

# MIDDLE WAY HOUSE

PROVIDING MEANINGFUL ALTERNATIVES TO LIVING WITH VIOLENCE



## FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS

The past two years have been a time of transition for Middle Way House. During this period, our newsletter took a hiatus. This issue marks its revival and future issues will be released quarterly.

We hope these articles offer a glimpse into our day-to-day activities as we work towards our mission of ending violence. When we interact with the community and ask individuals what they know about Middle Way House, their typical response is that we are a domestic violence shelter. While we absolutely do provide emergency shelter, we also provide a 24/7 crisis line, on-scene advocacy for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking; support groups; transitional and permanent housing; legal advocacy; and educational and prevention programs. It is not necessary that an individual be a resident in our shelter or transitional housing programs to access most of these services.

As we resume publishing at regular intervals, we'd love to receive your feedback. Did you particularly enjoy one of the features or do you have suggestions for future columns? Is there an area of our work you'd like to better understand? Want to learn more about current issues, policies, or legislation that impact our work and/or the individuals we serve? Let us know! Reach out via email, [communications@middlewayhouse.org](mailto:communications@middlewayhouse.org) or by phone 812.333.7404.

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR: DEBRA A. MORROW

Dear Friends,

October marked the 30th anniversary of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Middle Way House honored the occasion with the opening of our Wrapped in Love public art display of tree wraps. The community supported our work and this project with more than twenty tree sponsors and a team of nearly thirty fabric artists. Despite the arrival of chilly weather, the constant support we've received warms the heart of our organization and allows us to wrap the individuals we serve in love. If you haven't already, I hope you will take some time to view these beautiful tree wraps while you are out and about. Perhaps you might even consider speaking for a tree (read on for more information)!

Included in these pages are updates from many of our programs. We could not do this work without the support of so many devoted individuals. I am so appreciative of our committed staff and supporters, including our volunteers. As you read through the newsletter, you will have the opportunity to 'meet' Peg Smith. Peg represents just one of a force of more than 300 volunteers who generously contribute their time and talents to support the work we do to serve survivors.

MIDDLE WAY HOUSE

Recent headlines have been dominated by stories related to domestic violence. One of these incidents took place locally in Owen County, an area in which Middle Way House has an outreach office, and the other several states away in Texas. For those of us in the trenches of this work, both incidents hit far too close to home. They serve as stark reminders that despite significant progress over the last 30 years, we still have much work to do. We all have a role to play and I am counting on each and every one of you to help us make this a reality. How will **you** be a part of the solution?

Collaborating with community partners is a critical step in working toward solutions. Recently I teamed-up with Monroe County Prosecutor, Chris Gaal, to offer a multi-disciplinary training on best practices for responding to strangulation. Research shows that an attempted strangulation significantly increases the risk of homicide in domestic violence cases. It is critical for those likely to come into contact with survivors to properly recognize and respond to these incidents. In the months that follow, Chris and I plan to continue working together in order to encourage community-wide implementation of these best practices.

Middle Way has participated in another vital collaboration, the Protective Order Assistance Partnership (POAP), since 2011. POAP provides free assistance and support to survivors of seeking safety through civil orders of protection. Check out the full article to learn more about our involvement with POAP.

On behalf of all of us, we are incredibly appreciative of your support for the important services we provide, just a few of which are highlighted in this newsletter. If you want to learn more, please feel free to contact us.

*Debra*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: PEG SMITH

We always enjoy the opportunity to highlight the contributions of the incredible individuals who dedicate their time and talents to Middle Way House. There is no doubt that it would be impossible to provide the kind of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year support and services we do without the dedication of our volunteer force. While there are many positive things we could share with you about Peg, we thought you might enjoy learning about the experience of volunteering with Middle Way House through her own unique perspective. With that, please meet Peg:

Starting a new chapter in life can be very daunting, but it can also be filled of excitement and discovery. When my husband retired from his job of 33 years, we decided to begin again in Bloomington. With every move comes the anxiety of making new friends and finding a purposeful job that can make an impact on society. While researching Bloomington and what it has to offer, I discovered a community that was filled with non-profits that served the town in a variety of ways. With degrees in elementary education and educational counseling, I sought out non-profits that served children.

I came upon Middle Way House, and read about their Building Healthy Relationships program. In Toby's mission was written a desire to expand the program to the elementary grades. I wasn't sure exactly what the Building Healthy Relationships (BHR) curriculum involved, but I was very intrigued and signed up to volunteer, went through training, and became an OSA for Myke Luurtsema and Sam Harrell. For a school year, I went with Myke and Sam to almost all the middle and high schools in Monroe County. I also was able to visit Shoals and Loogootee schools.

What I witnessed in every single school was the dire need for information that was provided by the BHR curriculum.



With lessons on Stereotyping, Boundaries, Rape Culture, and how to identify what a healthy relationship really entails, I saw students learning how to find and use their voices for the first time. At the end of every lesson, Myke and Sam would tell the students that if they wanted to ask a question to simply write it on a piece of paper (always anonymously) and it will be answered the next day. These questions were what gave me my biggest reality check. From questions about identifying gender, to "I've been raped. What do I do?" the students needed to know the answers. Myke and Sam always answered these questions in a thoughtful, and non-threatening way. They helped the students find resources in the community, always noting that MWH can be the first call for help. Myke and Sam are both patient and smart teachers. They are both a fantastic face for Middle Way House.

While I was observing for a year, I started pulling together a curriculum (continued on following page)...

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT (CONTINUED)

...for elementary students that would be a prelude to the lessons in seventh grade and high school. Researching what other schools around the country are doing at the elementary level to build healthy relationships, I came up with a few lessons that coincided nicely with the Middle Way House mission. The lessons build on one another and strive to teach students to:

- Explore similarities and differences in classmates, while accepting who we are and appreciating our differences
- Break through stereotypes
- Learn how to be empathetic and compassionate
- Discover how to communicate in an assertive way
- Set boundaries and learn about appropriate touches
- Identify the safe people in their lives.

While the elementary schools have lessons about bullying, I feel these lessons about relationships need to come first. Treating fellow classmates with understanding and kindness is always the way to defeat bullying and domestic violence.

Overall, my experiences with Middle Way House have taught me so much more than I anticipated. Working with such passionate and compassionate individuals has been contagious, and energizing. Debra's leadership has been progressive and encouraging. For the BHR program, the goal is to educate students so as to make domestic violence non-existent. Seeing the individuals that are influenced by this program only stokes the fire to keeping it alive and hopefully growing into teaching all grade levels the importance of Building Healthy Relationships.



## VOLUNTEER WITH MWH!

**If Peg's story inspired you, sign up to volunteer!**

Help us end violence in our community by volunteering. You can make a difference by volunteering as little as 1.5 hours/ week. There are numerous opportunities available at our Bloomington locations and for our outreach offices in Greene, Martin, and Owen counties. All those interested in volunteering must participate in an orientation and training session.

**Our next training is scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd from 9 AM-5 PM** at the downtown Bloomington Transit Center (corner of 3rd and Walnut Streets). Pre-registration is not required, but we do ask that you visit the website, complete the volunteer application and bring it with you to the training.

### **2018 Tentative Training Dates:**

January 15th and 20th  
 April 14th  
 June 9th  
 September 8th and 15th  
 December 1st

All dates listed, with the exception of 1/15/18 (MLK Day) are Saturdays.



## PROGRAM/STAFF UPDATES: PREVENTION

It has been a busy fall for Middle Way's Prevention team! They have provided our Building Healthy Relationships curriculum to 5th and 6th graders at Harmony School, 7th and 8th graders at Tri-North Middle School, and 10th graders at Edgewood High School, Bloomington High School North, and Harmony School. Prevention has also launched a 6-week curriculum on communication and conflict resolution to male-identifying students at Edgewood Middle School.

In the broader community, the prevention team has also provided healthy relationship programming to residents of the Youth Services Bureau Binkley House, Stepping Stones, and the College Internship Program. They have organized a variety of workshops, including a consent workshop for children and caregivers at Bloomington PRIDE, a bystander intervention workshop for DJs (in collaboration with the Bloomington DJ Alliance and Indiana University), and an "Action Hour" at All Options on reproductive justice, survivorship, and incarceration. In October, the prevention team launched their monthly Letter Writing Night to incarcerated survivors (photographed above) in collaboration with All Options Pregnancy Resource Center, Bloomington PRIDE, Midwest Pages to Prisoners and New Leaf New Life.

For our campus community, the team also brought prevention and awareness presentations to IU classes

in the School of Social Work and the School of Public Health. Other presentations included the topic of consent and structural sexual violence, alongside Community Outreach Coordinator Evelyn Smith, at the Indiana Coalition to End Sexual Assault Campus Consortium.

## CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES

Earlier this month, our Crisis Intervention Services Coordinators, Katelyn Lipa & Pamela Sojka attended the Indiana Coalition to End Sexual Assault's (ICESA) inaugural Core 40 Sexual Assault Advocate Training. The training provides advocates with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide responsive and effective advocacy to sexual assault survivors. Core 40 training is also a necessary requirement for agencies to obtain and retain their rape crisis center designation. Participation supports Katelyn and Pamela's work to continue to strengthen our services to survivors of sexual assault.

Middle Way House offers a regularly scheduled and well-attended support group to individuals who have experienced sexual violence of any kind. The group is ongoing and survivors may request to join at any time. While the group is facilitated by two crisis intervention staff, topics and focus areas are led by the participants' needs and desires.

On Scene Advocates are available 24-hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year, over the phone (812.336.0846) and in person to listen, help make connections to community resources, develop safety plans and provide individuals with information about their options.

## CHILDCARE & YOUTH PROGRAMS:

In October, both classrooms at our **Rise and Shine Childcare** went through their annual Paths to Quality renewal rating. Paths to Quality is a quality rating and improvement program that assesses the level of care within a childcare program. We are pleased to report that both classrooms will retain their Level 3 designation for the next year.

In December, we are expecting a visit from the National Association for Family Child Care to determine whether the Butterfly room (preschool classroom for ages 2 and up) will become nationally accredited. If accreditation is received, the Butterfly room will quickly move up to level 4, which is the highest rating for childcare in Indiana. For more information about Paths to QUALITY, please visit: <http://www.childcareindiana.org>.



The **Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Program** exists to intervene in the cycle of violence in the lives of children, ages 3-18, who live or have lived at Middle Way House or the RISE. All youth come from backgrounds of homelessness, poverty, and abuse. YES strives to provide the children we serve with a safe and nurturing environment, new and enriching experiences, academic support, and emotionally supportive role models within a health-focused environment. From February-August 2017, YES served a total of 153 youth. Participants also take part in various activities throughout the local and surrounding communities.

For example, on October 21st YES youth participated in the IU Science Fest. Programming included all-

day activities with demonstrations, tours, and talks such as a physics demo, electric fish, a greenhouse tour, and many other activities. The youth especially loved all of the programs involving animals and insects!

In September, three youth participated in the NXG Youth Motorsport Academy, a go-carting program that meets educational criteria for STEM programming. Youth with no prior driving experience are able to learn the basic fundamentals of driving. Additionally, the program exposes youth to the motor sports industry and a full spectrum of the various career opportunities related to this field.

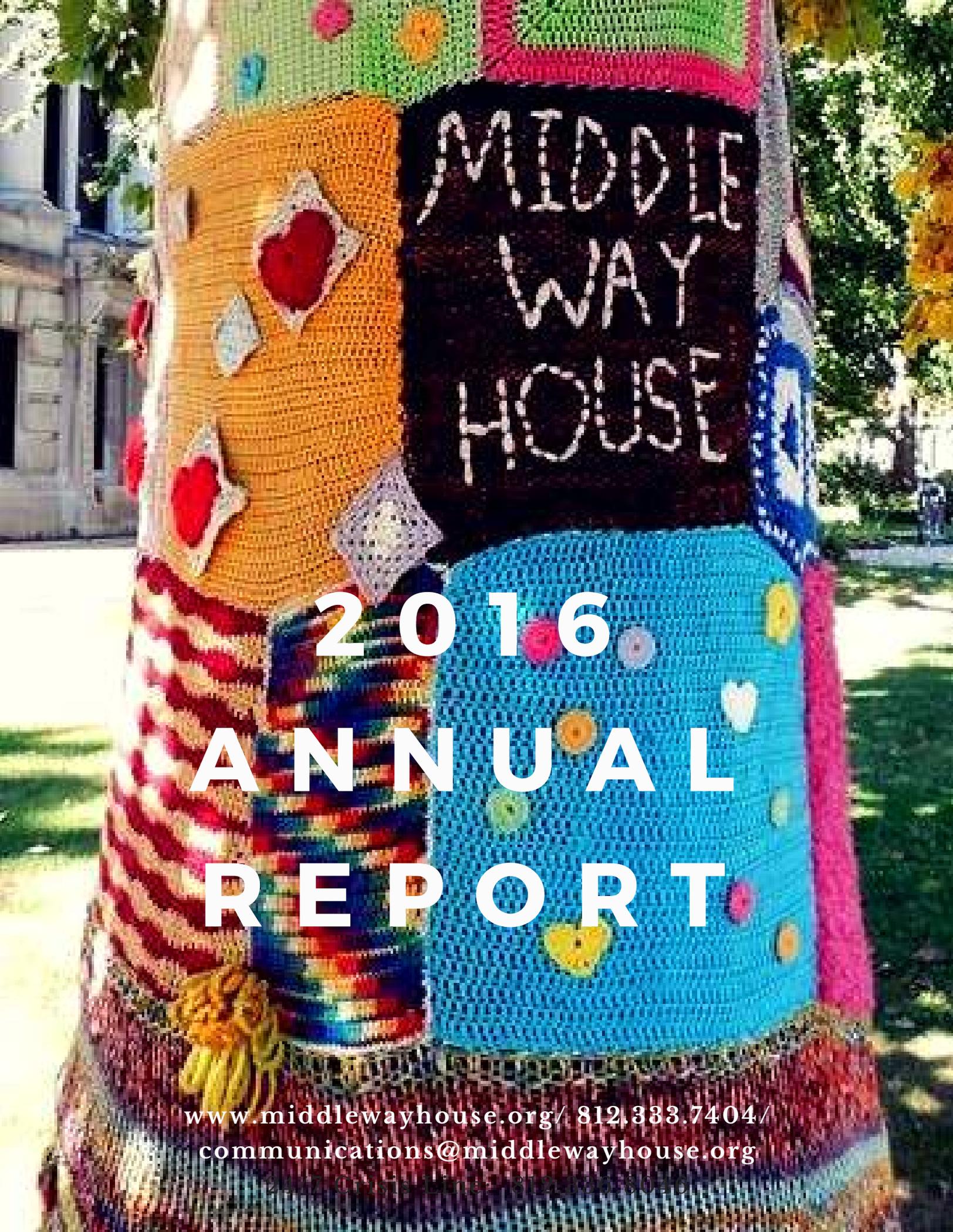


## UPCOMING CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

### **Evelyn Smith, Community Outreach Coordinator**

On November 11-12 MWH's Evelyn Smith, presented at the annual North American Students of Cooperation Conference, a national gathering of members of housing and worker-owned cooperatives in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She hosted two workshops, including an introduction to sexual violence prevention for co-op officers and leaders and a session on non-carceral accountability processes co-ops can use to address perpetrators of harm.

In January 2018, Evelyn plans to present at the Creating Change Conference, a national gathering of more than 3,000 LGBTQ+ political activists and community organizers in Washington, DC. She will be presenting twice on principles of sexual violence prevention for multiply-marginalized communities.



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2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

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# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2016 was a year marked by opportunities, celebrations, and challenges. In October, the Middle Way House family came together to honor the retirement of Toby Strout, our executive director of 30 years. In February of 2017, the entire community came together to honor Toby's life of passionate service and tireless advocacy for survivors. I am forever grateful to Toby for building an organization that helped me realize my full potential, and to the board, for selecting me in January of 2017 to lead this vital organization.

A lack of access to safe, affordable housing is often a significant barrier for survivors and is a critical factor to achieving long-term safety. As such, one of the most significant challenges we faced in 2016 took place when the Department of Housing & Urban Development de-funded transitional housing programs across the country, during which Middle Way House suffered a loss of \$174,000. Thankfully, our staff and community rose to the occasion to secure alternative funding from grants and donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations.

Because of this support the RISE!, a proven success, survived and continued to provide transitional housing to 100 women and children last year. Due to my own experiences, I am incredibly passionate about our transitional housing program. I feel confident that through our community's ongoing support we will be able to continue to address this crucial need for safe and affordable housing through the RISE.



Middle Way House served six counties and our emergency shelter provided 7,000 nights of safety to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. In a year's worth of data collected from resident's exit surveys, nearly 90 percent of emergency shelter clients indicated they were exiting to safe housing.

We could not accomplish this work without the support of our dedicated staff, amazing volunteer force of over 300 individuals, and the support of this wonderful community.

This report contains just a sampling of moments and information about the services we offer. If you want to learn more, we are just a call or email away.

On behalf of all of us at Middle Way House, thank you for your support!

Debra

# 2016 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## IMPACT & OUTCOMES:

### Emergency Shelter Services

MWH provided emergency shelter to 166 adults and 106 children at the New Wings emergency shelter, totaling nearly 7000 nights of safety.

### Crisis Intervention Services

Advocates and trained volunteers answered 865 calls on the crisis line, providing options and helping create safety plans. Of these, 22 were suicide calls.

Crisis intervention specialists responded to 108 requests related to domestic violence and 85 related to sexual assault. They provided support at the hospital for 28 survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

### Volunteers

Our dedicated volunteers contributed more than 28,000 hours of service.

### Support Groups

Over 200 individuals participated in our domestic violence and sexual assault support groups.

### Childcare / Youth Programs

Our Youth Empowerment Services (YES) program exists to intervene in the cycle of violence in the lives of children, ages 3-18 who have lived in our shelter or transitional housing programs.

Programming focuses on tutoring, health education, healthy strategies to resolve conflict, arts education, and the importance of community and civic engagement.

### Transitional Housing

Throughout 2016, all 28 apartments at the RISE! were full, with an active waiting list. There were an average of 66 children in residence.

### Legal Advocacy

Our team of three on-site legal advocates and their volunteers worked with 400 new clients and continued working with 411 existing clients, totaling 811 individuals served. 92 percent of the individuals who utilized legal advocacy services were members of the wider community and not residents in our emergency shelter or transitional housing programs.

### Prevention

In 2016 we served nearly 720 junior & high school-age students in Monroe County alone with our Building Healthy Relationships (BHR) curriculum. BHR uses evidence-based primary prevention strategies to reduce the likelihood of sexual & dating violence.

### Words of Impact

**"If it wasn't for the shelter and wonderful staff, I would not have survived."**

**"It was important to know my abuse was not unique."**

**"I know a miracle happened to me while I was here and I hope others give themselves the chance to experience it too."**

**"You guys got me to where I need to go. New life ahead!"**

**"Thanks for the judgement-free environment you provide."**

## Financials

### 2016 Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

#### Assets

<b>Current Assets</b>	
Cash and cash Equivalents	\$705,142
Accounts receivable, net	\$3,537
Grants receivable	\$56,073
Contributions receivable	\$905
Related party receivables	\$11,472
BCL Mortgage note Receivable	\$99,125
Other current assets	\$16,163
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$892,418</b>
<b>Property and Equipment</b>	<b>\$5,122,004</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
Investments in subsidiaries	\$686,458
Investments	\$15,820
Other assets	\$343,622
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$1,045,900</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$7,060,322</b>

#### Liabilities and Equities

<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Accounts payable	\$8,714
Payroll liabilities	\$39,695
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$48,409</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>	
MTG City of Bloomington	\$81,377
MainSource Mortgage	\$149,192
<b>Total Non-current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$230,569</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
Temporarily Restricted	\$815,959
Unrestricted	\$4,865,454
Board Designated	\$155,521
Permanently restricted	\$1,000
Retained Earnings	\$984,649
Net Income	-\$41,239
<b>Total Net Equity</b>	<b>\$6,781,343</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$7,060,322</b>

## 2016 Board Members

### Officers:

Michael DeNunzio, President  
 Cindy Houston, Vice President  
 Sally Dunn, Secretary  
 Judith Maki, Treasurer  
 Paige Freitag, Penny Gaither, Charlotte Hess, Francie Hurst, Kelly Kish, Al Lyons, Kathleen Sideli, Janet Stavropoulos, Bobbie Summers, Maxine Watson, Carl Ziegler

### Who We Are

Since 1971, Middle Way House has been providing services to people in crisis. Today, Middle Way House provides emergency shelter; a 24-hour crisis line; on-scene advocacy, support services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking; transitional and permanent housing solutions for survivors; legal advocacy; and educational and prevention programs. Middle Way House serves six counties in southern Indiana. For more information, please visit: [www.MiddleWayHouse.org](http://www.MiddleWayHouse.org).



**24/7 Crisis Line:**

**812.336.0846**

PO Box 95

Bloomington, IN 47402

Admin: 812.333.7404

[www.MiddleWayHouse.org](http://www.MiddleWayHouse.org)



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

## PROTECTIVE ORDER ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP

# POAP

Since 2011, Middle Way House has been an active partner in the Protective Order Assistance Partnership (POAP). POAP is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Monroe County Clerk, Middle Way House, Inc., the IU Mauer School of Law's Protective Order Project (POP), the IU Bloomington School of Social Work, and the Monroe County Prosecutor's Office. The project was the vision of our former Monroe County Clerk, Linda K. Robbins. Linda worked with the staff of the Monroe County Prosecutor, Chris Gaal, to bring together a team of stakeholders (including Middle Way House) to spearhead the partnership. Linda's vision was to provide free, co-located assistance to individuals seeking safety from threats or acts of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking through civil protective orders. Through the hard work and dedication of partner staff and volunteers, this important vision became the vital service it is today. We are very pleased that the current Monroe County Clerk, Nicole Lynn Browne, has continued to support and host the partnership.

Assistance through POAP can include safety planning, targeted resource referral and help completing a petition for a protective order to be submitted to a judge. All services are supportive, empowering and designed to help survivors make the best decision for themselves based on their own unique circumstances.



Grant funding awarded in 2014 from the Office on Violence Against Women has allowed Middle Way House to employ a full-time legal advocate (Stephanie Waller, MSW) within the partnership's office. This on-site presence has created a bridge of support to Middle Way House by providing survivors, many of whom are at the crucial and most dangerous point of exiting an abusive relationship, with immediate access to our broad range of services, all from within a county government office.

POAP is co-located within the Office of the Monroe County Clerk in the Charlotte T. Zietlow Justice Center (northwest corner of College Ave. & 7th Street). Office hours are Monday-Friday from 8 AM-4 PM. The POAP office is closed on all Monroe County Government holidays. Free 3-hour parking is available in the Morton Street Parking Garage (entrance on Morton Street between 7th and 8th Streets).

# **SPEAK FOR THE TREES!**

## **Seeking Volunteers to Act as a Lorax**

In October our Wrapped in Love public art display of tree sweaters was unveiled. These lovely sweaters will remain on display through mid-March 2018. During the winter months, the elements can become quite harsh. As a result, the sweaters experience some wear and tear (and sadly, occasional acts of vandalism).

We are looking for individuals (especially fabric artists) willing to act as a 'Lorax' to each of these 20+ trees throughout the community. This would entail checking on the tree at regular intervals and making minor repairs, as needed. If you'd like to speak for a tree, please contact us by phone 812.333.7404 or email: [communications@middlewayhouse.org](mailto:communications@middlewayhouse.org).



Middle Way House, Inc.  
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Bloomington, IN 47402