



At the Center for Empowerment and Education, we acknowledge the impact that oppression, war and conflicts have on survivors. They are left unprotected and at risk for violence (physically, emotionally, sexually, and spiritually as well as other forms) in areas of conflict throughout the world. For example, Lebanon currently hosts about 500,000 Syrian children between the ages of 3 and 18 and it is estimated that 54% of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon is under the age of 18. While many of these children face risks related to poverty, food insecurity, lack of access to healthcare, and forced labor, girls are also vulnerable to additional gendered risks including child marriage, domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual exploitation and assault, as well as intimidation and fear of violence within their communities.¹ In addition, one study from 2019 found that 75% of women in Ukraine reported experiencing some form of violence since the age of 15, and one in three reported experiencing physical or sexual violence.²

Since its founding in 1975, The Center has been a safe haven as the sole provider of services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield County. Our primary prevention and education programs underscore our steadfast belief that an informed community is a safer one. We are committed to our vision to end the violence against individuals and families and foster equality and empowerment for all.

The staff and volunteers at The Center are dedicated to empowering our clients during this extremely challenging time while tragedies are unfolding not only nationally, affecting the Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQ+ and other communities at risk, but also around the world. These include Afghanistan, China with Uighur Muslims, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Kashmir, Mexico, Nigeria, Paraguay, Palestine, Peru, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen. We understand that the conflicts named do not constitute an exhaustive list.



We are committed to understanding and valuing history as it affects us as a community. We recognize that decisions made by society have created barriers that no one should have to overcome, and that through establishing a culture and climate of diversity and equity, we can achieve inclusion and justice.

We will actively acknowledge and promote each individual's experience and identity in order to understand the prejudices they face and privileges they have in order to cultivate a culture and environment of affirmation and support.

We will continue to actively listen and incorporate survivors' voices in order to passionately advocate for all survivors, explore their rights and options, and work to prevent violence through education and awareness in order to develop a climate and culture of trust, respect, dignity, inclusivity, and justice.

Sources:

¹ Roupetz, S., Garbern, S., Michael, S. *et al.* Continuum of sexual and gender-based violence risks among Syrian refugee women and girls in Lebanon. *BMC Women's Health* **20**, 176 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-020-01009-2>

² Bindel, J., 2022. *How Ukrainian women will suffer*. [online] UnHerd. Available at: <https://unherd.com/2022/03/how-ukrainian-women-will-suffer/?1647183256086> [Accessed 13 April 2022].