



[920212SAFE.com](http://920212SAFE.com)

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October 3, 2023

## NEWS RELEASE

### GRASSROOTS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN MAKES AN IMPACT

*Be Safe Marketing Efforts Benefit from \$50,000 Brown County Grant,  
\$10,000 Bellin Donation*

GREEN BAY — Be Safe, a community-driven campaign to raise awareness about the local resources for victims of domestic violence celebrating its first anniversary, is sharing its success as Domestic Violence Awareness Month kicks off.

To assist the campaign's mission in its second year, Brown County is donating \$50,000 to support Be Safe.

"These grant dollars will allow the Be Safe campaign to continue its marketing efforts and help connect more victims of domestic violence with the help they need," said Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach during an event this morning at the Brown County Sheriff's Department. "We see the positive impact the campaign is having in the community and Brown County is happy to support Be Safe through this grant."

Chris Woleske, executive vice president of Bellin and Gundersen Health System and the Bellin Region president, announced the \$10,000 gift during the news conference. She said Bellin was excited to support the campaign, which is making a positive impact in Brown County.

"Domestic violence is a persistent yet often overlooked and deeply problematic reality in our communities. It knows no age, race or socioeconomic boundaries, and it can affect anyone — female, male or non-binary," she said. Domestic violence is "a multifaceted problem that requires a multifaceted solution, and that is what we have in Be Safe."

Launched last October, the Be Safe campaign created a hotline number — 920-212-SAFE — that connects callers with the trained advocates at Golden House. To promote Be Safe, digital and social media advertising strategies were deployed, along with the use of billboards and posters by project implementors Golden House and O'Connor Connective. Community partners also amplified Be



**GoldenHouse™**  
Help and Healing for Domestic Abuse

The **Be Safe Campaign** seeks to enhance awareness of local domestic violence resources and is a joint effort of Golden House and the Community Coordinated Response Team – Diversity and Inclusion Committee within Brown County.

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Safe's message by joining the campaign and sharing information in their sphere of influence.

Golden House Development Director Dina Borremans said since the launch of the Be Safe campaign, the number of calls increased dramatically.

"We knew the campaign would help us reach more people, but a 26% increase? That's incredible and it is tangible evidence we are connecting with more victims of domestic violence as well as their family and friends and providing them with the help they need," she said.

When Be Safe created a Spanish version of the campaign in June, the number of Spanish-language callers also increased, Borremans said.

Golden House's higher call volume comes at the same time as the Green Bay Police Department is seeing an increase in domestic violence arrests and charges, said Police Chief Chris Davis.

"In 2022 from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to the end of September, we had 318 cases. In that same period this year, we had 330 cases. We also saw more people being charged and an increase in the number of charges," he said. "Domestic violence is not decreasing in our community. Rather, as our statistics show, the problem is growing."

Brown County Sheriff Todd Delain said his department sees the impact of domestic violence on the community daily. So far this year, the Sheriff's Department has had 134 domestic violence calls and 497 charges with a domestic violence enhancer.

"One in four women and one in seven men in Brown County are impacted by domestic violence in their lifetimes," he said. "Those are staggering numbers."

The Be Safe campaign was created when a community-minded individual stepped forward with an idea to raise awareness about the local help available for victims of domestic violence. When local media ran stories about domestic violence, the donor noticed a national domestic violence hotline number was placed on the screen. They wanted to increase awareness about local help for victims and connected with O'Connor Connective to create and implement the Be Safe campaign.

The \$50,000 grant from the Brown County Health and Human Services Department comes through the Health in All Policies efforts to support the Be Safe marketing campaign to grow awareness of the 920-212-SAFE hotline and website.

"We know the pandemic increased the number of domestic violence cases in our community and through the support of the Be Safe campaign, we are taking steps to help reverse that trend," Streckenbach said.



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Borremans said the county grant is much appreciated and will help the Be Safe campaign continue its marketing and outreach efforts.

“The campaign is creating a lot of momentum, and we want to keep that going. To do so, we seek additional partners and funds to sustain our outreach. If this is something you are interested in, please let us know,” she said. “Your support will make a difference as it will allow us to reach more victims of domestic violence and let them know that free, local help is available.”

In addition to the funds provided by the initial donor in the campaign’s first year, Be Safe also received financial support from the Green Bay Packers Give Back program and Prevea.

### **Be Safe’s ripple effect**

Community partners — a variety of organizations from government entities and law enforcement agencies to non-profits, healthcare providers and businesses — are a key component to the campaign. The partners advocate for the campaign by sharing Be Safe’s information within their organizations and with clients, said Marissa Heim, the grants and outreach coordinator with Golden House.

“It is not only the campaign sharing information via digital advertising and social media posts, but also the ripple effect of the partners getting involved and sharing information within their networks,” she said.

At Bellin Health, for example, the healthcare provider placed posters in 350 exam rooms during the month of April, said Chris Woleske, executive vice president of Bellin Gundersen Health System and president of Bellin Health.

“Domestic violence is a persistent yet often overlooked and deeply problematic reality in our communities. It knows no age, race or socioeconomic boundaries, and it can affect anyone — female, male or non-binary,” she said. Domestic violence is “a multifaceted problem that requires a multifaceted solution, and that is what we have in Be Safe.”

Some other examples of partners sharing the campaign message include:

- Bellin Health placed posters in 350 exam rooms during the month of April.
- The Green Bay Police Department applied stickers on their squad cars highlighting the Be Safe hotline number.
- The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay included information about the campaign as part of its escalation workshops attended by 154 university athletes.
- iCare shared campaign messaging in its staff newsletter (300 employees) and member newsletter (48,000 subscribers).
- St. Norbert College placed magnets on its safety vehicles, with 1,750 student riders per month.



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During the past year, Be Safe has grown the number of community partners from a handful of about 30 and counting.

Be Safe partners include: Golden House, Brown County, City of Green Bay, Green Bay Police Department, Brown County Sheriff's Department, Green Bay Metro Fire Department, Ashwaubenon Department of Public Safety, City of De Pere Police, Oneida Police Department, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Bellin Health, Brown County Library, Brown County District Attorney's Office, Casa ALBA Melanie, Cellcom, Encompass, Family Services, Freedom House, Green Bay Packers Give Back, House of Hope, iCare, McDonald Companies, Midwest Communications, Prevea Health, St. Norbert College, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, WFRV Local 5 and O'Connor Connective, who created and implements and advocates for the Be Safe campaign.

Be Safe debuted its [fourth PSA video today](#), which will be shared on WFRV Channel 5 and Midwest Communications' radio stations.

The Be Safe campaign's website — [920212SAFE.com](http://920212SAFE.com) — provides additional information and resources and includes a private way victims of domestic abuse can connect with the team at Golden House. Other marketing assets created for the campaign include pages on Facebook and Instagram, posters, videos and more.

Heim said everyone in the community is encouraged to follow the campaign on Facebook and Instagram and share the content so that more people can be reached.

“That simple activity will spread the campaign's message to more people and provide them with information about the free, local help available to victims of domestic abuse,” she said.

Individuals or organizations are interested in contributing to the campaign or becoming a campaign partner, please contact Marissa Heim at [marissa@goldenhouse.org](mailto:marissa@goldenhouse.org) or Linda Bodden at [linda@oconnorconnective.com](mailto:linda@oconnorconnective.com) for more information.

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