

PROJECT SAFE



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Project Safe Program Outcomes

88% of clients reported that the services they received from Project Safe met their needs .

62% of clients achieved their employment goal.

92% of clients achieved their housing goal or safe housing.

88% of clients achieved other goals they set for themselves.

Project Safe is committed to evaluating the efficacy of our services. The outcomes to the left are self-reported by clients on anonymous surveys turned in upon the conclusion of services.

87% of clients reported they have a better understanding of domestic violence and its effects on their lives.



93% of clients reported that they are able to recognize signs of increased danger in their relationship



We believe in empowering clients to set their own goals and supporting them through the process. The outcomes to the right reflect the success of these efforts.

Project Safe Mission and Governing Board

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Governing Board

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Jason Kelley

Executive Director

Joan Prittie

Project Safe is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization working to end domestic violence through prevention and educational programs, crisis intervention, ongoing supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their children, and systems change advocacy in our community.

Work described in this report was supported in part by subgrant X17-8-036 awarded by the state administering office for the Domestic Violence Grant Program. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the state or the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

Hope Lives Here

Dear Friends Who Share **Hope** for a Community Free of Domestic Violence,

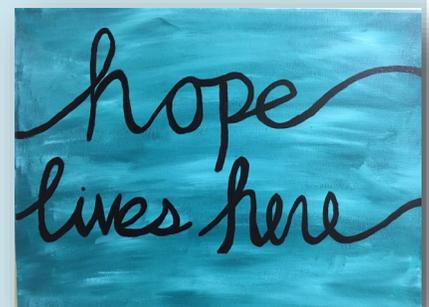
I am proud to share with you Project Safe's 2016 Annual Report. As 2016 came to a close, I ended my sixth year on the board of Project Safe including the past two years spent as board chair. I'll stay on for one more year as "past chair" for which I am grateful as I'm not ready to leave this



board that I've come to love. Serving on the board of Project Safe has been an honor for me. Our board is a true *working board*- we lead the staff in strategic planning, but also roll up our sleeves to organize fundraisers and awareness events such as Groovy Nights, Stomp Out Domestic Violence, and Dancing with the Athens Stars. We dream big and work to ensure the financial stability of the organization that we know spends 90 cents of every dollar raised on direct support for clients. We meet, we laugh, sometimes we cry, and mostly we mobilize around the belief and **hope** that through crisis intervention, ongoing support services, systems change advocacy, prevention and education, that our community, and in fact our larger society, can end domestic violence. We share in the belief and **hope** that all people deserve to exist in the context of loving relationships free from intimate partner violence.

Where do the supporters of Project Safe find **hope**? **Hope** lives in the hearts of the 27 full and part time employees and over 380 volunteers that work for Project Safe. **Hope** is heard in the voices of the 2893 hotline callers and 255 teens who texted the Breaking Silence Teen Text Line last year. **Hope** exists in the circles of support group meetings, the power of individual counseling sessions, and the education that has occurred through the 274 presentations and training sessions during the year to businesses, social service agencies, judges and attorneys, school classes, church groups and civic clubs.

I ask you to get a cup of your favorite coffee or tea, settle into a comfortable chair and spend some time digesting the information contained in this report. My **hope** is that you will then take a moment to reflect on what you can do to help us to continue to build a **hopeful future**- one free of domestic violence- for the adults and children that Project Safe serves.



~ Dawn Meyers, Board Chair 2015-16

Featured Program: Through an Open Window



In 2016 Project Safe and the Domestic Violence Task Force of Athens-Clarke and Oconee Counties held its **6th Annual Through an Open Window** event to raise awareness about domestic violence.

Anyone whose life has been touched by domestic violence was invited to create a painting at various workshops and open painting sessions throughout the year. Over 90 paintings were then displayed throughout October at ARTini's studio to commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The exhibit opened with a reception honoring the individuals, businesses and churches selected by our local task force as Advocates of the Year. At the conclusion of the exhibit, the paintings were brought to Project Safe's emergency shelter and outreach offices. Hundreds of paintings are on display at Project Safe's facilities to inspire and challenge staff, volunteers and clients.



Project Safe: Crisis Intervention



"I've learned new ways to cope with frustration, anxiety, depression, and to build strength."

--shelter resident

- * In 2016, advocates answered 2893 hotline calls--a new record for our organization.
- * Advocates at Project Safe's outreach offices at the Family Protection Center reviewed police arrest reports in Clarke and Madison Counties, and were able to reach out through calls or letters to offer support and services to 665 victims of domestic violence.
- * 212 individuals were sheltered at Project Safe's emergency shelter.
- * Through our relationship with the UGA Vet School, we provided 1986 nights of pet shelter.



"Thank you so much for everything. I am a different person than when I first came here. I learned to let go!"

--shelter resident



Featured Program: Teen Text Line

In 2016, Project Safe worked with Georgia Tech's **Institute for People and Technology** to create software for our teen text line. The software allows multiple users to log in from their own mobile devices which in turn allows us to handle greater texting volume. During the year, we expanded the service area of the text line from 32 counties to 147 (on its way to being statewide in 2017). Operated by student interns under the supervision of dedicated staff member, Breaking Silence is an important resource for teens seeking information and help about their dating relationships.

Texter: So I left him because I found someone who is really honest and even came to visit me and makes me really happy.

Breaking Silence: I'm glad that you were able to find someone that values you and that you feel like you're in a better place now

Texter: yes and it was the help from you

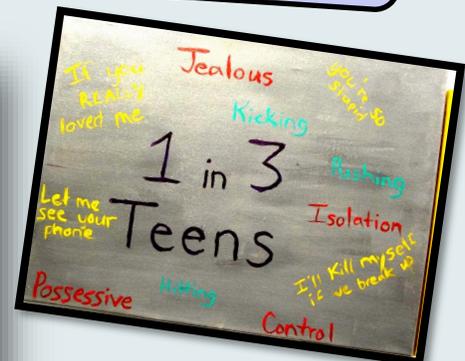
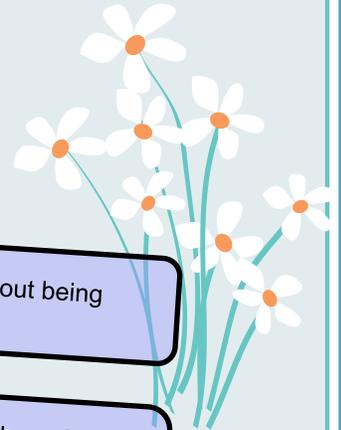
Texter: Merry Christmas Sophia. Thank you so much for all of your help!! I have finally escaped from him and I am happy!!

Breaking Silence: How are you feeling about being broken up?

Texter: I feel relieved but I still smile whenever he texts me.

Breaking Silence: It's totally normal to still have feelings like that after a breakup, but I'm glad to hear that you feel relieved.

Texter: Thanks—Thanks for also checking up on me.



Texter: Well everything is going a lot better now. We took time to sit down and talk. After the talk we had a better understanding of each other and the situation. Thank you guys so much for your help I really appreciate it. I will definitely always come to you guys when I have a problem.

Project Safe: Systems Change Advocacy



Since 2003, Project Safe has employed a staff person to lead a collaborative effort to review closed cases of domestic violence fatalities and near-fatalities, and implement recommended improvements in community response. In 2016, our Community Response Coordinator, Pat Peterson, led our fatality review panel in its examination of serious closed cases. The panel reviewed four cases, making recommendations to improve victim safety and abuser accountability.

Education and awareness were highlights of 2016 as a collaborative training on strangulation assault came to fruition in the form of a webinar including presentations from Project Safe executive director Joan Prittie, Project Safe board member Dr. Joanne Cono, and Western Circuit District

Attorney Ken Maulden and Assistant DA James Chafin. Pat Peterson led an effort to conduct educational presentations in low-income housing communities for both residents and staff.

Project Safe participated in a collaborative effort led by the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence to identify parole-eligible survivors of domestic violence in Georgia prisons and assist with post-conviction relief efforts, and our legislative advocacy included participation at Stop Violence Against Women Day at the state Capitol.



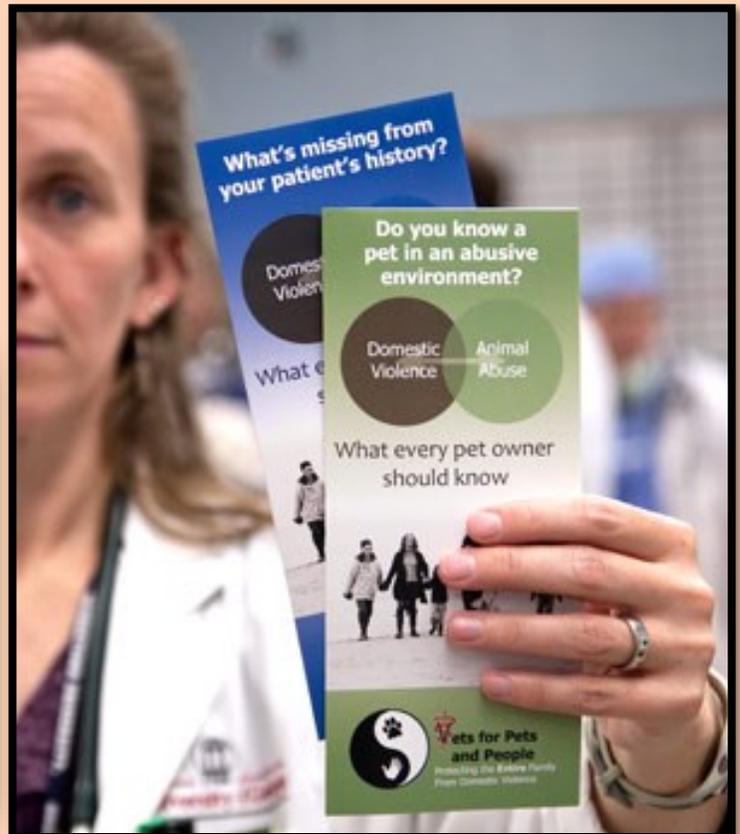
Featured Collaboration: Vets for Pets & People



Those in domestic violence situations are often kept isolated from friends and other family members, relying heavily on their pets for companionship and support. Neglecting, torturing, or even killing a pet is a powerful weapon of abuse. Survivors of domestic violence may be hesitant to leave an abusive home because they don't want to leave their pets behind.

Project Safe works tirelessly to remove such barriers to safety. Since 2009, Project Safe has partnered with the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine to provide shelter for our client's pets. Students, staff, and faculty volunteer to serve as temporary foster homes. Thanks to help from the UGA Vet School, people and their pets can find safety, healing, and hope.

Project Safe provided
1,986 nights of
pet shelter in 2016.



Project Safe Prevention & Education

I remember talking to a mother after one community presentation about Project Safe services. This mother was specifically worried about her teenage daughter's relationship with her boyfriend. She described to me an emotionally abusive relationship and we talked about the best ways for her to talk to her daughter about her concerns.

At Project Safe, we encourage family and friends to remain supportive of loved ones who may be in an abusive relationship, which we recognize can be very difficult. We talked about how this mom could stay supportive of her daughter without condoning the abusive behaviors of her boyfriend. This mom, as all parents do, wished her daughter could see that no one deserves to be physically or emotionally harmed in a relationship.

Luckily, a few weeks later, the mom let me know that her daughter was able to end that

relationship. She wrote to me explaining what happened. "The young man tried to give her an ultimatum of choosing between him and me. She told him good bye. **All I could think of was our conversation about how important it was that she get unconditional love and support from me to maintain our relationship. I am so grateful I made that choice. I really feel like that's what gave her the strength to walk away.**"

--By Mary Haddon, Youth Advocate & Educator



In 2016, Project Safe delivered 274 presentations and trainings -- a 20% increase over the previous year.

Project Safe believes that by focusing on prevention and education, we can bring our community closer to ending domestic violence. If you'd like to request a presentation or professional in-service training, please email the Community Involvement & Volunteer Coordinator, Linnea Ionno, at lionno@project-safe.org.

Project Safe Ongoing Support

Ongoing supportive services are designed to help people move on from unhealthy relationships and heal from the pain of experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse. It can take months or even years to become finally free from the emotional, physical and financial ties of an abuser. Our services such as individual counseling, support groups, advocacy, case management, and transitional housing help people discover their own strength and put their lives back together.

Outreach services are provided to survivors of domestic violence who are in need of support but not necessarily shelter. After working with Project Safe **98%** of outreach clients report that they have strategies to enhance their safety, and **99%** report knowledge of community resources.

Project Safe served 1606 women, children, and men at our outreach offices in the Family Protection Center.



As I sit in this room and take a look at my life
People might ask why do I run or fight
Growing up in a home where all you see
Was using, violence, and a father that molested me.
I hit the streets young thought I was grown
I wanted freedom so state to state I'd roam.
Hanging, slanging, gongbanging was me.
Thought I was a thug who cares about family?
But all things come back around
Look back on my life and I found
A person that was hurting & feeling lost
Ended up in prison paying the cost
Of living in the streets & chasing a lie
A lot of times I could of died,
The smoke has cleared and I finally see
The way I was living just isn't for me
I'm on a new path to a brand new life
No more struggling just to survive
I'm in a place to learn & grow
No more acting like I'm the star of the show
One day at a time that's how it must be
I'm not a victim of tragedy!

Poem by Current Outreach Client

Featured Program: Strangulation Webinar

Strangulation is a significant power and control tactic in abusive relationships, and in recent years Project Safe worked alongside other organizations to pass HB 911, which expanded the definition of felony aggravated assault to specifically include strangulation. Since the bill's unanimous passage through the Georgia legislature in 2014, Project Safe has made training on this issue a priority to ensure that law enforcement, health care providers, attorneys, and advocates understand the signs and impact of strangulation.



The Lion Heart Society is an Atlanta-based nonprofit that serves domestic violence task forces nationwide. This year, our two organizations joined forces to provide a free webinar to help professionals enhance their own knowledge and understanding of strangulation assaults, along with education on how to improve responses to survivors, improve policy, and to increase community understanding and offender accountability.

Through the collaborative efforts of Project Safe Associate Director Tangela Ferguson and Lion Heart Society Founder Elizabeth O'Neal, this webinar provided participants with 2.5 continuing education credits and covered both the physiological medical assessment of

strangulation and the application of Georgia law to strangulation assault. It included presentations from Project Safe Executive Director Joan Prittie, Western Circuit District Attorney Ken Mauldin, physician and Project

Safe board member Joanne Cono, and Western Circuit Deputy Chief District Attorney James Chaffin.

The initial goal of the training was to educate 30 individuals in the Athens-Oconee area. We exceeded this goal by 733% – we had 303 registrants, and approximately 250

individuals or organizations attended the webinar statewide. Even this may not reflect the true number of participants since multiple people could view from one sign-in. Attendees included staff of an entire school district in South Georgia, multiple police and sheriff's departments, two universities, two military bases, staff from the US Department of Defense, hospitals, and social workers, counselors, prosecutors and family lawyers from across the state.

Thanks to the donation of more than 100 hours of volunteer time as well as funds to underwrite the costs of producing the webinar, the Lion Heart Society enabled Project Safe and our local domestic violence task force to reach beyond the Athens area and educate people throughout Georgia.

"Thank you for this training, it was very Informative. Sadly we had to put everything we learned into practice immediately as we got a strangulation victim at our shelter the next day." --webinar participant

Project Safe Thrift Store



Project Safe operates out of multiple facilities, but only one of these is completely open to the public: our Thrift Store. The store is operated by staff, interns, and volunteers, and works to continue serving those affected by domestic abuse. All of our clients can shop for free, getting what they need for their new safe home. Additionally, the store provides vouchers for clients of other partner agencies. **In 2016 the store provided over a thousand vouchers and gave away more than 11,500 items to people in need.** Proceeds from store sales help fund Project Safe's work in the community.

Thrift Store volunteers help process donations, prepare items to display on the sales floor, organize shopping aisles, recycle broken items, and help customers with their purchases.

The Project Safe Thrift Store is located at 995 Hawthorne Avenue in the Bell's Shopping Center. It is open Monday through Saturday from 10-6. For more information, please call: 706-425-8863



"As a former Mayor of Athens, my work with the Project Safe Thrift Shop has revealed some of the most resourceful and industrious people I have ever met. Grandmothers and mothers preparing for new children. Parents seeking status brands for picky teenagers and students supplementing Hope scholarships. Loved ones determined to find better gifts. Amateur entrepreneurs gathering goods for yard sales. Not a business, the Project Safe Thrift Shop operates as a service. Donations find their way to a future of appreciation and life enhancement. With every hour I feel joy in helping."--Gwen O'Looney

Project Safe Interns and Volunteers

Project Safe began in the 1970's as a network of volunteer safe homes. Our programs and services have grown and changed through the years, but our reliance on volunteers to help provide the variety and quality of services has remained constant. In 2016, 384 volunteers contributed 21,561 hours in activities ranging from helping at our thrift store to providing meals for support groups to helping to plan our popular events and fundraisers. Highly trained student interns operate our teen text line, answer the hotline, co-facilitate groups and school presentations, and work at our emergency shelter and outreach offices.



"As an intern here, I've had the chance to see the ins and outs of this organization and how each and every situation is handled with grace, care, and love. Not only that, but the staff is caring, considerate, and is composed of some of the most incredible people I have ever met. Project Safe's unwavering support of victims of domestic violence is the perfect example of how a nonprofit should function. Keep up the good work!" --former intern

***"I am so proud and inspired everyday to work for such a dedicated and honest organization."
-former intern,
current staff member***



"I volunteer at the Project Safe Thrift Store, which provides items for clients and raises funds for the work done by Project Safe. They are always organized and ready for volunteers to help. It is very satisfying to help with an organization that does such important work that is needed in our community."

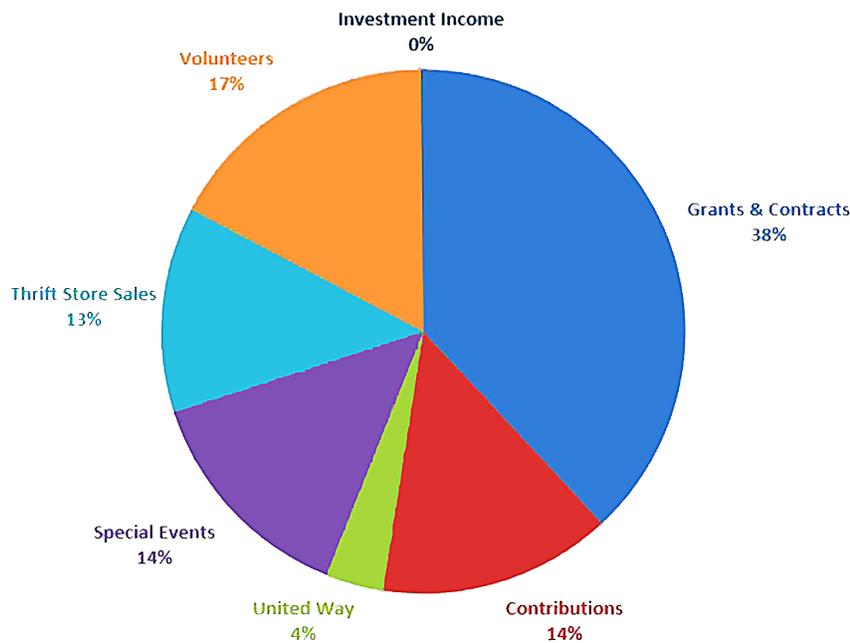
--volunteer

Project Safe Financial Information

FY 16 income and expenses are shown below. Project Safe received \$1,251,427 in cash and \$258,732 through donations of time with the value of a volunteer hour estimated at \$12. Client services accounted for 91% of all spending.

Source: Audit 12/31/16 by Robert Baker and Associates, Certified Public Accountants.

Fiscal Year 2016 Revenue

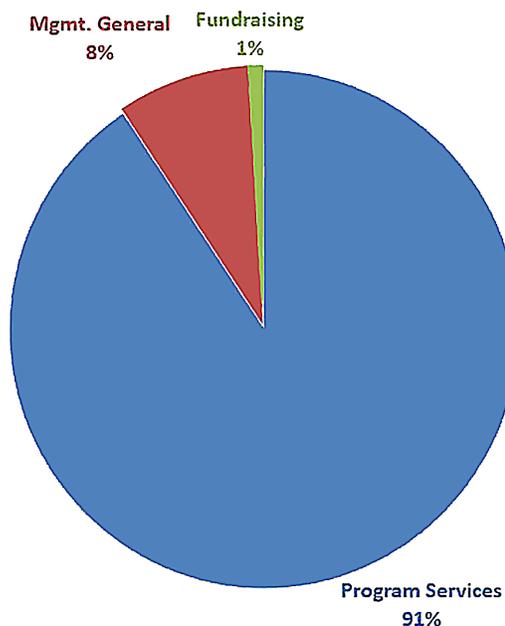


"Gracias, son unos angelos de Dios, las bendigo y les aprecio mucho por todo."

[Thank you, you all are angels of God, I bless you and appreciate you for everthing.]

--Spanish speaking outreach client

Fiscal Year 2016 Expenses



Project Safe How Your Money Counts

- **New ID card for someone whose abuser stole it: \$32**
- **A week in a motel under an assumed name when the shelter is full: \$317**
- **Three months of weekly counseling sessions for trauma and PTSD: \$900**

"I found out about Project Safe when David Hale was donating the proceeds of one of his tattoos to them. Not sure exactly what they did, I looked into their services, and found out just how much they do for the community here. I decided to volunteer, and it has been one of the most rewarding, empowering, and humbling experiences of my life.

It's rewarding to be able to directly help those in need and to see how much good this organization does not only in the lives of those it directly helps, but also to the community as it advocates for awareness and policy changes to eliminate domestic violence in the future.

It's empowering to see people who are capable of overcoming anything, rising from situations of extreme abuse to become confident, independent, and successful individuals. It inspires you to think about all that you can accomplish if you put your mind to it.

And finally, this has been such a humbling experience. So often, we can lose sight of the many gifts we have, whether that's money, education, resources, loving family, or supportive friends. Working with people who truly appreciate life's gifts reminds us all to look at what we have in our own lives.

Reminds us to share it, make the most of it, and to give back with our time and our money to organizations like Project Safe that work to make the lives of everyone in the community a little bit better, a little bit more loving, and a little bit safer."

-review on greatnonprofits.org



Thanks to Athens Ford for donating a new car in 2016 to transport clients for apartment hunting, job interviews, appointments, and bringing new people into shelter!

How To Donate

Online:

www.project-safe.org

Check by Mail:

P.O. Box 7532
Athens, GA 30604

Become an Annual Sponsor:

E-mail jpirtie@project-safe.org

More than ever, Project Safe relies on the generosity of the community to support our work.

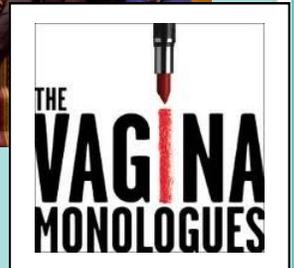
90 cents of every dollar goes towards client services.



Project Safe Special Events



Dancing with the Athens Stars is the community's premier fundraiser, with a net total of more than \$930,000 raised in its first 9 years.



Eve Ensler's award winning play challenges, entertains and inspires audience members to take action to stop violence against women.



Groovy Nights disco and silent auction is Project Safe's longest running event.



A spin-off of *Dancing with the Athens Stars*, Stomp Out Domestic Violence features teams of students paired with adult volunteers in a step competition.



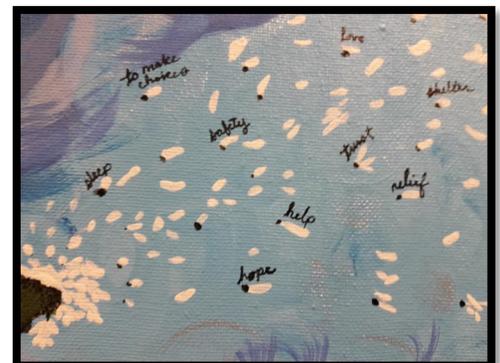
Project Safe Major Donors

Major Donors & Sponsors

1st Presbyterian Church of Athens
1st United Methodist Church of Athens
Ben & Joi Akridge
Allergy Partners
Alpha Chi Omega
Tish Anderson & Tom Santosky
Anonymous
Scott & Kelly Ardoin
ARH Group
Ashford Methodist Church
Athens Clarke County Emergency Specialists
Athens First Bank & Trust
Athens-Oconee Junior Women's Club
Barberitos
Leigh Ann Barnes
Robert & Mary Zorn Bates
Jean Biddle
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MinolaFernando
Lane & Norma Fitzpatrick
Five Bar
Five Points Optometrists
Fuel Hot Yoga
Gap Foundation
Georgia Emergency Medicine Specialists
Georgia Power

Georgia Skin Cancer & Aesthetic Dermatology
Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia
Carl & Sara Glickman
Global Escapes
Richard & Debbie Golden
Grainger Foundation
David & Beth Greeson
Harris Foundation
Dana Harshaw
Tradd & Betsy Harter
Linda Hayn
Hilltop Grille/Marker 7 Coastal Grill
Holiday Benevolence Market
Jonathan Hutton
Joe Irving
Jackson EMC Foundation
Kelly Family Cuidiu Foundation
Tammy & Bill Kemper
Teresa Kittle
George & Cindy Kuhlman
Paul & Carol Kurtz
Laserturf Southeast



What I Wish For

Project Safe Major Donors

Major Donors & Sponsors Continued

Law Offices of John Lyndon
Law Offices of Joshua Branch
Macy's
Louis Manglass
Martin Mechanical
Shannon & Kristy Mayfield
McDonald & Manus
Nissa McKinney
Angela Meltzer
David & Dawn Meyers
Mitchell Bridge Dental
Karen & Jim Moncrief
William Morang
James Morgenthaler
National Bank of Georgia
Niolon Lumber Sales
Nomad South
Gene O'Kelley
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Foundation
Phil Hughes Honda
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Studio Dance Academy
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Women's Council of Realtors
Women's Independence
Scholarship Program
Woodruff Memorial Charitable Trust
Working Against Gravity
Mike Worth
Joan Yantko
York Famiy
Jamshad Zarnegar

*Donors listed here contributed \$500 or more during either FY 2016 or calendar 2016.

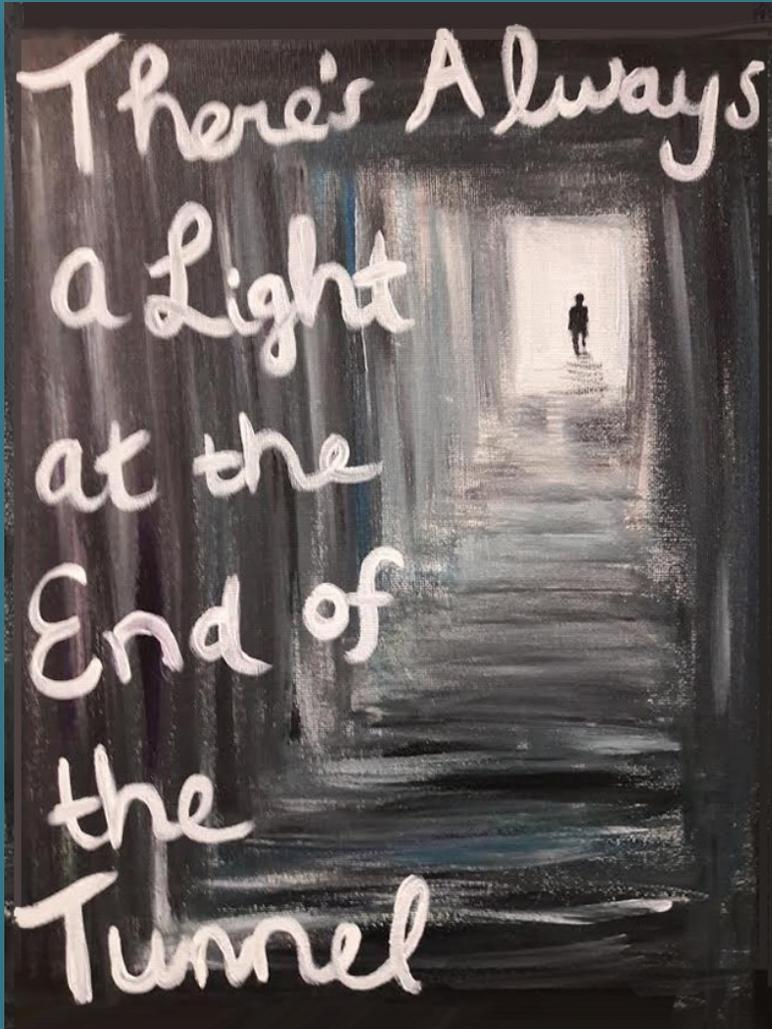
Government Grants

Athens-Clarke County (5% fund)
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Emergency Food & Shelter Program
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

For the fifth year in a row, Project Safe was named a top rated nonprofit by Great Non Profits!



Thank You!



“Long before our incorporation in 1990, Project Safe existed as a network of safe houses. Our founders opened their homes to strangers so that people with nowhere else to go could escape the horror of abuse. Today, we ask ourselves as an organization, What is the equivalent act of courage that we must do to end domestic violence?”

These words paraphrase a conversation the board and I had many years ago. I've written them on our annual report every year since, and think about them every day. Only time will tell if we're as courageous as our founders, but every day we honor their effort and sacrifice, and every day we work to be worthy of the generosity, support and trust given to us by our community. *-Joan Prittie, Executive Director*

Find up-to-date information about the latest news and events at Project Safe on Facebook, Twitter, and through our YouTube channel. To sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, e-mail lionno@project-safe.org.



Donate Online:

www.project-safe.org

Send Check by Mail:

P.O. Box 7532
Athens, GA 30604

Become an Annual Sponsor:
E-mail jprittie@project-safe.org



24-Hour Crisis Hotline
(706) 543-3331

Office: (706) 549-0922
Fax: (706) 354-6161
www.project-safe.org

24-Hour Text Line
(706) 765-8019

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ANNUAL REPORT DESIGN BY WENDYMEEHAN DESIGNS