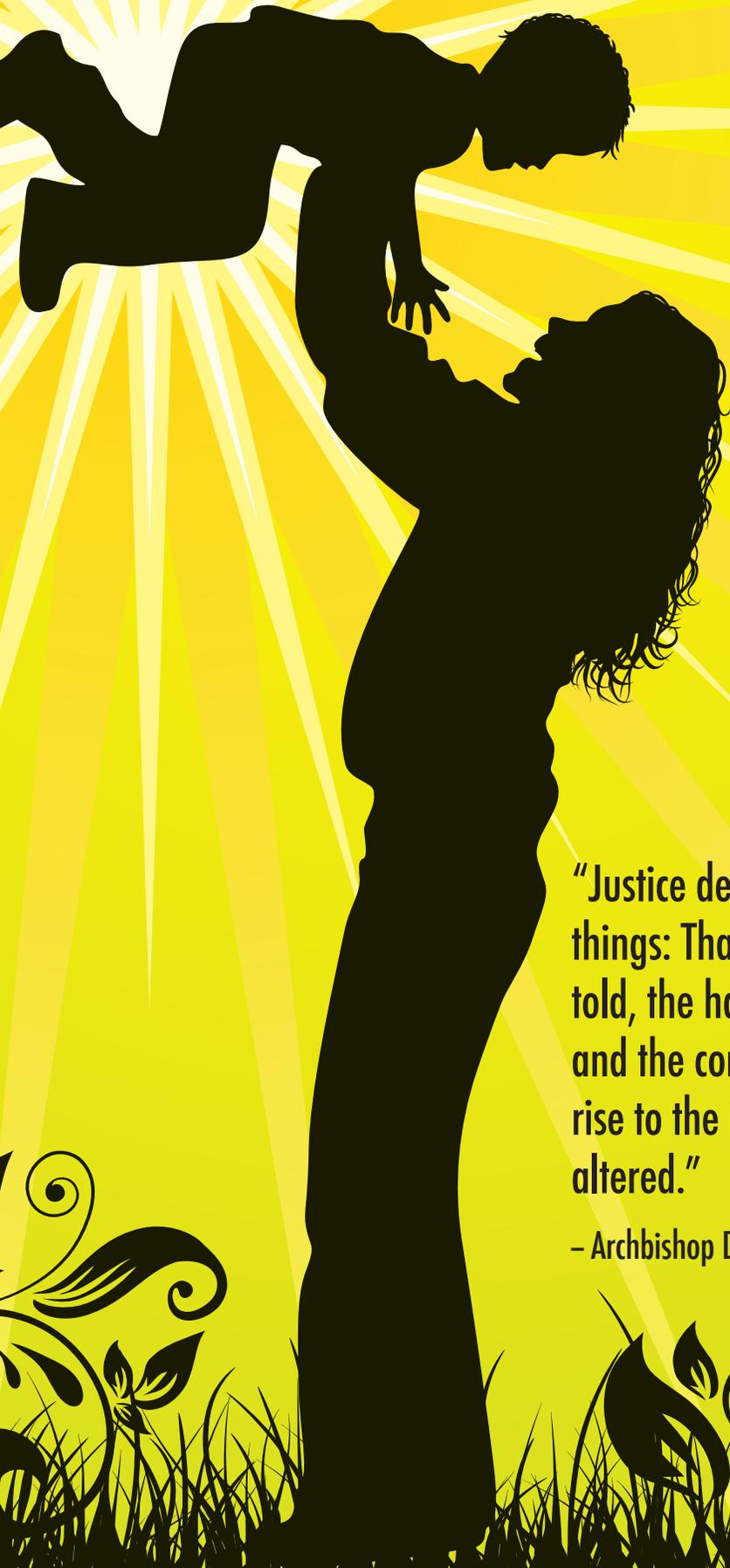




**Next Step**  
Domestic Violence Project

**2012-2013**  
**Annual Report**

Oct. 1, 2012 – Sept. 30, 2013



**“Justice demands three things: That the truth be told, the harm be repaired, and the conditions that gave rise to the injustice be forever altered.”**

**– Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

## Next Step Domestic Violence Program Staff

Rebecca Hobbs, Executive Director  
 Kelly Brown, Assistant Director  
 Suzanne Saunders Barrett Esq., Staff Attorney  
 Rick Doyle Esq., Staff Attorney  
 Angie Butler, Transitional Services Coordinator  
 Darlene Donahue, Crime Victims Advocate  
 Melissa Fairfield, Legal Program Coordinator  
 Jeannine Leblanc Grant, Youth Educator  
 Leslie Linder, DHHS CPS Liaison Educator  
 Michelle Potter, Shelter Program Coordinator  
 Sally Rier, DHHS CPS Liaison Advocate  
 Sherene Salahshoor, Community Educator

Next Step Domestic Violence Project  
 P.O. Box 1466, Ellsworth, Maine 04605  
[www.nextstepdvproject.org](http://www.nextstepdvproject.org)



## Our Mission

The Next Step 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 Statement

We believe that every individual has a right to live in safety and without fear of abuse. We offer hope, love, and respect to ourselves, our clients, and our community in order to foster empowerment, personal dignity, equality and freedom. Through these values, we strive to change the world.

## Education Committee

In 2012-2013, the education committee logged:

- 2,642.75 hours of community education
- 1,586.50 awareness and material distribution hours
- 365.50 hours for prevention work in our youth based programs presenting to 1,328 students

## “I was a good person... I was worth saving”

It took me 10 years to finally really recognize the signs of domestic violence that I carry. The completely shattered self esteem. The inability to say no. The endless search to feel safe, to feel clean, to be whole and to feel at home somewhere. The inability, despite the education and experience to hold a job. The deterioration of possessions lost to him because leaving always meant taking what I could carry; he'd keep the rest. And the loss of the respect of others.

They say that you are the company 'ya keep. Those that knew him thought I was so stupid to keep coming back. But he had a good job, despite both alcohol and drug abuse, he was still functional. I couldn't be.

The two months that I spent in shelter were definitely the closest thing I ever had to feeling that I might possibly make it. If I had not been told almost repeatedly in advocacy that I was a good person, that I was worth saving, that I needed to picture what my life would look like if I could design it, I would never have

finally left.

The craziness resurfaces when he discovered my phone number. I'd changed it so many times that I can't even remember. But he called me over 20 times before I could get ahold of Verizon (and myself) and switch

numbers yet again.

So much for all those resumes with the wrong number on them. And my grown sons — well there is no way to explain domestic terrorism. Not even to my son's — two of which serve as soldiers fighting terrorism. To try to explain “why is this man still in our lives?”

But a little voice in my heart sings, “You don't love him anymore!” And the voice gets a bit louder every day.

And it gives me hope because it is

a terrible thing to love someone and be so confused by the way they choose to behave. Books claim that abusive relationships are actually more tightly bound than healthy ones.

I shake my head in wonder: How can that be true?

But now, I believe it.

I have lived it.

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## Direct Service Committee Numbers

Support groups:	275 contacts
Direct service contacts in transitional housing:	452
Legal service contacts:	8,235
Shelter contacts:	1,729
Direct service crisis contacts:	3,260
Total direct service contact calls:	10,184
Total direct service face to face contacts:	3,767
Total people served:	1,091

## Volunteers advance Next Step's mission

**W**e try very hard to appreciate and thank our volunteers; those who work on the hotline, in court, on special events, helping in the office, safe homing etc. Without the commitment of these amazing people, our jobs would be much more difficult and we wouldn't be able to help the number of people we do.

Thank you!

At this time, we would like to recognize a few of our long time volunteers who have taken a respite from their countless hours of service. They have given selflessly and are now taking a little time to care for themselves.

**Kristin Hutchins.** Kristin has been a faithful hotline volunteer, our regular child care provider for Hancock County support group, a safe home provider for women in crisis, special events volunteer, and office support.

**Linda Sisson.** Linda has been a long time hotline volunteer and helped with special events.

**JoAnne Champney.** JoAnne consistently answered hotline, helped with special events and assisted with various needs in Washington County.

These three long time volunteers have been very valuable to Next Step and the people we serve. We are grateful to them for all their years of service.



Volunteer Kristen Hutchins receiving the "To Those Who Care" award.

### Volunteer time

2,610	hours donated for hotline advocacy
9	hours donated to safe home services
87	hours donated to support group services
36	hours donated to childcare
251	hours donated to special events
272	hours donated in internship work
77	hours donated providing court advocacy services
37	hours donated providing transportation

## A presence in the community: Ellsworth Chamber After Hours

**N**ext Step strives to provide a strong presence in our community. An important aspect of community involvement is networking with local businesses as key partners in offering direct support to victims. Employees of local businesses include victims, perpetrators and the friends and colleagues most likely to be involved in supporting change. Therefore, education and outreach by Next Step to area businesses has always been a priority. Recently we hosted a "Business After Hours" event through the Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce.

On September 12th, Next Step hosted the Chamber event at Darlings' Auto Mall. There were over 100 local business people registered for the event. Co-sponsors for the evening included: Darling's, Stanley Subaru, Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, Motifs Hair & Tanning, The First, Camden National Bank, and Bangor

Savings. Co-sponsors contributed door prizes and helped to defray the costs of food and drink.

We showed a film produced by MDI High School and Ellsworth High School students. This movie celebrates Next Step's 20th anniversary and highlights a recent outreach project by our local A Call To Men chapter. The new film was screened at the event for the first time and is now on our website. It was produced by Bailey Moore, Madison Brown, Megan Frost and Jared Brown.

The Business after Hours focused on Next Step's work in the community to end domestic violence. We distributed workplace tool kits that included hotline posters, brochures, and fliers listing 10 things the workplace can do about domestic violence. It was a successful evening and Next Step looks forward to partnering with area businesses in the future.



The local "A Call to Men" chapter of Next Step was highlighted on a movie about Next Step's 20th Anniversary created by MDI High School and Ellsworth High School. The movie was screened for the first time at the event.

# Legal Services: What you need, when you need it most

**“The greatest support I received repeatedly was the legal representation from The Next Step.**

**What a powerful way to walk into a domestic violence situation knowing you have a team instead of just you.”**

## **“There when you need them.”**

[That] is what I have to say about the free legal help I received through The Next Step Domestic Violence Project.

I was violently abused in a trailer truck in Massachusetts and we then crossed into New Hampshire and finally into Maine when I had the opportunity to get out of the truck and call my family for help. This happened in 2004. I have to maintain contact with this person because we have a child together.

In July 2, 2013, I was at the court house in Washington County, again regarding the same man, abusing me. It was verbal this time, but to me abuse is abuse. We have not been together for years but he knows our son is my weak spot and uses him to get to me.

I am happily married now to my best friend and supporter. The greatest support I received repeatedly was the legal representation from The Next Step.

I was alone that day at the court house and had a question and did not know who to call. I was given the number to The Next Step and within seconds

someone was on the phone asking me where I was and within five minutes someone from there was right at the court house with me. I was also told that I could receive free legal representation should I choose to.

Immediately I accepted their assistance. I met with the Next Step lawyer and immediately felt safe and secure with her. I knew she would help me with this situation but I felt a connection with her; she really understood the situation I was in and how to help me get through it.

She was a confidant when I needed to bounce something off her and a shoulder when I just needed one to get through the day. Everyone there was. Anytime I called an advocate I always got another voice on the end of the phone or a phone call back. The lawyer and I exchanged emails frequently and anytime I had a question it was answered in a timely fashion.

I did not feel like I was lost or confused. In court this time, I walked with nerves but very little. I was there with my husband and greeted by my advocate as well as the lawyer. What a powerful way to walk

into a domestic violence situation knowing you have a team instead of just you. I was able to speak my mind.

After years of suffering from physical, emotional, mental and verbal abuse from this one person, I finally found my backbone with the help of the Next Step lawyer and the entire team at the Next Step.

## Legal Numbers

Post Judgment:	81
Crime Victim:	123
Custody:	154
Divorce:	99
Divorce with children:	46
Protection From Abuse Orders:	292
Other:	220

## Next Step Domestic Violence Project provides the following services:

24/7 hotline: (800) 315-5579 - for support and advocacy | Emergency shelter | Transitional housing | Legal assistance | Support groups  
Community presentations, workshops, and awareness education | Systems advocacy | Youth outreach

## Next Step examines feasibility of High-Risk Assessment Team in Hancock County

**C**ross-disciplinary teams have become an important part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence in many areas of the country, including Maine.

They have also gotten a lot of media attention. The Bangor Daily News has featured a series of articles about response teams, as well as an editorial supportive of their use, and the New Yorker has run a feature article on the creation of a groundbreaking Massachusetts program.

Such teams are made up of advocates, law enforcement officers, social workers, medical providers, and other community service providers who encounter intimate partner violence and its effects on individuals and families. Generally a facilitator convenes regular team

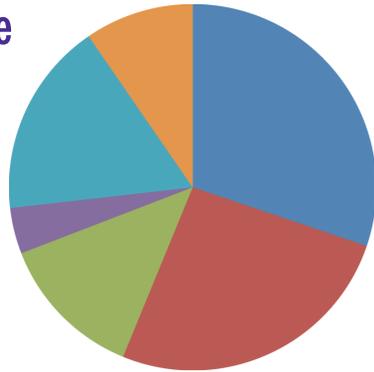
meetings where information regarding high-risk cases is reviewed. Upon review the team develops an action plan and thereby provides a platform for enhanced safety planning.

In April, Legal Services Coordinator Missy Fairfield and Staff Attorney Rick Doyle went to Boston to learn about cross-disciplinary teams at the Driving Change Conference. Since then, Next Step has been looking into the feasibility of such a team in Hancock County. In the course of these discussions, it has become clear that a high-risk assessment team could be a valuable resource for Next Step and other agencies working to prevent major domestic violence incidents in our area. There will be further assessment and outreach to potential partners in the coming year.

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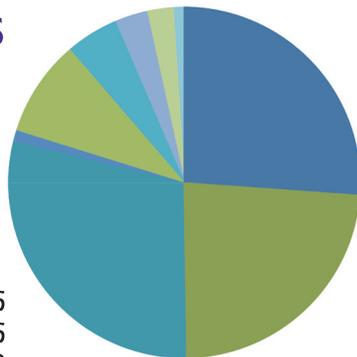
## Next Step Domestic Violence Project Financials

### 2012-2013 Revenue



Federal Grants - SSBG	\$237,277
Federal Grants - Other	\$214,328
State Grants	\$263,548
County Funds	\$9,380
Contributions	\$80,694
United Way of Eastern Maine	\$43,951
Fundraising Events	\$27,100
In-Kind Donations from Volunteers	\$22,000
Program Fees	\$8,918
Other	\$393
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$907,589</b>

### 2012-2013 Expenses



Salaries & Wages	\$472,665
Payroll Taxes & Benefits	\$175,285
Professional Development	\$4,000
In-Kind Wages	\$22,000
Contracted Services	\$34,563
Office Supplies & Utilities	
Utilities	\$22,437
Office Supplies	\$21,753
Insurance	\$15,000
Mortgage Interest	\$14,469
Rent & Property Maintenance	\$24,000
Communications	\$20,128
Program Supplies & Expense	\$14,400
Volunteer & Board Expense	\$2,112
Travel Expense	\$27,800
Direct Client Expense	\$7,213
Other	\$6,518
Depreciation	\$21,689
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$906,032</b>

## Next Step Domestic Violence Project Donors

Next Step thanks the organizations and agencies that provided grant funds in fiscal year 2013:

- Acadia Council of Realtors: Housing assistance
- The Asen Foundation: Support Next Step's mission
- Ellsworth Lioness: Core services
- Ellsworth Rotary Club: Safety measures at transitional housing
- Emergency Food Shelter Program: Food for families living in shelter
- International Homecoming Festival: For good in our communities
- Island Coalition Against Domestic Abuse: Collaborative work to end domestic abuse
- Machias Savings Bank: Build a fence at shelter
- Maine Association of Realtors: Housing assistance
- Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, passed through from the Dept. of Justice: Work in the child protective system
- Maine Community Foundation, anonymous donor: General support
- Maine Dept. of Health & Human Services: Core services and administration
- Maine Dept. of Public Safety: Improving safety of victims in Washington County
- Maine Governor Paul LePage, discretionary fund: Assist in the work of domestic violence organizations statewide
- Maine Housing: Shelter operating expenses
- Mid-Coast Mud Run: Support Next Step's mission
- Ocean Ledges Fund of the Maine Community Foundation: Unrestricted support
- Point Harbor Fund of the Maine Community Foundation: General operating support
- S & G Foundation: Support Next Step's mission
- Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation: Shelter improvement projects
- United Way of Eastern Maine: Youth education & safety & self-sufficiency
- WABI-TV: Food

And business sponsors that made our events possible:

- Bangor Savings Bank
- Bar Harbor Bank & Trust
- Camden National Bank
- Cattitude
- Darlings
- Downeast Graphics
- Jeffrey Toothacher
- Machias Savings Bank
- Motifs Hair & Tanning
- Roy, Beardsley, Williams & Granger, LLC
- Smile Design
- Stanley Subaru
- Storage Plus, LLC
- The First
- UP Harbor Marina

## Program highlight

# A "Call to Men" to end domestic and sexual violence



Rick Otto, member of "A Call to Men."

**Although we need the support of local, state & federal governments, the work in our communities to address these crimes must primarily come from our own efforts to change our language, our views & in some cases our behavior which can encourage the perpetrators or minimize the seriousness of their conduct and the harm they are causing their partners and their children.**

**N**ext Step's local group entitled "A Call to Men" is part of a national organization that has as its primary mission to educate the general public on the issue of domestic violence, its costs to our community & what each individual can do to prevent gender violence.

Our group was formed in 2008 headed by Kelly Brown, Assistant Director of Next Step. The group is primarily composed of individuals that consistently work with women that have been impacted by domestic violence.

One of our members is in law enforcement and responds to these domestic incidents when they are reported. Although our membership is small in number, we have initiated several activities and projects that have been very successful and well received by those who participated and were in the audience. We have spoken on the radio, presented films and participated in panel discussions, responding to questions from the audience.

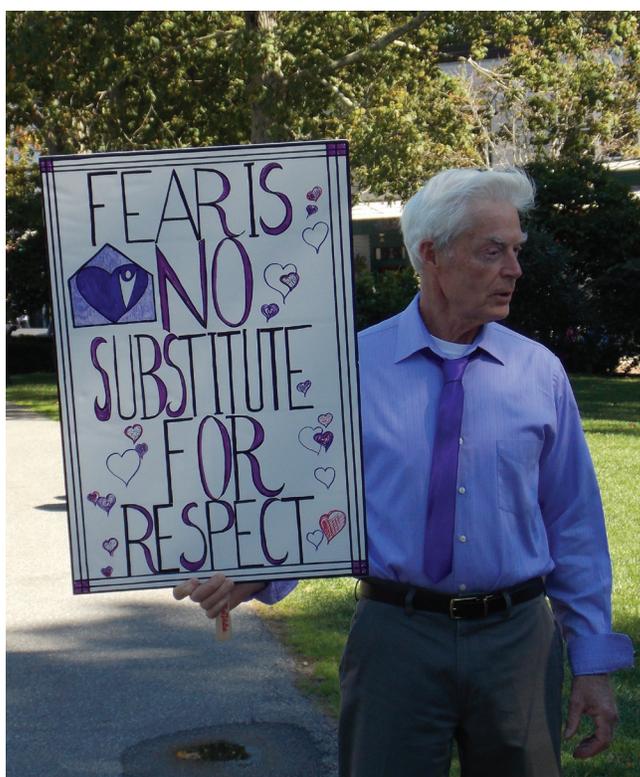
We created road signs, paid for by the generosity of local businesses that say, "Domestic and Sexual Assault is a Crime" showing the local hotline numbers. We have attended clubs and associations, such as Rotary, trying to spread the word throughout our business community and to develop new positive and influential alliances. Currently we are working on a video to describe our purpose and who we are. The hope is that our efforts will educate and encourage more participation in our group. We are planning to prepare posters for businesses and converse with athletic coaches about speaking out as well as giving presentations in our schools.

Although we need the support of local, state & federal governments, the work in our communities to address these crimes must primarily come from our own efforts to change our language, our views and in some cases our behavior. We know the individual actions may encourage perpetrators or minimize the seriousness of their conduct and the harm they are causing their partners and their children.

In the over-whelming majority of cases, this is a learned behavior much like the racist practices that inspired the Civil Rights movement to seek amelioration for the injustices that resulted. We must reexamine our own attitudes and educate ourselves so that we can be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

If you are interested in further information or would wish to participate in our group, please contact Kelly at Next Step or Rick Otto at the Hancock County Drug Court.

On October 3, 2013, 50 people took a stand with The Next Step Domestic Violence Project and the MDI YWCA to say that domestic violence must end. This year's walk was the first of many more to come.





# Next Step

## Domestic Violence Project

P.O. Box 1466, Ellsworth, Maine 04605

24-hour hotline: 1-800-315-5579

Business lines: 207-255-4934; 207-667-0176

## Support Groups

Our free, weekly support groups provide all participants a chance to talk about domestic violence and share questions, concerns, and experiences with others who are facing – or who have faced – similar situations. We offer periodic education and discussion sessions on related topics. Watch for flyers around your community and announcements in local newspapers. Childcare is often provided.

## Systems Advocacy

Next Step advocates will help and support you as you learn to navigate systems and access services like TANF, Child Welfare, secondary education programs, and community housing programs. We may also be able to advocate for you if the domestic violence in your life makes it hard to get the services you need.

## Emergency Shelter

It's often difficult to leave an abusive relationship for a lot of reasons. If finding a safe place to live is one of those reasons, Next Step can help. Just call our hotline – 1 (800) 315-5579 – and we'll talk to you about different options and resources, including our emergency shelter.

## Transitional Housing

You can also talk to our hotline staff about transitional housing, where we welcome low-income families who need a place to live because they've left an abusive situation.

You can stay in transitional housing, and participate in the programs we offer, for up to two years. During that time, we encourage you to set and achieve goals – your goals.

They might include attending counseling sessions, continuing your education, finding employment and permanent housing, and even financial planning. No matter what, we'll work with you as you move toward stability and independence.

## Legal Assistance

At Next Step you'll find a lot of helpful information including how to get a Protection From Abuse Order, navigate related civil matters like Child Protective Services, and handle TANF/ASPIRE and other social programs.

We know that going through the court process is difficult emotionally as well as practically, so tell us if you would like some extra support from one of our court advocates – staff members who aren't attorneys but who are very familiar with how the legal system works, especially as it pertains to domestic abuse. Our advocates will also refer you to a Next Step lawyer, if you need one.

## Community Presentations and Awareness Education

Next Step staff members present in-depth workshops that:

- 1) Increase community awareness and understanding about domestic abuse.
- 2) Define appropriate responses and ways to support victims of abuse.
- 3) Explain the importance of holding batterers accountable.

Next Step also offers school-based programs to raise awareness about dating violence, domestic violence, and to explore the characteristics of healthy relationships.