

wishbook2016

HELPING FAMILIES REBUILD THEIR LIVES



DAI SUGANO/STAFF PHOTOS

After finding the courage to leave her domestic abuser, Jessica, whose real name we are not using in order to protect her anonymity, got help from the Bill Wilson Center to rebuild her life.

THE WISH BOOK SERIES

The Wish Book is an annual project of the Mercury News that invites readers to help their neighbors.

WISH NO. 4

Help the Bill Wilson Center expand its Family Advocacy Services program, which helps families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It provides housing assistance and employment training, and helps pay for utilities, gas, transportation, clothing for interviews and more. Services for a family for a year are about \$1,800. A donation of \$65, for example, pays for laundry supplies, and \$100 provides groceries for a family.

HOW TO GIVE

Donate at wishbook.mercurynews.com or clip the coupon on **Page B2**

ONLINE EXTRA

Read previous Wish Book stories, view photos and video at wishbook.mercurynews.com.

The Bill Wilson Center helped one woman get her life with her two boys back on track

By Ramona Giwargis

rgiwargis@bayareanewsgroup.com

SAN JOSE — Jessica remembers her breaking point like it happened yesterday.

It wasn't when the man she loved punched her in the face and knocked her to the ground as the kids slept in the next room. It wasn't when he dragged her across the carpet by her hair. And it wasn't when he obsessively checked her phone or demanded she stop seeing her male friends.

The breaking point was when he got a permit to carry a gun. That's when Jessica, who already slept with a knife under her pillow, truly feared for her life.

"Once he got a gun, I was under here," Jessica said, tapping the bottom of her tennis shoe. "I knew my kids couldn't lose me."

Jessica, whose real name this newspaper isn't using to protect her anonymity, endured a decade of emotional and physical abuse.

See **Wilson** on Page 2

