



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network, Inc.

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Agency Overview

Peaceful Paths, Inc. is the state certified domestic violence center that serves adult and child survivors in Alachua, Bradford, and Union counties. Peaceful Paths provides a wide range of free and confidential programs including emergency shelter, supportive housing, crisis helpline, counseling and support groups for adults, teens, and children, Economic Empowerment Programs, Legal services, professional education and training, violence prevention education, and community awareness. Peaceful Paths leads the coordinated community response to domestic violence in this region, and engages a comprehensive group of partners who collaboratively address system services and gaps. The agency promotes an empowerment based philosophy of service delivery aimed at creating safety, support and a path to self-sufficiency for survivors and their children. Using advocacy and intervention, Peaceful Paths strives to create social change that impact's survivor safety and batterer accountability. Peaceful Paths is a member of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV).

History of the Agency

Peaceful Paths began its mission in the Gainesville area in 1974 as the Rape Information and Counseling Service (RICS), a grassroots organization that was formed to fight against sexual violence. In 1976, RICS began to expand its services to include battered women, and in 1977, established a spouse abuse hotline. In September of that year, the name of the organization was changed to the Sexual and Physical Abuse Resource Center to better reflect the changing mission. In January of 1978, SPARC was granted a lease on a shelter site and the shelter opened with its first client on March 30 of that year. SPARC became a charter member of the Refuge Information Network (RIN) in 1977 and began sending delegates to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence committee meetings. In 1997, the agency acquired a transitional housing facility that provides long-term support housing for survivors who have become homeless due to the violence in their lives. In October of 2000, SPARC underwent another name change to refocus the community on the mission of ending domestic violence. In October of 2015, Peaceful Paths opened the Dutton-Schilling Emergency Services Campus, a 72 bed housing community for shelter and supportive housing for survivors and their children. Peaceful Paths continually works to develop and refine comprehensive services to adult and child victims and survivors of domestic abuse.



Peaceful Paths
Campus



A Word from our Executive Director

Each year, the work to end domestic violence faces challenges. Funding changes, new political tides, system complications, and new partnerships can all be positive or negative influences in the way that services are delivered. Peaceful Paths has been continuously fortunate that our tri county region remains steadfast in support of our mission. This year we experienced that support in a variety of ways. Our Legal Project grew tremendously in staff and scope, and the outpouring of assistance from the Clerk of Court in Alachua County, from establishing a new office for the program to ensuring petitioners were referred, has made it possible for the project to be successful. Clerks in Bradford and Union followed suit with maintaining Memorandums of Understanding and sending potential clients our way. The Economic Empowerment Program reached more survivors than ever through financial literacy classes, housing programs, and support groups designed to teach and financial stability and mentoring. The addition of the Cox Communication Computer Lab in the Outreach office in Gainesville means survivors have access to training online through Lynda, can apply for jobs and benefits, search housing, and access safe email addresses more readily than ever before in the office space. Confidential access to computers is a blessing for survivors and their children.

The ongoing work of the High Risk Team, Child Welfare Project, and Housing Team reflect that widespread system advocacy that our agency is engaged in daily. Through active partnerships with the law enforcement, child welfare, and housing communities, we are making a difference in the lives of clients every day. Addressing victim safety, perpetrator accountability, and community protocol is critical in ensuring that we are creating a coordinated community response. The response of law enforcement agencies overall has resulted in a reduction in IPV related homicides, and has established our Center and community as leaders in this state. Child welfare removals for domestic violence have also decreased, and we are confident that we will continue to see improvements for survivors in this arena. While there is still work to do, advocates are diligent in being present in the system and addressing practices that harm victims and their children. The housing team successfully housed 49 families in permanent community based housing this year, dramatically impacting their long term safety and stability. Addressing housing from the beginning through surveys and financial safety planning starts a dialogue that allows advocates and survivors to work together more effectively in identifying goals, obstacles, and needs. Using these tools this year has increased efficiency and reduced time waiting for housing.

I hope that you will join us as an ally in the work to save lives and create change. Attend an event, come on a tour, donate to a project, or be a volunteer. More importantly, talk about this critical issue in your individual networks, so that we will continue to end the silence that allows abuse to happen. Together, we are making hope happen here.

MISSION AND THEORY OF CHANGE

MISSION STATEMENT

Peaceful Paths exists to save lives and create change

Value Statements

*Autonomy*Choice*Communication *Community*Courage*Diversity*Empathy *Equality*Flexibility

*Growth*Honesty & Integrity *Hope*Independence*Innovation*Patience *Peace

*Respect*Safety*Teamwork*Trust

THEORY OF CHANGE

- Expert Safety Planning process
- Collaborative advocacy
- Community resources and referrals
- Innovative outreach, residential, and prevention programs
- Connecting with survivors where they are to meet needs and identify barriers
- Open to change and feedback to close gaps
- Robust community partnerships
- Non-traditional approaches
- Stewardship of resources to maximize client benefits
- Strong community reputation and presence



The Clothesline Project

SERVICES UTILIZED FOR 2019

Total adults in residential services	232
Total children in residential services	153
Outreach clients	1421
Safety Plans Completed	5415
Hours of Counseling	6728
Days of Shelter	34835
Total Client Contacts	35712

Highlights from 2019

Peaceful Paths expanded critical core services for survivors and their children again this year. Legal services for injunctions were enhanced by adding new attorneys, and increasing pro bono partnerships. Economic Empowerment programs were enhanced through the addition of an Outreach Computer Lab, and an increase in the scope and number of financial literacy classes offered throughout the year. Child and youth programs reached a record number of students in programs from Head Start to High School. Permanent Housing advocates were able to find community housing for 46 families and relocated an additional 187 survivors into safe housing through the Attorney General's Office project. Fundraising also experienced a record year, with tours, events, and pledges moving the agency forward with vital client services support.



Guest Chef Fundraiser 2019

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

Emergency Shelter Services

Peaceful Paths provides safe, confidential emergency housing on the Dutton-Schilling Housing Campus. Advocates provide services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to the adults and children who need intervention and support to address the violence in their lives.

Shelter services provided but not limited to:

- Safety planning.
- Individualized service plan for survivors who are in shelter 72 hours or more.
- Emergency food, clothing, and hygiene products.
- Resources for survivor to fill prescriptions.
- Transportation either by bus or agency vehicle.

Eligibility for services

Peaceful Paths will provide services to eligible individuals regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, citizenship, immigration status, marital status or language spoken. Male survivors will be sheltered on the campus. To be considered eligible for emergency shelter services, individuals should be:

- Experiencing abuse by their current or former intimate partner or who are in danger of being abused by their current or former intimate partner.
- Victims of Sexual Assault who have been screened by Alachua County Victims Services or Victims Advocate from Bradford, or Union Counties.
- Residents of Alachua, Bradford, or Union counties or referred by another certified center because of safety issues.

Special needs and special circumstances are dealt with on a case by case basis and decisions are made based on the best interest of the client as well as the ability of the shelter to meet their needs.

Helpline

Trained advocates answer the Peaceful Paths Helpline 24 hours 7 days a week. Advocates are trained to immediately assess a caller for danger and lethality, complete a personalized safety plan, screen for admission for shelter and provide information and referrals that are appropriate to meet a caller's need. Staff will maintain confidentiality.

Counseling and Support Services

Peaceful Paths provides a range of counseling services to adults and children/youth in the three county area aimed at providing education and support to individuals and families dealing with domestic violence. Individuals requesting services from Peaceful Paths must be domestic violence survivors, either in the past or present. This counseling is designed to act as a method of education and support, which can help to empower the survivor in making healthy choices. Counseling is not designed to be professional therapy, but instead to facilitate personal growth and sharing between survivors and with staff. Peaceful Paths does not recommend or practice couples counseling in any form or any family counseling that includes the presence of an alleged batterer.

Counseling services include:

- Adult support groups
- Teen support groups
- Parenting groups
- Trauma counseling
- Crisis counseling
- Lethality Assessments and safety planning
- Specialized Support Services (Spanish speaking, high lethality, men's groups, advanced groups)

Case Management

Peaceful Paths is committed to providing quality advocacy to all clients that we serve. This includes safeguarding confidential information, supporting clients through agency/court proceedings, accompanying clients to court and testifying on their behalf as requested, making needed referrals, providing follow-up as necessary, and maintaining accurate records to ensure continuity of services. This commitment to advocacy also means adhering to interagency agreements and collaborative agreements in place with other agencies. By working interactively with partners, we can ensure that client needs are met in more comprehensive way than we alone can provide. Emphasis includes:

- Identifying resources available to survivors.
- Supporting survivor to identify goals and set priorities. Survivor's goals will be documented in a service plan.
- Providing internal and external referrals to assist in goal/objective achievement.
- Establishing appropriate length of stay based on goals.
- Identifying progression toward completion of survivor's goals and objectives.
- Adapting survivor's goals as other needs emerges.

Supportive and Permanent Housing Programs

The mission of the Supportive Housing Program is to provide survivors of domestic violence a low barrier option for housing first services as they work to secure permanent housing. Using the 6 units of Extended Shelter on the Emergency Services Campus, survivors of domestic violence and their children can access free, supportive housing for up to 12 months. The program is designed to provide residential services while survivors work to obtain permanent housing in the community. The units may be single family or communal as needs and demands require. As a part of their stay, Peaceful Paths will provide survivors with transportation assistance, employment counseling, life planning groups, individual and group counseling, housing advocacy, and links to community and mainstream resources.

Victim Advocacy Program

Outreach Victim Advocates are present in the judicial system in Alachua, Bradford, and Union Counties. Advocates work with our attorney and local partners in Law Enforcement and the judicial system to provide injunction assistance, safety planning, lethality assessment, case management, crisis intervention, and information and referral services. Advocates are also present for all court proceedings for injunctions, and for dependency and mediation services as needed. The agency also provides High Risk advocacy services known as INVEST (Intimate Violence Enhanced Services Team) and HRT (High Risk Team) that work with local law enforcement agencies to identify high risk perpetrators victims for enhanced support and services. This program is designed to reduce domestic violence homicides and increase victim safety.

Children's Program

Children's programs are available at both outreach and shelter facilities. Peaceful Paths' children's programs serve to protect and empower children who have either witnessed or been the targets of domestic abuse by teaching children and parents tools for violence free living. Advocates are mandatory reporters of abuse. Peaceful Paths' Children's Program provides services to children and parents who are affected by domestic violence. Services are designed to educate, support, and empower the children in participation. These services include:

- Educational and social support groups
- Childcare
- Children's case management
- Individual counseling
- Child and Youth Assessment

Violence Prevention Program

The Peaceful Paths Violence Prevention Program is designed to end violence through primary prevention activities. Primary prevention works to stop violence before it begins and educate individuals about healthy relationship skills. The program partners with community agencies and local schools to provide education through collaborative curriculum development and presentations. The program also offers trainings to students, teachers, and agencies regarding social change and the elements of popular education. The curriculum and activities, which coordinate with FL Sunshine State Standards, include topics such as:

- Healthy relationships
- Gender roles and stereotypes
- Media literacy
- Effective communication
- Conflict Resolution

Legal Services

The Peaceful Paths Injunction for Protection legal project provides free legal services to survivors of domestic violence seeking restraining orders. These orders include domestic violence, stalking, dating violence, and sexual violence. Attorneys will work with survivors with the following legal needs:

- Injunction petition completion, filing, and revision;
- Review denied injunctions and refile;
- Representation at court hearings for actions for domestic, dating, sexual, or stalking injunctions;
- Representation of victims as respondents;
- Legal advice for any legal issue a survivor presents;
- Provide legal referrals for issues beyond the scope of the project;
- Provide follow up after court proceedings; and
- Provide legal services under the project to outside referrals.



Financial Overview

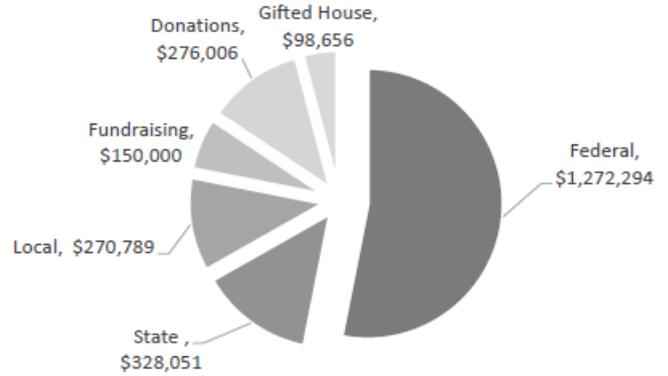
Peaceful Paths

Agency Budget - FY19-20

INCOME

Grant Income	
Federal	\$ 1,272,294
State	\$ 328,051
Local	\$ 270,789
Grant Income SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,871,134
Fundraising	\$ 150,000
Donations	\$ 276,006
Gifted House	\$ 98,656
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,395,796

Peaceful Paths: Income by Source



EXPENSES

Personnel	\$ 1,860,418
Professional Fees	\$ 111,470
Travel	\$ 33,750
Maintenance	\$ 38,025
Client Expense	\$ 137,693
Office Expense	\$ 137,700
Capital Outlay, Taxes & Licenses	\$ 4,800
Rent	\$ 9,818
Insurance	\$ 40,847
OTHER	\$ 3,475
Fundraisers	\$ 17,800
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 2,395,796

Highlights

- Audit report had no findings and demonstrates no going concerns
- Funding growth consistently over the past five years
- Reserves of \$100,000

Impacts



My name is AW and I was in a very abusive relationship, not only physical abuse but mental and physical as well as emotional. I didn't know where to go or who to trust. When I finally had enough and stood up for what I wanted for me and my children, I was able to get out and get away. I was referred to call Peaceful Paths. I didn't call right away because I was uneasy to talk to strangers and tell people what I was going through. I kept going day by day living in fear until I finally picked up the phone and called. Once Peaceful Paths told me to come and they could help I was relieved and still scared at the same time. I decided to go and that was the best decision we made in a long time. . Peaceful Paths gave me hope and a sense of real security. They allowed me to find myself again.



The Allstate Program has a long term client who started the financial literacy program in 2015, and has successfully improved her employability to receive better pay. The result is that she was able to complete her IDA savings account in April. She is using her money to install solar panels to reduce energy costs on her home. She is a consistent participant and contributor to our LIFE Connect monthly meetings and shares frequently about the daily successes and confidence she's gained through being a better money manager.