



PRESS RELEASE
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Interval House Launches New Program for Hartford Immigrants Grappling with Domestic Violence

HARTFORD – Interval House, the State’s largest domestic violence intervention and prevention organization, is building on its services for immigrants dealing with domestic violence.

Thanks to a new federally funded grant, Interval House will now operate, “Project: Hope Beyond Fear.” Hope Beyond Fear is the first program of its kind in the State and is focused on providing comprehensive domestic violence advocacy for immigrants and refugees living in the City of Hartford. The program increases Interval House’s capacity to respond to the unique needs of immigrant victims, as well as the stark cultural differences that exist among the immigrant community regarding violence against women.

“This new program allows us to double down on our mission to better serve a segment of our community that is critically underserved when it comes to domestic violence,” said Mary-Jane Foster, Interval House’s President and CEO. “Far too many times a person’s immigration status will prevent them from seeking help because they fear deportation or other immigration-related reprisals.”

Hope Beyond Fear will offer special intervention and support services by two state-certified and specially trained, bilingual advocates. The program also brings a new coordinator tasked with targeted community outreach and devoted to fostering special partnerships with other nonprofit agencies that offer immigration services. The Hartford Public Library and the Connecticut Institute for Refugee and Immigrants (CIRI) have agreed to team up with Interval House on the project.

“Hope Beyond Fear is a terrific collaboration and enhancement of the services we offer our clients,” said Alicia Kinsman, CIRI Interim President & CEO. “Immigrants and refugees face myriad hardships and obstacles on a daily basis -- ensuring there is support for them in dealing with issues of domestic violence is much needed.”

“Our libraries have always been havens for learning and outreach, so collaborating with Interval House on this issue is another way the Hartford Public Library system can be proactive in the community on a very important issue and problem,” said Bridget Quinn-Carey, CEO of the Hartford Public Library. “We look forward to working closely with Interval House to provide vital services to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.”

According to national statistics and studies, a person’s immigration status provides abusers additional ways to exert power and control over victims, such as:

- Isolating victims by preventing them from learning English or communicating with friends, family or peers from their home countries;
- Threatening victims with deportation or withdrawal of petitions for legal status;
- Intimidating victims by destroying legal documents such as passports, resident cards, health insurance or driver’s licenses;
- Manipulating victims by withdrawing or not filing papers for residency, or implying the victim will lose citizenship or residency if they report or seek help;
- Withholding financial support or threatening to interfere with a victim’s employment by falsely reporting his/her status to an employer; and
- Using children as pawns by threatening to harm them or have them taken away if authorities are contacted.

Immigrants living in the City of Hartford who are in need of domestic violence services or have questions about Hope Beyond Fear may call (860) 241-5114, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Around-the-clock help is available through the 24-hour hotline at (888) 774-2900. If someone is experiencing an emergency, they should call 911.

About Interval House

Founded in 1977, Interval House is the largest agency in the state of Connecticut dedicated to preventing and breaking the cycle of domestic violence. Through free and confidential services for victims in 24 towns and cities both East and West of the Connecticut River, Interval House has made a positive difference in the lives of more than 250,000 women and children who have experienced psychological and physical abuse at the hand of a domestic or intimate partner. 24-Hour Hotline: (888) 774-2900. Donations accepted: (860) 838-8451. All other calls: (860) 246-9149. Website: intervalhousect.org.

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