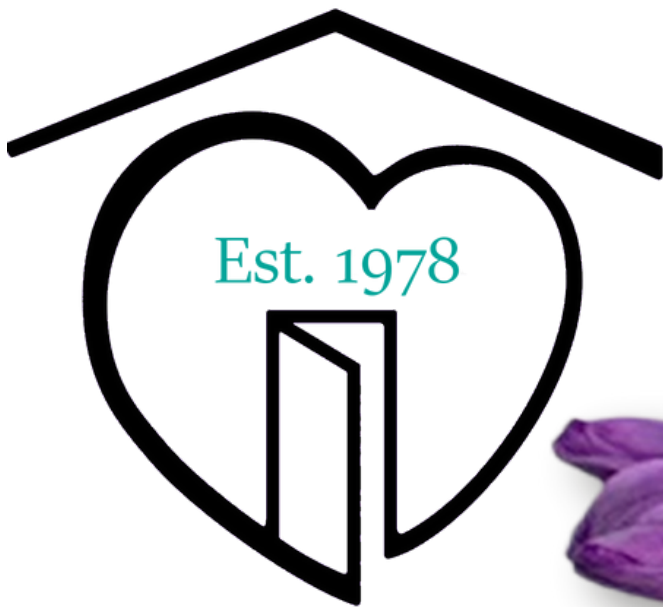


ANNUAL REPORT 2021



FRIENDS, INC.

Advocacy • Empowerment • Prevention

A Letter From the Director

If I had one word for the past two years, it would be “resilience”. Our clients’ resilience. Our staff’s resilience. FRIENDS’ resilience. No matter what—pandemic, increased needs, challenges to service delivery, staff transitions, we continued to deliver compassionate, trauma-informed care to domestic violence and sexual assault survivors. Without our services, individuals and families in this county would need to travel outside of Washington County to receive services related to domestic and sexual violence.

We learned that during the pandemic, our services were critical. Violence doesn’t stop during a pandemic. In 2021, we responded to 850 crisis calls and provided 95 clients with 5,801 nights of shelter. We provided 275 clients with our set of comprehensive, trauma-informed core services – a 10% increase in services per client.

We stood side-by-side with survivors, ensuring they remained resilient in their own journeys toward a violence free future. We delivered services in new ways—virtually, outside, socially distanced and masked. We started new partnerships with organizations in Washington County to better reach under-served populations. We demonstrated adaptability and resilience in our services and our commitment to survivors.

In this annual report, we will highlight the resiliency of our staff to deliver services through a pandemic, and the resiliency of our survivors in overcoming challenges in their lives. In the following report, we will discuss the resiliency of one of our clients, and her journey. We will talk about our staff and their incredible ability to adjust their services to meet survivors’ needs while also ensuring everyone’s safety—including their own. And, we will talk about the partnerships we created with the community that helps us expand our reach to those that are under-served, but disproportionately impacted.

We understand that this upcoming year will continue to be an incredibly challenging time for all of us. But we are confident that we will show even more resilience in our efforts to keep domestic violence and sexual assault survivor’s safe.

I am incredibly proud of the staff for their efforts, their problem-solving, and their talents in providing compassionate care to survivors in need. I am inspired by the survivors—their courage when they faced danger and fear and their resiliency in overcoming violence and walking into a safe future. It’s an honor to be part of FRIENDS and its mission.

Sincerely,
Kate Nickel



Kate Nickel,
Executive Director

Board of Directors

2020-2021:

Deb Donovan

Lay Rosenheimer

Carrie Lloyd

Rob Maksimuk

Karen Bialas

Nikki Nickel

Sara Wong

Patricia Holmes

Peggy Fischer

Bob Case

Eric Grinwald

Lori Torner

Eileen Evans

Archie Graham

Erica Becker

Julia Gray

MISSION VISION SERVICES

Mission Statement: To empower those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault by offering safety, support, and community awareness.

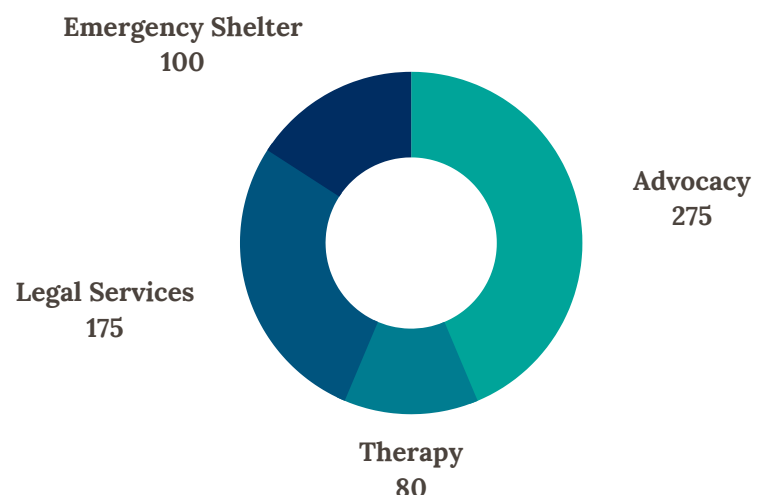
Vision Statement: We envision a socially just community where all voices are heard, where all gender identities are made to feel safe, and where all acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, and oppression are neither accepted nor tolerated.

Program Services:

24.7 Crisis Line
Emergency Shelter
Individual Advocacy
Case Management
Legal Advocacy
Family Law Services
Support Group
Children's Therapy
Transitional Living
Prevention Education
Community Outreach

Responds to
1000 Crisis
Calls

Average Annual Individual Client Count Per Program



PROGRAM SERVICES AND OUR COVID RESPONSE...

Over the last two years our staff has proven again and again that they are prepared to meet any challenges. We have come up with new ways to deliver services during a pandemic, adjusted work responsibilities as staff move on to new careers, and expanded our reach in the community by offering under-served populations a safe place and culturally competent services.

Our art therapist met with survivors in local parks. Our prevention educator created virtual presentations at times when the schools were shut down. Our advocates used telehealth programs for individual survivors that safeguarded their privacy while also reducing their risk of Covid 19 and its spread.

**In response to COVID and limited access
FRIENDS observed;**

**10% Increase
in
Services Provided
Per Client**



**50% Increase
in
Youth Reporting
Depression and
Suicide Ideation**

“
Thank you for our talks (counseling), they have helped me be more calmed, safe, consistent and happy. If I need help or advice I know who I can contact, you have helped me emotionally and materialistically.
(advocacy program)
”

“
She has really opened up emotionally and is talking to me about all the things that have been circling around her—from her dad, from her sisters, and all that. She is growing more confident and it is exciting to see her explore all these new options you have given her. It's helping her so much!
(art therapy program)
”

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Even through a global pandemic, FRIENDS expanded its reach in the community. We implemented culturally appropriate community outreach strategies to engage, educate and serve Washington County's Hispanic Community. In addition, we strengthened and expanded our relationship with CASA Gaudalupe Education Center to better serve Washington County's Hispanic population.

We created and led two educational groups, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault 101 (informational and educational sessions on violence) and an Open Community Share (a community dialogue on domestic violence and sexual assault awareness), specifically designed for Spanish-speaking communities in the county. The groups engaged in deeper conversations about generational trauma caused by domestic violence and sexual assault in Latino households. We also developed an add on section to Casa's Read to Succeed program and introduced young Latino children to healthy and unhealthy relationship concepts through fun, approachable activities like bingo. Additionally, we facilitated culturally specific presentations around healthy and unhealthy relationships to Latino teens through Casa's Dream to Succeed program (high school level). We will continue our collaborative programming with Casa to better reach Latino children who may have experienced or witnessed domestic violence and/or sexual assault in their homes.

As a result of the expansion efforts with CASA, FRIENDS developed new relationships with churches interested in and willing to host our community education groups. All this work allows our community outreach coordinator to better reach under-served communities when she is able to meet them where they feel safe and comfortable.

30 INDIVIDUALS

Participated in 20
culturally specific
community groups.

I thought that I didn't qualify for these services or that you wouldn't help me because of my immigration status. I was always afraid of losing my children. These are the things their father would always tell me. I now understand my depression and why I couldn't look at him or speak to him."

A survivor's perspective...

Every survivor that enters FRIENDS has a story filled with fear and pain. But, they also have stories filled with resiliency, determination, success, and eventually peace and independence – free from violence.

At age 14, Shavonda had been repeatedly sexually assaulted by an uncle for several years. She experienced much guilt and shame regarding the sexual abuse. Tragically, when she disclosed the abuse, the adults around her accused her of making it up, which confused her and made her even more ashamed. To cope with this guilt and shame, Shavonda withdrew from many of her friends and isolated herself to avoid talking about what had happened.

Shavonda told our art therapist that she contemplated suicide multiple times. Our therapist helped to place her in more intensive mental health care services for a couple months until resuming weekly art therapy sessions again at FRIENDS. Continuing her mental health counseling and working with our art therapist, Shavonda began to regain her self-worth. She began to attend social events to reach out to old friends and establish some new friendships. She learned to identify her strengths and to recognize negative self-talk, countering it with positive self-talk. The time she took with our art therapist and mental health services enabled her to decrease the guilt and shame she felt. In the last three months of therapy, Shavonda reported no suicidal ideation.



Carmen entered FRIENDS through the emergency shelter at age 40. She came into shelter after fleeing a violent relationship that she had been in with her former partner. Upon entry, Carmen was grappling with AODA issues, and minimal support from family and friends. She worked diligently to repair her relationships, and it all started with working on herself. Shelter provided the safety that she needed to address mental health and AODA concerns where she diligently attended group and individual services referred to her through case management. She also worked on job skills, which resulted in part-time employment that helped her save for housing after Friends. Through advocacy, Carmen worked on setting and maintaining healthy boundaries with friends and family, which helped her strengthen the relationships with the people that had distanced themselves from her. As she progressed, Carmen was referred to our Transitional Housing Program. During her participation in transitional housing, Carmen increased her skills that helped her save up and begin independent apartment hunting. She felt that the progression from emergency shelter and then to transitional housing enabled her to focus on building up the foundational skills and positive mental health that would be necessary to live independently, free from violence and sober.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

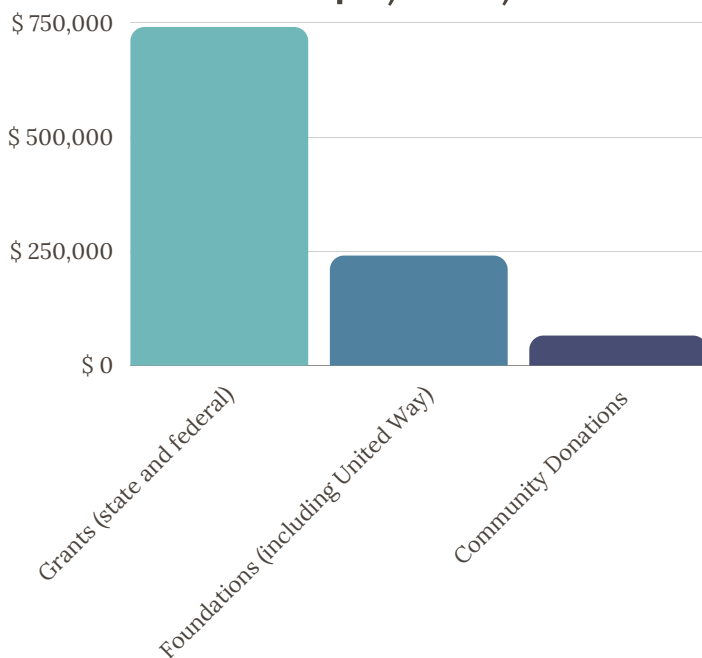
FRIENDS was able to increase our budget by \$300,000 with the successful application to the State of Wisconsin's Department of Justice. As a result, we increased leadership to include an Associate Director, added a community outreach coordinator, and a second Sexual Assault advocate to better serve survivors. A special task force was created by the state and it found that domestic violence/sexual assault workers across the state were under-paid for the level of work and responsibilities they provided vulnerable population. This grant opportunity allowed us to raise wage and benefits of our staff commensurate to the work they perform. Additionally, the increased budget revenues increased our capacity to expand programming

Our solid financial growth coupled with our strategic and fiscally sound approach to budget expenses will help with our goal to stabilize the budget post-pandemic, and increases our capacity to ensure we are good stewards of investments made by public and private sectors and individuals that support our mission.

ANNUAL BUDGET

2021 = \$1,032,890

2020 = \$1,014,215



\$165,000

In additional
dollars received
in response to
COVID

*does not include ALL
the in-kind material items



Annual Fundraiser

Entertainment with Friends (EWF) continues to be a successful annual fundraiser even with a transition to a virtual platform in 2020. TOP Dueling Pianos (Ted Oliver Productions) brought us back together in 2021.

THANK YOU



We are beyond thankful to our sponsors, to the local business and restaurants who supported us through raffle and auction donations, and of course our community who attended the event. On behalf of the staff, board of directors, and all those we serve **THANK YOU.**

Big News in Support of Sexual Assault Survivors



We were incredibly honored to welcome Governor Evers and Attorney General Kaul for the signing of the Sexual Assault Tracking and Reform bills.



EWF; Event Sponsors





FRIENDS, INC.
Advocacy • Empowerment • Prevention

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

**THANK YOU TO OUR
COMMUNITY.**

**TO EVERY
INDIVIDUAL DONOR,
CHURCH, SERVICE
GROUP, AND
BUSINESS.**

**OUR MISSION AND
VISION ARE
SUCCESSFUL THANKS
TO YOUR SUPPORT!!!**



Foundations:

West Bend Community Foundation
Ziegler Family Foundation
WBMI Company Charitable Fund
Johnson Family Fund
Oscar C & Augusta Schlegel Foundation
R. A. Stevens Foundation
Phyllis and Walter Malzahn Charitable Trust
Prescott Family Foundation
Norman A. Schowalter Community Trust
Healthy Community Foundation
Otto Bremer Trust
Priestaf Charitable Fund
Richard M Schulze Family Foundation
Rick & Julie Vandermause Fund

Grant Contracts:

Victims of Crime Act
Sexual Assault Victim Services
Department of Children and Families
Housing of Urban Development
United Way of Washington County
United Way of Greater Milwaukee and
Waukesha County