

The Advocate

Renewal House, Fall 2021

Karen Easter, Executive Director of REACHOUT Celebrates 50 years of Service

"HOTLINE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!" the poster said in huge neon-colored letters.

An 18-year-old SUNY Potsdam freshman, just arrived from a tiny town in the Appalachian foothills. She didn't even know what a hotline was, but she couldn't look away.

She was quiet, shy, disappointed, and lost. In the few days since she'd left home, the college life she had imagined had already fallen apart. The boy from home she'd followed to Potsdam? Never going to be hers. The biology and chemistry courses she needed for her pre-med plans? Closed out of every one. Friends? Hadn't met any. It was the end of the world as she knew it – all seemed lost.

"HOTLINE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!" The volunteer training started on Saturday. It sounded scary. She thought she wouldn't be capable of doing the work. What did she know about how to help people solve their problems? She'd always been able to sense when people – even strangers – were struggling and in pain. Because she didn't know anything to do to help, this was a burden that weighed very heavily on her and made her feel helpless. Maybe she could learn a way to help? So, fears and all, she walked into the hotline training session.

It was October, 1971, and I was that 18-year-old freshman. I did learn a way to help people in crisis, and I loved doing it! And fifty years later, I am still doing the work that the neon-colored sign guided me to when I was scared and lost.

That first hotline fell apart in 1974. Friends and I tried to start a new one, which also fell apart. In 1976, a group of SUNY Potsdam students made plans for a new hotline they were going to call Reachout. I was asked to be an advisor and trainer, and I said yes. My fiancé, a young lawyer named Steve Easter, said yes, too. From then on, our lives have been entwined with Reachout's life.

Reachout grew, and soon I was asked to be its executive director. I said yes. Once Reachout's lines were answered 24 hours a day, staffed exclusively by volunteers and me, we were able to help other services get started. In 1982, some women who hoped to start a domestic violence shelter found me. Would I help them plan? I said yes. A year later, Renewal House had been born, and its first director asked if Reachout would be their hotline, since they didn't have enough people to do it on their own. Our board and I said yes, and in April of 1983, Renewal House began to house families whose homes weren't safe for them. We answered all the incoming calls

Today, I'm the longest-serving crisis service director in this country. Our son, born in 1981, found a life of service at Reachout, too. Together with many others, we've trained more than 3,000 hotline volunteers. I spent several months training fledgling hotline directors in the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s. I've served for four years as the president of our national crisis center directors' association. But nothing makes me prouder than helping Renewal House begin, survive, thrive, and grow. I am so proud of our sister agency!

The hotline life has been a very challenging life, but I can't imagine a better life for me. Service to others has made all the difference between the sad, scared girl I was 50 years ago and the confident woman I am today. I've helped others to heal and I've helped countless volunteers learn to help others too. In doing so, I have healed myself. If you are struggling right now, I hope you will find the life you long for. And when you're ready, I hope you will say "yes" to helping someone else. It might make all the difference for you, too.

Yours in sisterhood and service, Karen

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

Domestic violence thrives in silence. To be able to support and help victims and survivors, and to prevent domestic violence in the future, we all need to normalize it by talking openly about it. Having an informed conversation about domestic violence requires the understanding that it is much more than physical abuse, and why 'just leaving' is not so simple for survivors.

Domestic violence is often thought about in terms of physical violence, but controlling behavior

and other abusive tactics often begin long before any physical violence occurs. As a society, we all have a role in changing the narrative about what domestic violence is, to whom it happens, and how we can support those who are experiencing it, and ultimately to prevent it entirely.

This October, in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) is partnering with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)

and other state coalitions across the nation to start a coordinated national conversation about domestic violence and how we can all contribute to changing the script on this overshadowed, but fundamental topic.

#Every1KnowsSome1

If you need assistance or want to talk to someone about domestic violence, call 315-379-9845 to speak with a trained peer advocate.

National Wear Purple Day, Thursday, October 21st

Help raise awareness by wearing purple — the signature color of domestic violence awareness. Wearing purple is the perfect way to start the conversation and end the silence on domestic violence.

Annual Dinner with Silent Auction 2021—*Cancelled*

Every year we invite our community to join us for our annual recognition dinner. This year, we felt we must cancel for the safety of everyone attending and for the staff at the Gran View.

Our program for the evening traditionally includes a message from our director, a guest speaker, a survivor who speaks, and the recognition of the year's honoree.

It is also a time when we have a silent auction to raise funds needed during the year.

We have often included an *empty seat at the table*; a tribute to

lives lost to domestic violence and/or to those who have worked to end violence in their community.

In place of the silent action, we kindly ask that you donate to our agency. Consider a **\$50 donation**, which would have been the cost to attend the dinner. Your donation would virtually provide a seat at the table showing your support of victims and survivors. With your support, our community can help save lives.

The most impactful portion of our dinner is listening to a survivor speak. Within the newsletter, you

will read about a survivor's journey. Although this person is not from our county, you will feel the impact that an abuser has on the lives of others.

And finally, we would *again* like to recognize everyone who has assisted Renewal House during this pandemic, so that we could effectively and efficiently continue to provide services to victims/survivors in need. Whether through donations or agents of service, you have been a tremendous help, and we are grateful.

Adopt a Family during the Holiday Season

Renewal House is once again sponsoring the Adopt-a-Family Program to benefit the adults and children receiving non-residential and residential services.

Client families will be paired with donor families based on the size of the family and the ages of their children. After being paired with a client family, a "Wish List" will be sent to the donors with the

receiving family's genders, ages, clothing sizes and their holiday wishes. From the list, the donor family chooses to purchase any or all of the items on the list, or substitute items they feel the client may enjoy.

This program is a source of happiness, joy and satisfaction for all involved, and with the help of the community, it is always a huge success!

If you have questions about the program or are interested in adopting a family this holiday season, please contact Renewal House at 315-379-9845 or email renewalhouse_cmdv@aol.com.

For an on-going list of residential and non-residential needs, email renewalhouse@verizon.net.

Donor Appreciation Report***Thank you for your support!***

Amelotte, Jane
Amo, Shirley
AMVETS Post 282
Backus, Paul and Debra
Baltus, Ruth
Baum, Danette
Bigwarfe, Brooks
Blewett, Bob and Susan
BPO Elks
Calico Sisters Group
Canton Kids Care
Carberry, Anne
Chambers, Holly
Christ's Church of Love
Churches of Canton
Clarkson University
Clarkson Society of Women
Engineers
Classy Collectibles & More
Community Bank, N.A.
Corning, Inc.
Dailey, Lucia
Dalton, Catherine
Day, Ronald and Shiela
Dean, Charles and Susan
Degraaf, Judith
Degraaff, Robert
Degroat, Judith
Delta Kappa Gamma
Delta Zeta
Derouchie, Daniel
Distasio, Amanda
Dold, Julie and Nathan
Facteau, Marian
Fay, Martin and Mary
Field, Adam
First United Methodist Church
Franz, Bonnie
Frary, Bonnie
French, Lauren
Frysinger, Char
Furgal, Mike and Pat
Furst, Suzanne and Benjamin
Gagnon, Patrick and Patricia
Galo, Ellen
Gardam, Claire and Brian
Gates, Sarah
Gauthier, Edward and Jacqueline

Green, Erin
Greene, Ann
Griffin, Linda
Guyette, Diana
Hammond Presbyterian Church
Hance, Doedi
Hill, Ken and Lori
Hill, Natasha
Hill, Elizabeth and Richard
House, Charles and Sharon
Hyde, Joan
Jacques, Phillip and Paula
Jenne & Carr Insurance Agency, Inc.
Kappa Delta Chi Sorority
Keller, Kathleen
Kiely, Laura
Knapp Station Community Church
Krenceski, Mary
Kuenzler, Julie and Brent
Kulp, Kristy
Larsen, Joan
Lawrence, Thomas and Kathleen
Lowell, Mark
McKie, Kristin
McLaughlin, Annie
Meites, Robin
Mental Health Counseling Services
of NNY, PLLC
Mueller, Roger
Mulkin, Alan and Kate
Nelson, Gena and Casey
Nicandri, Lois
Norman, Anne
North Country Savings Bank
Northern NY Community Foundation
Northside Community Church
O'Brien, Sean
O'Neill, James & Cheryl
Opdyke, Carol and Timothy
Owen, Mary Ann and Malcolm
Partridge, Sean
Pat Collins Real Estate
Perretta, Francine
Phalon, Theresa and Tim
Pierce, Barbara
Pinkerton, Jane
Planned Parenthood Generation
Action

Policella, Ruth
Potsdam—AAK Middle School
Potter, Donald and Nancy
Powers, Susan
Ragan, Avis
Relief Society
Richards, Diana
Richardson, Shannon
Rivezzi, Rose
Schaberg, Albert and Gail
Schrader, Greta
Seymour, Michael
Shine, Anthony and Collette
Siegfried, Will
Simons, Nancy and Jim
SLU Advocates Program
Smith, Betsy
St. Lawrence Health Initiative
Stein, Kathleen
Stevenson, Emmy
Street, Sally
Suniga, Rosemarie
The Somebody Cares Group
Tresidder, Tesia
United Methodist Women-
Canton
VFW Post 1194
Wallace, Judy and Jim
White, Jim and Sharon
Wight, Gary and Thadine
Wyckoff, Peter and Katherine
Ye Olde Liquors
Zonta Club of Ogdensburg
Zonta Club of Canton

Renewal House recognizes the businesses, organizations, and community members who generously support the adults and children who seek services at Renewal House by donating money, items, or time. The names listed on this report are from donations received since our last newsletter.

Services Offered at Renewal House

Renewal House provides a variety of services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in St. Lawrence County. All services are free and confidential. Services include:

24-hour Crisis Hotline: Staff and volunteers are available 24 hours a day by calling **315-379-9845**.

Regular office hours are 8 am — 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If it is not an emergency and you would like **to leave a message, call 315-379-9878**. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Individual Counseling/Emotional Support: Short-term individual counseling in a non-judgmental atmosphere that acknowledges a person’s ability and right to make choices. Help is available to consider options and plan for safety. Home visits are provided if needed.

Support Group: A facilitated self-help group for victims and survivors of domestic violence providing mutual support and understanding from others who have been abused and who share something in common. It has helped many victims feel less isolated, get useful information, and develop a safety plan. Transportation is provided if needed.

Economic Empowerment Program: Staff facilitate *Moving Ahead Through Financial Management*, a 5-module economic empowerment curriculum designed to identify and address financial abuse, develop budgeting strategies, and encourage financial security and independence.

Children’s Program: Recreational/Support Group to help children understand what abuse is and to give them a safe space to talk about their feelings. Children are reassured that the abuse is not their fault. Individual counseling is also provided.

Safe Housing: 24-hour intake for emergency, temporary shelter for domestic violence victims.

Advocacy: Assistance in obtaining orders of protection, pressing criminal charges, and working with law enforcement. We also help in obtaining emergency assistance from Department of Social Services, Office of Victim Services and other community programs.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners: Specially trained medical professionals providing compassionate, knowledgeable assistance to a victim of sexual assault.

Community Education and Outreach: Presentations are available for any public or private group, school, business, or agency.

Campus Advocacy
Our Campus Advocate provides direct service, trainings, and presentations for all colleges in St. Lawrence County. We are currently at four colleges that are generously sharing their space with us:

Clarkson University, Tuesdays, 8:30—4:30pm, Student Center, Room 044

SUNY Potsdam, Wednesdays, 9—5pm, Sisson Hall, Room 217

SUNY Canton, Thursdays, 9—5pm, Payson Hall, Room 207

St. Lawrence University, Fridays, 9—5pm, Bewkes Science Hall, Room 323

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Although we do not have a dedicated space, we are currently providing training to all students, staff and faculty. All services are available upon request.

Renewal House prohibits the discrimination or harassment of any person based on race, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, religion and national origin.

During the pandemic, some services may be modified. Please call with any questions.

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Survivor

I Thought I Knew What Domestic Violence Was

Survivor Shelley says domestic abuse doesn't always look like what you think

Dec 16, 2020 By Shelley F.

I thought I knew what domestic violence was. After all, I was working for a publishing company whose founder started Theresa's Fund (the domestic violence nonprofit that created DomesticShelters.org). I donated out of my paycheck to the cause. Along with coworkers, I toured local domestic violence shelters to see where our money was going. I was part of a committee that determined which organizations would receive Theresa's Fund grants.

I thought I knew what domestic violence was, but it turns out, I actually knew very little.

At 23, I started dating a man, we'll call him Alex (not his real name), who worked for the same company I did (yes, the company that was so supportive of domestic violence survivors). A few months prior, my college boyfriend—the person I spent five years with and the man I thought I was going to spend the rest of my life with—had broken up with me. I was 40 pounds overweight, depressed and my self-esteem was in the shitter.

Alex* made me feel special, valued, beautiful. He was smart, thoughtful and good-natured. When he was clean-shaven and smiled, you could see the little boy he once was peeking out from within. He wasn't especially suave or charming. He was just your average guy next door. He worked in IT. He introduced me to Battlestar Galatica and Firefly. He drove a Volkswagen and wore Texas. Also, he was married.

The Early Years

Yes, Alex was married when I met

him. He told me he and his wife had been living separate lives for a while (I know, I know). They still shared a home but had their own bedrooms and weren't intimate. He indicated he couldn't divorce her just yet, because she wasn't from the U.S., although he never really explained what that meant. Would she be deported if they divorced? Did he just feel bad for her? He didn't say and I never asked. I guess I didn't want to know.

Being married aside, the first two years of our relationship were pretty normal. We talked for hours, watched nerdy TV shows, went for daytrips on his Harley-Davidson, stood in line together for the first iPhone to come out. He spent more time with me than he did at home, and yet all I did was long for him to leave his wife and be with me. And then he did.

The Glaring Red Flag I Missed

During their divorce, Alex's ex-wife filed for an order of protection. I went to court with him. The proceedings were all about a cell phone. She told the judge he had been tracking her whereabouts via her phone. Alex stated he was only interested in the phone since he paid the bill. I didn't understand any of it. I had never heard of an order of protection. I assumed it was something to do with their divorce. Having a partner who's been on the receiving end of a restraining order is a serious red flag, but I was oblivious.

After his wife moved out, Alex and I grew even closer. He stayed at my place a lot. After all, that's where we were accustomed to spending time together and I didn't want to be in the home he used to share with another woman. I relished having someone to come home to. To eat dinner with. To fall asleep next to.

Everything was going great those first few months after his divorce. He was a model boyfriend. He called on the nights he did go home to say good night, even if it was 2

in the morning. He accompanied me to my family's Sunday night dinners. He brought me flowers. He wanted to spend time with me.

Slow Descent into Abuse

Things were going well. We talked about marriage and kids, but mostly we just enjoyed being able to be out in public together without fear that we'd run into someone Alex knew.

Then one day, while Alex and I were out to lunch, I reminded him I would be home late from work because I had an appointment to get my eyebrows waxed.

"Aw, can't you move it to next week?" he pleaded. "I really can't wait to see you tonight. I was planning on making us dinner."

Looking back—and I'm not trying to be dramatic here—but that was the beginning of the end. What I had seen as romance was actually his first attempt to control me. And he won. I canceled my appointment.

Weeks went by and then he called on my way home from work. "Are you OK? You're late, and I got worried." Again, I thought it was sweet.

But as time went on, we talked more and more about my schedule. Fought more and more about my schedule. Rather than making me feel desired any time he got upset about plans I had that didn't involve him, I felt guilty. I started to put off dinners with girlfriends so I didn't have to hear about it from him afterward. I took care of as much as possible personal business (errands and such) on my lunch hour rather than cutting into "our time."

Still, when we were together, things were great.

Then came the jealousy

We went to dinner at my mom's one Sunday evening, and her neighbors were outside. Both of them said hello. On the way home that night, Alex said he didn't like the way the husband had greeted me. He said

he thought my mom's neighbor was into me and it made him uncomfortable.

Then he started asking about the guys I worked with. Asking, then interrogating. To kick off one of our more ridiculous fights, Alex asked who I sat next to during a meeting. He knew who was going to be there and which conference room we met in. There were two men and two women in a four-person conference room. He wanted to know why I sat next to So-and-So.

"It's a four-person conference room. I couldn't not sit next to one of the men," I told him. He didn't care.

Fights like that gradually started happening more and more frequently. And somehow, he always won. He was older than me, smarter than me. He always had an answer, an excuse for everything. It was one giant mindf*ck.

Things Only Got Worse

The psychological abuse, the emotional abuse, the sexual coercion—it all started just like that. Innocently enough at first. While he was on a cross-country motorcycle trip to visit his parents, he brought up the idea of sharing intimate photos. When I'd had enough, though, he begged for more. The next time he asked and I said no, he said I didn't love him anymore. Of course I did. To prove it—and to avoid another fight—I sent some photos. I sent photos when he asked, I had sex when he asked (even if it meant crying my way through it). I slept facing him when he asked, because if I rolled over, he would say, clearly, I was no longer interested in him. Any time I refused him in any way, it resulted in a fight that I couldn't win.

Then came the threats

Alex no longer worked at the same company as me. To stay in

touch during the day, we sent instant messages. Sweet nothings and inside jokes at first. Then mundane "what's for dinner?" type business. One day, after back-to-back meetings, I returned to a screen full of messages on my computer. I had forgotten to tell him I had meetings. He was livid. He told me to call him right away.

I walked out to the parking lot. The fight started over my not replying to him but quickly devolved into God-knows-what. I wanted out. I wanted to end things. I tried. We hung up and I cried. While I was trying to pull myself together before going back to my desk, I opened my email and saw a message from Alex addressed to my boss. Inside were a number of the intimate photos I had previously sent him.

I couldn't breathe. I was devastated. I literally wanted to die. As a matter of fact, I decided right there in the parking lot that if I got fired over this, I would kill myself. I wouldn't be able to handle the humiliation.

I called Alex and screamed at him. Between sobs, I asked him a barrage of questions. What had he done? How could he do that to me? What the f*ck was his problem?! He laughed.

He told me to open the message and click on my boss's name. When I did, it showed Alex's email address. "I didn't actually send her the photos," he said. "But I could."

Total Control

Things only got worse from there. We skipped Sunday dinners with my family. He didn't want to risk seeing my mom's neighbor and, frankly, I didn't want to have to pretend to be happy in front of my mom. When we went out to dinner and had a male server, I stared at my menu while I ordered to avoid being accused of looking at another man too long.

After a date during which Alex became convinced I had a thing for the bartender, I got on the back of his motorcycle and held on for dear life. He was driving erratically to say the

least. He was speeding and kept accelerating fast for no reason. There was no backrest behind me. I was convinced he was trying to throw me off. I contemplated whether I should roll toward the shoulder of the freeway or just pop my helmet off and hope I died quickly.

One of our worst fights was over the phone while I was driving home from work. I don't remember what it was about, but I was fed up. I couldn't take it anymore. I hung up on him and threw the phone at my passenger window. But I quickly fished it out from between the seat and door at the next light because I knew he'd be calling back, and if I didn't answer, things would only get worse. They did anyway.

"If you ever hang up on me again," he said. "I will drive directly to Tucson and slit Mia's throat." Mia* was my niece. She was in preschool at the time.

I'm One of the Lucky Ones

Through all of that, it never once crossed my mind that what I was experiencing was abuse. I just thought I was in a shitty relationship. I used to pray he would hit me. For some reason, I thought that was the line. That was the line I had been waiting for him to cross. If he hit me, I'd have reason to leave and never look back.

It took me years—and writing for DomesticShelters.org—to realize what I endured was abuse. Today, I know I'm one of the lucky ones. Today, I know that even if he had hit me, I probably still would've gone back. I'm lucky he didn't. Too many women can't say the same.

After four years together, I finally ended things for good. I had tried before, but he kept threatening to kill himself if I didn't come back. Finally, it dawned on me: Better him than me.

Tech Safety

Alex didn't kill himself. He sold most of his possessions and moved out of state. Except for calling me the night before he left and asking me to marry him, I never heard from him again.

I'm one of the lucky ones.

* Names have been changed for safety

How to Shut Stalkers Out of Your Tech

People facing domestic abuse can take these steps to lock down their devices and eliminate stalkerware, NNEDV.org
By Yael Grauer, March 5, 2021,

People who are in or have left abusive relationships face very clear threats, including physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse, and verbal aggression. They may also come to realize they are being spied on or stalked—in person or virtually on their computers, phones, and connected devices. It can be frightening, but Consumer Reports has compiled a list of ways you can take back control.

Security and domestic violence experts say it's critical to figure out how an abuser may be accessing information you haven't shared, such as your physical location, who you've been speaking to, or details of personal conversations.

"You're basically approaching the whole situation like you're a detective," says Eva Galperin, director of cybersecurity at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

People may assume that an abuser has installed stalkerware on their devices when the real explanation is simpler and can be addressed first, says Toby Shulruff, Senior Technology Safety Specialist at the National Network to End Domestic Violence. "The more common thing is that all of these everyday features of our phones are used for monitoring," she says.

Start out with the basics, like changing passwords and

reviewing privacy settings on your accounts, Galperin says. An abuser may be getting information through shared calendar apps, social media check-ins, email being forwarded to another account, location sharing on navigation tools or other apps, or well-meaning friends who don't know about the abuse.

Or the perpetrator could have physical access to your phone or be able to log in to your cellular account to look through call logs, text messages, and billing records.

Once you've looked into these access points, see if the situation persists. If it does, your problem could be stalkerware, software that's covertly placed on computers or mobile devices that can intercept phone calls and text messages, and secretly record other information.

How to Get Help

Before taking steps to cut off an abuser's access to your devices and accounts, bear in mind that in some cases it could be risky: an abuser could react with anger. But, you don't have to face the decision on how to proceed by yourself.

For help navigating your options and for emotional support, contact a domestic violence counselor or advocate. (Renewal House) has trained advocates who can walk you through ways to protect yourself and build a safety plan.

Shulruff recommends calling the hotline (315-379-9845) using a different phone from the one you suspect may be compromised. It's best to use a device the abuser doesn't have access to, such as a trusted friend or family member's phone or a landline at work.

As an added precaution, you can keep the current phone you're concerned about in a different location while you call, in case

there is stalkerware on it, which could allow the microphone to be turned on without your knowledge.

There's one more factor to consider before you act. Cutting off an abuser's access to devices or accounts might make it more difficult to prove that digital abuse took place. If you're planning on filing a civil restraining order or criminal report, or even reporting digital abuse to your email provider, a social media platform, or another company, it's worth taking screenshots that could be evidence.

You can also consult a lawyer to get help figuring out how to best preserve evidence of digital abuse.

Once you're ready, here's what you can do to secure your private information.

List Your Online Accounts

Make a list of any account that shares information with others. This might include:

- Email accounts.
- Social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).
- Ride-hailing apps (Uber, Lyft).
- Streaming media accounts (Netflix, Hulu).
- Bank and credit card sites.
- Cable, phone, and utility companies.
- Computer and mobile device passwords or PINs.

Change Your Passwords

Next, change your passwords on accounts that contain personal information, and use a unique password for each account. Because it can be difficult to memorize a different password for each account, you can save those new passwords in a password manager that an abuser won't have access to. After you change your passwords, you can log out anybody else who might be accessing those accounts. Make sure you don't accidentally log yourself out before revoking an abuser's

access, because they could lock you out of your own account.

Set Up Multifactor Authentication

After changing your password, safeguard your accounts with another layer of defense by using multifactor authentication (MFA), sometimes called two-factor authentication (2FA). Once you enable it, you'll need a second element (or factor) to log in, in addition to your password. That way, even if your password is compromised, it'll be more difficult for an abuser to access your account.

Services implement MFA in a variety of ways. Receiving codes via text message or email is the only option for some online services. However, if you can, it is even safer to set up MFA using an authentication app, such as Authy. These apps are often recommended by security experts because codes sent by text message or email can sometimes be redirected or intercepted.

Don't Forget Connected Devices

If you use any apps that control connected gadgets, such as smart lights, door locks, thermostats, and even fitness trackers, make sure to change the sharing settings and set up MFA for those as well. These apps can give away information such as when you're home or when you're exercising or out and about.

Secure Your Devices

If you're an Android user or have a Gmail account, run through the security and privacy check on your Google account settings.

On your Android phone, make sure that Google Play is set up correctly and no stalkerware apps have been loaded. You can do this by checking whether Google Play Protect has been disabled under Settings > Security > Google Play Protect. This setting

scans your phone for harmful apps daily. It should be turned on, and the last scan should have happened within the past day. If the feature is turned off, you'll want to perform a factory reset on your phone.

If you're an iPhone user, download Trail of Bits' iVerify app, \$3, and follow the steps listed to make sure your phone is secure. You can also follow steps to see if anyone has access to your accounts, actively stop sharing, and make sure no one else can see your location.

Watch Your Social Media Updates

You may inadvertently be sharing information with your abuser on social media. Even if your account is set to share only with certain friends or you have a stalker blocked on a public account, it's possible that a mutual acquaintance is passing the information on. And if someone else tags you in a photo or checks in with you at a location or an event, you might be showing up to all their friends as well. Check your account security on Facebook, Instagram, Google, LinkedIn, and Twitter, and decide whether you want to change your privacy settings to limit access to your posts.

Pay Attention to Your Conversations

If it seems like an abuser is eavesdropping on all your conversations using stalkerware, is it possible that a well-meaning friend could be sharing information with them, instead? This can happen accidentally by people who aren't aware of how dire the situation might be, or who an abuser has manipulated into sharing key details, for example by feigning concern for a target's mental health.

Start by limiting the information you share to just a few trusted people. Ask your friends, family,

and employer to keep your location data and any other sensitive information private, both online and in personal conversations.

Consider Antivirus Software

If you're still concerned about stalkerware on your Windows computer or Android phone after following the steps above, you can download antivirus software that specifically detects the most common types. (While Consumer Reports also tests antivirus software, the recommendations below are specific to stalkerware.)

Eset, Kaspersky, and Trend Micro's Android apps all did well in finding stalkerware in evaluations by independent testing organization AV-Comparatives, while BitDefender, Eset, Kaspersky and Norton tested well on Windows. Malwarebytes is also recommended by digital security experts specializing in protection against stalkerware.

If you find stalkerware on one of your devices, you can remove it by following the steps given by your antivirus software, but remember that you don't have to remove it if you don't want to. Leaving stalkerware on your computers or devices can help you collect evidence or avoid tipping off an abuser that you're aware of it until after you've taken additional steps to increase your personal safety.

"The target is the person with the best assessment of their own appetite for risk and the likelihood that their abuser will escalate based on the knowledge that they have taken the stalkerware off their device," Galperin says.

A study published by the Journal of Family Violence in January 2020 found that **60–63% of survivors receiving services** from domestic violence programs reported tech-based abuse.

2020 (includes responding during a pandemic)

	DV	SA	Total
Total individuals served (unduplicated)	717	136	853
Adult Females	544	79	623
Adult Males	36	11	47
Adult Gender Nonconforming	1	0	1
Children/Youth	136	46	182
Safe Housing (safe dwelling only)	49	(individuals) Average length of stay was 33 days	
Denial of Safe Housing	121	Safe dwelling is full, family size too large for bed space available, etc. Other placement options are offered as an alternative to the safe dwelling.	
Hotline Calls	3,772	3,310 during office hours, 462 after hours	
Types of Service	Individuals Served	Number of times service was provided	
Emotional Support/Counseling	334	1,290	
Phone Counseling	766	6,548	
Personal Advocacy	578	4,376	
Criminal Justice Support	235	2,933	
Transportation	64	463	
Information	467	5,258	
Referral	284	705	
Child Care/Child Recreation	13	49	
Forensic Sexual Assault Exams Provided by a SANE	46		
Presentations (school-based & community)	2,669	43	
	Hours	Number of Volunteers	
Volunteers	1,598.5	13	

2021 Update

Renewal House received \$25,000 from the Arconic Foundation to assist victims/survivors with rental assistance.

We received Pandemic Relief funding for both domestic violence and sexual assault programs to assist in safe housing repairs and maintenance, new equipment for forensic rape exams, and direct client assistance needs.

A Technology grant was received to assist our agency in purchasing laptops, etc. so that all staff were able to work from home when needed during the pandemic.

Interesting facts

We received 12 forensic rape exam requests (and responded) in 5 weeks.

In one afternoon, 4 families sought emergency safe housing.

#Every1KnowsSome1

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Renewal House funding sources:

NYS Office of Victim Services

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

NYS Department of Criminal Justice Services

NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault

NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

St. Lawrence County Department of Social Services

United Way of Northern New York

FEMA

Stewarts Holiday Fund

NNY Community Foundation

Arconic Foundation

Donations and Fundraising

Fall 2021 Newsletter

I have enclosed my tax-deductible donation in support of the programs and services offered at RENEWAL HOUSE.

\$250 _____ \$100 _____

\$75 _____ \$50 _____ Other Amount _____

I give permission for my name to be listed on the donor appreciation report in the next newsletter.

I do **NOT** want my donation to be recognized.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Please make checks payable to RENEWAL HOUSE and mail to:

3 Chapel Street, Canton, NY 13617.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

Visit our website at www.slvrenewalhouse.org to donate by Credit Card.