

**This play has been a community effort from start to finish, and could not have been possible without the following supporters:**

City of Billings - Billings Metro VISTA Project, Venture Theatre Board of Directors, First Interstate Bank, First Montana Title, Stockman Bank, Altana Credit Union, Susan Runkle - Homeless Education Liaison for the Billings School District, Montana Rescue Mission, Family Services, Inc., Center for Children and Families, HRDC District 7, God's Love, MasterLube, Billings Community Connect planning committee, and everyone who shared their stories.

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**Ways to Help:**

**Sponsor a child with financial aid for theatre classes:** \$140 will cover one class for a semester, and \$300 will cover a summer camp, but any amount is appreciated.

**Donate to Billings Community Connect 2014:** Helping children often starts with helping their guardians. This event allows guardians the chance to sign up for life-changing social services.

*Checks for the above donations can be made payable to: Community Development Division, City of Billings, PO Box 1178, Billings MT 59103.*

**Mentor or Tutor:** Children need strong leaders to become healthy adults. You can become a tutor or mentor and volunteer at a local non-profit organization.

**Donate:** Non-perishable food and / or gently used clothing to organizations serving at-risk and homeless families.

*There are so many ways to help.  
Please talk to us after the show to find out more.*

# PROJECT HOMELESSNESS:



Written by Ryan Gage and Shad Scott  
Directed by Christie Anderson

**APRIL 19 – MAY 12, 2013**

A story of Billings' homeless youth & their experiences

This play is inspired by thirteen homeless children and young adults in Billings. We thank these wonderful people for sharing their intimate stories with Project Homelessness.

We invite the audience to participate in a TalkBack Session after each performance to discuss the themes and impact of the show and to discuss how we can start the end of youth homelessness in Billings.

We also welcome your anonymous comments, thoughts, and feelings by writing a message at the feedback table in the lobby.



# And I Know...

Written by Ryan M. Gage & Shad Allen Scott

**Setting:** A fictional shelter in Billings, MT

**Time:** Today

## Cast

(in order of appearance)

Chase.....	Tanner Stichman
Chaplain Carter.....	Vanessa Dent
Emma.....	River Newell-Cline
Molly.....	Mackenzy Gilsdorf
Izzy.....	Elizabeth (Izzy) Kay
Brody.....	Tucker Downs
Zach.....	Ryan M. Gage
Bri.....	Elizabeth Gage
Desi.....	Tiffini Iwen
Administrator.....	Amanda McCave

## Production Team

Director.....	Christie Anderson
Assistant Director.....	Elizabeth Gage
Second Assistant Director.....	Avery Jam
Stage Manager.....	Makay Loran
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Lehlani Kay
Set Design & Construction.....	Derek Stone, Amber Felker
Light Designer.....	Karlee Adler
	Tucker Downs
Sound Designer.....	Ryan M. Gage
Costume Crew.....	Montana Rescue Mission, The Cast
Props Design*.....	Sue Runkle, Sheila Cole
	River Newell-Cline, Jessie Obee, Tiffini Iwen
Movement Choreographer.....	Mackenzy Gilsdorf
Light Operator.....	Jessie Obee
Sound Operator.....	Amy Dixon
Lego "Rex-A-Roni" Builders.....	Ashtyn & Brittny Ranum
Project Managers.....	Jessie Obee & Amy Dixon
Producer.....	Lynn Al

*\*The toys you see will be donated to Montana Rescue Mission. The blankets used in the show were made by shelter volunteers. The art on the podium was made by children in the Women and Family Shelter.*

**Project Homelessness** is a joint effort sponsored by *Venture Theatre* and the *Billings Metro VISTA Project* to heighten awareness and illustrate the circumstances of the 500 children experiencing homelessness in Billings. The project is supported by the City of Billings as a component of **Welcome Home Billings**, the City's ten-year plan to impact homelessness.

Jessie Obee and Amy Dixon, AmeriCorps VISTA members, have been working for Project Homelessness since July 2012. They reached out to non-profits fighting poverty to research the state of homelessness in Billings and interviewed thirteen homeless children and young adults.

Ryan M. Gage and Shad Allen Scott wrote the script. Christie Anderson (director) and the cast brought the story to life. The play follows the journeys inspired by real children experiencing homelessness in Billings and the people that have shaped and influenced them.

**Project Homelessness** is raising money through sponsorships and donations for Venture's Youth Conservatory to provide financial aid to disadvantaged children to take theatre classes and attend summer camps. Theatre training gives children many skills they need to become successful adults, such as empathy, confidence and leadership. These skills can break generational cycles of poverty.

Sponsorships are also supporting the *Billings Community Connect* event scheduled for January 2014. This annual one-day, one-stop event ensures over 50 service providers are on hand to help our community members out of poverty by creating access to food, housing and other services.

## Facts about youth and family homelessness in Billings:

There are currently 511 children experiencing homelessness in the school district. This number does not include children too young to attend school, drop-outs, home-schooled students, and runaways.

The Billings community lacks sufficient shelter for youth and children experiencing homelessness.

Twenty-four percent of the caregivers in homeless families are employed.

Sixty-three percent of the caregivers in homeless families have at least a high school education, and 20% have attended college.

Domestic violence, mental health issues, and addiction are the leading causes of family homelessness in Billings.