**FREEDOM HOME CARE JOINS FORCES FOR PAWS FOR PATRICK**

**HIGHLAND PARK, IL (MAY 2021)** – [Freedom Home Care](https://www.freedomhomecare.net/), one of the leading and most respected home care agencies in the North Shore and throughout the Chicago area, is proud to support Paws for Patrick during National Mental Health Awareness Month.

Paws for Patrick is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to connecting emotional support animals to young people with mental health issues. Its fundamental mission is to strive to break the stigma of mental health through various community initiatives. Paws for Patrick was founded by the Roemer family of Lake Forest to honor their late son, Patrick, who struggled with depression and anxiety throughout most of his young life and lost his struggle at the age of 18.

Today, mental health issues such as anxiety and depression are affecting an ever-growing number of young people. It is estimated that **20% of youth ages 18 and under are affected by mental health issues each year**, and that number is rising at an alarming rate.

The month of May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, as well as the one-year anniversary of Patrick’s passing. In honor of both, Freedom Home Care of Highland Park, Lake Bluff, Lake Forest, and Deerfield are joining forces for Paws for Patrick to **Turn Our Town Green!** As you drive through these communities, you will see green ribbons beginning May 1st and ending May 31st to show that we care about the mental health of our neighbors, friends, and loved ones.

Freedom Home Care will also be hosting an animal shelter drive for the benefit of the shelters from which Paws for Patrick adopts: Orphans of the Storm, Wright-Way Rescue and Border Tails rescue. It will take place on Thursday, May 13th at The Sheridan Green Oaks in Lake Bluff from 4:30-6:30pm & May 20 from 4:30 – 6:30 PM at Sunrise of Highland Park.

For participants who cannot make the animal shelter drive events but want to donate, there will be drop off boxes outside these communities the entire month of May. Additionally, special giveaways and raffles will be given away at these events.

A list of items that can be dropped off for the animal shelter drive includes Paper Towels, Plastic Cat Carriers of All Sizes, Biodegradable Poop Bags, Gallon Size Ziplock Bags, Rubber Cleaning Gloves, Stainless Steel Bowls for Dogs or Cats, Chew Toys, Nylon Leashes of Various Lengths and Widths, Collars, Puzzle Feeder Dog Toys, New Towels (shower/bath size), Garbage Bags, Harnesses of Various Sizes, and Royal Canin Baby Cat Kitten Food.

We all know someone who struggles with their mental health – a family member, a friend, a neighbor, or a colleague. By working together, we can demonstrate to our community members – especially our youth – that we are here for them, we love them, and we support them.

**ABOUT FREEDOM HOME CARE**

Founded in 1996, Freedom Home Care is one of the leading and most respected home care agencies in the North Shore and throughout the Chicago area. With over 20 years of service, and a team of over 1,000 professional and compassionate caregivers, Freedom Home Care provides in-home care options to fit the needs of any client. From full-time live-in care to flexible hourly assistance, Freedom offers services to allow clients the freedom of being at home. Offices are located in Highland Park at 1749 Green Bay Road and in Lake Forest at 289 E. Deerpath Rd. A Park Ridge office is planned for spring 2019.

**ABOUT PAWS FOR PATRICK**

Paws for Patrick, a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting young people to emotional support animals to aid them as they live with mental health illness, was founded by the Roemer family of Lake Forest, IL to honor their late son, Patrick. Patrick struggled with depression and anxiety throughout most of his young life and lost his struggle at the age of 18. You can find more about Paws for Patrick on their [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pawsforpatrickesa/) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pawsforpatrick.org/). You can also donate to Paws for Patrick [here](https://www.pawsforpatrick.org/make-a-donation).