

Bergen County Department of Human Services

ALTERNATIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIVISION DIRECTOR

Let's celebrate **PRIDE & EQUITY!**

June marks the celebration of Pride Month and Juneteenth, two significant events highlighting the struggles and triumphs of the LGBTQ+ and Black communities. Pride month celebrates the courage and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community, advocating for love and equality. Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S. and the ongoing fight to end systemic racism. This June, let's honor diversity within our communities, educate ourselves, and stand in solidarity to promote a culture of love, justice, and respect for all.

Marisa Heluk, M. Ed.
ADV Division Director

ADV's Survivor's Day

On June 26th, we hosted our first-ever Survivor's Day: A Celebration of Peace and Perseverance. This unforgettable event honored the incredible strength and resilience of our clients, treating them to an evening filled with rejuvenating self-care and wellness activities. They embraced mindfulness through guided meditation and chair yoga sessions, and unleashed their creativity by painting mandalas and crafting beautiful terrariums.



JUNE 2024 IN REVIEW 6TH EDITION HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ [Invisible Wounds: Healing from Complex Trauma](#)
- ◆ [ADV's LGBTQIAP+ THRIVE Group](#)
- ◆ [Survivor Services Spotlight: Office of LGBTQ+](#)
- ◆ [New Legal Advocate Job Opening](#)
- ◆ [Featured Topic: Celebrating PRIDE History.](#)
- ◆ [ADV's June Photo Reel](#)
- ◆ [40-Hour Training Program for Domestic Violence Victim Advocates](#)

SOLIDARITY BEYOND THE PARADE

As we celebrate Pride Month, the ADV team acknowledge the deep connection between the fight against domestic violence and the struggle for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual (LGBTQIAP)+ rights. The LGBTQIAP+ community faces disproportionate rates of domestic violence and are statistically less likely to seek help from law enforcement or a domestic violence program due to fear of being met with discrimination or hostility.

As domestic violence advocates, it is our responsibility to acknowledge injustice and take action to support our LGBTQIAP+ survivors, colleagues, and loved ones. We can take our Pride Month advocacy to the next level by:

- Educating ourselves about LGBTQIAP+ experiences in abusive relationships through training and consultation
- Providing trauma-informed services that address intersectional issues affecting LGBTQIAP+ survivors
- Advocating for policies protecting LGBTQIAP+ rights, including marriage equality, non-discrimination laws, and hate crime legislation
- Amplifying LGBTQIAP+ voices and stories
- Creating safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQIAP+ staff and peers

By taking these steps year-round, we can help to create a world where all survivors - regardless of gender or sexual identity, feel valued, supported, and empowered to live freely. As domestic violence advocates, it is our duty to stand in solidarity with the LGBTQIAP+ community and work towards a future of equal rights and opportunities for all.

Reference

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (2019). 2019 Annual Report. Retrieved from [National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#)



CELEBRATING BIG STAFF TRANSITIONS

Cathy Tanis, LCSW

Cathy has dedicated her distinguished career to understanding the intricate connections between physical and mental health, driven by her early professional experiences as a nurse. In recognition of the special link between trauma and mind-body wellness, Cathy transitioned to clinical social work and landed in ADV's very own student internship program.



After working tirelessly to support hundreds of survivors of domestic violence throughout the years, Cathy was appointed Clinical Program Director in 2021 and championed several programmatic changes to ADV's Survivor Services, including the revitalization of our internship program. Cathy was also recently honored by the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NJCEDV) with an Impact Award in 2023, which recognized the extent of her positive influence on clients' and colleagues' lives throughout her tenure.

ADV celebrated Cathy's momentous retirement this month and her transition into a Clinical Consultant position where she will continue to support ADV clients in our Survivor Services program. Here's to a new chapter of impact, Cathy!

Salome Sigua, DVS

Salome has performed multiple roles throughout her seven-year career at ADV since her start as a Hotline Specialist. Salome became a NJCEDV certified Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS) in 2020 and has vast experience in working in survivor services and abuse intervention.



She left a huge mark on ADV this past year by coordinating and revitalizing Bergen County's Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) following disruptions to the program during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her work involved connecting and collaborating with Bergen County police departments to promote coordinated responses to violence and rebuilding ADV's volunteer program to its strongest numbers in recent years. As an established researcher, Salome readily applied her training in data collection and analysis to ADV's efforts to advance evidence-based survivor advocacy, support services, and education prevention.

We honored Salome's legacy at ADV this month ahead of her transition into a new role with New Jersey's Department of Children and Families (DCF), where she will continue to apply her talents and passion to creating safe spaces for individuals affected by domestic violence. Salome, your light will shine bright in this new role - Congratulations!

JOB & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ Full-time Legal Advocate
- ◆ DVRT Coordinator



Go to our [Get Involved](#) page to learn more or to apply for a position!

SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS/UPDATES

LGBTQIAP+ Affirming Services

At ADV, we recognize that LGBTQIAP+ individuals often face unique challenges in their relationships due to societal stigma and discrimination, leading to added layers of distress. Our Survivor Services Program offers LGBTQIAP+ affirming therapy, which acknowledges that a person's gender or sexual identity is a natural part of who they are, and promotes all clients' rights to live authentically, with dignity and pride.

Our services are also trauma-informed, acknowledging that many LGBTQIAP+ individuals have a history of trauma related to their experiences of abuse and marginalization. We invite clients to participate in evidence-based therapeutic strategies to develop coping strategies, resilience, and support networks.

Looking to Connect with other LGBTQIAP+ Survivors of Abuse?

ADV's **THRIVE Group** offers a safe, liberated space for LGBTQIAP+ survivors of intimate partner violence to explore the ways in which heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and other intersecting forms of discrimination have manifested in their lives.

This group is aimed at building self-esteem, resilience, strategic resistance, and a sense of community.

In this group, we cover educational topics that include:

- the dynamics of intimate partner violence
- misuse of power in relationships
- adaptive safety planning
- healthy boundaries
- communication skills
- LGBTQIAP+ allied community resources
- self-care, and much more.



Our groups offer a supportive and welcoming space for all survivors of intimate partner violence of all genders regardless of the gender of their past or present partners.

This group meets virtually and is confidential.

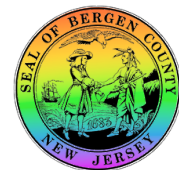
Survivor Resource Spotlight

Bergen County's Office of LGBTQ+ Services promotes community awareness, education, and training to create systemic change to ensure safe and equitable services. They are committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, while also promoting visibility and acceptance within the Bergen County Community.

LGBTQ+ Navigators are available through the Office of LGBTQ+ services to assist community members with accessing state, county, and local community agency resources that reflect the social identities of ALL individuals.

Additionally they provide:

- A hotline for LGBTQ+ residents who are in need of referrals for crisis intervention, counseling, legal advocacy and education
- Secure resources specific to LGBTQ+ individuals



To get in touch with The Office of LGBTQ+ Services, contact 201-336-6008 or go to [the Office's website](#) to learn more about their services.

CELEBRATING LGBTQIAP+ RESISTANCE!

Pride is for celebrating, commemorating, and recognizing the struggle that the LGBTQIAP+ community has faced for years. We desire equal justice and access to resources and opportunities for everyone.

LGBTQIAP+ History

From the Stonewall riots to the ongoing fight for equality, we honor the resilience, courage, and love of the LGBTQIAP+ community. Let's continue to uplift each other and advocate for a future where everyone can be their true selves.

In 1969 The Stonewall Inn was one of the most popular gay bars in New York City. Except it was far from being a safe space because homosexuality was still considered a criminal offense. It was illegal to serve alcohol to members of the community.



In June 28 of the same year, police officers raided the establishment with a search warrant authorizing them to investigate the illegal sale of alcohol. The employees, transgender individuals, and drag queens were harassed and kept inside the bar in preparation for arrest.

As a response to the abuse of their human rights, resistance and indignation against police brutality spread throughout the city. By that evening, thousands of protesters gathered at the Stonewall and resisted for over six days.



Activists formed the **Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee** to plan the first Pride march. It occurred the following year on June 28 to give the community a chance to gather and protest centuries of abuse and betrayal of their human rights.



Understanding Intimate Partner Violence in the LGBTQIAP+ Community

DID YOU KNOW?

For many LGBTQ+ people, intimate partner violence begins in youth or young adulthood, and survivors are less likely to seek for help.

The LGBTQIAP+ community face higher rates of discrimination, homophobia, transphobic stigma, marginalization, and hate-motivated violence which puts individuals at greater risk for intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault. Some tactics used by perpetrating partners include but are not limited to:

IDENTITY-BASED VIOLENCE

For some people, it may be very difficult to be out in the workplace, community, or to family. Abusers may use their partner's isolation or fear against them through manipulation or threats in order to gain control.

GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE

If someone does not allow their partner access to hormones, it is abuse. 146,300 transgender youth have lost or are at risk of losing access to gender-affirming care.

MIS-GENDERING & DEADNAMING

Purposely deadnaming or mis-gendering individuals is a form of abuse. *Misgendering* is using the wrong pronouns and *deadnaming* is calling a person by a name they don't identify with. For example, calling a trans or non-binary person "it" instead of using the correct pronouns.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Most LGBTQIAP+ people have difficulty accessing services. Abusers may use this to their advantage by manipulating their partner into believing that no one will believe or help them.

REMINDER

Using the correct pronouns is a critical part of supporting any survivor's right to self-determination.

ADV'S JUNE PHOTOREEL



The ADV team had a blast joining forces with Rutherford at their spectacular Annual PrideFest celebration, marking the official kickoff to Pride Month. They had us feeling faaan-tastic!



The ADV team attended the Pride Flag raising at One Bergen County Plaza, demonstrating our commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and social justice. We stood together in solidarity, celebrating progress made and more to come!

ADV hosted its very first Survivor's Day, a heartwarming celebration of courage, resilience, and triumph! This special event was a tribute to our incredible clients, who have overcome countless challenges and emerged stronger because of their journeys. The afternoon was filled with soothing serenity as we came together for guided meditation and a chair yoga session. Art therapy allowed clients to

express their creativity. At our terrarium creation station, clients crafted miniature masterpieces that embodied the beauty and harmony born from adversity. It was a day to remember, filled with laughter, connection, and inspiration.



ADV tabled and moderated discussions at The Office of Food Security's Third Annual Food Pantry Summit. Collaboration with our county partners is crucial, as the issues we address are interconnected. By sharing resources, we can more effectively support our clients!



The ADV team was out and about in the community this month, proudly showing their support for Pride and Juneteenth events championing equity. We celebrated diversity, inclusivity, and self-expression with fellow community members, fostering connections and spreading love and acceptance.



ADV'S TRAINING INSTITUTE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ADV's Training Institute on Domestic Violence provides online and in-person training for community advocates and professionals to enhance their skills in assisting domestic violence survivors. The training aims to empower advocates to interrupt abuse and intervene effectively for survivors.

The **40-Hour Training Program** is open to all and is especially geared toward individuals and groups looking to volunteer or work directly with survivors of domestic violence at victim service agencies requiring victim privilege certification. The training provides a comprehensive overview of domestic violence topics, including in-depth exploration of abuse dynamics in intimate relationships, the effects of abuse on diverse survivor populations, and anti-oppressive perspectives on abuse intervention and healing work.

The training operates in a cohort model with both live virtual sessions and independent self-paced modules granting participants additional flexibility. We offer the training four times per year with additional offerings on request. Participants are required to participate in live virtual ZOOM sessions to receive credit.

Training Topics Include:

- Domestic Violence Dynamics
- Continuum of Abuse
- Trauma-Informed Advocacy
- Values & Ethics for Advocates
- Societal Attitudes on Violence
- Anti-Oppressive Advocacy with Diverse Survivor Populations
- Crisis Intervention & Safety Planning
- Communication & Counseling Skills
- Domestic Violence Law in NJ
- Impact on Children & Teen Dating Abuse
- Healing Work with Survivors
- Abuse Intervention Programs & Coordinated Community Responses to Violence



UPCOMING TRAININGS

40-Hour Training - Standard Fall Cycle
9/17/24 - 10/17/24

Weekly Tuesdays & Thursdays
5:30pm - 8:30pm
Virtual via ZOOM

Ready to register?
Fill out our
Online Registration Form

For more information, go to our [Training Institute for Domestic Violence](#) page.

JOIN THE CCR-DSV MOVEMENT



The **Bergen County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic & Sexual Violence (CCR-DSV)** is a community network of individuals and organizations in the County that coordinates and supports collaborative efforts to reduce domestic and sexual violence, dating abuse, and coercive control. We accomplish this through awareness-raising, prevention, education, and advocacy.

The CCR-DSV recognizes violence as a critical community problem that poses significant threats to individuals, families, and the community. The CCR-DSV also recognizes that the power dynamics between the victim/survivor and perpetrator in domestic and sexual violence cases, when viewed through the lens of coercive control, calls for a specialized system of response.

No one individual or entity alone can end domestic violence which is why we are putting out a call to action for all of our community partners to join the Bergen County Coordinated Community Response Team.



To add your agency or organization to the team, complete our **interest form** or scan the QR code with any smart device.

HAVE AN IDEA TO HELP US GROW?

We are constantly looking to transform and improve our programs to benefit survivors and their loved ones in Bergen County. Do you have any **feedback, ideas, or suggestions** for ADV?

Submit your comments anonymously through our confidential **form** or scan the QR code with any smart device.



WANT TO STAY IN THE LOOP?

Make sure you are subscribed to **ADV's newsletter and email list** to receive more exciting updates on our agency programs, community events, professional trainings, and opportunities to get involved in the movement to end domestic violence and dating abuse in Bergen County!



Click **here** to sign up or scan the QR code with any smart device.

