

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



domestic & sexual violence _____
Prevention Coalition 



YEAR IN REVIEW

"ACTION IS THE ANTIDOTE TO DESPAIR." - JOAN BAEZ

The work of domestic and sexual violence prevention is not easy. There are ever-increasing demands for services and the complexity of risk to victims and survivors continues to escalate. We battle against entrenched oppression deep in our society which sets the stage for power imbalances we aim to end. On top of that, we are currently working in the context of prolonged political, social, and economic chaos.

Despite this, members of DSVPC continue taking action, both individually and collectively, to make a difference on behalf of victims and survivors. It is this action moving us toward a culture of safety for everyone.

One of DSVPC's Guiding Principles is the importance of interagency collaboration and coordination. Domestic and sexual violence are complex issues; no one agency can solve them alone.

In 2022, DSVPC took collective action to:

- Assist a record number of survivors with financial assistance for utilities and housing.
- Advocate for victims and survivors through creation and implementation of fatality review recommendations
- Train more active bystanders through Green Dot Lexington.
- Connect more community leaders to our movement through outreach efforts and the launch of a new city-wide campaign.

While day-to-day progress can feel slow, it is important to pause and acknowledge all the ways our actions move us forward. Each action on behalf of victims and survivors brings hope and contributes to the community we are striving to create - one of respect, equality, and non-violence.

Stephanie Theakston, MSW
DSVPC Coordinator

It's Time.

*It's time to get honest
about domestic violence.*



IT'S TIME

In partnership with the Mayor's Office and 27 Lexington leaders, DSVPC launched It's Time in November 2022. This new city-wide campaign aims to encourage a deeper understanding of domestic violence among community members, stimulate conversations, and inspire action.

DSVPC hopes to stress that domestic violence isn't an issue with "other people" in "other places." It happens in our own communities, workplaces, places of worship, and circle of friends and acquaintances. It is our responsibility, as community members to keep each other safe. From this foundational understanding, It's Time will model ways people can support survivors and hold people accountable for abusive behavior. To learn more, visit the campaign website at ItsTimeLexington.org.

In conjunction with the launch of the campaign LexCall 311 is now able to guide people needing to connect with someone locally about domestic violence but don't know where to start.

HOUSING & SAFETY

The Housing Stability Program, funded through a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, provides funds for rent and/or security deposit for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. In 2022 this program was extended to include assistance with survivors' utility bills for the first time.

With referrals from **13 different community partner agencies**, DSVPC was able to provide **\$64,246** in assistance for **201 adult and child survivors** to stabilize households and prevent homelessness.

The Safe Measures Program provides survivors with critical safety enhancements to help remain in their current homes safely. In 2022, DSVPC provided **102 services and pieces of safety equipment** to **66 adult and child survivors**.

**IN 2022, DSVPC ASSISTED
267 SURVIVORS WITH
SAFE HOUSING AND
SECURITY MEASURES.**

FATALITY / NEAR FATALITY REVIEW

DATA DRIVEN PREVENTION

In 2022, DSVPC revitalized our Fatality / Near Fatality Review Team. Fatality review is a nationally recognized best practice for conducting multidisciplinary and multi-agency examinations of fatalities and near fatalities of intimate partner violence to prevent future deaths and injuries.

The goals of the Fatality / Near Fatality Review Team are to:

- Identify gaps in services.
- Identify patterns indicating escalating violence and threat of death.
- Determine opportunities for earlier identification, intervention, and prevention efforts in similar cases.
- Assess opportunities to strengthen the current response of the criminal justice and social services systems, government, and the community.
- Enhance inter-agency collaboration and communication.
- Formulate findings and recommendations for the purpose of improving services and response for victims.

As DSVPC begins reviews, we are very grateful to have the commitment of Sherry Currens to serve as Chair. Ms. Currens was the Executive Director of the Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence for more than 30 years and has served on state-wide fatality review teams.

In 2022, the Review Team conducted two in-depth reviews of homicides related to intimate partner violence. The first review was the case of a woman murdered by her estranged husband in 2017. The second review was a murder-suicide case from early 2022 involving a minor child.

Recommendations made as a result of these reviews are posted on DSVPC's website at lexingtonky.gov/DSVPC.

In 2022, DSVPC documented 13 domestic violence-related fatalities in Lexington. This number is triple that of any previous year, yet only represents a fraction of the violence within intimate partner and family relationships. These tragedies are reminders of the importance of survivors being heard, believed, supported in accessing safety, and their right to self-determination at all times.

STATS FROM LEXINGTON'S 2022 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITIES:

- FIREARMS WERE USED IN 77% OF FATALITIES
- 6 VICTIMS WERE MALE, 7 WERE FEMALE
- 4 VICTIMS WERE UNDER THE AGE OF 18
- 9 FATALITIES WERE RELATED TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, 4 WERE RELATED TO FAMILY VIOLENCE
- OF THE 10 PERPETRATORS, 1 WAS A WOMAN, 9 WERE MEN. ALL PERPETRATORS OF INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE WERE MEN



GREEN DOT LEXINGTON

SMALL ACTIONS FOR A SAFER CITY

Green Dot Lexington had a tremendous 2022 completing 22 Green Dot trainings for individuals and organizations, resulting in more than 160 new Green Dot Bystanders throughout the city of Lexington – increasing the number of trained bystanders in our city by 88%.

Green Dot participated in 11 community outreach events and provided more than 50 referrals to domestic and sexual violence resources and support agencies.

In August, Green Dot Lexington held a Bystander Awareness Month Celebration and was recognized as the featured community partner with the Lexington Legends. With the support of Green Dot Spot Sponsors, including WesBanco, Rhema Word Foundation, and the Fatherhood Initiative, we welcomed more than 100 bystanders and their families with free game tickets and meals.

Green Dot Lexington proudly welcomed 3 new Green Dot Spots: organizations with 15% or more of their leadership & staff trained in Bystander Intervention:

- Lexington Public Library (53%)
- The Nest (41%)
- Lexington Pride Center (31%)

Community engagement greatly increased and requests for more Bystander trainings are received daily from organizations working specifically with communities of color and other marginalized populations.

If you or your organization has interest in hosting a Green Dot Lexington training, contact Dawn Runyon at drunyon@lexingtonky.gov.



OUTREACH

Each year DSVPC's signature awareness and outreach events grow larger and 2022 was no exception!

DSVPC's awareness event for National Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Month continues to grow: 24 local cafes partnered with DSVPC for the 3rd annual **Wake Up! Lex** to help spread information about resources and a message of support for survivors of sexual violence.

Purple Peace Pumpkins returned for the 2nd year to help recognize National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. DSVPC increased the number of purple pumpkins from the year before but still couldn't keep up with demand: 125 local businesses placed the pumpkins in their stores and displayed cards to help link people to local services for survivors.

Once again we are grateful to the students at Transylvania University for their assistance in painting pumpkins.

We are also grateful to those who visibly showed their support for survivors by participating in DSVPC's 7th annual **Purple Thursday!**

ADVOCACY

Advocacy remains one of the most important roles DSVPC has. It increases the impact of our work and helps strengthen the foundation of services and safety for survivors.

In 2022, DSVPC continued our long-running service of publishing weekly legislative updates while the KY General Assembly was in session.

Instead of our bi-annual Candidates Forum, this year we tried something different: produce a candidate questionnaire for all contested judicial and legislative races in Fayette County. This questionnaire asked candidates about their stance on important issues impacting victims and survivors.

Members of DSVPC continued asking hard questions about policies and practices that cause harm to victims and survivors and pressed for change.

Just as important as advocacy is strengthening relationships between advocates. That's why this year DSVPC hosted our first advocate roundtable discussions and quarterly get-togethers.





APPRECIATION & AWARDS

GRATITUDE FOR THOSE WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

On June 9, 2022, DSVPC hosted our inaugural appreciation and awards event to recognize and thank those who make domestic and sexual violence prevention and intervention their life's work. In addition to our gratitude for everyone involved, the following people received special recognition.

Ally in Action

The team from Lexington Fayette County Health Department and Bluegrass Care Navigators won the Ally in Action Award for their COVID response to GreenHouse17, which was prompt and robust, allowing the shelter to remain open throughout the pandemic.

Shining Strength

April Ballentine was presented with the Shining Strength Award for using her inspired and courageous voice to work on behalf of survivors. In 2013 April was shot by an ex-boyfriend but has not allowed anything to stop her from achieving her goals.

Spirit of Advocacy

Hunter Hickman received the Spirit of Advocacy Award for

his tireless representation of survivors during the protective order process. Several survivors have stated how helpful Hunter was in their journey toward safety. As one survivor wrote, "From the moment I walked in I felt like I mattered and would be safe in my journey to getting help and moving forward."

Visionary Voice

Teri Faragher was recognized for her lifetime of work supporting survivors. As the founder of DSVPC, Teri shaped and propelled Lexington's coordinated community response to domestic violence - always with a focus on best practices and research. To name just a few of her many contributions, Teri led the way to develop city-wide protocols in response to domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse and wrote grants to fund advocate positions and develop new programming including safe, supervised visitation. She established the Fatality Review Team and published the first Survivor Handbook. In honor of her lasting impact, the award will now be named the Teri Faragher Visionary Voice Award.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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 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 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 intimate partner and sexual 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:

Intervention and prevention practices 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.

MISSION

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



MEMBERS

Executive Committee

Chair: Diane Fleet, GreenHouse17, Assistant Director

Vice Chair: Jennifer Johnson, Ampersand, Director of Advocacy

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

Treasurer: Kacy Allen Bryant, Department of Social Services, Commissioner

Committee Chairs:

Advocacy Committee: April Ballentine, Appointed Member & Katie Mooney, The Nest, Director of Intimate Partner Violence and Parenting

Best Practices Committee: Brittany Scordo, Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Director of Victim Services

Outreach & Awareness Committee: Ashley Hill, Appointed Member

Domestic and Sexual Violence Fatality / Near Fatality Review Team, Sherry Currens, Ret. Director of the Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Ex-Officio

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

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

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

Taryn Henning, UK Violence Intervention and Prevention Center, Director

Demetrus Liggins, Fayette County Public Schools, Superintendent

Shayla Lynch, Ampersand Sexual Violence Resource Center, Director

Kama McKinney, 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 / Hon. Kimberly Baird, Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Commonwealth Attorney

Vince Riggs, Circuit Court, Clerk

Hon. Larry Roberts / Hon. Angela Evans, County Attorney's Office, County Attorney

Joanna Rodes / Shelia Horton-Holt, Family Care Center, Director

Alice Salyers, Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Ombudsman

Danielle Sanders, Community and Resident Services, Director

Winn Stephens, Children's Advocacy Center, Director

Isabel Gereda Taylor, Global Lex, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator

Darlene Thomas, GreenHouse17, Director

Hon. Lindsay Hughes Thurston, District Court, Judge

Angela Wallace, SANE, Director

Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Dept., Chief

Jeffery White, The Nest, Director

Sheriff Kathy Witt, Office of Fayette County Sheriff, Sheriff

Appointed Members

April Ballentine

Rania Belmadani

Alyce Graves

Ashley Hill

Stephenie Hoelscher

Margaret McGladrey

Emily McKenzie

Ashleigh McGuire

Rana Rahman

Hilary Sykes

Committees

Cynae Adams

Robin Anderson

Vanna Armstrong

Michelle Blakeman

Devine Carama

Jessica Castleberry

Laura Chowning

Alyesse Coonrod

Carl Devine

Lenzi Dodgen

Lelia Gillespie

Gary Ginn

Katy Goins

Debbie Goonan

Leticia Hagerman

Crystal Happy-Clay

Cornetta Harris

Kim Harrison

Mercedes Helton

Hunter Hickman

Megan Himes

Larry Johnson

Emily Jones

Leigh Koetsch

Casey Lyons

Aubrey McGuire

Robert Mason

Christy Messick

Keisha Morgan

Lt. Nathaniel Muller

Katie Mooney

Sandra Rodriguez

Liz Rudisell

Drew Shackelford

Sgt. Matthew Silver

Tanika Wall

Katie Webster

Kelly Wells

Tiffany Yahr

Staff

Stephanie Theakston, Program Coordinator, DSVPC

Dawn Runyon, Program Specialist, Green Dot Lexington

