

Organization
Date

Thanks for asking Hope Alliance to speak to your group today. I am (person, relationship to Hope Alliance)

Hope Alliance is the only emergency Shelter in Williamson County providing safety for those who've been victimized by Family Violence and/or Sexual Assault. Hope Alliance provides a 24-hour hotline, one-on-one counseling, group counseling, case management, safety planning, legal advocacy, hospital accompaniment, transportation and of course, emergency shelter. On average, each year Hope Alliance helps over 2,500 victims and in 2019, Hope Alliance provided over 8,000 Nights of Safety in our emergency shelter for more than 350 adults and children.

The MISSION of Hope Alliance is to assist those whose lives have been affected by family and sexual violence by providing safety, services and developing partnerships that lead to Hope, Healing and Prevention. Our goal is to eliminate this violence in the future.

So, you might ask "How do we address the mission?" Let's talk about the highlights of what we accomplished last year. During 2019 we provided:

- Services to almost 2,700 people who were victimized by Family Violence and/or Sexual Assault.
- 2,688 Hotline calls were fielded.
- 7,983 Nights of Safety were provided for women, men and children in our 30-bed facility.

- Over 18,800 one-on-one counseling sessions.
- Over 70 court accompaniments.
- Over 90 hospital accompaniments.

The real question is does Hope Alliance's services make any difference to families who received these services. Nine out of 10 clients have favorable comments about Hope Alliance. During "Exit Interviews," 94% to 97% of our clients express:

- An increased sense of security upon exiting the shelter,
- A decreased sense of hopelessness,
- An increased knowledge of available resources to aid in their journey, and
- An enhanced set of skills to help avoid re-victimization.

Hope Alliance began providing services in 1984. We've managed the only 24-hour hotline and emergency shelter in Williamson County for decades. Our services continue to grow, however, one of our biggest challenges is that demand for services is well beyond our current capacity.

Williamson County is one of the fastest growing areas in all of Texas and the United States. With increased growth comes an increase in the incidence of Family Violence and/or Sexual Assault. While Hope Alliance fielded over 2,600 Hotline calls, provided face-to-face services to almost 1,000 individuals and Sheltered 357 of them in our 30-bed facility, we also referred almost 1,000 individuals to

other shelters outside of Williamson County because we operate at almost full capacity almost every day of the year.

Because of this growing demand, we establish waitlists for Counseling, Case Management, Group therapy, and Shelter for individuals and families. 30% of the clients placed on the waitlist are children.

Our shelter can house up to 30 individuals at any given time. Clients are accepted into our Shelter based on the level of danger they're experiencing. The highest risk clients are given priority access to our Shelter. About 60% of the clients placed on the waiting list are deemed HIGH risk. We help them find alternative safe housing and provide counseling services until space is available with us. But where do these potential clients go in the meantime? Think about it:

1. The potential clients have little or no reliable income;
2. They have few resources;
3. They have unreliable or no transportation;
4. So where do they go if Hope Alliance can't provide immediate service?
5. They are faced with going homeless and living on the streets, or
6. They go back to their abuser who controls the money, the housing, the food, the transportation, etc.
7. They go back into the very Cycle of Violence from which they are trying to escape.

How do we fund the Hope Alliance operation?

Our 2019 budget is a little over \$2 million dollars of which approximately 40% comes from state, federal and local government grants. 60% comes from contributions from individuals, corporations, faith-based groups, foundations, civic groups and special fundraising events like our annual Amplify Austin, Allies of Hope Dinner & Awards, Women Fore Hope Golf Tournament, and our Survive, Thrive, Prevent 5K Run / Walk. With our mission to expand services and to serve more clients, we need individuals and companies in our community to become more financially involved. Seventy-six cents of every dollar goes to direct services, so we make the most of every donation given to us.

Donations of any size allow victims the opportunity to become survivors. A donation of:

- \$2,500 will pay for an average family consisting of a Mom and two children to stay in our Shelter for an average of three weeks;
- \$1,500 buys groceries and supplies for all Shelter residents for a month;
- \$750 can pay for 12, trauma-informed, Master's Level Counseling Sessions for an individual or family; or
- \$750 can support one client for all his/her services for one full year;
- \$250 can buy a month's worth of fuel for our van that transports survivors for job searches or attending doctors' appointments, etc.;

- \$100 can buy diapers for babies for about a month; and
- \$50 can pay for a potentially life-saving Hotline Call.

These are the easiest ways you as an individual and (organization name) can help but there are many other opportunities to serve.

You can offer your expertise. There are Committees that work on Marketing and Development, Facilities, Board Development and Finance. Joining a Committee is an amazing way to give back using skills you have gained in your personal and professional lives. Some volunteers like the results of their support so much that they become Board Members.

You can become an Advocate. Speaking Up and Speaking Out against family and sexual violence and encouraging others to do so is an easy way to educate our community on the significant number of victims in our area.

Your organization can become an “Ally of Hope.” Allies of Hope is a program that allows individuals and organizations to play a financial role in spreading the word about the issues of family and sexual violence in our community and ensuring a continuum of services for survivors and their families. Please encourage your friends and associates on social media to support Hope Alliance. Become an advocate for change and awareness

by attending our local events and contact us today to become an Ally of Hope.

You can volunteer. As an individual or as part of the (organization name), your support is invaluable to Hope Alliance. There are many opportunities where you can help with administrative activities or special projects. Volunteer applications are available on our website along with a list of volunteer opportunities. We do a Volunteer training once per month and once every three months we do a training for volunteers who want to learn how to work directly with clients. This formal, classroom, 32 hour Advocacy Training is conducted on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for 2½ weeks.

To provide further insight into our organization, I would like to share a recent true story about one of our clients. For confidentiality reasons, the names have been changed, but I hope the story touches you the way it touched me...

10-year old "Bobby" came into our shelter with his mom and 6-year old sister after a particularly scary incident with his father. He and his sister had witnessed many episodes of violence perpetrated by his father on his mother in the past but on this particular night, Bobby intervened when his dad held a knife to his mom's neck. When the police arrived, Bobby was waiting for them outside. His Dad had fled the scene; his mom and sister had locked themselves in a bedroom.

For almost 3 weeks, one of our Counselors tried to form a bond with Bobby, drawing on everything she knew about working with child witnesses of family violence. Other staff tried to form a bond too, but Bobby remained angry and unresponsive. He wasn't rude; he was just withdrawn. Nevertheless, before and after every individual and group counseling session Bobby attended, the counselors always said to Bobby, "I appreciate you."

Bobby would not actively engage in counseling; his sister was glued to his side. She was taking her cues from her older brother, so she was somewhat unresponsive as well. Bobby was very protective and caring of his sister. Counselors observed that he was protective and caring of other kids too, so staff asked him to help with the younger kids support group. Much to their surprise, he agreed to do so and he repeated to the other kids **everything** that the counselors had been saying to him over the last several weeks! It was incredibly heart-warming to watch.

Over time, and with the assistance of Hope Alliance, the family was approved for housing assistance through a program being operated by Hope Alliance at the time. When the Counselor saw Bobby the next time, she said, "Bobby, I heard the great news; you guys are moving into your own apartment! I'm so happy for you." Bobby looked the counselor straight in the eye, and said, "My mom's tears are finally happy tears." Then, he cracked the slightest of grins and said, "*I appreciate you.*" The Counselor responded "Oh my goodness, is that an actual

smile?" To which Bobby replied, "I kind of made you work for it, huh?"

Bobby is an awesome young man and he gave staff such a gift that day -- he reminded us why we do what we do! Bobby is why people, like you, should give of your time, talent, and treasures!

Hope Alliance sincerely appreciates the wonderful work that (organization name) does for this community. We have big changes and exciting things happening at Hope Alliance. We hope you will help us in any way you can so we can continue to break Cycles of Violence and make dreams come true like they did for Bobby and his family!

Thanks so very much for inviting me to update you on Hope Alliance and I'd be happy to answer any questions.