



2022 Annual Report

Shelter. Advocacy. Support.



SOJOURNER

Transforming lives impacted by domestic violence.

2022 A Year in Review.

dear friends!

Over the course of the past year, Sojourner staff had the privilege of walking alongside more than 7,800 individuals and families supporting them through challenges, celebrating their successes and cultivating peace, hope and security in their lives. It is truly a privilege and the reward for families and our community is immeasurable. Your support and generosity make it possible for victims to find a way out, and we are grateful for the opportunity to help families in our community find hope and healing.

Every individual has the right to live a life free from the threat of violence. Making that vision a reality for our clients has been the goal of our organization for 48 years. We strive to protect families from immediate danger stemming from violence and work diligently with our partners at the Sojourner Family Peace Center to break the inter-generational cycle of violence. Helping victims learn how to stay safe, build healthy relationships and remain safe when they leave our shelter is our primary focus.

As you read this report, you will learn about the critical work our advocates are doing to surround clients with the

resources, services and care they need to be successful. Our Lethality Report issued in 2022 addresses the importance of connecting individuals with services, as 99.9% of those people who connect with Sojourner are likely to survive their abuse. That is not always the case for people living in violent situations.

Our Domestic Violence High Risk team utilizes data and expertise to identify cases where an individual's lethality risk is high and intervenes to provide support and resources to prevent harm. Through our "Always a Way Out" campaign this year, we brought greater awareness to the services that are available to victims and connected with people who might not have gotten the help they needed. This is the way we save lives at Sojourner Family Peace Center...one person at a time.

This year, we proudly celebrated the five-year anniversary of our VOICES program, which is part of our Support Through Healing Services. Program participants expressed the newfound joy and hope they have in their lives during events held throughout the year and VOICES members were highlighted during our Be the Light Celebration.

(continued)

Creating dreams and finding new paths are the cornerstones of Camp Hope, where children find new friends and mentors and learn new skills. Perhaps more importantly, they play games, gaze at the stars and dance in a supportive environment that allows them to dream, feel loved and be safe.

sincerely,



Carmen Pitre

As a friend, donor, grantor, community partner, or concerned citizen, we are proud to have your support, encouragement and engagement as we work together to change lives. We are thankful that you have joined with us in this important work and in changing our community, one life at a time.



Emily Fons



Carmen Pitre
Sojourner President & CEO



Emily Fons
Board of Directors

MISSION to Transform Lives Impacted By Domestic Violence.

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2022 The Year in Numbers

417  Shelter Residents

12,329  Hotline Calls

 **15,153**
Bed Nights in Shelter

 **3,182**
Inbound Textline Messages

3,519  **51,953**
People Served by CDAAP Contacts Made

4,782 
Volunteer Hours

(Community Domestic Abuse
Advocacy Program)

Peace Tower

SHELTER & HOTLINE Services

“Leaving is one of the bravest things anyone can do. It’s one of the most dangerous things they can do, but I think once they make that choice and leave, it takes so much courage. And it takes more courage than people realize, especially people who haven’t been through it. And having support from family members and Sojourner, knowing you have people in your corner who care about you, that’s what I want to provide to my clients.” – Rachel S., CDAAP Advocate



Since 1978, Sojourner Truth House has been a safe respite for women, children, and men fleeing domestic violence. Last year, there were **15,153 nights of shelter** provided to **417 people**.

While guests often arrive at shelter without any belongings, they do bring with them the determination to live peacefully. In addition to basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and security, shelter residents receive empathy, counseling, advocacy services, and children’s programming.

Sojourner Truth House is a 53-bed facility. Despite being the largest domestic violence shelter in Milwaukee County, there is a waiting list of survivors seeking shelter. Sojourner advocates stay connected with them to help ensure their safety.

Since 1986, Sojourner has been designated the 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline for the City of Milwaukee and outlying communities. Hotline advocates speak directly with survivors, members of the community, and law enforcement partners from the scene of domestic violence incidents being investigated. In 2022, 12,329 calls were placed to the hotline, and 3,182 to the textline.

All calls and messages are confidential.

ADVOCACY

Sojourner is embedded at the systems level to link survivors to appropriate services and help them navigate the legal system. Services include Courthouse Advocacy, Legal Advocacy, and Community-based Advocacy.

The pandemic greatly impacted our systems advocacy programs, particularly the Restraining Order Program. Beginning in 1985, Sojourner has provided assistance to people seeking to file for a restraining order. Prior to the pandemic, all requests were filed in person at our office at the Milwaukee County Courthouse. When filing became electronic, a backlog built of people needing assistance. To address the demand, Sojourner became the first agency of its kind to use *Waitwhile*, an appointment-based system that enables people to make an appointment with a Restraining Order advocate or be added to a waiting list for assistance by an advocate or member of the Volunteer Attorney Legal Team (VALT). VALT is comprised of local attorneys who volunteer to assist people on the waiting list resulting in increased capacity that enables staff to clear the call log at the end of every day. In 2022, 3,250 people seeking restraining orders received assistance.

“We feel honored and grateful to be of service to an organization that is so important to the community in responding to its critical needs.”

— *Christina Lucchesi, von Briesen & Roper, s.c. VALT Volunteer*

Community-based advocates assisted **3,519 survivors by linking them to services to support their safety and well-being including legal advocacy, safety planning, and other services.**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE High-Risk Team

In 2022, the Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT) celebrated five years of successfully identifying and staffing domestic violence cases at the highest risk for lethality. The DVHRT is a multidisciplinary team that includes Sojourner advocates, the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office (DA), the State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections Office (DOC), and representatives from suburban law enforcement agencies. The goals of the DVHRT are to efficiently identify and staff domestic violence cases at the highest risk for lethality in order to determine individualized recommendations for each case that will maximize safety for survivors and accountability for offenders. Survivors being served by the DVHRT are considered top priority and are given access to immediate support.

In the team's five year history,
99.9386% of victims who sought assistance
from Sojourner survived their abusive relationship.

Their success inspired an outreach campaign to connect survivors to resources in the community. As the rate of domestic violence homicides remained high in 2022, victims were not connected to resources. With a growing urgency to reach people most in need of services, Sojourner partnered with Serve Marketing, an all-volunteer nonprofit advertising agency to give charitable causes a stronger voice in the community, to launch "Always a Way Out." Billboards in target zip codes, mobile display takeovers, and social media were used to raise awareness in key neighborhoods. In combination with an experiential campaign, Always a Way Out resulted in 31,274,547 total impressions and more than double the visits to Sojourner's website over the previous year.

**Every abusive
relationship
has a way out.**



ALWAYSAWAYOUT.ORG

SUPPORT THROUGH **Healing Services**

Sojourner encourages self-sufficiency and economic empowerment for survivors of domestic violence through an array of services aimed at helping them attain education, training, employment and economic freedom from their abuser, as well as strength and resilience for themselves and their children. Our programming is comprised of individual and group support, employment readiness training, and financial empowerment education designed to assist victims of domestic violence in their efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and freedom from abuse.

2022 was a year of milestones and firsts in Healing Services. VOICES, a network of survivors who use their voices to share stories of hope, healing, courage and

strength, celebrated its 5-year anniversary. VOICES' mission is to demonstrate the strength and resilience of survivors by raising awareness and providing education to the community. As they heal together, they share their stories so fellow survivors know they're not alone.

In 2022, Sojourner held its first support group for male survivors of domestic violence, providing a space for men. One in seven men will experience severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.



CHILDREN'S Program

Sojourner offers many resources to help kids impacted by family violence, including support groups, arts programming, and individual advocacy. A cornerstone of Children's Program is Camp HOPE, where violence ends and healing begins.

Camp HOPE America is the nation's first and only evidence-based camping and mentoring program for children impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. Sojourner collaborates with Camp HOPE America to offer a Camp HOPE experience for kids in Wisconsin. Each summer, youth aged 8 to 16 attend a weeklong sleep away camp facilitated by Sojourner using the Camp Hope curriculum designed by Alliance for Hope International.

Campers participate in a variety of activities including: archery, a climbing wall, an alpine tower, paddle boats, arts, crafts, campfires, stargazing and dance. Meaningful activities and encouragement create an environment where kids feel safe, seen, supported and loved. Camp HOPE's evidenced-based curriculum teaches campers to believe in themselves, in others and in their dreams.

Monthly reunions called Pathways to Hope keep campers connected throughout the year. In 2022, camp was back in person following the pandemic. Dozens of children attended, with 100% of campers and parents reporting overall satisfaction with Camp Hope.

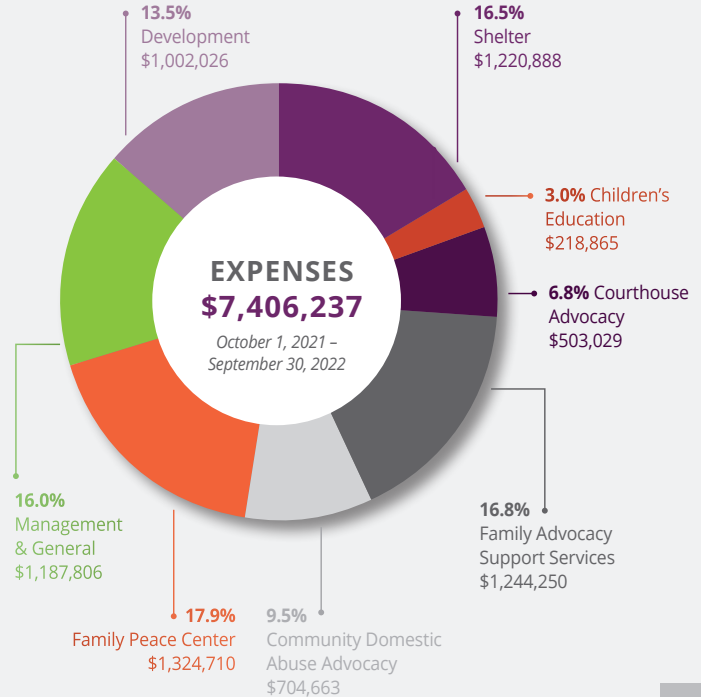
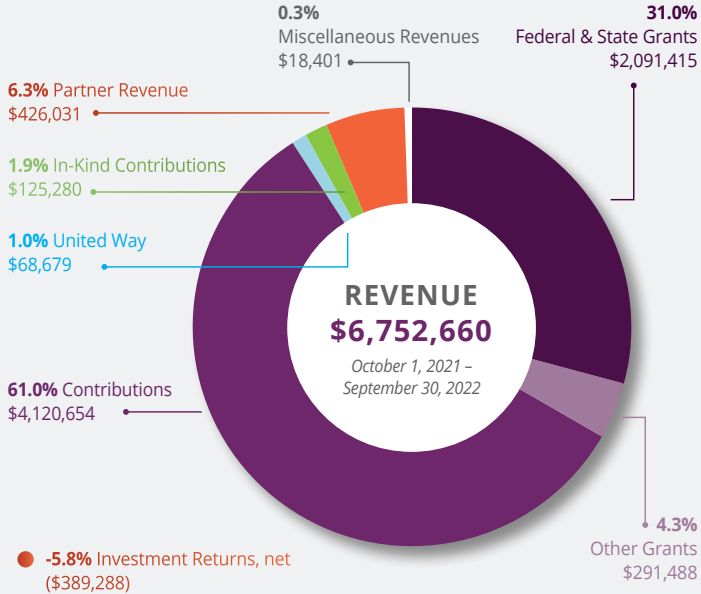
“I loved how counselors helped me with my problems and how we got to do new things.” – Camper



“Camp Hope is fun. Every year I never want to leave camp.”

– Camper

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