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Victims Services Center Of Montgomery County Inc

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325 Swede Street, 2nd Floor
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Business Telephone: 610-277-0932
Fax: 610-277-6386

CRISIS HOTLINES:
24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 888-521-0983
Sexual Violence: 610-277-5200
Other Crimes: 610-ASSIST-1



**24-HOUR CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES,
COUNSELING, ADVOCACY, IN-PERSON ACCOMPANIMENTS,
CHILD ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM,
PREVENTION/RISK REDUCTION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
COMMUNITY CRISIS RESPONSE**

www.victimservicescenter.org



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JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

Our mission is to provide advocacy and counseling for all who have been affected by sexual violence and other crimes against the person and to promote prevention and awareness in the community through education.

COUNTY PROFILE

Montgomery County is the third largest county in Pennsylvania. More than 800,000 people reside in its 482 square mile area.

There are 62 municipalities including numerous rural areas and major suburban communities.

SPECIAL EVENTS 2023-2024

Art Supplies Donation Drive



SPECIAL EVENTS 2023-2024

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

June 2024

Matty Muir Awards



Dear Friends,

Our dedication to meeting the needs of survivors of crime is reflected throughout all services, programs, and special initiatives. We remain steadfast in our commitment to provide trauma-informed care, and engagement with the community to ensure access to justice and services. VSC's adaptation of its service delivery to include remote access during the COVID-19 epidemic has been incorporated into our ongoing operations as it provides survivors with options to receive services in-person or by remote access.

Prevention Education programs to schools, universities, colleges, and community awareness programs provide options for in-person or remote access presentations tailored to meet the needs of the specific audience. VSC's partnerships and collaboration with other service providers and systems have increased our reach into the diverse communities of our county, and maximized service delivery while conserving cost. Our involvement in county-wide committees and task forces has provided an opportunity to increase awareness about VSC services and increase referrals for services and education programs.

VSC's Board of Directors consistent donation of their time, talents, and resources has contributed to VSC's progress in fulfilling its mission. VSC is a vital safety net that helps victims of crime, and their family members.

We are grateful for our volunteers and interns from a number of universities whose commitment to helping VSC achieve its mission is invaluable.

We appreciate the financial support from individuals, foundations and governments grants which is vital to VSC's operations and sustainability. Every dollar matters, whether large or small contributes greatly to ensuring that VSC services remain free and at no cost to survivors of crime.

We will soon begin preparing for the celebration of VSC's 50 years of service in 2025 and look forward to your participation in the celebration. We invite you to visit our website www.victimservicescenter.org to learn more information about VSC services and upcoming events.

Together, we can make a difference and help victims of crime, their family members and friends affected by the victimization of their loved ones heal.

Sincerely
Mary Onama, LMSW



ANNUAL APPEAL

Victim Services Center Launches Annual Appeal to Sustain Vital Services for Survivors

Victim Services Center (VSC) is reaching out to our community with this year's annual appeal, aiming to raise essential funds to support and sustain our services for victims of crime and their families. Each donation ensures that VSC can continue to provide comprehensive, no-cost services to individuals in crisis, helping them on their journey to healing and empowerment.

Over the past year, VSC's 24/7 crisis hotline has received 1,327 calls, from survivors and their loved ones seeking help and support. VSC stands ready to support them, offering crisis counseling, advocacy, and other critical resources to those experiencing trauma or distress.

To meet this need, VSC depends on the generosity of our Montgomery County community. With your support, we can ensure that survivors and their loved ones continue to have access to the vital services they need. Every contribution to our annual appeal goes directly towards sustaining these programs for the future.

Join us in our mission to empower and uplift survivors. Please consider making a donation to VSC through our website today.

www.victimservicescenter.org



SPECIAL EVENTS 2023-2024

April 2024

S.A.A. M. (Sexual Assault Awareness Month)



SPECIAL EVENTS 2023-2024

FINANCIAL STATEMENT JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2024

April 2024

Planting in Memoriam Event



Condensed Statement of Operations July 1, 2023- June 30,2024

INCOME

Government Grants		
PA Coalition Against Rape (PCAR)	\$	579,660
PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD):		
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)	\$	590,738
Rights and Services Act (RASA)	\$	136,928
Office of Violence Against Women (OVW)	\$	51,123
County	\$	13,457
Other Revenue		
Corporations & Foundations	\$	17,750
Townships	\$	15,560
General Contributions	\$	34,520
Fundraising	\$	14,061
In-Kind Contributions-Volunteer Hours /Equipment/ Other	\$	130,996
Community & Educational Programs	\$	13,576
Investment & Miscellaneous	\$	199
	Income from Operations	\$ 1,598,569
	Contributions to Endowment Campaign	\$ 2,772
	Total Income	<u>\$ 1,601,341</u>

EXPENSES

Personnel & Benefits	\$	971,446
Operations	\$	506,534
Volunteer Hours	\$	114,698
Depreciation	\$	11,826
	Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,604,504</u>
Increase/ (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$	<u>(3,163)</u>

The above condensed financial statement, derived from the audited statements on which our independent auditors, Baratz and Associates, P.A., have expressed an unqualified opinion is presented as a summary. A copy of the complete audit report is available upon request.

CRISIS INTERVENTION (24-HOUR HOTLINE)

Crisis intervention services via the 24-hour hotline that respond to victims of crime and their significant others who are in crisis resulting from a victimization. Victims receive immediate emotional support, information, and referrals and accompaniments to hospitals and police interviews upon request. The goal of crisis intervention is the empowerment of the client to manage and reduce current stressors precipitated by the victimization.

CRISIS INTERVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (2023-2024)

Staff and trained volunteers answered **1,3427** calls and **118** online contacts from victims of crime. They provided crisis counseling, emotional support, information and referrals to resources in the community. Callers were also educated on the numerous services offered by VSC.

INTAKE HIGHLIGHTS (2023-2024)

A total of **127** clients received intake assessments.



From Left: Molly Galvin (Advocate), Erin Milbourne, LCSW (Direct Services Supervisor), Julianna Amalbert (Advocate), Aidan Baker (Advocate)

VOLUNTEERS
David Barnes
Robin Becker
Ellen Dahill-Brown
Jennifer Farwell
Kate Darwin
Nina Foy
Sarah Halprin
Jan Harris
Missy Marinello
Felicia Rzeszewski
Daniel Wood

INTERNS
Amanda Blazkiewicz
Alexa Tarasca
Johnathan Perry
Shayla McJunkin
Leah Pulli
Stephen Knechel
Michelle Marshall



VSC volunteers assisting at the Upper Dublin triathlon.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Our volunteers complete an intensive, 65-hour training program to become state-certified Sexual Assault Counselors (SAC), equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to support victims of crime effectively.

Topics of the training include:

- Sexual Assault, Harassment and Date Rape
- PTSD & Trauma Responses
- Counseling techniques
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion
- Child sexual abuse and mandated reporting
- Victim's Rights
- Victim's Compensation
- The Legal System
- Forensic Rape Exam
- Elder Abuse
- Hate Crimes
- Ethics and confidentiality
- Self-Care
- Role-Plays for hotline calls

After completing the course and passing a final exam, the volunteers are Pennsylvania certified Sexual Assault Counselors/Victim Advocates.

As a volunteer with VSC, they assist victims of crime and their families by providing crisis counseling, information about VSC services and resources to other appropriate agencies via VSC's 24-hour crisis hotline. Volunteers also provide in-person accompaniments to hospitals and police stations for victims of crime.

Volunteers attend quarterly meetings with the Volunteer Coordinator and other staff to discuss procedures and refresh their skills, as well as get updates on VSC policies and any new information that is available. VSC volunteers include working and retired adults as well as graduate and undergraduate students from local colleges.

DIRECT SERVICES OUTCOMES (2023-2024)

Counselors continue to collect anonymous feedback from clients about how they feel about the counseling process. Results continue to be positive with clients reporting that they feel encouraged to use their support systems, feel open to expressing their emotions, and that they trust their counselor and feel genuine concern from them.



From Left: Eva Steele, LSW (Counselor), Erin Milbourne, LCSW (Direct Services Supervisor), Gavin Vogel, (Counselor)

“Thank you, VSC, for being there for me at a difficult time.”

A 62 year old crime victim

ADVOCACY SERVICES

Justice & Support

The Advocacy Department is dedicated to ensuring that each and every client is treated with the dignity, compassion, and respect that they deserve.

Advocacy services include:

- Accompaniment to both court and the police department
- Crisis intervention
- Victim Impact Statement assistance
- Assistance with filing Victim's Compensation Assistance Program claims
- Victim Notification Program registration
- Emotional support to the victim and their family members
- Referrals and additional information about the criminal justice system

The advocates provide outreach and training on victimization issues to professionals in the social services system. Advocates actively strive to identify areas for service improvement not just in VSC but throughout the criminal justice system as well.

Advocacy Services Highlights (2023-2024)

Advocates provided service to **1,623** victims of crime and their significant others.

- **300** in-person accompaniments
- **25** hospital accompaniments
- **22** police accompaniments
- **231** court accompaniments
- **22** area agencies and school accompaniments

“Victim Services Center has been my lifeline through this process. I can’t imagine going through this without them.”

VSC Advocacy Client

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT: INTERNS

Volunteer Interns: Supporting Clients with Compassion and Commitment

Each year, our Counseling and Advocacy Department is strengthened by the valuable contributions of volunteer interns who work directly with our team to support clients in their healing journeys. These interns, often undergraduate and graduate students in social work, psychology, criminal justice, and related fields, bring fresh perspectives and a deep commitment to VSC's mission.

Roles and Responsibilities

Under the guidance of experienced staff, volunteer interns assist in providing essential services to clients. They help with client intake, conduct follow-up outreach, and provide supportive listening and information to individuals who reach out to VSC. Working alongside our counselors and advocates, they also assist with safety planning, emotional support, and connecting clients to resources both within VSC and in the wider community.

Comprehensive Training and Supervision

All volunteer interns undergo thorough training in trauma-informed care, crisis intervention, and VSC's client-centered practices before they begin working with clients through a state-certified sexual assault counselor/victim advocate training. In addition, they participate in ongoing supervision and regular team meetings to ensure they are well-supported and equipped to handle the challenges of this work.

Impact on Client Services

The dedication and empathy of our volunteer interns significantly enhance our ability to respond to the needs of clients promptly and compassionately. Their presence allows us to expand our reach and ensures that every client receives the highest level of support possible. Many interns go on to pursue careers in victim advocacy and mental health, taking with them invaluable experience and a commitment to serving others.

We are grateful for the vital role our volunteer interns play in our Counseling and Advocacy Department. Their hard work, resilience, and compassion help us fulfill our mission and make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

In FY 23-24 volunteers and interns provided the agency with **2,841** hours of dedicated time.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

VOLUNTEERS

Victim Services Center of Montgomery County (VSC) was founded by five dedicated volunteers who recognized the urgent need for a coordinated response for victims of sexual assault. Their vision laid the groundwork for what VSC has become today—a trusted agency that continues to benefit from the commitment of devoted volunteers who support its mission.

Today, our volunteers play an essential role at VSC. They staff the 24-hour crisis hotline, accompany clients to hospitals and police stations, and actively participate in annual community events. Each volunteer undergoes rigorous training and becomes a state-certified Sexual Assault Counselor (SAC) before beginning their service, ensuring they're fully prepared to provide compassionate support to those in need.

VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Direct Service

- The Volunteers provided a total of approximately **37** hours of direct service to victims of crime: **29** hours provided to victims of sexual crimes; **8** hours provide to victims of non-sexual crimes.
- Volunteers worked a total of **1010.5** hours covering VSC's 24-hour crisis hotline. Volunteers went on **8** hospital accompaniments with victims of sexual assault, serving a total of **11** clients at these accompaniments.

Activities and Events

- Completed a total of at least **8** hours of in-service trainings on volunteer procedures.
- Attended special events, including but not limited to:

Community events, college job/internship/volunteer fairs, township awareness days, etc. where volunteers talked to the public about VSC services and gave out agency information.

ADVOCACY SERVICES

Empowering Survivors

Advocates assisted victims in receiving **\$135,536** through the Pennsylvania Victims Compensation Assistance (VCAP) Program.

Advocacy department hosted the Planting in Memoriam Event at Upper Merion Township Building.

Advocacy department received **712** referrals from the various police departments and the District Attorney's office throughout Montgomery County. The majority of the referrals come from Norristown, Cheltenham, Abington, Plymouth Township and Whitpain Police Departments.

Advocates provided **2** presentations to police departments, **3** presentations to community groups, and **2** presentations to other professional agencies.

VSC participated in local community coalitions and taskforces including:

- ◆ Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
- ◆ BuxMont Collaborative
- ◆ TriCounty Network (TCN)
- ◆ Interagency Council of Norristown (ICN)
- ◆ Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB)
- ◆ Montgomery County Hubs
- ◆ Services Training Officers Prosecutors (STOP) Team

“We appreciate the support that VSC’s advocates provide victims at very difficult times, such as [police] questioning and providing explanation of court procedures.”

Montgomery County Police Officer

COUNSELING & SUPPORT GROUPS

All counselors are trained and state certified in Sexual Assault Counseling and are experts in providing therapy for individuals and families who have experienced trauma. The counseling department’s clinicians come from diverse backgrounds which include psychology, counseling, and social work.

Counseling Services Highlights (2023-2024)

The department offered two support groups this fiscal year:

- CSA Group: This is a group for adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Group counseling often helps clients to gain support from others with similar experiences.
- Counselors participated in two support groups for trafficking victims offering education about trauma and the brain and self care.

Counselors provided **75.5** hours of group counseling to clients attending the above groups.

Counselors conducted a total of **753** individual counseling sessions to adult victims and their significant others.

Counselors participated in monthly meetings for Interagency Council of Norristown in which they presented on various resources in the community.

“Victim Services Center has been a true help to me and my family. VSC explained and eased my trauma and provided me with information that could help me and my family through my healing process.”

VSC Counseling Client

EDUCATION SERVICES

Promoting Sensitivity & Awareness

Primary Prevention Programs

	In Class	Out of Class		
	of Program#	# of Students	# of Programs	of Student#
Pre-school	12	35	0	0
Grades K-5	12	22	6	12
Grades 6-8	95	1930	0	0
Grades 9-12	194	3340	0	0
College/University	2	100	2	11
Adults - Other	1	197	2	8
Total	316	5624	10	31



EDUCATION SERVICES

Education/Awareness Programs

	In Class		Out of Class		Community Groups	
	# of Programs	# of Students	# of Programs	# of Students	# of Programs	# of Students
Pre-school	1	28	0	0	n/a	n/a
Grades K-5	75	1844	0	0	n/a	n/a
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
College/University	10	368	1	15	0	0
Adults - Other	10	267	1	4	4	58
Total	96	2507	2	19	4	58



“VSC did an excellent job of presenting dating abuse and sexual violence to my class. It led to a spirited discussion the next class, with different views from the boys and girls.”

High School Teacher

CHILD ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM

On-going Therapy

Child Abuse Treatment Program Highlights (2023-2024)

The Child Abuse Treatment Program (CATP) continues to provide free, long-term therapy to abused children who may not otherwise have had the opportunity to process their trauma in a professional, therapeutic environment. Eligible children are provided with therapy for one year. This allows the child to establish a rapport with their counselor as well as provide parents with consistent feedback and support. The staff is trained to use therapeutic play and other creative techniques as a way for children to learn to cope with their trauma in a healthy way.

Each family in the CATP program was contacted monthly to involve non-offending parents/guardians in their child’s treatment. Parents were invited to joint sessions when it was decided that the child could benefit from such intervention. Siblings were also invited when appropriate.

- Counselors conducted **272** individual counseling sessions with children in the CATP program.
- Counselors conducted **82** therapeutic interactions with non-offending caregivers, including in-person, joint sessions and phone discussions about supporting their child were also tracked.



Pictured: Shoshana Wortman, PsyD (CATP Clinical Supervisor)

“VSC’s Child Abuse Treatment Program provided counseling and family therapy and helped our family heal.”

Parent of a 3rd grade victim of child sexual abuse

EDUCATION SERVICES

Promoting Sensitivity & Awareness

The purpose of Education Services is to create awareness about the impact of violence on the community while promoting attitudes and behaviors that aid in the prevention of violence in society. This department is run by the Community Education Programs Supervisor and three Prevention Education Specialists, an expansion made possible by our recent CDC Rape Prevention Education grant.

Highlights

- Expanded department to three Prevention Education Specialists due to CDC Rape Prevention Education grant
- Successfully delivered prevention education programs to schools and colleges across Montgomery County
- Developed specialized programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
- Provided Mandated Reporter Training to 385 professionals, significantly exceeding projections
- Adapted parent/caregiver education by distributing materials for home use

EDUCATION SERVICES

Promoting Sensitivity & Awareness

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

We significantly exceeded projections by providing Mandated Reporter Training to 385 professionals, including the Lower Merion Library System and Germantown Academy. We also expanded our professional education offerings to cover topics like trauma-informed responses and connecting survivors to support services.

CDC Rape Prevention Education Grant

The CDC grant has been instrumental in expanding our capacity and reach. It has enabled us to:

- * Hire an additional Prevention Education Specialist
- * Develop specialized programs for the IDD community
- * Focus on primary prevention strategies
- * Implement evidence-based prevention approaches
- * Work towards promoting health equity in our community

Looking Ahead

With our expanded team and the support of the CDC grant, we are well-positioned to enhance our prevention efforts in the coming year. We aim to:

- * Further develop and implement our IDD-focused programs
- * Strengthen our community-based programming
- * Continue adapting our approaches to reach diverse and at-risk populations
- * Evaluate and refine our programs to ensure maximum impact

Our commitment to preventing sexual violence and promoting a safer community remains stronger than ever, bolstered by our expanded resources and capabilities.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Our Prevention Education Specialists deliver programs on a wide range of topics, including child sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, drug- and alcohol-facilitated sexual assault, acquaintance rape, campus sexual assault, bullying, cyberbullying, internet safety, bystander intervention, personal safety, healthy relationships, and mandated reporter training.

This year, we focused on three key objectives:

- Providing sexual violence awareness and prevention education to schools, colleges, universities, parents and caregivers
- Delivering sexual violence awareness and prevention education to community groups
- Offering child abuse mandated reporter training to allied professionals

School and College Programs

We successfully coordinated with schools and colleges across Montgomery County, utilizing curricula such as "Keeping Touches Safe and Healthy," "Healthy Relationships Project," and "Consensual Connections." The Act 55 legislation led to increased college partnerships and enhanced our "Navigating Interpersonal Violence" program for post-secondary institutions.

Community Outreach

A major focus this year was expanding our reach to at-risk communities, particularly people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our new CDC Rape Prevention Education grant allowed us to develop specialized programs addressing this critical need. We also continued efforts to reach other vulnerable groups like LGBTQ individuals and seniors, and engage with faith-based communities.



From left to right, Jessica Rice, Community Education Programs Supervisor, Jessica Heymann and Kayla Reeder, Prevention Education Specialists.



Pictured Above: VSC Education Department staff with Woodland Elementary School Safety Rangers graduate