

The Dove



Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County Newsletter



Letter from Deputy Director of Programs, Christopher McBride

This time of year always makes me grateful for my house, my family, and my job. True Fall, as I tend to think of early November, provides me with some of my most sacred moments. Coming in from an evening walk and shedding wet coats in my warm and well-lit front room. Brisk mornings with coffee and French toast, surrounded by too many baby toys and a plethora of throw rugs. The guiding lights of my home feel brighter this time of year, and the warmth of my family and friends provide a greater feeling of comfort.

I'm also reminded daily that thousands of households in our community do not provide comfort or support. Where I see a beacon of comfort, others find a space to avoid. "Home" for too many in Snohomish County means fear, violence or conflict. And while a million acts of incredible courage and sacrifice, of love and bravery occur within those walls, the very element of shelter and safety has been removed from too many lives.

So I spend this time of year grateful for not only the life I am incredibly blessed to have as mine, but for the tireless work of the advocates and staff at DVS as they do all that they can to provide the blessed lives and sacred moments that everyone deserves to the families of Snohomish County.

-Christopher McBride, Deputy Director of Programs

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IPV and Children; Effects and Mitigation

by DVS Staff

The work of serving families who are in the throws of, or recovering from, intimate partner violence (IPV) relationships is geared around the surviving parent. The mom who needs legal assistance, the father who needs a safe place to stay while police search for the abusive partner, the parent breaking a lease in an effort to find safety within their community. This work, however, is often informed by the children in the periphery, a fact that advocates at DVS and other IPV centered agencies keep in the very foundation of our mission.

According to a 2000 study, around 10-20 % of American children are exposed to IPV within their household, while a 2008 study found that an estimated 34% of Canadian children are exposed. While IPV is notoriously underreported, a conservative estimate of these numbers would mean that Snohomish County alone has approximately 14,500 children who have been, or will be, exposed to domestic violence, or 8% of the 184,000 children within the county. A high number, 60-75% of these children also suffer from direct abuse of some sort as well.

Children who are in these households, exposed to the effects of IPV, are more likely to experience a host of negative effects in other areas of their lives. According to an article published by the Paediatrics Child and Health journal in Canada, these children have an “increased risk of psychological, social, emotional and behavioural (sic) problems including mood and anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse and school-related problems in children and adolescents.” Further, children in IPV households are significantly more likely to experience violence within relationships as adults, both as the survivor and perpetrator of domestic violence.

Despite these alarming facts, there are multiple factors that can be introduced in a child’s life that can lessen the effects of IPV. A 2022 literature review identified multiple mitigating factors that can include the mental well being of the supportive parent, ability to improve socioeconomic status, peer and community support, access to language surrounding emotions and others. Children who have these supportive structures in their lives are less likely to be influenced by the negative effects of IPV in their households.

It is with these facts in mind, the vulnerability of the families that we serve and the ways in which that vulnerability can be bolstered, that DVS continues to pursue a safe and healthy space for children affected by IPV. We work to lessen the time survivors spend in unsafe households, knowing that the less a child is exposed to violence within their homes, the better outcomes they experience. We work to provide resources that can create social networks around families, knowing that a child who has opportunities to grow their self-esteem are less likely to find themselves in an unhealthy relationship in the future. We work to help our community ensure that all children are given an opportunity to be healthy, happy and loved as soon as possible.

For more information, please see:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3887080/#b2-pch18419>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/jan.15638>

Domestic Violence Services

Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County (DVS) is a private, non-profit organization serving Snohomish County since 1976. We are the only program in Snohomish County providing emergency shelter and comprehensive, confidential services to victims of domestic abuse without regard to age, gender, race, religion, culture, national origin, sexual orientation or income level. DVS provides individual and community awareness programs which can affect the social change necessary to eliminate domestic violence throughout Snohomish County.

Department Highlight: Shelter



Advocates meet with residents once a week to identify needs and goals, create an action plan, and support them in taking steps towards safety and stability. This often includes referrals to other DVS departments, such as the Housing or Legal Advocacy departments. DVS staff also offer a weekly support group to shelter residents, with childcare provided upon request. Additional referrals to community partners may include Child Strive, medical/dental care, DSHS, pregnancy aid, mental health providers, DCYF, Everett Animal Shelter, and other shelters. Advocates check in with residents weekly during scheduled meetings, but, as our shelter is always staffed, they can also bring up urgent concerns or request support as needed in the moment. Our dedicated team of shelter staff is comprised of: an Assistant Manager, who oversees client concerns and relief scheduling, provides crisis intervention, safety planning, advocate training,

and coordinates facility maintenance and repairs; three full time Shelter Advocates, who provide advocacy based counseling, emotional support, crisis intervention, safety planning, and case management; a youth advocate who provides individual support and advocacy based services to shelter residents and their children, including coordinating special events such as birthday parties, holidays, group activities, and provides childcare services; two overnight advocates who work 11pm-7am to cover the phones, clean and prepare rooms for incoming residents, provide advocacy based counseling and other services; and relief advocates to provide care and support during weekends, holidays, and high need time periods.

Our shelter staff also answer our Support Line calls. The Support Line provides routine and escalated advocacy services to callers who may be in crisis. Almost all DVS services start from the Support Line. From there, referrals to Legal Advocacy, Housing Assistance, Community Navigation, and Support Groups are made. Advocates also provide emotional support, safety planning, domestic violence education, and referrals to community resources. Last year, the line received 4,652 calls. Of those calls, there were 1,138 unmet requests for shelter.

Reasons we are unable to meet requests typically include callers who are not experiencing IPV or whose circumstances do not warrant a need for confidential shelter.

Though our main success at Shelter is our ability to provide safety and peace of mind for the many families who stay at our facility, we see some challenges as well. The housing crisis, particularly the lack of available, affordable housing, is a primary obstacle our clients face. As we are a short-term shelter, we cannot provide long term stays and must help residents navigate transitioning to other shelters that meet their safety needs while they address barriers to housing. Shelter services benefit deeply from the participation of the community. This includes volunteers to assist with the youth program and Support Line, as well as donations of higher need items such as: full size personal care items (shampoo, conditioner, body wash, lotion, and ethnic or textured hair care products); twin- and full-size sheet sets; white towels; and clothing typically unavailable or low in inventory at most clothing donation centers, like socks and underwear. If you are interested in providing any of these items, please contact our administrative office at 425.259.2827 to make arrangements.

If you are concerned about a loved one, or do not feel safe in your own relationship, please call our free, 24 hour support line at

425-25-ABUSE

425-252-2873

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY
 JULY '23 **COMMUNITY IMPACT** JUNE '24
 20,124 individuals impacted by IPV Supportive Services

Emergency Shelter



106 Adults and **146** Children received **9,602** safe bed nights

24/7 Support Line



4,576 Calls were received from Victims, Survivors, and Family Members

Legal Advocacy



460 Clients received **2,195** Hours of Legal Advocacy, Referrals & Support

Supportive Housing



99 Adults and **163** Children received **43,776** safe nights in Transitional and Rapid Rehousing units

Children's Programs



178 Children participated in **306** Hours of Enrichment Activities

Prevention & Education



6,445 youth and **644** adults participated in DV prevention and education training

Supportive Services



7,307 community members engaged in community outreach

DV Awareness



69 community event activities and **134** Social media activities



Domestic Violence Services
 of Snohomish County
 Intimate Partner Violence Centered

24/7 Support Line 425-252-2873

Volunteers



88 dedicated volunteers provided **3,028** hours of support



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mukilteo Library 2:30-4:30pm every Monday

Sultan Library 1-3pm
 November 4th &
 December 2nd

Mountlake Terrace
 Library 3-4pm
 November 6th &
 December 4th

Brier Library 1:30-3pm
 Edmonds Library 3:30-4:30pm
 November 13 &
 December 11th

Snohomish Library 1-3
 November 27th

Recovery Cafe 12:30-1:30pm
 December 2nd

SAVE THE DATE

33rd Annual Chocolate and Wine Lovers Gala

CANDY LAND

HOW SWEET IT IS

APRIL 4, 2025

TULALIP RESORT CASINO

More information to come!

