



SEEDS of CHANGE

Where the healing begins



Working to create a society free of domestic and sexual violence

SPRING 2018

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Letter from Our Executive Director

As the snow starts to turn to mush and then to mud, it makes me excited for Spring. A fresh start to the new year!

We started the winter off with a bang when the Aurora Fire Department responded to our shelter for a kitchen fire on New Year's Day. We were so grateful for their help and that no one was hurt or injured - thanks to the quick thinking of our remarkable staff.

While making important repairs to our kitchen, we were again struck with bad luck when a leak over "the good stove" forced us to halt providing shelter services completely while we make the repairs needed. These unfortunate instances have definitely taken their toll on our clients who stay with us, and on our staff the last couple months. Hurdles like these will only make us stronger (I tell myself). We will look for funding to fix the other side of the kitchen and keep working toward our mission, because domestic and sexual violence do not take a break while we fix kitchens.

So that's what we are doing...

We continue to see victims of domestic and sexual violence at three area court houses and four area emergency rooms. We answer crisis calls on the hotline; provide walk-in counseling services both individually and in-group; and present in classrooms, churches, civic clubs and businesses across southern Kane and Kendall County. We are preparing for our Main Event fundraiser in April and are in the midst of strategic planning. Things are still looking good, and will only get better because we have the most **amazing** community support ever! Thank you!

Sincerely,

Michelle Meyer

Michelle Meyer
Executive Director



Please join us

Please join Mutual Ground for a memorable night of incredible food, live entertainment, raffles, auctions and more! One lucky attendee will win a gorgeous diamond in our inaugural Champagne Diamond Dip. All proceeds support the programs of Mutual Ground.

Friday, April 27, 2018

Embassy Suites by Chicago Hilton
1823 Abriter Ct., Naperville

Complimentary Cocktails • Hors d'oeuvres • Champagne Diamond Dip • Gourmet Dinner
Open Bar • Live and Silent Auction • Live Music by Peter Miletic
\$125 per person • \$1,200 per table of 10

To purchase tickets go to www.mutualground.org or call Colleen Galloway at 630-897-0084 ext. 111!



Service Spotlight: Sexual Assault Program

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Every day, hundreds of Americans are affected by sexual violence and, on average, there are 321,500 victims (aged 12 or older) of rape and sexual assault each year in the United States.

Here at Mutual Ground, we believe sexual assault survivors, and support them throughout their entire journey. We send advocates to the hospital to support victims



during their time of need, our court advocates assist survivors with legal procedures, and our counseling services are offered to victims – all free of charge.

For victims of sexual assault, Mutual Ground provides individual counseling by our professional staff, along with comprehensive support groups for rape survivors, incest survivors, children, adolescents, non-offending parents and significant others.

Last year, the Sexual Assault department offered a number of specialized groups, focusing on “healing through art” – including art therapy for children, teens and adults. In groups, sexual assault survivors were guided in the use of poetry, journaling, and art to facilitate emotional expression and

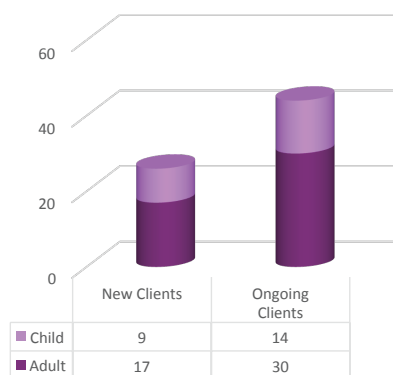
healing. The overall goal of Art Therapy is to provide an avenue for victims, a starting place to begin to express and explore how the trauma has impacted them -- eventually creating an art piece that shows what their trauma looks like. This is the first critical step in helping them develop the tools they need to deal with their feelings (i.e. anger, guilt, embarrassment, underlying sadness) and ultimately move beyond their trauma and live more emotionally at peace.

Over the course of one year, the Mutual Ground Sexual Assault Department provided 151 sexual assault victims with 1,854 hours of individual counseling. In addition to survivors, 17 significant others received 234 hours of counseling.

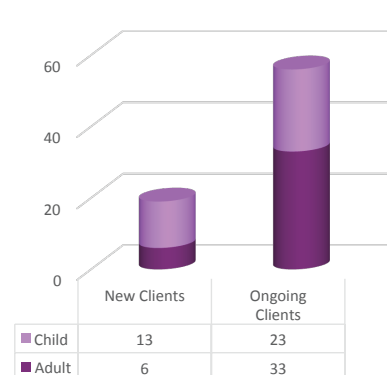
Total Sexual Assault Victims from December – January

Our sexual assault program provided services for **26** new clients and **44** ongoing clients in December 2017 through January 2018. During that time, **52** victims received **211** hours of individual counseling, **26** victims received **48** hours of advocacy, and **4** significant others received **18** hours of counseling and advocacy.

Sexual Assault Victims
December 2017 - January 2018



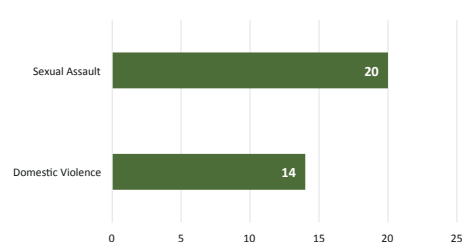
Sexual Assault Victims
December 2016 - January 2017



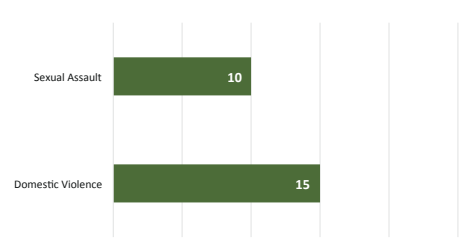
Emergency Response Advocacy

Our program partners with four hospitals as well as all local law enforcement offices throughout our service area. We have created amazing relationships with many organizations, including the team of SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) nurses at Northwestern Medicine - Delnor Hospital. We received **34** hospital calls in December 2017 through January 2018. Our hospital advocates assisted **20** survivors of sexual assault and **14** survivors of domestic violence. We have seen an increase in hospital calls compared to last year - we believe it is due to survivors becoming more empowered to seek help.

Hospital Calls
December 2017 - January 2018



Hospital Calls
December 2016 - January 2017



60-Hour Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Certification

Are you interested in helping individuals affected by domestic violence and sexual assault? Here's your chance!

Our next 60-Hour Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advocacy Training will begin on Tuesday, May 29th, and end on Saturday, June 23, 2018. Training will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. and on Saturdays from 8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Our certification provides basic training for individuals to work directly with those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. For more information visit our website at www.mutualground.org or contact Jenaleigh Turner at 630.897.0084 ext. 162 or jturner@mutualground.org.

Do You Want to Volunteer with Mutual Ground?

Mutual Ground always welcomes the valuable contributions of volunteers. We are flexible in terms of time commitment - requesting part-time, seasonal or full-time help.

Volunteers are an integral part of Mutual Ground, helping us meet our goal of preventing domestic and sexual violence and assisting victims of these crimes. We are grateful for the time and effort volunteers dedicate to making our community a safer place to live.

Our Volunteer Opportunities Include:

Hospital Advocate*	Administrative Projects
Hotline Advocate*	Marketing Projects
Child Care Advocate*	Fundraising Projects
Awareness Projects	Gala Event Volunteer
Shelter Projects	Group Service Projects

*Requires a 60-Hour Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Certification

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with Mutual Ground please apply online at www.mutualground.org or contact Julie Ford, Volunteer Program Administrator, at jford@mutualground.org or (630) 897-0084 ext. 104.

Thank You Painters District Council No. 30

Thank you so much to Painters District Council No. 30 for awarding its community service grant to Mutual Ground! The oldest part of our shelter was built in 1853 and is often in need of repairs and updates. The Painters District Council's "Impact Team" volunteers repainted various areas within Mutual Ground's domestic violence shelter – completely free of charge!

Painters District Council No. 30 is an Aurora-based union construction trade organization that has represented interior and exterior painters, drywall finishers, and glazers since 1925.

Thank you to the following members that volunteered their time: Juan Gonzalez, Brian Guethle, Chuck McDonald, Juan Rostro, Josh Shaw, and Kyle Szymczak.



Tips for Talking with Survivors of Sexual Assault

According to RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), every 98 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted. It is not always easy to know what to say or how to act when someone tells you they have been sexually assaulted.

Here are a few of RAINN's recommended tips on how to be supportive during a survivor's healing process:

- Use specific phrases to show your support such as:
 - “I believe you. / It took a lot of courage to tell me about this.”
 - “It’s not your fault. / You didn’t do anything to deserve this.”
 - “You are not alone. / I care about you and am here to listen or help in any way I can.”
 - “I’m sorry this happened. / This shouldn’t have happened to you.”
- Avoid judgment
- Check in periodically
- Know your resources
 - You can reach our 24-Hour sexual assault hotline at (630) 897-8383
 - Encourage them to practice good self-care during this difficult time

Mutual Ground
418 Oak Avenue
Aurora, IL 60506

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Upcoming Events

Mutual Ground

Main Event Gala

Friday, April 27th, 2018

6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Embassy Suites by Hilton

1823 Abriter Ct., Naperville, IL 60562

60-Hour Advocacy Training

May 29 - June 23, 2018

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays

Location TBD

Contact Us
Call us for more
information about our
programs and services.

Mutual Ground

418 Oak Avenue

Aurora, IL 60506

(630) 897-0084

Visit us on the web at

www.mutualground.org

Follow us on social media!

