

# PROJECT SAFE



**SHELTER**

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**COMMUNITY** 

**SUSTAINABILITY**

 **SUPPORT**



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

# Project Safe Program Outcomes

**96%** of clients reported that the services they received from Project Safe met their needs.

**60%** of sheltered clients achieved their employment goal.

**98%** of sheltered clients achieved their housing goal or safe housing.

**89%** of sheltered clients achieved their other goals.

**86%** of clients learned how to manage their safety.



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.

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 Governing Board

## Board of Directors

### Governing Board

Sharon Elliott, Chair  
Dawn Meyers, Past Chair  
Erin Podvin, Secretary  
Oonagh Benson, Treasurer  
Cindy Carmean  
Joanne Cono  
Andrea Dennis  
Ani Fischer  
Angela Hardeman  
Neal Pylant  
Monique Sanders  
Jimmy Williamson

### Advisory Board

Pat Daugherty  
Jenny Coleman  
Jason Kelley

### Executive Director

Joan Prittie

*"In my decade-plus involvement with Project Safe, first as a participant in some of the organizations fundraisers, and now as a board member, I can honestly say I have not come across a more well-run, fiscally-responsible organization. What Project Safe does with the funds, staff and other resources they have far outpaces other organizations much larger than them. Their stellar leadership, creative approach to fundraising and comprehensive support of the people they serve are unparalleled. I wish every community had an organization like Project Safe, and I know we are lucky that we do!"*

Dear Friends,

I am proud to share this year's annual report with you.

This is my fifth year serving on the Project Safe Board. Over these years, and especially as I am raising children of my own, I realize that being in a good family with love and support does not insulate us from family violence. Upon reflection, I realize that abuse can touch everyone's lives, even if not directly. Unfortunately, domestic violence crosses all of society.

As my daughters are growing up, I understand that they can be subject to the same issues that Project Safe is here to protect.

I am so thankful for the programs that Project Safe provides in the schools. When my daughter came home after a fourth grade series, I understood the significance of Project Safe working in partnership with the community to build a foundation of knowledge through education of the youth. This sparks new understanding and questions for the youth as they start to learn what a healthy relationship is and not just what is happening within the walls of his or her home.

If my daughters or their friends need help in their teenage years, I am happy to see the expansion of the teen text line state wide. Even when parents have close relationships with their children, teens do not always come to their parents and often cannot rely on peers for the best answers on relationships. The teen text line provides an anonymous avenue for teens to get welcome help or advice as they navigate through new relationships and emotions.

Finally, I am grateful for Project Safe's work in crisis intervention and ongoing support for victims of domestic violence. For the past year, we have had our hard hats on and are excited to announce that the shelter renovation is wrapping up. The shelter expansion allows us to help more people in crisis intervention or when someone needs a safe place to stay. This renovation makes it possible for us to shelter at least 20 more people each year.

Every day and night, we work to build and sustain a community where everyone is safe in his or her home. Everyone deserves to be loved. That is why the work that Project Safe does is so important. We don't just help the victims that are in the cycle of violence for generations. Project Safe helps ALL of us. Each year, through your support, Project Safe helps more and more of us.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and survivors, I want to thank you for your support in helping build a future free from domestic violence.

Sincerely,

Sharon Elliott, Board Chair 2017-2018



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.

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.

# Building a Foundation

**Crisis Intervention  
In 2017 advocates  
answered 2660  
hotline calls.**

## **Prevention and Education**

In 2017 Project Safe delivered 257 presentations and trainings.

If you would like to request a presentation or professional in-service training, please email the Community Involvement & Volunteer Coordinator, Kendall Worman, at

[kworman@project-safe.org](mailto:kworman@project-safe.org).

## **Ongoing Support**

Outreach services are provided to survivors of domestic violence who are in need of support and help to move on from unhealthy relationships and heal from the pain of experiencing abuse, but don't necessarily need shelter. After working with Project Safe, 98% of outreach clients report they have strategies to enhance their safety, and 99% report knowledge of community resources.

## **Systems Change**

In 2017, Pat Peterson, our Community Response Coordinator, led a committee of our local domestic violence task force in its examination of four serious closed cases of near-fatalities, making recommendations to improve victim safety and abuser accountability.



**We believe that everyone deserves to be safe in their homes and in their relationships, and that love shouldn't come at a cost of abuse or control. We put this belief into practice through our mission: working to end domestic violence through crisis intervention, ongoing supportive services, systems change advocacy, and prevention and education, and organize our work into these four areas.**

"Project Safe is so much more than a shelter. This organization had its roots as a hot line and has grown in scope and services. Project Safe provides advocacy for people affected by DV -- people who rarely have a voice themselves in front of legislators and policy-makers. The staff provide community outreach, educating many groups across our community and region. They have created a texting service with area teens who can get free guidance and help with dating and other uncomfortable social situations. Housing, transportation and counseling services help scores of women, children and families every year to break free from the chains of control and violence, to find shelter and healing, and to build pathways to health and independence." --Donor Review on Great Nonprofits

## **Crisis Intervention**

In 2017 advocates answered 2660 hotline calls.

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 1067 victims of domestic violence.

Interns operating our teen text line had 232 text conversations in 2017, responding to text inquiries from all over the state of Georgia.

# Building Collaborations

At Project Safe, we believe that collaboration leads to innovation, better quality services, a more coordinated response to domestic violence, and--ultimately--a reduction in abuse. In 2017, we began and enhanced several important collaborative efforts.



Project Safe and the Domestic Violence Task Force of Athens-Clarke and Oconee Counties held our 7th Annual Through an Open Window. The event features art projects created by, or in honor of, survivors of domestic violence. At the opening reception in early October, we also honored community members for their work to end domestic violence in the community, as well as survivors who shared their story. The art was on display at ARTini's through October--Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

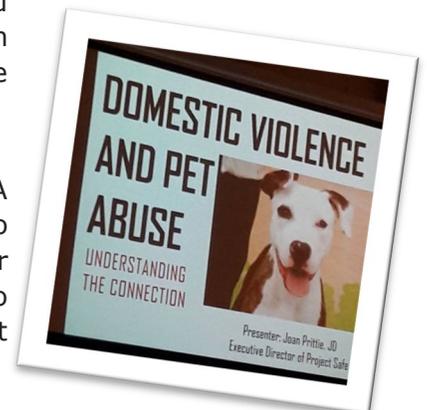
Many people aren't aware of the link between HIV and intimate partner violence. Abusers often prevent their partners from using contraception, and may not truthfully disclose their sexual history. Project Safe and Live Forward began a mobile testing partnership in 2017, utilizing our ambulance and their testing supplies and staff from both organizations to bring fast, confidential testing to convenient locations around our combined service area.



Project Safe continues our partnership with Georgia Tech's *Institute for People and Technology* to offer our dating violence text line. The text line offers constant, confidential assistance to teens who need to talk about potentially dangerous situations or ask tough questions regarding relationship violence. Students at the Georgia Institute of Technology developed the software, and interns from the University of Georgia operate the system and respond to the texts. Steadily expanding since its launch December, 2012, in 2017, the text line went statewide. We now serve 25-50 texters a month from all around Georgia.



Our work with Vets for Pets & People at the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine expanded last year to include educational presentations at conferences for practicing vets and vet techs, opening their eyes to the connection between domestic violence and pet abuse.



# Building A Future

At Project Safe, adult survivors often tell us that they witnessed domestic violence as a child, shaping their image of relationships and violence as a normal part of life. In July, 2017 Project Safe launched our newest program for the youngest survivors of domestic violence, Superheroes Camp, a week-long day camp for children who have witnessed intimate partner violence at home. The camp helps them heal from that experience, and aims to end the intergenerational cycle of abuse.



All superheroes face adversity, but that experience is what gives a superhero power and strength. Campers engaged in trauma-informed activities centered on understanding difficult emotions and learning coping skills to manage them, as well as understanding domestic violence and learning healthy ways to manage anger and resolve conflict. Children often internalize what happens in their home, so we pay special attention to help them understand that violence at home is never their fault.



"I want to come back next year!"

"I wish it was longer!"

To help our Superheroes to be able to express themselves and show their strength in healthy ways, we partnered with Canopy Studios where campers had the opportunity to 'fly' on the trapeze, and test their strength and agility with acro-yoga. Campers experimented with expressing themselves through art led by Kate Cook of ARTini's, and dance led by Studio Dance co-owner and former Project Safe board member Beth Shackelford. Superheroes also learned about their rights as children and toured both the Athens-Clarke County Courthouse and the Athens-Clarke County Police Department to learn more about how to get help when they need it.

"I feel loved at camp because everyone here cares about me."

We call the camp Superheroes because we believe there is a superhero inside all of us! Superheroes have different strengths, just like our campers, and we want to help our campers find their strengths.

"I was afraid of the courthouse because of when I had to come here before, but now that I met the judge, it doesn't seem so scary."



# 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. This past year, 361 volunteers contributed 22,543 hours in activities ranging from helping at our thrift store and providing meals for support groups to helping 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.



*"I have volunteered with Project Safe for several years and have done all levels of involvement, from assisting a client in need with moving out of an unsafe environment to dressing nicely at one of the annual fund raisers. Everyone I've ever dealt with at Project Safe has been professional, dedicated, and passionate about the work being done. This is so important when you are working with clients who are often at the lowest point emotionally in their lives. Few people seek out Project Safe because things are going well. People seek out services because something has gone terribly wrong. The Project Safe staff and volunteers meet clients where they are and work tirelessly to ensure immediate safety and long term education. Joan Prittie runs a tight ship and I hope to offer my volunteer services to Project Safe for a long time to come. "*

--review on Great Nonprofits



"I am a recently retired public school Kindergarten teacher. This service opportunity allows me to use my early childhood education training, as well as my experience as a mother. I enjoy spending time with the children, as well as visiting with their parents. The childcare room is well equipped with games, books, and toys for a variety of ages. And there's a great playground at the shelter, allowing time inside or outside. There is also support available if needed. The professionals at Project Safe are respectful and willing to answer questions. It's been a good experience."

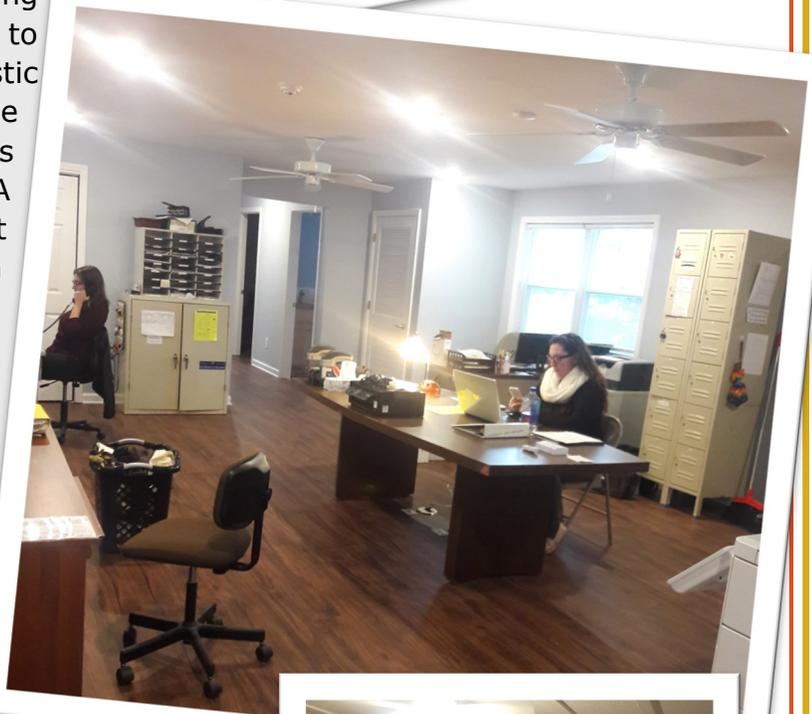
Mary Young, Project Safe Childcare Volunteer



# Building Shelter

Even equipped with the most ambitious dreams of ending domestic violence, Project Safe's scope is limited when our physical structure is insufficient to house our burgeoning aspirations. In 2017, our emergency shelter underwent a massive expansion; the tangible space Project Safe occupies is finally on its way to aligning with its powerful mission.

Our shelter previously had four bedrooms; now, we have 10--six individual bedrooms and four family-sized rooms. With more bed space, Project Safe can help more survivors of domestic violence escape from unhealthy and potentially life-threatening situations. A large downstairs addition to Project Safe's building allowed for a drastic expansion of our main office and the opportunity to better situate a spacious playroom for our clients' children. A resource room was constructed adjacent to the main office, where residents can use computers, browse flyers for support groups, and explore different employment and housing opportunities. Our two new advocacy and counseling rooms allow residents to meet with staff and discuss any sensitive concerns particular to their case in a private location. Construction is currently underway for individual workspaces designed for residents' children to complete their homework. The immense renovation progress made in 2017 cements Project Safe as an organization that is continuously maturing, improving, and pushing to serve as many clients as it can, as effectively as possible.



# Shelter Renovations and Expansion



The advantages of Project Safe's new amenities for both clients and staff are immeasurable; by expanding the organization's facility and maximizing our resources, we are effectively building a safer future for our community.

*"I love Project Safe. They are very helpful and caring, and they don't give up on anyone even if they have gave up on themselves. I would love to see Project Safe keep doing the great work they do in peoples' lives every day providing a safe place for women, children, and men if need be."*

*--former client*

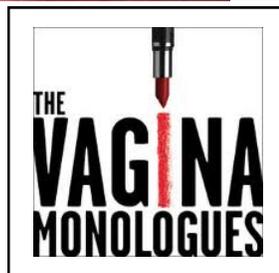
*"I feel the staff was extremely supportive, and each and every person here will always be in my heart <3"--former shelter resident*



# Building Awareness—Special Events



Dancing with the Athens Stars is the community's premier fundraiser, with a net total of more than \$1,061,000 raised in its first 10 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. Groovy Nights disco now features a lip sync battle of songs from the 1970's and 80's.



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.



# Building Sustainability

In 2017, the Project Safe Thrift Store won the Business Recycling Award from Athens-Clarke County Solid Waste and the Athens Land Trust at the GreenFest Award ceremony. GreenFest is a community-wide celebration providing citizens with the opportunity to increase their awareness of and interest in improving the environment. Our store's sustainability efforts have been recognized as going above and beyond in improving the environments businesses and community. We take in almost all items with very few exceptions, and broken items may be recycled or turned into other useful products. Thanks to Athens Land Trust, Joe Dunlop & Suki Janssen at ACC Solid Waste, NE GA Food Bank and all who help us redistribute usable materials to the best possible sources for reuse.

In 2017 Project Safe provided 7,763 items at no charge to 691 individuals/families. As always, our clients can shop for free, and all money raised from sales goes to support our programs and services for survivors of domestic violence.

The Project Safe Thrift Store is located at 995 Hawthorne Avenue in the Bell's Shopping Center. It is open Monday through Saturday 10:00-6:00 and Sunday 1:00-6:00. [706-425-8863](tel:7064258863)



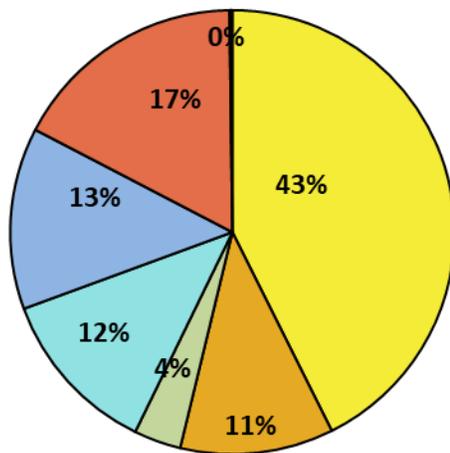
"I love volunteering with project safe thrift shop in Athens, GA It is an awesome feeling knowing that such a large percentage of each sale goes back to help the battered women in our community leave dangerous relationships and become safe with their children! Makes my heart warm!"

--review on Great Nonprofits

# Financial Information

FY 17 income and expenses are shown below. Project Safe received \$1,426,938 in cash and \$270,516 through donations of time with the value of a volunteer hour estimated at \$12. Client services accounted for 91% of all spending. *Source is Audit 12/31/17 by Robert Baker and Associates, Certified Public Accountants.*

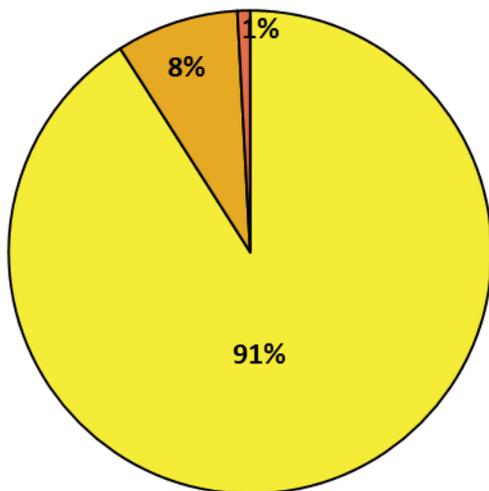
## Fiscal Year 2017 Revenue



- Grants & Contracts
- Contributions
- United Way
- Special Events
- Thrift Store Sales
- Volunteers
- Investment Income

"Project Safe is one of the rare non-profits that I've worked with that focus so much of the funding to the actual mission of the non-profit. It's amazing what can be done when the focus of the non-profit is actually on helping people. A surprising amount can be done with a small amount of funding and Project Safe is a perfect example of those results."  
--review on Great Nonprofits

## Fiscal Year 2017 Expenses



- Program Services
- Mgmt. General
- Fundraising



# Building Support—Major Donors and Sponsors

## Major Donors & Sponsors

1st Presbyterian Church of Athens

1st United Methodist Church of Athens

Agora Vintage

Allergy Partners

Alpha Chi Omega Beta Sigma Chapter

Alpha Phi Alpha Zeta Pi Chapter

America's Home Place

American Family  
Insurance Dreams Foundation

Stephen Andrews & Doris Downs

Anonymous

Dr. & Mrs. Ardoin

Ashford Methodist Church

Athens Clarke Emergency Specialists

Athens First Bank & Trust

Athens Real Estate Group

Emily Aune

Bank of Amercia

Barberito's

Robert & Mary Zorn Bates

Carol Bitner

Chris & Maura Blackmon

Kelley Blanton

Paul & Stacy Brannon

Philip Branyon

Sige Burden

Cable East

Calamit Farms

Maria Gloria Cardarelli

Cindy & Adam Carmean

Catholic Center at UGA

Classic City Orthodontics

Cathy Cofer

Jenny Coleman & David Shipley

Commercial Bank

Joanne Cono & Rick Tarleton

Covenant Presbyterian Church

Crossroads Church

Margaret & Eric Dahl

Andrea Dennis

Margaret Dennison

Dermatology of Athens

Diagnostic Clinic of Athens

Charles Dorr

Bertis & Katherine Downs

Gerald & Carol Driver Foundation

Ginger Duensing

Tommy Easterling

Entourage Clothing & Accessories

ETL Construction

F. Neal Pylant

Rebecca & Leon Farmer III

Minola Fernando

Ani & Aaron Fischer

Five Bar

Gap Foundation

Georgia Emergency Medicine  
Specialists

Georgia Power

Georgia Skin Cancer &  
Aesthetic Dermatology

Georgia Theater Company

Girl Scout Troop 12115

Give Back Real Estate

Glickman Family Foundation

Richard Golden

Grainger Foundation

Karen & Brad Hankins

Harbin Family Foundation

Harbin Lumber

Harris Foundation

Demmie Hicks

Hilltop Grille

Holiday Benevolence Market

Abigail Horvath

Isla Design Group

Kelly Family Cuidiu Foundation

Tammy & Bill Kemper

George & Cindy Kuhlman

Paul & Carol Kurtz

Law Offices of John Lyndon

Lincoln Fill Station

Joyce Loudermilk

Alisa Luxenberg

Macy's

Lewis Manglass

Robert Mason



# Project Safe Major Donors

## Major Donors & Sponsors Continued

Kristy & Shannon Mayfield

Nissa McKinney

Dawn & David Meyers

Mitchell Bridge Dental Associates

Nancy Travis Childcare Project

Teresa Nestor

Niolon Lumber Sales

Orange County Community Foundation

Bill Overend

Adele Patrick

Pearls of Wisdom & Grace Foundation

Phil Hughes Honda

Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center

Peter Pollak

Princeton United Methodist Church

Helen Prittie

Joan Prittie & Sandy Berry

Margaret Przybyla

Purple Ribbon Cleaning

Regina Quick

Robins Financial Credit Union

Gayle Rogers

Michael Romano

Richard Rosemond

Margaret & Eugene Schaufler

Sigma Delta Tau Eta Chapter

Silver & Archibald

Buddy & Gina Solomon

St. Mary's Healthcare System

Matthew Stemmler

Thomas Stephens

Zolinda Stoneman

Sunshine Lady Foundation

Will & Molly Tally

The National

The Place

Grady Thrasher & Kathy Prescott

Trinity Accounting Group

Tuckston United Methodist Church

Turner Family Foundation

Ulm Family Foundation

United Methodist Women of 1st UMC

United Way of Northeast Georgia

Verizon

Robert & Tammy Wall

Wells Fargo Foundation

Whistlebury Condominiums

Whitehead Athens Civitan Club

Frederick & Patricia Wiegert

James & Margaret Williamson

Patrick Winter & Mardi Schmeichel

Women's Council of Realtors

Women's Independence Scholarship Program

Jeff Wood

Woodruff Memorial Charitable Trust

Mike Worth

York Family

\*Donors listed here contributed \$500 or more during either FY 2017 or calendar 2017.

## Government Grants

Athens-Clarke County (5% fund)

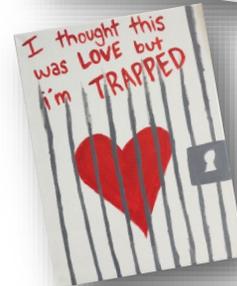
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Emergency Food & Shelter

Program

U.S. Department of Housing &

Urban Development



For the **SIXTH** year in a row, Project Safe was named a top rated nonprofit by Great Nonprofits!

# 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 [kworman@project-safe.org](mailto:kworman@project-safe.org)



## **Donate Online:**

[www.project-safe.org](http://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](mailto:jprittie@project-safe.org)



**Project Safe**  
Office: (706) 549-0922  
Fax: (706) 354-6161  
[www.project-safe.org](http://www.project-safe.org)



**END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



**Project Safe**  
24-Hour Crisis Hotline  
(706) 543-3331



**Project Safe**  
24-Hour Text Line  
(706) 765-8019