

A photograph of a forest path with wooden steps leading up a hillside. A large, moss-covered tree trunk is on the left. The path is made of dirt and wooden logs. The background is a dense forest with green ferns and trees.

# ANNUAL REPORT

**STEPS**

**TO END  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**

**July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018**

# FY18 Board of Directors

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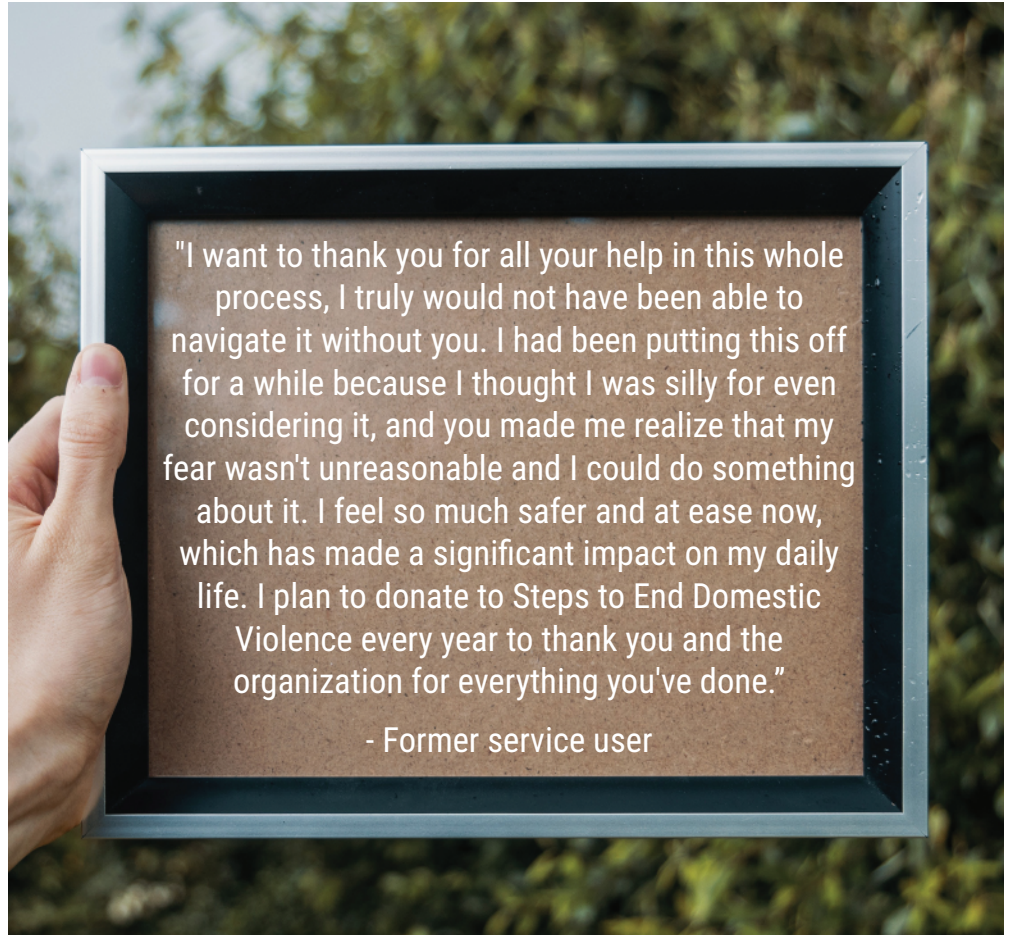
Keiga Matsumoto

Birgit Matthiesen

Mariah Ogden

Leah Perkinson

Sara White



"I want to thank you for all your help in this whole process, I truly would not have been able to navigate it without you. I had been putting this off for a while because I thought I was silly for even considering it, and you made me realize that my fear wasn't unreasonable and I could do something about it. I feel so much safer and at ease now, which has made a significant impact on my daily life. I plan to donate to Steps to End Domestic Violence every year to thank you and the organization for everything you've done."

- Former service user

Dear Friend,

In our mission statement, we promise to “promote a culture that fosters justice, equity and safety.” At no time has this felt more important – and possible. This past year has seen some terrible tragedies, but also glimmers of hope.

There were five domestic violence homicides in Vermont during the past year. At the same time, the Governor signed historic firearms legislation, including Act 92, which allows, under certain circumstances, law enforcement to remove firearms from the scene of a domestic assault. I testified before the Senate Judiciary committee in support of this bill, highlighting the fact that one of the most dangerous times for someone experiencing domestic violence is after law enforcement involvement.

The #MeToo movement has shed light on the prevalence of abuse as women speak up and speak out, breaking the silence that often surrounds such experiences. It certainly feels that we are at a tipping point – a time when change feels possible. And it is certainly an exciting time to be involved in this work.

As I look to our work ahead, I feel hopeful. Hopeful that we will continue to move toward a culture that truly does foster justice, equity and safety. Hopeful that you will continue to be a part of this movement to end domestic violence. Hopeful that you will continue to support the work we do, so that we can help others achieve well-being in their own lives.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Dougherty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kelly" being more prominent and the last name "Dougherty" written in a more compact, connected style.

Kelly Dougherty, Executive Director

# MY STORY

Sitting at the edge of the lake, I finally started to feel better. To feel something. After a long, dark, cold winter I wasn't sure I'd ever feel anything again – anything but sad, and isolated, and depressed.

The abuse was bad. I can't stress that enough. But the feeling of being all alone in the world that followed made me spend too much time with my thoughts. I didn't know where to go, who to turn to – I couldn't even tell my family what happened because I was afraid of their judgement and my own guilt.

Eventually, though, the truth came out. What I had experienced was domestic abuse. It was so hard to even say those words. My mother went through it and I always said that wouldn't be me.

But it was me. **And I survived.**

Through my experiences I learned that it's okay to say it. It wasn't my fault that this happened to me. It was because someone else was abusive. Uncaring. Unloving. And eventually, I realized, undeserving of my time – or my life.

If I hadn't left when I did, driving for days through so many states to a place I'd only seen on a map, I truly don't think I would be alive today. Something inside kept me going.

And it was there that I found Steps to End Domestic Violence.

The advocates listened to me. They believed me. They did not judge me – something I had been afraid of for so long. They made me see that I didn't cause this, they helped me show myself that I'm better than this. They helped me find a safe place to stay while I rebuilt my life and supported me as I worked through it all in my own mind.

Now, I'm sitting, watching the sun over the lake. It feels warm. I feel warm. I'm alive. And though I may have some hard things to deal with for a long time to come, I feel like I can do it.

When you support Steps to End Domestic Violence, you support me. You help me with my emergency housing, my court processes with the support of legal advocates, my struggle to find resources for wraparound care - because my trauma didn't end when I fled. You make prevention work in the community possible, so future generations won't have to go through what I did.

**You are saving my life.**



## **Why I support Steps to End Domestic Violence:**

"You not only saved my life - but you gave me hope that my life could become amazing."

"When I felt worthless, humiliated, abused, alone and forgotten - you reached out and didn't forget me."

"Sometimes all it takes to get on a good path is some well-placed help."

"I am a survivor and was helped by you."

"I know how important their services are."

"To help women living in fear."

"Because kindness matters."

The ring of a telephone can mean a lot of things – greetings from a friend, news from family, telemarketers selling who-knows-what. But at Steps to End Domestic Violence, that familiar sound can signify the first chapter in a life that’s changing.

Each month, the 24/7 hotline receives about 316 calls. And even after the administrative offices close for the day, every call will ultimately connect someone in need with an advocate.

Morgan Wagner, Hotline and Volunteer Manager, noted that, much like in the organization’s early days, many calls are answered by advocates well outside of “business hours.” The 3 a.m. calls are often those that need the most attention as they could be someone whose life is in danger. The call could initiate a hospital visit or collaboration with law enforcement.

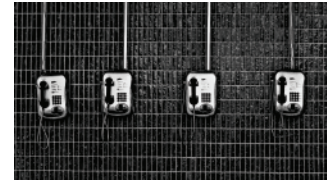
What makes the Steps to End Domestic Violence hotline unique, Wagner said, is the fact that the small staff is able to form long-lasting connections with callers – even if they never meet face-to-face. The familiar voice on the phone can be invaluable during a crisis.

Callers truly are in charge of hotline conversations. They can stay anonymous and can direct the conversation where they want it to go to ensure their safety and comfort. Staff are able to provide options for callers so they can make informed decisions and plan their safety the way that best fits their situation.

Some of the most rewarding calls come from friends and family, concerned about a loved one. These allow advocates to help shape future conversations and work to remove taboos around domestic violence.

Of the hotline, Wagner said, “It’s still the front door of our organization. Domestic violence exists behind closed doors. Without a confidential, 24/7 hotline, those doors would stay closed to people in the most precarious situations.”

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: HOTLINE



If you or someone you  
know needs us, we're here.  
Call (802) 658-1996  
or visit [stepsvt.org](http://stepsvt.org).

# LAST YEAR...

**Our mission is to assist in the transition to a safe, independent life for all those who have been affected physically, sexually, emotionally, or economically by domestic abuse and to promote a culture that fosters justice, equity and safety.**

- We served 1,868 individuals – 1,281 adults and 587 children.
- We provided emergency shelter to 226 adults and 121 children, for a total of 15,427 bednights.
- Our hotline fielded 3,799 calls, emails and webchats.
- We helped 301 adults file Relief From Abuse orders, from which 202 children also benefitted.
- We provided legal advocacy to 367 adults seeking support with divorce, custody, immigration, criminal justice and more.
- 74 amazing volunteers provided 4,212 hours of service - that is equal to more than 2 full-time positions and \$78,000.



# WHO WE SERVED:

Burlington	786	Richmond	17
Charlotte	4	Shelburne	56
Colchester	121	South Burlington	82
Essex	46	St. George	1
Essex Junction	44	Underhill	4
Hinesburg	16	Westford	2
Huntington	3	Williston	20
Jericho	7	Winooski	88
Milton	57		

We also served 167 adults and children for whom the town of residence was not reported, 83 out of county, 32 out of state and 2 outside the U.S. Due to the sensitive nature of domestic violence and the need for privacy among victims, many who reached out to us chose to remain anonymous. It should be assumed that the numbers for each town are under-reported.

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

### ASSETS

Cash	\$	109,261
Accounts receivable		222,158
Prepaid expenses/other assets		6,189
Property/equipment		171,144
Investments		330,019
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$	<b>838,771</b>

### LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$	12,830
Accrued salaries/payroll taxes		59,677
Deferred revenue		4,782
Deferred mortgage		105,000
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	\$	<b>182,289</b>

### EQUITY

Undesignated	\$	461,662
Board designated property/equipment		171,144
Temporarily restricted		23,676
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	\$	<b>656,482</b>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY**      \$      838,771

### REVENUE

Federal revenue	\$	458,766
Community fundraising		303,384
State revenue		295,277
Private foundations		114,040
United Way		79,649
Other revenue (in-kind, investment income)		77,883
Municipal funding		28,125
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$	<b>1,357,124</b>

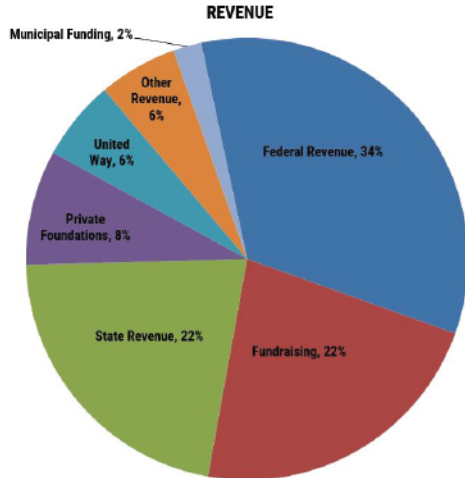
### EXPENSES

Salaries/benefits	\$	841,603
Emergency/rental assistance		121,258
Occupancy expenses		94,692
Other operating expenses		84,226
Donated services/materials		72,914
Professional fees/subcontract		34,240
Subgrants		16,122
Education/outreach/trainings		10,495
Shelter supplies/food		9,438
Children's supplies/activities		3,158
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	\$	<b>1,288,186</b>

**NET INCOME**      \$      68,938

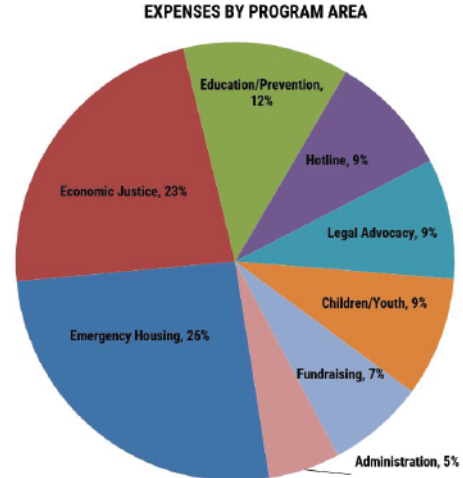
## REVENUE

Federal	\$458,766	34%
Community F/R	303,384	22%
State Revenue	295,277	22%
Private Foundations	114,040	8%
United Way	79,649	6%
Other Revenue	77,883	6%
Municipal Funding	28,125	2%
	<hr/>	
	\$1,357,124	100%



## EXPENSES

Emergency Housing	\$335,773	26%
Economic Justice	291,431	23%
Education / Prevention	157,672	12%
Hotline	115,633	9%
Legal Advocacy	114,237	9%
Children / Youth	113,838	9%
Fundraising	92,112	7%
Administration	67,490	5%
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	\$1,288,186	100%



# **STEPS**

## **TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

PO Box 1535

Burlington, VT 05402

Hotline: (802) 658-1996

Admin: (802) 658-3131

[stepsVT.org](http://stepsVT.org)