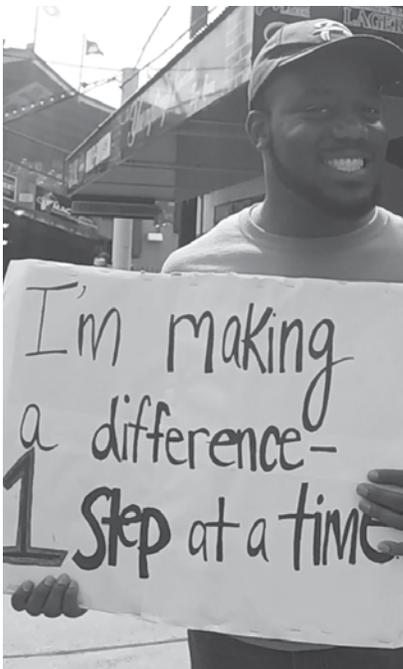


Safe Berks Walk For NO MORE Will Kick Off Art on the Avenue!

On Saturday June 16, 2018, the place to be will be Penn Avenue in West Reading. Art on the Avenue, an annual community celebration of art, music, food and fun, attracts thousands of people each year.

The Safe Berks Walk For NO MORE will kick off Art on the Avenue. This walk makes a statement. We are saying together, as a community: **No more domestic violence! No more sexual assault!**

Safe Berks staff and volunteers will be present all day at the 400 block of Penn Ave., celebrating, socializing, presenting music and art, and sharing information about the services we offer survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. In addition to raising funds to support Safe Berks, we will also raise awareness about these important issues. **We hope to see you June 16!**



WALK FOR NO MORE

TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

Register at www.safeberks.org,
click on Events

9-10 am: Check In at McDonald's,
810 Hill Ave., Wyomissing

10 am: Walk down Penn Ave. to 400 block

11 am-8pm: Art on the Avenue
Safe Berks will offer entertainment, kids crafts
& other fun activities all day at the
400 block of Penn Ave.

Thank You to the major sponsors of our Walk For NO MORE! (as of April 11, 2018)

To become a sponsor, email MindyM@SafeBerks.org or call 484-869-5293

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



A Message From Our CEO



April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Despite recent attention the #MeToo movement brought to these issues, sexual harassment and sexual assault are still the most under reported and under discussed topics in our society. At Safe Berks we are working diligently to create programs for survivors of sexual assault, so that they feel empowered to come forward and pursue their healing. In order to understand just how prevalent sexual assault is, and how infrequently prosecution of these offenses occur, please consider the following statistics from the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN):

We are also working to bring attention to issues of sexual harassment and workplace culture. On April 8, I participated in a Democratic Women's Forum dedicated to the #MeToo movement. In addition, we are working with businesses and supporters to offer a curriculum to local employers focused not on how to maintain "compliance" but on how to create a healthy and respectful workplace.

To dispel some of the persistent myths surrounding sexual assault, its victims and those who perpetrate this violence, it is critical to remember that sexual assault is not a crime of sex; it is a crime of violence steeped in power and control. Victims are not irresponsible people putting themselves in at-risk situations. Perpetrators are not strangers lurking around the corner. Rather, sexual assault is perpetrated most frequently by intimate partners, family members and acquaintances. Victims are groomed to accept the routine violation of their person and boundaries. It is pre-meditated, cold-blooded and pervasive.

It is also preventable. Please join with us to remove the culture and systems that allow this violence to continue unabated. We hope you will join us at Art on the Avenue for our Walk For NO MORE on June 16 where you can organize with us for concerted community action. It is up to us. Only we have the power to create a community free of sexual violence. It is time to truly say NO MORE.

Gratefully,

Mary Kay Bernosky

- **44% of victims are under age 18**
- **80% are under age 30**
- **Every 98 seconds, another American is sexually assaulted**
- **There is an average of 293,000 victims (age 12 or older) of sexual assault each year**
- **68% of sexual assaults are not reported to the police**
- **98% of rapists will never spend a day in jail**
- **Approximately 2/3 of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim**
- **38% of rapists are a friend or acquaintance**

Safe Berks is sincerely grateful to every member of our Walk For NO MORE Committee!



Shown in photo, standing from left: Mary Kay Bernosky, Mindy McIntosh, Jan Cremer, Tammy Dahms, Christine Gillfillan, Denise DiMascio & Heather Haller. Seated from left: Diane Duff, Pastor Steve Ohnsman, Mary Ann Moffitt & Jay Mahoney. Committee members not pictured: Judy Aulenbach, Barbara Boland, Pamela Conlon, Ed Ledwith, Nina Lilley, Kate Mallow, Tom McDevitt, Douglas Rauch, Francine Scoboria & Cheryl Tobias.

24-Hour Hotline
844-789-SAFE
Or text
SAFE BERKS to 20121

Embrace Your Voice – How you talk about sexual violence matters

The words you say send messages about your values. When you stand up for survivors of sexual violence – when you start by believing them – you send a powerful message to survivors, abusers, and bystanders.

Across the nation, April was recognized as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Safe Berks staff took part in many events in April, including “Take Back the Night” at Albright College, and “In Their Shoes” at the Wyomissing Public Library. Mary Kay Bernosky, Safe Berks CEO, participated in the “#MeToo Dialogues,” coordinated by the PA Federation of Democratic Women. This discussion explored how sexual harassment and sexual assault impact our society, especially in the workplace.

Safe Berks celebrated Los Retratos de mi Voz – The Pictures of My Voice, a Photo Voice Project, during April. An exhibit at the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, Reading, included 24 powerful images created by Latina survivors of sexual violence. For the past year, the participants also attended weekly group meetings facilitated by Safe Berks staff, and formed a close bond.

For participant Valois “Val” Joubert, 20, of Reading, the project was especially relevant and empowering. “I am a working photographer and I want to continue to grow as a photographer,” she said. “This gave me the opportunity to explore myself and my feelings through my photos.”

There will be additional Photo Voice Project displays, including June 16 at Art on the Avenue. Look for these compelling images and other Safe Berks festivities at the 400 block of Penn Avenue, West Reading.

“This gave me the opportunity to explore myself and my feelings through my photos.”



GRADUATION DAY: “This photo represents one of the best moments of my life because my family was so proud of me.” Photo by Val Joubert

Camp Safe Berks – A Teen Alliance to End Violence

The Education and Outreach Department at Safe Berks is pleased to offer Camp Safe Berks. Camp Safe Berks is a week-long summer camp program that brings various Berks County youth and adults together to form alliances of support that promote peace and justice in our schools and communities.

Camp Safe Berks begins the process of developing youth as leaders in oppression-work and is built on the principle that violence is anything that hinders, limits, or damages us as human beings, including not only direct hurt but the long-term internalized effects of that hurt.

Each day will focus on a separate Oppression: Adulthood, Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Classism. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the role Oppression plays in being a “root cause” of violence in our society. Participants will engage in

honest discussions and group activities that will build over the week. These activities are designed to further cultivate their ability to build empathy and acceptance of differences in others. In addition, participants will learn and develop the skills to see, understand, address social injustice, and build strategies to be promoters of peace and justice in their schools and communities. Camp Safe Berks is designed to ignite a passion within youth participants to not only spur their own personal growth, development and improved well-being, but also to become champions for social justice change throughout their community.

If interested as a camper or volunteer, it is required to apply to be considered for the program. To learn more about Camp Safe Berks, please visit our website at www.SafeBerks.org, or contact the Education and Outreach Department at 610-370-7811, or email JenniferE@SafeBerks.org.



camp SAFE berks
A Teen Alliance To End Violence

At-A-Glance

WHEN: July 23-27, 2018

TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHERE: Albright College

WHO: Berks County youth, ages 13-17

COST: FREE

Mural Artist Adds Beauty to Safe House

Marcia Graff Rowe believes in sharing her talents. As a mural artist, with a background of more than 25 years in the graphic design field, she has found that her passion for bringing art and nature together can create special places that bring people into calming spaces.

Marcia has been hard at work at Safe Berks over the last six weeks, creating magical spaces within our Safe House. She says, "Through 20 years of painting murals in homes and public spaces, I have seen the power of art to transform emotions. And the other calming effect is spending time in nature. So, I like to create murals that use natural subject matter, bringing the two positive effects together."

Marcia believes these colorful spaces can contribute to the healing process for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. Marcia said, "I enjoy spending time at Safe Berks, interacting with the dedicated staff, the courageous residents and the sweet children." Her hope is that her art will enhance the important work done at Safe Berks.

We offer a huge THANK YOU to Marcia for sharing her time and talents. Marcia can be reached at 610-926-4485 or mgraff@epix.net. Check out more examples of her artwork on her website at: www.marcia-graff.com.



Volunteers and Donors are Making a Difference at Safe Berks!



Safe Berks recently received a check for \$4,191 to help renovate the Safe Berks Playroom! The funds were raised by Heaven's Thunder Band at its "Inspiring Hope" concert Nov. 11, 2017, in Boyertown. About 200 people attended the concert, presented by Thunder Outreach Ministries, a faith-based community program. Thank you to Heaven's Thunder Band for caring about the children of Safe Berks! Shown in photo, from left, are band members Randy Graber, Janelle & Guy Detweiler, Mark Malizzi & Keith Morris; Safe Berks Children's Advocate Arianna Sanchez, & band members Brian McGuinness & Gary Pace.



Congratulations to Safe Berks volunteers Jill Lamy, left, & Rosemary Carabello, who received Distinguished Honoree awards at the Association of Fundraising Professionals National Philanthropy Day. Both have donated countless hours to inventory donations to Safe Berks, and to organize the Donation Room so that staff can quickly and easily locate items residents need.



Riverfront Federal Credit Union surprised and recognized volunteers across Berks County on Giving Tuesday, including dedicated Safe Berks volunteer Diane Cappa. From left: Mindy McIntosh, Aleida Rodriguez, Diane Cappa, Christine Gilfillan & Tim McLeod, CEO of Riverfront Federal Credit Union.

Celebrating the Service of Safe Berks Staff Members

At Safe Berks, there are 11 members of the staff who have served a decade or more. Combined, these 11 women have more than 160 years of experience!

Working full-time for a non-profit that serves survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day is not easy. But that has not deterred these 11 women. They don't quit. What motivates them? Why do they get out of bed every morning and keep trying to change the world?

"Domestic violence is not acceptable," said Mereliss Colon Ortiz, Director of Residential Services, a staff member since 2006. "No one deserves to be hurt, to be abused, and to live in fear in their own home. I want to be a part of ending that cycle of violence."

"I work at Safe Berks because I am inspired to work with people in need," said Mayra I. Mateo, Counselor/Advocate, who joined the staff in 2005. "It is gratifying to see women with their children who had been abused regain their stability."

"I am committed to our mission," said Aleida Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Residential Services, a staff member since 2008. "When I provide someone with information, they might not be able to utilize that information right away. But I know they are one step closer to safety, and we are one step closer to ending domestic violence and sexual assault."

"I work at Safe Berks because I believe that we, as a team, can change how people view abuse in all its different forms," said Susanna Torres, Fiscal Administrative Assistant, who joined the staff in 2007.

"We serve anyone who has been a victim of domestic or sexual abuse and needs a safe place," said Case Manager Candida Jarquin, who joined the staff in 2000. "We feel happy when people reach out to us."

Experienced staff have seen many changes at Safe Berks. Founded in 1976 as Berks Women in Crisis, the agency changed its name in 2016.



From left: Mayra I. Mateo, Counselor/Advocate, 13 years of service; Lourdes Melendez-Rosado, Statistical Coordinator, 17 years of service; Mereliss Colon Ortiz, Director of Residential Services, 12 years of service; Christine Gilfillan, Chief Operating Officer; 31 years of service, first 14 years as a volunteer, and then 17 years on staff; Mary Kay Bernosky Esq., Chief Executive Officer, 13 years of service. Not pictured: Susanna Torres, Fiscal Administrative Assistant, 11 years of service. Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev



From left: Ellie Sarno, Esq., Staff Attorney, 19 years of service; Jennifer Sawyer, Legal Advocate Coordinator; 20 years of service; Diane Ellis, Esq., Director of Legal Services, 19 years of service.



Aleida Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Residential Services, 10 years of service.



Candida Jarquin, Case Manager, 18 years of service

"We changed the name to convey that our services are for everyone," said Mary Kay Bernosky, Esq., Chief Executive Officer, who took the helm in 2005.

Most veteran staff cite the new facility - opened in 2012 - as the most significant change. The new building brought together all services under one roof, increased the capacity of the Safe House from 26 to 50 people, and added transitional Bridge Housing for 25 people.

"We are part of a movement for peace," said Christine Gilfillan, Chief Operating Officer, who joined the staff in 2001. "The movement has changed and the agency along with it."

"So much has changed about Safe Berks in 20 years!" said Jennifer Sawyer, Legal Advocate Coordinator, a staff member since 1998. "However, some things remain constant. We still operate 24/7 and provide free, confidential and life-saving services. We are proud of the work we do and are dedicated to continuing providing these essential services in our community."

Welcome Our New Staff!



New Safe Berks staff, group photo, from left: Chris Dowhower, Community Educator; Denise Gerena, Bilingual Legal Advocate; Natasha Turczynski, Community Educator; and Ahely Espinosa, Hotline Counselor. Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev Individual photo: Mayra Rodriguez, Counselor/Advocate.



WALK FOR NO MORE

We want to **END**
domestic violence
and sexual assault.

**SATURDAY
JUNE 16**

Kickoff event

Art on the Avenue

**FUN
ALL
DAY!**

- All are welcome!
- Entertainment
- Family activities



Educate • Advocate • End Abuse

Register at www.safeberks.org,
click on Events

9-10 am

Check In at McDonald's,
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10 am

Walk down Penn Ave. to 400 block

11 am-8pm

Art on the Avenue

Safe Berks will offer entertainment,
kids crafts & other fun activities all
day at the 400 block of Penn Ave.

The vision of Safe Berks is to eliminate domestic violence
and sexual assault in Berks County.

**Crisis Services • Residential Services • Education and Outreach
Counseling • Systems Advocacy • Legal Services**

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The Give Now button, located on our website at www.safeberks.org/donate/donate-now/, is a convenient way to support Safe Berks. Receipts are generated immediately via email. The official registration and financial information of Safe Berks may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does imply endorsement.

Contact Us

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Email: Peace@SafeBerks.org

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844-789-SAFE (7233)
Or Text SAFE BERKS to 20121



United Way of Berks County