



SEEDS of CHANGE

Where the healing begins

**MUTUAL
GROUND**
Where the Healing Begins

Working to create a society free of domestic and sexual violence

FALL 2018

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Letter from Our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We have been dealing with some serious space issues here at Mutual Ground over the last year. The demand for our services has been growing, and as the budget crisis subsided we have been hiring to fill open positions. This is allowing us to rebuild our programs and cut down on waiting lists for counseling and other services. At times our program staff have been forced to share office space, phones, and counseling areas, which is incredibly disruptive to their schedules as well as uncomfortable for our clients.

Good news! This July we embarked on a project to build-out the carriage house on the property to make room for seven new offices and a meeting space. This week, I am thrilled to announce that we will be moving all of our administrative personnel into that new back building space. This move ultimately

frees up MUCH needed space in the main building for additional counseling offices, a group room, and a new dedicated space for our 24-hour-a-day crisis line program!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Dunham Fund and a very generous anonymous donor for their help in allowing us to make the changes necessary. We are now able to provide the best service possible for the 900 adults and 300 hundred children who walk through our doors each year and for the 4,000 annual callers on our crisis lines. We are truly grateful!

Sincerely,

Michelle Meyer

Michelle Meyer
Executive Director



Please join us for the 11th Annual Walk for Hope

We hope you will join survivors, family and friends of Mutual Ground to raise much needed funds to help those affected by domestic and sexual abuse.

This event is family-friendly and FREE of charge to attend! It is NOT necessary to register, but if you would like to raise money as a fundraiser, create a team, or donate to a campaign please visit our website at www.mutualground.org.



Sunday, October 14th, 2018

8:00 am - 11:00 am

Blackberry Farm
100 S. Barnes Road
Aurora, IL 60502

All proceeds benefit Mutual Ground

Mutual Ground
418 Oak Ave.
Aurora IL 60506

mutualground.org
(630) 897-0084



Service Spotlight: Domestic Violence Program

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.

Mutual Ground is a safe place where people come together to break the cycle of domestic violence. With one-on-one and group counseling sessions, safety planning, agency referrals, and much more, we are not just a shelter, we are a solution.

Our Domestic Violence Program served 832 adults and 249 children last year. The department primarily focused on rebuilding services that were reduced or eliminated during the Illinois State budget crisis.

Last year, Mutual Ground's Domestic Violence Department implemented many program changes, such as establishing the Youth and Family Services Department (formerly the Youth Counseling



Department). The change in title reflects an intentional focus on family healing, recognizing that an essential component of intervention with all children is supporting and strengthening the

relationship between the non-offending parent and child. We also had a soft opening of the Yorkville counseling office located in the Kendall County Community Food Pantry and established a formal working relationship with the Kane County State's Attorney's Office (KCSAO) whereby a Mutual Ground legal advocate is co-located at the KCSAO to provide advocacy and support to victims in felony Domestic Violence cases.

If you or anyone you know needs help or someone to talk to, please contact us at our 24 hour Domestic Violence Hotline at (630) 897-0080. Spanish speaking advocates are available—we offer bicultural/bilingual services to anyone who reaches out to us.



Thank You to the Zonta Club of St. Charles, Geneva, and Batavia

Thank you to members of the Zonta Club of St. Charles, Geneva, and Batavia for decorating the Mutual Ground fence with purple bows and banners to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

These decorations will be displayed for the entire month of October.

About Our 24-Hour Hotlines

At Mutual Ground, our hotline advocates provide support and advocacy for people affected by issues of domestic and sexual violence - anyone can call our 24-hour hotlines to talk to an advocate anytime day or night. We support callers on the hotline through various experiences.

Our hotline advocates support all callers and can work with the caller to connect them with ongoing services, if they request. Sometimes calling a hotline is the first step in accessing support services for victims of violence and we are so honored that we get to support them in their time of need.

If you are a survivor in need of support, we are here to help. You can talk with a counselor on our 24-hour hotline or in-person at our Batavia, Yorkville or Aurora office. Call our Domestic Violence hotline (630) 897-0080 or our Sexual Assault Hotline (630) 897-8383 to talk or make an appointment. Services are free and confidential.

Volunteer Spotlight - Dan and Gayle Haas

When Dan and Gayle Haas heard that Calvary West planned a day of service at Mutual Ground, they were thrilled to volunteer. Their assignment was to help paint the shelter living room. Much to their surprise, they found themselves painting a room they had previously painted almost 34 years ago to the day. This brought back memories of that day and the fact that same evening Gayle had given birth to their youngest daughter, Elaine!

You see, the Haas family once owned the property at 418 Oak Avenue in Aurora. Dan was the pastor of Aurora Community Church, and Gayle taught at Covenant Christian School. They worked and lived on-site, raising their two daughters. During the early years, there was a tremendous amount of work done by the church members, including painting the church's music room. In the 90s, they sold the property to Mutual Ground.



"It is wonderful that the tradition of serving others continues here today. Mutual Ground is a vital resource in our community, focused on helping the disenfranchised, broken and underprivileged," Dan stated. "Being at Mutual Ground brought back so many special memories for our family. We truly loved the time we spent here."

Mutual Ground does have a way of touching lives and connecting people. If you would like to be part of this connection, please contact our Volunteer Program Administrator at jford@mutualground.org.

Thank You for Attending the Women's Power Lunch

The 10th Annual Women's Power Lunch was another huge success this year!

We would like to give special thanks to this year's Presenting Sponsor, Nicor Home Solutions, Keynote Speaker Dr. Sonat Birneckert Hart, Pipers Banquets, and the SHARE committee who coordinated this amazing event for Mutual Ground!



2018 Share Fox Valley committee

Congratulations to the 2018 Woman of Power, Stephanie Kifowit and the Woman of the Year, Fran Caffee!

Our New Amazon Wish List

We are excited to announce our new Amazon Wish List! Donors can now see what items we are in need of, purchase them directly from Amazon, and have them shipped to our office!

Visit our Facebook page or website at www.mutualground.org to access our Amazon Wish List.



Thank you to all the amazing donors who have already purchased items for us from our Wish List!

If you are interested in having a donation drive for us, please contact Julie Ford, Volunteer Program Administrator, at jford@mutualground.org.

Barriers to Leaving an Abusive Relationship

It is important to understand why victims don't "just leave" an abusive relationship. In reality, the most dangerous time for a victim is when she/he leaves an abusive partner. These are just some of the many barriers a victim might face when trying to leave an abusive relationship:

- Fear and terror of abuser
- Lack of shelter or housing
- Batterer's promises to change
- Love for abuser
- Lack of family or social support
- Fear of not being believed
- Religious beliefs
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of money
- Lack of access to legal counsel
- History of prior ineffective legal intervention
- Denial and minimization by outsiders
- Shame, embarrassment, self-blame, and guilt
- Wanting to keep the family together
- Isolation
- Abuser threatens self-harm
- Plus many, many more

Mutual Ground
418 Oak Avenue
Aurora, IL 60506

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Permit #40
St. Charles, IL

Follow us on social media!



Visit us on the web at
www.mutualground.org

Aurora, IL 60506
(630) 897-0084

Mutual Ground

Give us a call for more
information about
our services

Contact Us

Mutual Ground Main Event
Friday, April 26th
6:00 PM - 11:00 PM
Embassy Suites by Hilton
1823 Abriter Ct, Naperville, IL

Batavia Woman's Club
Fall into Fashion Luncheon
Saturday, October 27th
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Q Center
1405 N 5th Ave, St. Charles, IL

Upcoming Events
Walk for Hope
Sunday, October 14th
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Blackberry Farm
100 S. Barnes Road, Aurora, IL

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