turned violent, I packed a diaper bag and fled. When I arrived at WINGS Metro, I had nothing—but they gave me everything: safety, clothing, meals, legal help. Within a month, I had a furnished apartment and a job. Today, I have my own apartment, my citizenship, and my children are safe. WINGS helped me find my value and build a new life.”

###

About WINGS Program, Inc.

The [mission of WINGS Program, Inc.](http://www.wingsprogram.com) is to provide housing, integrated services, education, and advocacy to end domestic violence. With more than 40 years of experience, WINGS Program, Inc. is a premier provider of domestic violence solutions.

As the largest domestic violence agency in Illinois, WINGS creates high-quality, customized, domestic violence programs for survivors of all ages, ethnicities, and gender identities. WINGS programs have provided over one million nights of safe housing, life-changing community-based counseling, and award-winning mentoring programs.

Anyone experiencing domestic violence can receive help by calling the 24-hour hotline at 847.221.5680. For more information, visit www.wingsprogram.com.



Former Mayor of Chicago Rahm Emanuel cuts the ribbon opening WINGS Metro Safe House in 2016.



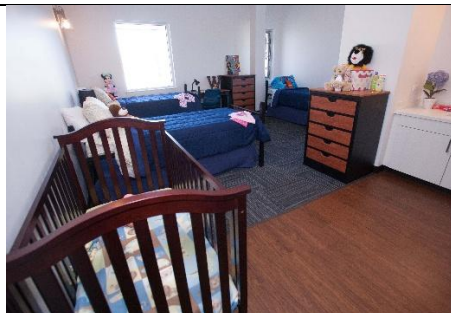
WINGS Metro clients receive special gifts on Valentine's Day organized by former WINGS graduate.



Raquel, WINGS Metro Safe House Kitchen Coordinator



Children's playroom at WINGS Metro Safe House



Guest room at WINGS Metro Safe House



Dining Room at WINGS Metro