



The court and legal staff were compassionate and very informed. They guided me skillfully through the system at all times and made me feel as though I had strong advocates.

## Attorneys Tackle Domestic Violence Laws

The campaign to eliminate domestic violence is waged on multiple fronts: education and information promote prevention; safe shelter and counseling provide safety, healing, esteem-building and empowerment for victims; and the criminal justice system should offer protection for victims and accountability for batterers. However, this third arena is one where Connecticut still has a lot of work to do, according to DVCC's Victim Advocates who work in the Stamford and Norwalk domestic violence docket courts every day.

"Domestic violence is a huge problem in Connecticut, and the courts are ineffective," said Katie Pawlik, an attorney and a former DVCC Victim Advocate, who now provides research and policy advocacy for the DVCC. "Right now, there is a culture of impunity for those who abuse their partners. Almost 70 percent of criminal domestic violence cases are dismissed or nollied each year throughout the state. In other states, prosecutors' offices are aiming to have conviction rates at around 50 percent."

Pawlik and Andrea Dahms, who is also an attorney and a Victim Advocate for DVCC in Stamford Criminal Court, acknowledged and commended the work done last year by Speaker of the House Christopher Donovan's Legislative Task Force on Domestic Violence and the state legislature to pass new laws to protect victims. But, they said, the laws still do not address many of the ongoing systemic problems that allow defendants to avoid prosecution and often force victims to return to court week after week to deal with civil issues, such as divorce and custody, as

well as their abuser's criminal case.

After many hours of research into best practices in criminal justice systems throughout the country, Pawlik and Dahms came up with a series of recommendations, which they presented in formal testimony to the Legislative Task Force on Domestic Violence (now in its second year) on December 20th. Additionally, they have been meeting one-on-one with the state legislators who represent DVCC's catchment areas.

Pawlik and Dahms said they are very



aware that spending is an issue, and have suggested changes that would not entail additional funding.

"At a time when perhaps the State cannot devote any more resources to this problem, we would ask this task force to consider small legislative changes and initiatives that would make our criminal justice system smarter and more effective, and to make the diversionary programs it offers available only to the offenders who are most appropriate, that is a first arrest for domestic violence, and to also hold defendants accountable if they do not satisfactorily complete the program," Pawlik

said in her testimony before the Task Force.

Dahms was invited to present to the Task Force information on Integrated Domestic Violence Courts, which is a "one family, one judge" response to domestic violence, bringing together the criminal and civil cases before a single judge.

She talked about two example cases in Stamford where the victim would have benefitted from such a system. In one, the defendant was being prosecuted in criminal court in a domestic violence case for violation of a restraining order. He and his partner had also been involved in a prolonged custody battle in family court, and she was still fighting to collect the child support she had been granted, but he wasn't providing. She also had to appear in civil court to extend the restraining order against him.

"She was in the Stamford Courthouse every other week," Dahms said. "She lost her job due to time away from work, and then couldn't afford to pay her attorney, while her partner had a very well-paid attorney."

In another case, an offender had two domestic violence felony cases pending against him in criminal court for abusing his wife. Meanwhile, she spent months petitioning in family court for a simple divorce – they had no children and she wasn't asking for property or alimony, just a divorce and name change. He fought her every step of the way, forcing her to remain in an abusive marriage far longer than necessary.

Above: DVCC court and legal staff, Jamie Vargas, Andrea Dahms, Katie Pawlik and Jennifer Cerezo.

# Message From DVCC Pres. Carolyn Ryzewicz

*We asked Carolyn Ryzewicz, the new DVCC Board of Directors President, to comment on why she joined the board and what her experience had been with the DVCC. This is the first of an occasional series by board members entitled "Why the DVCC?"*

Prior to joining the board of DVCC ten years ago, I spoke with representatives of two other agencies. I wasn't exactly sure what kind of board experience I was looking for, but I was confident that I'd recognize it when I found it. And I was right.

The executive director at that time, Joanne Lorange, didn't sugar coat the responsibilities. She emphasized that the DVCC board was a "working board," where members were expected to work on committees, advocate for the issue in the community and support the fundraising efforts on behalf of the newly merged agency. But her manner told me it wasn't all work — and, in fact, most board members seemed to enjoy fulfilling their duties.

She definitely was correct — and ten years later I'm still an enthusiastic supporter of the DVCC. Not that I intended to stay ten



years. But at the end of each term served, I realized that, not only wasn't I tired of working on the issue of domestic violence, but also there was no other topic that seemed to "grab" me with the same level of intensity and commitment.

During this past decade I have been actively involved in a wide variety of capacities. On the board I was secretary and then vice president, where I served as head of the nominating committee; I was on three executive director search committees, served on two committees to revise the board's by-laws and was a member of the strategic planning committee. And I served on the development committee.

Now I find myself president just as the agency seems to be positioning itself for another growth spurt. The exact direction is still being debated in the current strategic plan committee. But there is no doubt that over the years, as the DVCC has grown in stature and professionalism, more and more people seek out its services. Even the number of services continues to expand as the agency responds to the increasing needs of its clients.

I must admit that I consider myself extremely fortunate to be president of the board of directors at such an important time in the history of this dynamic agency.

— Carolyn Ryzewicz

## Abused Client Gets DVCC Help

As she made her way to Norwalk from her native country in South America, Nola\* was excited about rejoining her boyfriend and certain she was starting the life of her dreams. Instead she was plunged into a nightmare. From the moment she arrived, her boyfriend brutally beat, sexually assaulted and virtually imprisoned Nola for over a year before she finally found the opportunity and the courage to go to the police. They took her to the hospital and referred her to the DVCC office in Norwalk, where she has received assistance from legal and counseling staff since January. Nola said she feared not only for her life, but also for the safety of her family in South America, whom her abuser had continually threatened to harm.

"The experience was like a horror movie," she wrote in a letter describing her ordeal to the judge presiding over her boyfriend's court case. "He should never be free. What he did to me, he could do to someone else."

Despite her fear and the brutal treatment she received, the diminutive 25-year-old

displays a resilience and quiet determination that has allowed her to move on and embrace her life even though it is a far cry from the one she anticipated. She attends weekly group counseling at DVCC, has found a place to live, works full time at a variety of jobs and is applying for a U-visa, which gives legal immigration status to immigrant victims of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and other criminal activity. And thanks to the persistent advocacy by Katie Pawlik, DVCC's Director of Court and Legal Services for Norwalk, and Jennifer Cerezo, DVCC Victim Advocate, her abuser faces a prison sentence for sexual assault rather than the lesser charges associated with domestic violence that are usually dismissed if the offender attends a Family Violence Education program.

Despite Nola's initial reluctance to talk

about her abuse in a support group setting — she came to the first one with her head and most of her face covered by a scarf — she has since come out of her shell.

"In group, it's good to talk about feelings," she said. "I felt so bad and didn't want to talk to anybody. But when I heard other stories, I realized I wasn't the only one to suffer abuse and felt more comfortable sharing."

Nola added that she is grateful to the police for introducing her to the DVCC and for the ongoing support she has received.

"It's a good thing this organization provides support to women even though they are immigrants and undocumented," she said. "I want to thank DVCC on behalf of all women in similar situations."

\*Names have been changed for safety.



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# PeaceWorks Goes to Camp

“Miss Gina, Miss Gina, where’s Cool?” David\* enquired as DVCC PeaceWorks educator Gina Paniccia sat down with puppets Hip and Dandy Lion, each balanced on a knee. David is a camper at the Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc. (NEON) summer camp program, where PeaceWorks presents programs to several groups each week.

“Well, he has a day off today,” Gina said. “He went to the water park.”

Seven-year-old David’s eyes grew large and his whole expression registered concern.

“Alone? You meant he went there alone? What if he gets angry or upset and no one is there to help him?” he cried.

“I think he’ll be okay,” Gina said. “Remember, we had a really good talk last time about stopping, taking five and thinking before you say or do something mean?”

David shook his head and bit his lip. “I don’t know. Maybe. I’m still kind of worried.”

The fact that David was so concerned about one of the three colorful, oversized puppets that join him and his friends at camp several times a week to talk about feelings and how to solve problems is a testament to the animated presentations given by the PeaceWorks educators. He and his young campmates seemed to truly grasp the sometimes complex concepts of tolerance and empathy posed in made up scenarios and

were determined to help solve the dilemmas faced by the puppets.

“We have the kids talk about themselves, their heritage, their likes and dislikes, things that relate to them, in order to get into discussions about tolerance and empathy,” Gina said. “It’s really impressive that five, six and seven year olds can talk about tolerance and cultural understanding.”

Kristen Pavlik, Associate Coordinator of PeaceWorks, said one of the most rewarding aspects of working with youngsters in the summer camp and out-of-school programs is that it allows for consistency and the ability to build upon knowledge and learning week after week. Each age group at the NEON camp (Pre-K - 7th grade) meets with PeaceWorks educators twice a week for six to eight weeks. The older campers engage in games and activities such as relationship bingo and creating books and stories in which they are super heroes with their own “peace powers”. By the end of the summer, PeaceWorks educators will have taught over 100 children at NEON.

PeaceWorks also provides education at CTE, a Stamford program similar to NEON, at programs offered by the Norwalk Housing Authority and at the PeaceWorkSHOPS ongoing program that runs throughout most of the year at Norwalk City Hall. The

latter program is heading into its fourth year, with several students, and now their siblings, returning year after year.

“A lot of the older kids have taken on helping roles with the younger ones, they’ve built a community for themselves,” said PeaceWorks educator Lauren Linkowski.

PeaceWorks staff also goes to the two DVCC SafeHouses each week to meet and engage in activities with the young residents living there.

As the summer draws to a close, PeaceWorks is gearing up for another school year, during which it will present programs for Pre-K through 12th grade students in nearly every school in the seven communities served by the DVCC as well as PeaceWorkSHOPS and other after school programs at several venues. In the 2009-2010 school year, PeaceWorks reached 25,589 students and provided nearly 1,200 classroom presentations in the communities of Stamford, Norwalk, Westport, New Canaan, Darien, Wilton and Weston.

Meanwhile, David said he hopes Cool will be back very soon so that he can ask him about his day off. He is also looking forward to seeing all his puppet friends and the people who accompany them at his elementary school this fall.

*\*Names have been changed for privacy.*

## 24/7 at the DVCC SafeHouses

Imagine your daughter is going off to college. She has never been away from home before and because of financial constraints, you are unable to accompany her. Her plane is delayed, so she arrives in the middle of the night instead of during the afternoon, as planned. Because of cutbacks at the school, resident advisors staff the dorms only between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Someone lets her in, shows her to her room, instructs her to see the RA in the morning and leaves. She lies down on the unmade mattress and tries not to cry.

The scenario is not unlike arriving at a domestic violence shelter that is staffed only during daytime hours - except, of course, that the college student actually wants to be there and is not escaping an abuser with just the clothes on her back and two small, confused children in tow.

Happily, this type of desolate welcome no longer happens at DVCC’s Norwalk Safe-



House since January when it became one of five domestic violence shelters in the state to receive funding for around-the-clock coverage. Even more happily, this past July, the State Legislature allocated funds that will support 24/7 coverage in all Connecticut domestic violence shelters. The difference in the day-to-day operations and the comfort level of

the residents in the shelter that always has a staff member present is major, according to SafeHouse Director Cyndy Goldberg.

“Our 24/7 coverage is absolutely wonderful,” said Goldberg, who was horrified when she came to Connecticut from a similar domestic violence program in Illinois several years ago and discovered that none of the state’s shelters were staffed at night or on the weekends.

The benefits of additional staff reach far beyond having someone there to settle in newcomers. Just as important are the consistency of support and the security of knowing that a professional staff member is always there to talk, deal with a crisis or just provide companionship to a worried, sleepless resident at four in the morning. A fully staffed safe house also functions a lot more smoothly and efficiently because problems

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# Medical Advocacy Project Takes Flight

Bringing about systems change within an established institution may be one of the most frustrating and, if there is success, rewarding experiences one can have. It takes countless hours of work, piles of research materials, persistence, diplomacy, a willingness to learn and digest new information and more persistence, as the DVCC's Medical Advocacy Project's staff members have discovered over the past two years.

Working to develop the first Medical Advocacy Project (MAP) in Connecticut, MAP Director Susan Delaney and MAP Advocate Vicki Tippett traveled to other states, conducted extensive research and continue to contact and meet with medical professionals throughout Fairfield County. The purpose of the project is to promote early identification of victims of domestic violence through improved universal screening, provide onsite advocacy services to victims, develop a comprehensive educational training program for all health care professionals and, finally, to evaluate the intervention methods and outcomes in order to refine and replicate the model for other domestic violence programs in the state.

One of MAP's early initiatives was to forge a partnership agreement between Stamford Hospital and the DVCC. Through this partnership, which was formalized in August, the DVCC provides ongoing training on domestic violence to hospital staff, works closely with hospital staff to enhance screening procedures and interview techniques for patients who may be victims of abuse, provides onsite advocacy, education and referral services to patients who are positively identified as victims and will collaborate with hospital personnel to adopt formal evaluation procedures for monitoring the quality of the Stamford Hospital domestic violence program.

"Our goal is to educate all Hospital employees as to how to identify victims earlier in the cycle of injury," said Mary Henwood-Klotz, Administrator for Stamford Hospital's Center for Integrative Medicine and Wellness. "We look forward to working closely with the DVCC on this initiative and further developing all aspects of the partnership."

In early March, MAP implemented The MAP Team, whereby a DVCC domestic violence counselor/advocate is on call 24/7 to visit and provide services to victims. Calls to the DVCC counselor/advocates for assistance may come from medical personnel or the

police. Additionally, MAP has developed its own body map and intake forms and has designed 30-minute trainings for individual doctors and their staffs.

Medical professionals such as Donna Clemmens have embraced the MAP goals. Clemmens is an Associate Professor at New York University's College of Nursing and the newly appointed head of the Masters Entry Into Nursing Program at the University of Connecticut. A professional with over 35 years of experience working as a hospital nurse, a public health nurse and an educator, Clemmens fully understands the importance of developing a coordinated ongoing relationship between health care providers and advocates for victims of domestic violence. She explained that the response to victims by health care professionals varies widely and that one of the biggest problems is that once a patient identifies herself as a victim of domestic abuse, the health care worker often doesn't know what to do. (This observation has been confirmed by studies, including a survey by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which found that many healthcare professionals "lack confidence in their ability to manage and care for victims of domestic abuse.")

"This program is so important because it puts experts into the system," she said. "One doesn't feel as powerless because there are other professionals there to help."

The initial development of MAP entailed research and fact-finding trips. One such trip in October 2009 took Delaney and Tippett to Pennsylvania, where they visited three domestic violence agencies with an established 10-year-old Medical Advocacy program. They met with medical advocates from the three agencies and attended presentations by two of them to groups of medical professionals. Discussions included a wide range of topics, from understanding the national standards for hospitals on how to respond to domestic abuse to identifying which staff members should be trained on domestic violence.

They were able to focus their questions more specifically because of the knowledge Delaney gained earlier that month when she attended the Family Violence Prevention Fund's annual Conference on Health and Domestic Violence in New Orleans. Surrounded by over 1200 researchers, medical professionals and advocates from as far



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away as Australia, New Zealand and Japan, Delaney spent three intense, information-packed days learning about the latest findings in how domestic violence affects the health of its victims.

One of the most fascinating workshops she attended was a presentation on the results of a study that showed a link between stress from interpersonal violence and the molecular mechanisms that regulate aging. The study provided evidence that victims subjected to high levels of stress from domestic violence age faster and therefore may be more susceptible to diseases associated with aging.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is continually emerging evidence that the impact of intimate partner violence on a victim's health reaches far beyond visible bruises, cuts or broken bones. Citing several recent studies, the CDC writes the following:

"More severe physical consequences of IPV may occur depending on severity and frequency of abuse. Physical violence by an intimate partner has also been associated with a number of adverse health outcomes. Several health conditions associated with intimate partner violence may be a direct result of the physical violence (for example, bruises, knife wounds, broken bones, back or pelvic pain, headaches). Studies have also demonstrated the impact of intimate partner violence on the endocrine and immune systems through chronic stress or other mechanisms. Examples include: fibromyalgia; irritable bowel syndrome; gynecological disorders, pregnancy difficulties like low birth weight babies and perinatal deaths; sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS; central nervous system disorders; gastrointestinal disorders; heart or circulatory conditions."\*

\*<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>





DVCC's Vicki Tippet and Stamford Hospital's Mary Henwood Klotz at MAP event.

## MAP Assists Hospitalized Client

Even before DVCC formally established the MAP Team, whereby a DVCC counselor advocate is on call 24/7 to respond to victims in hospital and police settings, we were responding to hospitalized victims of domestic violence. One example is Mary\*, who, in January, was rushed to the Norwalk Hospital emergency room with a life-threatening stab wound in her neck. Her husband was arrested and charged with attempted murder several hours later.

After three weeks in intensive care, Mary survived the assault, but had a long and difficult recuperation ahead of her. An alert social worker in the hospital's rehab unit realized that she would need more than just physical rehabilitation. Her emotional and psychological well-being was also at stake. The social worker knew about the DVCC and made the referral.

DVCC MAP staff visited Mary in the hospital and assisted her throughout her nearly two month stay in rehab. They helped Mary and her mother (who was present during the attack on her daughter) deal with the trauma of the assault as well as with the more practical aspects of moving forward. Additionally they established that Mary was eligible for victim compensation through the state and gave her information on how to apply for it; put her in touch with the DVCC Housing Advocate to start looking for a new home, as she didn't want to return to the apartment where she had been attacked; brought in the DVCC legal staff to discuss Mary's desire to restart the divorce proceedings she had postponed a couple of years earlier; and searched around

for ways to help her rent or purchase the medical equipment she would need at home for pain management and continued care and rehabilitation.

Ultimately, because they had come to like and respect Mary so much, the social worker and nurses in the Norwalk Hospital rehab unit chipped in to buy some of the items she needed for home care.

Mary is just one example of how DVCC's comprehensive services can help people who present as victims of domestic violence in a medical setting, whether it be a doctor's office, a clinic, the ER, the hospital or in rehab. While her injuries were extreme and the domestic violence was obvious, MAP's goal is to provide the Fairfield County medical community with the information, education and training needed to identify and refer patients with far less visible symptoms or injuries, as well as to ensure that all victims are offered the broad range of services available through DVCC.

Medical professionals and insurance companies prescribe prevention and early intervention as the best medicine for good health. Advocates and educators who work with victims of domestic violence agree. Early intervention for a black eye or broken arm may well preclude a future stabbing or strangulation. Determining that the root cause of stress is an abusive partner may prevent a future heart attack or stroke. Consulting with the professionals who are best equipped to help victims of domestic abuse can go a long way toward ensuring a healthier life for countless victims who slip through the cracks and go unnoticed every day.

*\*Names have been changed for safety.*

## With Regret



Kathy Kincaid

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of DVCC board of directors' member Kathy Kincaid and former board member Chris Simmers.

Chris Simmers, who lived in Darien and was a real estate sales agent and manager, served on the board from 2005 to 2007.

Kathy Kincaid was an information security expert for IBM for over 30 years, an active volunteer for many local organizations in her home town of Westport and a devoted and long-time member of the DVCC family. She joined the board in 2007 after serving as a volunteer for the agency. During her tenure, she undertook the enormous task of co-chairing DVCC's Voices of Courage Luncheon fundraiser for four years, created and oversaw other fundraising events, served on committees to effect changes within the agency and raised awareness about the agency whenever possible.

"Kathy was passionate about the DVCC and the issue of domestic violence and she never stopped working to support the goals of this agency," said Rachelle Kucera Mehra, Executive Director of DVCC. "We will miss her dearly, both as a friend of the DVCC and as a friend."

The DVCC extends its condolences to the families of Kathy Kincaid and Chris Simmers and its thanks for sharing their loved ones with us.

**"I slept and dreamt  
that life was joy. I  
awoke and saw that  
life was service. I  
acted and behold,  
service was joy."  
—Tagore**

# Teen PeaceWorks Responds to Dating Violence

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in four adolescents report physical, emotional or sexual abuse from a dating partner each year, and other studies show the rate to be as high as one in three. The DVCC's educational project has provided programs on healthy relationships to teens since its inception, and is continually looking to expand and update its approach in order to meet the challenges of technology and other societal changes.

Most recently, PeaceWorks is addressing the problem by establishing a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to teen dating violence in Stamford. This initiative is thanks to a grant from the STOP Violence Against Women Fund administered through the State of Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management.

The goal of the CCR is to increase access to services, improve intervention methods and ultimately reduce the recurrence of teen dating violence in the Stamford community through a more collaborative and coordinated response to incidents of teen intimate partner abuse. DVCC hosted its first meeting in November to discuss the goals of the CCR, the services already being provided and the gaps in services and established intervention methods. Attendees included representatives from the Stamford Police Department's Special Victims Unit, Stamford public schools, Child Guidance, the Stamford Youth Bureau, Stamford Hospital, Stamford Academy, the State Attorney's Office and the Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education.

February 1 marked the beginning of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, and DVCC Teen PeaceWorks groups throughout our communities engaged in activities and events to promote awareness and information about abuse within teen dating relationships. Some of the activities included setting up informational tables, displaying life-size silhouettes depicting stories of teen victims, airing Public Service Announcements about teen dating violence on school networks and visiting school health classes to discuss dating violence.

DVCC is very proud of and grateful to the members of Teen PeaceWorks, many of whom have completed a nine-hour training course on intimate partner violence, for the work they have done and continue to do in this important area.



Students from Stamford (top) and Wilton (bottom) schools.





# DVCC Settles Into New Space

Climbing over boxes and looking for new places to stash pens and paperclips last December, DVCC staff members had no idea how their new Stamford office would affect the functioning of the agency. Sure it was new and bright and clean and didn't smell of mold or have peeling paint like the old office. But what would it mean that PeaceWorks, legal staff, SafeHouse staff, counselors and admin were all in one place and that Norwalk counselors and court victim advocates would also hang out here a couple of times a week?

Over the last year, we have discovered that the new centralized site has fostered and encouraged increased communication between staff at each level and in every department, resulting in faster and more comprehensive services for clients and greater exchange of ideas and information for systems change. On any given day, legal and counseling staff wander down to the "prevention wing" to consult with PeaceWorks educators or the MAP director, a counselor seeks advice from a legal advocate for her client, PeaceWorks educators schedule programs for children in the SafeHouses, a counselor meets with her group in the "discussion" area, volunteers come in to help in a variety of ways and children play in the big open playroom under the watchful eye of our administrative assistant.

To some this may not seem that meaningful, but for an agency that works with clients in six different venues and whose clients often need multiple services within a strictly confidential setting, it is hugely beneficial. Additionally, the new office is a place where the DVCC can proudly host other service providers from the community, our local, state and national political representatives, our funders and potential funders and many others to exchange ideas and information.

Just a few of our guests and gatherings since December have included: Michelle Cruz, Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut; State Representative Gerald Fox; State Senator Bob Duff; Judge Richard Comerford, Judge Robert Genuario, Judge William Wenzel and Judge Jack Grogins from the Stamford and Norwalk criminal courts; a networking luncheon for 35 service providers and other representatives from the Hispanic community; Teen PeaceWorks leaders from area high schools; representatives from the Community Fund of Darien; representatives



from our town Domestic Violence Task Forces; medical personnel assisting with the Medical Advocacy Project; and those involved with the DVCC's strategic planning for the future.

## SafeHouses page 3

don't develop overnight or on weekends, a client's needs are assessed more quickly and daytime staff can focus on providing help that needs to be done during working hours. Additionally, night and weekend staff can offer diverse and meaningful projects that benefit residents and their children in a relaxed environment.

When Sonia Velazquez, a Counselor Advocate at the Norwalk SafeHouse, comes to work every Saturday and Sunday for her 3 to 11 p.m. shift, she brings with her a repertoire of ideas to fill the weekend for both residents and their children. As the assistant director at a pre-school program, her full time job during the week, Velazquez is well prepared.

These are just a very few examples of how she and the SafeHouse residents have interacted during the past few months: making cookies from scratch while talking about memories associated with the kitchen; holding weekly discussions called Table Topics; playing musical chairs and computer games with the children; helping a client search for a safe place to have lunch with her sister; helping with job searches; discussing current events

In just a few short months, many have circled through 777 Summer Street, all with the ultimate goal of promoting the fundamental right of all individuals to be safe in their personal relationships.

from a daily newspaper; gathering information for a client who wanted to know more about the school her sons would be attending, researching afterschool activities and mentoring programs for preteen males and putting together folders and school supplies for the boys' first day of school; painting flower pots and planting "seeds of hope" in them; making Mother's Day bracelets and cards; reading and holding a discussion about the book *The Paper Bag Princess* with four children and their mom.

The main thing, though, is that the residents are secure in knowing that someone will always be there. "Often they just need someone to talk to and they love knowing that we're here," said Velazquez. "Even if they're out of the SafeHouse on personal business or interviewing for a job, they'll call to talk about what they're doing."

"The other day," she continued, "a little girl came into the office at the SafeHouse, sat down and told me all about how she was going to become a teacher. And then she asked, 'Are you going to be here so I can call you when I become a teacher?'"



Know that you are not alone, there are kind people who care and are concerned and prepared to help you.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010



Information and resources were given to me that I may have been too ashamed to ask for on my own. It is also nice to have someone who understands what you are going through.





Nobody should go through this alone... Just admitting I needed to come for my sanity was difficult, DVCC was highly informative and helpful.



# ANNUAL REPORT

## Financials 2009-2010

### DVCC Revenues and Expenses Fiscal Year 2009-2010

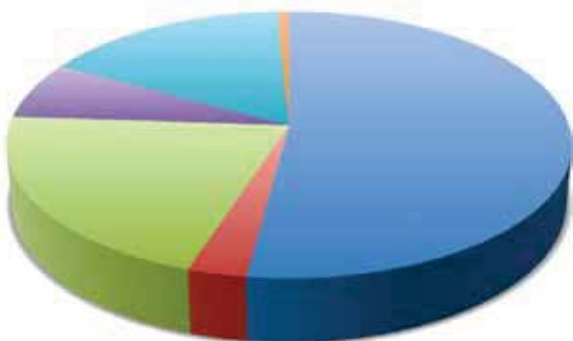
#### Revenues

Government	\$1,117,467
United Way	\$63,337
Private Donations	\$451,016
Special Events	\$150,083
In-Kind Goods & Services	\$345,683
Misc. & Investment Income	\$17,245
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$2,127,586</b>

#### Expenses

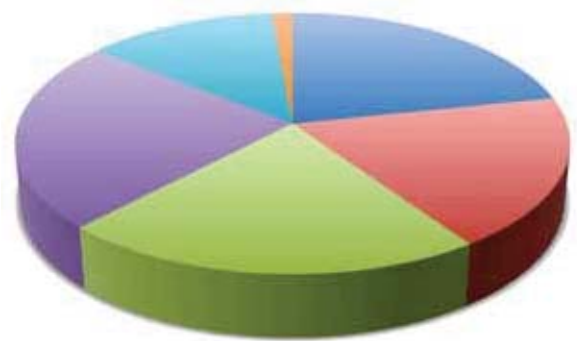
SafeHouses	\$455,132
Counseling	\$393,070
PeaceWorks	\$455,132
Court & Legal Advocacy	\$496,499
Administration & General	\$268,940
Fundraising & Development	\$29,220
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,097,993</b>

### Revenues



■ Government      ■ United Ways  
■ Private Donations      ■ Special Events  
■ In-Kind Goods & Services      ■ Misc. & Investment Income

### Expenses



■ SafeHouses      ■ Counseling  
■ PeaceWorks      ■ Court & Legal Advocacy  
■ Administration & General      ■ Fundraising & Development



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5 Eversley Ave Ste 303  
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# SUPPORT OUR WORK

*DVCC Needs Your Support. Your gift is vital to helping us carry out our mission.*

Please show your support for families in crisis by donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*Does your employer match your donation? Maximize your gift by contacting your employer's Human Resource office for a copy of their matching gift form.*

**Mail to: DVCC, 777 Summer Street, Ste 400, Stamford CT 06901**



## ALL SERVICES ARE FREE & CONFIDENTIAL

Emergency Shelter • Civil and Criminal Legal Advocacy • Counseling • Children's Services  
Medical Advocacy • Housing Advocacy • Multilingual Services  
Trainings and Educational Services • PeaceWorks: Prevention Education Programs  
**24-Hour Hotline (1-888-774-2900)**

## Donate Cell Phones

*Your old cell phone can help DVCC.*

Since we began collecting old cell phones, the DVCC has received more than \$7,000. When cell phones are donated to our agency, we keep a few phones for emergency use by our clients, but the others are sent to Shelter Alliance, an organization in Florida that refurbishes and recycles cell phones and pays us anything from 50 cents to \$25 for each phone. Broken and very old phones have no cash value but are simply recycled, so our environment also benefits by eliminating those electronic parts from our landfills. So, if you or your company has a cell phone or two just taking up space in your junk drawer, send them our way! Thank you.

*Please bring old cell phones to: DVCC  
777 Summer Street, Ste 400  
Stamford CT 06901.*