

# annual report

# Hope & Justice Project



# 2012

*Helping people  
affected by  
abuse and violence*

Hope & Justice Project continues to help people whose family and dating relationships are affected by abuse and violence. We recognize the importance of community awareness. So we provide education and training programs that encourage healthy relationships and the social change needed to eradicate domestic violence from our communities and our world.

*Here's a look at what we did in 2012.*

[hopeandjusticeproject.org](http://hopeandjusticeproject.org)

**Hope & Justice Project** is funded in part by United Way of Aroostook County; the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and Maine Housing; the Office on Violence against Women, U.S. Department of Justice – and by your generous donations. *Thank you for making our work possible.*

**Hope & Justice Project** does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in the delivery of services or employment practices.

HJP is so grateful for the foundation and grant support that makes our work possible.

- ▲ **Citizens Energy** – half the cost of heat for the three shelters and the Caribou transitional house
- ▲ **Sally Cares Foundation** – living room furniture and a convertible sofa for the Houlton shelter
- ▲ **Maine Community Foundation Aroostook Fund** – computer stations for clients
- ▲ **Levesque Family Foundation** – core services
- ▲ **Empire Beauty School** – for annual fundraising to benefit HJP
- ▲ **Presque Isle Rotary Club** – new beds for Caribou Transition House
- ▲ **Dept. of Justice Office on Violence Against Women Rural Grant** – outreach, advocacy and collaboration, especially in the St. John Valley
- ▲ **USDA Rural Development** – critical repairs at shelters and transitional housing
- ▲ **United Way of Aroostook** – shelter and transitional housing mortgages
- ▲ **Maine Department of Health and Human Services** – core services and administration
- ▲ **Aroostook County Commissioners** – matching funds for transitional services
- ▲ **Maine Housing** – shelter operations
- ▲ **Dept. of Housing and Urban Development** – Transitional housing in Caribou
- ▲ **Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence statewide collaborative DOJ Rural Grant supporting Child Welfare System Advocacy** – advocacy for families where both child abuse and domestic violence are present and child protection is engaged

## Hotline

Change that starts with a phone call

Hello? Hope & Justice Project. This is Carrie

*Hi...I have some questions. First, do you help people with custody?*

*I need to talk with somebody. My husband has been doing some things that I am really worried about. I'm not sure what I should do.*

Hello? Hope & Justice Project. This is Carrie

*I don't know if you can help, but my friend gave me your number and wanted me to call you.*



Every call is different. Every experience is different. But everyone who calls the Hope & Justice Project hotline needs our help – to assess their situation and to then to work

closely with them to find the ways and resources they need to get and stay safe.

**That's an important phone call.**

## Guidance and support

*I have been working with HJP for over two years. During this time I have learned so much in so many ways. I would have been lost without any of you. You have all helped me become so independent and strong.*

*You've directed me towards the people and things I need in order to help my wounded soul. Thank you so much for helping me try to find myself again. You have said so many encouraging things to help keep me motivated to do the right things for myself and my kids. Thank you, again for all you do.*

We do everything we can to help anyone who's living with abuse take back some control and become strong and self-sufficient. HJP advocates often meet with someone who's called our hotline face-to-face in the comfort of one of our eight outreach locations. There they can offer support, talk privately, and together create a highly individualized safety plan that truly reflects that person's situation.

In 2012, HJP partnered with **Women, Work & Community** (WWC) to develop a simple assessment process that helps people get a picture of their financial circumstances. WWC also answered complex financial questions and offered guidance and expertise to people seeking to enter the work force or start their own businesses.

## Support Groups

Support groups give people the opportunity to talk about experiences, share information and offer each other understanding and support.

### The numbers

HJP held 9 six-session support groups in four northern Maine towns in 2012.

Then we tackle the basics like how to access public assistance and housing support, find a job, and budget to make ends meet.

We help people who come to us with options to build – or rebuild – their lives.

## The Numbers

▲ 807 women    ▲ 45 men    ▲ 239 children  
**Total 1091 people**

## In the courts

*Hope and Justice Project has been a blessing for me, from being a battered woman to my children being abused. The knowledge I have received is unbelievable. Having a lawyer to help me out in court with my ex-husband has been a blessing all around. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.*

**About one third of the people who come to us need assistance with legal matters.** HJP court advocates guide people seeking to obtain Protection from Abuse or Harassment Orders, file for divorce or parental rights, or modify standing orders so that parents are better able to keep themselves and their children safe. The Hope and Justice attorney handles more complex issues.

We make sure low-income people have legal representation through the Hope and Justice Law Project and our partnership with Pine Tree Legal Assistance.

## The numbers

In 2012, the Hope and Justice Law Project attorney and court advocates consulted with or represented 344 people.

- ▲ 179 Protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs)
- ▲ 64 Divorces
- ▲ 91 Parental Rights & Responsibilities (PR&Rs)
- ▲ 57 Post Judgment matters

## Emergency shelter and Transitional housing

*When I left my husband I had no place else to go. Really. I had to come here [to shelter] I stayed a week-and-a-half and, in that time, I started a journal, went to church, and started to feel more confident. I want to live my life without being told or made to feel stupid, or not as good, or good enough, or second best.*

*NO never again. Thank you for my time here.*

*I tried leaving my ex-husband 8 times before I let you guys help me. I have never been happier. Me and my children still have a lot of healing and work to do, but we are the lucky ones. I will forever be grateful for all you have done.*

*I felt like [shelter] was my home. It was sad to leave, but I felt good knowing what I learned and knowing that I would be okay.*

One significant barrier to leaving a relationship, especially one that involves abuse, is the lack of a safe place to go. HJP provides emergency shelter, along with emotional support, help thinking through options and information for people and families in need of a safe haven.

HJP also provides people working to stay safe and free from relationships that involve violence with affordable transitional housing for up to two years.

## The numbers

### Emergency shelter

- ▲ Single women 21
  - ▲ Families 31 (53 children)
- Average stay 46 days**  
**Total shelter bed days 3848**

### Transitional housing

In 2012, 10 families lived in our transitional apartments.

## The numbers...

*Where our funding comes from and where it goes*

Revenues	\$962,546
Federal	638,686
State	179,811
Maine Housing	61,656
Private	35,797
Fees	23,041
Designated	12,585
Foundations	5,515
Local	5,455
Expenses	\$987,853
Salary & Fringe	780,709
Other	207,144

**Thanks to the many heroes who donate their expertise, services, and time** to help HJP get its work done...sometimes in ways that confidentiality prevents us from talking about, but with outcomes that change lives forever. These are just some of those heroes:

Empire Beauty School

The women who organize Women's Ski Day at the Nordic Heritage Center

The men who plow the snow for free at our Houlton and Caribou buildings

Polaris Cable

Time Warner Cable

Hogan Tire

Jobs for Maine Grads

Keith Brown, Criterium Engineering

Chuck Johnston

Dave and Wayne Donovan

The Sunday schools, women's groups, men's groups, and youth groups of Aroostook County's churches, whose combined contributions make our faith community the largest donor to HJP.

## Community outreach/presentations



Domestic violence exists in every community – whether people are rich or poor, have college degrees or never finished high school, are gay or straight, young or old. One way to combat domestic violence and abuse is by increasing awareness – if you can recognize it, you can help stop it.

Our **"In the Schools"** program introduces children to the reality of abuse – and encourages non-violent behavior and conflict resolution – through age-appropriate workshops and presentations on these topics: **Hands are not for Hitting, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Conflict Resolution, Healthy Relationships, and Teen Dating Violence.**

We gave 177 in-school presentations in 2012, for a total of 227.75 hours and 2967 students – 1725 from grades K through 12 and 1242 from Job Corps – participating.

### The Numbers

<b>K-6</b> 49 presentations	<b>7-8</b> 16 presentations
51.75 hours	20 hours
969 students	338 students
<b>9-12</b> 18 presentations	<b>Job Corps</b> 94 presentations
19.5 hours	136.5 hours
418 students	1242 students

*HJP thanks the schools in these towns for caring and participating...*

Hodgdon	New Sweden	Fort Fairfield	Fort Kent
Wallagrass	Woodland	Houlton	Caribou
Limestone	Madawaska	Van Buren	Mars Hill

**Strengthened partnerships** with several key community partners, including ACAP Family Planning; the Aroostook Band of Micmacs; Women, Work & Community; and L'Escale Madavic Inc., the domestic violence shelter in Edmunston.

**Strengthened our working relationship** with the Aroostook County Task Force on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault by collaborating on training for law enforcement: two 2.5 hour training sessions focused on homicide prevention, and two full day trainings by Major Marcus Bruning from St. Louis County, Minnesota on advanced skills for domestic and sexual violence investigation.

**Held our first** "Chalk it Up" events in Houlton and Fort Kent. Local people drew images on the sidewalks to raise awareness about domestic violence in our communities.



### Board We...

- ▲ Reviewed and improved our system of internal controls
- ▲ Established Finance and Audit Committee and reinvigorated the Personnel Committee
- ▲ Said good bye to Cindy Heron, Kim-Anne Perkins, Sonya Deschene, Jane Rioux
- ▲ Welcomed Nora Yeager, Milton Ross, Reed Nonken, Jane Hunt

### Staff We...

- ▲ Welcomed new staff members Desiree Chasse, Peggy Ross and Jessica Kinney to the Presque Isle office.
  - ▲ Said good bye to Jamie Cleary, who spent six years with HJP in our Houlton office. Jamie has shared her kind heart and skilled advocacy with people in the Houlton area through hotline and face to face support as well with people staying in the Houlton HJP Transition House.
- She also completed critical monthly reports for funders on service delivery and pitched in to staff the busy Presque Isle office several days a week. She has been an important trainer and mentor for new hotline workers and staff. We will miss her.