

PROJECT SAFE



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Building the Cockpit

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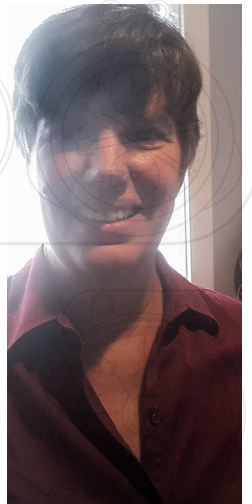
Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to share Project Safe's 2020 Annual Report. Our theme is **Building the Plane While Flying It**. Many years ago, I recall a mentor using this phrase to describe the implementation of a new statewide initiative, and it was a phrase I uttered repeatedly as we frequently changed our staffing patterns and processes to best serve survivors of domestic violence during a global pandemic.

At the front of the plane, important decisions are made. This is where the navigation takes place, including setting a destination and correcting course. Now, imagine the navigation equipment is entirely new and the plane's sensors are picking up conflicting information.

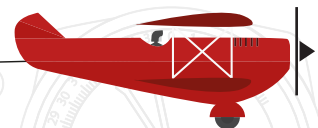
The pandemic certainly made the Project Safe "cockpit" look unfamiliar. Our board and staff leadership were thrust into a state of uncertainty, and the stakes (clients' wellbeing) were high. Nevertheless, we remained calm and flexible. If sensors indicated something wasn't working, we adjusted quickly. We tried to anticipate all that could go wrong before it happened and prevent it. Soon enough, we'd adapted to our new surroundings and could help the rest of the flight crew do the same.

In my 22nd year of leadership at this organization, I could not be more proud of the efforts of our staff, nor more grateful for the support and guidance of the board of directors as we daily worked to pilot this plane while demonstrating our belief that **everyone deserves to be safe in their homes and safe in their relationships**.--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.

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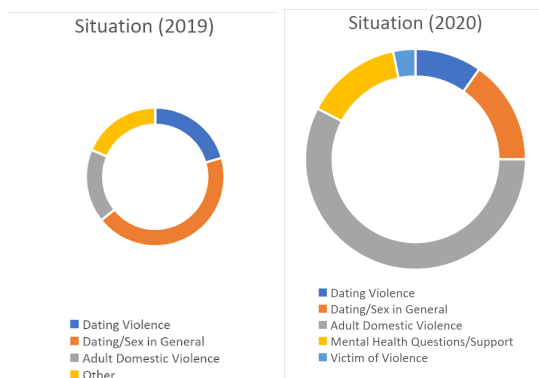
Boarding the Plane

As the reality of sheltering-in-place sunk in, many victims of domestic violence found themselves even more isolated than before. Moments of respite when an abuser went to work were now gone. The kids, home from school, had more opportunities to be exposed to an abuser's rage. It was harder than ever to sneak away to make a phone call to Project Safe's hotline. Survivors were forced to adapt their survival tactics to the quarantined lifestyle.

At the same time, Project Safe was adapting to their needs. We made sure our dating violence text line was widely marketed and accessible to all survivors who might be unable to make a phone call with their abuser at home all day. While only a small number of staff could work in the emergency shelter itself, we could make sure the hotline was being answered consistently by forwarding it to staff members working from home. When appointments were made with our outreach staff, we offered virtual meetings in addition to face to face walk-in hours.

For any survivor of domestic violence, reaching out to an organization feels like boarding a plane at the start of a long trip. Boarding a plane comes with uncertainty, and even anxiety for some. You reassure yourself that the flight will go smoothly even as you recognize how far you are from your destination. As an organization, Project Safe kept our eyes on where we were going so that we could adapt to new and uncertain circumstances in a way that kept our services consistently available to clients.

In 2020...
2056 Hotline Calls
112 Text Conversations
133 Clients Sheltered
763 Clients Served in Outreach



The proportion of texts from adults experiencing intimate partner violence increased significantly as we promoted the textline to all survivors who were sheltering in place with their abusers and unable to safely use the phone.



*"I never knew anyone cared enough to help until I came here."
--former shelter resident*

*"We would be without hope if you and the organizations you partner with were not available."
--former shelter resident*

*"Out of everyone I have turned to for years this organization validated me enough to finally start being able to breathe again."
--outreach client*

Building the Main Cabin

The main cabin of the plane has to be built with precision and care if the plane is to operate safely while hosting a large number of passengers. Likewise, our operations during the pandemic had to continue seamlessly to avoid harm coming to our clients. Project Safe staff worked as a team to make a blueprint for how we could continue providing survivors with the resources they needed. We broke our “construction crew” into quaran-teams, so that the minimal number of staff to provide our key services were on site at any given time while others worked virtually. Ultimately, we overcame each obstacle posed by COVID-19 to make sure our clients were cared for--and while some sheltered clients contracted COVID-19 through their work or school--we were able to help them isolate and recover safely without transmitting the virus to other shelter residents or staff.

The pet yard and kennel we opened in late 2019 allowed survivors to bring their furry family members with them to shelter. Transitional housing provided longer term stability for survivors with complicated legal situations or those just needing extra time to get on their feet. Rapid rehousing funds helped families get into their own apartments sooner than otherwise would be possible.

Twice-weekly walk-in hours at the Family Protection Center were maintained with strict mask and social distancing protocols, while phone and video meeting check-ins gave hundreds of survivors peace of mind and access to advocacy, case management, and financial assistance. Mobile staff delivered food and supplies to people’s homes, and provided PPE to those working clients whose employers did not do so. Outreach and shelter based groups continued, offering education and emotional support through virtual and socially-distanced gatherings; group attendees have remarked that their approach to relationships is healthier after having come. Across all Project Safe programs, survivors were able to access life-saving and life-changing services. Once built, the main cabin at Project Safe hosted passengers who, at the end of their journey, arrived at a new, safe destination.



Our new pet yard and kennels at shelter were frequently occupied throughout the year.

85% of clients achieved their housing goal or safe housing
56% of clients achieved their employment goals
90% of clients achieved their other goals

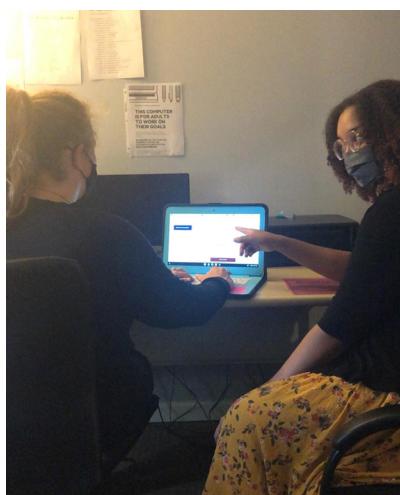


Flight Attendants

As a plane takes off, hits turbulence, and prepares for descent, passengers can look to the flight attendants to see how they should be responding to the plane's movements. It's important for flight attendants to keep their composure, even if they're nervous themselves. As we built our plane while flying it, Project Safe staff took on a "flight attendant" role for our clients over the course of the year.

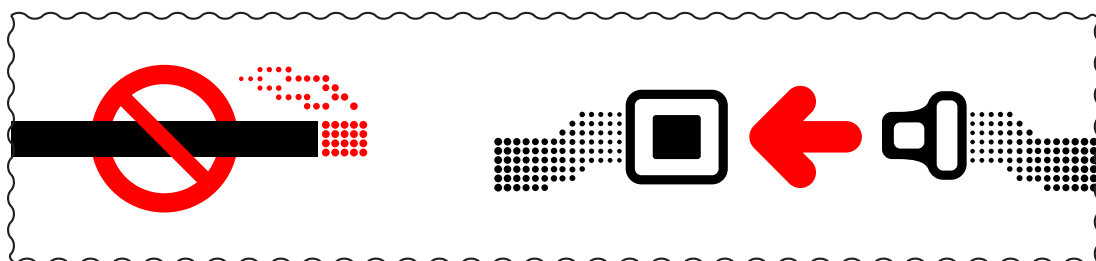
We adapted to new circumstances calmly and efficiently, reassuring our clients that we weren't going anywhere. We provided emotional support when they were understandably fearful of what would come next. As clients turned to us with questions about how to stay safe, from both a pandemic and their abusers, we continued to educate clients about their risks and help them make safety plans to address all their areas of concern.

In FY20, Project Safe increased our client assistance budget by 268%, helping survivors with rent, utilities, transportation, childcare, education, relocation, legal services, security/safety needs and more.

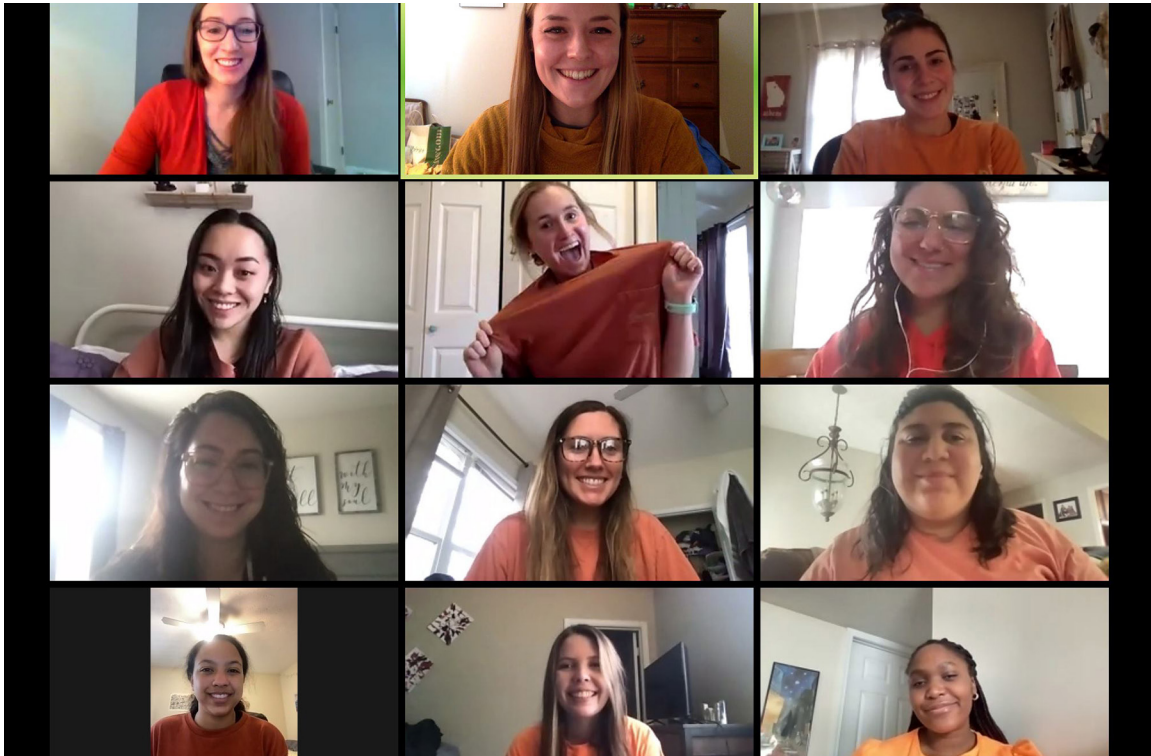


Shelter support groups often focus on what makes relationships hard for trauma survivors and how we can make things easier. New groups for 2020 included ECCO (Emotions, Conflict, & Constructive Outcomes), SWIM (Say What I Mean), and Take Care (Caregiver Skills & Support).

In 2020,
99% of clients reported they learned strategies to enhance their safety
94% of clients reported they learned about community resources to help them



Flight School



Interns wear orange for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Ground school and flight training combine to provide the instruction necessary to pilot a plane. Project Safe takes seriously our responsibility to train university students to be effective, trauma-informed advocates in the movement to end domestic violence. Our “Domestic Violence Boot Camp” consists of some 40 hours of pre-placement training that helps interns think critically about our mission and service and prepare to work alongside staff at our various facilities.

Staff worked quickly to transition all training materials to an online format. To combat “Zoom Fatigue,” staff assigned reading materials, audio clips, and videos to review prior to each 90-minute session, while check-ins and ice-breakers at weekly intern meetings throughout each semester helped to ease students’ isolation. Among other projects, interns made digital content for community education, reviewed police reports and made follow up contact with survivors whose abusers had been arrested, helped with the Who Are You Thinking Of? fundraising campaign, created the Asking for a Friend training series, and helped with virtual support groups and client advocacy.

Interns in 2020: 43

Hours of Service: 22,473 (includes on-call hours for Breaking Silence textline)

Building the Engines

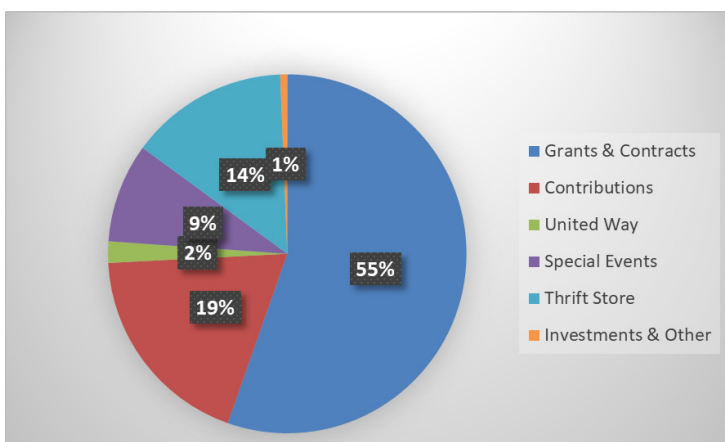


A plane's engines produce the thrust that moves it forward in the air. For Project Safe, our public events and fundraisers often serve this function by allowing us to move our work along more quickly with a jolt of support from the community.

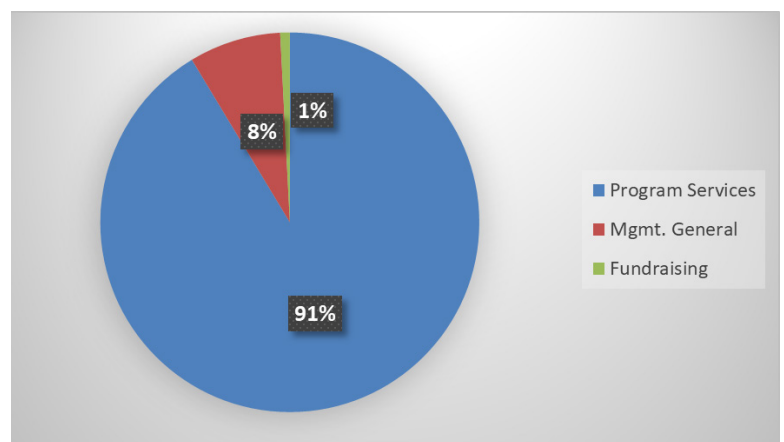
One way we built the engines in 2020 was adding our online campaign, Who Are You Thinking Of? as a way to celebrate healthy relationships while supporting Project Safe's mission.



Fiscal Year 2020 Revenue



Fiscal Year 2020 Expenses



FY20 income and expenses are shown in these charts. Project Safe received \$1,655,976 in revenue. Client services accounted for 91% of all spending. Source is Audit 12/31/20 by Robert Baker and Associates, Certified Public Accountants. Fiscal Year 2020 Revenue Fiscal Year 2020 Expenses

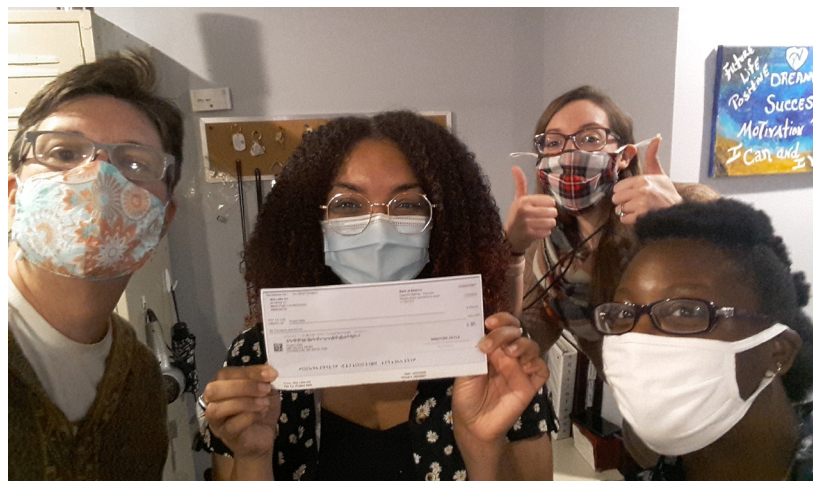
Building the Wings

The wings create the lift that holds the plane in the air. Properly designed wings make the air flow faster over the top of the wings, reducing pressure. In 2020 we had to build a new set of wings for our plane, cancelling the popular fundraiser events such as the Groovy Nights Lip Sync Battle and Dancing with the Athens Stars that normally provide the financial "lift" for our organization, and relying more than ever on the generosity of private donors, businesses and foundations.

Whether it was supply drives with contactless drop-off locations at area businesses, contributions of food and meals from restaurants, or monetary donations large or small, survivors of domestic violence benefitted from the kindness of our community. These are our major donors for 2020:

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ABDULWAHAB & NAOMI ALHAROUN
AHA!
ALPHA CHI OMEGA FOUNDATION INC
AMERICAN ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION
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THE NEWLAND FAMILY FOUNDATION
NEW LIFE APOSTOLIC CHURCH
PHYLLIS & TREY NIOLON
NIOLON LUMBER SALES



Staff celebrate a major gift from the company Aha!

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 RICHARD & MARCIA PAGE
 PANHELLENIC COUNCIL
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 JOAN YANTKO
 KEVIN YORK

Donors listed here contributed \$500 or more in FY2020 or calendar 2020

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Athens-Clarke County (5% Fund, Indigent Housing Assistance Fund)

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

(Victims Of Crime Act, Violence Against Women Act, Family Violence Prevention & Services Act,

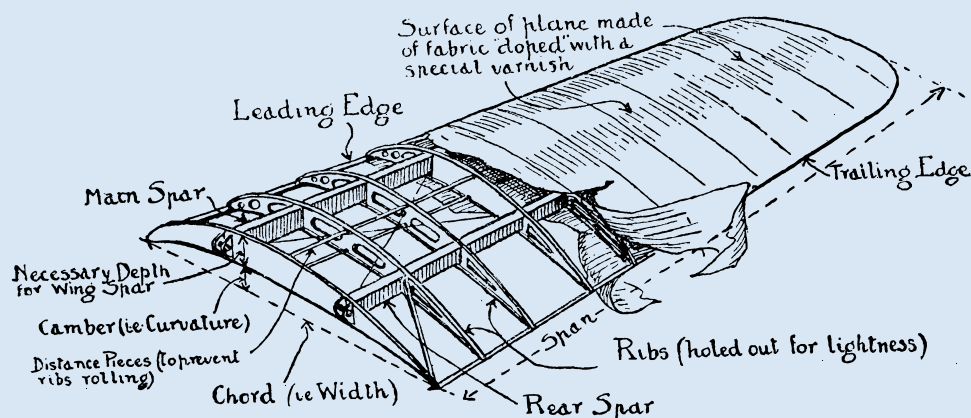
State Of Georgia Domestic Violence Grants)

Emergency Food & Shelter Program

U.S. Department Of Housing & Urban Development



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

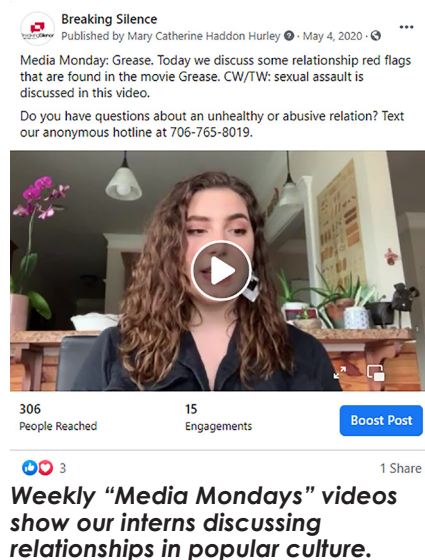


Building External Lights

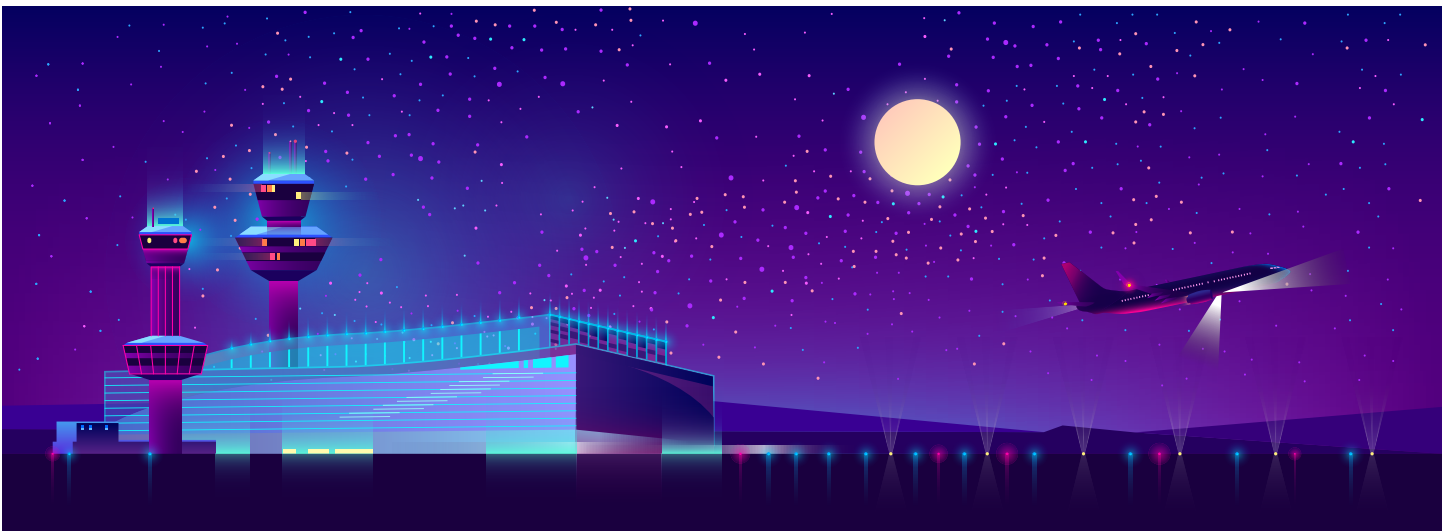
Navigation, beacon, and strobe lights make a plane more visible both on the ground and in the air. To make our services visible to others and to shine a light on the often-hidden problem of domestic violence, Project Safe relies on training and educational presentations. In a typical year, we will deliver hundreds of such presentations to audiences ranging from elementary school children to judges, clergy, healthcare professionals and more. The first quarter of 2020 started off as any for Project Safe with presentations throughout our service area and across the state from South Georgia to metro Atlanta. Once the pandemic hit and schools were closed, our Breaking Silence team began creating videos for social media to continue to help teens and young adults understand the dangerous dynamics of dating violence.

In 2020, Project Safe delivered:

- 22 in-person training presentations with 487 participants
- 5 in-school information booths reaching 760 students
- 19 virtual presentations with 745 participants
- 54 Breaking Silence videos with 4494 views on social media



"This nonprofit is extremely helpful and gives a lot of information on domestic violence. They came to speak to our fraternity and they have given all of us an enlightening experience. I most definitely will continue to support this non profit beyond my college years."--Review on Great Nonprofits



Air Traffic Controllers

Air traffic controllers monitor and direct the movement of planes whether in the air or on the ground, providing instructions to pilots, and ensuring safe take off and landing. For a nonprofit, this function is served by the strategic plan. After successfully completing our previous strategic plan, Project Safe began a new planning process for our 2020-2023 strategic plan.

Our prior plan had three strategic directions:

- shelter renovation and expansion
- expansion of the Breaking Silence dating violence initiative statewide
- review and assessment of financial structure to ensure long-term sustainability

Accomplishments included:

- completing all planned shelter construction projects as well as multiple "wish list" extra projects without incurring debt or ever closing the shelter facility
- taking the dating violence text line statewide with custom-designed software and a full time dedicated Youth Advocate
- creating a financial sustainability plan and establishing an endowment for Project Safe's long term stability

2020 saw the creation of a new plan with the following strategic directions:

- demonstrating impact through improved evaluation and communication of results and process
- implementing the newly-created financial sustainability plan and preparing for eventual leadership transition
- expanding domestic violence prevention efforts through targeted programs and collaborations

And Coming in for a Landing

"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.



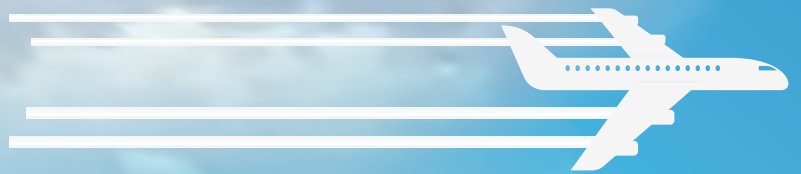
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Find up-to-date information about the latest news and events at Project Safe on Facebook, Twitter, and through our YouTube channel. To sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, email: mhaddon@project-safe.org



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**Project Safe
24-Hour Crisis Hotline
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