



D A S H

DISTRICT ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOUSING

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



**A Year of
Empowerment,
Safety &
Resilience**

A Letter from our Leadership

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with immense gratitude and pride. DASH has made significant strides in our mission to innovate in providing survivors of domestic and sexual violence with access to safe housing and wraparound services. We have continued to provide a range of emergency-to-transitional and transitional-to-permanent safe housing programs, flexible financial assistance, and holistic services. These efforts have empowered survivors to rebuild their lives on their own terms. Your unwavering support, dedication, and generosity have been instrumental in our success.

A Year of Impact

2023 was a year of remarkable growth and impact. Thanks to your contributions, we supported more than 1,200 survivors and children, providing safe housing, wraparound support, advocacy, and resources to foster an environment conducive to healing and recovery and to promote independence.

This year, in partnership with the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, DASH made significant strides in our Journey Home campaign. We reduced our mortgage by 84% and are well on our way to securing and owning Cornerstone, our 42-unit apartment building. As we approach the finale of our Journey Home campaign, we stand on the cusp of an extraordinary milestone filled with immense gratitude and hope for the future.

Our Programs and Initiatives

Highlights of our initiatives this year include:

- **Cornerstone:** We provided support to a total of 104 adults and children in our residential program
- **Empowerment Project:** We supported a total of 75 adults and children in our scattered site program
- **Right to Dream:** We supported a total of 21 transitioning youth and two children in our youth-friendly scattered site program
- **Survivor Assistance:** We provided more than \$240,000 to 96 adults and children through our Safe Nights Fund and Survivor Resilience Fund

Looking Ahead

While we celebrate our successes and are mindful of the work ahead, we continue to call on the District and our supporters to preserve and build on existing funding levels to ensure the highest quality client-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally competent services for survivors.

In the coming year, we will focus on strengthening our organization and increasing sustainable funding of our programs, employing a multifaceted approach that combines diversification of funding sources, expansion of strategic partnerships, increased corporate engagement, and meticulous grant management. We are excited about the potential to deepen our impact and broaden our reach.

Our Supporters and Partners

None of our achievements would be possible without the incredible support of our donors, partners, volunteers, staff, and community. Your financial, time, expertise, and advocacy contributions are invaluable.

On behalf of the entire organization, thank you. Together, we are building a foundation of support, empowering survivors to rebuild their lives with dignity and strength.

We look forward to another year of creating a safer and more secure future for survivors in our community.

With much gratitude,



Koube Ngaaje
PRESIDENT & CEO



Katherine Feeney
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Programs and FY23 Impact

DASH envisions the day when domestic and sexual violence are not tolerated and every home is a safe home. We believe that all survivors, regardless of their circumstances, disability, gender, or need, should be able to live without fear of abuse or homelessness, and we ensure survivors are treated with dignity, autonomy, and respect on their journeys out of abuse.

DASH provides a continuum of innovative emergency-to-transitional and transitional-to-permanent safe housing programs, flexible financial assistance, and holistic and tailored wraparound services to meet the individual needs of survivors and empower them to rebuild their lives on their own terms. DASH's proven model is grounded in low-barrier access, voluntary services, and trauma-informed practice.

DASH is recognized in the community for welcoming all survivors regardless of gender identity and serving male survivors, immigrants (including undocumented immigrants), elders, and LGBTQIA2S+ survivors. Unlike many programs, we do not require proof of abuse or ask about current drug use, involvement with the criminal justice system, eviction history, or debt. We have expertise serving survivors who have transitioned/are transitioning, are Deaf/hard of hearing, and those with limited English proficiency.



Cornerstone Program

Cornerstone provides 42 emergency and transitional apartment units for survivors of domestic and sexual violence and their families. Residents stay in an apartment of their own for up to two years, with housing, utilities, and other daily expenses covered by DASH. During their stay, residents work closely with DASH coaches to develop personalized goal plans that encompass a range of services and resources, including financial, legal, education, and employment. Like all of DASH’s programs, services are offered on an opt-in, voluntary basis, empowering residents to determine their own paths to stability and self-sufficiency. Our holistic, individualized, and trauma-informed approach ensures that residents receive the safety and support they need to rebuild their lives.

Fatima’s Story

Fatima* entered DASH’s Cornerstone program after fleeing a physically abusive relationship. With the support of her Cornerstone coach, Fatima embarked on a transformative path towards becoming a licensed cosmetologist.

Throughout her time at Cornerstone, Fatima dedicated herself to an internship at a local salon, diligently accruing the necessary training hours. With the support provided through Cornerstone and flexible funding assistance, Fatima was able to access a range of services, including tutoring support to help her pass her cosmetology licensure exam and childcare assistance. Through DASH’s partnership with Tzedek DC, Fatima was able to work with her coach and a Tzedek DC attorney to help her clear her past rental and utilities arrears, which had been entangled with her abuser. This critical assistance paved the way for Fatima to secure a new lease in her name upon her departure from Cornerstone.

In October 2023, Fatima successfully transitioned into DASH’s Empowerment Project, marking a significant milestone on her path to independence and self-sufficiency.

* Name changed to protect the survivor’s confidentiality



CORNERSTONE
Emergency-to-Transitional
Site-Based Program

104
ADULTS (49) & CHILDREN (55)
SERVED IN FY23

27 ENTRIES	23 EXITS
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16,537
SAFE NIGHTS

Empowerment Project

DASH's Empowerment Project is a two-year scattered site transitional-to-permanent housing program that provides housing and wraparound services for survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. DASH covers the cost of rent and utilities, as well as providing access to flexible financial assistance to support the achievement of participants' self-identified goals. DASH also provides intensive supportive services and resources, so individuals and families can become financially independent over two years and maintain their housing after exit.



EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Transitional-to-Permanent
Scattered Site Program

75

ADULTS (28) & CHILDREN (47)
SERVED IN FY23

9
ENTRIES

5
EXITS

18,432
SAFE NIGHTS

Amara's Story

After fleeing intrafamily abuse, Amara* had been sleeping in a storage unit and couch surfing with a friend when she was referred to DASH. In February 2023, Amara entered DASH's Empowerment Project (EP), seeking stability and support.

With the support of her EP coach, Amara was connected to DASH's network of landlords who provide low barrier access and found an apartment. Through DASH's partnership with A Wider Circle and access to flexible funds, Amara set up her new home with furniture and other essential household items.

In partnership with her coach, Amara developed her goal plan, which included a short-term goal of gaining employment to achieve financial independence from her abuser. Amara's coach played a pivotal role in supporting her throughout this process, offering guidance in researching employment opportunities, helping her identify potential job prospects, and assisting with resume building and interview skills.

In May 2023, Amara gained full-time employment, marking a significant step towards her goal of achieving financial freedom from her abuser. Amara worked with her coach to create a savings plan, opened a monthly savings account, and began saving. This helped her gain financial stability and independence. At the same time, Amara and her coach began researching certification courses to advance her career.

Amara's journey in the Empowerment Project exemplifies DASH's commitment to providing comprehensive support, including housing stabilization, employment assistance, and financial planning. By empowering individuals and connecting them with necessary resources, DASH aims to help survivors break free from abusive situations, rebuild their lives on their own terms, and achieve long-term independence.

* Name changed to protect the survivor's confidentiality

Right to Dream

Right to Dream provides transitioning youth (ages 18-24) survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and/or human trafficking access to scattered-site housing in the DC area. DASH covers all rent and utilities for up to two years, and participants receive intensive wraparound support services that include life skills support and facilitated access to education and job training. Participants also have access to flexible financial assistance to support the achievement of their self-identified goals.

Stacie’s Story

In February 2023, Stacie* sought assistance from DASH to escape her traffickers. Having been trafficked from the Caribbean, she lacked access to vital documents and records. In response, DASH provided a safe place in our Cornerstone Emergency Housing unit as Stacie actively worked towards obtaining the necessary documents to secure a unit in the Right to Dream (RTD) Program.

In April 2023, with dedicated support from her RTD coach and a partnership with one of DASH’s private landlords, Stacie was able to move into a new unit. Stacie now enjoys a beautiful one-bedroom apartment while pursuing her goal of becoming a nurse.

Encountering a hurdle with her expired Caribbean passport, she turned to DASH for assistance in the renewal process. Collaborating closely with her RTD coach, she successfully navigated the renewal, providing her with the assurance of updated documents as she continued her journey toward citizenship. Her success story exemplifies the transformative impact of DASH’s programs in empowering individuals to overcome challenges and achieve their aspirations.

* Name changed to protect the survivor’s confidentiality



RIGHT TO DREAM
 Transitional-to-Permanent Scattered Site Program for Transitioning Youth

23
 TRANSITIONING YOUTH (21) & CHILDREN (2) SERVED IN FY23

5 ENTRIES **14** EXITS

5,563
 SAFE NIGHTS

Survivor Resilience Fund

DASH's Survivor Resilience Fund provides one-time financial assistance to survivors of domestic and sexual violence to remove barriers to safe housing.

Chantel's Story

Chantel* escaped from a physically and financially abusive relationship - but in doing so she lost her job, fell behind on rent, and she and her child, Nia*, were evicted from their home. After temporarily staying in a shelter Chantel was able to find employment and secured a new apartment, safe from her abuser. However, she needed support to cover initial costs, including the first month's rent. Through DASH's Survivor Resilience Fund, Chantel was able to cover these costs and move into the unit with Nia. Expressing gratitude for DASH's assistance, the survivor said, "Thank you again so much, this has helped me tremendously."

Safe Nights Fund

Safe Nights Fund provides temporary safe housing through a hotel stay, advocacy, and support to survivors and their families who have a long-term plan for housing but are unable to access safe accommodation while they await placement.

Nadia's Story

Nadia* was 20 years old and 34 weeks pregnant. She fled an abusive relationship with the father of her child and was staying in a shelter while completing the lease-up process for a unit through Rapid Rehousing. When her abuser found her at the shelter, Nadia turned to DASH for help. Through our Safe Nights Fund, DASH was able to place Nadia in a hotel with restricted access until she was able to move into her new unit. During her hotel stay, DASH staff supported Nadia with safety planning, transport, and groceries. After nine days in a hotel, Nadia was able to move into her new unit and start the next chapter of her life.

* Name changed to protect the survivor's confidentiality

SURVIVOR RESILIENCE FUND

Flexible Financial Assistance

55 ADULTS

\$195,272
SPENT

SAFE NIGHTS FUND

41

ADULTS (24) & CHILDREN (17)

SERVED IN FY23

164

SAFE NIGHTS

\$44,983
SPENT

VIRGINIA WILLIAMS FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

986

INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED



JOURNEY HOME
CAMPAIGN FOR CORNERSTONE

DASH's 42-unit Cornerstone building is at the heart of our work for survivors of domestic and sexual violence who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Not only does it give a safe place to people rebuilding their lives, but it is also home to our vital wraparound services, daily operations, and administrative offices.

In 2019, DASH launched our Journey Home campaign to secure funds to purchase our Cornerstone building and support building renovations. Between FY2019 and FY2022, our generous donors contributed \$1,090,451 and this year, in partnership with the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, DASH made significant strides in our Journey Home campaign.

We are proud to announce that we were awarded a \$5 million grant from the Amazon Housing Equity Fund in June 2023. With these funds, we reduced our mortgage by 84% and have secured funds for future renovations, strengthening the sustainability of this 90-year-old building. Our partnership with the Amazon Housing Equity Fund marks a pivotal step in our efforts to secure and own Cornerstone, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Amazon for their commitment to housing equity and their belief in our mission.

The campaign's success is a testament to our joint legacy and commitment to standing with survivors and ensuring they find solace, strength, and renewed purpose within the walls that have sheltered them.

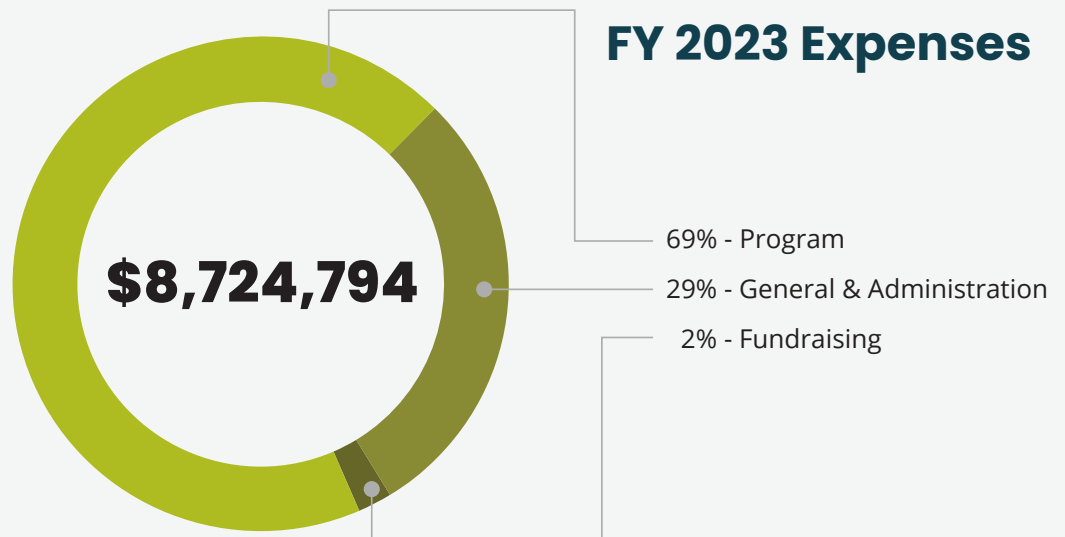
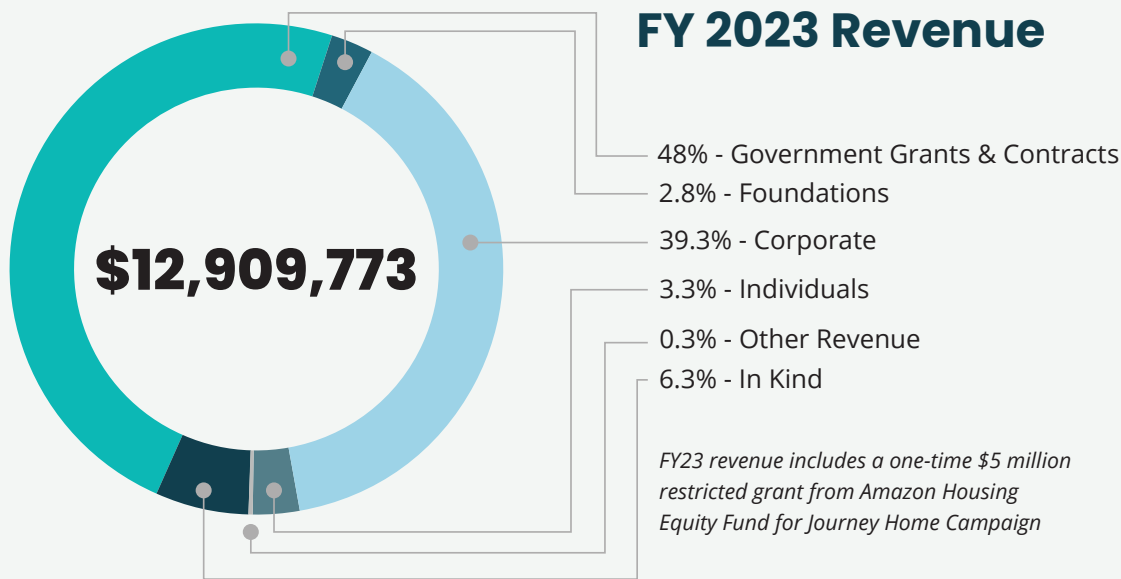


Financial Statement

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

This past fiscal year was a significant year of financial growth while focusing on organizational stabilization, including embedding new staffing structures and staff into the organization, and building out operational structures. Programmatically, DASH focused on stabilizing Cornerstone, Empowerment Project, Right to Dream, Survivor Resilience Fund (SRF), and Safe Nights Fund (SNF). Staffing investments in program administration and management support established new baselines in our scattered-site portfolio, training and technical assistance, and advocacy.

We remain committed to centering survivors in all we do, ensuring survivors have a safe place to call home and are treated with dignity, autonomy, and respect on their journeys out of abuse.



Volunteer & Community Highlights

We are deeply grateful for the unwavering commitment of our volunteers who donate their time, goods, and services, and whose compassion and hard work continue to inspire and uplift our organization.



TCC Gives

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to TCC Gives for their continued support and partnership. In addition to a much appreciated \$5,000 donation this year, their volunteers made a significant impact by helping us host a movie night for our Cornerstone residents, organize our property management storage garage, and complete an analysis of our cell phone account to achieve valuable savings. Thank you for your unwavering commitment and dedication!



Spur Local

As a leading nonprofit in the Greater Washington region, DASH was honored by Spur Local for our mission and services to empower domestic violence survivors. Spur Local recognized DASH in the “Growth Partners Over \$4 Million Budgets” category as part of its 2023 class. Alongside 133 nonprofits, DASH was chosen for being highly trusted as a critical nonprofit in our area.

“Recognizing and amplifying the impact of organizations like the ones in our new class is at the very heart of Spur Local,” said Matt Gayer, Executive Director of Spur Local. “These small nonprofits are creating local and hyperlocal change on a community-level. The significance of that for our region, and as a model for other regions, cannot be overstated.”

Over the next four years, Spur Local will offer free resources to DASH and the 2023 class, including skill building workshops and networking opportunities. DASH will also be featured on Spur Local’s website, social media, blog, and at events.

DASH is truly grateful to Spur Local for this recognition as we strive to make safe housing a human right. With the community’s support, DASH continues to create lasting change and build a safer, more welcoming society.



CREW DC

Each year our friends at CREW DC prepare wellness gift bags for survivors in our programs to celebrate Mother’s Day. This year they delivered almost 70 bags, honoring our female-identifying survivors who are rebuilding their lives with their children at DASH.



Dweck Properties

Our friends at Dweck Properties organized the storage space at Cornerstone where household items are kept and retrieved when a new resident joins the DASH community. Their organization streamlined the process of retrieving items, making the transition smoother for incoming residents, helping them feel more at home right away.



Borger Residential

Our sincere appreciation goes out to Borger Residential who organized and hosted a Back-to-School Drive for DASH. Their efforts resulted in the collection of essential school supplies, ensuring the children supported by DASH were equipped for a successful academic year. This drive provided necessary school supplies, while fostering a sense of community and support.

Looking Ahead

This year, we celebrate our many successes, including supporting more than 1,200 survivors, approaching the finish line of our Journey Home campaign, and building on our strong community partnerships and network of volunteers. As we look ahead to this coming year, we remain mindful of the lasting impact of the pandemic on our staff and our community. The challenges of the past years have shaped our resilience, adaptability, and commitment to our mission. While recovery continues, we are inspired by the progress made and the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will build on this foundation to foster growth, innovation, and lasting positive change.

We continue to call on the District and our supporters to preserve and build on existing funding levels to ensure the highest quality survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally competent services. At DASH, we stand in solidarity and partnership to honor the work and expertise of Black and Brown leaders in community-based service organizations who are constantly asked to do more with less while navigating systemic inequities deeply embedded in sectors and systems. There is a critical need for deep investment in the people, systems, and vital safety net services that address the needs of survivors and the organizations that support them within the holistic continuum of care.

The challenges DASH works to address are complex and evolving, and our commitment to finding innovative and sustainable solutions remains steadfast. In the coming year, we will focus on strengthening our organization and increasing sustainable funding of our programs, employing a multifaceted approach that combines diversification of funding sources, strategic partnerships, corporate engagement, and meticulous grant management. We are excited about the potential to deepen our impact and broaden our reach.

Thank You

Your support has made a difference
in the lives of DC neighbors.
There are many ways to continue:

- » Give Monthly
- » Setup Employer Matching Gifts
- » Stock Gifts
- » Planned Giving
- » Volunteer

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D A S H
DISTRICT ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOUSING

**District Alliance for Safe
Housing (DASH)**

PO Box 91730
Washington, DC 20090

PHONE: 202-462-3274

EMAIL: info@dashdc.org

