



Safe Passage

Safe Passage's Monthly news & updates

January 2021: Stalking Awareness Month/Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January

Message from Executive Director, Mary Ellen Schaid



As we look back over 2020, it is abundantly clear that this has been an incredibly difficult year. Few, if any of us, remain untouched by the struggles and heartbreak that have rocked our community, our nation, and our

world. As we look forward into 2021, it is clear that just changing our calendar isn't enough to address the challenges behind and before us.

At Safe Passage, we're facing the reality of skyrocketing rates of abuse and violence while providing shelter and support becomes more and more complicated. We're so grateful for the dedication and sacrifices of our staff. This has been a year unlike any other, but our staff and organization has remained committed to the vision of a world where everyone is safe.

As we look toward the next 11 months, we know 2021 brings so much hope. We're moving forward on a future home that will better serve our clients and community. We're looking forward to a vaccine. We're seeing new innovations in service provision that will make our work more accessible and successful for years to come. We're living through deep fear and struggle, but we know there is the hope of a brighter future.

This is the reality our clients face each and every day: the knowledge that things may be difficult, dangerous, and frightening now, but a brighter, safer future is possible. Thank you for all the ways you have supported our clients in this healing journey.

Meet Our Board

Introducing Board President, Mike Kokott



Mike Kokott is a long time member of the DeKalb Community and currently works as the Vice President in Operations at Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee/Valley West Hospital.

Safe Passage welcomed Mike onto the Board of Directors in 2015 and has served as the Board President for just over a year.

He explains why he joined the board by saying, "Safe Passage provides some of the most valuable services available in our community to people who are living through a very difficult time--perhaps the most difficult of their life. By serving on the Safe Passage Board, I feel like I can contribute to helping these people in need. I do not have the skill set that the very talented staff at Safe Passage possess that allows them to serve our clients' needs, but hope that my participation on the board might help them in this important work.

Mike is dedicated to a community without violence and we are so lucky to have him!

Thank you for committing to join us
in the fight for a better future!

Fun Fact: Mike has played in a band
since he was a child, and now records
his/other musician's music!

Our 2020 Review

921 SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE RECEIVED SERVICES AT SAFE PASSAGE IN 2020



6,656 nights in shelter



8,399 hotline calls



1,893 hours of prevention based presentations



17,818 hours of direct client services
including counseling & legal services



Celebrating 40 Years of Safe Passage



Our History

Safe Passage was founded in 1981 as a grassroots organization run by volunteers who wanted to create a safe place in the community for victims of domestic violence. Over the years, Safe Passage has continued to grow and expand, adding services and programs to meet the needs of all survivors who come through our doors.

In the early 1990s, offender intervention programming was added to services provided at Safe Passage, ensuring that the agency was not only focused on supporting survivors, but on ending abuse at its source. In 2003, services expanded even further as Safe Passage combined its domestic violence services with programming as a rape crisis center, expanding programming to meet the needs of survivors of sexual assault and abuse.

From the very first day of our grassroots, volunteer-led beginning, Safe Passage has been committed to the mission of supporting survivors and their loved ones while actively working to prevent future violence. We are grateful for the last 40 years and look forward to continuing our work for several more decades.

Building New Beginnings: Update

New Beginnings Construction Continues

If you've turned down Franklin Street in DeKalb during the last several weeks, you may have noticed more construction happening at our new property. A sewer line needed to be rerouted to allow for the construction of our new home.

Thank you Wagner Excavating, the Water Reclamation District, City of DeKalb, and Pappas Development for working together to finalize this stage of our New Beginnings project!

If you're interested in learning more about our campaign, [please click here.](#)



Welcome Volunteers and Interns!

Training Begins

On January 25 we kicked off our winter Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Training session. We are extremely excited to welcome a new class of volunteers and interns to the agency. Due to COVID restrictions, this is the first training we have been able to host in almost a year. So, it is all the more wonderful to be working with our trainees!

Ally is an Action Word

- ❖ Educate
- ❖ Challenge
- ❖ Interrupt
- ❖ Take action to change things



For everyone's safety, the training is being conducted virtually. But, we will still be finding lots of ways to connect and have fun throughout our 65 hours together. An added bonus of virtual training is that we get some four-legged friends joining us from time to time.

If you'd like to learn more about our training, please contact Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Beth Finch by email at mfinch@safepassagedv.org. If you'd like to learn more about the volunteer and internship opportunities at our agency, [please click here.](#)



