



Intimate Partner Homicide in Danbury

DANBURY, CT, October 27, 2023— Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) is meant to be a month that brings awareness to the community, helping the community learn more about it, learn what can be done to break the cycle, and learn how to prevent it from happening. However, the rise of Intimate Partner Homicides in the State of Connecticut is bringing more awareness to this public health crisis than any awareness month could ever do, and it happened again in Danbury.

We at The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE), the only state-certified domestic violence and sexual assault resource for the 11-town Greater Danbury region, know all too well the risks that domestic violence victims face daily. We know the fear that cascades throughout their body as they experience violence. We comprehend the vital importance of safety planning to help victims feel safer in their situation, be aware of their options, and know how to reach support. We understand the fear and anxiety that a victim experiences as they begin seeking a way to a safer life. We know how dangerous it can be for a victim when they finally decide to leave their abuser. We are there to provide each victim and survivor with the resources, support, and advocacy to navigate traumatic situations. We are there to help them find the life they all deserve, a life free from violence. We know these feelings because we are not only advocates, but we are a survivor-centered and survivor-led organization.

In the United States, “55% of all homicides are IPV-related.” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). Our 11-town service area has witnessed a staggering increase in Interpersonal Violence (IPV) in our community resulting in Intimate Partner Homicide. Since 2019 alone, our region has lost over 9 lives due to domestic violence. We want nothing more than to stop interpersonal violence from happening. We want to see laws and policies changed to help support victims and prosecute perpetrators.

As our community continues to feel the devastating effects of continued violence, we want the community to know that we are here. Services are available at our main office at 2 West Street, Danbury, CT. In addition, any victim can walk into Danbury Superior Court and work with our Family Violence Victim Advocates (FVVA) to receive services. The crisis navigation services offered at all of our locations are critical. Each Advocate is available to support and advocate for victims throughout the criminal court process for domestic violence cases. Our FVVAs at Danbury Superior Court and our Advocates at our main office are available to assist a victim with safety planning, obtain a Temporary Restraining Order and/or Protective Order, and, when requested, seek emergency sheltering options throughout the state.

In addition to advocacy services, each Advocate is available to help victims become aware of their options and help them make informed decisions. We empower individuals to find their voice and choose their path toward healing as they rebuild their lives. We believe that choice is about knowing what options are available and respecting an individual’s choice. We believe in centering victims’ lived experience and honoring that they are the expert in their own lives. We do not believe in telling someone what to do next, but rather offering resources, options and support and empowering them to make the decisions that feel best for them.

We walk alongside survivors daily at CEE. We know their names, we know their faces, and we hear their voices. CEE is committed to elevating the voices of those with lived experience to impact systemic change to help clear the path for those walking it in the future. CEE will continue to be an organization



that lifts up and encourages survivors to no longer be silent, to support one another, and to become one voice with a vision to end the violence.

We know that there are simply not enough resources to meet the actual needs of the community, and it is all falling on the heels of the devastating reality that funding for interpersonal violence is at risk of a 40% cut beginning in 2025. We can't risk that, and we can't risk opening up a news article only to discover that yet another person has lost their life due to domestic violence, and yet another family and community is devastated by the impact of that tragic and preventable loss.

If you or someone you know needs support, our no-cost confidential hotlines are available 24/7. Please call, CEE is here, we believe you, and we support you. The Center for Empowerment and Education will be here until the violence stops.

Domestic Violence Hotline (203)731-5206

Sexual Assault Hotline (203)731-5204

About The Center for Empowerment and Education

Since its founding in 1975, The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE), formerly The Women's Center of Greater Danbury, has been a safe haven as the sole provider of services to victims of domestic and sexual violence in the Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield County areas. Each year, CEE serves over 30,000 individuals from area communities with confidential services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and provided at no cost.

CEE provides support services in the form of counseling and advocacy, crisis intervention, and emergency shelter. Their advocates empower individuals to find their voice and choose their path toward healing as they rebuild their lives. CEE prevents and reduces interpersonal violence in the community through prevention education and awareness. CEE is reducing trauma by stopping violence from manifesting in the first place. CEE believes that everyone deserves to live a life free from violence.

All funds provided to CEE support their critically needed domestic violence, sexual assault, and resource services for adults and children in an 11-town service area, including: Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, and Sherman. CEE is a member of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence.

NOTE TO MEDIA: For further comment, please reach out to Ashley Dunn, CEO of The Center for Empowerment and Education, contact her at ashley.d@thecenterct.org

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