



CEE Celebrates 20 Years of SafeWalk, Marking Two Decades of Community Support for Survivors

DANBURY, August 31, 2026 – This October, The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE) will celebrate a major milestone as it launches the 20th Annual SafeWalk, a community-wide event held during Domestic Violence Awareness Month to raise awareness, inspire action, and raise funds to support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Since its inception in 2006, SafeWalk has become one of greater Danbury's most recognized and enduring community events, raising more than \$1 million to support CEE's no-cost and confidential services. Over the past two decades, thousands of participants, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners have come together through SafeWalk to stand with survivors and help create safer communities.

This year's SafeWalk will once again feature six local community walks, taking place in Brookfield, Danbury, New Milford, Newtown, and Ridgefield on October 3, 2026, and Bethel on October 10, 2026, as well as a virtual participation option throughout the month, allowing supporters to join from anywhere.

"Twenty years ago, SafeWalk began as a simple but powerful way for our community to show support for survivors," said Samantha Flynn, Chief Development Officer of CEE.

"Celebrating 20 years of SafeWalk is not only a reflection of how far this event has come, but also a testament to the extraordinary generosity of our community. Because of the thousands of individuals, sponsors, volunteers, and partners who have participated over the past two decades, more than \$1 million has been raised to support survivors and strengthen critical services throughout our region. We are proud of this legacy and excited to continue walking together toward a future free from violence," said Kelly Rybczyk, Executive Director of CEE.

SafeWalk serves as more than a fundraiser. It is a visible demonstration of the community's commitment to ending interpersonal violence and ensuring that survivors have access to safety, healing, and support. Funds raised through the event help sustain CEE's critical services, including crisis intervention, emergency shelter, advocacy, prevention education, counseling, and support groups.

Nearly half of CEE's operating budget is funded through charitable contributions, making SafeWalk an essential component of the organization's ability to serve thousands of individuals annually throughout Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield Counties.

Participants may register as individuals or form teams with friends, family members, coworkers, or community groups. Pets are welcome to participate, and each registration includes a commemorative SafeWalk t-shirt, with pet participants receiving a SafeWalk bandana. Participants are also encouraged to create fundraising pages, share their SafeWalk experience on social media, and join the conversation using #SafeWalk2026.

As CEE celebrates SafeWalk's 20th anniversary, the organization invites the community to honor the event's legacy while helping build a future free from violence.

To create a fundraising team, sponsor this event, or make a donation, please visit www.thecenterct.org/events or contact Linda Cummins, Fundraising & Events Manager at (203) 731-5200 x232 or linda.c@thecenterct.org.



If you or someone you know needs support, CEE's no-cost confidential hotlines are available 24/7. Please call, CEE is here, we believe you, and we support you.

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 20,000 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 Kelly Rybczyk, Executive Director of The Center for Empowerment and Education, Kelly.r@thecenterct.org

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