

Our Collective Voices

2024 GRATITUDE UPDATE



We as a community and organization have changed a lot since 1980 when CVOEO's Voices Against Violence was formed by a group of dedicated volunteers opening up their hearts and homes to people fleeing violence. Our shelter, Laurie's House, then opened in 2002 and has almost always been at capacity.

In more recent years, we have focused more on reaching those living on the margins such as those with co-occurring substance abuse, native communities, LGBTQIA+, elderly, and people of color. Our work has also expanded with prevention work in local schools, transitional housing, supervised visitation, and more.

After 27 years as Director at Voices Against Violence, Kris Lukens is retiring. Shannon McMahon, team member for over six years will be our next Director. Shannon shares about her passion for anti-violence work:

"I grew up in Franklin County, I have done this work in other communities but came back here...I knew there was a need in our community and I wanted to be apart of the solution.

I spent a lot of time reflecting on the need, people experience violence here in childhood, youth, and adulthood. I wanted to come back here and help make Franklin and Grand Isle a place where people thrive and experience less gender-based violence."



*Thank you Kris Lukens
for 27 years of
dedicated service!*



MAKING SPACE

Voices Against Violence and our partner, Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), applied for and received one-time state funding for an additional shelter for survivors in St. Albans. This beautiful new shelter on Fairfield Street in St. Albans will be able to house eight families and has a large yard, meeting space, and gardens.

In this new facility, we will have the space to transform our work! Since the 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), when federal funding was first awarded to survivors experiencing domestic violence, agencies like Voices Against Violence have not had an increase in federal aid. Additionally, VAWA funding has historically only supported crisis intervention, which has limited our ability to provide the prevention, community, and healing work needed for our communities to thrive.

Our team has held focus groups, listened to survivors who have accessed services previously, and evaluated what is needed going forward. With this new shelter, we can provide congregate housing in a beautiful space. We will have practitioners providing art, music, and other kinds of holistic practices that empower healing. In addition, we will have lots of space to garden - we may even get chickens!

The options for our work to serve Franklin and Grand Isle with this space are endless, and we are so thankful and excited for the support from CHT to help this dream come to fruition!

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

We will honor this month by hosting several community events in October:

Community Advocacy Training

Voices Against Violence created this training to highlight the impact gender violence has (and historically had) on how we support people who experience gendered violence, and how we can collaborate as a community to work together to end domestic and sexual violence. This session will be held October 24th and 25th at the Swanton Library. For more information, contact our Educator Coordinator, Hannah, at hudson@cvoeo.org.

The Cleansing Cauldron

This is a community-based healing activity, where we will share bread and a hot meal, journal together, and then reflect as a group on letting go of trauma and moving forward in community. For more information, contact our Transitional Housing Coordinator, Danielle, at dperry@cvoeo.org.

Survivor Art Day

Survivors and children can sprawl out and have access to many different mediums for art and conversation. For more information, contact our Family Services Coordinator, Megan, at m spatola@cvoeo.org.

HEALING WITH LULLABIES

We are here for survivors not only in crisis but throughout their healing journey for years to come. Through our partnerships with the Lullaby Project, Scrag Mountain Music, and Writers for Recovery, we help survivors write and record a lullaby song for their child.

Many survivors have lost custody rights or have a strained relationship with their children, this project can be very healing.



“One participant does not have custody of her kids and she said she never believed she was deserving of her kids due to the ongoing trauma she’s experiencing. She poured her heart into the lullaby she made for her kids and received so much support from everyone else who participated.

She said she felt a sense of ‘worth’ that she hadn’t felt in a long time, that she deserved a good life and a relationship with her kids. It was amazing to see how she reacted to this experience and to be a part of her healing journey.” - Kris Lukens, Outgoing Director

OUR IMPACT

13,000+ responses to people experiencing domestic and sexual violence, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking to **530 unduplicated people, including children.**

18,000+ hotline calls, webchats, and emails supporting people seeking services for themselves, or on behalf of someone.

5,906 shelter nights for survivors and families displaced due to domestic violence and transitional housing to 8 families.

400+ instances of financial assistance for survivors and their children to access safety.

45+ families served by All About Kids, to help create a better relationship with a child and parent that has previously caused harm.

114 youth education programs and 200+ local professionals attended one of our trainings.



YOU CAN JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Volunteering

We will work with you to create meaningful projects that work play to your strengths! Call 802-524-6575 to talk to an advocate about what volunteering can look like for you. Volunteer needs include, administrative support, shelter maintenance, childcare, court advocate, education and outreach, transportation volunteer, and more.

Donating

As a non-profit, we rely on contributions from generous community members and businesses. Through your support, victims and survivors in our community know you care and that can mean the difference between feeling empowered and feeling hopeless. Whatever its size, your gift will help ensure that services are available to your neighbors when they are needed.

Donate a one-time or monthly gift at voicesagainstviolence.org.

Leave a Legacy with Planned Giving

You can make a bigger impact when you include Voices Against Violence in your estate planning. To leave a gift, consider using the following language in your will: "I give and bequeath unto Voices Against Violence at CVOEO, tax ID #03-0216837, ___% of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate to be used for general charitable purposes." You can also make Voices Against Violence a beneficiary of your retirement account, life insurance, donor-advised fund (DAF), and other assets.

Current Shelter Needs:

- Diapers and wipes
- bowls and plates
- menstrual hygiene products
- Towels
- Grocery and gas gift cards
- Bedding: Pillows, twin sheets, blankets
- Sippy cups
- First aid kits
- Lawn games
- Art supplies
- Hand soap

Call 802-524-6575 to coordinate drop off at our St. Albans office.



Our Mission: Voices Against Violence works towards the elimination of domestic and sexual violence and stalking through direct service, education, and systems change.

**voicesagainstviolence.org
24/7 Hotline: 802-524-6575**