



PEACEWATCH

Center for Domestic Peace Newsletter • Fall 2023

Dear Supporters,

In case you missed the announcement this past June, Donna Garske is stepping down as Center for Domestic Peace's executive director in February 2024 after serving for 44 years. Her thoughtful departure comes at a time when she can joyfully exit, knowing the foundational work of the organization has contributed significantly to the international efforts to end domestic violence.

Donna began her career at C4DP as a volunteer coordinator in 1977, quickly advanced to executive director, and has since played a vital role in the organization's growth. Her insights and relentless pursuit of a safer society have enabled the organization to secure critical resources, develop innovative programs, and foster partnerships that make a lasting impact.

In this edition of PeaceWatch, we share the monumental milestones and achievements of the organization over the past 45 years guided by Donna's strategic leadership. On behalf of the board and all who have been touched by Donna's contributions, we're grateful for her unwavering commitment and tireless advocacy.

As the board of directors, we are confident in the process we have in place to recruit the next executive director. We've assembled a search team and hired an experienced firm to assist with selecting the next leader.

Additionally, the board created a transition task force comprised of board members, C4DP's deputy executive director, and other staff. The Task Force will ensure that the transition process from now through onboarding a new executive director is thoughtfully carried out, supports our new leader, helps advance inclusion, and maximizes the positive impact that this transition can bring to our staff, community, and service users. We look forward to our continued work in eliminating domestic violence.

There will be a celebration for Donna in the future, so please watch for that information. I hope you'll join us in honoring Donna for her 44 years of service, vision, and compassion – a legacy that will continue to benefit countless communities well into the future.

Onward toward domestic peace,



Cynthia Murray
Board Chair

Dear Supporters,

It only took 11 words to change the direction of my life. It happened when I first learned about Marin Abused Women's Services (MAWS), the name Center for Domestic Peace was founded under in 1977. A small group of women in Marin had organized to say no to violence, and from that place of clarity the organization was birthed. MAWS was only a few years old, but I was impressed that its mission statement to provide life-saving services to battered women had already expanded to include a commitment to "catalyze and contribute to the community effort to end the violence." As an emerging young leader, those words inspired me to join a community effort to dismantle the belief systems and practices that perpetuated and ignored violence against women. I was inspired to get ahead of the wave of women's victimization from violence by generating practical and far-reaching solutions to end this historical social problem.



My 44-year tenure with C4DP has given me a long-term perspective on our work. Looking back at key decisions we've made, I've reflected on the strategies C4DP has built on over time. Has our evolving feminist analysis on gender violence held up over time, producing tangible results for survivors and their children and for those who abuse? Did building C4DP from a public health prevention approach – which addresses problems before they begin, early when they first start, and after the fact – generate declining rates of domestic violence? Did our strategic focus to build community ownership to address the causes and solutions for domestic violence bring more people to the table? Have our culturally and linguistically specific strategies increased access for people from marginalized communities? Did our decision to integrate social movement building into the fabric of our work expand the base of those who care about this issue?

It takes one look at the "45 Year Milestone" article included in this edition to see that the answer is "YES" across the board. While holding down Marin's 24/7 direct service response to domestic violence, we have also advanced strategically toward the goal of those 11 words – "catalyzing and contributing to the community effort to end the violence," which has contributed to a 55% decline in domestic violence calls to law enforcement and a 31% decrease in requests for emergency shelter.

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Since announcing I am stepping down as Executive Director Feb 1, 2024, I've experienced a powerful sense of completion about my work at C4DP. Given the opportunity I was given by the board and staff who hired me 44 years ago, I can't wait to see what the next executive director will bring that will build on our strengths going forward. Our future presents endless possibilities for us to progress toward even greater impacts. Required is thoughtful, steady, insightful, dedicated, and strategic leadership. Thankfully, C4DP is endowed with this caliber of leadership at all levels throughout the organization.

Thanks to our generous donors, giving volunteers, committed and talented staff, engaged community partners, and effective board, C4DP stands at the pinnacle of success resulting from our thoughtfulness and collective efforts.

In closing, I celebrate all of you for making C4DP what it is. May we all continue to let joy in as we carry C4DP's work forward. In the words of Valerie Kaur, founder of the Revolutionary Love Project, "In the struggle to protect our loved ones, choosing to let joy in is a revolutionary act. It gives us energy... If we do this right, they [our ancestors] will inherit not our fear, but bravery born of joy."

This is the legacy we are building for ourselves and the next generation. Who we are now will reflect to C4DP's future leaders in years to come. May they know us as courageous souls who worked tirelessly and joyfully to create a world imbued with domestic peace.

Blessings to all,

Donna Garske
Executive Director

45

YEARS

of Achievements & Impact

VISION. ST

1977-1986

In 1976, Marin's National Organization for Women (NOW) conducted an investigation into domestic violence, revealing Marin police departments had no records of such incidents. As a response, NOW established **Marin Abused Women's Services (MAWS)** as a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit and launched a 24-hour hotline, which received 268 calls in its first year. Short-term emergency housing was coordinated through private homes and the Marin Housing Center.

1977 Opened inaugural shelter for abused women and their children. One year later, purchased a facility with a grant from HUD.

1980 Secured office space in central San Rafael. By 1983, personnel totaled 10 full-time and five part-time positions.



1980 Began ManKind, one of the nation's first men's programs to educate men to stop their violent behavior and activated a men's hotline to deter men from engaging in violence.

1983 Purchased a 10-unit complex to establish one of the nation's first transitional housing complexes for battered women and their children, called **Second Step**.

1985 Received funding from the CA Office of Criminal Justice to develop a curriculum called "Relationship Abuse Prevention Program" and to create a video, "When Love Hurts." Both were one of the first in the nation to address the prevention of dating abuse for high school students.

1985 Received national television and radio coverage on ManKind, also highlighted in a BBC documentary.

1987-1997

Began to work with national domestic violence organizations to draft legislation to protect the rights of abused women and their children.

1992 **Transforming Communities: Creating Safety and Justice for Women and Girls** was founded to end domestic violence through community prevention programs.

1994 Received \$100,000 worth of pro bono services to create an educational video, "Beyond Awareness to Action: Ending Abuse."

1994 Coauthored AB226, which established statewide standards for batterer intervention programs and helped pass the **Federal Violence Against Women Act**.

1996 Received **Special Achievement Innovations Award** sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Branch of the CA Department of Health Services for Second Step.

1997 Created the **Community Oriented Policing Services Project (COPS)** in partnership with the Marin County Sheriff's Office to implement a more coordinated criminal justice response to batterers.

1997 Received **National Marshall Award** for Excellence in Violence Prevention.

1997 Selected by CA Department of Health Services to establish **Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training, and Resource Center (TC-TAT)**, a statewide technical assistance and training network to foster community prevention.

1998-2007

By 1998, MAWS employed more than 25 people with an operating budget close to \$1.9 million. 5,000 women, children, and men were served annually, plus thousands more through community work.

1999 Secured funding through the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), from the Grants to Encourage Arrest Program, to initiate the **Women's Community Advocacy Project (WCAP)** in partnership with the Marin County District Attorney.

2000-2001 Purchased and renovated the 16,000 sq. ft. A Street location in San Rafael, which was inaugurated as the **Center for Safety, Justice and Equality** in January of 2002 and rents space to other like-minded organizations.

2001 Launched **WomanKind**, a 52-week educational program certified by Marin County Probation for women to learn to stop their violence.

2000-2003 Developed, test-piloted, and launched the Healthy and Equal Relating curriculum, resulting in 78% of teen participants doing something new to address verbal and/or physical abuse.

2002 TC-TAT trainings expanded nationally with federal funding.



2003 Established an additional 10 units of transitional housing, doubling Second Step's capacity.

2003 Gained national attention as the recipient of the **Mary Byron Foundation's Celebrating Solutions Award**, honored for the ManKind Program and its work addressing the root cause of domestic violence.

2005 Cofounded and cochaired the **Respect for All Collaborative (RAC)** in Marin County middle schools, focused on anti-bullying and violence prevention strategies and programs.

2005 Formed **Athletes as Allies**, with the National Football League Players Association, to train high school coaches and athletes in our Healthy and Equal Relating curriculum.

2005 ManKind statistics show that 77% of our graduates on probation do not get re-arrested for domestic violence 4 years after graduation. These are some of the best statistics in the country for Batterer's Intervention Programs.



2005 In a two-year span, TC-TAT provided training and support to over 1,000 faith leaders and prevention advocates statewide, conducted trainings and technical assistance to 14 domestic violence state coalitions, and reached over 200 people in 8 trainings statewide through the **Preventing Violence Against Women with Disabilities** project.

STRATEGY. SUCCESS.

2008-2017



2008 After MAWS' 30th Anniversary celebration, the organization furthered its goal to increase community engagement to end domestic violence.

2009 Received a three-year Recovery Act grant for Second Step to increase economic empowerment for transitional housing participants.

2010 Adopted a new name, **Center for Domestic Peace (C4DP)**, to better reflect the depth and breadth of the organization as a whole.

2010 Spearheaded formation of the 19-member **Bay Area Domestic Violence Shelter Collaboration** to have a larger regional impact. In 2015, the Collaboration received **Revolutionary Advocate Award** from the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence.

2011 C4DP and HYP (Huckleberry Youth Programs) established **Marin Youth Services** with 3 years of OVW funding, providing holistic intervention/prevention services for 13- to 24-year-olds affected by dating/domestic violence – featuring a hotline, school advisory committees, and anti-dating abuse campaigns.

2012 Launched a Facebook app and outreach campaign, **"DV. It's Not OK,"** to promote healthy relationships and engage the community in committing to the **Individual Peace Agreement** pledge.

2013 C4DP and the District Attorney's Office celebrated 15 years of living up to the promise of a **Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to Domestic Violence**, in partnership with government, criminal justice system, and institutional partners. The CCR produced more than 40 changes and additions in policies and responses to domestic violence in Marin County.

Completed the first phase of the shelter rehabilitation and upgrade project, making it a welcoming, ADA-compliant home with 20 beds.

2014 Received **Marin Democratic Party's Alex Forman Peace Award**. While the award is usually given to honorees outspoken against foreign wars, C4DP was selected because peace among nations requires starting with the environment surrounding children and families.

2014 Launched the **Children and Youth Division**. C4DP was one of 9 to receive funding from OVW to develop services for children exposed to domestic violence and created **In This Together**, a group therapy program that served 154 women and children in the first year.

2015 Received the **Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership's Heart of Marin Award** for Excellence in Nonprofit Leadership.

2015 Began final phase of the shelter upgrade project, converting office space into 10 additional beds and building a separate office. In 2017, the shelter grew to 30 beds, increasing bed space by almost 50% over 5 years.

2016 Expanded the numbers reached annually through training and outreach by 31% to more than 14,000 individuals in Marin.

2018-2022

By 2018, our long-standing strategic priority to increase equity and access for marginalized communities including adults and youth of color, LGBTQI+, non-English speakers, those geographically isolated, and older adults resulted in documented increased access for these populations.

2018 Created a Southern Marin Community Engagement Liaison in Marin City to increase C4DP presence in the Black community and to ensure Black survivors have access to culturally responsive services.

2018 Created **Champion Men's Zone (CMZ)** to reach young men and boys, with focus on Black and Latinx populations. In 2022, 74 sessions on healthy masculinity provided to 33 young men. In total, 80 youth participated in activism.

2019 Voces de Cambio, a group of volunteer survivors, received the 2019 **Leaders of the North Bay Award** for their outreach to underserved, underrepresented communities.

2020 COVID-19 challenged C4DP to pivot to remote services while responding to escalating domestic violence during the pandemic. Remote services provide an unexpected benefit to survivors, making services and DVROs (Domestic Violence Restraining Order) more accessible.

2020 Voces de Cambio donated nearly 450 volunteer hours to launch *Tu Voz, Mi Voz*, a bilingual video campaign to increase outreach to victims during COVID. By the end of 2022, these videos were viewed 3,287 times in over 18 countries.

2020 Voces de Cambio receives **California Partnership to End Domestic Violence's Equity Award**

2021 Launched strategic effort to increase visibility and access for those experiencing domestic violence in geographically isolated locations, including West Marin.

2021 Awarded a multi-year national demonstration grant from the Administration for Child and Families to evaluate the success of **In This Together (ITT)**. Hired Dominican University's Global Public Health Department to evaluate the program. In 2022, 238 parents and 359 children received ITT and other services from C4DP's Children, Youth, and Community Prevention Department.

2021 Received the **Readers' Choice Award** for Best Nonprofit in Marin from the *Pacific Sun* Newspaper.

2022 Translated 104 pages of C4DP's English website into Spanish, launching one of the only culturally relevant and accurately translated domestic violence services websites. More than 2,600 pageviews occurred in the first five months.

2022 Voces de Cambio volunteers receive **Champions for Safety Award** at the Immigrant Heritage Marin award ceremony in San Rafael.

2022: Voted **Best of Marin: Gala/Fundraiser** by *Marin Magazine* readers.

2022



Retained a renowned criminologist to study the past 9 years of domestic violence related calls to law enforcement in Marin, revealing a **55% decrease**, which is statistically relevant, as this trend was not seen elsewhere in California. A correlation can be made to C4DP's partnership with law enforcement and the development of the Pocket Card, a simple tool used for uniform response to domestic violence calls.

2022 Assisted more than **240,000 women, children and men** impacted by domestic violence since its founding in 1977. The 24/7 English/ Spanish hotline receives more than 8,000 calls annually. The annual organizational budget has grown to more than \$5M with a staff of 47.

Answering the Call: C4DP's 24/7 Hotline

In 1976, founding members of what was then Marin Abused Women's Services gathered in Kay Tsenin's living room. Frustrated by the violence and associated shame they witnessed in women around the county, they launched the first domestic violence hotline in Marin. Finally there was someone to listen to survivors and offer the help and support they desperately needed. Back then, domestic violence was considered a family matter, not a crime.

Running uninterrupted for more than 46 years, Center for Domestic Peace's 24/7 English/Spanish hotline is the first point of access for anyone to connect with our services. In 2019, C4DP merged the separate English and Spanish hotlines into one, hiring full-time bilingual advocates to answer the 8,000 plus calls a year we receive.

Whether callers are in immediate danger or looking for referrals, our compassionate advocates are here to help with a survivor-led philosophy. Hotline advocates assist a survivor without judgement, no matter what stage in the relationship a caller is in. This includes wanting to stay, thinking about leaving, in the process of leaving, or having already left the relationship. The hotline offers lethality risk assessments, safety planning, referrals and appointments for legal services, screening for entry to the shelter or our Second Step transitional housing, and connections to therapy, support groups, and/or our rental assistance program.

Another frequent call to the hotline is from the law enforcement partners we have collaborated with in refining their response to domestic violence related calls for more than a decade. Minimizing

their protocol to a single tool, the Pocket Card instructs officers in different jurisdictions to respond in a unified way and to make a rapid connection to our hotline at the scene. This way survivors receive immediate assistance and learn about their options for safety.

The significance of connecting to our hotline early can be seen in the numbers. In C4DP's Impact Survey conducted with 98 survivors whom we assisted in a prior year, 94% reported not being physically hurt by an intimate partner in the last year.

We are ready to answer your call, 24/7 @ 415-924-6616

Meet the Advocates



Nancy Cifuentes



Laurel Freeman



Natalie Gonzalez



Ivonne Palma Hutt



Maria Lopez



Tiffany Nemo



Elizabeth Ortiz



Metzli Sanchez

Empowerment through Support Groups

Support groups are the cornerstone of the feminist movement, sustaining their significance since the 1970s. They offer a safe place for women to come together in community with each other, destroying one of the root tactics of abusers – isolation. There is a special power in women helping women, who may have different experiences but share a passion for healing. Support groups are key for many survivors in their journey to heal.

Moved to Zoom as a result of COVID-19, C4DP's support groups continue online. We have learned this is a great equalizer, providing greater accessibility and removing barriers such as location, transportation, and childcare.

C4DP support groups are offered twice a week on Tuesdays (English 4-5 pm and Spanish 5-6 pm) and Thursdays 5-6 pm, and open to all regardless of gender. On average, 5-10 participants attend per session. Skilled advocates who are ethnically diverse with a wide range of experience facilitate the groups with different styles. Groups are free and open to all survivors, with no time commitment required. Some come once or twice; some

come back time and time again, even showing up years later to refresh and revisit something they want to work on or process.

Our philosophy for leading the groups is survivor centered with a psycho-educational framework used to guide the discussions. We begin each session with a mindful moment to bring everyone present into the space for grounding and clarity. The topic rotates each week, with 6 topics created intentionally to be both broad and narrow so everyone can see themselves reflected. The brilliance is in the design of the program. Participants guide and support each other, validating their own story with shared experiences and finding their own pathway to heal. The 6 topics include: the definition of domestic violence and how it appears in our relationships; the impact of domestic violence on health and wellness; exploring how domestic violence impacts children; developing healthy boundaries and recognizing change; learning about the abuser-controlled relationship; and safety planning.

If you are interested in joining a support group, please call our English/Spanish speaking case manager @ 415-526-2553.

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CENTER FOR DOMESTIC PEACE
Working Together to End Domestic Violence

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OCTOBER

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

One Sip Closer to Ending Domestic Violence

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, C4DP's coffee sleeve campaign connects to our community through Marin's love for coffee and tea. Our goal is to spark hot conversations about domestic violence while also showing support for anyone in an unhealthy relationship to get help. Resources are printed on the sleeves for bystanders, those experiencing domestic violence, and those who are harming others. Help raise awareness about domestic violence in Marin by stopping by one of our participating shops in October. **Visit our website for the complete list www.c4dp.org/dvam**

Free Seminar with Wells Fargo Bank

A Planned Giving Conversation - What's the legacy you want to leave in this world?

October 17, 10-11:30 AM

Wells Fargo Bank, 770 Tamalpais Drive Suite 220, Corte Madera

A free workshop presented by Center for Domestic Peace and Wells Fargo Bank that will give you a comprehensive understanding of your options for planned giving. **Call 415-526-2543 to reserve your spot.**

Free Webinar with Marin County District Attorney

Abuse is Not Always Physical

October 25 or November 15, 6-7:00 PM • Online

Join C4DP and Marin County DA's Office for this free informational webinar on the different types of abuse. Learn what to do if you or someone you know may be in an abusive relationship. **www.marincountyda.org/stopabuse**

Annual Dia de los Muertos, Day of the Dead

October 28, 12-1:00 PM • 734 A Street, San Rafael

Hosted by C4DP, the children of C4DP staff, and Voces de Cambio (Voices of Change, a volunteer activist group of former service users), our annual event will be held in person and include a special memorial and reading of the names of those in the Bay Area killed by domestic violence.

For more information visit www.c4dp.org/dvam