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Rise-NY

2021

*Annual
Report*



Our Mission

Rise's mission is to assist families who experience or are threatened with domestic violence and to increase the community's awareness of this pervasive problem.

Our Work

We provide comprehensive domestic violence services, including: shelter, hotline, advocacy, legal, group and individual counseling, and community education.

Our Impact in 2021



17,792 advocacy services were provided to **1,964** survivors



We provided **3,111** safe shelter nights to **171** adults and children

We provided an additional **68** motel bed nights when victims could not be accommodated at shelter due to a lack of space or COVID exposure or infection.



2,357 calls to our 24-hour hotline were answered by trained staff



We fed **3,886** healthy meals to **82** children in our shelter program



35 trainings and talks were provided to the community



560 individual and group counseling sessions were completed

A note from our Board President



Kristopher Bryson

This past year, as the pandemic has evolved, so have our efforts to overcome the challenges that each phase has presented. In some cases (like our signature fundraising event), we have had to postpone. Instead, we ran a well-received Facebook campaign to spread awareness of domestic violence.

Other services have grown with our new challenges. As always, our shelter this year has been a haven for domestic violence victims. Victims who have been exposed to COVID, however, would have made our shelter unsafe for others. To address this, we set up a partnership with a local motel, allowing us to still give such people a safe place to stay.

Amongst all this, we have also continued to try and expand our ability to reach diverse communities. We recently served multiple non-English speaking families and provided training on immigrants and domestic violence. This is a vital part of our mission; domestic violence is a crisis that affects everyone, but those who our institutions historically under serve are often those who are most in need of our support.

Everything we've accomplished and every life changed has only been possible because of our tremendous staff. The jobs they do are difficult at the best of times and COVID has made this exponentially more so. Despite their roles requiring a tremendous amount of mental and emotional energy daily, we are able to change lives because our staff come to work every day ready to serve with compassion, professionalism, and the determination to help save lives and make our community a better place.

Board of Directors

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Kristopher Bryson

Vice President

Paul Magner

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Secretary

Rose Olsen

Members

Robert Adams

Jane Blake

Melissa Blakeslee

Debra Cohn

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Christina Kunzman

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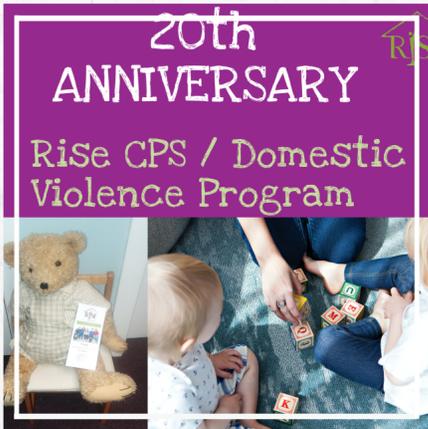
Ada Robinson-Perez, PhD

Craig Williams

Lisa Young

2021 In Review

The COVID pandemic worsened the **housing crisis** in Broome County. Victims requiring relocation as a result of abuse faced an alarming shortage of safe and affordable rental units and lacked the financial means for upfront costs, impacting their safety. Rise was fortunate to receive a grant from the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence which enabled us to directly support survivors with housing needs. From the start of the program in July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, Rise was able to assist 25 families with housing costs including security deposits, rent, utilities, security upgrades, and household items. This grant cycle runs until September 2022.



2021 marked two decades of successful collaboration with Child Protective Services to serve families with concerns of domestic violence and child maltreatment or neglect. The goal of this program is to provide early intervention to improve chances that children will remain in the care of a non-offending parent. Two Rise advocates accompany caseworkers on initial home visits to provide safety planning with clients, conference with caseworkers and advocate for families, provide assistance with CPS reports, and accompaniment to fair hearings. In 2021, they received 104 referrals from CPS, Family Services or Adult Protective Services, went on 31 joint visits with caseworkers, and assisted 79 victims with safety planning.

The CPS/DV advocates also co-facilitate Rise's educational Pattern Changing group.

The purpose of this group is to help educate victims on unhealthy and abusive tendencies in relationships while also helping victims to form goals, recognize red flags, and go on to live healthy lives. In 2021, our advocates facilitated eight six-week long educational groups.

Early in 2021, Rise placed a law enforcement advocate at the **Endicott Police Department**. This decision was heavily influenced by the success of our advocate at Johnson City Police Department, a program now in its third year of funding through a grant from the federal Office for Victims of Crime. Our advocate at EPD provides services to victims with police involvement in their case, case conferences with officers about the dynamics of domestic violence, gives information and referrals for victim alerts, and provides trainings to the police. They also contact victims listed on Domestic Incident Reports to offer further services. Between February-November 2021, they followed up with 262 Endicott victims to offer advocacy services to enhance safety.

Our 2020-2021 Board of Directors President Courtney Ignarri was recognized for her valuable contributions to the board and fundraising with a **Purple Ribbon Award** for Board Member of the Year. The Purple Ribbon Awards are a national initiative by DomesticShelters.org and Theresa's Fund.



Vicarious trauma is an occupational hazard for staff in the victim services field, so we try to prioritize self-care and mental health so that we can best help survivors. In late Fall, our staff attended a full day **retreat** at Salt Springs State Park. We enjoyed a guided meditation in a sun-kissed field, practiced archery, attended a tea workshop, painted pumpkins, and received henna tattoos. Previous staff activities of the year have included a plant exchange and painting party, reiki, and mental health days to visit the zoo or socialize with coworkers.

Our administrative office received fresh interior paint, helping to achieve our vision of **trauma-informed design** for our counseling and advocacy offices. In all, seven rooms or offices and two hallways were painted in this project, replacing textured wallpaper that had been up for at least a couple of decades. Trauma-informed design involves the creation of a physical environment that promotes healing and safety. A calming environment eases tension, leading to positive outcomes and empowerment. This design incorporates cool, calming colors, natural light, visual interest, elements from the natural world, and clear sightlines with few barriers.



Legislative updates

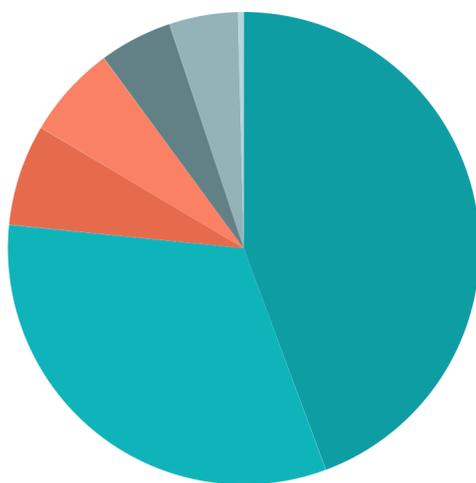


In July 2021, New York state passed legislation establishing **domestic violence advocate-victim privilege**. This allows victims to speak freely with advocates without fear of reprisals or discovery by their abusers. There is a provision in the new law that allows exceptions when authorized by the survivor and in a couple other extreme circumstances. We have been watching this bill stagnate in state legislature for several years, so its passage was a victory for all survivors and domestic violence service staff in New York.

2021 Financials

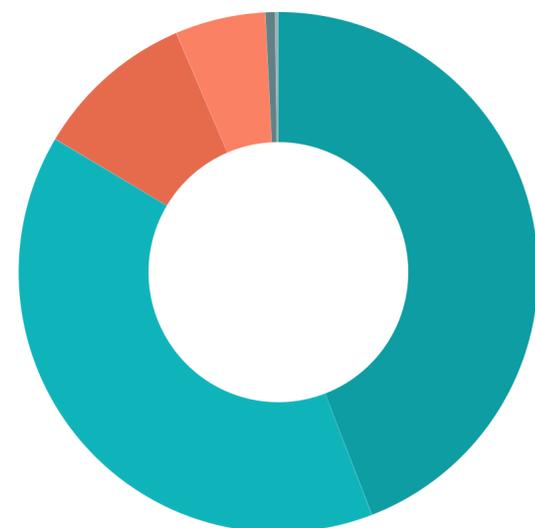
Based on a pre-audit cash basis

Revenue: \$1,252,171



- State Grants (44.33%)
- Residential Program Per Diem (32.26%)
- Non-Residential Contract (6.93%)
- Federal Grants (6.37%)
- Local Grants (5%)
- Individuals and Organizations (4.73%)
- Foundations (0.38%)

Expenses



- Shelter Program (44.15%)
- Advocacy Program (39.4%)
- Administrative (10.02%)
- Counseling Program (5.62%)
- Community Education (0.61%)
- Advertising/Fundraising (0.19%)

New funding sources in 2021 included CARES funding through the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program and pandemic relief funds from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

Significant expenses in 2021 compared to previous years included a new hybrid vehicle for shelter operations and transporting clients, evacuation and replacement of a sewer line, and direct assistance to survivors for safe housing.



We appreciate all of our donors who make it possible for us to continue providing essential services. **Thank you so much!**