



THE SAFE BEACON

NEWS FROM SAFE IN HUNTERDON



Happy Winter from SAFE!

We can't believe it's almost the end of the year! It is hard to get to the last month of 2022 without reflecting on all that we have accomplished together as an agency. Since our opening, we have grown and progressed in ways we could not even imagine. Our programs are stronger than ever, and we plan to continue to strengthen them in order to support victims and survivors.

Our counseling department, legal department, and crisis response teams continue to serve survivors in moments of crisis. Our shelter continues to house and support victims through some of their hardest moments and works to empower them with resources. Our prevention and outreach department continues to target vulnerable populations by providing prevention education before acts of violence can occur. However, we could not have gotten to this point without the generosity and support of the community!

We want to take a moment to thank all of our partners for their continued support and dedication toward helping victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault! Even the smallest acts of support- whether it is coming to our events, sharing our social media posts, sharing our resources, or donating items for our clients, all acts of support are deeply appreciated and do not go unnoticed! As we begin to wrap up 2022, we ask for your continued support and commitment toward our mission! We cannot work to end domestic violence and sexual assault in Hunterdon County without you! We hope that you continue this mission with us as we continue to grow and develop! Thank you.

24/7 HOTLINE: 908.788.4044



Our Holiday Drives are Here!



SAFE
IN HUNTERDON
Hope•Help•Healing®

We are in need of the following items

- PJs in all sizes (starting from newborn up to adult XXL)
- Unisex sweatpants in all sizes
- Unisex T-shirts in all sizes
- Toiletries (such as body wash, shampoo and conditioner and lotion for winter)

Giftcards!!*

**Please make sure any giftcards can be used online or in local stores since some clients do not have transportation

Our Holiday 2022 drive is here! Keep checking back on our website for more information on adopting one of our families! You can also donate via the “donate” page on our website. Here, you will also find our Amazon Wishlist for items that are needed in the shelter for our clients! Donations of any size are greatly appreciated and are tax exempt.

Find out more about our holiday drives on the front page of our website!

Donate: <https://safeinhunterdon.org/donate/>

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Fall Events Recap

Fall was a busy time for SAFE in Hunterdon! We were lucky enough to take part of several community events that allowed us to meet some wonderful people! While you can check out some pictures from these events on the news page of our website (<https://safeinhunterdon.org/news/>), here is a quick recap:

We kicked off the end of summer (and the start of fall) by participating in Hunterdon County's 4H Fair where staff and volunteers were out tabling from morning to night in the community organizations tent for five days!

In September, we were honored to be invited to participate in Hunterdon Central's "Honoring Our Heroes" event! It was a lovely night where some of our staff and other community organizations were recognized and greeted by the school's football and dance teams.

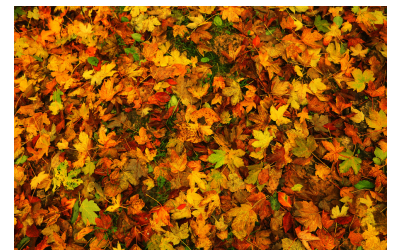
On September 17th, we participated in Raritan Community Day where we were represented by some of our incredible staff! We got to table with some other wonderful organizations and got to share some of our resources!

On the 21st, SAFE went back to school with South Hunterdon Regional High School! We got to table in the halls of the school as parents of students got acquainted with their kids' schedules for the new school year.

On the 25th, SAFE participated in NJCASA's "Movement for a Safer NJ" event. This event featured a 1.8 mile walk in honor of the 1.8 million survivors of sexual violence in New Jersey. It also featured fun activities like yoga, live music, and art projects that some of our staff tried their hands at!

On the 27th, Safe hosted their first SAFE at the Salon event! This education event was catered to salon owners and stylists to teach them how to recognize signs of domestic violence in clients and how to facilitate the conversation to provide resources.

On the 29th, SAFE's DVRT coordinator, Lauren Bivona reaffirmed the event's message by teaching Hunterdon County police officers how to handle incidents related to domestic violence. The event included a presentation by SAFE's own child advocate, Madison Yeatts on detecting signs of child abuse. Bivona's speech taught about early abuse indicators such as animal cruelty. The event was concluded by a brave speaker, relying on anonymity due to security concerns, who gave a powerful personal account of domestic violence. We were also honored to recognize Trooper Ashley for her dedicated service!



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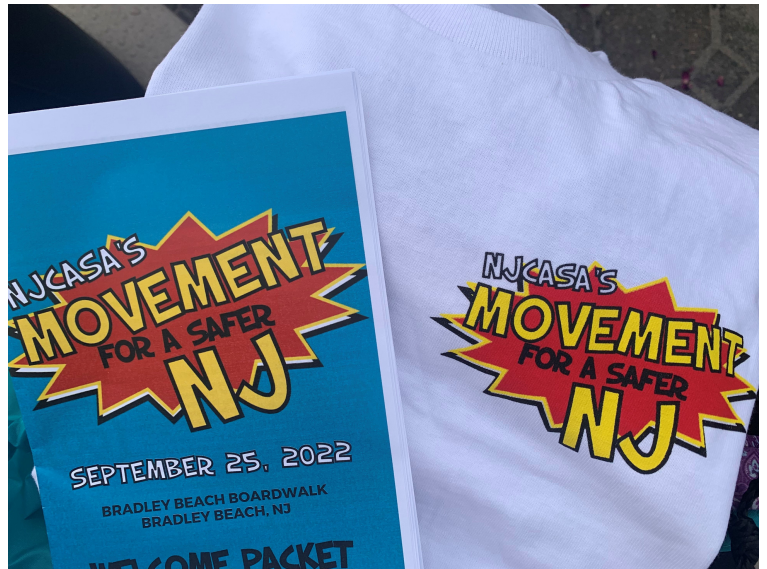


Photos from Our Fall Events! (in chronological order)

Card and pin given out at Hunterdon Central's "Honoring Our Heroes" event



SAFE's legal advocate Beatriz Martinez tabling for SAFE at Raritan Community Day



SAFE's table at South Hunterdon Regional High School's Back to School Night (top) and a photo from SAFE's SAFE at the Salon event (bottom)



Items given out at NJCASA's "Movement for a SAFER NJ" event (top) and a picture from September's DVLO meeting featuring SAFE's DVRT coordinator Lauren Bivona (left), Trooper Ashley (middle), and SAFE's Emergency Services Coordinator Rebecca Ramos (right)



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DVAM Recap

October was exceptionally busy for SAFE in Hunterdon!

As you may know, October is Domestic Violence

Awareness Month- which is a crucial month for raising awareness here at SAFE. The month consisted of lots of reflection on the work that our organization does and how we can continue to support victims and survivors.

After months of planning, we held our Light in the Darkness: Candlelight Vigil on October 20th. This day was also National Wear Purple Day in honor of domestic violence, and many attendees showed up wearing their purple in solidarity!

The event kicked off with some opening remarks from our Clinical Director, Renee Walton followed by remarks from our Board President, Karen Widico. Our pledge of allegiance was led by the mayor of Flemington, Betsy Driver. Hunterdon County Prosecutor Renée Robeson also gave some statements about the impact of DV, followed by a powerful reading from SAFE's DVRT Coordinator, Lauren Bivona. Our vigil also hosted some poems read by Board Members Beverlee Ciccone, Laura Hernandez, and former Board member Cindy Barter.

The event would not have been complete without the personal account from our survivor guest speaker, Sharon Dillard. Her account painted a painful picture of the realities of domestic violence in a same sex relationship.

The event concluded with our candle lighting and moment of silence, accompanied by our harpist, Joanna Marini Dindinger.

We could not have asked for a perfect night for the event, or for a better turn-out. Thank you to everyone who attended and showed their support!

You can read coverage from our candlelight vigil [here](#)



A Light in the Darkness: A community reflection service and candlelight vigil

Thursday, October 20th, 2022 at 6PM
Historic Hunterdon County Courthouse steps in Flemington
In the event of inclement weather, event will be held inside the historic courthouse.

SAFE in Hunterdon is hosting this annual community event to honor victims of domestic violence and stand in support with survivors. Please join us as we remember those who have been affected and shine a light of hope with your presence.

This event is open and free to the public. Candles and light refreshments will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to wear purple for National Wear Purple Day.



For questions or more information, contact kfeaster@safehunterdon.org.

The flyer from SAFE's 2022 Candlelight Vigil (top)



SAFE's Prevention and Outreach Coordinator Kathryn Feaster (left) with SAFE's Clinical Director Renee Walton (right) at the October 20th vigil



SAFE's CSVA Coordinator Marika Gray (left) and SAFE counselor Laura Carayas (right) wearing purple for National Wear Purple Day

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Vigil Speech from SAFE's DVRT Coordinator Lauren Bivona

I thought of you today.

I actually think of you often, which, considering how everything turned out, might surprise you.

The last time we spoke you didn't think I would remember you, but I did. You called me to talk about the obstacles, all the barriers, all the times you almost lost hope – you were furious. You were angry at me, angry at the system, angry at the overwhelming difficulty. You were right to be - and I remember every word of that conversation too.

I remember your face, I remember your name, I remember your children, I remember the broken bones, I remember your purse upended in the street, I remember a million little details that swirl into your unique experience.

The physical abuse you experienced was severe; the emotional abuse had you describing yourself as “broken”. I knew there was nothing broken about you – you were a survivor, you were quick, you were smart, and you knew just what you had to do to stay a few steps ahead of the stalking, the tormenting, and the never-ending stress and fear your relationship had turned into.

We tried to help you then, tried to dodge the constant judgement of the “why doesn't she” and the “she shoulds” – the abuse and the fear wasn't all that was holding you back. The lack of a place to go, the idea that you could just up and leave, the absurd notion that you would be safe with just a restraining order and a suitcase... How the rest of the community treated you, reserving life rafts for people who weren't even drowning while you drifted further and further away from the shore of safety was as much as a barrier as anything that the abuser did.

You kept trying though; and you got out. You did. You called me to tell me, the only person you could identify in the system of difficulty, that you got out. You weren't calling me because you wanted to connect with me, or thank me, or say I helped you though – you were calling me because I had to listen. You were furious at all that it took, the mistakes that were made, the cracks that were really canyons that you slipped through. You called because we had to make it better for the next you, because what you went through – the bouncing around to courthouses, the accusations, the having to justify at every turn why you needed help, the paperwork, the not being believed, the intrusiveness, the impossibility – the barriers, all the endless barriers – we need to shoulder them out of the way.

SAFE in Hunterdon thinks of you when we train volunteers, when we have staff meetings, when we deep dive into best practices. SAFE sees you as we expand services, schedule counseling, brighten safe house playrooms, and go out into the community with programs focusing on education and hope.

SAFE thinks of you when we hire the best of the best, while making sure our faces reflect yours. We think of you when we develop relationships with community partners, to better serve you in the ways that you tell us you need.

This audience thinks of you as they shine a light in the darkness you faced, volunteer for our response teams, and provide the resources SAFE needs to keep fighting to remove the barriers you faced.

We think of you often – for the privilege we receive in being allowed to support you, for the hope we see when you walk through our doors, for the ways we are always striving to do better, to be better, and to make all of the moving parts sync for you better.

I thought of you today, I'm thinking of you now, and all of us see you – we hear you, we believe you, and we remain on the path with you.

Thank-you.



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2022 Harvest Fest

In October, SAFE had the opportunity to be a part of Flemington’s 2022 Harvest Fest! However, this event was more hands on than our average tabling events- we were also pouring the drinks! This event was a fun opportunity to meet the community and to represent SAFE in a unique way.

Our staff and board were hard at work all day pouring and handing our wristbands! We appreciate everyone who came out to show their support and to celebrate!



Katie Taylor (left) with SAFE counselor Brian Taylor (middle left), SAFE counseling intern Emma Dillard (middle right), and SAFE child advocate Madison Yeatts (right) at Harvest Fest on October 29th



Giving Thanks for Community Generosity



Thank you Raritan PD!

Thank you so much to Raritan PD for their generous donation to SAFE in Hunterdon! The funds raised from one of their past PBA (Policemen’s Benevolent Association) events will be a huge help in supporting our clients and our programs! These programs are crucial for helping victims and survivors and your generosity is greatly appreciated!

From raritantownshippolice.com

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Thank you Judy Gold!

We would like to give a special thanks to Judy Gold! Her generous donation to SAFE will go toward getting electronics for our clients! These items are so important for making clients feel at home. They are also crucial so that clients can complete tasks like schoolwork, research, and job applications! Your generosity is sincerely appreciated!



Judy Gold (left) with SAFE's DVRT Coordinator Lauren Bivona (right)

A Call for Volunteers!

By Rebecca Ramos, Emergency Services Coordinator

SAFE is currently recruiting volunteers for our Domestic Violence Response (DVRT) and Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART)!

The role of the DVRT/SART volunteer is to provide victims of domestic and sexual violence with immediate support at the moment of crisis and provide all available information regarding the law, safety options, and available resources at a victim's local police department or hospital.

All applicants selected as part of the DVRT/SART teams are required to successfully complete a 60-hour training provided by SAFE in Hunterdon. Volunteers must be 18 years old or older, have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation, be willing to submit to a background check, and be available to commit to 3-4 volunteer shifts per month. To apply, scan the QR code to the right of this article or click here.

Apply here!



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Communities for Change: Join BW NICE to Support Hunterdon County Survivors



Source: bwnice.org



BW NICE (Businesswomen Networking Involving Charity & Education) is a professional women's empowerment organization that provides women at all stages of business and personal life with support, education, and resources. Each BW NICE Chapter is dedicated to raising funds and awareness supporting a local organization in the fight against domestic violence and sexual abuse.

The Hunterdon County Chapter raises funds specifically for supporting SAFE in Hunterdon. The Hunterdon County Chapter meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Mountain View Chalet in Asbury, NJ from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. They are always welcoming new members, and members are encouraged to come with a friend!

For more information regarding BW NICE and the Hunterdon County Chapter, please visit the chapter's website [here](#)

Community Thanks

By Kathryn Feaster, Prevention and Outreach Educator

Thank you so much to our community partners! SAFE would not be able to sustain its programs without your support and generosity.

Our community partners include:

BWNice, Consignment Shop of Flemington, DCF/DOW - SV Stakeholders, Family Promise, Fisherman's Mark, Flemington Food Pantry, Hunterdon County DHS, Hunterdon County Human Services, Hunterdon County Dept of Education, Latino Access Coalition, NJCASA, NJCEDV, Noel Hiers, Norwescap, OAG, PNC, Prevention Resources, The Prosecutor's Office, ShopRite of Flemington, United Way of Hunterdon County, Victim Witness- Prosecutor's Office

Thank you for your continued partnership and support!

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