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Advocacy • Empowerment • Prevention
262-334-7298

FRIENDS, Inc.

FALL NEWSLETTER

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS

We want to send a huge thank-you to **Milwaukee Tool** for rolling up their sleeves and making a real difference. Their team volunteered their time to organize shelter donations, tackled a list of yard work tasks that transformed our backyard space, coordinated a donation drive for our high-need items and moved everything out of our garage so we can begin renovations. It's the kind of hands-on partnership that lifts a whole organization, and we're so grateful.

Also, a special thank-you to **Modern Woodmen of America**, who went above and beyond to turn our backyard into a space where kids can play and adult clients can relax. They donated brand-new patio furniture, yard games, and so much more. Then, they stayed for three hours in 95-degree heat to assemble every single piece. That kind of dedication doesn't go unnoticed, and our backyard is already seeing so much joy because of it.





Impact100 Greater Milwaukee

We're thrilled to share that FRIENDS, Inc. has been awarded a $100,000 grant from **Impact100 Greater Milwaukee** to expand our Emergency Shelter, and we're the first Washington County agency in a decade to reach their finalist phase. This grant will transform our garage into secure, functional space, freeing up room inside the shelter to add **six new beds.** That means we'll be able to serve up to **48 more individuals each year** when people are reaching out at the most critical moment of their lives.

Here's the reality: we are the only Domestic and Sexual Violence shelter in Washington County. In 2025, we sheltered 171 people, however, we had to turn away 237 others because we simply didn't have space. When we say no, there's nowhere else in the county to go.

This project adds two secure, hidden parking spaces for survivors fleeing abuse. A visible vehicle can be a dangerous clue to an abuser.

"This funding gives us the ability to say yes when yes matters most," said our Executive Director, Jesikah Becker. "It means more families can be welcomed into shelter. It means more children can sleep in a safe place. It means more survivors can take the next step toward safety to rebuild their lives. Most importantly, it means this investment is going to save lives."

We're deeply grateful to **Impact100 Greater Milwaukee** for believing in this work.







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UPCOMING EVENTS

FARMER'S MARKET

This October, FRIENDS, Inc. is thrilled to be hosting the Downtown West Bend Farmers Market again! We'll have fall-themed activities for all ages, homemade baked goods to enjoy, and plenty of resources to share about the work we do in the community. Be sure to stop by our booth, we'd love to see you and say hello!





OCT. 10TH, 2026, 7:30AM-11AM,
WEST BEND FARMER'S MARKET
120 N MAIN ST SUITE 170, WEST BEND, WI

SOUP AND SOLIDARITY

Join us for a soup sampling fundraiser!
In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, FRIENDS, Inc. will be selling soup sampling tickets (or full bowls!) at Sippie Hippie in Slinger to try soups from local businesses and non-profits!

Try 5 samples for $8, all 10 samples for $15, or have a full bowl for $10!

Check our events page on our website for more information and updates

https://www.friendswi.org/get-involved/events/



OCT. 22ND, 2026, 6:30PM-8:00PM,
SIPPIE HIPPIE
319 E WASHINGTON ST, SLINGER, WI

Luminary Walk

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH 2026
6:00PM-8:00PM
RIVEREDGE NATURE CENTER
4458 COUNTY RD Y, SAUKVILLE, WI 53080



RIVEREDGE NATURE CENTER

Please join us for a peaceful and meaningful Luminary Walk at **Riveredge Nature Center** as we honor the lives lost to domestic violence and stand in solidarity with all who have been impacted.

During the walk (approximately one mile, with shorter options available) we will move together in solidarity. The event will also include family-friendly activities, domestic violence awareness resources, and our pledge table, where attendees can commit to standing beside and supporting survivors.

COASTERS FOR A CAUSE

You may recognize our Coasters for a Cause campaign from past awareness months! This October, in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, local bars and restaurants will stand against domestic violence with us by using coasters that raise awareness and share our resources. These coasters spark conversation and remind our community that support is always available. Stay tuned to our social media for a list of participating locations!





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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH: EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors used to gain power and control in an intimate relationship. It can include physical harm, emotional abuse, threats, financial control, and isolation. At its core, domestic violence is not about anger. It's about control.

Harmful myths, like "they should just leave" or "abuse only happens in certain areas," silence survivors and prevent them from seeking help. In reality, domestic violence can affect anyone, and understanding the truth is key to building a safer, more supportive community.

THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence has both immediate and lasting effects. Survivors may face fear, shame, and isolation that disrupt daily life and relationships, along with physical injuries and long-term health problems. Many struggle with depression, PTSD, or suicidal thoughts, even after leaving. The impact extends beyond survivors to children, families, and communities, highlighting the urgent need for prevention and support.

The Role of the Community in Prevention and Support



We all have a role to play in ending domestic violence. By fostering a culture of safety, respect, and accountability, we can challenge harmful attitudes and behaviors that allow abuse to continue. It is important to:

Believe Survivors: Offering support and validation is critical for the healing process.

Educate Others: Share information on healthy relationships, boundaries, and the dynamics of abuse.

Speak Out: If you witness controlling, harmful, or abusive behavior, intervene safely or report it.

Create Safe Spaces: Ensure survivors know there are resources available, including advocacy, counseling, legal support, and shelter.

HOW YOU CAN HELP DURING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH:

Wear Purple: Purple is the color for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Show your support by wearing purple throughout October, and tag us on social media to spread the message! Also, the third Thursday in October is Purple Thursday! Join our team on 10/15/2026 in wearing purple and use #PurpleThursday on social media!

Get Involved: Participate in FRIENDS, Inc.'s Domestic Violence Awareness Month events or volunteer with FRIENDS, Inc. to support those in need.

Spread the Word: Help us amplify the message by sharing FRIENDS, Inc. posts on Facebook and Instagram. Your voice can help break the silence.

Donate: Your donations to FRIENDS, Inc. provide essential services for survivors and their families.

GET INVOLVED

As we head into the holiday season, we have several high-need **volunteer opportunities** and **donation requests**, your help can make a big difference! Looking ahead, our **Adopt-a-Family program** will be starting soon, providing holiday support to local families in need. If you'd like to get involved, please reach out to outreach@friendswi.org. We'd love to connect with you!

Current high needs: Ethnic hair products, gift cards, smart phones (used), medicine for kids and adults (all kinds), hand soap, sweatpants, yoga pants and plain t-shirts (new items only please), garbage bags (13-gallon), underwear and sock packs (new items only please).

Scan here to learn more about how to get involved!