



**MAKE IT HOME
BAY AREA**

ENDING FURNITURE POVERTY

WWW.MAKEITHOMEBAYAREA.ORG



Make it Home Our Story

Make It Home originated as a labor of love of its founder, Carolyn Rebuffel Flannery. As a highly regarded, Bay Area interior designer, Carolyn had a first-hand understanding of the waste issue in the design industry, where damaged shipments and “refreshed” furniture often would be tossed out.



Executive Director
Carolyn Rebuffel Flannery

At the same time, through her long-time advocacy for foster care, Carolyn was acutely aware of how even the simplest of furniture and household goods were unaffordable for youth aging out of the foster system, often leaving them to move into empty apartments.

In 2020, Carolyn founded the non-profit Make It Home as a way to address these two problems at once - furnish the homes of former foster kids and others transitioning out of crisis with gently-used, donated furniture and household goods, keeping it out of landfills.



Clients receiving furniture

The circumstances of people relying on Make It Home have broadened since the beginning, but the need is the same. As of July 2022, Make It Home has partnered with social service agencies to furnish the homes of more than 1,600 people in almost 700 households across 7 Bay Area counties, all while diverting almost 750 tons from landfill.* Now with warehouses in both San Rafael and Walnut Creek, our capacity to meet the Bay Area's needs keeps growing.

** Please check www.makeithomebayarea.org for the most up-to-date numbers.*

"You realize that furniture is not a luxury when you see kids sleeping on blankets on the floor and digging through a black plastic bag for their school clothes."

- Make It Home Volunteer

Our Social Impact



Not having a bed to sleep on means a poor night's sleep, affecting your ability to live, work and study. Not having pots or pans to prepare food can lead to a diet relying on fast food. Not having a sofa means you don't have a place to relax with family or friends. Moving from a shelter into an empty box can lead to people giving up apartments and returning to a shelter because, at least there, they have a bed.

Most of the individuals and families we serve do not have access to furniture due to circumstances beyond their control. If it wasn't for Make It Home they would not be able to resettle back into the community. This is a critical service for the most vulnerable in our society, creating conditions for the good mental and physical health of the people we serve.

The impact of furniture poverty can be devastating.

By providing furnishings to those transitioning out of crisis, Make It Home not only creates a true home for its clients, but also puts them on a positive path to reduce their chances of returning to the streets.

"With a furnished home my life has stability now. My self-confidence has grown and this has had a great impact in my professional and personal growth."

- Lucinda, Make it Home Client

Our Human Impact



The people served by Make it Home have at least one thing in common — they need help during a difficult time. Our clients are individuals and families in transition who need a safe space and solid home base to rebuild their lives.

They include:

- Women and children escaping abusive domestic situations
- Foster kids aging out and getting their first homes of their own
- People coming out of shelters or halfway houses
- Individuals and families in recovery from physical and mental illness or addiction
- Refugees and recent immigrants to the U.S.
- Victims of fires, floods or hurricanes
- Veterans

Randall & Cassie**

Cassie, Randall's daughter, had been living with her mother (who had full custody) and when her mother passed away, Cassie was taken into foster care. For Randall to bring Cassie home, he needed a new furnished apartment of his own. He got the apartment but did not have the funds to furnish it and get Cassie back. We stepped in quickly at his and his caseworker's request, as the only thing preventing reunification was furniture. We were contacted about the situation on a Friday and moved the furniture in on Tuesday. Randall got Cassie home Tuesday evening. He called to thank us, with tears in his voice and said,

"I have a story and now you are a part of that story. Thank you for everything that you have done for us."

9.68 MILLION TONS OF FURNITURE WASTE WENT TO LANDFILLS IN THE U.S. IN 2018.

-*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

Our Environmental Impact



That's over 19 billion pounds (add in carpets and rugs and that is another almost 5 billion pounds) discarded to sit in landfills in 2018 alone.* Furniture gets dumped in landfills for many reasons: a scratch, a broken leg, outdated cushions. Meanwhile, 37.2 million people, or 11.4% of the U.S. population, are living in poverty (2020 U.S. Census). It is hard to furnish a home when you are struggling to put food on the table and make ends meet.

While fixing one problem, we help solve another.

At Make It Home, with a little TLC and a designing eye, we give furniture and furnishings a new life and keep them out of landfills. Our talented and dedicated volunteers refinish and stain tables, recover chairs, and replace broken knobs on dressers. We then curate beautiful household set ups for those in need who would otherwise be living in an empty space.

As of July, 2022, Make It Home has proudly diverted almost 750 tons of furnishings from landfill. With those furnishings we have furnished almost 700 households and helped more than 1600 people. And, the number is always growing.**

*<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/durable-goods-product-specific-data#FurnitureandFurnishings>

**Please check www.makeithomebayarea.org for the most up-to-date numbers.

Actual sets of furnishings delivered and installed for our clients



"I haven't had a home for 20 years. I've been living on the street. I am so grateful for Make It Home."

-Make It Home Client

Our Nuts and Bolts



Our Mission: Make It Home helps Bay Area families and individuals transitioning out of crisis. We recycle, repurpose, and curate gently-used, donated furnishings to transform empty spaces into homes.

Our Vision: To end furniture poverty while protecting the environment.

Our website: www.makeithomebayarea.org

Our locations: Warehouses in San Rafael and Walnut Creek

Counties we serve: Marin, San Francisco, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin

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Hi-res images available upon request.