

is center Connection Summer/Fall 2022 crisis center



From our executive director



I love this quote from Maya Angelou, "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

The butterfly is often used as a symbol to represent the metamorphosis and strength of domestic violence survivors. I also think of butterflies when I think about the growth of the Crisis Center, especially in the past five years.

You've helped us double our annual budget, increase revenue from fundraising and Neat Repeats by 50%, increase the number of staff by 25%, increase the number of counseling clients by 62%, file 38% more Orders of Protection, add 15 new law enforcement partners and the list goes on and on - and we're not done yet.

Plans are being made, or are already in motion, to further expand programs to better meet the increased demand for services. While I am hoping that the majority of this expansion will be covered by increased state funding, the Crisis Center still needs your help.

We need you to help us increase awareness, especially during October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We need you to generously support our year-end Holiday Appeal and our gala in February. We need you to volunteer in our Neat Repeats stores and in our programs. I know I am asking a lot, especially during these challenging financial times, but I also know you've always come through for us and never let us down.

Because of you, change and growth are possible, and survivors of domestic violence will never feel alone or afraid.

With gratitude,

Pam Kostecki, Executive Director

Will you take the "Purple Posse Challenge"?

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and **we challenge YOU** to wear your favorite purple shirt and voice your support for victims of domestic violence. Simply take a

selfie or have someone take a photo of you in a purple shirt holding up a sign that says, "I wear purple because...". Your reason can be as simple as "I support victims of domestic violence" or any reason you choose. Please post your photo on

social media, tag the Crisis Center, and use the hashtag **#purplepossechallenge**. You can challenge family, friends, neighbors, celebrities, or anyone else you wish! We will use these

> photos in a video that will be posted on social media promoting awareness for victims of domestic violence. Spread purple across social media and voice your support for victims of domestic violence!



Starting a New Narrative



Being a mother is not easy. It requires unconditional love and sacrifice. Tiffony is the epitome of a selfless mother. Her journey at the Crisis Center began at an extremely tumultuous time in

her life, but her decision to re-set her life and begin a new narrative has made all the difference.

Tiffony was in an emotionally and mentally abusive relationship with her husband for sixteen years. She tried unsuccessfully to leave her marriage four times, but when the abuse starting happening in front of her son, she had enough.

She began meeting with a counselor and soon after left her husband and moved into the shelter with her son. She expressed that from a very young age through adolescence, she and her family were in and out of homeless shelters. "My initial introduction to the Crisis Center was friendly and warm, and the atmosphere was peaceful. It was unlike any shelter I'd ever been in," Tiffony said.

Tiffony speaks candidly about her re-set moment during the initial meeting she had with Case Manager, Andrea. "For forty years I carried the guilt of feeling like I was a burden to others and Andrea helped me let go of that burden. She told me I was important, beautiful, and not a burden." This critical re-set moment was the beginning of a new narrative in Tiffony's life. She said, "I felt like grown Tiffony was ready to take care of young Tiffony."

Andrea remembers this moment vividly and said, "We don't know what their life has been like, but we want clients to have a place where they can re-set and be safe, comfortable, and have the opportunity to create new narratives."

"I felt like grown Tiffony was ready to take care of young Tiffony."

Tiffony and her son continue to move forward on their journey in their new apartment as part of the Crisis Center's community-based housing program. The best part of moving forward, according to Tiffony, was giving her son his own bedroom.

We're Listening!

In May, over 300 surveys were emailed to donors who have given \$750-999 annually over the past few years. We



learned that donors in this group feel appreciated for their giving, and that our communication tools are providing both educational and impactful stories. "We will be doing more surveys among different donor groups throughout the year," said Lorri Nagle, Director of Development. "Hearing what's meaningful to our donors is very important to us." Nagle also noted that more than 80% of this donor group are survivors or know someone whose life has been impacted by domestic violence.

The Right Reaction



The Crisis Center has been providing domestic violence training to salon professionals for more than three years. During the state-mandated training, our staff discuss signs that

identify if someone might be a victim, what to say to a victim, and how to provide resources to the victim without putting them in jeopardy. During these trainings, many stylists shared that they suspected some clients have been involved in an abusive relationship, but didn't know how to address it.

Recently, outside an Evergreen Park salon, a stylist witnessed an altercation between a client and her partner in the parking lot. Because of the training she received from Crisis Center staff, she recognized the signs and called the police. They responded immediately and diffused the situation. Later, she was able to give her client information on the programs and services at the Crisis Center.

Endless Summer

The Crisis Center's Summer Camp provided endless fun at the shelter. From rock painting to story time at the library to zoo trips and puppet shows, the children and their parents experienced many moments of joy that helped play a big part in their healing process.



Establishing Priorities

During the last year, stakeholders at the Crisis Center joined other similar organizations across the state and actively engaged in advocacy efforts to secure an increase in state funding for domestic violence services. "We asked for \$100 million in funding, but we're thrilled to get \$70 million - which is a \$50 million increase," said Pam Kostecki, Executive Director. Plans are in the works for Domestic Violence agencies throughout the state to apply for the funds to expand programs to better meet the need, increase staff wages, and much more.

Two of our priorities include expanding our emergency shelter and outreach, and providing staff a living wage. During the pandemic, we reduced shelter capacity to ensure safety, but now that restrictions are eased or lifted, we not only want to return to our initial capacity, but increase it so we can serve more survivors.

Last year, 4,452 survivors across the state of Illinois were turned away from shelters by domestic violence service providers because there wasn't enough room, with the largest unmet need occurring in the suburbs of Chicago.

Another top priority for the Crisis Center is providing a living wage to our employees. To determine fair and equitable salary ranges for all positions, Pam and members of the Leadership Team at the Crisis Center worked with other Domestic Violence agencies and consultants. Pam and Meghan Mokate, Director of Finance, also did a vast amount of research on compensation and the impact of the cost of living each year.

The Illinois Department of Human Services application for the increased state funding to support these changes and expansion was recently submitted. Meanwhile, planning for expansion, salary increases, and other positive changes continue.

A Perfect Game

The pandemic certainly changed the way work teams interact, but the July staff meeting changed all that! Team members spent the day together bowling and celebrating their perseverance and commitment during two very challenging years. Doreen Holford, Regional Director for the Neat Repeats stores said, "Working in such a fast-paced, tense environment at all our locations, it was nice to see people just relax, breathe, and just be themselves."

Based on the smiles in these photos, the afternoon was a big success!



Inflation's Toll

Financial stress and the challenges that inflation presents have serious consequences for victims of domestic violence. As families figure out how to pay for things like gas and groceries, tensions rise and victims may be subject to more severe forms of violence, or an increase in the frequency of violence.

"Abusers can be triggered by so many things, but lack of money and figuring out how to afford everyday items is definitely at the top of the list right now," said Megan McShane, Director of Clinical Services. Megan also shared that financial insecurity is one of the most prevalent reasons why victims don't leave their abusers. Domestic violence is about exerting power and control over another person. "Most of the survivors we see in our counseling offices talk about never having control over the money they earned or joint household income. One of our goals is to help survivors work toward independence so they live a life free from violence and control."

Workplace Culture

To foster a workplace culture where everyone loves coming to work, the Crisis Center has incorporated the "FISH Philosophy". The philosophy encourages four key practices for all staff:

- Be There: Be emotionally present for people.
- Play: Encourages being creative, enthusiastic, and having fun.
- Make Their Day: Find simple ways to serve or delight people in a meaningful, memorable way.
- Choose Your Attitude: Take responsibility for how you respond to what life throws at you. Your choices affect others.



"We've seen a real culture shift," says Director of Human Resources, Latasha Hubert. "Our employees are bringing more of their personalities, talents, and passions to the workplace, and everyone from the clients to the donors benefits. FISH has also helped improve employee retention, a goal we have been working hard on."

If you want to explore a career at the Crisis Center, contact Latasha Hubert at jobs@crisisctr.org.

Corporate & Community champions

The Power of Matching Gifts

Ryan Penrod was introduced to the Crisis Center by board member Dave Anders in 2018. "When I heard stories about the shelter families and all of the other programs and resources the staff provide, I was hooked. It's a great



organization and an easy cause to get behind," said Ryan.

Ryan has been able to double his giving because his employer, Salesforce, matches all of his gifts. "It's like getting 100% return on investment," Ryan added. Check to see if your company matches charitable donations.

Multi-year Grant Awarded

The American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation has awarded the Crisis Center a three-year, \$30,000 grant, to continue our work. "We

are humbled by the generosity and continued support from the foundation and Crisis Center Board member, Doranita Tyler," said



Lorri Nagle, Director of Development. "Doranita had been a champion for our cause for many years and served as the impetus for this incredible award."

It Takes A Village!

Every year, both the Tinley Park and Frankfort libraries graciously collect items from community donors for our back-to-school and holiday gift drives. "The staff at the libraries are so kind and helpful. Because each library is open longer than our donation center, items can be dropped off after typical work hours," said Janice Barry, Development Associate. Diana Koepp from the Frankfort Public Library District said, "We really enjoy our partnership with the Crisis Center." It truly takes a village, and the Crisis Center is grateful for its partnership with both libraries!



Extended Hours for Neat Repeats!



Neat Repeats stores in Worth and Orland Park have extended closing hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday until 7:00pm. The Neat Repeats resale stores have been an integral part of the Crisis Center for South Suburbia for over 35 years.

Please stop at one of the Neat Repeats stores (15551 S. 94th Ave. Orland Park, 6602 W. 111th St. Worth) some evening and enjoy the

If you wish to become a member of one of these very special teams of Neat Repeats volunteers, please email volunteer@crisisctr.org.

wonderful selection of merchandise and welcoming atmosphere. While you're there, thank the volunteers for their support of victims of domestic violence.

Neat Repeats is currently looking for donations of new and gently used fall and winter clothing for men, women, and children. Household items are also needed. Donations are accepted during regular store hours. For more information, visit crisisctr.org.

We would not be here today if it weren't for the unwavering and generous support from our donors and volunteers. Thank you!

This list is merely a glimpse of those who have made a significant impact at the Crisis Center and partnered with us to support victims of domestic violence. While we cannot recognize every donor and every gift due to space restrictions, we are so grateful for all of them and their generous hearts.

Gift dates July 1, 2021 — June 30, 2022

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Neat Repeats - Orland Park

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Neat Repeats - Worth Carole Baker Kathy Baldea Kitty Baldi Donna Bonk Josephine Bradley Nora Brennan Celeste Brown Theresa Burke Angela Burzycki Anne Carroll Fileen Cechota Marge Centano Eleanor Champagne Phyllis Cheek Lidia Churin Ronnie Cihak Suzette Coan Carol Crowell Susan DeKoker Ila Desai Jill DiFoggio Patricia Duffy Diane Duncan Ellie Elder Cynthia Ellis

Karen Eversen

Debra Garelli Laura Geary Veronique Gerring Sue Grant Susan Guibord Sharon Hager Jill Halleran Jodi Halleran Janet Hart Marguerite Hastings Dora Haynes Debbie Hejna Barbara Hennessy Valerie Johnson Charlene Juricek Chuck Klenn Kathy Klenn Gloria Laas Ruth Lindquist Mary Lee Lockwood Linda Lullo Noreen Lyons Kathy Martel Michele Martiniak Gerry Mathews Mary Mc Ginnis Barbara McAulliffe Norma McKeating Diana Mikos Wendy Miller Roxie Molonev Nancy Neary Carolyn Nowak Martin O'Keefe Rita O'Neill Kris O'Reilly Delores O'Sullivan Eileen Parker Lisa Pesavento Chris Petritis Joni Rusco Shirley Russiaky Doris Sanchez Mary Santine Claudia Saveley Lois Schoonveld Dotty Schumpp Denise Schwenn Susan Sertich Mary Sheeran Jeannine Sherman Kim Shine Marty Skimel Lois Stanciak Sandy Stephens Chris Styka Bridget Sullivan

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Rashida Hughes
Pat Laschober
Cecelia McClellan
Lois Murphy
Mike Ruffner
Mary Wadsworth
Rita Walker
Brenda White
Wayne Winterberg

Program/Clerical
Joyce Anders
Bonnie Boersma
Lisa Klose
Dana Lahart
Janet Loughrey
Linda Napolillo
Jennifer Rice
Yasmin Vaughn

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Leaving a legacy

Joan Sullivan

Remembering the Crisis Center for South Suburbia in your will or estate plans enables us to continue to provide life-saving services to victims of domestic violence. For more information about leaving a legacy, contact Lorri Nagle at 708.429.7255 or lnagle@crisisctr.org.

Zeta Chapter





Matching Gift Campaign

\$31 from 31 people for 31 days = nearly \$31,000 for victims of domestic violence!

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the Crisis Center is launching its #31derfulways campaign in hopes of raising \$31,000.

This year, Corporate Champion BMO Harris Bank is energizing our campaign by matching all gifts, up to \$15,000.

☐ I have included the Crisis Center for South Suburbia in my estate plans.

from Human Resources and submit it with your gift.

How can \$31 help? It will provide . . .

- Emergency shelter and food for families fleeing from domestic violence
- Professional counseling
- Staff to work in courthouses and hospitals to help identify and support victims
- Community education about domestic violence, and much more

Complete and return the form below,

Donate online at www.crisisctr.org, or scan the QR code.

If you have any questions, contact Lorri Nagle at Inagle@crisisctr.org or call 708.429.7255.



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Mail your gift to: Crisis Center for South Suburbia | PO Box 39 | Tinley Park, IL 60477 or make your gift online at www.crisisctr.org

Many employers offer a matching gift program. If you or your spouse's employer offer this option, please obtain the appropriate form

MATCHING GIFTS

Choose Your Adventure

Financial insecurity is one of the main reasons many domestic violence survivors return to their abuser. The Crisis Center hopes to help decrease this return rate with the introduction of the *Choose*



Your Adventure program, a 12-week experience that provides survivors with workforce development training, job skills, and job opportunities. It aims to teach participants practical and valuable skills that will assist them with the job hunting process so they can thrive in the workforce.

Aaron Briggs is the new Workforce Development & Employment Coach. He brings a plethora of experience having worked in workforce development and higher education for the past three years. He is also currently pursuing his master's degree in social work.

"My hope is that participants are able to use their voices with new confidence and carve out the future they desire," said Aaron.

"I have seen many times how improving job skills can turn one's life around for the better and I want everyone I come in contact with to reap those benefits."

Aaron hopes to partner with local business to supply job opportunities for *Choose Your Adventure* participants and in turn, give participants the skills and workforce knowledge they need to become financially independent.

National Night Out

National Night Out (NNO) is an annual community-building event that promotes police-community partnerships and fosters neighborhood support. The Crisis Center currently partners with 29 police departments and was happy to provide staff and volunteers at many NNO celebrations this past August.



Diversity and Inclusion Grant

An organization is only as good as its culture. The Crisis Center recognizes that an



inclusive environment can make or break an organization. As such, one-time funding from the Illinois Attorney General's VCVA Special Project Grant will provide an online diversity and inclusion certification program through Cornell University for several members of the Crisis Center's Leadership Team. "We want to go beyond compliance and do whatever we can to support an inclusive work culture," said Yvonne McDonald-Hames, Associate Executive Director.

Perfect Day for Golf

The Dianne Masters Cup Charity Golf Outing hosted over 120 golfers, raised nearly \$70,000, and was held on a day that easily boasted the best weather of the summer. Special thanks to our top sponsors: The Aiello Family, ACTION Sertoma, Packaging Reps, Inc., Integrity Restoration, and Susan and Pat Frangella. Thank you, also, to our golfers, donors, staff, and volunteers, including a large group of volunteers from Northwestern Palos Medicine, who worked so hard to make the day a memorable one.



Learn more about volunteer opportunities at Veat Repeats, in our programs, and at our

annual fundraising events. Contact Michelle McCarthy at 708.429.7255 x605 or volunteer@crisisctr.org.

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Events calendar

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October 1 - 31, 2022

Check out our monthly e-news for details on upcoming events, Not Subscribed? Contact Beth Kazmierczak at bkazmierczak@crisisctr.org.

Annual Gala — An Evening in England: A Royal Ball February 25, 2023

Don your royal best at Odyssey Country Club for dinner, entertainment, auctions and more. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities will be available very soon at RoyalBall.givesmart.com or contact Lisa Molloy at Imolloy@crisisctr.org.



