



TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT  
1982-2022

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022





LIVE FREE FROM ABUSE

LIVE FREE FROM ABUSE



TEXAS  
ADVOCACY  
PROJECT  
800.374.HOPE



TEXAS  
ADVOCACY  
PROJECT  
800.374.HOPE

OUR VALUES

**COURAGE • EMPOWERMENT  
INNOVATION • INTEGRITY**



**TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT**

1982 - 2022

## **DECADES OF COMMITMENT TO TEXANS LIVING FREE FROM ABUSE**

**OUR MISSION** | Texas Advocacy Project's mission is to end dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in Texas. Texas Advocacy Project empowers survivors through free legal services and access to the justice system, and advances prevention through public outreach and education.

**Our vision is that all Texans live free from abuse.**

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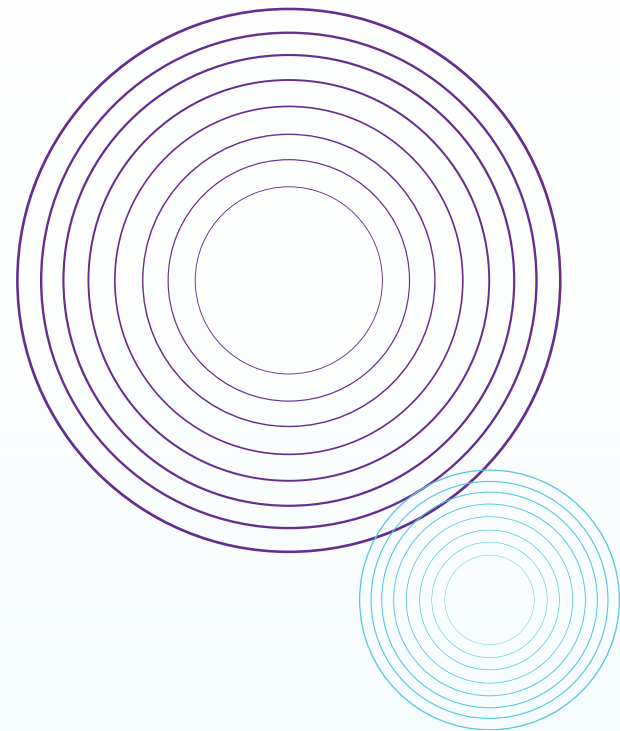
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# WHO WE SERVE

Established in 1982 by a group of young lawyers, **Texas Advocacy Project** started as a legal hotline. In the decades since, TAP has evolved into an **expert on legal issues** affecting survivors of power-based abuse. Today, our **holistic approach** includes both **solutions and prevention**.

Our **solutions** consist of legal, social, and advocacy services proven to **break the cycle of violence** and get victims to safety. We provide effective **legal and social services** like protective orders, termination of abusers' parental rights, child-custody modifications, as well as assistance with civil issues that affect abuse cases such as housing, employment, education, and financial empowerment. In an effort to advance our vision, **we serve ALL Texans** without regard to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, immigration status, or any other distinction.

Our team extends its impact through **prevention** work consisting of a network of **outreach and education** to the public and those that work with survivors including: domestic violence and sexual assault shelters, judges, prosecutors, crime victim services personnel, legal advocates, medical professionals, universities, and students.





TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT  
1982 - 2022



## IN HONOR OF TAP'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

of supporting survivors and in recognition of this pivotal moment in the organization's history, **TAP designated Andrew Weber, JD, as its inaugural Chair Emeritus.** Weber, a past Board Chair and mentor to several Executive Directors/CEOs, has supported TAP for over three decades, earning him this esteemed honor. Weber currently serves as the Partner in Charge of the Austin office of Fort Worth-based Kelly Hart & Hallman LLP.

**Nearly 1 in 3\* human trafficking victims are recruited by a family member or caregiver**

**In 2022, Texas Advocacy Project supported clients from ages 13 to 84 years old**

**74%\* of all Texans will experience domestic violence or will know someone who has**

**1 in 10\* children have seen one parent assault another**

**Over half of U.S. women and almost 1 in 3 U.S. men will experience sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes\***

**In 2022, Texas Advocacy Project served 10,502 clients and children across the state**





# THE BASICS

**TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DONORS, & FINANCIALS**

**THE MANY PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP AND SUSTAIN OUR ORGANIZATION AS WELL AS ENSURE THAT TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT IS STEWARDS OF EVERY DOLLAR DONATED**



# STAFF

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP

We are extremely fortunate to have a leadership team with over 58 years of combined experience serving TAP and a remarkable **67 combined years dedicated to supporting survivors of abuse.**



**HEATHER BELLINO**  
Chief Executive Officer



**BRONWYN BLAKE**  
Chief Legal Officer



**CELIA TÉLLEZ**  
Chief Development &  
Communications Officer



**DENISE MARGO MOY**  
Chief Operating Officer



**JEREMY RATHKE**  
Vice President of Finance



**AMANDA ELKANICK ODER**  
Vice President of  
Advocacy & Outreach



**KELLY BUSKIRK**  
Vice President of Grants

## DEMOGRAPHICS

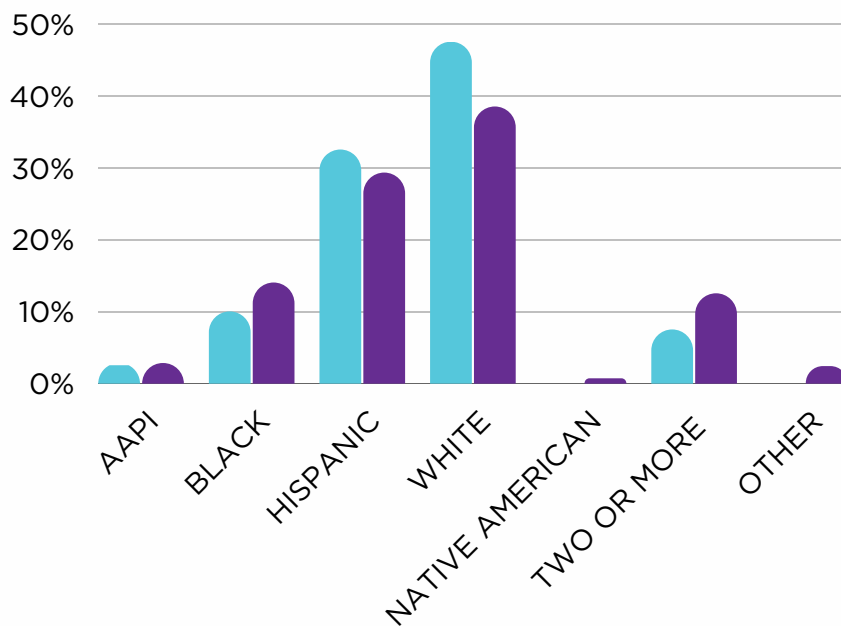
We believe our mission and vision are most effectively fulfilled with staff and Board that is reflective of **Texas' diverse communities.**

### EMPLOYEES

Our recruitment, hiring, and job training practices reflect a commitment to diversity and creating a welcoming space for all. We foster a workplace that respects each individual, and seeks and values diverse perspectives.

### CLIENTS

TAP serves ALL Texans without regard to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, immigration status, or any other distinction. We create and implement programs using our awareness of cultural differences.



## FELLOWS PROGRAM



MICHELLE EGBUNA



DIANA MERCADO



PAOLA VELA

**Texas Advocacy Project Fellows Program funds summer law clerks and first year staff attorneys from underrepresented backgrounds to join us in this work.**

Most public interest positions for law students are unpaid, which undermines diversity and inclusion efforts. Nowhere is this more dire than in the fight to end gender-based violence! For example, Black women experience intimate partner violence at a rate 35% higher than that of white women; however, they are less likely than white women to use social services or go to the hospital because of domestic violence. **Culturally specific and culturally affirming legal services are essential.**

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER YEAR IN REVIEW

What a milestone 2022 has been - **40 years of providing life-changing legal solutions for survivors!** What started in 1982 with four dedicated lawyers, has evolved into **a team of 47 people** serving survivors of abuse and **we are still doing it for FREE!** This is possible because of the people from our past and present who are willing to step into the future with us!

**In 2022, we assisted over 1,200 survivors in nearly 600 social work consultations. Our legal team served nearly 10,000 survivors in almost 5,000 cases and our training and outreach team provided training to nearly 5,000 people!**

**Some other notable accomplishments from our 40th year include:**

- We began working with the **Office of the Attorney General (OAG)** and other prosecutors to provide survivors of human trafficking **Trauma Informed Trial Prep** to help them prepare to be witnesses for a criminal trial.
- TAP joined the steering committee for the **Human Trafficking State Adult Services Project (SASP)**.


- We continued presentations to national audiences on our work. One such opportunity was a **partnership with Abrigo at their National ThinkBig Conference on the detection of human trafficking** in finances and how banks can assist survivors in their communities.
- In efforts to better serve the diverse communities in Texas, our **staff participated in multiple DEI trainings** led by the National Coalition Building Institute and Ujima. These trainings informed the expansion of our Diversity & Inclusion commitment.
- Collaborating with the University of Texas at Austin's Title IX office and UT Law's Mithoff Pro Bono program, Chief Legal Officer (CLO) Bronwyn Blake began serving as a Supervising Attorney for law students volunteering as **Title IX advocates**.
- Chief Legal Officer, Bronwyn Blake, joined **Nancy Grace** on her Crime Stories podcast.
- As part of **Showtime's CUSP film**, TAP's Vice President of Advocacy & Outreach, Amanda Elkanick Oder participated in a panel with the Geena Davis Foundation and the directors of the film.
- In response to a new law regarding human trafficking prevention in the hospitality industry, TAP now has been authorized by the OAG as a training provider of "**Human Trafficking Prevention in the Hospitality Industry**".

**As we look toward the future and close the chapter on our 40th year, you can expect continued growth, driven by our core values. We will work tirelessly to provide holistic, wrap-around services to survivors and prevent these abuses from ever occurring.**



**Heather Bellino, Chief Executive Officer**





**"...I am 17 years old and  
my attorney and TAP  
never made me feel  
belittled or like a child...**

***They made a  
traumatic time in my  
life go smoother..."***

**Texas Advocacy Project Survivor-Client**

# TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT'S 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY GIVING THEIR TIME,  
RESOURCES, & LEADERSHIP



**Michael Marcin, Chair**  
Attorney at Law, Cantilo & Bennett, L.L.P.

**Scott Biscoe**  
Allstate

**Alison Watters, Vice Chair**  
Self-Employed

**Marshall A. Bowen, Attorney at Law**  
Butler Snow LLP

**Boran Buturovic, Treasurer**  
Center Coast Capital Advisors, LP

**Hema Chugh**  
Dell

**Jon Andrews**  
Accenture

**Reema Desai**  
Attorney at Law, Wiley

**Ginger Averitt**  
Eleve Cosmetics

**Sharon Dobbs, Attorney at Law**  
Retired – IBM Associate General Council

**Hope Bartolotta**  
Self-Employed

**Kristi Elizondo**  
Connect Worldwide, Inc.

**Thomas Graham**  
Crosswind Media & Public Relations

**Kathleen D. Hausenfluck**  
Lolley & Associates

**Cynde B. Jones**  
Accenture

**Burke Kennedy, Attorney at Law**  
Savills

**Julia McKenzie**  
The Covalent Foundation

**Marsha Milam**  
Milam Distillery

**Sherrill Morales, CPA**  
Atchley & Associates, LLP

**Scott Neuendorf**  
Luther King Capital Management

**Marybeth Schmitz**  
Vista Equity Partners

**Jeannette Spinelli**  
Spinelli Residential Group

**Sarah Melton Swartzendruber**  
Philanthropist

**Kenny Thompson, Jr.**  
PepsiCo

**Jessica Warren, Attorney at Law**  
Warren Law

**Ashley Womack**  
Abrigo, Inc.

## ADVISORY BOARD

- **Jose M. Rangel, J.D., Chair**
- **Peter Black**
- **Marla Broaddus, JD**
- **Beryl Crowley**
- **Denise Davis**
- **Julie Graham**
- **MJ Hegar**
- **Erin Huddleston**
- **Matt Matthews, J.D.**
- **Linda Phan**
- **Leslie Rhode**
- **Susan Salch**
- **Alex Schoch, J.D.**
- **Kelly Thorstad, M.D.**
- **Michelle Simpson Tuegel, J.D.**
- **Julienne VanDerZiel**
- **Andrew Weber, J.D.**
- **Shannon Wolfson**

IN 2022

**328**

**PEOPLE  
VOLUNTEERED**

**4,097**

**TOTAL HOURS**

## LETTER FROM TAP BOARD CHAIR

Texas Advocacy Project's Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team are pleased to present this 2022 Annual Report. The past year was an amazing success. The organization expanded its activities, increased our outreach, and held the most successful fundraising event in our history. Educational assistance to care providers, students, and enforcement authorities has become a major part of our effort, and during 2022 the groundwork was laid for us to be recognized as one of the most significant state organizations to address the complex issues for victims of human trafficking. **A year like this is going to be tough to follow, but I know our current leadership team will continue to take the organization to new heights.**

This year presented an opportunity for TAP to increasingly involve the organization with State leaders to share expertise, knowledge, and data on domestic violence and human trafficking. **TAP CEO Heather Bellino returned to the Texas Council on Family Violence's Public Policy Committee, which addresses the response to family violence in our state and provides guidance on measures that will be presented to the Texas Legislature.** In addition to family violence, Heather and our Vice President of Advocacy & Outreach, Amanda Elkanick Oder, also served on the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force. These efforts to become a recognized source of expertise were not just local, but also nationwide.

TAP kicked off last summer with a trip to Washington D.C., where our leadership team met with the Director of Policy Research for Employment Policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to organize a joint discussion for Human Trafficking Awareness Month. During that trip, they seized an opportunity to meet with staff from Senator John Cornyn's office. The meeting occurred at the time of the tragedy in Uvalde, when both the U.S. House and Senate were contemplating the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.



**Our leaders were able to provide valuable insight into extreme risk protective orders and on closing the “boyfriend” loophole.** The organization continued to build relationships and its brand as the voice for survivors in policy discussion.

While most other state organizations have means testing requirements, TAP's multiple braided funding streams allow it to be one of the only statewide civil legal service provider who can speak on behalf of all survivors. 2022 concluded my term as Board Chair, and it was an exciting year. Fortunately, our new Board Chair, Alison Watters, has been heavily involved in all our activities and will bring new and unmatched energy to this position in 2023. Finally, I want to again recognize our extremely capable and charismatic CEO, Heather Bellino, who continued to do the hard work of building relationships and making connections with donors, State & community leaders, and Texas schools that allowed our reputation and influence to grow. **Texas Advocacy Project appreciates your support in its effort to provide legal services to the victims of family and domestic violence in Texas,** and to educate and train our children, healthcare providers, and leaders in striving to end this menace.

**Michael Marcin, Board Chair**





**“I give to this organization because it is exceedingly well run. Every penny, every volunteer hour, every resource is used strategically - and ultimately provides lasting safety and hope for Texans.”**

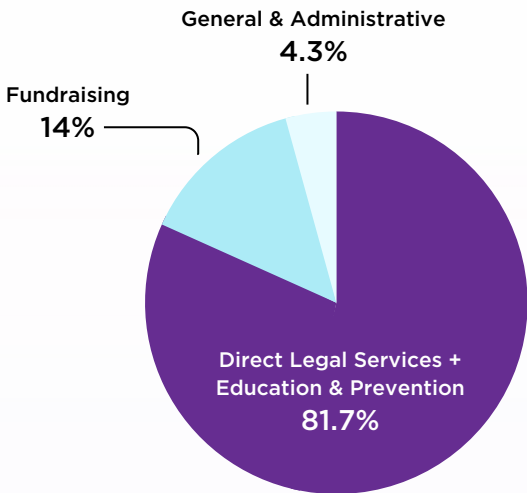
**Alison Watters  
Board of Directors, Vice Chair**

# STEWARDS OF YOUR DOLLARS

## 2022 FINANCIALS

With our unique approach to braided funding, TAP is able to enhance our financial sustainability, mitigate risk, and maximize our impact. Our method of funding involves the strategic amalgamation of diverse funding sources from various organizations and individuals to support our mission. **This approach empowers us to diversify our funding streams and reduce our reliance on any single source of funding.** As a result, we gain greater flexibility and adaptability in delivering programs and services that cater to survivors. This has enabled us to develop more effective initiatives and services that generate a profound impact on the communities we serve.

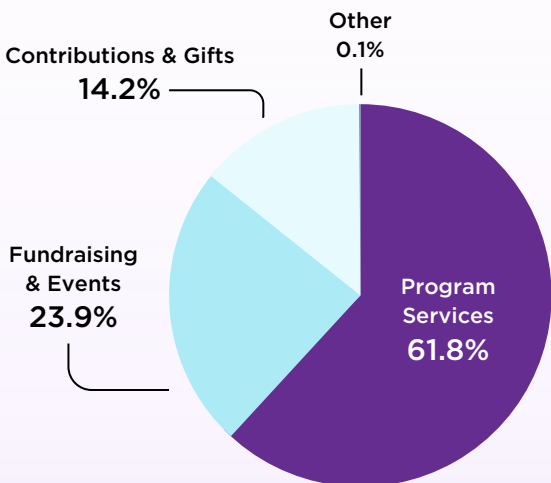
**PROUDLY OPERATING ON** **82% DIRECT SERVICES COSTS** **&** **18% ADMIN COSTS**



### EXPENSES

Program Services	
• Direct Legal Services	\$2,328,516
• Education & Prevention	\$1,258,869
Fundraising	\$614,548
General & Administrative	\$188,261

**TOTAL \$4,390,194**



### REVENUE

Program Services	\$2,804,409
Fundraising Events	\$1,083,617
Contributions & Gifts	\$643,694
Other	\$3,726

**TOTAL \$4,535,446**

# MAJOR DONORS

- Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Division
- Texas Access to Justice Foundation
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Attorney General of Texas
- Savills
- The Meadows Foundation
- The University of Texas School of Law
- Krikland & Ellis LLP
- Sarah & James Shrewsbury
- Vista Equity Partners Management, LLC
- Accenture
- Moody Foundation
- Biote
- The Breach Family Foundation
- Alison & Tim Watters
- Nancy Whalen
- Catherine Brophy
- Wendy Houser
- Brady Matthews
- Rocco Piazza
- Todd Richardson
- Staci Satterwhite
- Marybeth Schmitz
- Shield-Ayres Foundation
- The Carl C. Anderson Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation
- The Covalent Foundation
- The Dallas Foundation
- The Rothell Charitable Foundation of Central Texas

# MEMBER RATED

Texas Advocacy Project takes pride in achieving the highest rankings from both **GuideStar** and **Charity Navigator**. Our organization has been awarded GuideStar's prestigious Platinum Seal of Transparency and Charity Navigator's Give with Confidence seal. **We are honored to have also been recognized as the Best Place for Working Parents.** Our unwavering commitment to the highest level of transparency is reflected in our nonprofit profile on both GuideStar and Charity Navigator. We invite you to explore our profiles and learn more about our organization's impact.



# ADVOCATES FOR HOPE

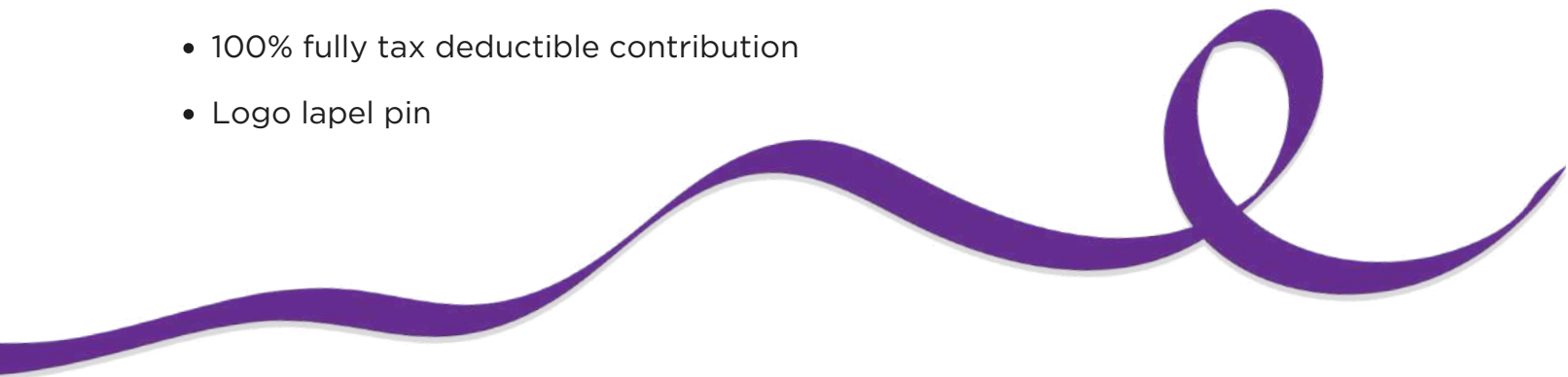
## TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT'S SUSTAINING GIVING CIRCLE

Power-based abuse in Texas must end. But we can't stop it alone. Our Advocates for Hope show the community that abuse of any kind -emotional, financial, physical, and sexual- cannot be tolerated. Join us in our vision that all Texans live free from abuse by joining our sustaining giving circle!

**Become an Advocate for Hope by visiting [TexasAdvocacyProject.org/donate](https://TexasAdvocacyProject.org/donate) or email [Development@TexasAdvocacyProject.org](mailto:Development@TexasAdvocacyProject.org).**

### MEMBER BENEFITS

- Annual Appreciation Reception
- Name listed as an Advocate for Hope on our website and Black & White Ball program
- Subscription to our monthly e-newsletter, the Hope Herald
- Invitation to our annual Holiday Party
- 100% fully tax deductible contribution
- Logo lapel pin



# WE APPLAUD THE DEDICATION OF OUR 2022 ADVOCATES FOR HOPE FOR HELPING TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF SURVIVORS

- Karen & Jon Andrews
- Rebecca Austen
- Ginger Averitt
- Heather & Todd Bellino
- DeeDee & Scott Biscoe
- Marshall A. Bowen
- Marla Broaddus
- Becky & Boran Buturovic
- Andrea Cavender
- Lauren Dupuis
- Kristina & Jorge Elizondo
- Sylvia & David Fuller
- Julie Graham
- Thomas Graham
- Kathleen Hausenfluck
- Amber Hausenfluck
- Cynde B. Jones
- Erica & Burke Kennedy
- Christine & Michael Marcin
- Denise Margo Moy
- Sarah Melton Swartzendruber
- Marsha Milam
- Janet M. Mitchell
- Jessica & Eric Moore
- Sherrill Morales
- Katherine Mudge
- Thanhhao & Scott Neuendorf
- Tina Rodriguez & Dr. Steven Wilkins
- Marybeth Schmitz
- Alexander C. Schoch
- Jeannette Spinelli
- Kenny Thompson, Jr.
- Michelle Simpson Tuegel
- Julienne VanDerZiel
- Alison Walgren
- Jose M. Rangel
- Alison & Tim Watters
- Sasha Wytrwal
- Berry Crowley
- Lin & Andrew Weber



# TYPES OF POWER-BASED ABUSE



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological.



## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit.



## DATING VIOLENCE

Violence, abuse, or power and control imbalances that occur in a romantic relationship.



## SEXUAL ASSAULT

Actual, threatened, or attempted sexual contact with another person without that person's consent.



## CHILD ABUSE

Also called child endangerment or child maltreatment is physical, sexual, and/or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children.



## STALKING

Actions that make someone feel threatened, oppressed, or intimidated regardless of the relationship.

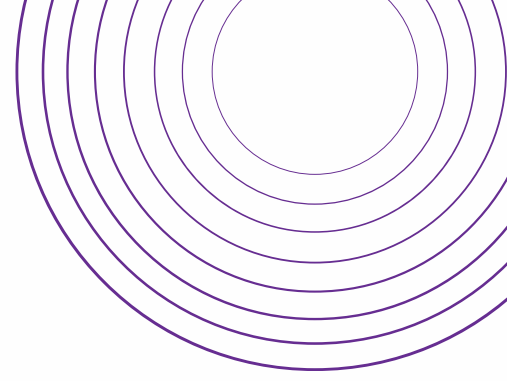


# SOLUTIONS

## LEGAL AND SOCIAL WORK SOLUTIONS

OUR SOLUTIONS CONSIST OF LEGAL, SOCIAL, AND ADVOCACY SERVICES PROVEN TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND GET VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS TO SAFETY

# SOLUTIONS THROUGH LEGAL ACTION



## LAWYERS ON YOUR SIDE

**Texas Advocacy Project's** core power is in its legal expertise and experience dealing with power-based abuse. It serves its clients primarily through advice and counsel, assistance with protective orders including Magistrate's Order for Emergency Protection (MOEP's), assistance in pro se matters, and direct representation. **It also provides assistance with general civil issues that impact power-based abuse cases such as housing, employment, education, and immigration.**



## TELE-LAW

Our attorneys work directly with victims in person and utilizing tele-law (the distribution of legal services and information via electronic information and telecommunication technologies). **Tele-law allows long-distance client and attorney contact, care, advice, reminders, education, and remote representation.** When rural settings, lack of transport, lack of mobility, or simply the lack of a legal aid office in a county blocks access to the justice system, tele-law bridges that gap.



## SPECTRUM OF SERVICES

FLEXIBLE LEVELS OF LEGAL SERVICES TO ENSURE A SURVIVOR IS NEVER TURNED AWAY

### LEGAL LINE

The initial consultation. Free and confidential advice and counsel.

### ASSISTED PRO SE

Providing survivors with individualized unbundled legal assistance, empowering survivors to represent themselves in court.

### DIRECT REPRESENTATION

Attorneys stand next to survivors in court proceedings when cases are too complicated to navigate alone and the barriers to justice are too high.

## THINKING BIG THROUGH IMPACT LITIGATION

When called for, our attorneys file impact litigation to bring about lasting change beyond one survivor's case. These cases create societal change and ensure future courts serve all survivors fairly. **SPECIALIZING IN LEGAL TOPICS THAT HELP COMBAT POWER-BASED ABUSE.**





## LEGAL SOLUTIONS\*

### PROTECTIVE ORDERS

A court order that prevents an abuser from coming near the survivor, their residence or workplace, and/ or school of a survivor and a survivor's children. If an abuser violates this order, they can be arrested immediately.

### CHILD CUSTODY / MODIFICATIONS / ENFORCEMENT / TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS / ADOPTION

No longer having to co-parent with an abuser, consult them for important decisions, or worry about who the child would live with in the event of a survivor's untimely death.

### TITLE IX ADVOCACY

Legal support provided to a survivor to ensure their school, college, or university properly handles sexual assault or harassment claims, under Title IX.

### COERCED DEBT RELIEF

Abusers often use control of finances to force victims to stay in an abusive relationship. In these instances, victims are forced to choose between facing economic hardship or staying with their abuser. Our Financial Empowerment Tools help victims cope with financial abuse.

### POST ARREST CRISIS CONSULTATIONS

Collaborating with Austin Police Department, TAP attorneys provide Crisis Consultation Services. Using trauma-informed skills, TAP attorneys contact victims after the arrest of their offender and offer assistance with safety planning and obtaining an Emergency Protective Order (EPO).

### DIVORCE

Severing the ties. Permanently and legally separates survivors from their abusive spouses.

### TRAUMA INFORMED TRIAL PREP

A trauma-informed approach begins with understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the survivor. Using a trauma-informed lens, legal and social work staff work with survivor clients to prepare them for the reality of appearing in court. By crafting services and programs that are sensitive and directly responsive to the trauma that many survivors experience after a violent crime, TAP attorneys identify and limit potential triggers to reduce re-traumatization and protect their clients' mental and emotional health.

### CRIMINAL RECORD RELIEF

TAP attorneys work with survivors of human trafficking and other abuses to expunge criminal records resulting from survivors' victimization. Cleaning a survivor's record is necessary for securing employment, housing, education, and child custody - all critical elements in rebuilding one's freedom and securing sustainable independence. Our social work staff builds on this legal remedy by connecting survivors with the opportunities they are now eligible for.

*\*This list does not provide a comprehensive overview of all the legal services offered by Texas Advocacy Project.*

# SURVIVOR-CLIENT STORIES

## MAURA'S STORY\*

**\*Maura reached out to TAP for help keeping her three children safe from her extremely violent and abusive husband who had been sexually assaulting their daughter.** Maura's husband would show her porn and require her to recreate it. On one occasion when she refused to cooperate, he strangled her. This is how Maura became aware of the situation.

Once she was aware, Maura felt like she was living in a nightmare, but at first, she was afraid to call the police in fear of retaliation. She refused to allow him to be alone with her daughters but he became extremely angry that they "told" on him and he punched Maura so hard that he popped a blood vessel. On another occasion, he pulled out a gun to threaten her. The last straw was when he lined up his daughters in the garage and punched them each in the face.

**Maura called the police and he was arrested and convicted of five criminal charges, including aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, strangulation, and sexual assault of their daughter.**



When she contacted TAP, Maura's husband was in jail. **Without a divorce and his parental rights terminated, Maura was concerned that once he got out of jail that he would have access to the children.**

Maura's TAP attorney took on her case on as Direct Representation and her family received assistance from both TAP attorneys and TAP social workers. The strategic decision was made to pursue a Protective Order prior to the divorce. **As it stands today, TAP was able to get Maura a Lifetime Protective Order for her and her kids.** TAP is now working on getting her divorced with custody of her children and getting his parental rights terminated, so that he can never harm her children again.

“

**I can't EVER thank-you enough!** You have answered my prayers & have restored my faith in the judicial system! You've done more for me in just a few months than the State of Texas did through so many events, incidents & a trial for over a span of 5 years. The work you do deserves so much more! **You have changed my life in so many ways. I know I can truly start healing now.**

”

## SAVANNAH'S STORY\*

**\*Savannah survived a brutal assault from her husband whose abuse escalated seemingly out of nowhere. She was thrown on the floor, stomped on, strangled, restrained, and tortured.**

Savannah had fractures and was unable to seek medical treatment for several days because her husband took her phone, prevented her from leaving the house, and forbade her from seeking help.

Savannah called the TAP legal line and spoke to an attorney. At this time, she was still in the early stages of processing what happened to her, and not ready to take any legal action. She was hopeful that it would not happen again and was mostly concerned about what would happen to her husband if it were reported. The attorney connected Savannah with a TAP social worker. Savannah stayed in touch with her social worker for several weeks. **Her social worker provided active listening, validation of her complex feelings, and gentle education about the dynamics of power and control in domestic violence.** Savannah also had a trusted therapist who she disclosed the abuse to, and this allowed her to safely process her feelings about the abuse and what she wanted for her future.

After about 3 months, Savannah decided that she wanted to report her assault to law enforcement, get a protective order, leave her spouse, and eventually get a divorce. **Two TAP attorneys were then able to jump on the case and provide representation for Savannah in her Protective Order case.**

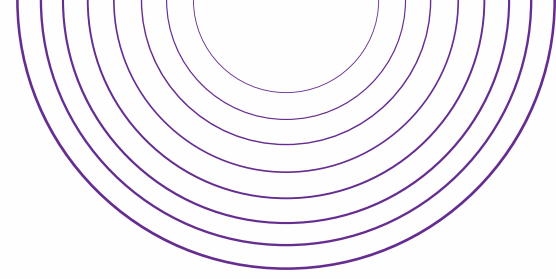
Savannah worked with her TAP attorneys and social worker to process roadblocks in the case, particularly her husband avoiding service. **She received ongoing safety planning, psychoeducation on trauma (to help normalize the challenges she was facing and rebuild her confidence), help with relocation and lease termination, and advocacy with local law enforcement, all while working and trying to heal.** Savannah expressed that although she was juggling so much at once, she felt more confident and self-assured because she had a whole team by her side.

**Savannah was granted a lifetime protective order on every ground her TAP attorneys pled for while her husband was also facing criminal charges.** Savannah has gone on to divorce her husband, and she and her beloved pet are living free from abuse. Savannah and her son are now happy and thriving, free from abuse!



*\*Names have been changed to protect the privacy of our survivor-clients.*

# SOLUTIONS THROUGH SOCIAL WORK



**TAP's social workers closely collaborate with the legal staff to deliver holistic and trauma-responsive care.** We understand that survivors coping with safety concerns, overwhelming stress, and mental health issues may struggle to fully absorb the legal advice provided. Our dedicated social workers are uniquely equipped to step in and offer the necessary support to help survivors overcome these challenges. **Since the successful launch of our Social Work Program in 2021, we have expanded our team to include three highly qualified LMSWs.**



## SOCIAL SOLUTIONS

### CASE MANAGEMENT & WARM REFERRALS

Social workers assist survivors in holistic healing by providing housing, financial, and mental health resources. TAP utilizes community partnerships by providing warm referrals to external service providers. This means that with a client's consent, we can contact a partner agency on their behalf, lowering the rate of re-traumatization in having to tell one's trauma story to multiple agencies. When unexpected housing funding became available through Pandemic Emergency Assistance Funds a.k.a "PEAF", our social work team was poised and ready to address urgent housing needs. The team was able to distribute a total of \$200,000 in just 8 months. Funds were utilized for emergency hotel stays, deposits, rent, utilities, furniture, and security cameras.

### CRISIS INTERVENTION & PERSONAL SAFETY PLANS

Clients' safety needs are evaluated using Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell's Danger Assessment tool. Social workers guide clients to create individualized plans of action to reduce the risks they and their children face. Social workers also assist survivors in processing and understanding the effects of trauma through active listening, psychoeducation, and validation. This is essential, as survivors commonly have a waiting period to access local counseling programs.

### 2022 ACHIEVEMENT

In 2022 alone, our compassionate social work team served 546 primary survivors and provided critical assistance to over 1,254 clients and children across the state.



## CONTINUED EDUCATION

### EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

TAP partners with local universities to provide field placements (internships) for Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work students. This furthers the reach of our team and provides invaluable experience for the students.

# SURVIVOR-CLIENT STORY

## JOANNA'S STORY\*

**\*Joanna survived physical, sexual, mental, emotional, and financial abuse from her husband.** After calling the HOPE line and receiving legal advice, the attorney referred her to a TAP social worker.

Joanna's abuser monitored her every move and every call, so all appointments had to be carefully arranged. **In order to take phone calls, Joanna had to make an excuse to step away, and then go outside and hide near a walking trail behind her home.** After completing the call, she would delete her call history in case her abuser checked her phone. On the first call with Joanna, it was evident that Joanna was very afraid- not only for own safety, but that of her son's as well. Joanna had already made contact with a local domestic violence agency and was on a waitlist for emergency shelter. However, after speaking with Joanna it was evident that something needed to happen immediately to help Joanna and her son get out of the home she shared with her abuser. Joanna's husband would threaten to call immigration if Joanna left him. **He also had Joanna arrested after he physically assaulted her by lying and saying that she was the aggressor. At that time, Joanna was so terrified of what could happen to her and her son that she did not speak out against her husband.**

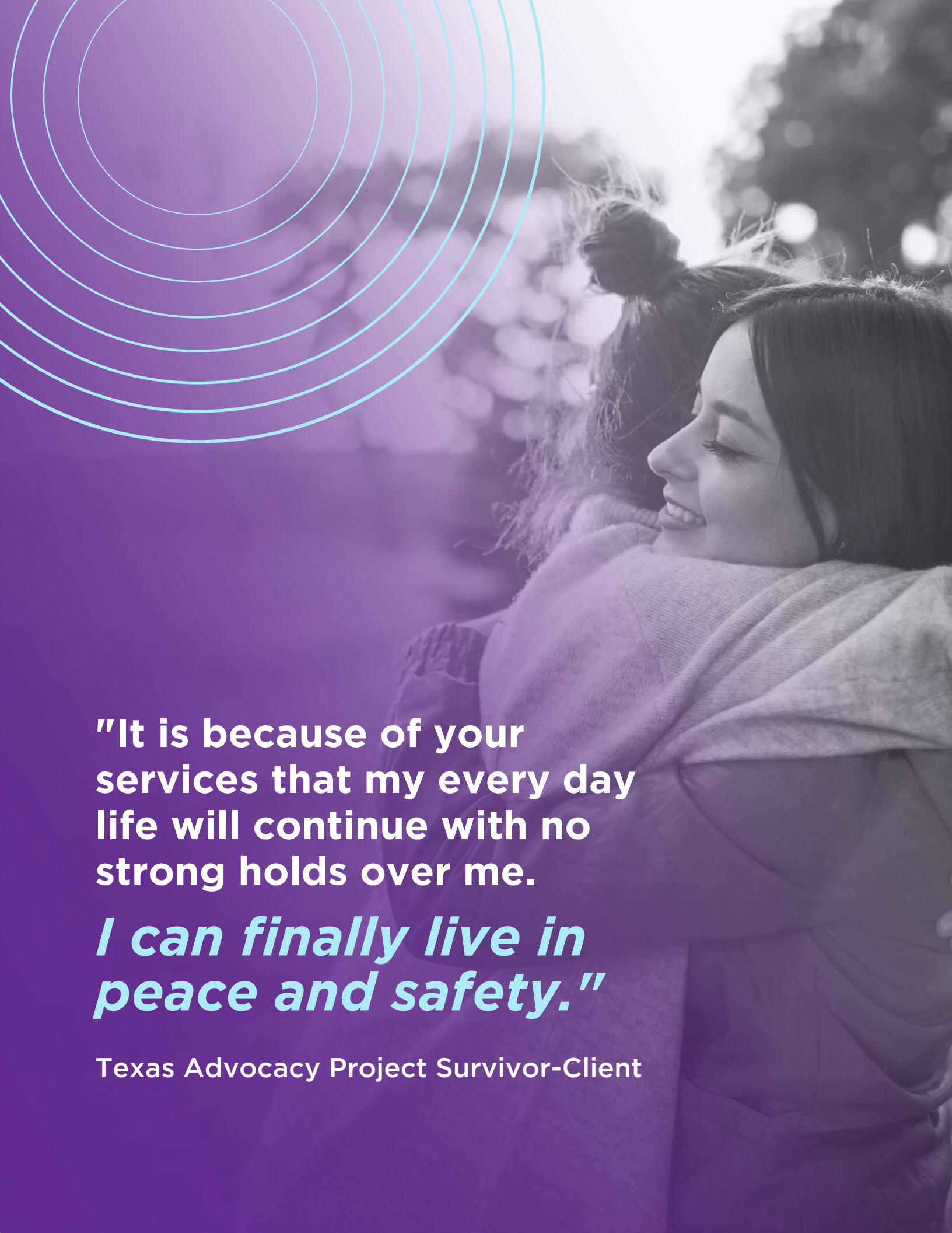
However, Joanna had decided that she was ready to speak out and was desperate to get out of her abusive situation. Her social worker was able to book a hotel stay for Joanna and her son through HHSC PEAFF funds that were available to TAP at that time. Joanna showed such incredible strength and courage throughout this time.



Joanna found a way to get herself and her son out of their home safely and found a neighbor willing to drive her halfway to the hotel and then take an Uber for the rest of the drive. **TAP was able to pay for Joanna's hotel stay for the month in which she waited to get off the waitlist for emergency shelter.** Joanna and her social worker stayed in touch throughout her stay. Joanna was in need of many resources, and her social worker was able to help her navigate agencies that help with housing, legal immigration services, basic needs, and counseling.

**Her social worker was also able to provide emotional support and supportive counseling to Joanna throughout the time she waited for counseling services to be available to her.** She also provided psychoeducation about trauma to help her through challenges she was facing with nightmares and sleep disturbances. Through the help of TAP and other organizations, **Joanna was able to leave emergency shelter and enter into a transitional housing program, where she still resides.** Joanna credits everyone involved for helping her through this very difficult and scary time, and says, "You saved our lives." Joanna is hopeful for the future, now that she can build a stable and happy life for herself and her son, free from violence.

*\*Names have been changed to protect the privacy of our survivor-clients.*



**"It is because of your  
services that my every day  
life will continue with no  
strong holds over me.**

***I can finally live in  
peace and safety."***

**Texas Advocacy Project Survivor-Client**



# PREVENTION

## OUTREACH, EDUCATION, & POLICY

EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY- INCLUDING MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, JUDGES, TEENAGERS- ON HOW THEY CAN HELP PREVENT ABUSE FURTHERS OUR VISION THAT ONE DAY ALL TEXANS WILL LIVE FREE FROM ABUSE

# PREVENTION THROUGH OUTREACH

TEEN  AMBASSADORS  
OF H O P E



**Teen Ambassadors of Hope is a statewide leadership campaign designed to equip teens to influence positive change around healthy relationships and teen dating violence prevention.**

Through continued training and support from TAP staff and outside leadership coaches, Teen Ambassadors gain valuable resources and tangible information on promoting safe and healthy relationships while raising awareness and funds in support of TAP's mission.

## TEEN AMBASSADOR OF HOPE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend T AoH Orientation in-person or virtually to gain a foundational knowledge of ways to cultivate healthy relationships and prevent teen dating violence.
- Build a business plan to raise funds (\$500 goal encouraged) and awareness for TAP's mission and services.
- Contribute meaningfully to T AoH by actively participating in virtual trainings, discussion topics, and community-building events.





IN 2022

**88** TEEN AMBASSADORS  
RAISED

**\$36,500**





**Our Handbags for Hope campaign partners with the community to collect new purses, gender-neutral totes, and diaper bags for survivors across Texas.**

This campaign helps to lead those experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) or sexual assault to safety and free legal and social services. Each bag is fitted with a discreet tag that lists TAP’s toll-free legal line 800-374-HOPE, safety planning information, and Allstate Foundation’s Financial Empowerment Planning Guide. All bags are then distributed to shelters, clinics, and crisis centers across Texas.



**2072**  
**HANDBAGS**  
**GENDER-NEUTRAL**  
**TOTES & DIAPER BAGS**  
**SENT IN 2022**



**PARTNERS**

BABB (Bad A Biker Babes) • GET MAD • SmileOn Orthodontics • Buttercup Dental • Biscoe Insurance Group • American Association of University Women • Misa Jane Boutique • Keller Williams Lake Travis • WMU Of Ebenezer Baptist Church • Travis County Sheriffs’ Office • Travis County Constable Precinct 5 • Accenture • Austin Marriott North • SpringHill Suites Austin • Recovering Peace • St. Michaels Catholic Academy • Nitro Swimming • NCL South Austin Wildflowers • The Nitsche Group • Round Rock Police Department



**Our Backpacks for Hope campaign also partners with the community to collect new backpacks and school supplies for children of survivors who currently reside in domestic violence shelters across Texas.**

Similar to Handbags for Hope, each backpack is fitted with a discreet tag that lists TAP's toll-free legal line, safety planning information, and of course, new school supplies to help these kiddos, elementary through high school ages, start off the new school year just like every other kid.



# 1951

## BACKPACKS

WITH SCHOOL SUPPLIES  
SENT TO KIDS IN SHELTER  
IN 2022



### PARTNERS

Dallas College • Target • Cedar Park Police Department • Kimberly Bridenstine Allstate Agency • E. Wildman Gallery • GET MAD • Biscoe Insurance Group • Edward Jones • Kirkland & Ellis LLP • Spinelli Residential Group • Big Lots • Hays Park Apartments • Glamour Plastic Surgery & Med Spa • Hope City Church • Taste of Gnome • Apple Inc. • Leander Park • Lonestar Pediatrics • The Kenzie at The Domain • Dematic Corp • Texas Children's Pediatrics • Fairmont Austin • Benchmark Bak • Modern Women's Health • Austin Diagnostic Clinic • Accenture Austin • Avanti Hills • Crate and Barre • Abrigo





**Our Hope for the Holidays campaign provides holiday cheer to 13 survivor-clients and their families.**

All families are nominated by our attorneys and are past TAP clients who we have helped through our civil legal remedies. TAP partners with the community to give these families a holiday to remember by fulfilling each family's dream wish list.

**PARTNERS**

Simply Home • Energy Renewal Partners • Tik Tok • Whole Foods •  
Christabell Nunez • ADA Diamonds • Target • BB's Supper Club •  
General Motors • Sally Decelis

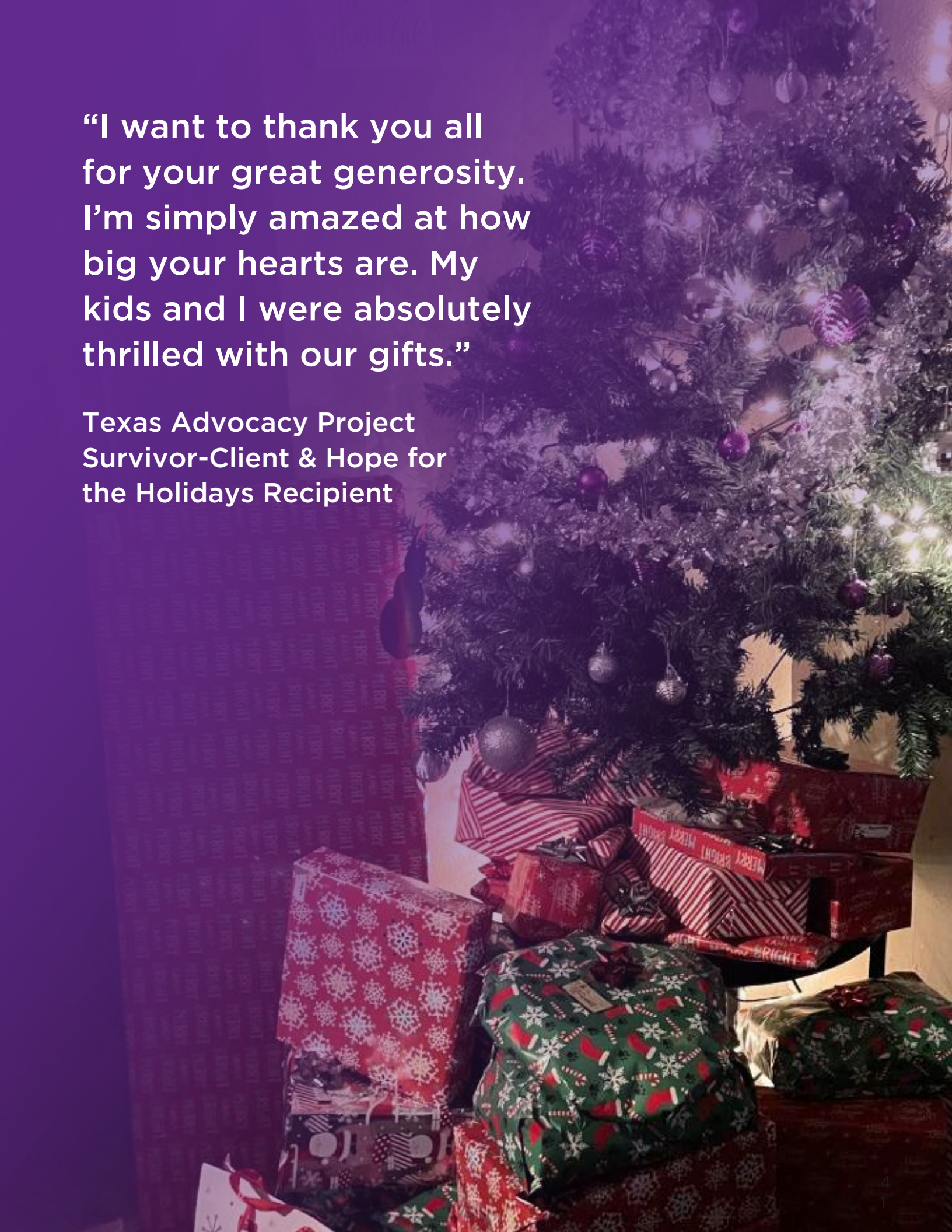


**700** BOXES OF CHEER  
SENT TO 13 FAMILIES IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS



**“I want to thank you all  
for your great generosity.  
I’m simply amazed at how  
big your hearts are. My  
kids and I were absolutely  
thrilled with our gifts.”**

**Texas Advocacy Project  
Survivor-Client & Hope for  
the Holidays Recipient**



# PREVENTION THROUGH EDUCATION

At Texas Advocacy Project, we firmly believe that education is a vital component of empowering survivors to access the resources they need. When our communities know better, they can do better. Our team is dedicated to sharing best practices on legal systems, including recent legislative changes that impact survivors, and equipping individuals with knowledge on incorporating trauma-responsive and holistic services. **By imparting knowledge, we are paving the way for communities to make positive changes and better support those affected by power-based abuse.**

Throughout 2022, Texas Advocacy Project received numerous invitations to present at national conferences, where we were able to showcase our exemplary service delivery model to stakeholders from across the country. We also recognized the need for on-demand education geared toward survivors and began providing them with essential training. Our survivor-focused trainings aim to educate individuals on their victim rights and equip them with the knowledge and resources they need to access them effectively.



## TRAINING CONFERENCES

We were proud to serve as expert presenters at the following conferences:

### STATE CONFERENCES

- Independent Bankers Association of Texas Annual Conference
- Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America State Leadership Conference
- Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Symposium
- Texas School Safety Center School Based Law Enforcement
- Department of Family and Protective Services Partners in Prevention Conference
- Texas Association of Student Councils and Honor Society Advisor Workshop
- Texas Public Services Teach Association Summer Conference
- State Bar of Texas Poverty Law Conference
- Girls Empowerment Network
- Pathfinder Conference
- TAASA Annual Conference
- Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America Fall Conference
- Texas Association of Student Councils Middle-Level Workshop

### NATIONAL CONFERENCES

- Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma 19th Annual Hawaii International Summit
- Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma 27th Annual San Diego International Summit
- Conference on Crimes Against Women
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2022 National Conference on Domestic Violence
- National Center for Victims of Crime's 2022 National Training Institute
- Southern Regional Education Board: Making Schools Work Conference
- Institute on Coordinated Community Response Rural Conference
- Abrigo Think Big National Conference



## NEW TRAININGS CREATED

**In 2022, we added 7 new trainings to our on-demand training portable- Teachable!**

IN 2022 TAP EDUCATED

**4,925** INDIVIDUALS  
ACROSS TEXAS

INCLUDING A TOTAL OF 348 TEENAGERS

## MOU PARTNERS

### 138 MOU'S ACROSS THE NATION AS OF 2022

At Texas Advocacy Project, we strongly believe in the importance of developing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with other organizations as part of our unwavering commitment to supporting survivors of power-based abuse. Our MOUs foster collaboration and partnership, establishing formal agreements that allow us to work closely with shelters, law enforcement agencies, counseling centers, and healthcare providers. By forging these meaningful connections, we can communicate more effectively, deliver services more efficiently, and share valuable resources.

The MOUs we have established enable us to provide survivors with comprehensive support through seamless referrals and coordinated services, ensuring that no gaps exist in the assistance they receive. Through streamlined processes, avoiding unnecessary duplication, and harnessing the collective knowledge and resources of our partners, **we enhance our effectiveness in addressing the systemic issues surrounding power-based abuse and in caring for every individual we serve.**

#### In 2022 alone, TAP added 17 partners to our growing list:

Independent Bankers Association of Texas Annual Conference • Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America State Leadership Conference • Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Symposium • Texas School Safety Center School Based Law Enforcement • Department of Family and Protective Services Partners in Prevention Conference • Texas Association of Student Councils and Honor Society Advisor Workshop • Texas Public Services Teach Association Summer Conference • State Bar of Texas Poverty Law Conference • Girls Empowerment Network Pathfinder Conference • TAASA Annual Conference • Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America Fall Conference • Texas Association of Student



# PREVENTION THROUGH POLICY

At Texas Advocacy Project, we know that effective advocacy in the public policy sphere amplifies our capacity to create lasting change for the survivors and communities we serve. By engaging with our democratic process to design practical, constructive policy, we are working towards a reality where **all Texans live free from abuse.**

Due to TAP's **braided funded stream**, we are uniquely positioned as the only legal services provider in the State of Texas able to speak on behalf of all survivors. In Texas' 87th Legislature, we were called to the Capitol as subject matter experts to assist decision makers in the formation of state laws relating to issues besetting survivors.



The work to protect survivors' interests at the Capitol persists year round. In 2021, TAP's CEO, Heather Bellino, and VP of Advocacy & Outreach, Amanda Elkanick Oder were honored to be appointed to the **Office of the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force**. The Task Force drafts recommendations to improve the legislative framework against human trafficking. TAP executives also sit on the **Texas Council on Family Violence's Public Policy Committee (PPC)**. The PPC, comprised of a diverse group of survivors, family violence advocates, law enforcement, prosecutors, educators, and the judiciary, plays an essential role in advocating for survivors during the legislative session.

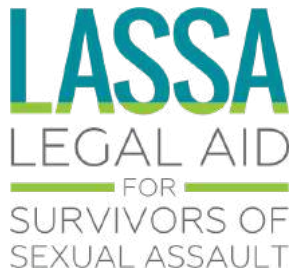
TAP also works with the **Texas Association Against Sexual Assault's Policy and Advocacy Team**, composed of a group of advocates who work to establish best practices standards and sustainable systems for survivors of sexual assault through legislative, legal, community, and human trafficking advocacy.

For the 87th Legislative Session, TAP assisted these committees with the help of our **Board of Directors' Governmental Affairs Committee**, comprised of seasoned experts, in successfully passing nearly 30 policies to secure funding, improve statutory clean-up, enhance investigative and prosecutorial tools, and strengthen victim protections and services.

In July, our executives traveled to the Nation's Capital to visit with Senators Cruz and Cornyn's offices and political pundits to expand our reach to the Federal level. By sharing the voices of our clients and the mission of Texas Advocacy Project, we hope to ensure survivors continue to be wrapped in life-saving services.

We are grateful to the Texas Supreme Court who worked tirelessly with the Texas Access to Justice foundation to ensure necessary funding and to our State and Federal Legislature who not only kept survivors in mind but put them first.





Central Texas Family Violence Task Force



The Texas Stalking Project



Travis County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team

# PREVENTION THROUGH COALITIONS

TAP is proud to be part of task forces, coalitions, response teams, and networks across the state in collaboration with other organizations to be at the forefront of power-based abuse and systemic change.



# EVENTS

**BRINGING ADVOCATES TOGETHER**

FROM FUNDRAISERS TO EDUCATIONAL EVENTS, TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT STRIVES TO BRING SUPPORTERS TOGETHER TO SPREAD AWARENESS AND RAISE FUNDS, ALL WHILE IN GOOD COMPANY

# KENTUCKY DERBY WATCH PARTY



# CUSP SCREENING + PANEL



# BLACK & WHITE BALL VIP PARTY





16TH ANNUAL  
BLACK & WHITE  
*Ball*

Leaders in the legal, medical, governmental, consulting, finance, and technology fields joined together for an evening of live music, dancing, **Mystery Gifts, Live Auction, and the presentation of the annual Courage Award**, which honors a former survivor-client who has demonstrated the courage to stand up to their abuser. Due to safety concerns, this year's Courage Award Honoree's name and story cannot be released; however, their journey truly illustrates the power that legal and social solutions have in ending unimaginable and brutal violence.

**\$982,050**

OF UNRESTRICTED FUNDING  
**RAISED IN ONE NIGHT!**





## 2022 BLACK & WHITE BALL COMMITTEE

**EVENT CO-CHAIRS:** Alison Watters & Tanya Dorsett

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Catherine Brophy
- Andrea Cavender
- Leta Dorsett
- Kristina Elizondo
- Melissa Merhar-Parker
- Krista O'Malley
- Cathy Hale
- Helen Haman
- Cynde Jones
- Sarah Shrewsbury
- James Shrewsbury
- Kaeleen Weiser

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### PAST CHAIRS:

- Paula Greenfield
- Stephanie McKenzie
- Suzanne Pierson
- Leah Wallace
- Alison Watters
- America Strader
- Jeannette Spinelli
- Leta Dorsett



# WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

By donating, partnering, volunteering,  
or just becoming better informed,  
you can help bring about a day when  
***all Texans live free from abuse.***



## DONATE

Donors help ensure that critical legal services are available, free of charge, when they are most urgently needed.

[DONATE TODAY](#)



## GET EDUCATED

We provide free training to judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, educators, students, military members, health care providers, and the general public.

[LEARN WITH US](#)



## VOLUNTEER

Volunteers directly support the many services Texas Advocacy Project provides. Opportunities are available for a variety of educational, professional, and personal backgrounds.

[VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME](#)



**TEXAS ADVOCACY PROJECT**  
**800.374.HOPE**

 **@TexasAdvocacyProject**

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 **TexasAdvocacyProject.org**