



# Healing the Wounds of Absence

Growing up as a young boy, I realized my dad was away from home a lot. He grew up poor and wanted better for his family. As a blue-collar worker, he worked two and sometimes three jobs to be the provider to our family. He saw to it that he supplied the things we needed, materially. He had a very dedicated work ethic and little time to play or relax. As a young teen, I knew if I wanted to spend time with him, I needed to enter his world. In other words, work alongside him whenever possible.

As devoted as my father was to his family, my mother was devoted to him and us four children. What my dad provided for us materially, my mother would provide love and spiritual needs. She was the homemaker and arranged her schedule around our needs. I do look back with fond memories.

As a young man, I fell into the same trap of working too much to provide what I thought my family needed, mainly monetary gain. I knew I had a responsibility as a dad to provide, but I didn't balance that with what my children really needed; showing them love by spending time with them and being a godly example to follow.

*"One hand full of rest is better than two fists full of labor and striving after wind."* Ecc. 4:6 NKJV

As a Board member, I understand there are many who come to the Women's Refuge through our counseling office or our Christian live-in program who have suffered greatly due to a loss of relationship with their parents. Many come from

broken homes, abuse, and lack of love as young children which negatively affect them as adults.

Fathers should be the protectors of the home but sadly, this is missing in today's families. The fabric of our society today is not being solidified by men who are willing to stay the course, persevere lead and love their families with the love of Christ.

*"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."* Proverbs 22:6

While our earthly fathers can't provide everything we need, our Heavenly Father is the One who can. God provides all our needs, physically, mentally and spiritually. He is all knowing, always present and all powerful. A meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ can compensate for any deficiencies in giving to our children or receiving as children.

At the Women's Refuge, we are all about restoration, whether it be with relationships or personal renewal. We walk alongside those souls to go through the process of feeling as a victim to them realizing they are a survivor, and God is there for them to live as a thriver. If you find yourself in need of support, please call the Women's Refuge today. We care and are here to offer help, hope and healing!



*Bill Ludwig*  
Board Member

## Message from the Executive Director



*Diane A. Ludwig*  
Executive Director

It is heartwarming to see a father holding his child's hand as he helps them navigate their first steps or teaching them to how to navigate life. Father's Day serves as a reminder of the vital role fathers play in nurturing, guiding, and supporting their children. It is a day to recognize their love, dedication, sacrifices, and spiritual influence on the family's well-being. Our Heavenly Father is also there to guide us with His

love and mercy. He is the true author of Fatherhood and exemplifies all the goodness and guidance that our earthly fathers hope to emulate. Recognize and appreciate the father(s) in your life that have had a positive impact on you whether by simple gestures or grand festivities, and make a heartfelt acknowledgment of the enduring love and commitment they provide.



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## Board Member Spotlight



Richard Johnson

I earned a Business Administration degree from the University of North Carolina and an M.B.A. from Penn State. My career began at Gulf Oil, where I progressed through financial and strategic leadership roles, ultimately serving as CFO of its Research and Development company. After the Gulf-Chevron merger, I helped launch the University of

Pittsburgh Applied Research Center as Executive Vice President, overseeing 2,000 employees.

Later, I led the Leadership Development Corp. and partnered with World Vision to create the Gifts-in-Kind program, distributing over \$4 billion in donated products to underserved communities worldwide over 25 years.

A follower of Christ for 50 years, I've held leadership roles on various boards, including Eden Christian Academy, Christ Church at Grove Farm, and the Women's Refuge of Vero Beach, where I've served as Treasurer for eight years. My wife Jackie and I now enjoy life in Vero Beach, where I continue to apply my leadership, financial, and collaborative skills in service to others.

## Support Groups:

**Monday** - Overcomers (7-8:30 PM)

**Tuesday** - Conquering Codependency (3-5 PM)

**Thursday** - Shelter from the Storm (3-5 PM)

**Friday** - Anger Management (3-5 PM)

- Bible Study (8:30-9:30 AM)



Scan QR code or visit link below to see dates & learn more!

[www.womensrefugevb.org/counseling/support-groups](http://www.womensrefugevb.org/counseling/support-groups)

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Proceeds benefit the Women's Refuge of Vero Beach



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## MEET & GREET

MEET THE STAFF - CAMPUS TOUR - LEARN MORE  
RSVP: [womensrefugevb.org/MeetAndGreet](http://womensrefugevb.org/MeetAndGreet)

*When?* Wednesday May 28, June 25, & July 30  
10:30-11:30 AM

*Where?* Women's Refuge Campus  
1850 Lemon Ave  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

## The Influence of Men in the Home

In our community and counseling sessions, we often witness the profound impact men have on the emotional and spiritual climate of the home. The Bible speaks clearly to this truth. When men walk in Christlike love and servant leadership, families thrive.

In Ephesians 5:25, husbands are called to love "as Christ loved the church" - a love marked by sacrifice, patience, and care. This kind of leadership doesn't dominate; it nurtures. It creates a home where women feel safe, valued, and supported, and where children learn what love and respect look like.

Jesus Himself modeled this in how He honored women, offering compassion and dignity where culture offered silence. His example calls today's men to do the same.

At the Women's Refuge of Vero Beach, we believe strong, godly men help build strong, healthy homes. Through counseling, mentorship, and prayer, we're committed to supporting families and encouraging men to live out their God-given calling.

Allison Hufford  
PR Assitant