



MCEDV.

The Maine Coalition
to End Domestic Violence

2020 Annual Report

Our Mission

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV) mobilizes collaborative community action with and on behalf of a statewide network of Domestic Violence Resource Centers to ensure that all people affected by domestic abuse and violence in Maine are restored to safety and that perpetrators are held accountable. MCEDV builds partnerships that promote public policy, education, and systems advocacy to create and encourage a social, political, and economic environment that fosters communities where the diversity, dignity, and contributions of all are respected and celebrated, and domestic abuse and violence no longer exist.

Public Policy

COVID-19 dominated our policy efforts in 2020, truncating Maine's legislative session and forcing a reckoning within our safety net systems. The outsized effect of the pandemic on communities of color in Maine has identified glaring gaps in our state's safety net. At the same time, truths that many have long known about the disproportional impact of the criminal justice system on those same communities have been seen by the public at large in new ways.

MCEDV and our member programs have spent the summer and fall in deep dialogue, exploring how we can effectively advocate for the needs of all survivors and pursue public policy that will truly lead us to justice, equity and an end to violence. We are committed to asking questions, to broadening our understanding of what safety means and to pursuing a public policy agenda that includes but looks beyond the criminal justice system to the many facets of what creates safety in people's lives: Economic justice. Housing. Health care. The civil justice system. Language access. Culturally informed services. And more.

Only through creating a framework for safety that considers holistically what safety means for people can we really address the root causes of domestic abuse and violence, and develop interventions that that will work for all those who are affected by abuse. This will require deep listening to survivors, expanded partnerships, vision, and persistence. As we look toward 2021, we are poised to pursue a broader change agenda than ever before.

Board of Directors

Daryl Fort, President
Marvin Ellison, Treasurer
Marie Sola, Secretary
Peggy Rotundo
Emily Cain
Beth Edmonds

Training & Technical Assistance

MCEDV seeks to transform how systems and individuals in Maine support survivors and hold abusive people to account, and to shift conditions that foster abuse and violence. Last year, MCEDV's team:

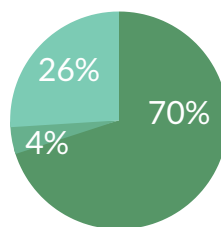
- **Spent 239 hours training 2,303 Maine professionals** - including law enforcement, nurses, clergy, advocates, child welfare workers and others - in effectively responding to domestic abuse, elder abuse, teen dating violence, and sex trafficking and exploitation. 91% of trainees reported gaining knowledge and skills that would help them respond to survivors in their work.
- **Re-designed key curricula to be effectively delivered online**, including our 12-hour training for mental health professionals and our basic and advanced training for child welfare workers.
- **Spent 1,250 hours providing technical assistance** regarding policy and practice related to domestic abuse for advocates, policy makers and systems partners.
- **Reallocated training funds** for conferences cancelled by COVID-19 to support six Assistant District Attorneys to become certified as trainers in prosecutorial response to non-fatal strangulation, advancing our efforts to coordinate multi-disciplinary nonfatal strangulation response teams across the state.
- **Supported our member programs' response to the pandemic** by developing model protocols, providing intensive technical assistance around technology-facilitated services, and convening regular peer support conversations for advocates.
- **Worked with the National Network to End Domestic Violence and Planned Parenthood of Northern New England** to distribute 1500 masks to advocates statewide when the pandemic was new and supplies were short - and helped advocates find sustainable suppliers of PPE for the long haul.

Administration

MCEDV administers federal and state funds that support Domestic Violence Resource Centers through a contract with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, as well as two grants from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women. These funds form the backbone of advocacy responses to domestic abuse in local communities across Maine. In 2020, we:

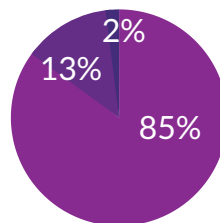
- **Administered disbursement of \$8,500,921** to the DVRCs while monitoring for compliance with all contract provisions.
- **Disbursed an additional \$183,470** to other project and grant partners, including Maine's network of violence intervention programs.
- Thanks to the public's attention to the vulnerabilities of survivors in the pandemic and a subsequent increase in giving, **we increased our ability to provide direct emergency financial assistance to survivors by 80%**. Unrestricted funds remain a small portion of over overall budget - but they make a big difference.

Where Did the Funding Come From?



Federal Grants.....70%
State Contracts.....26%
Private Foundations,
Individuals & Dues.....4%

Where Did the Funding Go?



Payments to DVRCs.....85%
MCEDV Expenses.....13%
Payments to Other
Project Partners.....2%



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DVRC Snapshot

The Domestic Violence Resource Center Network

Our member Domestic Violence Resource Centers (DVRCs) provide services for people affected by domestic abuse and violence, dating abuse, stalking, elder abuse, and sex trafficking and exploitation. DVRCs are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, via their 24-hour helplines.

What Did It Look Like in 2020?

When the pandemic arrived in Maine, DVRCs were forced to quickly restrict in-person services, transitioning quickly to phone-based services – relying heavily on the core of their work, the helpline – and exploring new methods of offering services safely and confidentially online.

- **12,516 people sought and received help from DVRCs.** While slightly fewer people reached out this year, their needs were more intense. DVRCs reported increases in the number of phone calls with survivors (up 24% from 2019) as well as the time spent on helpline calls (up 22%).
- **612 people accessed emergency sheltering** - just under 5% of the people DVRCs served. In response to the pandemic DVRCs increased their use of hotels for sheltering by 1,375%. This was more expensive and time-intensive, but was necessary to address the risks posed by COVID-19. Although we sheltered about the same number of people as in 2019, the number of nights people were sheltered was up 13%, suggesting the obstacles to finding safe, affordable permanent housing are even more complex in the pandemic.
- **4,844 people** - 39% of survivors with whom DVRCs worked - accessed DVRC legal assistance as part of their safety plans. In addition, DVRCs advocated with the courts to maintain access for survivors needing emergency orders throughout the pandemic, addressing logistical challenges related to court closures, screening protocols, video hearings, and more.
- **441 volunteers contributed 36,576 hours of service**, an in-kind donation of labor worth more than \$548,640. Even during the pandemic, community members came forward to sign up as new volunteers, playing a key role in helping meet the increased need for helpline services.
- **2,219 protective parents** involved with Child Welfare worked with specialized Domestic Violence-Child Protective Services Liaisons. Additionally, the Liaisons provided 2,908 consultations for CPS workers, equipping those workers with skills to respond to people who abuse their children as well as their partners.

Who Did We Help?

More than ever before, this year much of the DVRCs' advocacy happened over the phone. Additionally, advocates launched new text and chat services to provide options in the pandemic.

This year DVRCs:

- Took **20,020 crisis helpline calls**;
- Had **9,109 electronic contacts**; and
- Had **30,224 support calls** in addition to the helpline.

DVRC services are designed to be low barrier, without the requirement that people provide lots of demographic data or even their names. Last year DVRCs worked with:

- **1,173** people who shared they have physical, mental or cognitive disabilities.
- **222** people who identified themselves as LGBTQ+, including 21 people who identified to us as transgender and 3 who identified to us as nonbinary.
- **127** people who identified themselves as immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- **842** people who identified themselves as male.
- **592** children who accessed services - 245 of whom were sheltered.
- **597** people who identified their age as over 60.
- **138** people who were victims of sex trafficking.
- **1,655** people who were homeless.

On any given day, MCEDV's member programs serve approximately 500 individuals and field 100 crisis helpline calls across the state.

What Was the Impact?

DVRC services help survivors minimize the risks they face from abusive partners and from systems and communities that often present additional barriers to safety and peace. In 2020, that meant helping survivors navigate a world transformed by COVID-19:

- **78%** of survivors we worked with between March and October said the pandemic had affected their safety.
- **73%** said they had elevated safety concerns because of social distancing and COVID-19.
- **97%** of survivors we assisted when services were restricted reported feeling that we were able to meet their needs, even when we were not able to meet in person.
- **89%** of survivors throughout the full year reported they learned strategies to help them plan for their safety and manage their risks.
- **89%** of survivors throughout the full year reported they learned about community resources that were available to them.
- **84%** of people who attended trainings offered by the MCEDV network reported an increase in their preparedness to work with victims.