Starting Point is currently hiring for a full-time advocate to provide quality direct services to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking in Carroll County. If you have a desire to make a difference now’s the time to email your resume to executordirector@startingpointnh.org

Starting Point Shelter, The Grace House, has the capacity for 13 victims - 5 adults and as many as 8 children. We are almost always at capacity. Many of our guests arrive with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. Our staff and volunteer are quick to supply them with all the basics to get settled in, but we are always in need of more help. If you are interested in volunteering at the shelter providing transportation, child care or personal advocacy please email shelter@startingpointnh.org to learn about our volunteer program. If you would like to donate gift cards for the local supermarkets, supply stores or gas cards please contact shelter@startingpointnh.org

Today Starting Point has a staff of 11 and a volunteer pool of more than twenty (… and we’re still growing - read “Make a Difference” for employment and volunteer opportunities), a shelter with the capacity for 13 victims, a dozen Memo-randum of Understanding (MOU), that engage Starting Point advocates in the earliest stages of a victim's journey thus shortening the incident of abuse (according to the Bureau of Criminal Justice), with our hospitals and health centers, courts, schools, colleges, DCYF, law enforcement and others. We host forums, book discussions, house parties and trainings. In the last year alone we provided classroom instruction to 621 students in Carroll County.

Community engagement has become the focus of our advocacy, to improve the quality of life for all who live in Carroll County, by all. And, still there is much to do, but the light at the end of the tunnel grows brighter with each passing year. 2019 has been a year of transformation birthed from our most recent strategic planning sessions. We welcomed a new Executive Director and moved staff around to better engage the community for the work ahead.

Deb Weinstein comes to us with a wealth of public service experience. "In addition to her expansive knowledge of the issues surrounding domestic violence and sexual assault and thorough understanding of the law, she leads with kindness and integrity. The Board feels very lucky to have found Deb", shares Starting Point Board of Directors Co-Chair, Jessica DellaValla. “Easy to talk with, Deb meets every person and issue with an open, but stout, heart!”

Continued on page 2
Continued from page 1

Raetha Stoddard, who has been with Starting Point for nearly 10 years in numerous positions from volunteer to Executive Director, “has always served with passion for prevention and community engagement. Raetha meets every experience and role with energy and enthusiasm.” Beth Carpenter, Starting Point Board of Directors Co-Chair, adds, “No matter where we need her, Raetha is there. She truly cares about each person we serve, and whether sitting at the hospital, handing out flyers at an event, or dancing around the room at Boots ‘n Bling, there is no greater champion for victims in Carroll County than Raetha.”

Brad Loomis has been with the agency for 10 years as the Family Violence Prevention Specialist (FVPS) and has recently moved into the Direct Service Coordinator (DSC) position bringing a wealth of expertise in advocacy, court proceedings and supervision. “Brad is a stellar and reliable leader in the work to provide quality services to victims and survivors. He is also a great storyteller who often surprises us with his seemingly latent gift to gab! We are so grateful to have him move into this important position.” - Deb Weinstein, Executive Director.

Pennny Frechette, who came on staff in 2018 as a court advocate, has taken over the position as FVPS. “Pennny has been a fabulous addition to Starting Point. Her knowledge of court procedures has allowed her to not only hit the ground running but at a full sprint!” - Brad Loomis, DSC.

In addition to these changes our Admin Assistant Liz Stillman has been elevated to the position of Business and Grants Manager helping to support the stability of our funding going forward. “All the moving parts at Starting Point are important and essential positions for getting the work done. What Liz does is oil the machine, making sure all the parts are in working order. Her care and concern for victims and staff alike is the heart of our office!” - Raetha Stoddard, Community Outreach

The addition of the federally funded Housing First Program in 2018, headed by Shawna Peare, has proved very successful thanks to Shawna’s passion for housing advocacy and is growing in leaps and bounds. Please see “Housing First” article for more information on our Housing First Program and an upcoming Landlord Summit for September 11, 2019.

Our newest staff include Jensa Stevens, our prevention specialist. “Jensa’s passion is matched only by her compassion and remarkable ability to connect with people, from grade school students to victims in the midst of trauma. Our prevention program is in good hands!”

Trish Varney started with us this month and is a much-appreciated addition to our Shelter “team” which until recently was single-handedly run by April Bona. April has been with Starting Point for the past 6 years and has consistently improved the quality of our Shelter Program.

We were also lucky enough to have an intern this summer from Plymouth State College, Christa Hylen. BTW Christa, we were just kidding when we said you should drop out of college and stay on at Starting Point permanently…or were we? In seriousness, we are so proud of you and can't wait to hear about what you teach them back at school this fall. You certainly taught us plenty this summer!

Much has changed since Starting Point first incorporated as a non-profit in 1981 and much still needs to be done. The good news is that there are now more of us to get it done.
common lexicon. Roxane Gay's valuable
often hear but even those of us who do
"Not That Bad".

discussion. The book for October will
promote a 
In April and October, Starting Point


September 8
2 pm 5th Annual Starting Point Challenge: Indian Mound Golf Club Nine-hole, w/cart – Scramble: Live music, BBQ, raffles, awards and prizes. For more information call 603-651-7068 or email epogl/networks.com/events

September 11
7-9 pm Landlubber Summit at Adventure Suites in North Conway. This is an opportunity for landlords and property managers to learn more about our Housing First Program and enjoy com-
plimentary wine and appetizers, get a sneak peek at the new spa and saloon at Adventure Suites and VIP tours of the rooms! See "Housing First" article for more information. To RSVP email community@startingpointnh.org

September 17
5-7 pm Starting Point will be the featured non-profit at the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce After Hours at Christmas Farm Inn

September 9, 10, 18, 19, 23, 25
6-9 pm Volunteer training at Camp Calumet in Freedom. For more information or for an application please email community@startingpointnh.org

September 25
7-9 pm Volunteer/Staff/BOD and Friends of Starting Point Potluck dinner at Camp Calumet in Freedom

September 30
5-9 pm Dine to Donate at Joseph's Spaghetti Shed in Glen

October 16
5-8:30 pm Dine to Donate at Max's Snowvillage Inn in Eaton

October 22
6-8 pm Bingo for a Cause at Red Parka Pub & Steakhouse in Glen

Please check out our website for a full schedule of October's Domestic Violence Awareness Activities and check back often for more upcoming events! For more information on events please call 447-2494 or email community@startingpointnh.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

The bottom line? If the behaviors cause
the victim to fear their partner or it causes
them to feel distressed or anxious than the
line that separates healthy from unhealthy
relationships has been crossed.

• Make unhealthy compromises (time,
work, happiness, integrity, etc.) to keep
your partner happy
• Are embarrassed to have friends and
family witness how your partner treats
you.

ANNIVERSARY
IT ALL STARTED WITH A POINT…

Wife beating was made illegal in the United States in 1920. Like any form of
written emancipation, the law required
years of grass root anti-oppression
movement before it was truly recognized
as a societal rule. Still there is a great
deal of work to do before we can declare
the rule a societal norm.

In the late 1970s, a couple of women
from Carroll County, who had experi-
enced the terror of abuse and hardships
borne from the lack of support for
victims, came together to support one an-
other with an overwhelming desire "not
to let it happen to another woman", an oft
heard sentiment from many victims still
today.

In 1981, Carroll County Against
Domestic Violence and Rape was
formed and soon after became
known as Starting Point.

In 2021, we will begin a celebratory
year acknowledging the founders and all
those that have contributed and benefit-
ted from the support Starting Point has
provided to our community.

We would love to hear from you if you
worked, volunteered or were a client at
Starting Point over the past 40 years.
Your stories will be added to a collage of
our history and displayed throughout the
year. We will be collecting written stories,
poems, artwork or any other expression
of experiences. We will also be collecting
recorded interviews for a short video.
Complete anonymity will be upheld for all
those requiring confidentiality of their
story.

Stay tuned for dates and times of up-
coming anniversary events and celebra-
tions in 2021. We can’t do the work
without you and we can’t celebrate without
you either!

To share your stories please email:
community@startingpointnh.org

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THE FOLLOWING IS A PARTIAL LIST OF SOME
WARNING SIGNS OF AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

or by the abuser in the relationship.
It is defined only by the victim and may
encompass emotional, mental or physical
abuse. It is also important to understand
that abuse happens over time and is
hard to identify sometimes as abuse,
often minimized by believing it’s "just"
constructive criticism or deserved
somehow.

• Make unhealthy compromises (time,
work, happiness, integrity, etc.) to keep
your partner happy
• Are embarrassed to have friends and
family witness how your partner treats
you.

• Believe that you cannot live without
your partner
• Take responsibility for all your relation-
ship problems
• Believe you deserve to be mistreated or
hurt
• Believe that marriage or pregnancy will
change your partner for the better
• Are made to feel bad about yourself by
your partner

• Have fewer and fewer happy times
together, and more time is spent on
apologies, promises, anger, guilt and fear
• Feel trapped or unable to leave the
relationship
• Experience diminished self-worth,
strength, and determination
• Experience feelings of helplessness,
helplessness, despair and lack of
emotional control, stemming from the
relationship
• Receive threats of suicide from your
partner to control your behavior

Excerpts taken from Crossing the Line: A Model for Domestic Violence Therapy, Charles A. Frazier)
For many victims the fears and anxieties of living independently can cause them to return to abusive relationships. Abuse can seem the lesser evil to homelessness, especially in the North Country when temperatures can be below 30 degrees a good portion of the year, not to mention the danger of living without security measures like a roof and four walls to prevent further victimization. Starting Point advocates provide transitional services to survivors that include programming like “Tenancy 101” and “Financial Literacy” as well as work readiness supports and ongoing emotional support that takes the form of case management once a client enters the Housing First Program. The federally funded Housing First Program helps survivors prepare for independent living and provides ongoing support to help stabilize them over months or years, depending on the need. “It’s an amazing program and a great resource for us to be able to offer survivors. I’ve seen huge transformation in people who participate in our Housing First Program, the kind of transformations that are responsible for breaking the cycle. Unfortunately, the Valley has a critical lack of affordable long-term housing for us to access. Long term rentals are what we need to really make the program successful here in the Valley rather than finding housing outside the county which is something we end up doing too often” says Shawna Peare, Housing First Advocate. On September 11 Starting Point will be hosting a Landlord Summit hosted by Adventure Suites in North Conway to provide a greater awareness to landlords and property managers about the Housing First Program. Along with representatives from Starting Point, local legislators and Housing Coalition advocates will be on hand to discuss upcoming plans for incentivizing long term rentals. For more information see our calendar section or call 447-2494 or email communitty@startingpointnh.org. All parts of a community must share a clearly defined theory of violence to coordinate effective intervention strategies. In the United States, theories about the cause and contributing factors of domestic violence have evolved for more than 40 years. The following is a portion of a paper entitled “Evolution of Theories of Violence.” To read the full article please go to our website, www.startingpointnh.org or email community@startingpointnh.org for a copy.

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children. The Domestic Violence Housing First approach focuses on getting survivors of domestic violence into stable housing as quickly as possible and then providing the necessary support as they rebuild their lives. The approach's success relies on survivor-driven advocacy, flexible financial assistance, and community engagement. The COST OF PREVENTION IS FAR LESS THAN THE COST OF NO PREVENTION Community Outreach and Prevention is currently the overall focus of the work at Starting Point. We are experts in crisis intervention and have done critical work in that area, but that work is triage if we don’t also provide prevention and engage the community to stand up for victims. In preparation for October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month Starting Point is offering open houses and training opportunities in September to increase involvement. “Our focus for October is prevention, and the engagement of men in the work to end domestic and sexual violence” shares Raetha Stoddard, Community Outreach Coordinator. “If domestic and sexual violence could be stopped by women alone it would have been done. In 1930, women got the vote, not because they voted for it, but because their counterparts voted for them to have the right. We need to work in tandem, not separately.” In engaging more men in the work, Starting Point hopes to better hone their expertise in working with male victims. The statistics indicate that more women are victimized. “I see those statistics every day, but I also believe that male victims may be less likely to reach out to an organization that is best known as a women’s organization. We help all victims and are anxious to do so more in the future for male victims and for our LGBTQ+ community”, says Stoddard. Volunteer training sessions will begin September 10. For more information or to receive a volunteer application please email community@startingpointnh.org or call 447-2494.

The battered women’s movement gained traction in the United States in the 1970s. At the time the leading theory of causation for battering was a psychopathology, which holds that make batterers are mentally ill and in need of psychological remedies such as therapy or medication. “The theory proved to be incorrect. The number of relationships that involved violence was much greater than original theorists guessed, and psychological tests did not support the theory that mental illness causes violence. One study showed that far fewer batterers have ‘clinical disorders’ than previous studies supporting this theory of violence indicated. Furthermore, researchers found that batterers’ behavior was inconsistent with profiles of mental illness.” The psychopathology theory of domestic violence has been revived in recent years as researchers look to psychological disorders and individual characteristics of batterers as the cause of domestic violence. However, this theory is criticized as inaccurate and shortsighted, in part because it serves as an excuse for batterers and ignores the role of gender in society. Some researchers believe batterers are over diagnosed with these disorders, and treatments for psychological disorders have not consistently yielded successful results. Early studies also characterized battered women as mentally ill. The results of these studies were distorted because they only examined women who were in mental hospitals. Their batterers, who appeared calm and credible compared to the institutionalized women, minimized and denied their partners’ accounts of the abuse when they were asked about the cause of their partners’ condition. In reality, battered women are not mentally ill. Many of those who were institutionalized were misdiagnosed as a result of society’s failure to recognize or understand the physical and psychological effects of domestic violence.