

MOBILE ADVOCACY

How do you ensure the safety of the survivor and the advocate if they are meeting in a public place or the survivor's home?

We take safety very seriously. Before an advocate has their first meeting with a survivor, they go through a safety checklist and create a safety plan with the survivor to determine the safest place for them to meet. If safety is compromised at any point, the meeting will be ended and rescheduled.

What type of increased investments will this model require?

Since New Beginnings piloted mobile advocacy starting in 2015, we have many of the policies, procedures and protocols needed in place. The biggest investment will be purchasing and upgrading our technology for the mobile advocates, including laptops and cell phones. Other increased investments will include providing comprehensive training to ensure safety, and transportation options for advocates.

NEWBEGIN.ORG

There are many websites with information about domestic violence, why not just redirect people to those resources?

Currently, our website averages over 6,000 page views each month and our most frequented page is "Get Help." Survivors and others in our community are already looking to us for help and information, and we want to have all the resources they need in one place. New Beginnings will balance how much content to include on our own website versus directing people to already existing resources.

HOME SAFE

How do you know this model will work?

We are modeling our new housing approach after other organizations that have made similar changes. Through recent pilot projects coordinated by the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Washington State, 96% of survivors provided Housing First services retained their housing 18 months after entering the program. See our Research document for more information on the successes of this model.

Are you selling the shelter?

Yes, New Beginnings is selling our communal shelter building. Our new approach realigns our housing services with best practices, providing a more private and healing environment for traumatized survivors and kids. Specifically, we will house survivors fleeing abuse in our existing apartment building and at hotels. Survivors will be able to stay for a longer period of time in our apartments, increasing the support they receive to build confidence, deal with legal issues, stabilize finances and find new homes.

The housing market in Seattle is so competitive, how will you find affordable housing for survivors?

New Beginnings will have housing specialists on staff whose sole focus will be on building relationships with local housing authorities, landlords and other housing programs, and connecting survivors with housing that is the right fit for them. This service, combined with ongoing budgeting support and short term financial assistance, will enable survivors to stabilize their finances and plan for their futures. This new model will also give us the flexibility to help survivors stay in their current homes if that is a safe option.

Are hotels a safe option for survivors?

Yes. New Beginnings has been leveraging hotel stays for survivors who are in immediate danger for years. Our advocates safety plan with survivors we place in hotels to minimize the risk that they will be followed or tracked to their new location, and to ensure that survivors are taking appropriate precautions once registered. Survivors staying in hotels will be visited by advocates, and will receive the same compassionate services that other participants in our programs receive.

Will the number of people you serve change?

As a result of this shift, New Beginnings will have fewer people living at our facilities. However, the increased flexibility of the Home Safe model allows us to work proactively with survivors and, where possible, identify alternatives to emergency housing. Ultimately, we anticipate serving more survivors who need housing assistance through a combination of short term housing, rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention services.

Will you partner with other organizations focused on housing?

Yes, when such organizations are able to meet the unique needs of survivors. We will take a highly individualized approach to match each survivor with housing that is the right fit and is sustainable for their future. New Beginnings has a long history of collaborating with organizations that specialize in domestic violence, housing and other human services. We will continue to cultivate these partnerships and build new ones as part of our expanding community outreach efforts.

Why are you making this change when there aren't enough emergency shelter beds in Seattle already?

One of the biggest reasons we are making this change is we know it will be more effective and trauma-informed for survivors. In looking at a 10-year analysis of where participants go after they leave our temporary Shelter, 60 percent returned to their abuser, ended up homeless, went to another short-term shelter or left without telling us where they were going. We know we can do better, and are confident the Home Safe model will offer survivors more options and greater long term stability.

TEEN ADVOCACY PROJECT

How will you work with other youth programs?

New Beginnings will build partnerships with organizations serving youth and teens so we can offer these vital services in locations where teens already have trusting relationships. We have some of these relationships established, such as with Seattle Public Schools and Boys and Girls Club, and will work to expand collaborations to other organizations.

How will you work with schools?

New Beginnings has relationships with several middle and high schools in the Seattle and Shoreline School Districts. We will cultivate these relationships and build new ones to provide in-school advocacy services to youth, and train school personnel to identify warning signs of abuse and respond with compassion and appropriate resources.

DEDICATED YOUTH SUPPORT

How many survivors do you serve who have kids?

More than half the survivors New Beginnings serves each year have children. In 2015, New Beginnings helped 267 parent survivors and their 190 children. We know the key to ending domestic violence is prevention and intervention, and this population is the best place for us to start.

¹www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do/US-Program/Washington-State/Homelessness-and-Family-Stability

²New Beginnings' Shelter is designed for communal living. All living spaces are shared, including bedrooms, by the families we serve. Families share a bedroom with at least one other family while living in our Shelter.

³Trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives.