INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Human Trafficking Awareness Month
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
In The Mainstream: Together We Rise
Staff Spotlight: Ann Langenstein

let's start the conversation.
INSIDE THIS ISSUE
What's in a Donation?
Volunteer Spotlight & Teen Dating Violence
We're Hiring, Shelter Needs, & Volunteer Adopt Our Families
In The Mainstream:
Donation Spotlight
Human Trafficking Awareness Month
Together We Rise
Our Work
34th Annual Duck Race
I Run With Survivors 5K/1 Mile Walk
Opportunities
Connect with Carol
Mark Your Calendar
Winter 2022

34th Annual Duck Race
The Duck Race is CFPA's signature fundraising event and features a race of 30,000 rubber ducks. Every 5th duck is a grand prize, to travel packages, gift cards, technology, and more. Ducks are available for purchase beginning in June. Stay tuned for more information!

I Run With Survivors 5K/1 Mile Walk
Join CFPA on Saturday, April 9, 2022 in the Village of East Peoria for the fifth annual “I Run With Survivors” 5K run / walk in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. All ages are invited to participate and the course begins at 8:00 am. Registration will open in February. We need your help! Partner with CFPA to sponsor this important event. Please reach out to Cecily Young at 309-691-0551 or cyoung@centerforpreventionofabuse.org.

Connect with Carol
First Name
Last Name
Email Address
Message
I Run With Survivors 5K/1 Mile Walk | 4/9
33rd Annual Duck Race | 2021

Fact vs. Fiction Edition

Using our expertise to provide services to survivors and educating the community is one of the most important roles to end human trafficking and is essential. But the facts are that many people do not understand the heinous human rights violations committed by traffickers. The Center for Prevention of Abuse’s Human Trafficking Services (HTS) Department just celebrated its fourth anniversary. While we continue to lead the way in victim services, education and awareness, we rely on the support from the community can change lives.

Fact: Many survivors have been trafficked by family members including parents.

Fact: Human trafficking is always a violent crime.

Fact: The most pervasive myth about human trafficking is that it often involves kidnapping or physically forcing someone into a situation. In reality, most traffickers use psychological means such as, tricking, defrauding, manipulating, or deceiving the victim into believing they will benefit from their participation in the activities to which they are being coerced. The fact is that the use of psychological manipulation is far more common than physical force, and many victims are able to prevent or escape from trafficking situations on their own.

Fact: Human trafficking is NOT the same crime as human smuggling. Human trafficking is a violation of a person’s human rights, while human smuggling is a violation of a country’s immigration laws. A person can be trafficked and also smuggled—a case is considered human trafficking if the person is forced or coerced into commercial sex or labor/services. But when a person is trafficked, they may be a victim of human trafficking even if they are also a victim of human smuggling.

Fact: Human trafficking occurs in many forms throughout Central Illinois. From forced labor to forced marriage, there are many ways in which traffickers take advantage of vulnerable individuals. It is estimated that there are at least 700,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States alone. This includes not only the trafficking of women and children, but also the trafficking of men for commercial sexual services or forced labor.

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Fact: Human trafficking does not occur in the United States. It happens in every country, including the United States. In fact, experts estimate that there are at least 700,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States alone. This includes not only the trafficking of women and children, but also the trafficking of men for commercial sexual services or forced labor.

Fact: Human trafficking is a crime that affects people of all ages, genders, and races. It is estimated that there are at least 700,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States alone. This includes not only the trafficking of women and children, but also the trafficking of men for commercial sexual services or forced labor.

Fact: Human trafficking affects countries around the world. While it is estimated that there are at least 700,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States alone, it is clear that the crime affects not only the United States, but also countries around the world. It is important to recognize that human trafficking is a global problem and that we must work together to end it.

Fact: Human trafficking is NOT a crime of violence. Human trafficking is a crime of violence, exploitation, and corruption. It is a crime that affects people of all ages, genders, and races, and it is estimated that there are at least 700,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States alone. This includes not only the trafficking of women and children, but also the trafficking of men for commercial sexual services or forced labor.

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The Center for Prevention of Abuse is proud to recognize January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. We hope everyone recognizes that they have an important role to play in addressing this human rights issue. CFPA is an established leader in the fight against human trafficking. As one of the only agencies in the state of Illinois with a dedicated Human Trafficking Services (HTS) Department and as the trained and sanctioned human trafficking services provider for the forty-six county Central Region of Illinois, we take great pride in the work we do. The HTS department is centered on providing trauma-informed victim-centered care for all survivors of human trafficking and facilitating statewide human trafficking awareness trainings and outreach initiatives.

Over the past four years, CFPA has provided hundreds of human trafficking trainings to thousands of people throughout the state of Illinois. Our trainings and outreach efforts are vital to building a statewide coalition of anti-human trafficking advocates. Our mission at CFPA is simple: We want to help all people live free from violence and abuse. We know what it means to be mission-focused in fighting human trafficking and raising awareness and we want you to join us in this fight.

CFPA offers industry-specific trainings for law enforcement, first responders, healthcare workers, social service providers, victim advocates, the transportation industry, utility workers, city officials, and many others. We also offer a training for the hospitality and tourism industry that meets and exceeds the guidelines of the Illinois Lodging Services Human Trafficking Recognition Training Act. In addition to industry-specific trainings, we are always happy to educate and train civic organizations as well as religious and community groups.

Our trainings define human trafficking, cover applicable laws, local trends, and highlight real world survivor stories. We look at industry-specific red flags and warning signs. Finally, and most importantly, everyone who receives CFPA’s training knows what to do should they suspect a trafficking situation is occurring. Human trafficking is a reality in every state in our nation, and Illinois is no exception. CFPA feels an obligation to do all we can to prevent this terrible crime.

Knowledge is power and we want to empower you as an anti-human trafficking advocate. If you are interested in scheduling a training for your organization, please call us today at 309-691-0551.
Often when a new year begins, we take stock of where we are versus where we wish to be (we see you, healthy eating goal, you too, screen time goal) and begin to consider changes that need to be made. Those changes may include placing limits on activities we engage in, such as limiting our dessert intake or minutes of screen time. We place these limits on ourselves in order to protect us from something which, when experienced in excess, may cause harm. While setting these limits – or boundaries – may seem restrictive, they can actually be very helpful in meeting our needs, goals, and values.

Boundary-setting is a form of self-care. Thinking through what we are comfortable and not comfortable with is important to our physical, emotional, and even digital health. Students in the tri-county area who participate in CFPA’s prevention programming learn about boundaries, the importance of setting them, and how to communicate them.

Boundary-setting applies to all aspects of one’s life and is key to maintaining healthy relationships with family, friends, co-workers, dating partners, and spouses. Communicating and respecting boundaries are signs of a healthy a relationship. Sharing something like, “I enjoy time with you but also need my alone time to recharge,” is honest and helps those in our life understand what we need and value.

When boundaries are not discussed or respected, that could be an indicator the relationship is unhealthy or, worse yet, abusive. If our partner says, “I need you to stop texting others because when you do it makes me jealous,” then it is a warning sign that they have trust issues and may be trying to exert control. Being afraid to talk about boundaries because our partner may react negatively or violently is a red flag that we are in an unhealthy relationship.

Helping young people recognize this red flag and others is how we share our Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month:

**Boundary-Setting**

By: Laura Kowalske, Director of Prevention Education

*To download CFPA’s Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month toolkit, visit centerforpreventionofabuse.org and go to the Prevention Education tab. This year’s toolkit includes activities, discussion points, and more to continue the conversation about teen dating violence and relationship abuse.*
what's in a donation.

At the Center for Prevention of Abuse, we are so thankful for the community support received through donations. We want you to know exactly where your money goes and how it impacts the lives of all who come to us seeking peace.

- $5 could provide personal hygiene products for one person staying in our emergency shelter
- $10 could provide fresh produce for a week’s worth of healthy meals for a family in our emergency shelter
- $25 could provide a gas card to help outreach clients get to and from appointments with our counselors
- $50 could help survivors afford their monthly medications
- $100 could cover the cost of one hour-long classroom presentation on violence prevention education
- $350 could cover the cost of our 24/7 crisis hotline operation for one day
- $500 could provide funding for an Adult Protective Services caseworker to investigate possible abuse in the home of an elderly individual
- $1,000 could provide six hours of language translation for a trafficking survivor whose native language is not English
- $2,500 could provide one month in safe shelter for an individual fleeing a violent or abusive situation
- $5,000 could provide two months of therapy for one sexual assault survivor
- $10,000 could cover the cost of Safe From the Start for one month, a violence intervention program for children ages 0–5 who have witnessed or experienced an act of violence at home or in the community
- $20,000 could provide six years of therapy for one child
- $50,000 could provide six months of therapy for 10 children
- $100,000 could cover the cost of one hour-long classroom presentation on violence prevention education and a year of therapy for one child
- $250,000 could provide funding for a Violence Intervention Program for children ages 0–5
- $500,000 could provide two months of therapy for 50 sexual assault survivors
- $1,000,000 could provide six months of therapy for 100 children
- $5,000,000 could cover the cost of Safe From the Start for 10 years
- $10,000,000 could provide funding for a Violence Intervention Program for children ages 0–5 for 10 years

**Give the gift of peace today by making a monetary donation.**

Donations can be designated to specific services or as a general donation.

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Honorariums and Memorials
Honorariums may be made to celebrate a special occasion and memorials may be given to acknowledge a lost friend or loved one.

Stock, Real Estate, and Insurance Policies
Donations can be made in the form of capital assets.

Donations that Leave a Legacy
Remembering CFPA in your estate plans can save and change lives for many years to come. A bequest can be designated to a certain program of CFPA or used at CFPA’s discretion. However, if a donor wishes, a bequest can be designated to one of two endowment funds. The Slane Endowment Fund supports the general operations of CFPA and the McPheeters Endowment Fund supports the Prevention Education program.

For more information about monetary donations, honorariums, memorials, capital assets, and legacy donations, please call 309-691-0551.

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in the mainstream. Together We Rise

*Originally published by WMBD on December 22, 2021*

When a violent crime happens in central Illinois communities, many times the victims face a long road to recovery. But how do they get to a point of healing? There is one local program working to offer solutions.

“I was dealing with domestic violence with my kid’s dad for years and bypassed a lot of it until he put a gun to my son’s head,” said one local mother. It was the breaking point for her as a survivor. We’ll call her “Ondrea” for her safety and privacy. “My son would talk about it so freely, like nothing ever happened,” said Ondrea. “He could be walking in the grocery store, and he would just [say], ‘My dad put a gun to my head.’ He thought it was normal.”

Ondrea reached out to the Center for Prevention of Abuse in Peoria. There, she met a legal advocate who introduced her to Safe From the Start, a free, referral-based therapy program for children up through the age of five.

“We see young people who have experienced trauma or abuse,” said Carol Merna, the CEO of the Center for Prevention of Abuse. “It could be an age-inappropriate movie, video games, a shooting in the neighborhood, a fight, domestic violence, of course, sexual assault, anything that they’ve seen that affects them in an adverse way. That’s an experience that we want to be able to help them process and hopefully help them find some recovery from it, so it doesn’t affect them the rest of their lives,” Merna said. She explained since 2001, more than 650 families, including Ondrea and her son, have utilized the services of Safe From the Start.

“He just would constantly talk about guns and constantly talk about killing people and he started becoming very inappropriate,” said Ondrea.

As part of the program, a therapist performs baseline behavioral and development analyses on the child and a stress index on the caregiver. Then the child participates in about six, 30–45 minute long play therapy sessions. “When children are very young, they don’t always have the language to express what’s happened to them. But with play therapy, play is how a child learns,” said Joni Lyons, former program administrator who worked at CFPA for the last 14 years. Throughout the program, the kids have access to costumes, games, books, figurines, and a sand tray where they can create their own worlds as the therapist analyzes. Clients are taught how to process their emotional traumas in healthy ways.

Success looks different for each client, but research-based follow-up assessments and caretaker responses offer insight. “It’s exciting to see lives changed. And you think there’s hope. There’s always hope, and these children are getting services to renew their hope, to renew the caregiver’s hope,” said Lyons.

That’s been the case for Ondrea, after she said play therapy helped her son open up about his trauma to program therapists. “He’s happy. He’s a normal, five-year-old now. You wouldn’t know that anything ever happened to him,” she said.
we’re hiring

visit centerforpreventionofabuse.org/careers to view current job opportunities

shelter needs.

Fresh meat, eggs, milk, and fresh produce
Canned tuna and chicken
Coffee, cream, and sugar
Oatmeal
Microwavable rice, pasta, and other sides
Peanut butter and jelly
Boiled water and juice boxes
Cereals, granola bars, Pop-Tarts
Healthy snack items for children
Canned fruits and vegetables
Canned soups, stews, and pastas
Cleaning supplies: Antibacterial wipes, bleach-free cleaner, sponges
Pajamas for a variety of ages and genders

volunteer opportunities.

Medical Advocates

When someone presents as a victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse/assault in local emergency departments, the hospital calls CFPA for a medical advocate. Our medical advocates go to the hospital to assist with the individual’s immediate needs and provide information about their rights as a victim. CFPA is currently in need of second and third shift volunteers.

CFPA provides training for all interested medical advocates prior to volunteering on calls. For more information, please email Kelly Ward at kward@centerforpreventionofabuse.org

Thank you to all donors and groups who generously donated and volunteered during the holiday season! Due to the amount of donations received, not all groups are pictured below.

above: We could not be more grateful for Heartland Health Services and their donation drive to collect items for our general wishlist during the holiday season

below: Thank you to Sheri Zalar and Judi Beck from the Peoria Women’s Club for the donation of homemade blankets

above: Each year, our supporters and friends at Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh - Peoria Chapter and the Peoria Hindu Temple host a donation drive for CFPA and our clients during the holiday season in honor of Diwali. This year, 11 different organizations were involved in the Sewa Diwali Food Drive – making it the biggest donation yet! Thank you for this year’s incredibly generous donation, continued support of our mission, and making a huge impact in the lives of those we serve!

below: Many thanks to Barbara Selring, Barb Blanco, Martha Dakin, Geojean Lipovsky, and community for the generous monetary donation

above: We are thankful for the group from Washington Presbyterian Church for their landscaping work at CFPA

right: Thank you to Senator and Mrs. Win Stoller (IL-37) for the donation of items to help restock CFPA’s pantry

right: Kudos to Tori Bogatitus, Devin Soldati, and Chelsea Hartman for volunteering to clean the grounds at the Carol House of Hope

above: Thank you to the East Peoria Women’s Club for your Socktober donation to CFPA

If your organization, business, club, or group is interested in doing a food or donation drive to benefit CFPA, please call Kelly Ward at 309-691-0551 to find out about our immediate or mass donation needs.

*photo credit: CFPA
Staff Spotlight.

Ann Langenstein

Director of Human Trafficking Services

Meet Ann Langenstein, the newest addition to CFPA’s leadership team. Design and Communications Coordinator, Clayton Frankel, interviewed Ann to welcome her to CFPA and to get a glimpse into her new job position.

Clayton Frankel (CF): What inspired you to work here at CFPA?

Ann Langenstein (AL): During my career, I have always fought to protect abuse victims. CFPA’s vision “build a safe and peaceful community” aligns perfectly with my career goals and what I want to help accomplish with this position. CFPA has a long successful history of helping survivors of abuse by working collaboratively to find solutions. I’m very excited to be a part of this great organization!

CF: Can you give us an overview of your career journey?

AL: Most recently, I worked in the Madison County Circuit Court, felony division. I was the assistant to the chief criminal judge and oversaw the Domestic Violence Accountability Court. While there, we had the opportunity to team up with the National Network for Safe Communities (NNSC) at John Jay College to implement the Intimate Partner Violence Intervention (IPVI) in our community. Serving as Project Manager, I worked with local law enforcement, court personnel, and advocates to execute IPVI, an offender-focused, victim-centered strategy that addresses the most serious and chronic intimate partner violence.

CF: How has everything you’ve done in your career so far lead up to you working for CFPA as the Director of Human Trafficking?

AL: In my career, I’ve seen hundreds of the most violent abuse cases. The only solution is coming together to help end the cycle. This is why I strongly believe in a coordinated community response. I had the unique opportunity to work collaboratively with community stakeholders: advocates, law enforcement, state’s attorneys, probation officers, mayors, and social service agencies. Whether you’re dealing with intimate partner violence or human trafficking, it’s important to build trust and not to inflict further harm onto the victim. Historically, we as a society have expected the victim to “act;” leave the abuser, call 911, reach out for help, don’t put yourself in that situation, or we have persecuted them for past behavior, drug abuse, etc. We need to keep the focus on the offender and the violent criminal acts that they’re perpetrating. A coordinated response will create a more offender-focused, victim-centered environment.

CF: Do you have a personal philosophy that helps guide you through your work?

AL: This quote by the late Bishop Tutu accurately expresses my thoughts on trust, accountability, and creating peace within my community: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” ~Desmond Tutu

CF: Is there anything specific you’re looking forward to as CFPA’s new Director of Human Trafficking Services?

AL: I’m extremely grateful for this opportunity and excited to be working with such a compassionate dedicated team. I am also looking forward to collaborating with the other Directors and team members with years and years of experience. I welcome their advice and guidance.

CF: Anything you’re hoping to accomplish for you or your department?

AL: To work collaboratively with my team to continue the great success the department has already seen, to listen to the needs of human trafficking victims, and to strategize next steps going forward. For me, its not about reinventing the wheel, it’s about helping to implement and broaden the concepts and plans that the team has established and grow from there.

CF: Of course of work, what do you like to do when you have some free time?

AL: I love spending time with my family and my dog. Coco. My son Kyle is a freshman at the University of Illinois and my daughter Alison is a senior in high school and will be attending Illinois State University in the fall. I spend most of my free time watching dance competitions and basketball games. On a quiet evening, you’ll find me playing scrabble with Coco on my lap and sipping on a glass of Sauvignon Blanc with the smooth sound of jazz playing in the background.

CFPA’s Adopt Our Families program was a great success this year! With the help of very generous and thoughtful community donors, more than 60 families were “adopted” and received gifts. We would also like to extend gratitude to all of our volunteers who joined us on our wrapping nights to get all of the families’ gifts wrapped in time for the holidays! The eagerness to support a family demonstrates to our clients just how much this community cares about them. We appreciate all the love and light sent our way this holiday season. We look forward to another successful Adopt Our Families program in 2022!

The Piecemakers

After sewing for themselves and loved ones for several years, the Piecemakers decided it was time to use their skills to make a difference in the lives of those in our community. Contact was made with Fran Reyes at CFPA in the fall of 2015. That first year, the need was for 5 receiving blankets for their clients. In 2019, they sewed 60 receiving blankets. As the years have gone by, they have been delighted with the opportunity to sew more receiving blankets for new moms to cuddle and snuggle their precious babies.

“We are excited to continue to meet this need in the lives of new moms and babies.”

“If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” ~Desmond Tutu

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or medical advocate for the Center for Prevention of Abuse, please contact Kelly Ward at 309-691-0551.
Thank You!

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Vicky Benedict
Steve Baumann
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September 1, 2021 – November 30, 2021

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Andria Temporal
Erin Montgomery & Drew Shultz
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IN MEMORY OF
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