



# Annual Report

JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023

# Greetings

## Friends and Supporters,

The years do fly by and that means this year was a time of review, evaluation, and planning for Helpmate. The end of our current five year Strategic Plan in 2023 provided the perfect opportunity to take an introspective look at where we are as an organization. Those thoughtful conversations provided a springboard for articulating our goals for the next three years as we seek to more fully live into our mission. It's both an exciting and challenging time for Helpmate as we look forward to expanding shelter capacity while simultaneously grappling with historic reductions in federal funding. We remain optimistic and committed to our mission: We work with our community to eliminate abuse and fear by providing safety, shelter, and support for victims/survivors of intimate partner domestic violence.

We share with you here our five key areas of Strategic Focus for the coming three years so you can see how we approach our work. Each initiative includes detailed goals and objectives to guide us and keep us effective. As an overview, these key areas are:

1. **Programs:** Complete construction of new, expanded shelter space sufficient to serve survivors in need, while continuing to provide appropriate facilities and technology for other on-going services.
2. **Personnel:** Ensure Helpmate has the trained, highly competent, and dedicated staff and volunteers needed to meet the needs of survivors, and ultimately to end the cycle of domestic violence.
3. **Resource Development and Finance:** Broaden our revenue sources and continue sound financial management practices to ensure quality services can be provided as we expand shelter services.
4. **Programs:** Continue providing programs essential for survivor safety and support, including the 24/7 hotline, emergency shelter, counseling, court advocacy, outreach and education, and case management.
5. **Partnerships:** Continue providing education to prevent attitudes that perpetuate violence, maintain existing partnerships and form new partnerships that leverage resources to support survivor needs.

We look forward to keeping you informed all year long about all of these efforts. In particular, stay tuned for big news relating to the building of a new residential shelter for victims at especially high risk of potentially lethal abuse. We are truly grateful for all who make this work possible. Thank you.



*April Burgess-Johnson*

**April Burgess-Johnson**  
*Executive Director*

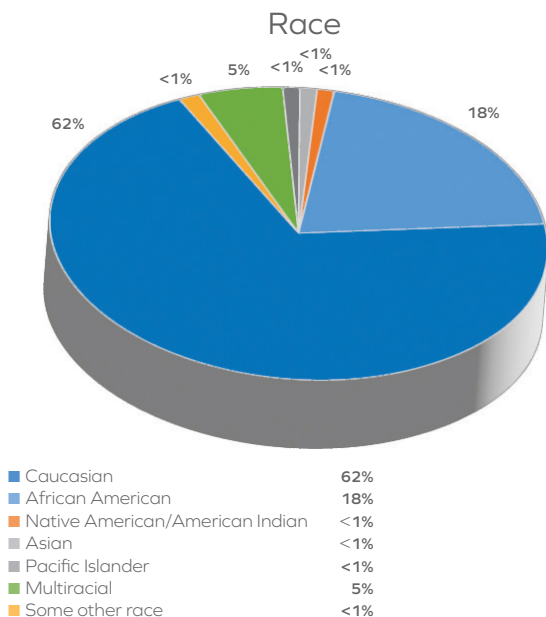
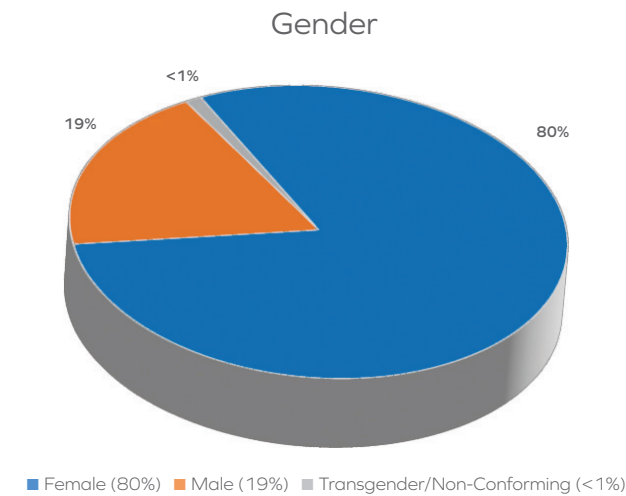
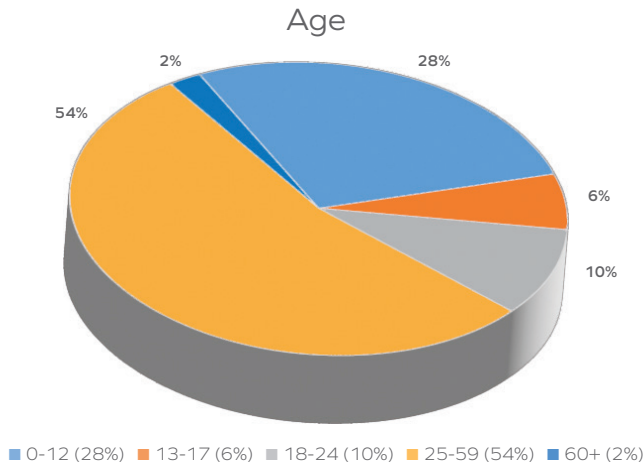


*Ginny Raviotta*

**Ginny Raviotta**  
*Board Chair*

# 2022 - 2023 Year In Review

Thanks to your generous support, in the last year we...



## SAFETY

- Collaborated with law enforcement to provide **741** lethality assessments to survivors in crisis
- Provided **24/7** crisis line support **3,091** times to survivors in need
- Trained advocates provided **21,580** units of service to **3,559** survivors and families in need

## SHELTER

- Provided shelter to **202** adults and **139** children, yielding **21,508** safe nights
- Upon exiting shelter services, **95%** of survivors reported feeling safer, and **71%** of survivors reported feeling less isolation

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Offered services to foster resiliency for **1,010** children in crisis
- Child and Family Advocates worked with **316** families dually involved with Child Protective Services

## SUPPORT

- Provided **2,181** free counseling sessions
- Court advocates accompanied survivors who filed **370** protective orders
- **1,473** individuals were able to meet self-identified goals while engaged in services
- Bi-lingual advocates served **236** survivors with limited English proficiency in order to support their access to safety

## PREVENTION & OUTREACH

- Engaged **3,504** community members in prevention education and outreach events
- Reached **1,201** youth and college-aged young adults across **29** learning sessions around Buncombe County

# Erica's Story

I got married at 16. He seemed like a really good guy-my sister's friend and a sweet talker. I trusted him and I loved spending time with his two children. I felt like we were a family.

Things quickly changed after we got married. He became controlling. He constantly accused me of cheating on him and went through my phone, for example. Then the violence started-every single day. He was aggressive with the children too. I was scared.

He was already using drugs when we got married, and as things got worse, I began using too. When I got pregnant I hoped that this would make him less violent, but it didn't help. At one point, he held a gun to my head and threatened to kill me. That was terrifying, and I tried to kill myself. Inpatient treatment helped, but he begged me to come back after I was discharged. He said things would be different. I went back to him, probably because I needed the drugs.

Children's Protective Services (CPS) was alerted about my daughter's care so I ended up taking her to my mother's house to stay. My drug use continued as did rehab, periods off drugs, and returning to my husband. My baby went to live with my mother and I ultimately decided to sign my rights over to my mom.

Things went downhill after that. I used a lot, overdosed 13 times and ended up in a coma. Detox and rehab, over and over again. I became pregnant with our second child.

My new baby tested positive for substances when she was born even though I was clean for three months before she was born. She had to go live with my mother and I gave up. Losing two children was too much and I went back to him again. I stayed clean but the abuse continued.

It was during this time that I found out about Helpmate. They have staff who specializes in working with survivors who have children and who are involved with CPS. My Helpmate case manager took me to the shelter and let me look around. I got some help with moving my things out of my home and immediately moved into the Helpmate shelter.

The Helpmate shelter is the best place I have ever been. The people who work there are very understanding and always seemed happy to listen to me. I could just go talk to them and tell them everything about my day when I got home. It made me feel comfortable to be there.

I worked with my case manager and was able to rent a house using resources provided by Helpmate. I have a job now and two months ago Helpmate connected me to an opportunity to get a good car. I have a counselor and I've been clean this entire time as well. Most importantly, I've finished the trial home placement stage with CPS. I now have custody of both of my daughters and they live with me. I feel like I'm making up for what I missed with them!

Things are getting better, but some days are hard. I still have contact with my ex because he is allowed visitation with the children. It's a lot of work to establish and maintain boundaries with him. He still thinks he can control me. My daughters are my priority and I'll make sure they are safe and happy.

A lot of things have changed for me as I've started a new life without my abuser. I am happy I found out about Helpmate and that I was able to connect with them to make a plan to get my children back with me. I just want to tell other people who are using that recovery is possible and amazing so don't give up!



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**Thank you to our  
dedicated staff  
and volunteers!**

## Our Generous Community

*Friends and Supporters,*

*You make hope possible every single day. By supporting Helpmate, you let survivors know that their community cares about them. Together, we can create a safer community, one family at a time.*

*Thank you,*

**April Burgess-Johnson**  
Executive Director

### THE SAFE HAVEN SOCIETY

The Safe Haven Society was created as a way to recognize those who support the work of Helpmate by giving \$1,000 or more annually. We are grateful to these 150 families who provide a significant portion of our Annual Campaign funding each year.

Thank you to Jacqui Friedrich and Don Swaby for their leadership as co-chairs of the Safe Haven Society.

### THE LEGACY GIVING SOCIETY

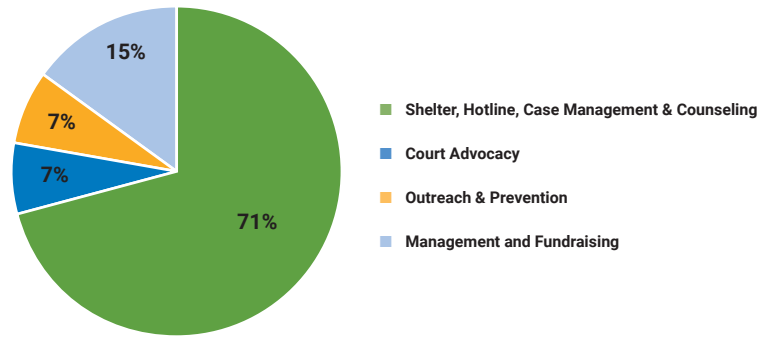
This Society is also chaired by Don Swaby, and honors the generosity and foresight of our planned giving donors. We extend our heartfelt thank you to those who make the decision to support survivors long into the future by remembering using a will, bequest, trust or other planned giving method.



# Financial Statements 2022-2023

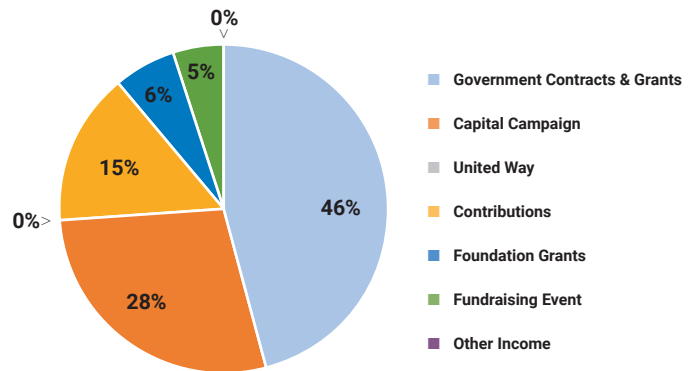
## Expenses

Shelter, Hotline, Case Management & Counseling	\$2,211,783
Court Advocacy	206,708
Outreach & Prevention	211,570
Management and Fundraising	463,671
	<b>\$3,093,732</b>



## Support and Revenue

Government Contracts and Grants	\$1,976,623
Capital Campaign	\$1,204,467
United Way	3,452
Contributions	627,147
Foundation Grants	236,975
Fundraising Event	227,686
Other Income	6,679
	<b>\$4,283,029</b>



## Get Involved

You can help create a safer future for survivors! There are many ways to contribute to this work.

### Volunteer

- Answer calls to our hotline, bilingual welcome
- Provide administrative support
- Assist with shelter maintenance
- Take a shift at our reception desk
- Represent Helpmate at community events
- Provide childcare during programs for survivors
- Join the Kind Team to help with in-kind donations
- Have special skills (cooking, IT, writing, etc.) you would like to share? Let us know!

### Partner

- Encourage your employer to become a Business Partner
- Host a fundraiser or awareness event
- Coordinate a social media campaign to promote awareness of domestic violence and our services

### Invite Us

- Speak to your faith community
- Present to your colleagues
- Meet with your social group or student organization
- Speak to youth with whom you are involved



## Volunteer for Helpmate!

For more information, visit [HelpmateOnline.org/Volunteer](https://HelpmateOnline.org/Volunteer)

# 2022 Hope Rising: Standing with Survivors

As part of our efforts to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Helpmate hosts a special event each October. This event helps raise awareness about domestic violence in our community and provides critical resources to support this work.

In 2022, Helpmate hosted our first annual Hope Rising: Standing with Survivors Breakfast. This was our first in person event since 2019 and provided a much appreciated chance to gather and renew our commitment to this work. We thank you deeply for being a part of a community that is taking a stand against domestic violence and helping survivors create lives free from violence.

We are grateful to those who helped to organize this breakfast: Chair **Ceil Sanow, Pam Bailey, Beverly Brignolo, Joyce Greene, and Lauren Karlsson.**



**Ceil Sanow**  
Event Chair



**Brenda Mills**  
Keynote Speaker

## Thank you to our 2022 Hope Rising Sponsors

### Challenge Gift Sponsors

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Nathan, Jennifer, and Emery Adams

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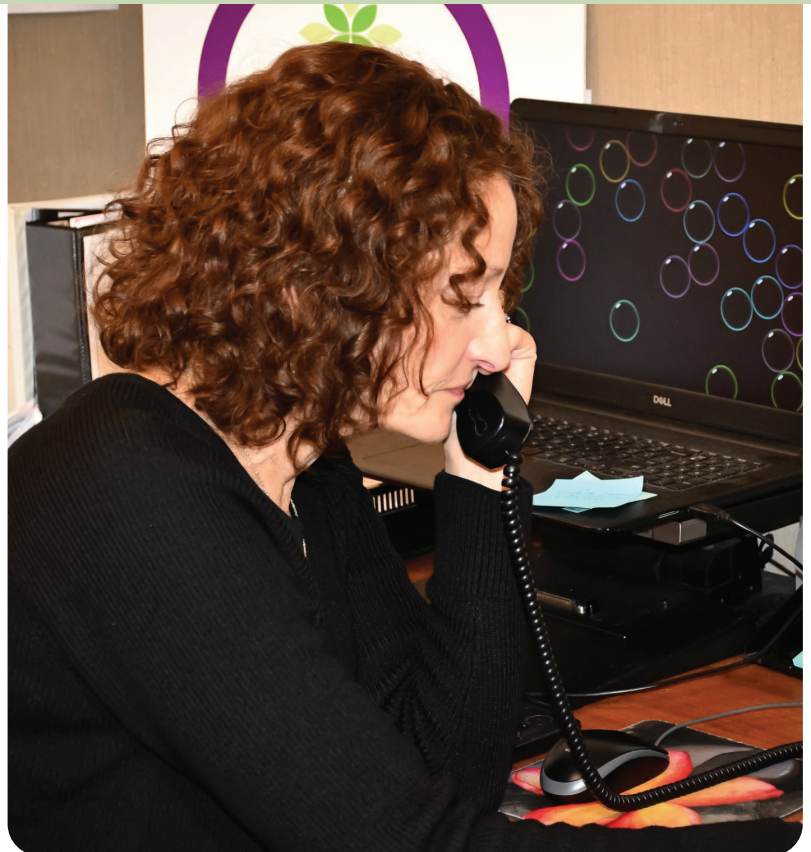
### Personal Sponsors

Karina Escalante  
Shirley and Ernest Ferguson  
Kerry and Anna Friedman  
Merritt and Madeline Moseley  
Jerry and Genieve VeHaun  
Larry and Janie Wilson

## 24 Hour Hotline

Helpmate's emergency hotline operates 24/7/365 for immediate crisis intervention, danger assessment and safety planning. This is often a survivor's first point of contact with Helpmate and calling represents a courageous moment for a survivor seeking help. Staff and volunteers who answer the hotline receive rigorous training on domestic violence, community resources, Helpmate's programs, safety planning and confidentiality. Whenever a survivor calls, we are prepared to respond with empathy, knowledge and hope. Helpmate implements the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) in partnership with all of the law enforcement agencies in Buncombe County. Through this LAP protocol, responding officers to domestic violence incidents call Helpmate's hotline on-scene and connect the victim directly with an advocate for safety planning, resources and support.

**Helpmate's Hotline  
number is  
828.254.0516**





## Shelter

Helpmate's emergency shelter has 20 beds, and offers a safe home to the highest-risk adults and children who must flee their homes to escape abuse. Placement in Helpmate's shelter is prioritized largely based on imminent risk of homicide through a research-based tool called the Danger Assessment. 91% of those sheltered by Helpmate are in the highest homicide risk category. Beyond the immediate safety provided by our shelter, survivors are also provided with basic necessities, counseling, support groups, and are assigned a case manager who meets with them at least weekly to work on their self-identified goals needed to establish a new life which is safe and free from violence. Shelter provides 24-hour staffing and security. Sadly, we receive many more requests for shelter each year than we can accommodate. We are working to address this issue by expanding our shelter programming, with a new and larger shelter scheduled to open in Summer 2025. Survivors who have just left an abusive relationship regularly rely on staff to ease their loneliness, validate their experiences, and help them find hope and see a way forward.



## Case Management

Case management is the practical and informed support provided to address a survivor's self-identified needs and goals. Survivors in shelter and from the community are provided a case manager to bring Helpmate's and other community resources to bear in addressing their needs. These needs make take the form of safety planning, obtaining transportation, obtaining and maintain housing, securing employment, locating childcare and advocacy with other partner agencies. At the Family Justice Center, survivors seeking services for the first time are assisted by Helpmate Intake Specialists to access the many community partners on-site, such as law enforcement, Pisgah Legal Services, and Forensic Nurse Examiners, and are then connected to a Helpmate case manager for ongoing support. Case managers forge supportive and enduring relationships with survivors.



## Survivor Outreach and Prevention Education

Helpmate provides educational workshops focused on raising awareness about available help and resources for people at high risk of domestic violence victimization, including youth and young adults, pregnant women, and people in substance use recovery. Our youth-focused programming includes information that promotes healthy relationships, non-violent conflict resolution, and respect for personal boundaries to reduce the rates of perpetration of domestic violence. Our prevention educators work with schools, employers, businesses, faith groups, first responders, healthcare workers, and community organizations to provide training on the dynamics and impacts of intimate partner violence.



## Counseling

Helpmate's counseling program provides group and individual counseling services, as well as consultation and training across other programs at Helpmate. Survivors receive trauma-informed and DV-informed care aimed at healing the emotional and behavioral impacts of domestic violence. Weekly groups include: Domestic Violence Education Class, Empowerment Group, Latina Support Group, and African American Women's Support Group. Helpmate counseling staff also partner with other programs at Helpmate to provide a series of support groups for families who have experienced domestic violence. The Helpmate counseling program receives a high number of inquiries and referrals for services. Individual and group counseling services are provided by a team of graduate interns and Helpmate's licensed therapists.



## Court Advocacy

Helpmate has an office on the 2nd floor of the Buncombe County Judicial Complex. Having advocates on site for the entirety of the business day helps ensure survivors always have access to supportive services when they enter the courthouse. Court advocates assist survivors who are seeking both civil and criminal remedies. Whether survivors are filing for Domestic Violence Protective Orders, custody, divorce or criminal charges, court advocates offer information about the processes and accompany survivors to court dates. Court advocates also assist survivors who have criminal charges that are a result of their experiences with domestic violence. Advocates meet with survivor defendants both in and out of the custody of the sheriff's department. Liaising with numerous court personnel, attorneys, and community partners, Court Advocates ensure that survivors are informed, connected to appropriate resources, and that their voices are heard in the often overwhelming and triggering legal proceedings in which they participate.



## Housing Supports

Housing case managers work with some of the most vulnerable survivors who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness due to the abuse they have suffered. Our case managers receive referrals for folks in need of housing stabilization services and work with them to create case plans. We assist survivors in identifying, obtaining and maintaining safe housing. We collaborate with other agencies and landlords to educate our community about our housing program and, in doing so, increase the number of units for survivors to rent. We offer rental assistance for survivors accepted into our housing programs and prioritize entry into those programs based on level of danger the survivor is experiencing. In addition, we have a transitional housing program called iRise. This is an intensive case management program that offers wrap around services related to housing, including rental assistance to survivors and supports survivors who experienced childhood trauma, have barriers to tenancy and high lethality indicators for domestic violence.



## Children's Services

Helpmate's Child and Family Advocates work with survivors to identify and access services, supports, and resources for their children who have been impacted by domestic violence. We offer training and consultation for professionals in the community who serve children experiencing domestic abuse. The team helps survivors address their reproductive health and to access pre- and post-natal care to give their children the best start possible. We support survivors by advocating with Child Protective Services and Juvenile/Family Courts when necessary to help keep children safe and interrupt the inter-generational cycle of violence. We believe that no child should have to live in a home where there is violence and that early intervention is the key to preventing life-long impacts of trauma exposure.



# Thanks to All Our Donors!

This list includes all gifts between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

Members of the 2022-2023 Safe Haven Society have been bolded. Thank you for your leadership gifts.

Members of the 2022-2023 Legacy Giving Society are noted by asterisks.

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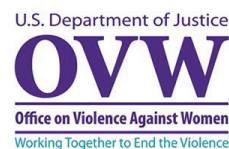
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