



# Women's Advocates

## Breaking the cycle of domestic violence

### Women's Advocates Offers 24/7 Safety Resources by Phone and Online

Our experienced and compassionate Crisis Resource Advocates answer Women's Advocates' crisis line (651-227-8284) 24 hours a day. Various safety resources are also available on our website at [wadvocates.org/find-help](http://wadvocates.org/find-help).

There is a peak time when both our phone line and our web resources are accessed -- the lunch hour on weekdays. To the seasoned advocates at our shelter, this is no surprise. During the lunch hour, a person may be at work or school with access to phones or computers that are not monitored by their abuser. We find that people seeking safety from abuse are careful, resourceful, and planful about their wellbeing.

Shelter is the most common request from crisis line callers. Callers and web visitors also seek information about Orders for Protection, mental health support, and affirmation of their experiences.



### Partner Highlight: Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention

In summer 2019, Women's Advocates partnered with [Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention](#) to bring the Oasis of Love staff into our shelter to provide their domestic abuse peer support curriculum for both women and children.

This collaboration allowed Women's Advocates and Oasis of Love advocates to share resources on how we provide support and information groups, review and learn from each other's curriculum for a similar group, and add tools to our toolbox.

### Women's Advocates in the Community

In December, Women's Advocates' small but mighty outreach team provided 17 presentations in the community, reaching 363 individuals with the message of addressing violence where we live, learn, work, and gather.

Our new safety resource hub was successfully launched as well, click [here](#) to access it! The team is working on identifying more opportunities to provide domestic violence education, expanding our reach in the community, optimizing our social media presence (@wadvocates on Facebook, @womensadvocates on Twitter and Instagram), and constantly searching for new ways to increase awareness of domestic violence, promote healthy relationships and

## Women's Advocates' New Docu-Series: Building a Legacy

*Women's Advocates and Twin Cities PBS have co-produced a series of documentary short videos chronicling Women's Advocates' history and legacy and implications for the future. The following is excerpted from a blog post written by Women's Advocates Executive Director Estelle Brouwer and featured on Twin Cities PBS Originals website. The full post, which includes the videos mentioned above, can be found at [this link](#).*

On an October night in 1974, in Saint Paul, Women's Advocates opened its doors to women seeking safety from abusive relationships, becoming the first domestic violence shelter in the U.S. In the years leading up to that night, the tenacious women who founded Women's Advocates had been part of a grassroots organizing and consciousness-raising effort, pushing back against systems that denied women their right to independence, equality and safety.

The idea for the shelter grew out of the experiences of two women who staffed a Saint Paul legal hotline that supported women who wanted to change their names or to seek a divorce. When it became clear that spousal abuse was the underlying problem for most of these women, the consciousness-raising group decided to focus on supporting battered women and advocating for local policy changes. Because the group's efforts resisted traditional structures of hierarchy that revolved around male dominance, the group paid dearly, facing threats, anger, derision from community leaders and encouragement to do something "less inflammatory."

At the same time, other groups of women were organizing in similar ways across the country. Everywhere, it seemed, women were suffering at the hands of abusive spouses and partners, and they had nowhere to go to be safe. In the Twin Cities, "Men had 37 options for places to go for housing if they didn't have a place to stay for the night, but women had none," says Susan Ryan, a member of the Women's Advocates collective. It was time to do something.

In the video linked below, members of the founding collective reminisce on their 45 years of serving women in need of shelter and support. "When Women's Advocates first opened on this Friday in October, the house wasn't ready, and these calls kept coming in. They were women who just needed a place... So we just said, 'Okay, let's open the doors.'

community resources, and cultivate new partnerships.



## Did You Know?

January is National Stalking Awareness Month. Portrayals of stalking in the media and in our society in general do not always fully convey the severity, seriousness, and danger associated with it. Stalking and domestic violence commonly intersect as tactics to instill fear in the victim survivor and maintain control and power. The choice to stalk someone is a calculated and methodical decision with wide-ranging, often devastating, impacts.

### The Devastating Reality of Stalking

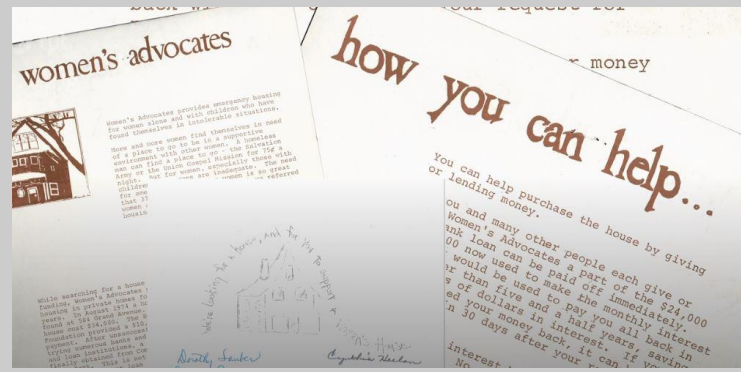
- **Every year, 14 out of every 1,000 adults are victims of stalking**
- **46% of stalking victims feel fear of not knowing what will happen next**
- **3 in 4 stalking victims know their stalkers**
- **Many stalking victims are stalked by perpetrators of a similar age**
- **1 in 7 stalking victims report they have moved housing due to this crime**
- **Stalking is linked to general sickness, anxiety, fear of death, and depression**

**January is National Stalking Awareness Month. Be aware.**

Sources:  
Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2017). *Stalking*.

And they started coming in that night," says Sharon Rice Vaughan, a member of the founding collective.

Since the very beginning, advocacy at Women's Advocates has embodied the principle that women are the experts on their own lives, an idea that grew directly out of the consciousness-raising movement. "After the kids were in bed, women would gather in the kitchen, and they would talk about their lives and what they hoped for. Those conversations were the heart of the support that women offered one another," says Betsy Raasch-Gilman, a member of the Women's Advocates collective.



## How to Help Year-Round

We seek community support to fulfill shelter and resident needs, including:

**Facebook Fundraiser:** You can easily raise awareness and encourage your network to support our cause with just a few clicks. No fees are deducted for donations made on Facebook. Start at [our page here](#) and click "Create Fundraiser." Supporters also often use [GiveMN](#) to create their own fundraising page to support Women's Advocates.

**Gift Cards:** Gift cards to Target, Walmart, Cub Foods, and local gas stations are useful to help Women's Advocates fill immediate needs for our residents and aftercare participants year-round.

**Volunteering:** Head [here](#) to view individual and group volunteering options at Women's Advocates. Please read through the requirements and eligibility information before submitting a volunteer application. Note: volunteer options may be seasonal and on-site positions are typically limited to weekdays during business hours.

*Any questions about volunteering, fundraising, or donating gift cards can be sent to [development@wadvocates.org](mailto:development@wadvocates.org).*

Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. (2009). [Stalking Victimization in the United States](#). National Institute of Justice. (2012). [Intimate Partner Stalking: Fear, Psychological Distress and Health Impacts](#).

## Donation Needs

In Kind Needs: Our current in-kind donation needs include:

- New full-size hygiene products
- New natural/multicultural shampoos, conditioners, hair oils, etc.
- New or gently used twin XL size blankets, comforters, bed sheet sets
- New hair barrettes, clips, hair ties, etc.

Clothing Needs: Currently, Women's Advocates has need for the following clothing items:

- New or lightly used seasonal clothing for all genders, sizes 2T-7
- New or lightly used women's sweats and leggings, sizes S-3XL
- Gloves for all ages, sizes
- New or lightly used women's sweatshirts in all sizes
- New sports bras and women's underwear in all sizes
- Hair scarves

If you are able to donate from the list above or have questions, please reach out to [donations@wadvocates.org](mailto:donations@wadvocates.org).

**AmazonSmile:** If you'd like to help fulfill our needs via Amazon, your shopping can create REAL impact for Women's Advocates. All you have to do is start your online shopping [HERE](#), designate Women's Advocates as your charity of choice, and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to us. Please bookmark the link in your browser.

## Quick Links

[Our Website](#)

[Donate Now](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Wish List](#)

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

Crisis Line: [651-227-8284](tel:651-227-8284)