



A semi-annual publication from Safe Haven Ministries

"A Place of Refuge and Hope" Ps. 46:1

## A NOTE FROM MEGAN



*"When my parents started fighting, I would take my three sisters and hide in the closet until it was over,"* shared a woman as she told me about her story of growing up in an abusive home.

Today, this woman is a strong, nurturing mother, who continues to provide care for her loved ones. Unfortunately, not all children who witness domestic violence experience such a positive outcome. Studies show that children exposed to domestic violence are at greater risk for substance abuse, juvenile pregnancy, and criminal behavior than those raised in homes without violence.

The work we do at Safe Haven does not only provide protective factors for mothers like the one mentioned above, but also for her children. Our shelter provides families with nights free from violence. Not only are we working to keep children in our shelter safe, we are working with youth in schools as we engage in conversation about healthy relationships and social norms change. Starting these conversations at a young age is critical in helping prevent domestic abuse before it begins.

As we look forward to the future, we are excited for a new facility that will

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## FINDING HOPE, UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORT

*"I appreciate Safe Haven and the weekly group so much! They have helped me open my eyes and stay strong when I would have just given up. I am blessed to have found the courage to finally call and make it through the door. Thank you!"*

– Client

Domestic violence support groups have proven to be one of the most effective resources for survivors. Social isolation is a powerful tactic abusers use to maintain control over their partner. By interfering in their relationships and sabotaging access to support systems, abusers create a dynamic in which their disparaging and critical voice is the dominant message. Without meaningful relationships and options for support, a survivor is further at risk of suffering from feelings of hopelessness, depression, loneliness, and physical ailments.



Safe Haven support group participants.

At Safe Haven Ministries, survivors are encouraged to re-establish connections and gain the needed support of other women who have experienced domestic abuse. Through client surveys, survivors have repeatedly identified the following benefits of having attended Safe Haven groups:

- relating to others who have had similar experiences and feeling understood by staff
- having an increased understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence
- learning how to better plan for their safety
- increasing their use of healthy coping strategies

As experts on domestic violence, our professionally trained advocates facilitate on-going, psycho-educational groups on an array of topics: verbal and emotional abuse, the effects of domestic violence on children, spiritual abuse, and many others. Last year alone, we supported 167 individuals through our group programming. All of our groups are free and offer a safe, confidential space for survivors to navigate their healing journey. Additionally, we offer free childcare during all of our group sessions and a meal for evening group participants.

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expand our ability to serve more women (many of whom are mothers) and their children, giving them solace through safety and education about domestic abuse. In fact, our Capital Campaign, *Empower the Journey*, is moving forward with momentum. We have reached the \$4.5 million milestone of our \$5.5 million goal! The new facility will expand our ability to serve more families and provide prevention and education services to our community. We are breaking ground this month and will have a public ribbon cutting ceremony when we move into the new building.

Thank you for being part of helping us provide resources to our greater Grand Rapids community to bring an end to domestic abuse. Together, we are working to create a stronger, healthier community.

Warmly,

Megan E. Hopkins

## WELCOME NEW DIRECTORS



**Holly Wilson, LMSW**, is the Director of Client Services and comes to Safe Haven with 10 years of experience serving victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Her experience utilizing an empowerment-based and trauma-informed approach as an advocate, therapist, and clinical coordinator, provide incredible value as she leads our team of advocates. Holly's heart for the mission of Safe Haven will ensure agency programming and staff are equipped with the expertise and support needed to provide quality services to clients.



**Kent Bosma** is the Director of Development and brings 9 years of experience in nonprofit administration and fundraising, and over 5 years of related experience in sales, customer service, and marketing. His education and experience have prepared him well to lead the development team, utilizing his strengths in relationship building and budget sustainability. Kent is passionate about using these skills to ensure the agency is connected to the necessary resources to thrive and support clients in the best way possible.

## MOVING BEYOND #METOO

Our nation's recent focus on sexual misconduct is a turning point for those working in violence prevention. More than ever before, our community is ready and willing to engage in this work; this includes focusing on how to better support survivors but also taking the steps to ensure that tragedies shared through #MeToo never happen in the first place.

While education around violence prevention may never be easy, it is essential. And so we ask, how are you using your spheres of influence to advocate for lasting change? Whether it is your church, workplace, or child's school, consider inviting Safe Haven to lead a training that will equip individuals with the tools to create a culture of prevention and appropriately respond when violence is detected. Together, we can work toward lasting change and fulfill our mission of ending domestic violence.

The recent training Safe Haven led was an amazing experience for both our students and parents. The presentation was extremely interactive and helped my students engage right away. Sarah (Safe Haven educator) uses very current terminology that resonates with students and gives her an authority because she understands the issues facing our youth.

–Laura Kiefer Male, Director of Student Ministries, EverGreen Ministries



**Safe Haven**  
MINISTRIES

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## 2017 PROGRAM STATS

- 688** women & children served
- 6010** bednights of safety
- 3130** calls were received on our 24/7 free & confidential hotline
- 84** classrooms received healthy relationship education

## SUSTAINERS OF HOPE



Jeff and Rebecca Rozema are the happy parents of six children and have provided a home for children as a foster family.

Jeff and Rebecca Rozema began supporting Safe Haven in 2001, when Rebecca worked as Safe Haven’s Director of our Volunteer and Children’s Programs. During this time, Rebecca witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of domestic violence. Jeff and Rebecca continue to support Safe Haven through our monthly giving program, Sustainers of Hope. “The need for services is substantial, but can’t be met without consistent giving. We give monthly to Safe Haven to ensure that the support a family needs is available to them when it is sought, because needing to wait (for shelter) may be the difference between life and death,” Rebecca said.

To find out more about how you can provide regular support through our Sustainer of Hope monthly giving program, please contact Kent Bosma at 616-452-6664 or kbosma@safehavenministries.org, or go to [www.safehavenministries.org/support](http://www.safehavenministries.org/support).

## EVENTS & TRAINING UPDATES

Stay involved with Safe Haven all year long and attend our events!

Visit [safehavenministries.org/events](http://safehavenministries.org/events) for more information

**CELEBRATION  
OF HOPE**  
Wed., May 2nd  
6:00 pm

**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
SEMINAR**  
April 2018

**2018 FALL  
LUNCHEON**  
Tues., Sept. 25th



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*You're invited*  
CELEBRATION  
OF HOPE

May  
2  
2018

WATERMARK COUNTRY CLUB

6:00 p.m. Networking reception with live entertainment

6:30 p.m. Strolling dinner

7:30 p.m. Program

Please join us for this new evening fundraising event as we celebrate stories of hope and the work of Safe Haven Ministries.  
Reserve your seats by April 23. Visit [safehavenministries.org/celebrationofhope](http://safehavenministries.org/celebrationofhope) or contact Debbie Murphy at [dmurphy@safehavenministries.org](mailto:dmurphy@safehavenministries.org) or 616.452.6664.