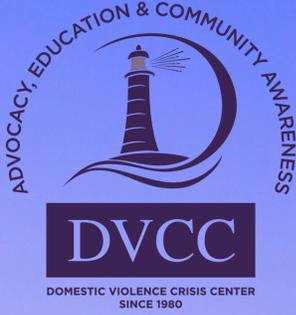


Listen. Connect. Offer.



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year at DVCC, we are filled with gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication to our mission. Your commitment has allowed us to continue our vital work in addressing and combatting domestic violence in our community.

Our efforts have focused on three main pillars: **Listen, Connect, Offer.**

Listen: We have continued to prioritize listening to the stories and experiences of survivors. By providing a safe space for individuals to share their journeys, we ensure that their voices are heard and their needs are understood.

Connect: Building on the foundation of listening, we have strengthened our connections within the community. Through partnerships with local organizations, law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, and educational institutions, we have expanded our reach and improved our ability to provide comprehensive support.

Offer: With your support, we have been able to offer critical services to survivors and their families. From emergency shelter and legal advocacy to counseling and prevention education, we strive to meet the diverse needs of those affected by domestic violence.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities that lie before us. As we continue to grow and evolve, we remain committed to our mission of ending domestic violence and creating a safer, more compassionate community for all.

None of this would be possible without your generosity and belief in our cause. Whether you have donated your time, resources, or expertise, please know that your contribution has made a tangible difference in the lives of survivors. You are helping DVCC create a future where every individual feels safe, valued, and empowered.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission. Together, we are making a difference.

Warmly,

Suzanne Adam

SUZANNE ADAM

Chief Executive Officer





Our Mission

DVCC's mission is to prevent and eliminate domestic violence by educating our communities and supporting individuals in building safer lives.

Domestic Violence Crisis Center (DVCC) is here to support individuals on their journey to safety. DVCC advocates for individuals who are experiencing abuse in personal relationships. Our multiple services and professional staff help those experiencing any level of domestic violence and assist them in building a safer environment for the well-being of themselves and their families. All victim services are free and confidential. Services offered are multicultural/multilingual and inclusive of individuals of all identities.

OUR IMPACT

VICTIMS SERVED

3,619

VICTIMS RECEIVED
HOUSING & FINANCIAL ADVOCACY

200

BED NIGHTS PROVIDED IN SAFE HOUSES &
HOTELS

15,673

TRAINING & EDUCATION PROGRAMS

450

VICTIMS RECEIVED
CIVIL & CRIMINAL ADVOCACY

2,957

ADULTS RECEIVED TRAINING &
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1,563

VICTIMS RECEIVED
YOUTH & FAMILY COUNSELING

154

YOUTH REACHED
THROUGH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

9,185

FY 2024

SERVICES

Safe Housing

DVCC offers domestic violence victims and their children safe, short-term emergency housing for those experiencing homelessness and fleeing violence. DVCC has two safe houses which are in confidential locations in Stamford and Norwalk.

Residents in our safe houses are provided with meals, clothing, safety planning and transportation. They have access to all of DVCC's wrap-around services. Whether for a few days or a few weeks, DVCC's safe houses offer a safe place where healing and recovery can take place.

In FY2024, DVCC provided shelter for **164** individuals, **76** of whom were children.

Since COVID, the average length of stay in the safe houses has **tripled**.

Legal Advocacy

DVCC provides advocacy for domestic violence victims within the legal system and has an office at Stamford Superior Court. Advocates can help victims with the following:

- Criminal cases:
 - Advocacy and information around family violence arrest/court case, from arraignment through final disposition
 - Advocate for victim's wants and needs
 - Victim impact statements
- Civil cases:
 - Provide information and assist with restraining orders
- Advocacy with local law enforcement

SERVICES

Client Story

The following story demonstrates DVCC's commitment to providing victim-centered advocacy while also highlighting the full range of services available to residents at the safe houses. With the approach of listening to each person and understanding their unique needs, DVCC's advocates are able to walk alongside each victim, helping them identify personal goals and creating comprehensive strategies for achieving them.

Maria experienced domestic violence and entered our safe house for the first time in the summer of 2023. This victim immigrated from South America escaping gang violence and poverty. When she came to America, she was emotionally, mentally, psychologically and physically abused by her ex-boyfriend, and on one occasion, was pushed while pregnant. Maria entered the safe house where she could share a safe space with other surviving women, as well as children of all ages. The safe house provided her with food, linens, clothes, and toiletries. Staff also assisted by arranging and providing transportation to and from medical or urgent appointments with no cost to the victim. Staff safety planned with her and provided emotional support throughout the transition into safe house. She was referred to DVCC's counseling department where she could process one on one with a licensed professional. She was also referred to our housing and financial department to give her options for housing, financial planning and budgeting.

Maria left our safe house with hopes of a new beginning in the fall of 2023. Unfortunately, the abuse did not stop, and the victim reentered the safe house shortly thereafter with her son. She was once again welcomed and reengaged with our services. The safe house met her basic needs and provided items such as a crib, stroller, diapers, wipes and plenty of clothes for her newborn. Within two months, she requested to move to DVCC's other safe house location to be closer to her doctors; staff promptly assisted with the transition. She has been an active participant in many programs available to her and her children, including a self-care group, journaling group, and enrichment activities for the children.

Staff also provided a referral to Building One Community for immigration services. Staff advocated for the victim and explored short- and long-term housing options. Malta House was explored as an appropriate housing option that would best suit the needs of her and her child, and staff assisted with her transition from our safe house to Malta House, providing case management and working directly with Malta House staff to ensure a smooth transition. She is excited about the future, and eager to continue to grow and experience a violence free life.



SERVICES

Housing & Financial Advocacy

DVCC's Housing & Financial Sustainability program helps survivors overcome financial abuse, achieve economic independence, and access safe housing. Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness, with financial abuse occurring in 99% of cases.

The program provides financial counseling, support groups, and financial literacy workshops to help survivors achieve long-term stability. Services include housing advocacy, financial education, debt management, credit repair, and employment assistance. Studies show 74% of survivors remain in abusive relationships longer due to financial insecurity (NNEDV, 2018). The goal of the program is for survivors to build safer lives and create long-term financial and housing stability for themselves and their children.

During Fiscal Year 2024, DVCC continued its partnership with **Mutual Securities Credit Union (MSCU)** to help victims of financial abuse recover and build financial stability. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), clients give MSCU permission to accept funds from DVCC on their behalf to participate in our Match Savings Program and Secured Credit Card program, allowing them to repair and build credit and savings plans. Together this partnership is helping victims of financial abuse overcome these complex and challenging circumstances and achieve financial stability.

DVCC also continued its partnership with **CT State Community College- Norwalk** to enroll clients in continuing education and certification programs. We have a streamlined enrollment process with CT State, so clients can quickly and easily enroll in classes while also maintaining confidentiality. During the fiscal year, Allstate funds supported three clients with limited English proficiency to attend ESL classes at the college, as well as supported clients to attend and receive certificates in bartending, day care, real estate, and First Aid/CPR. These certificates allowed the clients to have more employment opportunities and increase their income and economic stability.

Counseling

DVCC offers short-term individual counseling with survivors of domestic violence to help them understand the effects of trauma, identify options and goals, and develop safety plans. We offer group counseling which fosters a supportive environment that helps to lessen feelings of isolation, self-blame and denial.

DVCC also provides youth and family counseling to help children who have experienced the trauma of domestic violence. The program offers one-on-one counseling, parent/child counseling and age-appropriate support groups for children as secondary victims of domestic violence. The program also supports young adults as primary victims of domestic violence including teen dating abuse.

“ Because of DVCC's counseling, resources and education, I went from being unsure of whether it was okay for me to leave my situation, to clearly aware that I have been experiencing domestic violence and it was best for me to leave for the health and wellness of myself and of my children. ”

SERVICES

Client Story

Lucy came into our shelter along with her three children, demonstrating remarkable strength and determination by leaving her abuser. Despite enduring abuse, she made the courageous decision to seek help and provide a better life for herself and her children as well.

Upon arriving at the shelter, Lucy took advantage of the resources available to her. DVCC provided counseling sessions to address her trauma, and she showed an unwavering commitment to healing and personal growth. Not only this, but her children also engaged in counseling sessions to help them flourish. Her children, who had also been affected by the abusive environment, began to thrive in the safe and supportive atmosphere of the shelter.

Lucy attended one of DVCC's financial education workshop using Allstate's Moving Ahead curriculum, to help assist clients with improving their credit, learning about financial abuse, credit and providing information to improve their finances. In this workshop, Lucy was active by asking questions and expressing interest in participating in the options provided. Lucy enrolled in the Matched Savings program, the secured credit card program, and NNEDV's Micro Loan program, which will help build her credit. She expressed that she understands the importance of a savings account not only herself but for her children and opened an account with our financial institutional partner, Mutual Security Credit Union. Lucy's determination and resilience was evident as she navigated the challenges to be able to build a stable future for her family.

The client expressed how grateful she was for the programs that are provided for clients. Lucy signed up for paralegal classes at the local community college, CT State Community College- Norwalk, to continue her education, with flexible funds from the Allstate and Break the Cycle grant to help her with her educational goals. She serves as an inspiration to all who face similar challenges, showing that with determination and the right support it is possible to build a positive future.



2024 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

PUBLIC ACT 24-77, AN ACT CONCERNING COERCED DEBT:

Defines coerced debt, makes those who cause another to incur coerced debt civilly liable, and establishes a claims process with banks/creditors.

- Defines coerced debt as “any debt incurred in the name of a debtor who is a victim of domestic violence...when such debt was incurred in response to any duress, intimidation, threat of force, force or undue influence used to specifically coerce the debtor into incurring such debt.”
- Makes any person who knowingly causes another individual to incur coerced debt civilly liable to said individual (“debtor”) for the debt and that person may also be civilly liable for attorneys’ fees and costs incurred by the debtor in establishing that a debt was coerced.
- Establishes a process through which a debtor may work directly with a creditor, bank, etc. (“claimant”), to show that a debt was coerced and request that the claimant cease collections of the debt.

ADVOCACY

2024 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

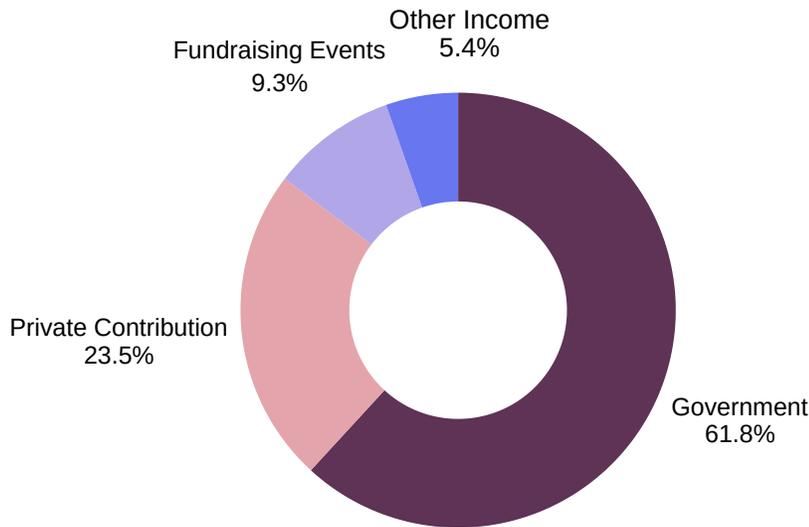
PUBLIC ACT 24-151, AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE: Requires distribution of information regarding intimate partner violence (IPV) by birthing hospitals and birth centers.

- Requires the Department of Public Health (DPH), in conjunction with CCADV, to develop educational materials regarding IPV for distribution a) in print to each birthing hospital and birth center in the state and b) electronically to obstetricians and other practitioners of obstetrics.
- Requires birthing hospitals and birth centers to provide the IPV educational materials developed by DPH to pregnant and postpartum persons.



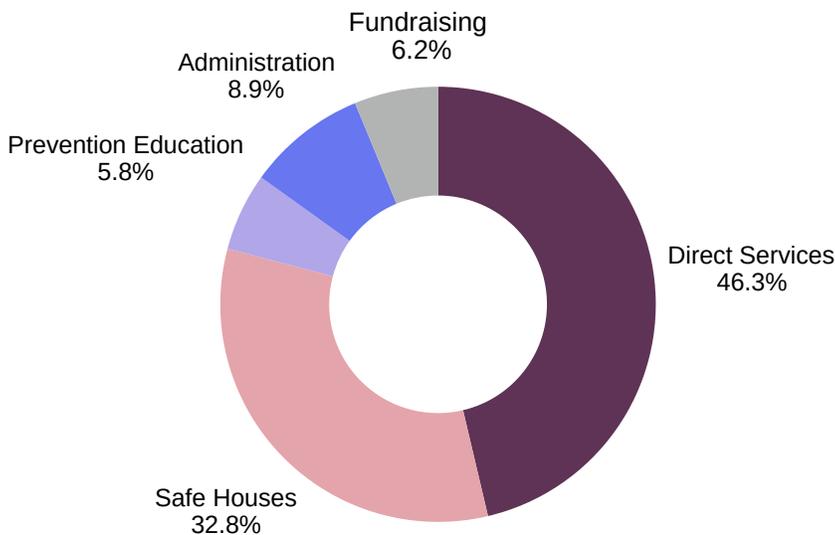
FINANCIALS

Income



Government: \$2,324,241
Private Contribution: \$883,850
Fundraising Events: \$349,403
Other Income: \$201,698
Total Income: \$3,759,192

Expenses



Direct Services: \$1,604,147
Safe Houses: \$1,136,269
Prevention Education: \$200,518
Administration: \$307,103
Fundraising: \$215,559
Total Expenses: \$3,463,596

DONORS

We thank you for the financial contributions that enable DVCC to continue its important work. Every effort has been made to list names accurately. Please accept our apologies for any errors or omissions.

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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS CENTER
SINCE 1980**



Stamford Office
1111 Summer Street, Suite 203
Stamford, CT 06905

Norwalk Office
5 Eversley Avenue, Suite 201
Norwalk, CT 06851

DVCC Hotline: 203-588-9097
National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233

www.DVCCCT.org