

# SPEAK UP

MONTGOMERY COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTER

## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Supporting a victim of domestic and sexual violence requires intentional thought and behavior that promote empowerment. In the aftermath of abuse, survivors benefit from compassion and support in the ways listed below.



*Listen*

*Believe*

*Ask How You Can Help*

*Respect Boundaries*

*Empower!*

*Provide Resources*

*Provide Accompaniment*

*No Victim Blaming*

*Hold Abusers Accountable*

*Volunteer*

*"The true measure of a society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable persons." -Gandhi*

# SPEAK OUT

## Dear Friends,

It has been our privilege this year to provide services to survivors that empower them as they courageously embark on their journey of healing. We take great pride in providing compassionate care and utilizing best practices. The relentless epidemic of domestic and sexual violence continues to plague Montgomery and surrounding counties. This encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, including but not limited to sexual abuse of children, sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment, human trafficking and murder. Unlike most other crimes, interpersonal violence is usually not a sudden, isolated, and/or unexpected incident. Domestic and sexual violence have long been accepted as something that happens to victims, and is often swept under the rug. Cultural norms, religious practices, economic and political conditions set precedence that initiate and perpetuate violence against victims.

In October 2017, numerous women in Hollywood came forward with sexual abuse allegations against an influential film producer with the power to make or break careers. While stories about sexual abuse are not new, they hit a nerve with the current climate in the U.S coupled with stories about his victims. On October 15, 2017, actress Alyssa Milano invited people to use a #MeToo hashtag to show just how widespread sexual harassment and assault are in our country. Soon thereafter, millions of people used the #MeToo hashtag. Within a few days, Facebook reported that 45% of users in the U.S. had at least one friend who had posted #MeToo on their timeline. The Agency answered over 54,000 crisis hotline calls in 2018, a 62% increase in calls since 2016. We attribute this increase partially to the #MeToo movement. These numbers fall in line with other crisis call increases across the U.S. As it becomes more culturally appropriate to speak out against domestic and sexual violence, the Agency continues to see an increase in requests for services. During 2018, the Agency responded to 393 requests for medical accompaniment after a sexual assault.

Violence within the community violates a victim's ability to enjoy their basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Trauma-informed services are crucial to survivor restoration. This report highlights our commitment to excellence in service delivery and summarizes our key accomplishments during 2018.

*Sarah Raleigh*  
Sarah Raleigh, President/CEO

*Tom Cox*  
Tom Cox, Board Chairman

I will bring Light  
to the Shadows.

#SpeakUpSpeakOut




I Should Not  
Have to  
Hide.

#SpeakUpSpeakOut



I speak for those  
who don't have  
a voice.

#SpeakUpSpeakOut



# PROGRAMS-BY THE NUMBERS

## **Hotline**

### **54,005 Crisis Calls**

Hotlines are a lifeline for victims. We answer our confidential crisis hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Often this is the first point of contact for victims seeking crisis intervention, safety planning, emergency shelter, information and resources.

## **Emergency Shelter**

### **1,627 Housed**

The Shelter provides a safe, secure and confidential refuge. Victims are empowered from crisis to confidence by addressing their diverse needs. We strive to make their transition as seamless as possible by providing crisis intervention, safety planning, case management, life-skills classes, financial literacy, individual and group counseling.

## **Advocacy: 798**

### **Accompaniments: 393**

Advocates serve as an indispensable resource and an agent of hope when they accompany survivors to forensic exams, law enforcement, and court of social service hearings. Advocacy and other supportive services provide empowerment through information, validation and encouragement.

## **Counseling**

### **1,290 Victims**

Our counselors utilize a strengths-based approach to enable victims to find the courage to reclaim a sense of control while maintaining their dignity.

Survivors benefit from compassion and support as they heal and rebuild their lives.

## **Transitional Housing:**

### **25 Families**

Transitional housing is a short-term investment in a long-term strategy for independent living. The primary outcome of this program is for residents to become financially stable and live a violence-free life.

## **Legal**

### **1,516 Served**

Legal resources provide both safety and economic justice to survivors through appropriate legal representation within the judicial system. Our State Bar-licensed attorneys provide free legal consultation and representation to survivors of family and/or sexual violence.

## **Outreach**

### **59,663 Educated**

Education is vital to ending violence in our community. Our Community Outreach program begins the difficult conversation about family and sexual violence and provides tools and strategies to start the process of changing attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that contribute to violence.

## **Volunteers: 1,811**

### **Volunteer Hours: 36,610**

We cannot accomplish our mission and operate our agency without the help of our dedicated volunteers. They are essential to breaking the silence.

Volunteers enable us to build organizational strength and extend our resources.

# 24 HR CRISIS HOTLINE (936) 441-4044

## OUR MISSION

At the Montgomery County Women's Center, the mission is to lead the effort in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault through Crisis Intervention, Assistance, Advocacy, and Social Change.

## OUR VISION

We envision a healthier society free from violence and oppression—a future where all individuals are given the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential.

*Not All  
Wounds are  
Visible*



## OUR RESPONSE

An effective response to violence must be multi-sectoral, address immediate practical needs of those experiencing abuse, and focus on changing attitudes and beliefs that promote the acceptance of and even encourage violence, and undermine survivors' enjoyment of their full human rights and freedoms. In order to achieve a multi-sectoral response, the Agency has a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team that is tasked with conducting ongoing program evaluation. The CQI Team's mission goes far beyond quality assurance by identifying system-related gaps in services and any potential barriers to those services.

Be it a Whisper  
or a Roar  
I will NOT be  
Silenced Anymore.



#SpeakUpSpeakOut

MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
**Women's Center**



Conroe Office  
1401 Airport Road  
Conroe, TX 77301  
(936) 441-4044

The Woodlands Office  
1600 Lake Front Circle  
The Woodlands, TX 77380  
(936) 441-4044

Something Special  
19073 I-45 South  
Shenandoah, TX  
(936) 441-SHOP