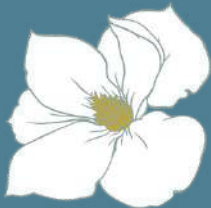


# IMPACT REPORT 2024

---

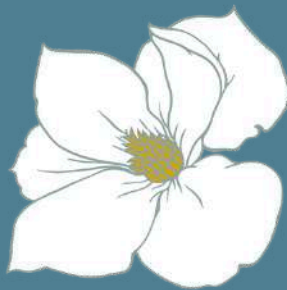


SAFE|HAVEN  
MINISTRIES

**Fiscal Year 2024**

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024





# SAFE HAVEN MINISTRIES

## Mission

Following Christ's example, and motivated by our community's needs, our mission is to prevent and end relationship abuse and human trafficking.

## Vision

We value the inclusion of all survivors. Through education, empowerment, and community collaborations, we believe all individuals have a right to a healthy relationship.

## Values

- excellence
- faith
- equity & belonging
- partnership
- safety
- social norms change
- stewardship
- survivor centered
- systems change

## Our Commitments

### Supportive Culture

- diversity, equity, inclusion, & belonging for all
- strong communication

### Confident & Competent Staff

- on-going training for staff
- posture of learning
- cultural humility

### Data Informed

- program evaluation
- researched based
- community listening

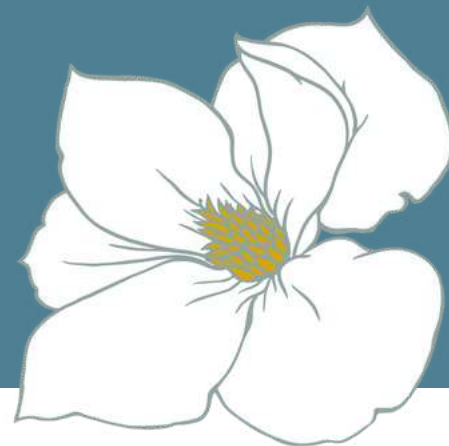
### Intentional Collaboration

- collaborative projects
- valuing partnership
- asset mapping



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

---



## Dear Friends,

On Monday mornings our whole team gathers for “stand up.” We often start the time sharing our weekly “wins” :

- A family getting keys to their new apartment
- A generous volunteer packing hygiene kits and delivering new resources for clients
- Support groups gathering for meaningful conversation and building connections for encouragement.

Our missional impact grows through each financial gift, the time poured into volunteering and the partnerships we have with people and organizations. Domestic violence is a public health epidemic in Kent County. Domestic violence and Human Trafficking adversely affect housing stability, mental and physical health, child and family stability, and the economic health of our community.

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support of our community and dedicated team members who played a crucial role in our mission to end and prevent domestic violence and human trafficking. I am honored to share the annual report for Safe Haven Ministries for the fiscal year 2024.

Our commitment is steadfast to support survivors and cultivate a community where everyone thrives. We continue to work collaboratively with community leaders to implement solutions that center survivors, creates a connected community and fosters belonging for everyone. Innovative steps are taken each day to engage people in education and a culture of violence prevention.

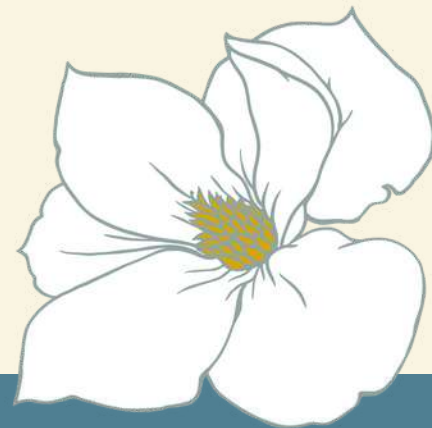
**In closing, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to you. Together, we are making strides toward a future free from domestic violence and human trafficking.**

“Each day small and extravagant acts of kindness, justice, and service are connected to Safe Haven’s mission.”  
~ Rachel VerWys



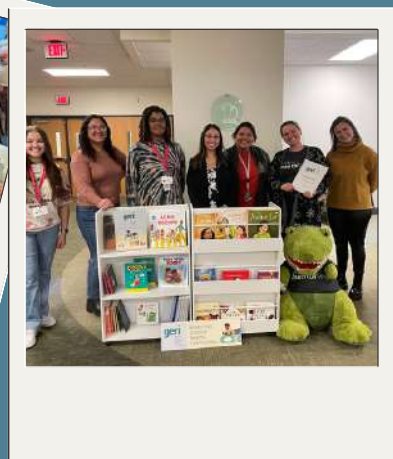
**Rachel VerWys**  
CEO

# PREVENTION & EDUCATION



## Youth Violence Prevention

Youth Violence Prevention (YVP) is one of several prevention-focused programs at Safe Haven. It includes initiatives like our Middle School and High School curriculums (My Voice Matters) as well as the Grow Engage Read Imagine (GERI) and Young Leaders Against Violence (YLAV) programs.



## OTHER AREAS REACHED LAST YEAR:

- Youth-Serving Organizations
- Human Service Agencies
- Healthcare Providers
- Faith Communities
- Criminal Justice Sector
- Higher Education

## Our Approach

Safe Haven utilizes a prevention approach that focuses both on the individual, as well as making changes throughout organizations and across systems to ensure that communities can be successful in reducing rates of violence. In addition to providing knowledge, we help participants develop the skills and tools to effectively implement & lead change in their own community.

FY23

FY24

330

332

Total number of prevention & outreach activities completed

6,031

11,558

Community members reached through all prevention & outreach efforts

3,204

3,546

Youth reached through violence prevention



geri

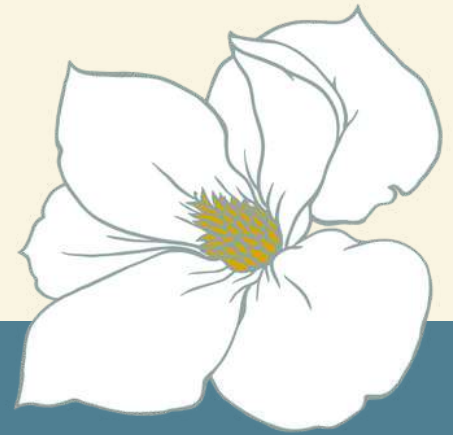


Learn more about our partnership with MSU



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

---



## “...destroyed my life”

Human Trafficking involves the use of force, fraud and coercion of a person for labor or commercial sex acts. Human trafficking is an umbrella term for sex trafficking and labor trafficking. Adults and minors can experience trafficking. Millions of people around the world are abused by human trafficking despite efforts to combat the crime. Human Trafficking remains misunderstood and pervasive in our community and across the United States.

The misuse of power and control over a person for exploitive purposes intersects within the context of our cities, streets and neighborhoods. It is true, human trafficking can happen to anyone, yet there are often factors that increase someone’s vulnerability :

- unstable housing
- a history of domestic violence
- runaway youth or youth in foster care
- economic instability
- migration or immigration
- substance abuse

Human  
Trafficking  
Victims  
Served

63

through crisis  
support, advocacy,  
shelter and/or  
housing

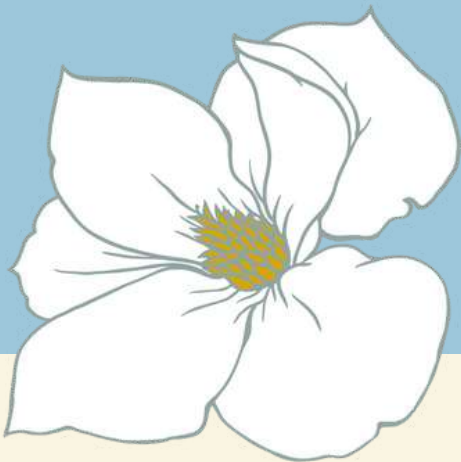


## EQUIPPING OUR COMMUNITY

We equip multi-sector leaders and our community to better understand human trafficking through our Anti-Trafficking Seminar. Held at least quarterly, the seminar explains the different typologies and the current landscape in West Michigan. Participants learn about the impact human trafficking has on adult and minor victims, risk factors and vulnerabilities of trafficking, as well as effective referral strategies.

“Great presentation! Very informative & engaging speakers/topics. Thank you for the important work you are doing in our community.”

# CLIENT SERVICES



Services include crisis support and safety planning, ongoing one-on-one support, support groups, shelter, housing, legal advocacy. All services are free, no documentation required and offered in the individual’s preferred language

Number of crisis contacts

2023

3,322

2024

3,686

Total clients served in shelter

281

226

Number of households served in shelter

93

89

Number of children served in shelter

188

137

Number of individuals receiving nonresidential services

392

330

Shelter & housing nights of safety

16,127

24,559



# Safe Transitions



Safe Haven's partnership-based transitional housing and rapid rehousing for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking is making a tremendous impact. Safe Transitions provides transitional housing for 1-2 years through a collaborative model and flexible rental assistance – both of which include ongoing supportive services from a Housing Advocate. Our generous donors make housing stability possible for these survivors.



**TOTAL NIGHTS OF  
HOUSING SAFETY 24,000+**

Safe Haven supported  
**65** clients through the  
Safe Transitions Program

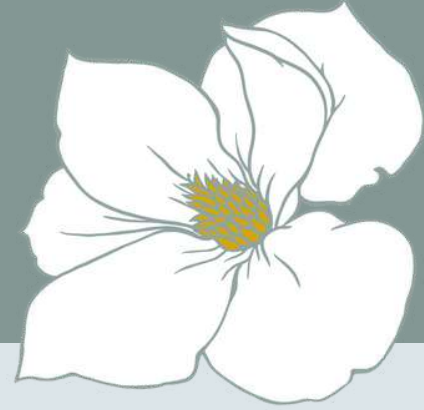
“

“Living in a Safe Haven Ministries transition house has been a very big blessing. We have a secure home, and we are getting the help that we need to move forward for our future.

I am blessed to have the support of Safe Haven and their staff to help me and my children. I pray that others seek Safe Haven Ministries and get help they need as well.

~ Survivor

# SUPPORT GROUPS



## Relationship Abuse Educational Support Group & Pláticas y Pan Dulce: What is it? What does it look like?

Understanding the various tactics used to maintain power and control over an intimate partner, advocates explore topics related to the effects of trauma, characteristics of abusers, intergenerational trauma, and abuse along the relationship spectrum. This group is a great first step for understanding the complex dynamics of intimate partner abuse. Pláticas y Pan Dulce is the Spanish Support Group.

## Advanced Relationship Abuse Educational Support Group: "How can I love someone who hurt me so badly?"

Survivors are not crazy for loving their partners and this group will explore grief, trauma bonds, post-separation abuse, and learn how to rebuild community and healthy boundaries. Survivors learn to incorporate healing techniques and explore the journey of growing through the stages of healing.

## Survivor Thriver Support Group:

For survivors looking for a drop-in-style, low commitment opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals as they continue to navigate life post-separation. This is a survivor led peer group for individuals looking to stay connected and gain peer support from one another. Topics are fluid and related to what survivors need to explore with one another.



## Financial Empowerment:

This group helps empower survivors who have experienced financial abuse with the knowledge, practical skills, and support needed to ensure better financial security. Those who complete this curriculum will gain the confidence to create a budget and make informed spending decisions, open a safe bank account, improve their credit, pay down old debt, and begin working toward their own personal financial goals.

”

“I don’t understand why every seat in this group isn’t filled, the information and support is so helpful, I wish I had come sooner!”

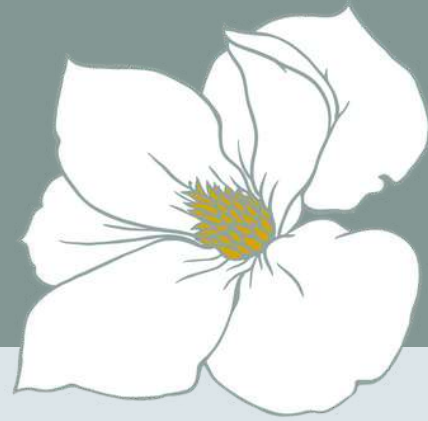
~ Survivor Committee Member

”



# COLLABORATIVE IMPACT

in 2024



**The Domestic Violence Action Network (DVAN) is one example of Safe Haven 's commitment to community collaboration. Safe Haven co-chairs various workgroups within DVAN, including High Lethality, Criminal Justice & Governance.**

In 2023, we joined community leaders in a courageous proposal to leverage experience and collaboration of cross-sector agencies to launch the new Kent County Domestic Violence Action Network (DVAN). For decades, the Domestic Violence Community Coordinated Response (DVCCRT) brought sectors together around our counties response to domestic violence. The reimagined Kent County Domestic Violence Action Network continues to address the need for increased survivor-centered systems response and the opportunity to initiate infrastructure to support coordinated collective impact strategy for equitable change. The project worked to recognize domestic violence as a public health crisis addressed with inclusive and trauma informed solutions and a \$4 million investment from Kent County ARPA funds.

Kent County Prosecutor Chris Becker shared that our community fought for years to secure funding for a specialty domestic violence court. Now that it is finally happening, through the work of DVAN, Becker said it will make a tremendous difference, calling it a

**“game changer”**

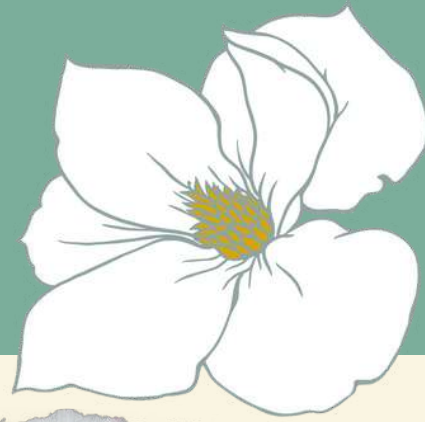


GERI partnerships with Grand Rapids Public Library, MSU Spark Research for Social Change, Affinity Mentoring and City of Grand Rapids continued to thrive. New book nooks were added to Roosevelt Park Ministries, Burton Elementary, Southwest Elementary School, Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center, & Kent District Library Bookmobile.

TAKE A STAND AGAINST VIOLENCE

# GIVE HOPE

---



**43** trained  
volunteers contributed  
to **4,460** hours,  
investing an equivalent  
of **\$89,200**

Volunteering is an experience  
that allows us to give and  
receive.

Besides giving back to the  
community, volunteering  
provides the opportunity for a  
transformative venture.

Here at Safe Haven, we strive  
to engage our partners in a  
mutuality of service where  
both groups learn from one  
another.

Learn more at  
[shmgr.org/volunteer/](https://shmgr.org/volunteer/)  
or use the QR Code





# SAFEHAVEN MINISTRIES

## Board of Directors

Fiscal Year 2024  
July 2023 - June 2024

Shannon Vinson, President  
Michael Wiese, Vice President  
Danica deWaha-Persons, Treasurer  
Esperanza Degnan, Secretary  
Maleika Brown  
Yani Castro  
Julie Manion  
Melissa Stewart  
Alexandria Walker

Rachel VerWys, CEO



2627 Birchcrest Dr. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
p. 616.452.6664 f. 616.452.1168 e. [info@shmgr.org](mailto:info@shmgr.org)  
[www.shmgr.org](http://www.shmgr.org)

Learn  
More About  
US TODAY!





SAFEHAVEN  
MINISTRIES