



The CHOICES Safe Haven Shelter For Victims of Domestic Violence

Overview

For nearly four decades, LSS CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence (CHOICES) has been providing a safe, secure shelter for victims of domestic violence in central Ohio. Services are provided for victims and families, both on-site and with community partners, including a 24-hour crisis and information hotline, individual counseling, advocacy work and community-based support groups.

Regrettably, the demand for sheltering of victims of domestic abuse in Columbus and the surrounding areas has increased, and CHOICES' resources have been stretched thin. As the only domestic violence-focused shelter in Franklin County, CHOICES will serve nearly

"CHOICES will serve nearly 2,000 different individuals this year, including nearly 700 who seek refuge at the shelter."

2,000 different individuals this year, including nearly 700 who seek refuge at the shelter. Half of those who are in our shelter at any given time are children. Since CHOICES joined the LSS Network of Hope in 2014, we have seen a 20% increase in the number of people seeking safety at the shelter.

Meeting this increasing need, while ensuring the safety of victims in a respectful, secure manner, requires an innovative approach to domestic violence sheltering. Under the

leadership and stability afforded by its 2014 merger with Lutheran Social Services, CHOICES is prepared to meet this challenge, with the support and partnership of the central Ohio community.

Creating a Safe Haven for Victims and Families



Current CHOICES Shelter



Proposed CHOICES Shelter

The need for comprehensive domestic violence services is overwhelming, and the opportunity to make a difference is now. CHOICES is prepared to continue leading the community in addressing domestic violence on all fronts, but it must do so strategically. The first step in that process is an important one – mounting a community-wide Comprehensive Campaign to fund the construction and operations of a new, larger facility to meet the rapidly growing need for this type of safe shelter.

Every nine seconds a woman is abused in the U.S. (PADV)

The new shelter in Franklin County will greatly enhance the services and support provided by CHOICES, as well as offer space to other aligned agencies and partners to expand services to clients.

The new building will:

- Ensure the safety and security of those visiting or staying at the shelter;
- Support a Trauma-Informed Care model for care of victims;
- Create an environment focused on dignity and respect;
- Accommodate the specialized needs of domestic violence victims and their families;
- Provide easy access to transportation; and
- Offer outdoor play and relaxation areas for clients and families.

About the New Shelter

The shelter will be a 46,000 square foot safe haven located on Cassady Avenue near Agler Road in north Columbus. It will be modern and will provide both private and group living spaces suited to the diverse population on-hand at any given time – which may include men and women, children, those of varying sexual orientations and people of different ages. A “neighborhood” design concept will offer privacy, increase the sense of normalcy and keep parents and children connected.

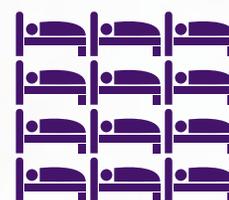
Among the unique staffing plans for the shelter are an on-site crisis counselor, who will immediately address emotional and psychological needs of victims coming from crisis situations, as well as a kitchen advocate to work one-on-one with survivors to redevelop healthy relationships with food. Because almost half of shelter residents are children, a family activities coordinator will support parents on parenting techniques and a child’s transition to the shelter. A visiting physician at the shelter will oversee medical needs of clients and their families.

Most importantly, bed capacity in the new shelter will more than double – from 51 beds to 120. Additionally, each year CHOICES will be positioned to provide services to 1,300 victims and survivors who are not shelter residents, and the crisis hotline will be able to receive 4,300 calls annually. Group activities, some of which have been suspended due to a lack of available space, will be resumed and expanded.

Current Shelter



Proposed Shelter



135% INCREASE

 = 10 beds

Executive Summary

Why It Matters

Providing a secure refuge for victims of domestic violence provides critical value in central Ohio. Domestic violence transcends all socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious lines and can take many different forms, including physical and sexual assault, emotional abuse and financial control. It is an issue that has a far-reaching societal impact. Both the affected victim and our community realize significant benefits when a victim becomes a successful survivor.

1 in 3 women & 1 in 4 men will experience domestic violence in their lifetime.

(CDC Violence Prevention)



If the victim is also a mother, this positive impact is amplified now and in the future. Not only do the children benefit from the immediate safety and stability, but they learn healthy behaviors they can use throughout their lives. Children witnessing parental abuse are more likely to repeat the pattern of abuse, so it is vital to expose them to positive, alternative behaviors as quickly and early as possible.

Domestic violence is a community-wide issue, and, in the broader society, a number of societal and economic benefits are seen when victims can escape an abusive situation. Both workplace productivity and worker absenteeism are positively impacted by organizations such as CHOICES.

Costs related to critical community supports – such as law enforcement and health care – are reduced when victims are supported. CHOICES’ advocacy and education activities spread the word about domestic violence’s negative effect on society and engages people so they can recognize it and participate in stopping it.

Three women in the day by their husbands



Executive Summary

Leveraging Expertise

The shelter will have the highest levels of security, to ensure clients feel safe at all times. A focus will be on thoughtful design, inspired by Building Dignity, a national concept developed for shelter designs that helps rebuild survivors’ dignity, fosters a sense of healing and allows staff to focus on victim-centered advocacy.

Local leaders will guide the process as part of a Shelter Design Planning Committee. Members include:

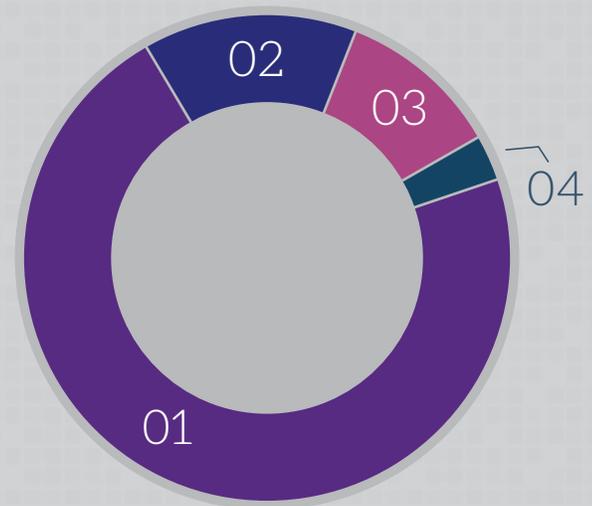
- Chief Kim Jacobs, Columbus Division of Police
- Franklin County Sheriff Zach Scott
- Nancy Neylon, Ohio Domestic Violence Network
- Karen Days, The Center for Family Safety & Healing
- Anne Murray, Columbus City Attorney’s Office

Assistance from our Corporate and Community Partners

Recognizing that a stronger community will result from comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence, CHOICES is looking to our corporate and central Ohio community partners for assistance in funding the development and operations of the new shelter.

With the valued input of our staff, partners, community leaders and volunteers, CHOICES established a fundraising goal of \$18.3 million. When secured, this budget will allow CHOICES to acquire the land, build the shelter and grounds, cover three years of incremental operating and programming expenses, fund new programming, as well as seed a building maintenance fund. The CHOICES endowment will support the shelter’s greatest immediate and emerging needs.

\$18.3 Million Campaign Goal



01 | Construction and Land Acquisition Costs:

- \$13,216,729

02 | 3 Years of Incremental Operating & New Programming:

- \$2,575,965

03 | CHOICES Endowment

- \$2,000,000

04 | Building Maintenance Fund & Other:

- \$515,000