

SOUTH SUBURBAN FAMILY SHELTER, INC.¹

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2020 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021

Mission

The mission of South Suburban Family Shelter is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services to families in which domestic violence exists without imposing any one solution.

Values

We support **change** and engage in all aspects of this process.

We provide **safety** through trust and confidentiality.

We promote **inclusivity** and embrace diversity.

We value others through **respect** and dignity.

We act with **integrity** and uphold accountability and transparency.

We foster **teamwork** through collaboration and open communication.

We commit to ongoing **innovation**, education and growth.

About South Suburban Family Shelter

South Suburban Family Shelter (SSFS) has been providing services to victims of domestic violence for more than 41 years. SSFS was formed in 1980 as a direct result of a needs assessment survey conducted in the southern suburbs of Chicago. Graduate students from Governor's State University along with representatives of the National Council of Jewish Women South Cook Section and Aunt Martha's conducted the survey to a broad audience. This survey revealed that there were between 500 and 700 known victims of domestic violence yet no services available for them. Since that time, SSFS has been providing services to support the victim's efforts to become and remain safe, gain control over their lives and become self-sufficient.

South Suburban Family Shelter has an extensive presence in the community. SSFS staff members are active on numerous committees and associations on the local, regional and state levels. South Suburban Family Shelter has networking agreements with the area police departments, other social service agencies, area hospitals, and clinics. SSFS regularly works with Prairie State College, South Suburban College, Governor's State University and more than 20 elementary, junior high schools and high schools.

¹ Name has since changed to Anew: Building Beyond Violence and Abuse

Programs

Services are available in Spanish and in English to victims of domestic violence and their families. All services provided to victims are provided free of charge. There is a sliding scale fee for partner abuse intervention groups. Services continued to be significantly impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Last year SSFS provided services to over 1,426 direct program participants and reached over 13,924 members of our community through the following programs.

24-hour Hotline
Emergency shelter
Counseling

Housing
Court Advocacy
Domestic Violence Advocacy

Community Education
Partner Abuse Intervention

All programming operates under the following guiding principles:

- Domestic violence is a crime of power and control.
- While anyone can be a potential victim, most often women and children are victims.
- Domestic violence negatively impacts all who experience and/or witness it; therefore, domestic violence diminishes the quality of life in the community.
- Domestic violence is abuse and is unjustified.
- Each person has responsibility for their own behavior.
- Survivors do not cause the abuse.
- Each person has a right to the information, support and services necessary to become safe, self-reliant, and autonomous.
- Children from violent homes are at risk.
- Violent behavior is a learned response and is often passed down from generation to generation.

24-Hour Hotline

The purpose of the 24-hour hotline program is to provide information and advocacy to domestic violence victims whenever it is needed. This program is staffed by 40-hour trained bilingual/bicultural staff who are well prepared to discuss domestic violence issues, South Suburban Family Shelter programs and services, the Illinois Domestic Violence Act and related laws, and referral information for related issues that domestic violence victims may have such as homelessness, substance abuse, suicide, to name a few.

Last year 975 hotline calls were taken by bilingual/bicultural staff. Of these, 510 were domestic violence victims seeking information, support and referrals; and 465 were non-domestic violence victims using the hotline to obtain other referrals.

Emergency Shelter Program

The purpose of the Emergency Shelter Program is to provide a safe place for domestic violence victims who are leaving their homes in fear of immediate physical harm for themselves or their children. Shelter is provided through the use of off-site secure locations and the length of stay is generally one to three nights. Transportation is provided to victims who have no access to a car. Food, clothing, and other needed items are provided to clients to make their stay in the shelter as comfortable as possible.

After the victim is placed in emergency shelter, a Crisis Intervention Advocate meets with the victim and helps identify their options. The Crisis Intervention Advocate and the victim prepare immediate and short-term goals. Information is presented on the other services that South Suburban Family Shelter provides as well as how to access them.

Last year South Suburban Family Shelter provided 148 nights of emergency shelter to 30 adult victims and 22 children.

Housing Programs

The Sanctuary is a transitional housing program serving women with children experiencing homelessness. The program location is a 10-unit apartment building and provides families with temporary, rent-free housing as well as supportive services onsite. The program goal is to assist these families in achieving their goals of securing permanent housing and preventing future homelessness.

South Suburban Family Shelter is the lead agency for The South Suburban Domestic Violence Rapid Re-Housing Program in collaboration with Crisis Center for South Suburbia. This program offers rental assistance for families exiting from homelessness due to domestic violence. Rental Assistance is offered for a one-year period in tandem

with case management services. At the end of the year, the client is permanently housed in their unit.

25 families were served by our housing program in FY 2021.

South Suburban Family Shelter also provides financial assistance and case management to insure that domestic violence victims are not made homeless due to domestic violence. SSFS Advocates assist with the preparation of budgets, related financial issues, resume writing, and job search skills. Last year South Suburban Family Shelter provided 578 hours of educational, economic, housing, and employment counseling to 44 clients.

Counseling Program

The mission of the Counseling Program at South Suburban Family Shelter is to educate, empower and support victims of domestic violence with the information and the skills that they need to heal from domestic violence. When working with child victims/witnesses, the goal is to provide children with the advocacy, support, domestic violence education and skills that they need to recover from witnessing domestic violence. SSFS Counselors have their Master's Degree in Counseling or Social Work. Last year the Counseling Program served 252 people with 2,488 hours of service. The following services were provided:

- Group counseling and therapy
- Adult & children's counseling
- Advocacy
- Child care/parental services
- Family counseling
- Adult & child evaluation/assessment/case management

Court Advocacy Program

South Suburban Family Shelter provides legal help for victims of domestic violence through our Court Advocacy Program.

The purpose of the Court Advocacy Program is to inform and assist victims of domestic violence when navigating throughout the legal system. In doing so, Court Advocates ensure that victims are aware of their legal rights under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986 as it pertains to both civil and criminal court systems. Advocates are available to assist with the preparation of Protective Orders and accompany victims to court for support as they attempt to obtain relief from domestic violence. Although Protective Orders are temporary, they can provide relief in several ways.

Legal Remedies Available on Protective Orders:

- Prohibit the abuser from causing physical abuse, harassment, interference with personal liberty, stalking, intimidation of a dependent, etc...
- Exclusive Possession of the residence- this can order an abuser to be removed from the shared or common dwelling if it can be proven that the presence of the perpetrator places the victim and other household members in danger (if there is a threat to safety).
- Temporary custody of minor children.
- Prohibit the abuser from having any contact with the employer of the victim and school of protected parties listed on the Protective Order.
- Prohibit the abuser from removing or concealing minor children.
- Order the abuser to surrender any firearms and/or FOID card to local law enforcement.

South Suburban Family Shelter Court Advocates are present in the 6th Suburban District, Markham Courthouse Monday- Friday 8am- 430pm to provide advocacy, information, and support that domestic violence victims need when navigating the legal system. Last year the Court Advocacy Program provided court advocacy, court orientation and information and assistance to 1,756 people seeking support at the courthouse and assisted 200 victims in obtaining an Order of Protection.

Domestic Violence Advocacy Program

The South Suburban Family Shelter Domestic Violence Advocacy Program provides outreach to the community about domestic violence and the services available based on the individual needs. Advocates provide domestic violence education, survivor empowerment, and community support. A primary function is to provide education, assessment and emotional support to patients visiting our healthcare partner locations.

In the healthcare sites, the advocates provide information, assistance, advocacy, emotional support, education on the dynamics of domestic violence, safety planning, counseling, and court referrals to individuals who come into the emergency room of area hospitals. Medical advocate's assist and train medical personnel to recognize the different signs of abuse and understand the dynamics of domestic violence. However, due to the pandemic, the program was not able to provide services at our healthcare partner locations.

The area medical partners that collaborated with South Suburban Family Shelter on this project last year were:

- Advocate/South Suburban Hospital, Hazel Crest IL
- Franciscan Health Hospital, Olympia Fields IL
- Cook County Cottage Grove Health Center, Ford Heights IL
- Family Christian Health Center, Harvey IL

Last year this program participated in public education events that reached 2,083 individuals and provided 390 hours of on call service at the Administrative office for survivors and community members seeking support.

Community Education Program

SSFS's Community Education Program strives to facilitate an understanding with our participants of domestic violence and the relevant dynamics, highlighting the interconnected issues for people who are abused, people who perpetrate abuse, and people who want to help. As an approved training site through the Illinois Certified Domestic Violence Professional Board and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, we offer the Domestic Violence 40-Hour and the Abuser Intervention Facilitator 20-Hour Trainings four times annually. SSFS also connects in the community by providing trainings on domestic violence fundamentals and dynamics and tailoring presentations to meet specific topical requests.

Our Prevention curriculum provides age-appropriate violence prevention education in classroom settings for students in grades pre-K through 12th. Last year, our Community Educators provided prevention presentations to 823 students in this grade range. They also provide outreach and education on domestic violence related issues to 13,115 professionals, community leaders, and the general public.

Partner Abuse Intervention Program

The Partner Abuse Intervention Program (PAIP) is a critical part of our coordinated community response to domestic violence. PAIP staff provides psycho-educational training in a group setting to perpetrators of domestic violence using the nationally accredited Duluth Model in order to (1) help the perpetrators become more reflective about their histories, emotions, and behaviors, (2) help the perpetrators make better choices, (3) end intimate partner violence, and (4) increase the safety of victims and their children. Groups are co-facilitated by a male/female team to hold group discussions, hold the group participants accountable, and help the group participants engage fully with the program. These groups consist of 30, two-hour classes. Last fiscal year 123 men and women who used violence accessed this program.

Governing Board

South Suburban Family Shelter is governed by a Board of Directors that meets 10 times a year. The meetings are held at South Suburban Family Shelter’s Administrative Office, Homewood, Illinois beginning at 6:30pm. South Suburban Family Shelter’s Board of Director members and officers are elected for a 2-year term.

South Suburban Family Shelter’s Board of Directors is made up of individuals representing the communities that we serve. Last year’s board included:

- President – Jeffery Smith
- Vice-President – Michael Leonard
- Financial Officer – Tracy Weems
- Secretary – Cherilyn Parker

Members at Large –Krista Butler, Vernell Johnson, Teri Gaby, Chief Mitchel Davis, Esther Jenkins, Marydale Donald, Michelle Lehmann, Renee Jefferson

Advisory Board Members include – Toi Hutchinson, Paul Kessler, Dory Machtinger, Denise McGrath, Kimberly Rowe-Barney, Val Warner, Linda Williams, Jessica Colon-Sayre, Deb Sedberry.

South Suburban Family Shelter’s Executive Director is Jennifer Gabrenya.

Financial Statements – Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021)

Total Income	\$3,003,808
Total Expenses	\$2,991,619
-Domestic Violence Advocacy	\$183,462
-Court Advocacy	\$230,640
-Counseling	\$506,760
-Partner Abuse Intervention	\$110,657
-Hotline & Crisis Intervention	\$135,024
-Housing	\$922,084
-Fundraising	\$199,930
-Administrative	\$420,823
Total Net Assets June 30, 2021	\$1,689,483