

# CHAOS, DESIGN AND HEART

by: Debbie Anglin / photography: Josh Welch

It looks like chaos. Pieces that don't match, thrown next to each other, stacked on top of each other. To the untrained eye, the Focus on Home warehouse, filled with donated sofas, dining room tables, lamps and headboards looks like an unorganized mess.

So it is with the clients they serve - families who are moving out of homelessness. These are people who haven't had a lot of order or harmony in their lives - living in a shelter, in their car or on a friend's sofa for weeks or months. They are the single mom with small children who finally found another job. They are the man who served his country and recently beat an addiction. They are getting back on their feet and are thrilled beyond words to get their own place.

"It's incredible when someone who didn't have a home moves into a place that's all their own," says Joli Sanders, founder and executive director of Focus on Home. "But they walk into

a completely empty space. Where will they eat dinner - and on what plates? Where will their kids lay their heads that first night?"

An interior designer by trade, Sanders remembers the early time in her career, as a struggling single mother, in a place filled with furniture discarded from others. Her successful career in interior design led her to wonder how a great resource, "old" furniture from a redesign, usually still in great shape, could be used again to help people with no furniture. She checked with organizations that serve the homeless and found there was a tremendous need.

"An empty space isn't ready for a family," adds Sanders. "I want our families' experience, when they walk through their front door, to be one of amazement. We furnish their homes down to the details - the table is set with plates, napkins, glasses and forks. The bed is made with clean sheets, fluffy pillows and warm blankets. No more chaos. It's ready for them to start living.

**"We help families create comfortable, dignified homes where they can live, love and grow strong."**

*Thank you to Anglin Public Relations for finding and sharing big ideas and the people making them.*



*From the seeming chaos of the warehouse, Focus on Home creates comfortable spaces for families who are moving out of homelessness.*