

# *safety.support.solutions*

*A publication for friends of The Haven Shelter & Services | Spring 2025*





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## **From Executive Director Ellen Yackel:**

Dear Friends,

For 39 years, we have been here to provide safety, support, and solutions to those who have experienced intimate partner violence and sexual violence. Most people know us as a shelter, and for 39 years, we have provided a safe space for women, men, and children to escape abuse. Advocates on our 24-hour, toll-free hotline provide crisis intervention, safety planning, and information and referral. Those are two important services, but our dedicated, passionate staff also provide intensive support services such as needs assessments and assistance in accessing community resources to meet those needs. When necessary, even during the night and on weekends, staff provide victims with transportation to Richmond or Fredericksburg hospitals to obtain forensic exams, staying by their side through the long, arduous process, if needed. Staff provide information about available legal remedies and provide accompaniment and support in navigating the often complex court system. We understand the effects of trauma on survivors, and we are dedicated to making every effort to reduce those effects.

At the same time, we are striving to help create communities that respond effectively to intimate partner and sexual violence and to build communities in which such acts of violence are less likely to occur. Through our partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, we practice Lethality Assessment Program protocols to determine the lethality of each and every intimate partner violence call to which they respond, making safety planning and shelter services available to survivors when they are at most risk of death or bodily harm. Through our partnership with Just Harvest, we create community garden projects throughout our service area, supporting the efforts to meet the basic needs of our neighbors. Youth throughout the five counties we serve have the opportunity to participate in our Do You program, which uses art to help young people define their values and learn more about themselves and others.

The community depends on our services, and we need your support to continue providing those services. Everyone knows at least one person who has experienced intimate partner or sexual violence, though you may not be aware of it. In honor of those individuals, please consider providing financial support to The Haven to ensure that services will be available when they need them. To find out more about the incredible work we do, visit our website or call us to set up a time to meet and talk about what we do and what you can do for survivors.

Sincerely,

*Ellen Yackel*



# Creating Something Better: The Haven's Bold, Holistic Approach to Violence Prevention

Ten years ago, The Haven's prevention work looked a lot like what you might expect—classroom presentations on healthy relationships, posters about consent, and brochures about dating violence. At the time, these were essential first steps. They helped bring taboo topics like dating violence and consent into public discourse and made space for conversations that had long been avoided. But for all their good intentions, they weren't enough. They didn't address the root causes. They didn't reflect the lived realities of our rural communities. And most importantly, they didn't align with what survivors were telling us they truly needed.

Today, our prevention strategy looks radically different—and that's no accident. We've intentionally reimagined our work to go beyond harm reduction. Instead, we're focused on cultivating the conditions where violence is less likely to occur in the first place.

At The Haven, we believe that proper prevention doesn't begin with a crisis. It starts with connection—with building communities where people feel safe, valued, empowered, and supported. We've shifted our strategy to focus on the root causes of violence: historical trauma, cultural disconnection, systemic oppression, and community isolation. That means investing in relationships, cultural identity, access to resources, and a genuine sense of belonging.

This transformative approach is led by our Community Resilience Coordinator, Chad Lewis; our Food Sovereignty Consultant, Jay Grebe; and powered through a key partnership with **Just Harvest**—an organization committed to food sovereignty in Indigenous, Black, and other marginalized communities. Their mission aligns with our own: to reduce the economic and social impacts of hunger, which can lead to violence, while building sustainable, community-rooted solutions.



Together, The Haven and Just Harvest maintained **three community gardens** across the region—in Caroline County, Historic Downtown Tappahannock (Essex County), and at Menokin in Richmond County. In 2024, these gardens **produced over 1,200 pounds of food** and served as vital green spaces for **cultural education, youth engagement, and community connection**. The two organizations also partnered with teachers and students at Richmond County Elementary/Middle School to launch a school garden, fostering hands-on learning around food systems, health, and sustainability.



Our programs are no longer limited to the schools. Today, prevention means multi-session, community-based learning rooted in culture, healing, and empowerment. Some of our most impactful offerings include:

- **Culturally Rooted Storytelling Circles**, where youth and adults explore themes of identity, belonging, and resilience, are key protective factors against violence.
- **Food Justice and Indigenous History Workshops**, developed in collaboration with Just Harvest, draw connections between historical trauma, structural disconnection, and modern forms of violence.
- **Heritage Garden Projects** that pass on traditional knowledge, foster intergenerational relationships, and increase food access in underserved areas.
- **Nutrition and Cooking Classes**, where participants learn not only how to eat well, but how to build confidence, joy, and connection through shared meals and cultural cuisine—even through something as humble as learning to make a better bowl of ramen.

We're also **meeting people where they are**—in church basements, apartment complexes, public libraries, and even online spaces. Because prevention isn't a lecture, it's a relationship. It's built in real time, through trust, support, and shared experience.

In 2024, The Haven and Just Harvest co-hosted **26 workshops with a total of 428 participants**. These events weren't just well-attended—they made an impact. **100% of survey participants** reported learning new information, developing new skills, and creating new relationships. These aren't just numbers. They're signs that our communities are healing and growing stronger.







We also co-hosted a **cultural exchange event attended by 70 participants and featuring more than 20 artists, growers, historians, storytellers, and performers.** The event included hands-on learning, a tasting of Indigenous cuisine, a free market, and vibrant conversations around foodways, healing, and community resilience.

At the heart of our prevention work is a deep respect for **Black and Indigenous cultural values.** In partnership with Just Harvest and the Menokin Foundation, we've launched projects that center cultural preservation, land stewardship, and environmental sustainability—including seed saving, no-till gardening, storytelling initiatives like our Before Times and Sky Woman workshop and Three Sisters workshop, and cultural events like our Colors of Cultural Exchange.

These programs don't just teach—they restore. They remind participants that their history matters. Their culture is powerful. Their community is worth protecting.

The Haven's work is grounded in research that highlights the **protective factors** proven to prevent violence and foster resilience. We design our prevention strategy around:

- Cultural identity and historical awareness
- Community engagement and leadership development
- Emotional regulation, self-esteem, and social-emotional learning
- Trusted relationships with adults and mentors
- Opportunities for meaningful contribution and visibility

Violence thrives in isolation. Prevention thrives in connection. That's why The Haven's approach is **intergenerational, collaborative, and rooted in relationships.** When people feel seen, known, and valued, they are more likely to seek help, support one another, and build communities rooted in care. We're not just preventing harm. We're creating something better—together.



## FY'24 Impact Report

Behind every data point is a survivor, a family, a life forever changed. Our work at The Haven is grounded in survivor-centered and trauma-informed practices.



**377 adults and 72 children received 4,356 hours of advocacy.**



**The Haven answered 595 calls on our crisis hotline.**



**54 adults and 60 children received 4,244 nights of emergency shelter.**

Whether it's a mother who slept safely for the first time in months, a child who got to focus on school instead of fear, or a survivor who walked into court with an advocate by their side—your support made this possible.



**92% of intimate partner violence perpetrated against children was committed by their parent or parent's partner(s).**

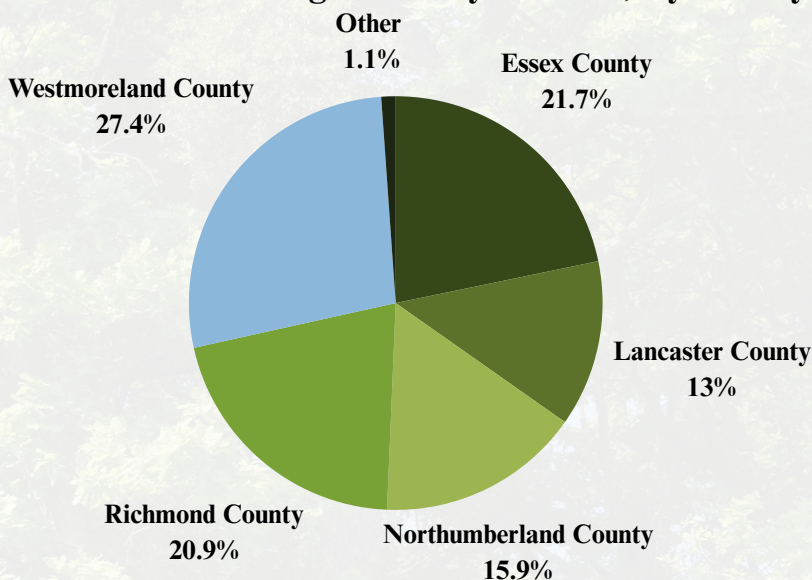
**42% of sexual violence perpetrated against children was committed by family or other household members.**

**85% of intimate partner violence perpetrated against adults was committed by their spouse or partner.**

**50% of sexual violence perpetrated against adults was committed by their spouse or partner.**



### Individuals Receiving Advocacy Services, By County





## Survivors Share Their Stories

Each year, The Haven asks survivors to reflect on their experiences through our Documenting Our Work (DOW) survey. The responses go beyond statistics. They're raw, personal, and deeply revealing of the impact our shelter has on those we serve. One of the most powerful questions we asked is "What do you think you would have done if the shelter did not exist?" Some of the responses we received included:

- "I would be homeless."
- "My children and I would have slept in our car."
- "I would still be living in fear and be nobody."
- "I would either be back with my abuser or dead."
- "Slept in my truck."
- "We have no one to stay with."
- "Lived at my grandma's old house or... I don't know, be homeless."
- "I would have been further abused."
- "Probably wouldn't be here."
- "Been abused every day in a trailer with no electricity or water."
- "This is the only resource in the area for women."
- "Stayed with my abuser."
- "Gone back to the house and been sad."

These words are haunting and honest. They highlight the harsh realities survivors face in our rural community, where options are few and The Haven is often the only refuge.

In contrast, we also asked "Please describe any positive experiences you have had with the shelter." Some of the responses we received included:

- "The staff made me feel human again."
- "Being treated with dignity and respect makes all the difference."
- "The staff was supportive and helpful with any issues I had."
- "Helped me get my finances together—I used to blow money. Now I can save or spend on needs like car repairs."
- "Got emotional support, legal assistance, and help with housing."
- "Time to get myself together to save for relocation."
- "The intake person was thorough and kind. My case manager was amazing."
- "Good moral support from other survivors."
- "Really gives me strength to become self-efficient."
- "I've had the pleasure of understanding other women's struggles and finding stability for myself and my child."
- "It felt good to cry to a staff member and be heard."
- "Friendly staff. Clean environment. Felt safe."

These voices are why we do the work. While data can help us explain our impact, survivor stories bring that impact to life. They show us that even in moments of crisis, hope is possible. Healing is possible. A future is possible. And that's exactly what The Haven exists to offer.



# Statement of Financial Position

The Haven Shelter and Services, Inc.

## Statement of Financial Position

FY 2024 - June 30, 2024

Assets	FY 2024
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$198,860
Investments	\$486,488
Grants and Contributions Receivable	\$155,498
Prepaid Expenses	\$8,983
Land, Building, Fixtures, and Equipment	\$1,064,981
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(\$574,728)
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,340,082</b>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

#### Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$30,323
Lease Liability	\$15,942
Accrued Expenses	\$18,698
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$64,963</b>

#### Net Assets

Net Assets w/out donor restrictions	
Unrestricted Operating	\$557,545
Unrestricted Property and Equipment	\$490,253
<b>Total Net Assets w/out Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>\$1,047,798</b>

**Net Assets w/Donor Restrictions \$191,294**

**Total Net Assets \$1,239,092**

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$1,340,082**

\*\*79 cents of every donated dollar go to program services.\*\*

## FY'23-'24

### Board of Directors

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Janet Hemming - Vice Chair  
Wanda Ryan - Secretary  
Heather Brann - Treasurer  
Rita Katzman  
Trinity Bea  
Tammy Carter  
Arriana Taylor-Roy  
Nina Thompson  
Cindy West

## FY'24-'25

### Board of Directors

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Trinity Bea - Secretary  
Heather Brann - Treasurer  
Arriana Taylor-Roy  
Cindy West  
Lakesha Sayles  
McKann Payne  
Rebecca Minor



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