



The mission of Crisis Center North is to empower victims of domestic violence and cultivate community attitudes and behaviors that break the cycle of violence.

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crisis center north



## NEW TECHNOLOGY *to* HELP SAVE THE LIVES *of* DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

To better protect the nearly 30,000 people at high-risk for lethality in Pennsylvania – and in response to the 119 women killed last year in domestic violence homicides – Crisis Center North (CCN) and Nexion Solutions, in collaboration with Penn State University (PSU) faculty, is announcing a landmark new research endeavor around the implementation of a new technology-based solution, dubbed the NightWatch, to enhance the safety of domestic violence survivors.

“We know when a victim leaves, that’s when they’re at highest risk. And so even when we’re relocating people and their pets, it

doesn’t mean they’re not going to be stalked, it doesn’t mean they’re not going to have issues,” said Grace Coleman, CCN President & CEO.

CCN will collaborate with Nexion Solutions to provide a cohort of 50 domestic violence survivors at highest risk for lethality with the new technology, which – through cellular connectivity on Verizon’s best-in-class network – will provide them with immediate access to police and emergency services in the event of a violent altercation.



## PAWS PROGRAM *Recognized*

In April 2025, Crisis Center North (CCN) PAWS For Empowerment Program received the Purple Ribbon Outstanding Pet Program Award!

The Purple Ribbon Awards are hosted by DomesticShelters.org, Alliance for HOPE and experts in the field who have combined forces to develop and launch the first comprehensive and international awards program honoring the myriad hope givers of the domestic violence movement, including advocates, programs and shelters, survivors and volunteers, Family Justice Centers, and members of the community support system.

*NightWatch,  
continued from page 1*

CCN will work with local law enforcement to implement the technology throughout Allegheny County, using a Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) and hospital intake assessment to ensure the technology is protecting those at highest risk.

In the event of a violent incident, the project allows survivors to activate a device, providing immediate access to police and emergency services. The device offers a one-touch emergency button: functions as its own communication device (i.e., no phone required); is GPS-enabled; and is waterproof. The nature of the device is not disclosed for the protection of victims.

In 2023, the NightWatch was piloted in Milwaukee County, WI, resulting in the safe resolutions of two abductions and one ambush; nine arrests of repeat DV offenders; eight emergency medical transports; 50 incidents of DV responded to by officers; and 0 high-risk clients lost their lives.

"The GPS on this device is wicked accurate. We actually had a woman who was hiding in the bushes next to her home from her abuser, and we could see exactly where she was, and so we sent police to that location to extract her. So we said, 'She's in the bushes.' So they actually were able to pull her safely out of there," explained Liz Kohler, founder of Nexion Solutions.

"There's a myriad of resources we have to offer at our center, and this will be one of them that stays with them and on them," Coleman said. "Domestic violence thrives in isolation. With this device, the victim is never alone. All they have to do is activate the device and someone is going to be there for them."



## You can help save lives with the NightWatch.

Donate  
Today



Scan Here  
or visit  
[CrisisCenterNorth.org](https://CrisisCenterNorth.org)



*Join us for*  
**PAWS AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**2025 PET WALK | 5K EVENT**

**Sunday, Oct. 26, 2025 @ 10:00am**  
**North Park | Allison Park, PA**

**scan to register!**



crisis center north







PAWS FOR EMPOWERMENT

*5th Annual*

# PET WALK

**“Paws Against Domestic Violence”**

October 26th, 10am-1pm

[Crisis Center North's PAWS for Empowerment](#) program welcomes you and your pet to participate in the “Paws Against Domestic Violence” Pet Walk event! Let's go for a walk/run! Grab your sneakers and a pet, and join us at North Park this October for a walk to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness month.



100% of the  
proceeds goes  
directly to the  
PAWS program

## K9 Demonstration

*from* McCandless and  
Ross Township Police

## Pet Costume Contest

## Food Truck

## Vendors

## Games

*The mission of Crisis Center North is to empower victims of domestic violence and cultivate attitudes and community behaviors that break the cycle of violence. PAWS connects to that mission by employing Canine Advocates to comfort dv survivors in local Allegheny County municipal courts. PAWS also provides essential services for animals of dv survivors, including vet bills, supplies, and emergency temporary hotel stays (together with the pet or separate housing for the pet).*

*In addition, PAWS staff travel to local vet offices, police departments, and other places to raise awareness about the connection between pet violence and family violence. PAWS and Canine Advocate Ari were on hand this year for **the passing of Act 146**, which protects family pets as part of PFA (Protection From Abuse) orders in PA for the first time!*

OCTOBER IS



**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**  
**AWARENESS MONTH**

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month! Crisis Center North is commemorating the occasion during this month by holding community events that focus on holistic comprehensive services for survivors, their families, and their pets.



# GIVING TUESDAY

... December 2 ...

Giving Tuesday is the day that nonprofits look forward to each year to ensure that supporters can help the cause that they feel strongest about. Serving survivors of domestic violence has always been crucial to so many in our community, and this is your chance to help! Pittsburgh Magazine and GBU Life are holding their annual Giving Tuesday campaign, and Crisis Center North will be participating. Stay tuned for details on how YOU can help and how to maximize your giving power on this important day!



## CCN'S 2025 NORTHERN STARS

All of these individuals have gone **above and beyond**, showing unwavering commitment towards ending the cycle of violence in the community.

Crisis Center North always seeks to acknowledge important community members who assist in supporting and furthering the mission of the organization. The Northern Star Awards (NSA) recognize individuals and groups committed to addressing the issue of domestic violence. This year's Crisis Center North Northern Star Awards go out to Exemplary community members who are committed to helping survivors and rebuilding lives.

PA State Representative

**Emily Kinkad**

Representing District 20

North Fayette Police Department

**Lt. John Walls**

Director, Onala Recovery Center

**Zachary Benkovitz**

*We Salute You!*



## CCN'S PAWS PROGRAM *and its* SERVICES *in the* COMMUNITY

Presently, PAWS is offering **economic assistance to clients with pets** such as relocation funds, rent assistance, tangible funds, transportation, and vet funds. The funds are not only for families with small pets but also for families with large companion animals such as horses.

PAWS is also currently scheduled for **trainings on the link between animal and person abuse and the new Protection from Abuse law** which includes protection for pets to local veterinarians, victim service providers at the Victims Services Pathway Conference and state-wide Magisterial District Justices.

# Out & About

SERVING THE  
COMMUNITY AND  
RAISING AWARENESS



## SURVIVE & THRIVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR

On **Saturday, June 14, 2025**, Crisis Center North hosted its inaugural *Survive & Thrive Community Health & Wellness Fair* at **The Castle Consortia in McKees Rocks**. This event was designed with the goal of removing barriers between community members and healthcare resources.

**Approximately 176 adults and children** from the McKees Rocks community were in attendance throughout the day. **136 Health & Safety Giveaway Bags** were distributed to adult attendees; each giveaway bag – packed in slice-resistant, RFID-protected, lockable pouches – contained harm reduction, hygiene, and safety supplies: Narcan (x2), fentanyl test strips, xylazine test strips, sharps disposal container, nitrile gloves,

*continued on page 8*

# PROGRAMMING N·E·W·S

COUNSELING, PREVENTION  
EDUCATION, *and* ECONOMIC  
EMPOWERMENT



## Counseling and Therapy

### Museum Visits

Crisis Center North brought a number of clients to Pittsburgh museums through a partnership with the Carnegie Museum group. Clients accompanied CCN counselors on July 25th at the Carnegie History Museum and August 15th at the Warhol Museum.

Clients described the experience as highly engaging, highly informative, transformative, and uplifting. Reflecting on and engaging with the art and exhibits allowed Clients and counselors to approach topics that would have felt more painful and difficult in talk therapy alone. Also, these new uplifting experiences are associated with appreciation and a place of healing, forging new healthy pathways in the brain.

CCN's goal is to hold one unique museum session per month; our next stop is the Carnegie Science Center!

### Equine Therapy

This year's equine therapy took place at Bella Terra Stables. Equine therapy participants connected with the animals in a profound way. The horses' empathetic behavior and calming presence beneficially affected participants' nervous systems and helped regulate their heart rate, breathing, and stress responses. Equine calm activates the parasympathetic nervous system of those who interact with them, lowering anxiety and hyper vigilance, fostering mindfulness and reducing intrusive thoughts and increases attunement to their own bodies. Guiding the horses, clients reported feelings of agency and competence, which were followed by feelings of empowerment and self-esteem.

## Prevention Education

During the 2024-25 school year, our prevention education programming has grown by leaps and bounds! Not only have our Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) and Challenging Athletes to become Lifelong Leaders (CALL) programs evolved to be more relevant to today's student athletes and the challenges they face, we have also developed new programming to reach new audiences.

In the middle of the school year, we were approached by third grade teachers who were having some trouble with kids being bullied and bringing their home lives to school, unable to focus and often having behavior issues with classmates. We were able to combine parts of our middle school curriculum about healthy relationships with our high school mentoring program and came up with a brand-new "Friendship, Communication, and Respect" program.

During our sessions with third graders, PE educator Brett spent one class period working on activities and discussing positive and negative friendship traits, how to be a good friend, how to stick up for what you need, how we communicate with and without words, and how to be respectful of our peers and teachers, especially about creating boundaries.

A few days after he presented, high school mentors came to the elementary school to work with third graders in completing activities based on the big ideas discussed earlier. The third-grade teachers noticed a big difference in attendance, behavior, and academics after our sessions, especially leading up to the high school mentors joining them. The high school students appreciated working with the third graders

*continued on page 8*





# HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Crisis Center North's Holiday Toy Drive is here! Help bring joy this season by:

- DONATING NEW TOYS
- CONTRIBUTING GIFT CARDS
- MAKING A MONETARY DONATION
- SHOPPING OUR AMAZON WISH LIST (SCAN BELOW)



**DEADLINE FOR  
DONATIONS:  
DECEMBER 5TH**



Crisis Center **North**





and gave them a chance to be leaders. The success of this new program is increasing our reach and will be adopted by at least one other school during the 2025-26 school year.

Also, based on the new “Friendship, Communication, and Respect” program, we designed single presentations to 1st-8th grade summer camp students in Manchester. The students at the camp come from underserved backgrounds and often have seen violence in and out of their homes. We were able to speak with each grade-level independently about friendship, communication, and respect. The students were engaged and excited to talk about their personal lives and how to safely handle difficult situations with their friends and in their homes. For the first time ever, we were able to reach first graders through fourth graders and we look forward to working with these younger ages again.

## Economic Empowerment

### Rebuilding Lives and Livelihoods By Restoring Economic Power

Clients who are rebuilding their lives need the tools and materials to do so, and YOU can help!

#### Current client needs include:

- Cleaning supplies
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Razors
- Shaving cream
- Lotion
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body wash
- Hand soap
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Laundry detergent

*No clothing or used items, please.  
Clothing donations can be directed to  
Treasure House Fashions.*

#### *Out & About, continued from page 6*

safety cards containing DV information and hotline numbers, CCN medical tracking diary, CCN personal panic alarm, CCN hand sanitizer spray, CCN lip balm/SPF stick, CCN purple ribbon hot/cold pack, CCN personal hygiene kit, and a scroll pen detailing the health effects of DV and means of getting in touch with Crisis Center North. **28 Wellness Pouches** were distributed to youth attendees; each contained a CCN lunch/freezer pouch, CCN aluminum water bottle, CCN health & safety coloring and activity book, CCN cooling towel, reversible waterproof backpack, safety cards, hand sanitizer, and a scroll pen.

Most event attendees were local to the McKees Rocks area. Word of mouth traveled quickly and individuals from the immediate area - and as far as Monroeville, PA - steadily streamed in for the entirety of the time that the food trucks were present. The availability of free food at a walkable distance was essential to bringing in attendees, and every individual who received a meal ticket spent time exploring the resources inside The Castle. Upon departing, Kona Ice and Smokehouse BBQ provided a supply of food to be held for attendees arriving after 3pm.



## 2025 PRIDE: SHOWING OUR SUPPORT

Crisis Center North was on hand for the 2025 PRIDE Festival, celebrating the LGBTQ+ community. A great time was had by all who

attended, and CCN spread the word about dv stats relating to LGBTQ+ populations, the availability of services to the community, connecting to underserved populations, and showing community support!



## BARREL AND FLOW: COMMUNITY AND ARTS IN ACTION

For the fourth year in a row, Crisis Center North was offered a tabling spot at the nation's #1 beer, music, and arts festival – Barrel and Flow. The festival celebrates black artists, musicians, and brewers as they collaborate with other breweries and artists from the Pittsburgh area. Over 4,000 people attended this year's festival. We were able to offer attendees a rundown of the services we offer and provide information about relationship abuse and the help that is available through Crisis Center North. We also raised close to \$100 from our always popular PLINKO board! A highlight of every year, Barrel and Flow brings together people of every race and gender for a day of good times, good friends, and lots of laughter.



# THANK YOU

Crisis Center North would like to offer its deepest thanks to the following Extraordinary Members of the Community!

**Emily Roan**

Union Fitness

for donating client services

**Michelle Bushée**

Piatt Sotheby's Bushee Group and Friends

for donating school supply backpacks

**Diane Cebulski**

*and the*

McCandless Democratic Committee

for donating school supply backpacks

**Emiliano's**

for their amazing pop-up fundraiser benefiting CCN and  
Treasure House Fashions

**2025 Health Fair Vendors,  
Participants *and* Supporters**

**2025 Critical Needs Alert Donors**

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT!



## WANT TO DO MORE?

JOIN OUR  
**LEGACY  
CLUB**

Crisis Center North is creating a group of **DEDICATED** members who want to leave a lasting legacy to help end the cycle of violence. If you are **PASSIONATE** and want to affect tangible future change, then this group is for you!

If you would like to find out more about our Planned Giving Program, please contact the Development team of Michael Brayack at [mbrayack@crisiscenternorth.org](mailto:mbrayack@crisiscenternorth.org) or Jef Garfinkel at [jgarfinkel@crisiscenternorth.org](mailto:jgarfinkel@crisiscenternorth.org).



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or **FRIEND**



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Crisis Center North complies with all Title IX requirements to prevent sexual harassment, sexual violence, or gender discrimination in the workplace. For information on the agency's Title IX policy and procedures, with instructions on how to file a complaint, please go to this link on the CCN website: [crisiscenternorth.org/policy](http://crisiscenternorth.org/policy).

Please show your generosity. Giving to CCN is as easy as a few clicks. Log on to **CRISISCENTERNORTH.ORG** and click "**Donate**" on the home page.

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained for the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania at 1-900-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.