



March into Renewal

March is a month for renewal, it's a time to shed layers and to *spring* ahead! A New England March, however, is often a roller coaster of renewal. One day of melting away the past followed by a day of isolating cold and stormy weather, much like the journey from victimization to survivor-hood!

Just as it can take several attempts for a victim to leave an abusive situation it can take time to move forward from the violence. The stress and negative adrenaline from domestic and sexual violence can significantly alter one's brain chemistry (see our book suggestion for this month to learn more about the neuroscience of trauma).

The good news is that with help negative brain chemistry can repair, and new skills can take the place of behaviors that were once helpful for surviving the abuse but that no longer serve a purpose in a life without violence. For instance, hyper-vigilance, a well-known aftereffect of trauma, can help a *victim* deescalate a potentially violent situation but it can become disruptive and create barriers for *survivors* as they heal. Because this process can take time, Starting Point advocates provide long-term support, sometimes many years after victimization. As COVID restrictions wane we are hoping to return to in-person peer-support groups at our new Advocacy Center in Conway. Look for our *April Schedule* below for upcoming support groups.

Although many of us did not get sick with COVID during this pandemic we were all affected by it. Just as we are by the pandemic of interpersonal violence, even when we ourselves are not victims.

We have heard from many friends, and experienced it for ourselves as an agency, that “rejoining” has been a roller coaster of excitement and apprehension. Healing from the personal and global trauma of the pandemic will take time. Recognizing that healing is not linear and is a uniquely individual process will help us move forward as a community with compassion and patience.

Unfortunately, even as we wane from the COVID pandemic we are still firmly entrenched in the pandemic of interpersonal violence. In fact, the one has made the latter more difficult these last few years and more than ever we need your support as we offer ours.

See - even our March enews intro has been a roller coaster of good and bad news!

As we move forward in our work at Starting Point, we are asking our supporters to renew their commitment to the Starting Point mission of ***Not Tolerating Violence in Our Community.***

Please join us with a donation to our 40th Anniversary fundraiser or as a volunteer or by picking up one of our recommended books on the subject to learn more or by attending one of our upcoming **April Sexual Assault Awareness** events. See below for our April Schedule for volunteer training dates, events and book recommendations.

Together we can ALL *live free of domestic and sexual violence!*



Tamworth Foundation board members, from left to right:
Paul Chant, Nina Perry, George Cleveland, Gail Marrone.
(Not shown Keats Myer and David Little.)

Starting Point received a grant for \$4799 from the Tamworth Foundation!

Since its formation in 1937, the Tamworth Foundation has worked to strengthen the community by allocating funds for projects that enhance the lives of Tamworth citizens.

Last year alone, Starting Point provided more than 400 bed nights (safe shelter) for victims of domestic and sexual violence and their children, who resided in Tamworth.

The \$4799 grant will go toward the remodeling of the children's room and teen nook in the Starting Point shelter. The remodeling aims to create welcoming spaces and materials for children that support developmental play, and calming spaces for parent and child to curl up and read a book, do homework, or work on an art project. The children's room is also used for program partners to meet with children for therapeutic purposes. Most of all having a warm and welcoming space for children promotes healing from the traumas they have experienced.

The Starting Point shelter provides safe haven for up to 13 victims (5 adults and as many as 8 children). Victims screen into the shelter if they are considered to be in imminent danger (no court or police involvement are necessary for screening) or if they are homeless due to victimization.

Due to limited space those in imminent danger are given priority and are never turned away. Alternative safe housing is arranged for victims in imminent danger whenever the shelter is full and support services are provided to all who request shelter. Those services are free and confidential and include transitional housing, financial empowerment, parental and youth services support and personal advocacy.

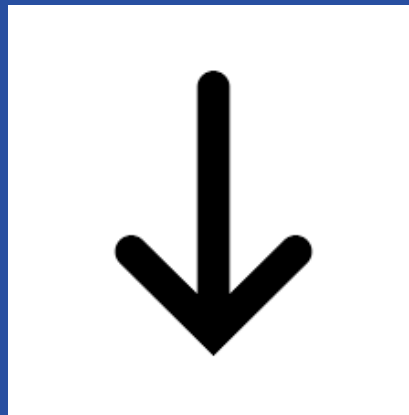
If you are interested in helping with our shelter renovations please email raetha@startingpointnh.org to learn ways you can get involved.

Is there anything better than spring skiing?!
Well come to think of it - YES! Skiing for a Reason!



Thanks to our alpine friends at Cranmore who raised over \$700 during Mt. Meister's! And to King Pine, the KW Realty/603 Property Group and 4 Point Title for holding a *Racing for a Reason* event for Starting Point on March 4th. **SKI ON!**

If you are looking for ways to contribute, Starting Point has an ongoing needs list at Amazon.



Amazon Wish List

If you shop on Amazon 'Smile' you can choose Starting Point as the receiving charity! It all adds up! \$350 so far!!

For more information on Amazon Smile you can check out the link here: [Amazon Smile For Starting Point](#)



Starting Point Services

In a conversation with a community member our Outreach Coordinator realized how often people are surprised by the breadth of services offered by Starting Point.

So, we thought we'd dedicate a little space here to highlight the range of services provided by Starting Point.



Housing

Having a housing program during a time when vacancy is at 0% is akin to providing empty water jugs to desert hikers. It's challenging to say the least!

Our housing program is funded federally with some statewide support and through the generosity of our donors. The program helps survivors find and maintain safe, sustainable housing. Unfortunately this can not always be done in Carroll County due to the lack of affordable housing and so our services include partnering with other agencies in more affordable markets. This isn't always the best solution because it uproots the family and severs important networks, but it is a better alternative to homelessness, another serious crisis in Carroll County.

Starting Point housing advocates work with survivors on a variety of levels which includes budgeting, financial empowerment, 101 Tenant Training, work readiness, and other wrap around supports that help a survivor gain independence.

Housing advocates also help negotiate and communicate with landlords about any tenancy issues that may arise, assuring good landlord/tenant communication.

Many victims leave dangerous situations with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Starting Point helps provide essentials, furniture and other housing items for those who must start from scratch.

Like with all federally funded programs, the Starting Point Housing Program has a screening process and strict guidelines. This can make the program prohibitive for some, mostly due to high rents and a scarcity of units. These barriers have inspired creativity from our advocates who are trained to look for solutions. We have successfully helped survivors move to areas where rents are affordable for them without financial support. In some cases, Starting Point has been able to help maintain housing previously shared with an abuser by assisting in the court process for removal of the abuser from the premises and the lease, and has provided new locks and reinforced security.

Our Housing Program differs from Transitional Housing which is also a service that Starting Point provides. Transitional Housing may include a short stay at the shelter or other shared living situations and wrap around services that include personal advocacy, financial empowerment and emotional support.

Sometimes the best route to safety is bus or air fare, returning a victim to their family, far away from the abuser. This too has been a service provided by Starting Point.

Housing is a complex and yet basic need. For many victims home has become a prison, and safety is in the fleeing. Being able to offer some form of shelter is essential in helping victims heal.

If you are a landlord and are interested in learning more about our Housing Program please email raetha@startingpointnh.org



APRIL - Sexual Assault Awareness Month Calendar

Listen for our radio 40/40 campaign all month long on WMWV-93.9

TBA - Spotlight on NHPR *Give Back* program

All Month - at A Little Off the Top Salon in Conway - Fairy Hair Tinsel Extensions by donation. Show your support by donning teal tinsel hair extensions, a fun way to draw attention to the work of Starting Point and showing your support for victims of sexual assault. And, if you're all in - teal and purple lash extensions are also being offered with 25% of the proceeds being donated to Starting Point. Call Jahz at 603-730-2276 to make an appointment.

12, 5-8pm - Volunteer Training Orientation - all are welcome to attend this first training to learn more about the agency. All trainings will be held at the Advocacy Center at 30 Pleasant St. in Conway

13, 5-9pm - Volunteer Training

14, 5-8pm - Volunteer Training
19, 5-8pm - Volunteer Training
20, 5-9pm - Volunteer Training
21, 5-8pm - Volunteer Training

26, 7-8pm - First in a series of Parent Workshops. This one will be highlighting ways to talk to teens about sexting, a precursor to sexual harassment and assault. Learn about the laws, protections and resources available. Facilitated by Starting Point Prevention Specialists and local police.

28, 5-8pm - Volunteer Appreciation party at Camp Calumet in Freedom for all Starting Point Volunteers! Dinner, appreciation and networking.

30, TBD Peer Support Group on resilience - this is an open support group focused on returning to the 'norm' or more so creating a new norm through self-care and networking practices. email community@startingpointnh.org or call 603-901-2237 for more information.



Gifting Gift Cards!

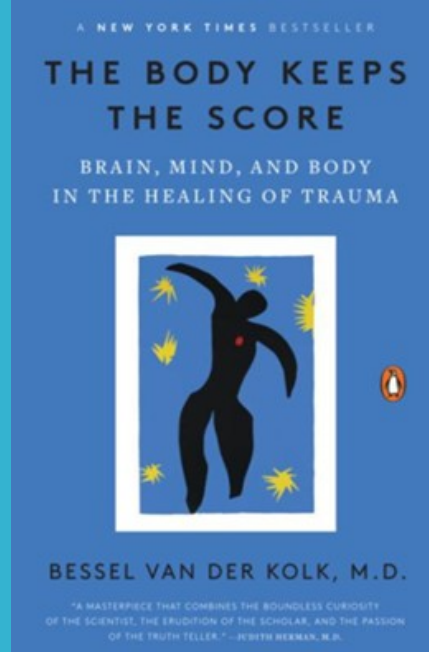
Thanks to all our donors who have dropped off gift cards. This is such a great way to support victims and help advocates provide essentials during crisis intervention. We've had a few folk put gift cards on their

weekly grocery shopping list!! We are deeply grateful for your regular donation! Thank you!

Please consider picking up a gas or food card the next time you shop! It makes a huge difference in the lives of victims and supports the effectiveness of our services.

Cards can be dropped off at Starting Point's new Advocacy Center in Conway on Pleasant Street or mailed to: Starting Point PO Box 1972, Conway, NH 03818

**The Library Corner: The Body Keeps the
by Bessel Van Der Kolk, M.D.**

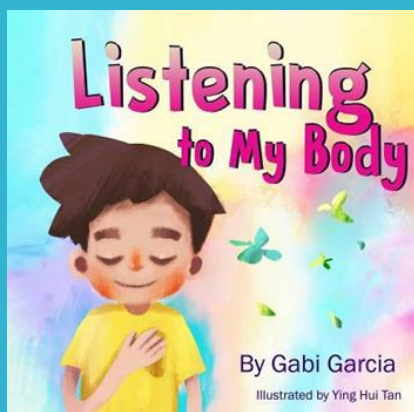


"The Body Keeps the Score" by psychiatrist and trauma expert Bessel Van der Kolk is a staple of Starting Point advocates, helping us better understand the effect that psychological trauma can have on individuals and how trauma can impact the way people perceive themselves and the world around them. This book covers the intricacies of how trauma produces these effects by considering the neuroscience involved. The book can be, at times, technical but offers not just an explanation of why but also how neuroscience allows us to produce new, effective treatments for trauma survivors. Examples of these approaches include eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, yoga, and limbic system therapy.

The book is a guide through modern therapies practiced throughout Van der Kolk's career and the patients he has seen. So this book also serves as a history of the mental health field of the last 30 years.

Here's a quick video summary of the book:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSCXyYuT2rE>



"Listening to My Body" by Gabi Garcia is an activity book that helps children connect emotion and sensation and helps them to understand how their body works. Through practice activities in the book children can develop greater control of their emotions by developing ways to regulate as well as strategies for self-soothing.

Teaching children to be in tune with their bodies and how to regulate their feelings, combined with awareness of appropriate touch can help reduce sexual abuse between children.

Don't have a child to buy books for? Don't worry - we do! Books, games, and activity packs are always welcome donations for our shelter and young clients!

Contact community@StartingPointNH.org to learn more.

Save the Date!

STARTINGPOINT'S
**10TH ANNUAL
BOOTS N' BLING
THURSDAY,
JUNE 9TH
2022 AT 5PM**
THE
WENTWORTH INN

DINNER, DANCING,
SILENT & LIVE
AUCTIONS TO
BENEFIT THE
VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC
& SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Starting Point
TICKETS:
STARTINGPOINTNH.ORG

YIKES...just 88 days away!
If you haven't ordered your tickets you might want to do so now, tickets are selling fast! Go [here](#) to get yours today!

June 9, 2022 at the Wentworth Inn in Jackson, NH

Our team is currently working on soliciting auction items and packages.

Like this fabulous Pontoon Cruise on Silver Lake from our friends Donna & Michael Veilleux!!

Here's something to start dreaming about ... A 2-hour cruise for four with drinks and refreshments. An educational circumnavigation cruise tour of pristine Silver Lake, it's islands and Cove leading into Cooks Pond with a stop at a secluded swimming area!

I think I hear bids already!!



If you would like to volunteer before or during
Boots 'n Bling, or if you are interested in sponsoring
our annual fundraiser please contact us at
raetha@StartingPointNH.org
or call 603-901-2237.



Starting Point | PO Box 1972, Conway, NH 03818 603-447-2494

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