



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**

Rachel Wozniak  
Compass House  
(716) 886-1351  
rawozniak@verizon.net

**Compass House Provides Services to 10,000<sup>th</sup> Youth at Emergency Shelter this Month**

**[Buffalo, NY] (June 25, 2013)** – Every year in the Western New York region hundreds of youth runaway, or otherwise find themselves homeless due to abuse, neglect, family conflicts, and other issues. Thankfully many of these youth find their way to Compass House, a not-for-profit agency that provides safe shelter and other services to runaway and homeless youth in Western New York. Through Compass House, the youth are provided with access to emergency shelter, food, clothing, needed emergency services, and necessary support to return to a safe living arrangement. Compass House is pleased to announce that in May 2013 the emergency shelter, located at 370 Linwood Ave, provided services to the 10,000<sup>th</sup> runaway and homeless youth at Compass House’s Emergency Shelter.

“This is an outstanding achievement made possible due to the dedication of Compass House employees, volunteers, board members and community partners who have devoted their time and efforts to Compass House since its founding in 1972.”, says Lisa Freeman, Executive Director of Compass House. “We hope that as long as the need in the community exists, our doors continue to be open for youth in crisis.”

This is an accomplishment that should not only be celebrated by Compass House, but for the Western New York community as a whole. The 10,000 youths who have accessed Compass House’s resources have done so as a means to safer, healthier, and happier lives. Over 97% of the youths who access Compass House resources each year exit the shelter and return to safe living arrangements, resulting in positive home lives for the youth and safer communities throughout Western New York.

Since 1972 Compass House has provided safe shelter and services to homeless and runaway youth in Erie County. The Emergency Shelter maintains 24-hour a day access to safe shelter services for up to 13 youths, ages 12 through 17. In addition to the Emergency Shelter, Compass House also offers at its Resource Center a non-residential program for youths ages 14 through 24 with case management services, counseling, and positive social and recreational activities. Services at both the Emergency Shelter and Resource Center are confidential, voluntary, and free.

Along with the Shelter and Resource Center, Compass House partners with businesses and organizations in the community to provide Erie County youth with immediate safety and access to Compass House’s resources through its Safe Place Program. Compass House’s Safe Place partners in Erie County include Tops Markets, Boys and Girls Clubs, NFTA buses, certain town Fire Departments, and GLYS Drop-In Center. Through these partners, a youth who is in crisis is able to go to one of these locations to be connected with Compass House.

“Our Safe Place partnerships have extended the doors of Compass House to virtually every community in Erie County. We are very grateful for the community support we, and our youth, receive.” says Lisa Freeman.

### **About Compass House**

*Founded in 1972, Compass House is a not-for-profit agency that offers safe shelter and services for runaway and homeless youth in Western New York. Compass House remains the only shelter and resource center for male and female runaway homeless youth ages 12-24 in Erie County. Our emergency shelter is opened 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can house up to 13 youths ages 12-17. Services provided at the shelter include: immediate access to food, clothing, and emergency services, intake and assessment services, counseling, referrals, advocacy, and aftercare. In addition to the Emergency Shelter, Compass House runs a Resource Center, a non-residential program open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (with extended hours 4 nights a week), that serves homeless youths ages 14-24 years. At the Resource Center, youths and young adults have access to intake services, case management, crisis counseling, positive social and recreational activities, advocacy, and much more.*

### **About National Safe Place**

*National Safe Place provides training and technical assistance for youth service agencies and businesses interested in developing the Safe Place program. Businesses and community locations that appeal to youth – such as fast food restaurants, convenience stores, fire stations, public buses, and libraries –connect young people in need with a partnering youth service agency. Safe Place was created as an outreach program of Shelter House by the YMCA of Greater Louisville in 1983 and remains a wholly owned subsidiary of the YMCA of Greater Louisville. This year, National Safe Place will celebrate the program’s **30<sup>th</sup> anniversary**. Since its inception, Safe Place has helped more than 285,000 youth. For more information, please visit [nationalsafeplace.org](http://nationalsafeplace.org).*

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