2019 ANNUAL REPORT

domestic & sexual violence
Prevention Coalition

WELCOME

When thinking about the wisdom of others that guides us through this work, this quote from Nelson Mandela always comes to mind: “Safety and security don’t just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment.” This idea of being intentional in creating safety is at the heart of our mission. This past year we took several steps to fulfill that mission by:

- Creating spaces where survivors are believed and supported, where their voices and experiences are heard and valued through events like Wake Up and Listen Up
- Equipping communities with skills to prevent violence before it occurs through Green Dot trainings
- Conducting outreach and providing culturally appropriate information and resources on domestic and sexual violence to diverse communities
- Broadening our partnerships across sectors to leverage their networks to expand our message and increase our capacity to respond to the complex needs of survivors.
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We are deeply grateful to everyone who has participated and supported our work in ending domestic, dating, and sexual violence and stalking.

It continues to be an honor to grow together, to serve this community, and to continue working toward or mission to create a culture of safety.

Stephanie Theakston, MSW

Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition, Coordinator

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MISSION & VALUES

Mission

To create a culture of safety and empowered stakeholders through advocacy, education, collaboration, and service coordination for communities impacted by interpersonal violence.

Core Values & Guiding Principles

In an ongoing effort to evaluate and articulate our work, DSVPC has developed and adopted core values. While these values have long been part of our efforts, putting them in writing lets the community know what matters most in the work we do. These values will continue to guide us as we strive to foster a culture of safety.

Survivor-Centered:

Practices are centered on and responsive to survivors and those they care about. Practices are trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and nonjudgmental. Survivors are the experts in their unique experiences, providing the foundation for the practices and interventions they receive.

Community Accountability:

Survivors are never responsible for the abuse. It is the responsibility of the community to change the culture of tolerance to intolerance of abuse and coercive control, to hold offenders accountable, and to focus on offender behavior rather than the behavior of the survivor.

Inter-Agency Collaboration and Coordination:

No single organization or system offers the solution to interpersonal violence. Fostering open communication, transparency, and respectful coordination across agencies increases our collective capacity to hold offenders accountable and serve survivors.

Intentional Access:

All survivors deserve access to systems, services, and resources. Identifying and removing barriers that limit or deny access is critical to increasing safety for survivors.

IPV Informed:

Practices and interventions are informed by the understanding that interpersonal violence is a pattern of purposeful behavior that includes coercion, intimidation, emotional harm, and assault that may vary in scope, severity, and duration. Establishing safety and accountability is an ongoing process.

Anti-Oppression:

We oppose all forms of oppression. While our work is rooted in the historical context of violence against women, oppressions such as racism, sexism, homophobia/heterosexism, classism, ableism, ageism, xenophobia, and others contribute to the perpetuation of interpersonal violence.

Collaborative Efforts

Strangulation Task Force

2019 began with a huge legislative success: the passage of a state felony strangulation law. Thanks to the pro-active efforts of its members and the partnerships already developed with first responders, the Strangulation Task Force was poised to immediately begin training on evidence collection to prosecute this crime. As a result of these coordinated efforts, Fayette County leads the state in convictions of perpetrators. Knowing the potential for fatality and the fact that nearly 50% of survivors seeking a protective order state they have been strangled one or more times, the task force continues to work across sectors to provide a survivor-centered response and to educate the community on the risks of strangulation.

Wake Up! Lex

In recognition Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, DSVPC launched a new outreach campaign in April. Through Wake Up! Lex, we partnered with more than a dozen local coffee shops to spread a message of support for survivors across the community. Customers of participating shops used their social media networks to leverage the message even further by taking pictures of themselves with the coffee sleeves and posting online. Contact information for Ampersand Sexual Violence Resource Center was printed on the back of the sleeve and a basket of resources was in each shop. Thanks to the participants, this message reached 1000's of people!

(1)Staff from Transylvania University, (2)Commonwealth Attorney's Office, and (3) Lexington Police Department participate in Wake Up! Lex

Safe Housing

Domestic and sexual violence is the third leading cause of homeless for women and children while housing instability makes survivors more susceptible to further violence. In our ongoing efforts to prevent harm and create a culture of safety for survivors, DSVPC has two programs to help survivors maintain safe housing.

The Housing Stability Program, funded through a grant from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), allows DSVPC to make a one-time payment toward rent, mortgage, or a security deposit for survivors at risk of losing their housing or needing a safer place to live because of the crimes committed against them. By identifying survivors most at risk of becoming homeless, advocates across the community assisted 38 adult survivors and 42 children with maintaining safe housing in 2019.

Advocates assisted 38 adults survivors and 42 children maintain safe housing by accessing $24,450 in Housing Stability funds.

The Safe Measures program, funded through the Department of Social Services, helps increase safety for survivors wishing to remain in their current homes. DSVPC provides survivors with critical safety enhancements, such as lock changes, security cameras, window alarms, and more. In 2019 we assisted 40 adult survivors, 54 children, and 15 other adults living with survivors, increasing safety for 109 individuals.

Underserved Victim Advocacy Project & Green Dot

Now in its second year, the Underserved Victim Advocacy Project continues empowering communities to actively prevent violence by providing information and resources, teaching applicable intervention skills, and promoting an understanding of shared responsibility for community safety.

In 2019 Resource Liaisons conducted more than two dozen trainings on a wide range of topics including Green Dot bystander intervention, healthy relationships, and domestic violence and child abuse prevention. Audiences included immigrants and refugees, pregnant and parenting teens, high school students, faith communities, and more. Trainings have been provided in many languages, including English, Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, Nepali, and Ukrainian.

Refugees from (1) Bhutan & (2) Democratic Republic of the Congo participating in training

Listen Up! Lex

The 2nd Annual Listen Up! Lex festival was a great success! Collaborators across multiple sectors came together to show support for survivors, provide resources, and engage community members.

Survivors provided powerful testimony through poetry readings, music, and dance. Vendors sold survivor-made goods and local agencies provided information on survivor services.

It is our hope this small festival will help break the public silence around domestic and sexual violence—silence of survivors, the community, and those that cause harm.—and more people will speak up to prevent it.

LGBTQ Service & Outreach

Even though domestic and sexual violence occur at similar rates in LGBTQ relationships as in heterosexual relationships, local data shows these communities are not accessing services equally. In an effort to better serve members of these communities, the newly formed Best Practices Committee chose LGBTQ access and outreach as the first topic on which to focus. After conducting several informational interviews, DSVPC found that recognizing domestic violence and knowing how to respond to it were among the top concerns for many individuals identifying as LGBTQ. With The Nest taking the lead, DSVPC has begun developing a training for agencies wanting to improve their intervention and prevention responses for these populations. This training, along with trainings for LGBTQ community members will begin in early 2020.

(1) Tanyqua Oliver performing spoken word; (2) staff from The Nest and (3) Chrysalis House; (4) and The Wallce Sisters performing music at Listen Up! Lex

Domestic Violence Awareness

Every October, DSVPC's members organize events to acknowledge Domestic Violence Awareness Month, amplify their love and support for survivors, and initiate well-informed conversations about violence prevention and intervention.

This year members participated in Wear Purple Day to visually display the vast support for survivors in Lexington. There were also events to draw the connection between domestic violence and pet abuse and educate immigrants and refugees about local domestic violence laws and resources.

Survivor Handbook

DSVPC continues our efforts to serve all survivors by providing culturally specific trainings and resources. After updating the handbook in English in 2018, DSVPC had the new version translated into Spanish and printed copies to distribute in Spanish-speaking communities.

Front cover of updated Survivor's Handbook in Spanish

(1) Staff from GreenHouse17, (2) The Nest, and (3) Amanda's Center on Wear Purple Day; (4) UKPD's Hudson and CASA's Matilda at Compawsionate Companions; (5) "toasting" purple donuts at North Lime

Members

Executive Committee

Chair: Kelly Wells, County Attorney's Office, Victim Advocate

Vice Chair: Diane Fleet, GreenHouse17, Assistant Director

Secretary: Sgt. Jeremiah Harville, Lexington Police Dept., Sergeant

Treasurer: Chris Ford, Department of Social Services, Commissioner

Ex-Officio

Hon. Bruce Bell, District Court, Chief Judge

Rashmi Adi-Brown, CHES Solutions, Director of Div. of Family and Youth Services

Ken Armstrong, Dept. of Public Safety, Commissioner

Hon. Traci Brislin, Family Court, Chair

Emmanuel Caulk, Fayette County Public Schools, Superintendent

April Davis, KY Cabinet for Health & Family Services, Service Region Admin.

Hon. Catherine DeFlorio, Legal Aid of the Bluegrass, VAWA Attorney

Connie Godfrey, Adult & Tenant Services, Director

Taryn Henning, UK Violence Intervention and Prevention Center, Director

Shayla Lynch, Ampersand Sexual Violence Resource Center, Director

Lisa Minton, Chrysalis House, Director

Chief Joe Monroe, UK Police Dept., Chief

Duane Osborne, Friend of the Court's Office, Friend of the Court

Kathy Plomin, City Council, Councilmember

Hon. Lou Anna Red Corn, Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Commonwealth Attorney

Vince Riggs, Circuit Court, Clerk

Hon. Larry Roberts, County Attorney's Office, County Attorney

Joanna Rodes, Family Care Center, Director

Winn Stephens, Children's Advocacy Center, Director

Isabel Gereda Taylor, Global Lex, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator

Darlene Thomas, GreenHouse17, Director

Angela Wallace, SANE, Director

Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Dept., Chief

Denise Wells, Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Ombudsman

Jeffery White, The Nest, Director

Sheriff Kathy Witt, Office of Fayette County Sheriff, Sheriff

Appointed Members

April Ballentine

Alyce Graves

Ashley Hill

Dr. TK Logan

Mirlleth Zapata Parra

Committee Chairs:

Advocacy Committee: vacant

Best Practices Committee: Brittany Scordo

Outreach & Awareness Committee: Ashley Hill

Committees

Patricia Acosta

Robin Anderson

Vanna Armstrong

Rania Belmadani

Claire Brickman

Erica Bybee

Jenna Cassady

Elizabeth Cox

Emma Dickinson

Lenzi Dodgen

Debbie Goonan

Katie Gross

Leticia Hagerman

Cornetta Harris

Kim Harrison

Mercedes Helton

Cierra Henderson

Samantha Hess

Hunter Hickman

Jodi Holsclaw

Jennifer Johnson

Laela Kashan

Becky Katz

Jennifer Kelder

Alicia Knox

Carolynn Lee

Nicky LeGood

Susan Lemay

Kellie McClure

Margaret McGladrey

Emily McKenzie

Jennifer Melfar

Christy Messick

Katie Mooney

Erin Morris

Ranym Nenneh

Thalia Peters

Kathy Phillips

Sara Pickering

Ginny Redmon

Lt. David Richardson

Natalie Riney

Jamie Ross

Jason Rothrock

Meg Savage

Brittany Scordo

Jamie Smith

Hon. Lindsay Hughes Thurston

Jessica Tope

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