

STORIES FOR PEOPLE
WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

Bloom

SPRING 2025



cassie's story

“Accepting help was one of the most challenging, yet life-changing decisions we made.”

I was raised in an upper middle-class family surrounded by support and stability. When I married, I believed I was building a life with a partner who was committed to his sobriety and helping others through his profession as a clinical social worker.

Behind closed doors, the reality was much different. He made the choice to return to using drugs and everything began to unravel.

“On the outside, everything seemed ideal.”

It wasn't just the physical abuse—chairs being thrown at us or being threatened with knives. My reality was constantly being twisted. Gaslighting made me question my memory, instincts, and sanity. We walked on eggshells.

My children were at a point where suicide seemed a viable option, coming to me saying, ‘what if we just all died, and it wouldn't be so bad anymore.’

That was the wake-up call for me to finally do something.

With several late-night calls to the hotline at GreenHouse17, we planned and filed an emergency protective order. Accepting help was one of the most challenging, yet life-changing decisions we made.

My advocate was there the day of the court appearance. She held my hand during all of it and walked me to my car.

After 23 years of marriage, my children and I finally found the courage to seek help. For too many years I had been trapped in a cycle of fear, silence, and self-doubt.

I am proud to say my children and I have been free from abuse for the last seven years. It hasn't been an easy road, but it was worth every step.

This is only part of Cassie's story, in her own words, shared with permission.



Our story is one of survival, resilience, and healing. I have amazing kids, and they make me so proud. My oldest graduated with honors and went on to receive her master's degree and my youngest is a sophomore with a full ride scholarship, pursuing their dreams. I have found a job I enjoy, and, after all these years, I am in a healthy relationship built on trust and respect.



HOORAY FOR GRAY'S *Groundbreaking Women*

Gray's employee driven cooperative, Groundbreaking Women, demonstrates their leadership through action and impact.

They have volunteered their time to organize the emergency shelter, collect gifts for the holidays, and wear so much purple to raise awareness during Purple Thursday and Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Last year, they also undertook an archiving project, organizing documents from our early years as a nonprofit. This initiative preserves our history while

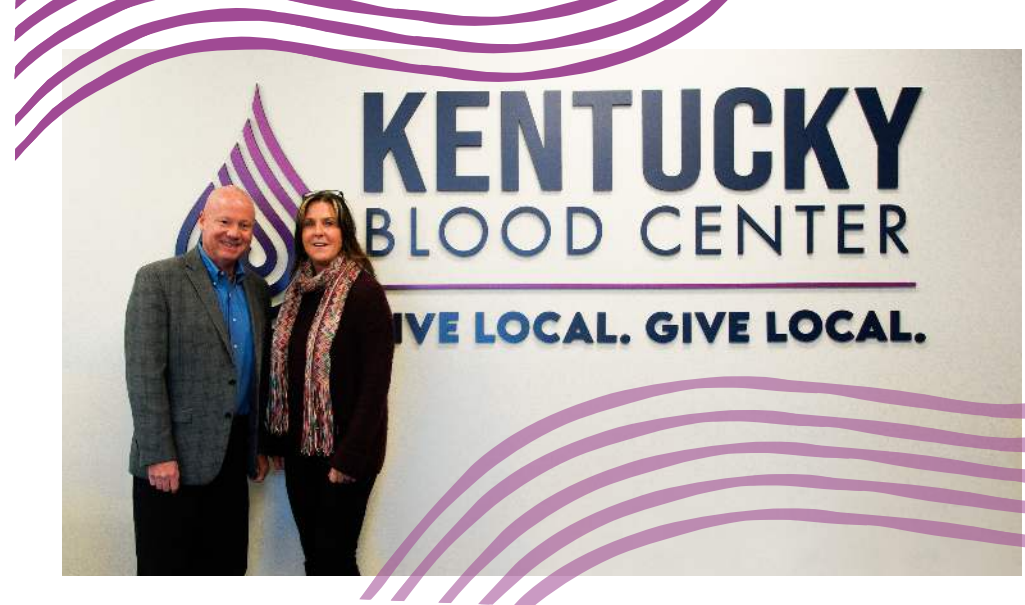
honoring the strides made toward safety and empowerment.

"We're so grateful for the support of the Groundbreaking Women," shares Corissa Phillips, our external relations director. "This is a group that exemplifies partnership and community. They get things done!"

Through every effort, Gray's Groundbreaking Women embody the values of collaboration and compassion, making a lasting difference for our organization and survivors of intimate partner abuse.



Do you have a work group looking to support survivors through volunteering? Visit our website to begin planning something special: GreenHouse17.org/volunteer-home



HEALING TOGETHER *Blood Center Partnership*

Donors at select Kentucky Blood Center locations could choose to give the value of their thank you gifts to our organization during the Healing Together campaign in November and December.

The partnership raised an incredible \$7,500 to support services for survivors.

"We love partnerships that allow our generous blood donors the chance to help another great local nonprofit. Far too many families are impacted by intimate partner abuse and we're thrilled to be able to support the work our friends at GreenHouse17 do every

day to assist people in need at a very critical time," says Mandy Brajuha, VP of external relations at the Kentucky Blood Center.

The community's generosity made a significant impact, contributing to lifesaving blood donations while also providing critical funds to support survivors.

"Although our missions are accomplished in different ways, both of our organizations are committed to nurturing lives and need community support to be successful," adds Darlene Thomas, our executive director.

Do you have a partnership idea to support survivors? We look forward to exploring possibilities. Reach out to us at contact@greenhouse17.org.





This year marks a milestone. Twenty years ago, on **February 14, 2005**, we officially became a nonprofit organization. We embrace our anniversary falling on Valentine's Day to celebrate supportive love and healthy relationships.

"Authentic love is the most powerful expression that genuinely shows those we serve that they are valued and worthy. It is in that love that survivors remember how to love and care for themselves again," says Darlene Thomas, executive director.

Two decades have passed, but she will always remember a pivotal moment in our early history. Although court advocacy and support services were already being provided across the region, she faced a decision about the emergency shelter.

"I was standing at the back door of an empty building looking out on 40 acres of farmland. Could this be our new home? How will survivors stay connected with other community services? Can we engage supporters from this country location?"

"Feelings of safety warmed my heart as the sun lowered in the sky. I imagined a group of survivors talking on the back porch, looking out to the fields where their children were playing."

Before the sun dipped below the horizon, she had clarity. This property should become a safe home for survivors and our new headquarters.

In the years to come, partners from near and far would help imagine opportunities for the beautiful land to foster healing. More than 65,000 adults and children have been supported during the past 20 years, including 4,600 who found safety at the shelter.

"Our mission holds thousands of stories of celebration, fear, loss, and possibility—most with happy endings and many still being told."



20 YEARS





Photo by Pavel Damiyuk on pexels.com



Justice for Families

IMPROVING SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

A new grant will strengthen our community's safe visitation and exchange services for children.

The three-year award was received through a competitive application for Grants to Support Families in the Justice System, commonly known as the Justice for Families Program. Only 24 communities in the nation were selected for funding last year.

"This is a major investment that responds to a critical need in our communities," says Scott Lancaster, manager of our safe exchange and visitation program. "The funding helps stabilize the operation of our existing services while expanding partnerships to support children and their parents."

The Justice for Families Program is dedicated to improving the civil and criminal justice

system for families with a history of intimate partner abuse and other violence. Guiding principles include equal regard for the safety of children and adults through respectful and fair interactions.

A team united in these goals will bring varied experience and perspective to the effort. Partners include the Board of Directors for the Lexington Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition, Georgetown Police Department, and Boyle County and Mercer County Family Court.

"Children deserve safety and predictability. I'm proud that our organization was able to ensure continuation of safe visitation and exchange services in the region seven years ago and honored the program has received federal support."

The Grants to **Support Families** in the Justice System program is authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2013 per 34 U.S. Code § 12464. Neither the funder nor its components operate, control, are responsible for, or necessarily endorse this program, including, without limitation, the program content, technical infrastructure, policies, and any services or tools provided.



COMMUNITY CARE

nurturing lives



Although the work to end intimate partner abuse always will be difficult, safer tomorrows are possible in a community that cares about survivors.



Donations to reduce parking fines through LEXPARK's Connect for Community raised over \$1,000 to support the mission.

Ned Bellau, his band Canvas, and many talented local musicians made this year's Rock Relief at The Cellar a great success.

We celebrate volunteers from the UK Martin Luther King Center and Office of Student Organizations and Activities for their volunteer service on Martin Luther King Day.



The J&H Outdoors Bags to Riches program brought awareness and funds to support survivors.

Whitaker Bank's Danville branch donated \$2,000 to support the Children's Safe Exchange and Visitation program to help

families navigating complex dynamics have a safe space to heal.

Thank you to Heart of Kentucky United Way for their longtime partnership and support in Boyle, Garrard, Mercer, and Lincoln counties.



Timber's Grateful Companions has launched their Compassion Support program in memory of Lydia Cassady. Timber will visit residents at the shelter to share his healing energy.

Thank you to all who gave so generously during the holidays to create meaningful moments for survivors and their children.

Hooray for Shop & Share! Many thanks to First Lady Britainy Beshear, ZeroV, Kroger, and other partners for coordinating this statewide event for so many years. Thank you to everyone who volunteered and donated. Our pantry at the emergency shelter will be stocked for almost a year!



Do you have a great idea to support survivors? Let's chat! Reach out to Hallie at 859-519-1911 or hlintner@greenhouse17.org.



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Registration for summer flowers will open in March. We're excited to offer the **Summer Flower CSA and U-Pick Season Pass** again this year. Visit GreenHouse17.org/summer-flowers to sign up!

Green  House17
Nurturing lives

harmed by intimate partner abuse.



800.544.2022
24-HOUR CRISIS HOTLINE

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