

## 2017 Walk for Hope Rescheduled

Thank you to everyone who planned on attending our 10th Annual Walk for Hope! Unfortunately, we had to cancel the walk due to severe weather.

In place of the walk, we will be hosting an Open House, where people can pick up their Walk for Hope t-shirts, drop off their pledges, and experience our various victim impact projects.

### Mutual Ground Open House

**Friday, November 3rd from 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

**Saturday, November 4th from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Mutual Ground, 418 Oak Ave, Aurora, IL, 60506**



## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

Our mission at Mutual Ground is to provide education, awareness, and life-changing services that empower individuals, families, and communities to end the cycle of domestic and sexual violence.

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we have reached out to the community through education presentations, fundraising events, and social media to promote our mission. Continue reading to learn more about barriers to leaving an abusive relationship, how you can support survivors, and Mutual Ground's services.

### Ways You Can Support Survivors

- ◆ Listen to their story
- ◆ Believe them
- ◆ Ask how you can help
- ◆ Hold abusers accountable for their actions
- ◆ Combat victim blaming and rape culture
- ◆ Empower survivors to take back control of their healing
- ◆ Confront harmful language
- ◆ Do not judge them
- ◆ Respect boundaries
- ◆ Volunteer with Mutual Ground (Visit our website for details)
- ◆ Donate items to our shelter (visit our website for details)
- ◆ Don't tell them what to do

## Letter From Our Executive Director

Domestic Violence Awareness Month is upon us once again. I have been asked by some, why do we have to have awareness months about domestic violence? Isn't everyone aware by now? My answer to this question is simple. No.

If they saw what we see on a daily basis here at Mutual Ground, they would understand by continuing to spread awareness is so important. It's not only important during the month of October, but every month, actually every day. That's why the word "awareness" is part of our mission statement. Here at Mutual Ground, bringing awareness to this issue is the most important first step to getting people in our community the help they need. Not just awareness of the issue, but awareness of how to prevent it, how to intervene, and how to continue to get the support you need to live a safe and happy life.

If you are interested in having us present at your company, church, or civic center please reach out— we would love the opportunity to spread awareness of domestic violence issues and how Mutual Ground can help throughout our community!

*Michelle Meyer*

Michelle Meyer  
Executive Director



# Program Spotlight: Domestic Violence Program

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. **1 in 3 women** and **1 in 4 men** in the United States have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner.

Mutual Ground is a safe place where people come together to break the cycle of domestic violence. With one-on-one and group counseling sessions, safety planning, agency referrals, and much more, we are not just a shelter, we are a solution.

Our Domestic Violence Program served **772** adults and **208** children last year. The department primarily focused on maintaining essential services related to **safety**. Last year, Mutual Ground's Domestic Violence Department implemented many program changes. We developed an **undergraduate internship program** that contributes to students' educational experience while also assisting Mutual Ground in the provision of **hotline**, **child-care**, **legal advocacy**, and **emergency response services**. The department also created **S.E.L.F.** (Safety, Empowerment, Learning & Friendship), a psycho-educational group for new clients who would have otherwise been wait-listed for counseling.



## The Number of Lives Impacted by Mutual Ground



**24-Hour Hotline:** **5,239** people received crisis intervention, guidance, support, information and referrals.

**Emergency Response:** **172** victims of domestic and sexual violence who were receiving care in area emergency rooms were provided emotional support, advocacy, and resource information.

**Counseling & Supportive Services:** **1,209** adults and children in our community received no cost counseling, support services and referrals. Mutual Ground worked with **323** children, in an effort to help them re-claim their childhood.

**Emergency Shelter:** Last year, Mutual Ground provided **90** adults and **113** children with safe shelter. This resulted in **5,944** nights of safety.

**Prevention Education:** **2,575** education programs were presented to student (K-12) in **80** schools throughout Southern Kane and Kendall Counties, reaching more than **56,000** students.

**Court Advocacy:** **796** individuals received assistance with orders of protection, child custody, and other complex legal challenges. Advocates assisted in preparing and filing **291** Orders of Protection to help victims stay safe from abusers.

## Obstacles to Leaving an Abusive Relationship

It is important to understand why victims don't "just leave" an abusive relationship. In reality, the most dangerous time for a victim is when she/he leaves an abusive partner. These are just some of the many barriers a victim might face when trying to leave an abusive relationship:

- ◆ Fear and terror of abuser
- ◆ Lack of access to legal counsel
- ◆ Lack of shelter or housing
- ◆ History of prior ineffective legal intervention
- ◆ Batterer's promises to change
- ◆ Denial and minimization by outsiders
- ◆ Love for abuser
- ◆ Shame, embarrassment, self-blame, and guilt
- ◆ Lack of family or social support
- ◆ Wanting to keep the family together
- ◆ Fear of not being believed
- ◆ Isolation
- ◆ Religious beliefs
- ◆ Abuser threatens self harm
- ◆ Low self-esteem
- ◆ Lack of money
- ◆ Plus many, many more



## Be a GEM and Give Every Month!



At Mutual Ground all of our programs and services are *free of charge* because of our generous donors. Every donation counts to help us provide our life-changing, and life-saving, services. Becoming a monthly donor is very special to us! It gives us a monthly revenue stream we can count on.

We are honored to partner with State Street Jewelers in Geneva – when you sign up to donate \$40 or more each month you receive a gorgeous pendant necklace or lapel pin especially designed

with Mutual Ground's representative branch with three leaves signifying our prevention, intervention, and ongoing support services. But any amount helps!

Please consider becoming a Mutual Ground GEM and help us meet the needs of victims experiencing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence. Whether it is your neighbor, co-worker, mother, sister, brother, cousin, or even a friend of a friend, we will be here to help.

Please go to our website to sign up to become a GEM!

## Thank You for Attending the Women's Power Lunch!

The 9th Annual Women's Power Lunch was another huge success this year! The event sold out at 300 attendees and raised \$23,000 for Mutual Ground!

We would like to give special thanks to this year's Presenting Sponsor, Nicor Home Solutions, Keynote Speaker Patti Vaquez, Two Brothers Roundhouse, and the SHARE committee who coordinated this amazing event for Mutual Ground!

**Congratulations to the 2017 Woman of Power, Norma Peterson!**



## Thank You to Our 2017 Walk for Hope Sponsors!

### Presenting Sponsor



### Gold Sponsors

GL Precision Tube, Inc., Hollywood Casino Aurora, The Hartford, Meadowvale, Molly Maid

### Silver Sponsors

Aurora Firefighters Local 88, Caterpillar, Comcast, Everett Ventures, LLC, The Exchange Club of the Tri-Cities, The Rotary Club of Geneva, Skyline Tree Service, TekPak, Inc., Whitt Law, LLC, Youngren's Inc.

### Bronze Sponsors

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### Patron Sponsors

Gamma Phi Omega, Eta Chapter, Alarm Detection Systems, Inc., Aurora Bank and Trust, Fox Valley Dialysis

## Upcoming Events

### Mutual Ground Open House

Friday, November 3rd: 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
Saturday, November 4th: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Mutual Ground  
418 Oak Ave, Aurora, IL

### Villa Verone Dinner and Show

Sunday, January 28th, 2018  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Villa Verone  
416 Hamilton St, Geneva, IL

### Mutual Ground Main Event Gala

Friday, April 27th, 2018  
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
Embassy Suites by Hilton  
1823 Abriter Ct, Naperville, IL, 60563

## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services

**Mutual Ground**  
418 Oak Avenue  
Aurora, IL 60506  
(630) 897-0084

Visit us on the web at  
[www.mutualground.org](http://www.mutualground.org)



**Mutual Ground**  
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