



Request for American Rescue Plan funds to address Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

Journey Center for Safety and Healing (Journey Center) is seeking funds to address the urgent need of increasing violence for victims of domestic violence and child abuse throughout the pandemic. While many people found refuge in their homes during stay at home orders, people experiencing domestic violence and child abuse were isolated with their abuser. As a result, Journey has seen a significant increase in demand for services and are seeing the ongoing impact of prolonged trauma and abuse. COVID has both exacerbated and exposed the huge barriers for those attempting to leave an abusive relationship and the impact of systemic racism on victims of color. The funds we are requesting from ARPA will allow us to provide critical services to survivors including victim advocacy, therapy, emergency shelter, and expedited permanent housing so that survivors can bypass shelter altogether.

History & Current Status

Journey has been a leader in Cuyahoga County for nearly 50 years addressing issues of violence and abuse within families and between intimate partners. Journey is the only comprehensive domestic violence service provider in the county reaching nearly 15,000 adults and children each year. Journey's mission is to provide services that foster safety and healing to those affected by domestic violence and child abuse; and to prevent abuse through education, advocacy, and systemic change.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Journey to find new ways to provide services throughout Cuyahoga County, all of our crisis services remained open. Journey's Shelter operated with reduced census to maintain social distancing. We utilized hotels for overflow needs as well as for clients who were COVID positive or exposed. Our Helpline saw increase in calls and calls to our Advocates and Therapists increased 80%. We implemented tele-health and virtual supervised visitation. We have been receiving more referrals than ever from emergency rooms and are having clients come to us with severe injuries and complex mental health conditions. As we have been working alongside our clients from the onset of the pandemic, it is evident that the effects of the pandemic will be long lasting.

Journey staff do an evidence-based Danger Assessment with each client. Prior to COVID the average score was 16.5 on a 20 point scale. Throughout COVID and continuing today the average score is 19.6 indicating extremely high risk for homicide. That data underscores what our staff are seeing and clients are telling us – abuse is escalating both in frequency and severity.

Over the past year, there were 387 people fleeing domestic violence who were eligible for our Emergency Shelter and Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative that we could not serve. We safety

plan with these survivors and work to get them to safe locations, still some end up in the homeless shelter system or staying with their abuser.

We also have an average of 50 survivors on our waitlist for specialized Trauma Therapy and dozens of families waiting to receive Supervised Visitation. Journey Victim Advocates are supporting high risk clients and have overwhelming caseloads.

Journey works in many ways to address root causes and prevent domestic violence. Not only has COVID been an extremely dangerous time, it has also exacerbated and exposed the systemic disparities on victims of color including housing, health care, and criminal justice. We are proposing an investment of resources to offer the following:

- A community-based and culturally inclusive approach. Not all victims of intimate partner violence will call law enforcement for help for a variety of reasons; this is especially true in marginalized communities. Often survivors turn to trusted places for support such as family, friends, faith community, neighborhood organizations, and health care providers. Victim Advocates are a critical support to survivors who are navigating the criminal justice and legal systems; or, who are seeking safety and healing outside of those systems. Journey Center has 4 Spanish speaking Advocates and our Latina DV Project provides the complete array of services in Cleveland's Hispanic and Latino communities.
- Enhanced community outreach and engagement. Throughout the pandemic Journey adapted its outreach to go where children and adults isolated at home with an abuser may be able to still access help such as grocery stores, pharmacies, libraries, health clinics, and the faith community. We also adapted our training resources for a remote environment with topics that include how to identify and support victims of abuse during this time of isolation.
- Expedited permanent housing - Journey's Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter is the only shelter in Cuyahoga County where individuals and their families have access to a confidential location and inclusive services tailored to victims of DV. Most clients at Shelter are Cleveland residents and are fleeing with children. Journey serves approximately 300 individuals annually through its Emergency Shelter. During COVID Journey launched its DV Housing First Initiative that expedites linkage to permanent housing for domestic violence victims by doing their direct intake into Rapid Rehousing and providing comprehensive supportive services. This will allow us to double the number we can serve and by-pass the need for a disruptive stay in shelter or hotel.
- Therapy and behavioral supports –Trauma informed therapy is critical as survivors struggle with the aftermath of the pandemic and extended isolation. Journey's specialized therapists are highly trained in working the both adults and children experiencing the trauma of abuse.
- Client assistance – Addressing the financial vulnerability of those attempting to leave an abusive relationship is critical to their ability to do so. Supports include relocation assistance, security deposits, rental application fees, utility balances, transportation, food, and enrollment in

training/educational programs. Journey continues to use hotels when COVID cases surge or there is no other safe option.

Target Audience

The target population for this initiative is any individual or household who is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, human trafficking, and child abuse. While these abuses are happening across all socioeconomic, religious, cultural, education levels, there are disparate impacts for communities of color as well as other marginalized groups such as the LGBTQ and disabled communities. Black women in the U.S. are twice as likely as non-Hispanic white women to be fatally shot by an intimate partner. Younger Black women ages 18-34 are at the greatest risk, 3 times more likely to be shot and killed by an intimate partner than white women in the same group.

Journey serves people regardless of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, income, or veteran status. Currently, survivors are identified by service partners, community outreach, or through Journey's 24-Hour Helpline.

Outcomes

The ultimate outcome is for victims to have the material and interpersonal resources to achieve safety, wellbeing and self-sufficiency. For survivors this means they will have reduced risk of returning to an abuser or being vulnerable to another abusive relationship. The barriers are complex and national data shows that survivors attempt to leave their abuser on average 7 times before they leave permanently.

Journey uses a self-sufficiency matrix that measures observable changes in housing, income, employment, financial literacy, transportation, access to health care, mental health & substance abuse, support system, relationship safety and childcare. When a survivor successfully establishes self-sufficiency away from their abuser it has tremendous ripple effects throughout their family and community. Children are no longer exposed to abuse; survivors do not experience job loss, which is common; the health, homeless, and child welfare systems are used less and the generational cycle of violence is more likely to end.

Journey Center is member of the Ohio Domestic Violence Network, a state wide association of domestic violence providers. One OH provider, Bethany House in Toledo, conducted an economic impact study and determined that every \$1 spent on domestic violence services saves the community \$65.43 in social costs attributed to law enforcement, lost work productivity, criminal justice system, foster care, and mental health services for adults and children served.

Federal VOCA Cuts during COVID when more support is needed for victims, not less

Over the past 3 years, not only were Journey's clients impacted by the crisis of COVID but also a devastating reduction in federal funding for victim services. Journey Center's most significant source of government funding over the years has been the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Over the last three years, that funding was cut by \$1,100,000. At the same time our largest private funder, The United Way discontinued its grant making program resulting in another \$300,000 loss and Journey was forced to cancel its annual fundraising luncheon two years in a row.

As a result, Journey was forced to eliminate 10 FTEs which has significantly impacted our ability to meet the needs of survivors. Fortunately, Journey was able to leverage funding through the CARES Act and a PPP loan that meant we did not have to reduce staff even further.

Congress has passed a solution to better fund VOCA, but it is unclear when and by how much it will be replenished and return to previous levels, if ever. Journey is fortunate to have strong support from both philanthropic and government sources and are mid-way through our current strategic plan that prioritizes enhancing strategies to diversify funding sources even further. ARPA funding will be a critical bridge as Journey continues to expand its capacity to access additional private and public funding for long-term sustainability.

American Rescue Plan funding will allow us to build back some of our lost capacity and do so in a way that tailors services toward the needs that were exacerbated during COVID (closed courts, no safe place to go, isolation at home with abuser, complex mental health needs after prolonged exposure to abuse, lack of access to health care, and mistrust of law enforcement). This is a time when we need more support for survivors, not less.

Funding Request

Journey is requesting \$1,750,000 over three years that would fund 4 Victim Advocates, 2 Trauma Therapist, and 2 Outreach and Training Specialists and includes client assistance funds to help with housing, relocation, and the ability to respond to ongoing COVID impacts. (Detail attached)

Thank you for your consideration and recognition of the public safety and public health crisis victims of domestic violence and child abuse face, and even more so during pandemic.

Contact Info

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Journey Center for Safety and Healing				
ARPA Funding Request 2022				
Item	ARPA Year 1	ARPA Year 1	ARPA Year 3	Total
Personnel Expenses				
Salaries and Wages				
Advocate - 4 FTE/4FTE/3FTE	168,000	173,040	133,673	474,713
Outreach - 2 FTE/2FTE/1FTE	76,000	78,280	40,314	194,594
Therapist - 2 FTE/2FTE/1FTE	120,000	123,600	63,654	307,254
Management/Supervision	52,837	54,422	41,908	149,167
Fringe Benefits	121,362	120,087	79,259	320,707
Non-Personnel Expenses				
Occupancy	40,587	44,524	44,767	129,878
Equipment/Supplies*	7,500	1,000	1,000	9,500
Client Assistance**	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
Travel/Related Expenses	4,500	4,725	4,961	14,186
Total Project Expenses	\$640,786	\$649,678	\$459,537	\$1,750,000
* Three laptops with software and warranties and configurations, printed materials for community outreach				
** Relocation cost, security deposits, rental application fees, utility balances, transportation, food, enrollment in training or education programs, hotels for COVID + clients or when there are no other safe options.				