



## Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report (October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021)

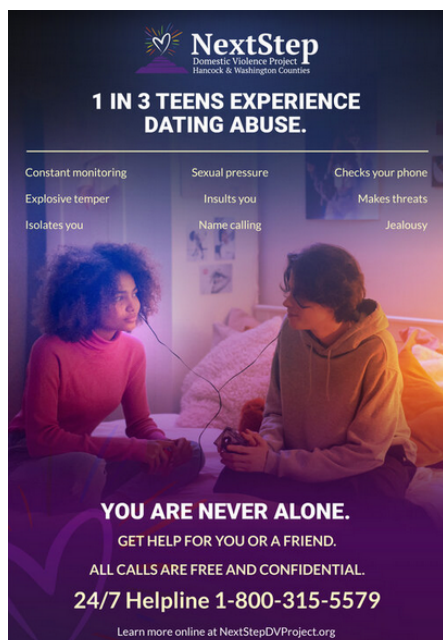
### A Brief History

The Next Step Domestic Violence Project was incorporated in August 1993 and began operations in 1994. We are committed to assisting victims and survivors not just of domestic violence, but also of other types of abuse including stalking, dating violence, and sex trafficking. We view interpersonal violence not as a family problem, but as a violation of civil and human rights.

We do not do our work in isolation. Next Step is part of a statewide network of Domestic Violence Resource Centers working together as members of the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence. We have counterparts throughout the United States and around the world.

### Mission Statement

NextStep Domestic Violence Project supports and empowers people affected by domestic violence, while striving to prevent and end the cycle of domestic violence through education and social change.



### Our Vision

NextStep envisions a peaceful society in which Individuals enjoy equality, respect, autonomy, and compassion in all relationships.

### < Teen Dating Awareness

*New posters were designed and distributed to schools throughout Washington & Hancock Counties to help create awareness about teen dating violence and offer resources to help. A section of the website is dedicated to providing resources for teens, educators, and parents: [nextstepdvproject.org/teen-dating](http://nextstepdvproject.org/teen-dating)*

# Keeping Up With The Times

Dorathy Martel, Executive Director

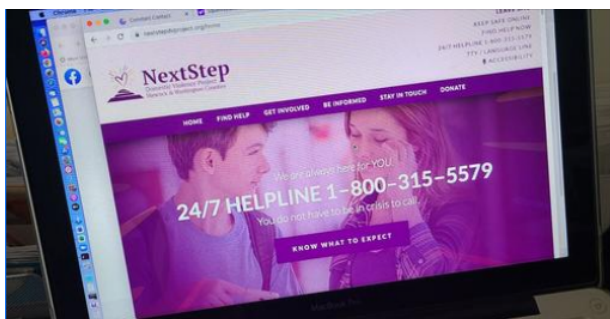


When I think about NextStep's last fiscal year, the main thing that comes to mind is that we have made it through another pandemic year, and that in itself feels like a triumph. But we have accomplished much more than that. And by "we" I mean everyone who cares enough about our mission to be reading this annual report; and the survivors who have reached out to us; and our staff and volunteers.

Between October 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021, NextStep staff and volunteers assisted 819 people in the efforts to escape from, heal from, and triumph over the abuse they experienced. We sheltered 44 people, for a total of 1,474 nights of relative peace and safety. We provided court advocacy to 377 individuals, child welfare system advocacy to 100 people, and counseling to 72. 118 adults and 976 young people received education and training about recognizing and responding to domestic violence and defining safe relationships. We offered violence intervention programming to 46 individuals, most of whom were court-mandated to attend as part of our community's efforts to hold people accountable for the violence they perpetrate.

We also added three new members to our staff; embarked on a strategic planning process to increase our responsiveness to the needs of survivors; and began a project to repair our shelter building and make it more accessible to people and their animal companions. And we added new accessibility functions to our website with a product that will translate the text into any of a long list of languages and will alter the appearance to make it easier to read in numerous other ways. (Click on Accessibility at the top right corner of the homepage.)

In the coming months we hope to engage with survivors and community members in person more often. Technology has been essential these past two years; we could not have kept going without phones and videoconferencing. But human contact, unmediated by machines, creates opportunities for deeper connections, and we look forward to being able to be face to face safely in the near future.



## < Website provides an Inclusive Experience Online

*As part of NextStep's diversity and inclusion strategy, website visitors are now able to access a wide range of accessibility and language support tools to customize their digital experience through Recite Me assistive technology.*

[NextStepDVProject.org](https://NextStepDVProject.org) / 1-800-315-5579



## One in Three

**Brook Minner**  
**Co-Chair, NextStep Board of Directors**

Last year I was having a conversation with a woman I do not know well. She provides a professional service for me and while I've always been fond of her, we are not friends. In passing, I happened to mention that I am serving as the Co-President of the NextStep Board. After a longer than expected pause, she told me that she knew a lot about NextStep. Having worked in the domestic violence field in various ways for a long time now, I proceeded with caution out of respect for her privacy.

But what she told me validated why I do this work. She said she was certain that the folks at NextStep saved her daughter's life. She told me the harrowing story of the abuse her daughter endured at the hands of an ex-boyfriend. I'll spare you the heartbreaking details but her daughter's boyfriend used all the tactics that abusers everywhere use: emotional, financial, sexual, and eventually, physical abuse.

As a result, her daughter temporarily lost custody of her baby, fell deep into an addiction, and suffered continued emotional and physical trauma. But eventually she learned about NextStep. Like many people that use our services, this young woman was supported by the helpline, received free legal services, and was assisted in working with Child Protective Services to regain custody of her daughter. Now, years later, she's obtained a college degree, has a good paying job, and a stable life. But the most important thing is that she regained her dignity. She and her child are living a safe and peaceful existence.

She is just one of the many people who find their way to freedom and safety with the help of the advocates at NextStep. Because of the taboo that still exists for survivors of domestic abuse, many people never tell their story and that is entirely understandable. But just because you might not often hear about it, does not mean that people all around you are not suffering from domestic abuse. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, one in three women have suffered from abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime. One in three. Look around the next time you're in a room. One in three. NextStep provides services to your neighbors, your colleagues, your friends, and your family members, whether you know it or not.

And this work would not happen without your support. Thank you to all the staff, volunteers, donors, and supporters of NextStep. I am so grateful to work with you in an effort to make our communities, families, and homes a safe place for everyone.

[NextStepDVProject.org](https://NextStepDVProject.org) / 1-800-315-5579

## Service Data for October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021

Service	Number	Comments
People Served (Direct Service)		
# Individuals Served (Crisis Intervention, Safety Planning, Emotional Support)	819	Many people receive multiple services. They are only counted once here. Numbers of people receiving specific services are detailed below.
# Individuals Receiving Shelter	44	
# Individuals Receiving Court Advocacy	377	
# Individuals Attending Support Group	11	Groups were suspended for several months due to the COVID-19 pandemic
# Individuals Receiving Transitional/Supportive Housing Services	8	
# Individuals Receiving Child Protective Advocacy	100	
# Individuals Receiving Mental Health Counseling	72	
<b>Method</b>		
# Helpline/Advocacy Calls	6192	
# Electronic Advocacy Contacts (text, email)	1735	
# Face-to-face contacts	3751	We have been limiting face-to-face contacts since mid-March 2020 due to the pandemic
<b>Community Response Activities</b>		
Education and Training for Adults	118	
Education for Youth	976	



## Funding

Revenue	
Federal, State, and County Funds	\$1,375,089
Private Foundation Grants	\$115,425
Individual and Business Donations	\$69,074
Volunteer Time and Donated Goods	\$92,948
Other	\$45,213
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,697,749</b>
Expenses	
Programs	\$1,460,064
Administration	\$234,222
Fundraising	\$3,463
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,697,749</b>



## Volunteerism

NextStep relies on our volunteers to help us cover our hotline every hour of every day and to help with other forms of direct service, such as court accompaniment.

This fiscal year 17 volunteers gave 5,824 hours of their time to directly help victims/survivors of domestic abuse. Other volunteers served on the board, built a playground, held fundraisers, distributed materials, built relationships in their communities, and much more.

