



# Annual Report 2019

My Sister's Place  
1436 U Street, NW Suite 303  
Washington, DC 20009



From Our

Executive Director

## Pending ML Drafted Letter

### Board of Directors

Zoe Sharp  
Board Chair

Shawn Wright  
Board Co-Chair

Santina Rocca  
Board Treasurer

Marizy Krulic  
Secretary

Beverly Allen  
Member

Amy Berger  
Member

Jenny Brody, Esq.  
Member

Noelle Dubiansky  
Member

Eva Petko Esber  
Member

Melanie Hind  
Member

Michelle A. Kisloff, Esq.  
Member

Alex Levin  
Member

Lisa E. Rosenthal  
Member

Sophie Sahaf  
Member

Bailey Williams  
Member

Mercedes Lemp  
Ex Officio  
Executive Director



# Our Mission

---

My Sister's Place (MSP) shelters, supports and empowers survivors of domestic violence and their children, while providing leadership and education to build a supportive community.

For over 40 years, MSP has been an innovator in changing lives by providing DC's first hotline and first domestic violence shelter, and now by taking a public health approach to the epidemic of domestic violence. As DC's oldest domestic violence shelter, we have served as a cornerstone of the District's response to this pressing public health issue since 1979, and our impact on DC's community remains as strong as ever.

MSP is unique in offering a full continuum of care from emergency shelter through transitional-to-permanent housing. Our experienced team of case managers and residential counselors provides clinical counseling, case management, and comprehensive services to empower survivors to recover and thrive. MSP also provides training, case consultation, and advocacy to engage communities to prevent violence and abuse. Our goal is to end domestic violence, and empower everyone to build healthy lives and relationships.

# Our Impact

## Supporter Perspective



"I am so grateful to have the opportunity to get to know Britny\* this summer and help this family prepare for third grade. She is truly a brilliant, motivated, and cheerful little girl and it is such a pleasure to spent time with her."

---

- Anna



"As a young girl I saw my aunts flee domestic violence and come to my house. The issue is close to my heart and I will always support My Sister's Place."

---

- Cherry



"For too long, the issue of violence in the home has gone unknown and unnoticed and has caused considerable psychiatric pain to the women who are affected. My Sister's Place sensitizes citizens to this problem, and I am happy to lend my support."

---

-Rob

# Our Impact

---

## Survivor Perspective

"My Sister's Place was the only place I could turn to. They were understanding of what I had been through and truly helped me on my journey to becoming whole again."

---

- Anna

"My Sister's Place has helped restore my purpose...I hope to give back to others what I received from My Sister's Place, especially children facing domestic violence."

---

- Jasmine

"One mean parent and one powerless one can do awful things to a child. Working with the counselors here and sharing with the other women has helped me to take my own power back."

---

-Dominique

# Programs & Services

MSP is unique in offering a continuum of care from emergency shelter through transitional-to-permanent housing. Our experienced team of case managers and residential counselors provide clinical counseling, case management, and comprehensive services to empower survivors to recover and thrive. MSP also provides training, case consultation, and advocacy to engage communities to prevent violence and abuse.



**Sanctuary Plus:** our 90-day emergency shelter provides a safe haven for survivors of domestic violence and their children. Sanctuary Plus provides residents with counseling, case management, daily coaching, and referrals to enable them to successfully transition to permanent housing and independence.



**Transitional-to-Permanent housing program:** our innovative programs helps families fleeing from domestic violence move from crisis and homelessness to safety and stability. Our staff provide case management and other supportive resources aimed to empower RISE participants. Rental payments are subsidized by MSP for one year. Families have the option to remain in the homes they have made for themselves, promoting long-term self-sufficiency and freedom from abuse.



**Community Outreach and Education:** eradicating domestic violence requires a coordinated community response that embraces prevention and intervention. My Sister's Place collaborates with district partners and community members to ensure that service providers and community members are equipped to appropriately respond to victims' needs.



**Aftercare:** upon exiting our residential and non-residential programs, survivors are provided ongoing contact with case-management staff to support them in their independence. Services include counseling, referrals to community-based services, and advocacy as needed. Our goal is to assist clients in building long-term supportive systems within their communities, to reduce the likelihood of future victimization.

# Program Impact

...October 2018- September 2019

Survivors are provided holistic care under the direction of licensed case managers. Our combination of clinical care and a survivor-centered approach to domestic violence allows us to create a continuum of care that leads to empowerment and independence.



1,729 case management and counseling sessions were provided, including psycho-education workshops



281 mental health service sessions empowered survivors to recover and thrive



105 women and children transitioned to transitional or permanent housing



256 safety plans developed with Domestic Violence survivors



157 women and children received aftercare services, including continued case management



296 community members received DV-101 & Bystander Intervention training to educate them in supporting DV Survivors

# Community Outreach & Events

Eradicating domestic violence requires a coordinated community response that embraces prevention and intervention. MSP partners with law enforcement, the legal community, clergy, and others to ensure that service providers and community members are equipped to appropriately respond to victims' needs. MSP raises awareness about domestic violence, in English and Spanish, with a focus on prevention and intervention through the distribution of literature, dissemination of information at events, and innovative projects. Additionally, in collaboration with the DC Volunteer Lawyers Project and DASH, weekly walk-in clinics in the community to provide legal and other support to survivors seeking help.



October 10th, 2019 | 4pm - 8pm  
**THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT**

Join us for an open-art exhibition illustrating the resiliency of survivors and their children who overcame domestic violence and abuse and still prevail with hope and courage. MSP's Clothesline Project empowers survivors to tell her story on her own terms, in her own unique way - breaking through the shroud of silence that has surrounded her experience. Join us as we lift up the stories of our mothers, our sisters, our friends, and our community.

## Clothesline Project 2019

MSP's Annual Clothesline Project empowered survivors to tell their stories on their own terms, in their own unique way - breaking through the shroud of silence that has surrounded their experience, through art-work on t-shirts that represent their journey. Members of the community walked away with an increased knowledge of the plight of survivors and education on how best to support them.



# Partners

My Sister's Place relies on community partners to provide comprehensive care to our clients. The success of our programs and events relies on the dedication of our volunteers, service partners, and donors.

## Thank You:



Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence  
Resource Project (DVRP)  
Ayuda  
Bread for the City  
Cake Brigade  
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)  
Child and Family Services (CFSA)  
Community Family Life Services  
Dance Institute of Washington (DIW)  
DC Metropolitan Police Department  
DC Safe  
DC Volunteer Lawyers Project (DCVLP)  
Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)  
Department of Health (DOH)  
Help Me Grow  
Department of Human Services (DHS)

District Alliance – Safe Housing (DASH)  
District of Columbia Coalition Against Domestic  
Violence (DCCADV)  
Eloquii  
FBI Community Outreach  
House of Ruth  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
Love By The Handles  
Mary's Center  
National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)  
Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG)  
Street Law, Inc.  
The Family Place  
The Rosemount Center  
U.S. Dept. of Justice  
Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)  
University of Maryland

# Sharing your Support



“DEEP WITHIN  
EVERY CRISIS IS AN  
OPPORTUNITY FOR  
SOMETHING  
BEAUTIFUL”

---

-KATE MCGAHAN

In these unprecedented times, it is easy to become overwhelmed with everything going on; between being inundated with negative news stories and not knowing what the future holds, it can often feel like too much. This can be even harder for the families living at the shelter, many of whom have had plans, like moving into their own homes, stalled. Many have lost their jobs, and the ones who are fortunate enough to have kept their jobs are having issues finding child care while kids are out of school. Clients are also stressed about staying healthy while having to go to work.

One of my clients, who is currently pregnant and is considered high risk, called me a few weeks ago inquiring about diapers. The client no longer had income and also had concerns about going into the community to look for diapers. Normally, the shelter is well-stocked with diapers, wipes, and other supplies needed for the clients, but with the pandemic raging, we realized we were going through our supplies faster than usual, and they were not being replenished at the same rate. After getting off the phone with my client, I immediately emailed my friends and family asking if they could support the shelter, and asked specifically for diaper and wipe donations. Many of them rushed to help. Off-hand, I decided to make a post on the neighborhood virtual bulletin board. I was not sure if people would see the post or want to help, but I figured it could not hurt to ask. The response was overwhelming. Within 48 hours, I was inundated with neighbors wanting to donate diapers/wipes/baby supplies, offers to make face masks for the shelter, and inquiries about other ways people could help the families at the shelter. It was so uplifting and heart-warming to see how the community came together to support My Sister's Place. The outpouring of support reminded me of the resilience and compassion of our community, and that even in the toughest of times, we will work to get through this crisis together.

-Sara Feola, MSP Social Worker

# Thank You

Throughout 2019, we continued to help families fleeing domestic violence live free from violence.

Thank you for being a part of our life-saving work.

We couldn't make strides in our programs and the many other initiatives we undertake without the generosity of donors. You are part of a community that cares and for that we thank you! All gifts, regardless of size, are significant and we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support as we know with your generous support we will be able to continue to build upon our commitment to shelter, support and empower survivors of domestic violence and their children, while providing leadership and education to build a supportive community.



# FINANCIALS

4-STAR RATING FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR



Charity Navigator is America's premier independent charity evaluator. They help charitable givers make intelligent giving decisions by providing in-depth, objective ratings and analysis of the financial health and accountability & transparency of America's largest charities. Charity Navigator awarded My Sister's Place four out of a possible four stars. This indicates that My Sister's Place adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities, and that My Sister's Place consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way.

## FY19 Statement of Activities

|  | Without<br>Donor Restrictions | With<br>Donor Restrictions | Total        |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Revenue and support:</b>            |                               |                            |              |
| Grants                                 | \$ 1,838,939                  | \$ -                       | \$ 1,838,939 |
| Other contributions                    | 449,668                       | -                          | 449,668      |
| Child & family services                | 58,200                        | -                          | 58,200       |
| United Way/CFC                         | 22,043                        | -                          | 22,043       |
| In-kind services                       | 28,584                        | -                          | 28,584       |
| Special events                         | 56,090                        | -                          | 56,090       |
| Interest and dividend income           | 1,799                         | -                          | 1,799        |
| Unrealized gain on investments         | -                             | -                          | -            |
| Other income                           | -                             | -                          | -            |
| Net assets released from restrictions  | 41,000                        | (41,000)                   | -            |
| Total unrestricted revenue and support | 2,496,323                     | (41,000)                   | 2,455,323    |
| <b>Expenses:</b>                       |                               |                            |              |
| Program services:                      |                               |                            |              |
| Shelter services                       | 1,214,835                     | -                          | 1,214,835    |
| Community education                    | 103,035                       | -                          | 103,035      |
| Community counseling and consultation  | 119,495                       | -                          | 119,495      |
| Transitional housing                   | 611,168                       | -                          | 611,168      |
| Total program services                 | 2,048,533                     | -                          | 2,048,533    |
| Supporting services:                   |                               |                            |              |
| Management and general                 | 256,450                       | -                          | 256,450      |
| Fundraising                            | 90,259                        | -                          | 90,259       |
| Total supporting services              | 346,709                       | -                          | 346,709      |
| Total expenses                         | 2,395,242                     | -                          | 2,395,242    |
| Change in net assets                   | 101,081                       | (41,000)                   | 60,081       |
| Net assets, beginning of year          | 3,014,909                     | 41,000                     | 3,055,909    |
| Net assets, end of year                | \$ 3,115,990                  | \$ -                       | \$ 3,115,990 |



ENDING VIOLENCE | EMPOWERING LIVES

# my sister's place

My Sister's Place (MSP) shelters, supports and empowers survivors of domestic violence and their children, while providing leadership and education to build a supportive community.

My Sister's Place  
1436 U Street, NW  
Suite 303  
Washington, DC 20009



[info@mysistersplacdc.org](mailto:info@mysistersplacdc.org)



202.529.5261



My Sister's Place, DC



@mysistersplacdc



@mysistersplacdc



@mysistersplacdc