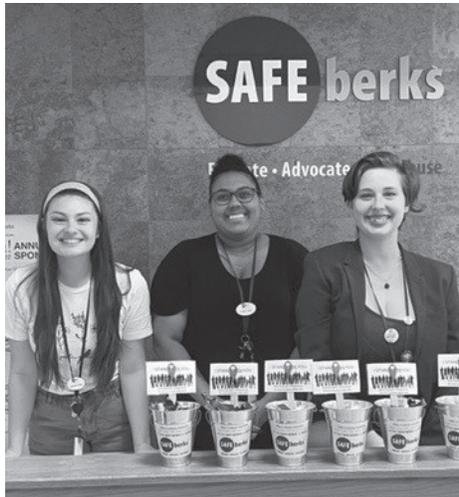


October was Domestic Violence Awareness Month #DVAM

During October, as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Safe Berks staff in the Community Outreach & Response (COR) Department delivered buckets of purple ribbons and information about our free services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to local hospitals, healthcare centers, medical offices, non-profit organizations, colleges, and businesses.

Tragically, domestic violence is much more common and lethal than most people realize. According to the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV), one in four women and one in seven men will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. There are many forms of domestic violence, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and financial abuse.



Safe Berks staff from left, Morgan Driggs, Community Response Specialist, and Kasee Lewis and Vero DeHart, both Medical Advocacy Partnership Program (MAPP) Specialists.

The dedicated staff of Safe Berks provide free and confidential services 24 hours every day, 365 days a year, to empower and assist survivors. Services are available in all languages and include: shelter, legal services, counseling, community outreach and response, medical advocacy, and education. To request services, call the Safe Berks 24-hour Hotline at 844-789-SAFE (7233) or text SAFE BERKS to 20121.

Advocates in the COR Department at Safe Berks are working with many community partners to serve more survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault out in the community. COR Advocates also provide specialized educational and awareness programming. For more information about collaborating with Safe Berks, contact Stacey Jordan, Managing Director of Community Engagement, at 610-373-1206 ext. 141, or StaceyJ@SafeBerks.org.

Safe Berks 21st Annual Silent Witness March & Dedication

The Safe Berks Silent Witness Project is a visual monument to those lost to domestic violence homicide in Berks County. Each October, during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we hold the Silent Witness March & Dedication. More than 250 members of the community gathered on October 17 and marched silently from Safe Berks to Reading Area Community College, carrying red, life-size silhouettes that symbolize those lost to domestic violence homicide. Each silhouette wears a shield that describes the tragedy of their untimely death.

We held a Dedication Ceremony at RACC, which included a moving speech by Luis Serrano, who tragically lost his beloved mother, Maria Serrano, to domestic violence homicide in 2009. Many family members and friends of those lost attended this solemn event. Sincere thanks to all who participated and to RACC for their partnership and hosting this important memorial.

Since 1999, when Safe Berks began keeping records, there have been 80 beloved individuals lost to domestic violence homicide in Berks County. We mourn the loss of each one and we are here to offer empathy, compassion, and support to their loved ones.

During the month of October, the Safe Berks Silent Witness Project was also displayed at RACC, Kutztown University and Alvernia University. For more info about the Silent Witness Project, contact Cathy Ganter, Prevention Specialist at Safe Berks, at 610-373-1206, ext. 130, or CathyG@SafeBerks.org.

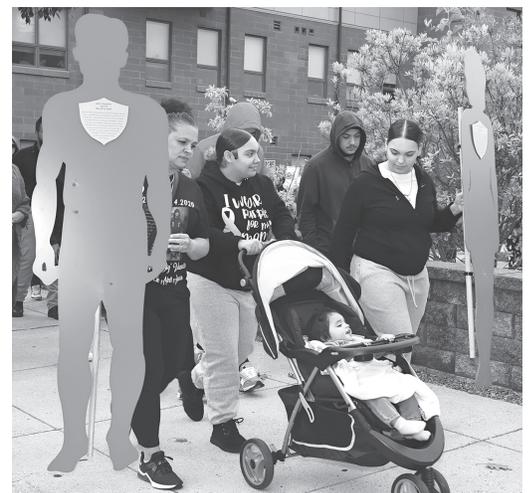


Photo by Jennifer Adames - J. Adames Designs & Photography



Photo by Bill Coughlin

A Message from our CEO

Hello! I hope you are enjoying the crisp air, gorgeous colors, and the wonderful smells of Fall – my favorite time of year!

Fall also hosts Domestic Violence Awareness Month, in October, which keeps Safe Berks staff very busy developing, facilitating, and attending events that spread awareness throughout our community. At each event, we strive to ensure survivors of domestic and sexual violence know how to access our free services, help prevent abuse through education, and encourage the community to join our efforts to build a Safe Berks.

We are so grateful to Reading Area Community College for hosting our 21st Annual Silent Witness March & Dedication on October 17. Many community members gathered at this very special and important event to honor and remember the lives lost to domestic violence homicide in Berks County.

Since 1999, when Safe Berks began keeping records, there have been 80 Berks County lives lost to domestic violence. We mourn the loss of each of one and are here to offer empathy, compassion, and support to their loved ones. We will never stop our relentless commitment to preventing the next tragedy.

As the holiday season approaches, please consider visiting the Safe Berks Gift Wrapping Table at the Berkshire Mall so our volunteers can wrap your gifts! You can read more about it on Page 5. All donations received help support our work to provide free services to all survivors 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Gift Wrapping Table will also have the beautiful Celebration of Peace ornament designed by Wyomissing HS Senior, Maddie Campbell, available for purchase. The ornament makes a wonderful gift idea and 50% of each sale goes directly to Safe Berks.

To close out 2022, we are thrilled to announce the new Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation Team Up Fundraiser! This exciting raffle opportunity is offered in partnership with hometown hero and local legend Lonnie Walker IV, a true friend and advocate of Safe Berks. See Page 5 for more details about how you can meet Lonnie, a Los Angeles Laker, when he plays the Philadelphia 76ers on Dec. 9 in Philly! This fun raffle includes 2 tickets to the game including meet and greet passes, dinner for two at Cheers American Bistro with overnight accommodations and breakfast compliments of The DoubleTree by Hilton Reading, and car service to and from the game courtesy of Rhoads Limousine. We cannot thank Lonnie and these sponsors enough for their support!

Gratefully,




Safe Berks CEO Beth Garrigan
Photo by John Secoges, Photo courtesy of Berks County Living magazine

Safe Berks Seeking Volunteer Cooks!

Safe Berks is seeking volunteers to provide dinner to residents every evening of the week. Another option is to sponsor dinner from a local restaurant. **For more info, or to schedule a dinner, please contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or MindyM@SafeBerks.org.**

Thanks to all our volunteer cooks! Together, we are building a Safe Berks!



Safe Berks services are free, confidential, and available in all languages.

Toll Free Hotline:
844-789-SAFE (7233)

or

Text SAFE BERKS to 20121

Available 24/7/365

Counseling

610-373-1206, ext. 606

Legal Services

610-373-1206, ext. 107

Peace@SafeBerks.org

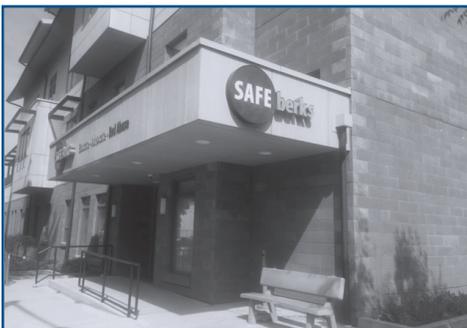
www.SafeBerks.org

Follow Safe Berks



Camp Safe Berks Teens Create Empathy Garden

Teens who attended Camp Safe Berks this summer gathered at Safe Berks this Fall and created an Empathy Garden. The Empathy Garden is filled with the beautiful Empathy Mosaics the teens created this summer at camp. Empathy — the ability to understand and share the feelings of another — is one of the most important keys to preventing domestic violence, sexual assault, and all forms of violence and bullying. The Safe Berks Education & Outreach Department offers Camp Safe Berks each summer, as well as monthly meetups of the campers throughout the school year. Thanks to these amazing teens for sharing their time and talents to help build a better world, where everyone is safe and can enjoy their lives.



Financial Abuse is a Form of Domestic Violence

There are many forms of domestic violence — including physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and financial abuse. All forms of domestic violence are rooted in the abuser's attempts to control another person.

Financial abuse can include preventing a person from working, preventing access to financial resources, and destroying a person's credit. Safe Berks provides free assistance to survivors to help them recover from financial abuse and build financial stability and success.

The Safe Berks Counseling Department offers many services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, including survivors of financial abuse. All services are free, confidential, and available in all languages. Counseling Services include individual Empowerment Counseling, Support Groups, Safety Planning, and Financial Empowerment Counseling, including assistance with Housing Resources.

Financial Empowerment Counseling services include:

- Individual counseling focusing on economic and housing goals
- Financial Empowerment Classes
- Job Fairs
- Assistance with resume writing
- Assistance with clothing for interviews and employment
- Connections with employers seeking staff
- Connections with housing opportunities
- Assistance in recovery from financial abuse



Michelle Nunez,
Economic & Housing
Specialist at Safe Berks

To request Counseling Services from Safe Berks, call 610-373-1206, ext. 606. To request Financial Empowerment Counseling from Safe Berks, email MichelleN@SafeBerks.org or call 610-373-1206 ext. 208.



LGBT CENTER
OF GREATER READING

Available
in person or
via Zoom!

LGBTQ+ Survivor Support Group

A safe place for LGBTQ+ survivors (ages 18+) who have experienced sexual assault, domestic violence or relationship abuse to receive support and empowerment.

Mondays 4:30pm-5:30pm at the LGBT Center of Greater Reading
640 Centre Ave. Reading, PA 19601



To sign up, please contact Victoria Simmons
VictoriaS@SafeBerks.org
484-651-9745

Join the Safe Berks Team!

Safe Berks is seeking several new staff members including: Staff Attorney, Internship & Program Facilitator, Residential Children's Advocate Assistant, Community Educator, and Crisis Counselor & Advocate. For more information or if you have any questions, email JoseB@SafeBerks.org or visit: SafeBerks.org/get-involved/job-opportunities/. Join us as we serve survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and provide resources that empower them to build safe and happy lives for themselves and their children. Join us as we work to prevent domestic and sexual violence. The free services provided by our staff truly save lives and positively impact lives and families. Help us build a Safe Berks!

Safe Berks Works with Police to Prevent Lethal Domestic Violence

Thanks to the Kutztown Borough Police Department and the Hamburg Police Department for inviting Safe Berks to co-facilitate Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) trainings for law enforcement professionals this Fall. Safe Berks works closely with local police departments to serve survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Marissa Pham, MA, Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)/Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)

Specialist at Safe Berks, offers free training to police departments on how to utilize the LAP program in intimate partner violence cases. This tool can help police identify situations where violence can quickly become lethal. This tool can save lives. For more info about LAP or to request training, contact Marissa at 610-373-1206 ext. 134 or MarissaP@SafeBerks.org.



Shown in photo from left, Sgt. Nicholas Epolito, Reading Police Department Criminal Investigations and co-facilitator of the training, Chief Craig Summers of Kutztown Borough Police Department, and Marissa Pham, MA, Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)/Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) Specialist at Safe Berks and co-facilitator of the training.



Safe Berks Partners with Easy Does It, Inc.

Safe Berks is honored to partner with Easy Does It, Inc., (EDI) Leesport. This nonprofit organization is dedicated to improving the quality of life of individuals recovering from the effects of substance use disorder. EDI offers Soberstock, an annual free music festival held each September, celebrating recovery. Shown in photo from left, at Soberstock, Melissa Egan, Admissions Coordinator at Easy Does It, and Kiki Garcia, Medical Advocacy Partnership Program (MAPP) & Rapid Response Advocate at Safe Berks.

Congrats to Winners of the Safe Berks Employee Spotlight Award!

These dedicated staff members were chosen by their co-workers. We honor them for going above and beyond the call of duty every day, truly displaying the Safe Berks values of Safety, Respect, Empowerment, Education, and Hope, and upholding our mission of relentless commitment to advocating, educating, and ending abuse. Thank you for your service!



Victoria Simmons

Victoria Simmons, Community Response Specialist, joined the Safe Berks staff in 2021, and she is always willing to pitch in her time and talents on projects. Her dedication, commitment to our mission, and work ethic have made a significant impact. One year ago, she was chosen to work with local colleges. She immediately hit the ground running and now has weekly office hours and is involved in events and trainings at many local college campuses. She is a strong advocate for survivors and has worked tirelessly to strengthen existing collaborations with community partners as well as create new ones.

Back to School Party in Safe House!



As students headed back to school, the children and teens at Safe Berks were treated to a festive Back to School Ice Cream Party! Special thanks to Turie Sotzin and Mid Penn Bank for donating the ice cream supplies. We also thank all the donors who helped provide new backpacks and school supplies for the children of Safe Berks, and Arianna Sanchez, Lead Residential Children's Advocate, who created this special event for the children.



Arianna Sanchez

Arianna Sanchez, Lead Residential Children's Advocate, joined the Safe Berks staff in 2015. She is dedicated to serving the hundreds of children who live in our Safe House each year. Arianna plans and coordinates activities, helps children develop literacy skills, and shares her artistic talents to provide a festive party in the Safe House each month. Arianna served in-person throughout the entire COVID-19 pandemic, and her position expanded when the Safe House needed to serve as a remote school during the quarantines. Arianna is a true hero to children and a fierce ally to both parents and children recovering from abuse.

Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation Team Up Fundraiser!



Safe Berks CEO Beth Garrigan and Lonnie Walker IV

We are thrilled to announce that Safe Berks and The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation are teaming up to offer an exciting new opportunity for you to meet Lonnie, a Los Angeles Laker, when he plays the Philadelphia 76ers on Dec. 9 in Philly! To purchase Raffle Tickets visit: www.SafeBerks.org/donate/LonnieTix/ The winner of this fun raffle will receive 2 tickets to the game including meet and greet passes, dinner for two at Cheers American Bistro with overnight accommodations and breakfast compliments of The DoubleTree by Hilton Reading, and car service to and from the game courtesy of Rhoads Limousine. We cannot thank Lonnie and these sponsors enough for their support! All proceeds will be split between Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation. Thanks to Daniel Muldrow, Manager of Facilities at Safe Berks, for

helping coordinate this new fundraiser. For more info or to purchase tickets, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or MindyM@SafeBerks.org. Lonnie, a true hometown hero and local basketball legend, led the Reading High School Red Knights to their first state championship in 2017, next played for the University of Miami, and then was drafted in 2018 to play in the NBA for the San Antonio Spurs, and is now continuing his amazing journey with the Los Angeles Lakers! In addition to his incredible athletic skills, Lonnie has a heart filled with kindness and empathy for others. He founded the Lonnie Walker IV Foundation to positively impact individuals and families by helping communities, including his hometown, Reading, PA. Thank you for everything you do Lonnie, we are cheering for you!

Safe Berks Seeking Holiday Gifts for Residents!

We are seeking the help of the community to fill up Santa's Workshop and make sure the residents of Safe Berks enjoy the spirit of the holidays! Our Holiday Wish List is posted on our website at: <https://safeberks.org/donate/donate-goods/>. Some of the new gifts we are requesting include:

- Toys, Dolls, Games, Puzzles, Art Kits
- Winter Coats, Hoodies, Sweatpants, Gloves, Hats, Shoes
- Towels, Sheets for Twin-Sized Beds, Pillows, Blankets
- Purses, Backpacks, Clothing, Luggage, Pajamas



Thanks to The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation for delivering holiday gifts to the residents of Safe Berks!

We ask that new, unwrapped gifts be delivered to Safe Berks, 255 Chestnut St., Reading, between Dec. 1 and Dec. 16, on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Any questions, or to participate in our "Sponsor a Family" holiday program, contact Francine Scoboria, Communications Coordinator, at 610-370-7812 or FrancineS@SafeBerks.org.



Thanks to Maddie Campbell, a senior at Wyomissing High School, for sharing her time and artistic gifts by designing this beautiful Celebration of Peace Ornament, which helps raise funds for Safe Berks, and our work providing free services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Cost is \$20, and 50% of all sales will be donated directly to Safe Berks. This beautiful ornament is made exclusively for The Baldwin Brass Center. This ornament will be available for sale at the Safe Berks Gift Wrapping Table located near center court in the Berkshire Mall from Dec. 1 to 24. It is also available for purchase online at www.baldwinbrasscenter.com, or visit The Baldwin Brass Center, 623 Penn Ave., West Reading. Any questions, or to purchase an ornament directly from Safe Berks, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or MindyM@SafeBerks.org.

Safe Berks Volunteers To Wrap Gifts at Berkshire Mall Dec. 1-24!

Need help wrapping those holiday gifts? Stop by the Safe Berks Gift Wrapping Table near center court in the Berkshire Mall and let our volunteers wrap your gifts! This service is available every day from December 1 through December 24. All donations help Safe Berks continue providing free services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. For more info, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or MindyM@SafeBerks.org. Thanks so much to all our dedicated volunteers and everyone who is supporting this fundraiser! Happy Holidays!



Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation Team Up Fundraiser!

To purchase Raffle Tickets visit:
www.SafeBerks.org/donate/LonnieTix/
 See Page 5 for more info!

Winner will receive:
 2 Tickets to see Lonnie & the Los Angeles Lakers play the Philadelphia 76ers in Philly Dec. 9; meet & greet passes; dinner for 2 at Cheers American Bistro; overnight stay & breakfast at The DoubleTree by Hilton Reading; & car service to & from the game courtesy of Rhoads Limousine!

All proceeds will be split between Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation!

For more info or to purchase tickets, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or MindyM@SafeBerks.org.

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The vision of Safe Berks is: Berks County is free from domestic violence and sexual assault.

- ▶ Crisis Services
- ▶ Residential Services
- ▶ Counseling
- ▶ Legal Services
- ▶ Community Outreach & Response
- ▶ Medical Advocacy
- ▶ Systems Advocacy
- ▶ Education & Outreach

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Gifts to Safe Berks

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

Safe Berks
 255 Chestnut Street
 Reading, PA 19602

www.SafeBerks.org
 P: 610.373.1206 | F: 610.372.4188
 Email: Peace@SafeBerks.org

Toll Free Hotline:
 844-789-SAFE (7233)
 Or Text SAFE BERKS to 20121



United Way of Berks County