



A Survivor's Story

***Content warning - sexual assault, abuse**

My dream as a young girl was to be married to a nice and handsome man and have a family. When I first met my abuser, I thought he was my Prince Charming. He was polite, nice, and charming. He told me that he would take good care of me and protect me—Not knowing that the protection I needed was from him. When we started dating, he introduced me to his family, and at the time he was living with his mother. We eventually got married and started living together in the same household.

After our marriage, his demeanor and personality changed from a nice person to a psychopath. He physically would beat me and would not stop until he saw me bleeding. I did not only suffer from severe physical abuse but also emotional abuse and neglect. He would say disparaging things to me to destroy my self-esteem. He took complete control of my life. Everything I did had to meet his approval or I would be physically punished with brutal beating, leading to bleeding and unconsciousness. I was held captive, stalked, beaten, raped, and emotionally destroyed. He took pleasure in seeing me bleed, begging for my life, and told me that no one would come to my rescue. I stayed in the relationship during the abuse with the hope that he would change from his abusive and mean demeanor.

When I was five months pregnant, my abuser beat me up severely, resulting in a miscarriage. While pregnant, my abuser had offered to take me to the doctor to get a return-to-work note because I frequently missed work due to the ongoing physical and emotional abuse. In the garage, he started getting angry, slapping me around and bouncing me off the pillars that were holding the garage. Fortunately, the postman was coming to our house to deliver the mail. The postman allowed me to get away from him, run back into the house, and barricade myself in the bedroom. After the postman left the house, he broke into the bedroom and continued to beat me until I suffered a miscarriage.

I called the local police several times and reached out to family members and friends during the abuse. My confidant was his mother. She advised me to run away from him. However, I kept returning to him hoping that I would change him. On one occasion, I called the police to rescue me from his abuse. The police officer gave me the telephone number of A Safe Place Domestic Violence Program in Oakland and assisted me in calling A Safe Place. I was admitted into the residential program.

While at the residential program, I found out that I was pregnant with another child for him. I gave birth to a child at A Safe Place Residential Program. During my stay at A Safe Place, I received free housing, meals, case management support, and trauma therapy. I am back working for A Safe Place, teaching arts and crafts to survivors of domestic violence living in the residential program. I am grateful to A Safe Place Program for rescuing me from a psychopath and supporting me through my recovery process.

Become a Volunteer with A Safe Place



**40 HOUR DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE TRAINING:**

REGISTER TODAY

VISIT: asafeplace.org/professional-development

FALL TRAINING STARTS:
January 2024

MANDATORY ORIENTATION:
TBD, Call for more info



ABOUT: A Safe Place offers training workshops in domestic violence and intimate partner abuse that can be used for professional development and is required for anyone who wishes to become a Domestic Violence Volunteer at A Safe Place.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CALL 510-986-8600
asafeplace.org



Support Survivors

Register to volunteer today!



Volunteer opportunities with A Safe Place include assisting with our 24-hour crisis line, community outreach, special events, and more.

Orientation Date:

- January 4, 2024: 6 PM to 8 PM

Training Start Dates:

- January 20, 2024: 8 AM to 5 PM
- February 3, 2024: 8 AM to 5 PM
- February 10, 2024: 8 AM to 5 PM
- February 17, 2024: 8 AM to 5 PM

[Click Here for More Info](#)

Look out for each other this holiday season - Watch for the signs

As we near the end of the year, we will all engage in activities with family, friends, and community. It is a special time - but as we enjoy the festivities, please do not forget that many people are suffering behind closed doors.

We never know who may be experiencing violence in the home, so it is important to extend kindness and compassion. Children suffer silently, and most victims keep quiet. There are signs - both visible and invisible - that we can all be aware of as we visit and share this season with others.

This time of year, many victims and survivors choose not to leave due to the holiday season.



Please watch out for:

- Family and friends who wear sunglasses and extra makeup to cover bruises
- Making excuses to leave activities or short notice cancellations for family activities
- Avoiding family and friends
- Lack of money to buy necessities
- Consistent isolation from family and friends

If you are unsure how to help someone who is being abused, contact our Crisis Line at (510) 536-7233.

Holiday Wish List & In-Kind Donations

While you're out doing your holiday



shopping, keep in mind the families who are unable to do the same. For this holiday season, we have compiled a wish list to support victims of domestic violence and their families. Please visit the link below to view a list of needed items. Your support means a great deal to our families.

[View Wish List](#)

A Letter from Our Director

Dear friends and supporters,

As 2024 approaches, we ask that you remember A Safe Place in your end of the year plans. While many of you are preparing for joyous holiday celebrations with family and friends, others are not so fortunate and are suffering from violence in the home.

To mitigate this, A Safe Place is there to provide critical services to victims and survivors of intimate partner violence, with many of these victims being children. Homelessness and poverty have impacted families tremendously in the past year, and our services doubled this year as a result. We provided a safe haven for over 200 victims and survivors of domestic violence. Requests for mental health and legal services have doubled, increasing our need for more funding.

A Safe Place has been there for individuals who would not have otherwise had anywhere to go or to call without our 24-hour crisis line. Our work has impacted not only the survivors we work with directly, but our community as well. We know that breaking the cycle at an early age is critical to decreasing domestic violence, so we give back to our Bay Area community through our work in local schools and other youth-serving organizations. For over 45 years, A Safe Place has partnered with our community to make Oakland and the wider East Bay a safe place to live.

We are completely reliant on the generosity of others, and those charitable donations make a true difference in the services that we are able to provide. That is why we ask you to remember A Safe Place this holiday season and consider making a charitable contribution to support our meaningful work. Any amount you can share will be greatly appreciated and put directly back into the community.

Our donation process is easy - we've simplified it by allowing supporters to donate online at www.asafeplace.org/donate, call 510-986-8600 to give a charitable gift using a credit card, or send a check to P.O. Box 23006, Oakland, CA 94623. There is no better



way to celebrate the holiday season than by sharing what you have with families who are suffering behind closed doors. During the month of December, adults and children will be forced to flee homes due to violence by their intimate partners. Your generosity will have a considerable impact on their lives, and every gift matters, no matter how small.

This season, please consider setting aside part of your budget to support the work of A Safe Place with a tax-deductible donation.

With Gratitude,
Carolyn Russell M.S.W., M.A.
Executive Director

Legislative Updates

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV) has compiled a 2023 bill chart regarding domestic violence policy in CA.

[View Policy Positions Here](#)



Ways To Support

Give a gift to A Safe Place to support survivors of domestic violence. Your contribution goes beyond a donation; it's a lifeline for survivors and their families. Explore our Gift Catalogue and choose a meaningful way to make a lasting impact.

**DONATE TODAY
DONATE TODAY
DONATE TODAY
DONATE TODAY
DONATE TODAY**

 www.asafeplace.org/give



1 - Shelter Nights (\$50)

Provide a safe haven for a survivor and their child for one night. Your gift ensures a warm bed, security, and support.

[Click Here](#)



2 - Trauma Counseling Session (\$55)

Support a survivor's journey to healing through a professional counseling session. Your contribution brings hope and resilience.

[Click Here](#)

3 - Legal Assistance (\$50)

Empower survivors with the legal support needed to



break free from abusive relationships. Your gift helps secure restraining orders, custody agreements, and more.

[Click Here](#)



4 - Childcare Support (\$50)

Give children affected by domestic violence a safe space for learning and play. Your contribution supports their growth and recovery.

[Click Here](#)



5 - Emergency Food and Clothing (\$50)

Provide basic needs to survivors, offering comfort in times of crisis. Your gift ensures access to nutritious meals and essential clothing.

[Click Here](#)



6 - Monthly DV Service Sustainer (\$50)

Join our Monthly Sustainer Program to provide ongoing support. Your recurring gift makes a lasting impact on survivors' lives.

[Call our office for more info](#)



7 - Community Outreach (\$50)

Support educational programs to prevent domestic violence in communities. Your contribution helps break the cycle before it begins.

[Click Here](#)



8 - Full Support Package (\$250)

Cover a comprehensive support package, including shelter, counseling, legal assistance, and more. Your generous donation transforms lives.

[Click Here](#)

9 - Join *Friends of A Safe Place*

Volunteers help with friend-raising and fundraising outreach to community members and donors.

10 - Employee Matching Gift

If your company has a charitable giving program, email us at grants@asafeplace.org to learn more.

11 - Host a Facebook Birthday Fundraiser

We have social media tools to share if you need them - just email us at grants@asafeplace.org.

12 - Donate in Someone's Memory

Losing a loved one is difficult. Their generosity and unwavering commitment to making a positive difference remain meaningful even beyond death. Honor a loved one by donating any amount at www.asafeplace.org/donate

Your generosity creates ripples of change, providing safety and hope to those who need it most. Thank you for being a beacon of light in the fight against domestic violence.

A Safe Place | Breaking the Cycle, Changing a Life

[Donate](#)

24 HR CRISIS LINE: 510.536.7233

MAIN LINE: 510.986.8600



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A Safe Place | P.O. Box 23006, Oakland, CA 94623

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