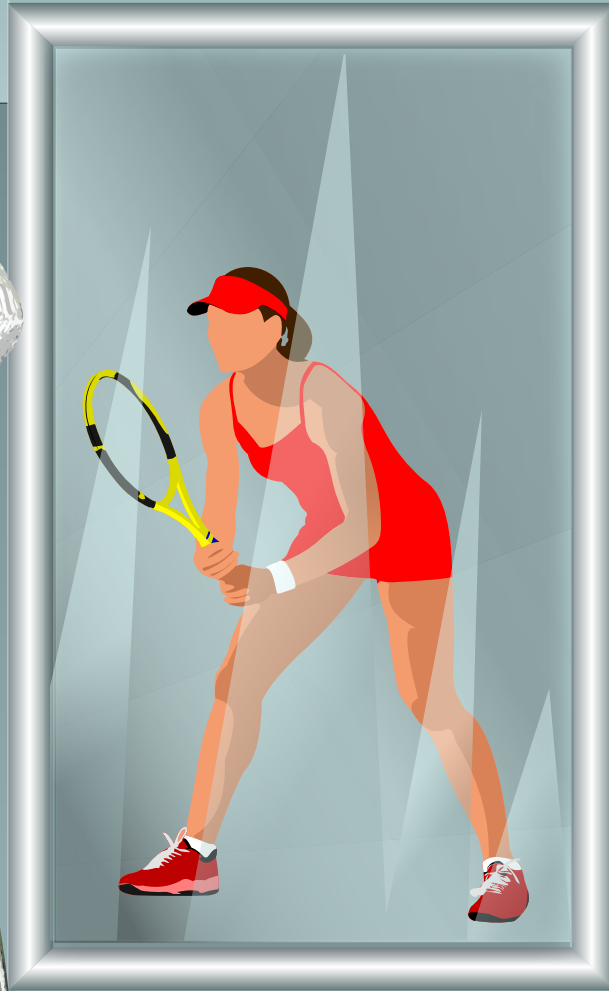


# PROJECT SAFE

*This is where I was...*



*But this is where I'm going*



## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

"Sports teaches you character, it teaches you to play by the rules, it teaches you to know what it feels like to win and lose—it teaches you about life."

--Billie Jean King (Tennis)

# Sports & Life Lessons

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## Executive Director

Joan Prittie

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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.

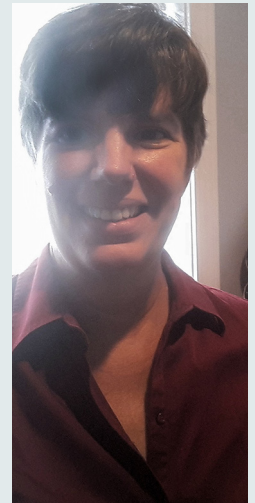
Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to share Project Safe's 2021 Annual Report. Our theme is **Perseverance**, a quality we see exemplified among our clients and staff. We're taking special inspiration from women athletes and the perseverance required to succeed.

My grandmother, mother, and I all played basketball. When I was young, I played in a boys-only league, because there wasn't one for girls my age. Being the only girl was hard, and no one was exactly happy for me to be there. If I messed up, it was obviously because girls aren't as good. If I did well, it embarrassed the boys.

Decades later, when helping mom organize her things in the months preceding her death, we came across something I had totally forgotten about: the tacky trophy for being MVP of that team in my second year. She held onto it for more than 35 years. She wasn't proud of my basketball playing; but that I persevered.

I will always be most proud of everyone involved with Project Safe when we persevere through difficult situations in furtherance of our belief that **everyone deserves to be safe in their home and safe in their relationships**. This is how we to make things better for our clients, the community, and those whom we haven't yet reached. —Joan Prittie



Vintage basketball photo: Joan's grandmother is 2nd from right.

*“Don’t wait until you’ve reached your goal to be proud of yourself. Be proud of every step you take toward reaching that goal.” – Simone Biles (Gymnastics)*

*“Thank you for listening at night when I cried. You met all my needs and helped me so much.”--former shelter client*

## **In 2021...**

**88% of clients achieved their means of support goals**

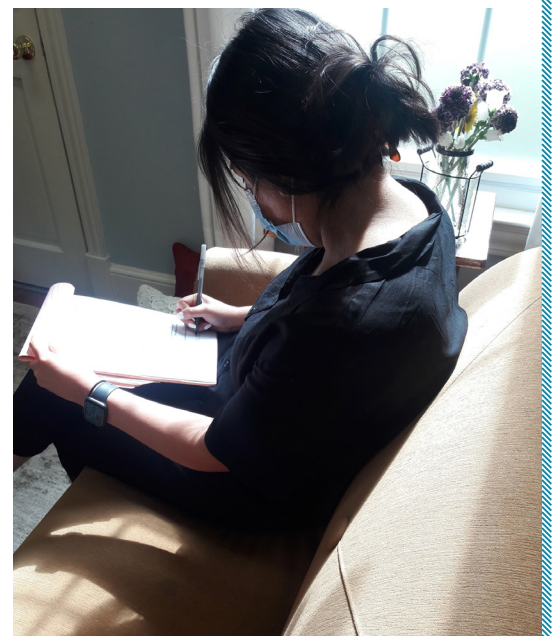
**91% of clients achieved their housing goals**

**97% of clients achieved their other goals**

**97% of clients reported they increased their knowledge of community resources.**

**96% of clients reported they learned strategies to enhance their safety.**

Perseverance allows us to achieve our goals in the face of barriers and challenges. At Project Safe, our advocates work with survivors of domestic violence to set goals and help them move toward their achievement.



**Signing a lease is a giant step in achieving housing goals for many survivors.**



*The success of every woman should be the inspiration to another. We should raise each other up. Make sure you're very courageous: be strong, be extremely kind, and above all, be humble."* – Serena Williams (Tennis)



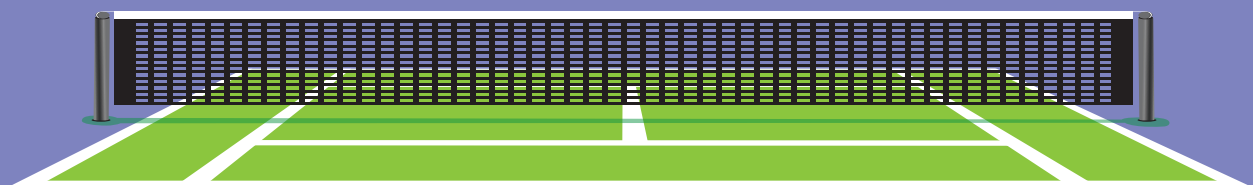
Project Safe provides emotional support to survivors of domestic violence through individual meetings but also through an array of support groups offered at the emergency shelter and through our outreach office.

Sammy (name changed for confidentiality) began attending New Beginnings in 2021. Beatrice (name changed for confidentiality) has been a member of the group for years. What do these two women have in common? Not only are they survivors of domestic violence, they were also both arrested following incidents involving their abusive partners. As we know, sometimes when an officer responds to a scene, it can be difficult to determine who the primary

aggressor was. If a victim fights back, the abusive partner may have scratch marks or other wounds on their body, making it seem like they are the victim. This is what happened to both of these women. Sammy felt alone and like no one understood her scary and stressful situation, but through New Beginnings she found Beatrice who was able to relate completely. Witnessing these two women find support and acceptance in the midst of difficult and traumatic events is what I love most about facilitating the New Beginnings group.

The charges against Beatrice ultimately were dropped during the investigation, and her abuser is serving a prison sentence. While Sammy's situation is still ongoing, the resolution of Beatrice's case gave her hope and energy on her healing journey. This kind of healing would not have been possible without the virtual format of the group; something we started at the beginning of the pandemic but have continued because it works so well for our participants. Did I mention that Sammy moved in with family out of state after the incident with her abuser? Holding group online allowed her to gain support each week from hundreds of miles away.

**--Brittney Potter, Community Advocate**



*"You never know if you can actually do something against all odds until you actually do it." – Abby Wambach (Soccer)*

When I think of how much I've grown throughout my internship and employment at PSI, I first think of the hotline. Before I started my internship, I was terrified of making or answering phone calls. I would put off any calls I needed to make and send every incoming call to voicemail. After spending the first few months of my internship working remotely, I was ecstatic for the chance to finally come into the shelter to get some direct service experience. My excitement turned to fear once I found out that direct service included answering the phone. I tried my strategy of avoidance, but it did not work for very long. The nature of our work leaves no room for procrastination. I was asked to start answering the hotline. And, after years and years of putting off important phone calls and bursting into tears when my parents told me to answer the phone, I just started answering.

I think something in me recognized that there are few things more terrifying than being the survivor on the other end of the phone, who has recognized the dangerous situation they are in, and has no other choice but to tell their most difficult story to a complete stranger. Recognizing that was the instant cure to my lifelong phobia of phone calls that I didn't know I needed.

**--Emma Boardman,**  
who started as an intern,  
became a part-time shelter advocate,  
and is now Textline Manager.

**Interns in 2021: 39**

**Hours of Service: 20,374 (including on-call hours for the Breaking Silence textline)**



**In 2021...**

**2393 hotline calls**

**188 textline conversations**

**131 clients sheltered**

**580 clients served in outreach**

**25 clients served in long term housing**

*Acknowledge your small victories. They will eventually add up to something great.”*  
– Kara Goucher (Track)

### SEEKING VOICES AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence is the leading cause of injury for women in the United States. For their children, witnessing domestic violence is often a scary and traumatic experience, leaving many needs unmet. We are seeking to learn about the experiences of children who lost a parent due to domestic violence. If you witnessed domestic violence as a child and your parent was murdered or seriously injured by an abusive partner, we invite you to participate in our focus group to provide insight on how our community can help the youngest survivors of domestic violence.

A gift card will be provided to those who participate.

\*Note must be 18yo or older to participate.

**FOCUS GROUP DATE:  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13  
9AM-11AM  
ACC LIBRARY  
2025 BAXTER STREET**

If interested or have questions,  
please contact Mary Haddon  
childsurvivorsproject@gmail.com  
706-549-0922

Sponsored by the Athens-Clarke and Oconee  
Domestic Violence Task force

In 2021 Project Safe led the formation of the Child Survivors Initiative of the Domestic Violence Task Force of Athens-Clarke and Oconee Counties. The initiative was inspired by observations of our longstanding Fatality Review Committee. That multidisciplinary group gathers data after a domestic violence homicide or near-homicide to identify patterns or areas for systems improvement to aid survivors, hold domestic violence perpetrators accountable, and to prevent future domestic violence homicides. When looking at older cases of the Fatality Review, a few things became apparent. Children experience unique needs when a parent loses their life due to domestic violence. Caretakers who gain custody of the children are grieving themselves and may not know how to support a grieving child or talk about what happened. The child may be grieving the loss of both parents; one who lost their life and the other that is incarcerated for the murder. Families of the victim and abusive partner may

be entrenched in a custody battle. New caretakers may not know all of the resources that are available to them.

Later in 2021, we held a focus group to hear from members of the community their experience with domestic violence related homicide. Some participants in the focus group were adults who, as a child, lost a parent due to domestic violence homicide. Some were grandparents whose adult daughter was killed by an abusive partner, leaving behind a child of her own. One participant was not a family member, but took in children after their mother was murdered. All participants shared valuable feedback that we are incorporating into our ongoing initiative. One clear theme that emerged was for support for new caregivers. While children often have advocates, their new caretakers may not have an advocate themselves to help them navigate through the challenges of unexpectedly caring for a child that has lost a parent in a traumatic way. The Child Survivors Initiative has utilized this feedback to explore avenues to support child domestic violence homicide survivors and their caregivers.



*“Technique and ability alone do not get you to the top; it is the willpower that is most important.” – Junko Tabei (Mountain Climbing)*



*Advocates at the Clarke County Courthouse*

Project Safe has five staff members who work alongside police and other agencies at the Family Protection Center. These advocates are referred to by the Department of Justice as Jessica Gonzalez Advocates--so named for a Colorado woman who was unable to get law enforcement to act upon her desperate pleas for help when her abuser violated a temporary protective order by picking up their three children outside of the agreed-upon schedule. He took the children's lives as well as his own. Domestic violence advocates might have been able to help law enforcement better understand the nuances of abuse and coercive control, and appreciate the danger inherent in the Gonzalez' situation—leading to a much quicker response. In 2021, Project Safe advocates reviewed **1437 police reports** for domestic violence and made contact with **533 victims** named in those reports to offer services, working closely with law enforcement to identify cases of highest risk. On request from our Chief Judge, we added weekly hours at the courthouse every Tuesday to help people with temporary protective orders. Since its inception in August through the end of 2021, staff met with **30 individuals** at the weekly clinic. Contemporaneously with the start of the TPO clinic, we began reaching out to TPO petitioners and contacted **40 individuals** in 2021.

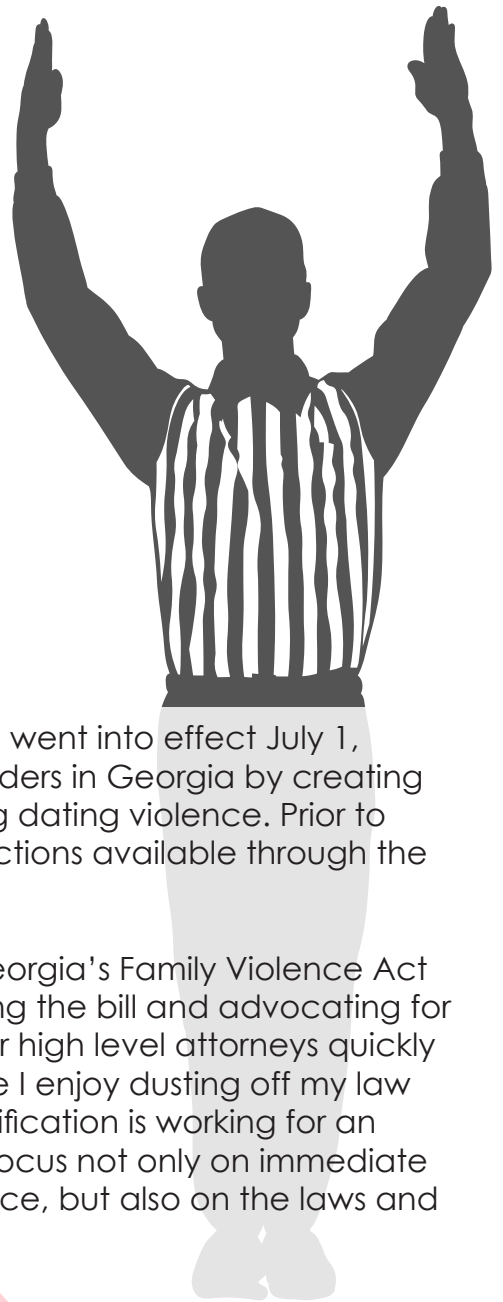


*“Your program is helping me face my fears head on.”--former client*

*I always want to give more than I gave yesterday.” – Allyson Felix (Track)*



**Joan Prittie trains judges on the new dating violence law.**



Project Safe celebrated the passage of House Bill 231 which went into effect July 1, 2021. This new legislation extends coverage of protection orders in Georgia by creating a new Temporary Protective Order for survivors experiencing dating violence. Prior to the new law, dating couples were excluded from the protections available through the Family Violence Act.

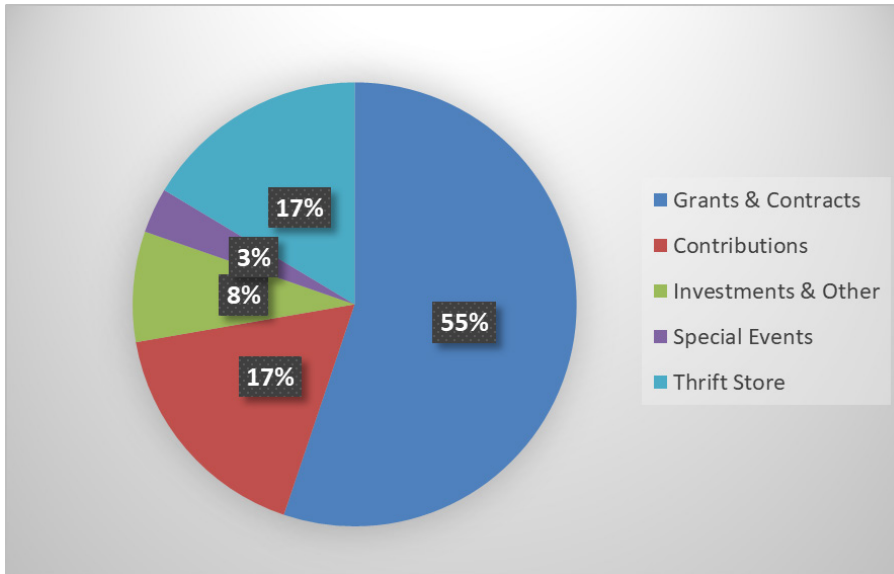
The passage of HB 231 is the most substantive change to Georgia's Family Violence Act in 29 years. Joan Prittie was involved in the process of drafting the bill and advocating for its passage this spring and then spent time in June with other high level attorneys quickly drafting paperwork for use starting July 1. Prittie states "While I enjoy dusting off my law degree periodically for projects we undertake, the real gratification is working for an organization that sees the big picture and the necessity to focus not only on immediate and long term needs of those experiencing domestic violence, but also on the laws and systems that may allow such violence to persist."



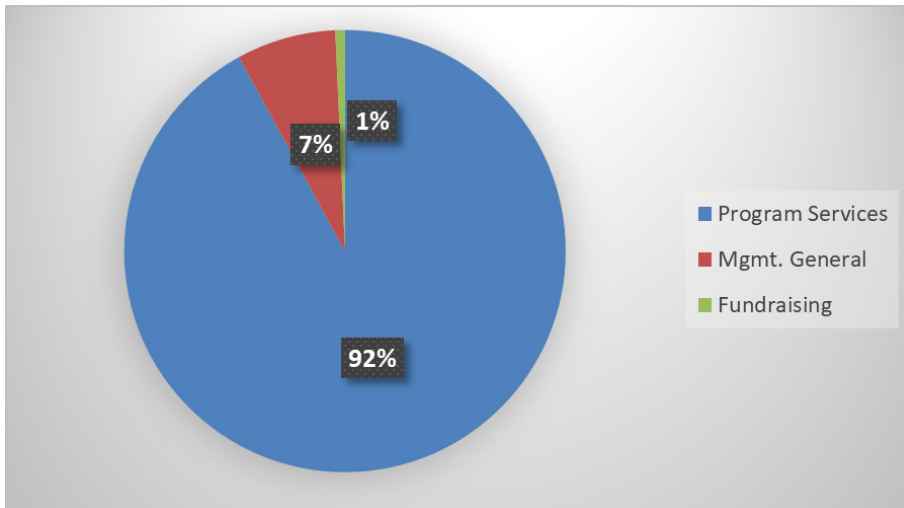


*If you think you're done, you always have at least 40 percent more."*  
– Lauren Crandall (Field Hockey)

### Fiscal Year 2021 Revenue



### Fiscal Year 2021 Expenses



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

In 2021 Project Safe continued to persevere without the benefit of our large special events and fundraisers, relying instead on grants, donations, and thrift store revenue to provide the resources to meet the needs of our clients and community. We reaped the benefits of our careful financial sustainability plan crafted as part of our 2020 strategic plan.

FY2021 income and expenses are shown in these charts. Project Safe received \$1,434,304 in revenue. Client services accounted for 92% of all spending. Source is Audit 12/31/21 by Robert Baker and Associates, Certified Public Accountants.

*Courage, sacrifice, determination, commitment, toughness, heart, talent, guts. That's what little girls are made of; the heck with sugar and spice."*

*– Bethany Hamilton (Surfing)*



**Mary Haddon,  
Community & Student  
Engagement Director**



**Tangela Ferguson,  
Associate Director**



**Donna Bracewell,  
Community Response  
& Outreach Services  
Director**



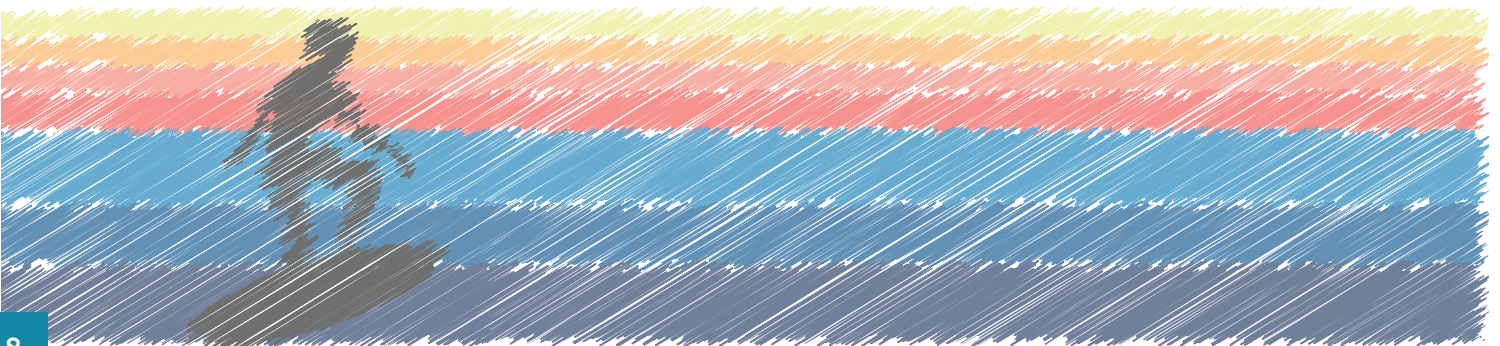
**Joan Prittie,  
Executive Director**

## **Leadership & Recognition**

As part of our 2020 strategic plan, Project Safe reorganized to create a four-person leadership team in summer 2021 consisting of Executive Director Joan Prittie, Associate Director Tangela Ferguson, Community Response and Outreach Services Director Donna Bracewell, and Community and Student Engagement Director Mary Haddon. In her new role, Donna Bracewell leads the staff at the Family Protection Center and provides guidance and support for a number of coordinated community initiatives such as Fatality Review, High Risk Team, Firearm Surrender and more. Mary Haddon's new position includes working with interns and volunteers across all Project Safe programs, leading many educational presentations, and supervising the Breaking Silence staff team. All combined, these four leaders have 67 years of dedicated service at Project Safe.

For Prittie's part, that service was recognized in November, when she received the 2021 Gender Justice Award given by the Georgia Commission on Family Violence.

In a press release, GCFV's Co-Chair Paige Whitaker stated "The Georgia Commission on Family Violence agrees that we are long overdue in awarding our own Gender Justice Award to this extraordinarily hardworking changemaker...she is not only a force in her local community of Athens, her impact can be felt around the state."



# Donors listed here contributed \$500 or more in FY21-22.

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## GOVERNMENT GRANTS

**Athens-Clarke County** (5%, 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**



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

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

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

*This is where I was...*



Women's soccer uniform circa 1895



*But this is where I'm going*



**PERSEVERE**