

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF GREATER DANBURY?

April 5th, 2023

For almost 50 years, The Women's Center of Greater Danbury has been the foundation in Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield Counties for services surrounding domestic violence and sexual assault, but where did they go? The answer? We didn't go anywhere; we are still in the same place we have been for decades, 2 West Street, Danbury, Connecticut, and are now doing business under the new name of The Center for Empowerment and Education.

In 2021, we completed a rebrand, and we are now The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE). Why the name change you ask? Over the past few years, we have asked ourselves many questions about who we are and strive to be. Throughout this process, we consistently recognized that while our services are inclusive of all genders, our name said otherwise. We knew we needed to change that, and we did. In addition, we asked ourselves questions about what we do and what we hope to see happen as a result of our work. The same two words kept surfacing in each conversation, Empowerment, and Education. From there, The Center for Empowerment and Education was a natural new name to represent every aspect of who we are today.

Over the past year, we have continued to dig into who we are, unearthing the reality of our work and underlying themes of who we are at our core. We empower individuals to find their voice and choose their path toward healing as they rebuild their lives from interpersonal violence. We are preventing and reducing interpersonal violence in the community through prevention education and awareness. We are reducing trauma by stopping violence from manifesting in the first place.

As we continued excavating, we started asking ourselves if our mission and vision aligned with everything we do. We asked ourselves what compass we were using to drive decision-making. We asked ourselves questions, we asked the community questions, we asked stakeholders questions, and we asked clients questions. We learned a lot about ourselves throughout this exploration, and on April 3, 2023, we approved a new vision and mission statement and found our compass with five (5) Guiding Principles.

Our new mission represents who we are, what we do, and who we serve: Our mission is to break the cycle of interpersonal violence through empowerment, education, and support services utilizing inclusive, trauma-informed, and client-centered practices for all individuals in the community.

Our new vision represents what we hope to achieve as a result of our mission: Our vision is to create safer communities free from interpersonal violence for all individuals in Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield Counties.

Our Guiding Principles will serve as our compass, guiding our decision-making into the future:

Empowerment: Empowering individuals to find their voice and choose their path towards healing as they rebuild their lives from interpersonal violence.

- We believe that choice is about knowing what options are available, respecting an individual's choice, and having the resources to make the choices they want.

Education: Preventing and reducing interpersonal violence in the community through prevention education and awareness.

- Certain risk factors are linked to a greater likelihood of interpersonal violence; understanding these risk factors can provide greater opportunities for prevention.
- We recognize that our education, prevention and supportive services can help individuals identify if they are a victim of interpersonal violence.

Survivor Centered: Uplifting the voices of lived experience to impact systemic change.

- We allow survivors to guide our work and center their voices and experiences.
- We encourage survivors to no longer be silent, to support one another, and become one voice with a vision to end interpersonal violence.

Social Change: Actively working to shift the culture that allows interpersonal violence to thrive.

- Interpersonal violence is fueled by all forms of oppression. Our programs and services honor intersectionality, allowing the link between oppression and interpersonal violence to become visible to all.
- We provide services to all individuals impacted by interpersonal violence regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, nationality, socioeconomic status or religion.

Collaboration: Building safer communities through collaboration centered on diversity, equity and inclusion.

- We can best support survivors and prevent interpersonal violence when many people and organizations come together, learn from one another and create solutions together.

As anyone does when they find their compass, they pull over for a moment. While pulled over, we recognized that our website could work differently for us and for each of you. After months of working closely with our ThinkSisu team, we redesigned our website to represent who CEE is today and who we strive to be in the years to come. So please join us in celebrating our new Mission and Vision, and our Guiding Principles by visiting our refreshed website at www.thecenterct.org

As always, we want to remind our community that we are here. If you or someone you know needs support, our no-cost confidential hotlines are available 24/7.

24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline (203)731-5206

24/7 Sexual Assault Hotline (203)731-5204