

ANNUAL REPORT

STEPS

TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019



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Who are you? What's your story?

I am a lot of things; I am a mother, a daughter, an advocate, a social justice warrior, and the new Executive Director at Steps to End Domestic Violence. I've seen the effect of domestic violence first hand and know how trauma can follow you throughout your lifetime.

What is your background? What did you do before coming to Steps to End Domestic Violence?

I was raised in the restaurant industry from the age of five. I saw a lot of weird stuff and met the most wonderful cast of characters. It was through this experience that I learned to appreciate that each of us comes with a unique story.

When it came time to raise my own family I knew I wanted something different for my children and entered human services. I completed my undergraduate degree at Vermont College at Norwich University in Montpelier and I began my career as a case manager for a transitional living program for homeless girls who were pregnant and/or parenting. Without knowing it at the time, this experience was the beginning of a career path that I continue to follow. From here I went on to work with the State of NH's Employment Program as a facilitator teaching job readiness to women receiving cash assistance through the State's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). I quickly realized that the state's requirements for assistance was often difficult for the adults I was working with and was without any system of support for success. At the time I was also working part-time as the Municipal Welfare Administrator for a small town in the White Mountains region of NH, working with residents of the town who were lacking resources to pay for basic needs; shelter, food, and utilities; another system that was rich with rules but lacking support. I worked closely with the Selectboard to rewrite policy and expand my position to offer case management for individuals receiving assistance. It was at this point I decided to continue my education and pursued my Master's degree in Non-Profit Management. Shortly thereafter I was named Prevention Services Division Director at a local Community Action Program. My position oversaw the agencies Homeless, Domestic Violence, and Guardianship Programs.

Meet Dawn Ferringo

Executive Director

What are your passions? What is important to you as both an advocate and a person?

People's stories; learning what makes us each who we are; connecting people who I know, without a doubt, should meet; fighting for social justice; live music and the shared experience we receive from it;

Why Steps to End Domestic Violence? What about the organization attracted you?

I had always known I would leave NH once my children graduated high school and began my search the month after my youngest completed high school. Vermont had always been close to my heart because of the time I spent at Vermont College. I was immediately attracted to the open position at Steps to End Domestic Violence and began my research. When I learned of the conversations that drove the name change I knew I wanted to work here. I appreciated the time and discussion that led to a more inclusive, non-gender biased name and wanted to be part of the movement.

What does the future hold for Steps to End Domestic Violence as it relates to the Chittenden County community?

It has always been my vision, both here and in NH, to help break the silence and the stigma of domestic violence by providing more education and support, for both community and survivors; to take the steps to change the narrative. I would like more community wide discussion/trainings about what it is like to live with trauma; about what adverse childhood experiences look like, how it shapes us, and what we can do to help to both heal and prevent it.

What are your first impressions of the DV supporters' community here?

Steps to End Domestic Violence has a long history in Chittenden County. I have been overwhelmed by the dedication and commitment of longtime supporters and staff. I am appreciative of the community resources for all of the anti-violence programs in Chittenden County and hope to work alongside our community partners for years to come.

What is your end goal? What would you love to see happen with DV in the area?

To end domestic violence!

LAST YEAR...

We were able to serve 1,557 people; 1,283 adults and 273 kids.

We provided emergency shelter to 226 adults and 99 children for a total of 14,719 bednights.

The 24-hour hotline received 3,862 contacts, and 1,066 people received support, safety planning and referrals.

An average of 55.5 new callers per month utilized the hotline, the agency's "front door" to services.

Our Economic Justice program helped advocate for and support 241 adults, with rental assistance provided to 15 people and rapid rehousing help to 30 people.

58 adults and 155 children were supported through playgroups, advocacy and parenting support via the Children and Youth Services program.

23 volunteers gave 2,089 hours of their time to perform a variety of tasks - this is equal to more than one full-time position on staff and \$41,057.



I support Steps to End Domestic Violence because...

- Kindness matters.
- Youth in our community deserve to know what healthy relationships look like.
- I am a survivor and I was helped by you.
- No one should live in fear, especially in their own home.

Why do you?

When Wanda Bezio first entered into the world of Steps to End Domestic Violence, she was helping out a friend who had a job-share role with the organization and needed someone to fill the rest of the time.

What Wanda didn't know then was that her friend was involved in an abusive relationship herself.

The job-share eventually turned into full-time and this year, Wanda announced she would be retiring from her role as Finance Director.

She spent 31 years with Steps to End Domestic Violence.

In that time, Wanda has seen changes in both the movement and the organization, but it's safe to say her own feisty spirit and unwavering empathy have stayed the same.

"People have to be totally engulfed in the work," she said about her chosen field. "It isn't something you can turn off."

She's seen people come and go, and realizes that having a strong support system in and out of the office is essential for working to better the lives' of others – each day can be exhausting, but ending domestic violence is just a part of life for staff.

Wanda also remembers the energy that started the anti-violence movement – the rallies, calls to legislators, burning undergarments to take a stance. She's watched things evolve into the digital world, with calls-to-action broadcast online rather than with older-school methods.



CELEBRATING WANDA'S RETIREMENT

And, she hopes, that the work she has dedicated three decades to will someday not exist any more, and domestic violence will no longer have a place in relationships.

"It'd be nice if it worked like smoking," she said of social norms around abuse – smokers are now viewed as outcasts, though their actions at one point were really common.

But – there's a long road ahead.

"I think a lot of victim-blaming still happens. I don't see that that has changed too much," she said.

The future, according to Wanda, lies in the hands of young folks. She said the biggest hope for the cause is working within schools and with youth in the community, encouraging the next generation to stand up and speak out against abuse.

Also, she said, voting is essential. Specifically voting those who aren't supportive out of office and making way for more women to hold high-powered seats.

Her hopes for Steps to End Domestic Violence include a more diverse staff with differing backgrounds and a centralized physical location where all services can be provided as efficiently as possible.

And of course, she said, funding is a necessity. Larger gifts would mean long-term solutions.

Thank you, Wanda, for your wonderful spirit, your kindness, your love and your dedication. You'll forever be a part of the movement and forever our friend!



2019 marks 45 years of serving Chittenden County





Thanks for sharing it with us!



Who we served...

Burlington - 738

Charlotte - 16

Colchester - 119

Essex - 80

Essex Junction - 45

Hinesburg - 15

Huntington - 3

Jericho - 12

Milton - 64

Richmond - 14

Shelburne - 50

South Burlington - 110

St. George - 1

Underhill - 12

Westford - 1

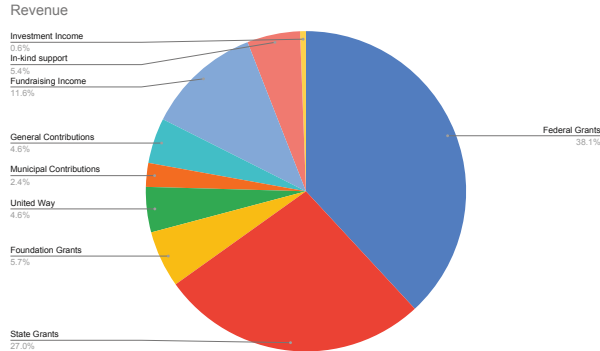
Williston - 27

Winooski - 108

Note: 142 people from outside Chittenden County were served, as well. There are many others who do not disclose their town of residence because they feel unsafe doing so. Due to the sensitive nature of domestic violence and the need for privacy among victims, many who reach out to us choose to remain anonymous. It should be assumed that the numbers for each town are under-reported.

Revenue

Federal Grants	\$432,717
State Grants	\$306,911
Foundation Grants	\$65,153
United Way	\$51,925
Municipal Contributions	\$27,282
General Contributions	\$52,034
Fundraising Income	\$132,054
In-kind support	\$60,807
Investment Income	\$6,738
Subtotal - support and revenue	\$1,135,621
Other revenue	\$28,280
Total	\$1,163,901



Expenses

Program Services

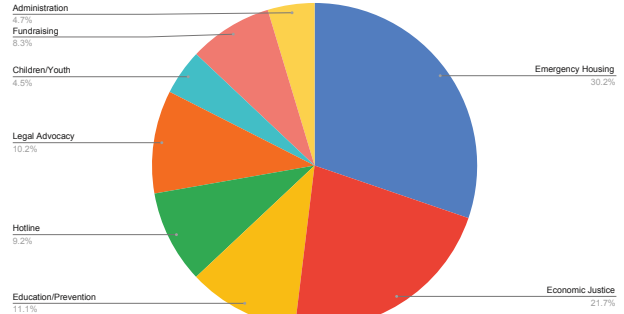
Emergency Housing	\$361,415
Economic Justice	\$259,323
Education/Prevention	\$132,237
Hotline	\$110,535
Legal Advocacy	\$122,436
Children/Youth	\$54,164

Support Services

Fundraising	\$99,498
Administration	\$55,677

Total	\$1,195,285
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EXPENSES



STEPS
TO END
DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE

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Admin: (802) 658-3131

stepsVT.org

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