



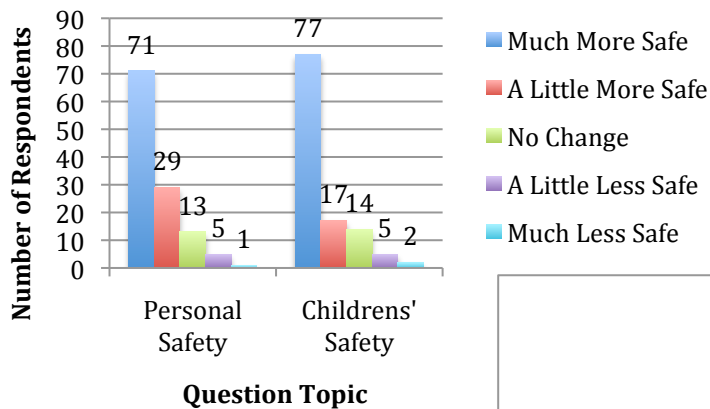
# Health and Safety Of Habitat Partner Families

In 2011, Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota conducted a homeowner impact pilot study\* and found many Habitat homeowners saw great improvement in their lives in regards to health and safety.

Here's what homeowners had to say:

- "Our lives are so much better. My children have allergies and they use much less medications. **My oldest daughter also has asthma and she has not had to use her inhaler since we moved in.**"
- "There is **so much space for my daughter to get around in her wheelchair** and all her equipment. Thank you."
- "**My family and I are much safer now.** I do not worry about the kids being outside to play. The boys are constantly outside with neighborhood friends."
- "Before we qualified for our home my family lived in an apartment complex that was very unsafe...**Since we moved we are safe, my home is handicap accessible, and we are part of a beautiful family.** We are now happy, grateful, and feel very blessed.... We are proud to be a part of the Habitat for Humanity family! They saved us!"

## Safety Improvement



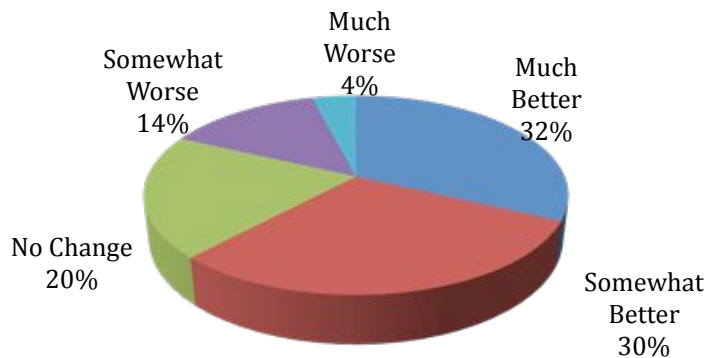
- 25% of our survey respondents had someone who is **disabled** living in their Habitat house

- 84% of homeowners who responded said they personally felt safer and 82% said they felt their kids were safer!

- 67% said they felt their children were **MUCH** safer

- **53 homeowners (44.5%)** said someone in their family **has a respiratory illness** (eg. allergies, asthma, etc)
- Of those homeowners, **62% said their respiratory illness improved!**

## Respiratory Illness Improvement



\*The 2011 Homeowner Impact Pilot Study collected data from a non-random sample of 261 Habitat for Humanity homeowners from 7 affiliates in Greater Minnesota. This data cannot necessarily be generalized to the entire state of Minnesota.

For more information visit <http://www.hfhamn.org>



## Homeowner Impact Stories Of Health and Safety

### Handicap Accessibility Advantages

Richard, a single dad with three children, has been a Habitat homeowner for nearly 14 years and loves his handicap accessible home. His youngest son, Alex, has cerebral palsy and was in a wheelchair at an early age. The family was previously living in a non-handicap accessible apartment that was too small for their needs. "I did a lot of carrying and walking with him," said Richard, "Alex was 5 at the time and still sleeping in my bed with me, and the girls were in a small room."



Richard then applied for a Habitat home, and they built one of the first handicap accessible Habitat homes in the county. The house was built to accommodate Alex's needs with a wheelchair ramp, 36-inch doors, special bathroom fixtures, and extra space for Alex's increasing amount of equipment. Richard remembered that what he was "mostly excited about as Alex grew, [is that] we could adequately take care of him." The home provided ample space and comfort for Alex and his two sisters to grow.

Richard was also excited that the home was within a mile of both the elementary and middle schools, so all of his kids would be closer to school. After the move, Richard was thankful that he didn't have to worry about Alex's safety riding the bus for lengthy periods of time. He was also thankful that the home provided a stable place for his family to come home to as they got older. He jokingly remarked about his oldest daughter who is hoping to start a Master's program this year, "This is still her permanent address. I still get things I don't want in the mail!" Overall, Richard said Habitat "is a fabulous program. [Habitat] really does help families greatly, a lot more than you really expect...it's really given us a lot."

### Healthy Home Alleviates Allergies



After moving into her Habitat home in the winter of 2011, June, the mother of two, quickly saw positive changes in her children's health. June remarked, since moving into their Habitat home, "My daughter who has allergies...doesn't take allergy meds anymore." June explained that her daughter was also sick every winter for years. Now, "She hasn't had many colds or hasn't had any allergy issues at all."

Her daughter's allergies were taken into consideration when building the Habitat house, and the paints, woodwork, and flooring were designed to be "allergy-free pretty much" as June said. June's father, Bryan, who was integral in building the Habitat house, also commented about the air filtration systems and the air-tightness that helps control pollutants and keeps the temperature of the house consistent while also keeping energy costs low. Additionally, June used to smoke in her old apartment, but has declared her Habitat home a smoke-free zone.

Bryan noted the home was such a blessing for June, but has made an even bigger difference for the kids. The kids are healthier and fully enjoying having their own space instead of sharing a bedroom. June has been most happy about being able to watch her kids grow in a stable, safe, healthy home they can call their own, and to be able to "stay together and be a complete whole family, complete with a house. That's always been my dream to have a house...and knowing it's affordable." Bryan also commented "I think that pretty much everybody's [dream] is to own your own place eventually. Certain circumstances in life don't always get you there though...For what they [Habitat] do for the low-income people, it's huge... she could not have afforded it in any other way...Every time I start talking about this place it makes me choke up. It's so important."