



# CONNECTIONS

The Center Against Sexual & Domestic Abuse, Inc.

Fall 2020

## CASDA Goes Virtual for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

To recognize **Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)**, CASDA will be collaborating with community partners throughout October to highlight a message of non-violence and spread the message of local services for victims and survivors of abuse. This year will look very different with COVID-19 precautions in place. But rest assured, planned activities will bring a creative twist to our current "virtual" world.

**Events will be posted or uploaded onto our Facebook and Instagram platforms and shared with the hashtag #listeningfromhome** from NoMore.org

Learn more below and **see p.2 for a post-able flyer with the basics!**

**Thursday, October 1st:** An opening ceremony, featuring the Mayoral Proclamation, will take place on CASDA'S Facebook page. This kick-off event alerts the community to domestic violence and all of our October plans. A CASDA team will place purple flags on the Douglas County Courthouse lawn and we ask the community to leave your porch lights on tonight for domestic violence victims and survivors.

**Friday, October 2nd:** Watch for a Facebook post asking for your questions regarding domestic violence and/or CASDA services; these will be compiled for our Oct. 13th Q&A event.

**Sunday, October 4th - Saturday, October 10th:** "Health, Help and Healing" Domestic Violence Virtual Retreat Week. CASDA's first ever holistic retreat offers a variety of alternative options for stress, anxiety, depression, PTSD or for anyone seeking ways to relax. Sessions will include yoga for all ages, chair yoga for older adults, guided meditation, deep relaxation, and live music. Each day will offer live and pre-recorded videos of teachers, healers and musicians. Find the full schedule on CASDA's Facebook page.

**Tuesday, October 13th: 1pm,** DVAM Q&A Live with CASDA and Safe Haven (from Duluth), using the questions that were submitted on 10/2/2020.

**Saturday, October 17th: 9am,** Tower Fit Shake Shop Booth: Shake up your support for DVAM! Masked CASDA advocates will be present with DVAM

give-aways and information.

**Monday, October 19th: 1pm,** "Why Does She Stay?" Q&A "How can you help?" Join this interactive session online to learn and ask questions.

**Tuesday, October 20th: 12-1pm,** DVAM Q&A online panel with CASDA and UWS.

**Wednesday, October 21st: All Day,** Grab a tasty purple treat at the Wednesday Bakery (1202 Ogden Ave.) in support of DVAM and CASDA!

**Thursday, October 22nd: 1pm,** "Finding Comfort and Wisdom in Nature" with Theresa Kelleher, Nature Based Life Coach & Storyteller, live (via Zoom) from London, England! Theresa, who is native to Ireland, will share her wisdom with survivors. See CASDA'S Facebook page for the direct link to come into this live session!

**Monday, October 26th - Saturday, October 31:** Flood Facebook Purple! **#PURPLEPASSION.** Post a photo of yourself in purple attire, showcasing your DVAM pride. Prizes will be awarded! Make your post public, tag @CASDAorg, and don't forget your hashtag!

**Tuesday, October 27th:** "Survivor Stories" Please tune into our Facebook page today to view survivor stories. Sharing your story of abuse is something that takes strength and courage. Please show your love and support to survivors that are willing to share.

# CASDA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and we at CASDA are thrilled to share this year's activities and message of non-violence through our virtual platforms at Facebook/CASDA.org and Instagram/casdasuperior.

**October 1st:** Facebook Opening Ceremony

**October 2nd:** Facebook Question Compilation

**October 4th - October 10th:** "Health, Help, and Healing" Virtual Retreat Week - Virtual Yoga, Guided Meditation, Music, and more

**October 13th:** Live Q&A w/CASDA & Safe Haven (1pm)

**October 17th:** CASDA Representatives at Tower Fit Shake Shop (9am)

**October 19th:** "Why Does She Stay" and "How can you help?" Live Q&A (1pm)

**October 20th:** UWS Q&A Panel (Noon - 1pm)

**October 21st:** Purple treats available at Wednesday Bakery (1202 Ogden Ave) supporting DVAM and CASDA

**October 22nd:** "Finding Comfort and Wisdom in Nature" With Theresa Kelleher (1pm Zoom)

**October 26th - October 31st:** Flood Facebook Purple #PURPLEPASSION

**October 27th:** Facebook Survivor Stories

**Additional information will be shared on CASDA's Facebook and Instagram pages with the hashtag #listeningfromhome.**

As of March, CASDA has adjusted, and readjusted, several aspects of our programs and practices to help ensure the health and safety of our residents, staff, and the general public.

Until further notice, the following services and adjustments are in place:

- Requests for assistance may be made via our 24-hour help line (715-392-3136; 800-649-2921), our website (<https://casda.org/get-help/>) or our general email address ([info@casda.org](mailto:info@casda.org)).
- In-person advocacy is available for shelter residents, and for outreach clients by appointment. We recognize that, occasionally, someone might need to walk in during business hours for immediate assistance. We will help that person as best we can, but due to a reduced number of advocates in the building, setting a specific appointment time in advance is encouraged whenever possible.
- We have resumed in-person advocacy for Wisconsin victims of sexual assault who report for an medical exam at any Twin Ports hospital. However, we are keeping these visits brief in most cases and making sure the victim knows how to reach us for follow-up services after their exam, which is typically conducted by a PAVSA-trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE).
- The majority of in-person volunteer opportunities and assignments are still postponed.
- We are limiting non-monetary donations to new items only. If you have any questions about our current needs or possible donations, please contact us.
- Many staff members are still working primarily from home to limit the potential for in-person contact within our offices and common areas.
- The Twin Ports Pet Safe Housing Program is temporarily suspended until both CASDA and our partner agency are able to resume pre-pandemic levels of staffing and services.

Despite the impact on our full scope of services, CASDA remains committed to supporting survivors of abuse:

- Since the onset of the pandemic, we have continued to triage incoming calls and to offer crisis counseling, safety planning, and information/referrals around the clock.
- We have migrated support group meetings to an online platform.
- Our advocates have remained in touch with clients via remote channels, and have resumed in-person appointments in controlled environments, often outdoors or in a larger room with mandatory mask-wearing, physical distancing, and sanitizing between appointments.
- We are offering educational and outreach programming via remote means, such as social media and teleconferencing platforms, and occasionally in person in a controlled environment.

CASDA administration continually assesses the need for maintaining current precautions and/or modifying other services based on any new information or directives we receive from government public health officials and our state coalitions.

## CASDA THANKS OUR 2020 MAJOR CORPORATE SPONSORS!



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# Meet CASDA's Fall Interns

## Catherine Hoffman

I'm from Clayton, WI, but am currently living in Superior for the school year. I am pursuing a major in Psychology and a minor in Business Administration at UMD. I enjoy reading, doing puzzles, and doing anything that involves going outside. I'm interning with Jill in the Community Engagement Program.

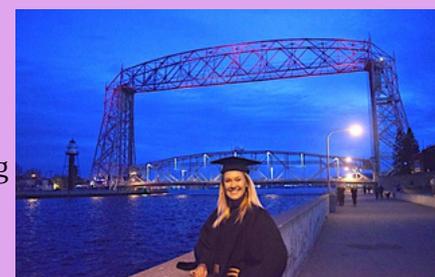


## Mackenzie Spaulding

I am from Ortonville, MN. I am a senior at UMD majoring in Social Work. In my spare time I really enjoy being home with my big family and running outside. I have been working with children for many years. I am really looking forward to working with Sherry in the Children's Program.

## Morgan Martin

I am from Prior Lake, MN. I graduated from UMD last spring with two bachelor's degrees, one in Communications and one in Criminology. I have worked at CASDA for the last 11 months as a Fill-in Advocate in the Shelter program. I loved working here so much that I wanted to expand my learning to the community engagement aspect of CASDA, so I am interning with Jill in that department to learn more about what she does and acquire more experience and skills!



## Cassie Ploehn

I live in Superior, WI. When I am not completing assignments for the UWS Social Work program, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends as well as crafting. I was recently gifted a cricut and have been learning how to print vinyl to apply to shirts. I am interning with Denise, CASDA's Outreach Advocate.

## Beth Shefchik

I live in Duluth, MN. In December I will be completing my associate's degree in Gerontology at WITC. I plan to return to school next fall for Social Work. I have always enjoyed being around older adults and I am excited to see where my career takes me in the field. At CASDA, I will be working with Lisa in the Domestic Abuse Program to find ways to reach the older community and share CASDA's mission with them. I am so thankful that CASDA was willing to host me this semester. I'm happy to be a part of the team!



*Children's Program Intern Mackenzie helped collect the information for this page. Intern Morgan contributed an article, and Intern Catherine helped lay out the newsletter. We appreciate our interns!*

By Morgan Martin

I originally applied for a CASDA internship, but was offered an interview for a paid position as a part-time fill-in advocate for the shelter. Because I majored in Communications and Criminology at UMD, with my goal to be a victim advocate, I jumped at the opportunity. I was offered the position, and began my training a couple of weeks afterwards.

CASDA's training program covers the dynamics of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse; common barriers faced by victims and survivors; white assumptions and cultural privilege; alcohol and drug abuse; and more. While it was impossible to learn everything about these topics, the training was a great start to understanding what I needed to know before beginning the job.

I found that when I started, I was very nervous about my new responsibilities, as well as excited for the opportunity to help people. The main duties of being a fill-in advocate include:

- answering the crisis line whenever it rings,
- taking Immediate Response calls from a law enforcement officer responding to a domestic situation and following up with the survivor to offer services from CASDA, and
- helping with case management and safety planning for clients (making sure that they have plans set in place if they ever find themselves in an unsafe situation after they leave shelter).

A fill-in advocate also maintains the cleanliness of shelter by completing chores throughout the weekend -- but nothing that you wouldn't be doing at your own house, and you get paid for it! During COVID-19, we are extra attentive with disinfecting every surface every four hours and right before a shift change.

There are also times when you just get to hang out and talk with the clients, and that is really rewarding. It is an awesome feeling and experience to see a client come into shelter and become close with the advocates, where they are able to talk about their lives and goals. Of course, you still have to keep professional boundaries in place and remember that you are working right now, and they are not. Your number-one job, however, is being able to validate and understand a client, whether they are residing in shelter or calling the crisis line.

Survivors need to know that they have someone in their corner that can validate and empathize with what they are feeling. It is important to understand how hard it can be for someone to come into shelter, and your job is to help them with whatever they need during that stay, whether that be filling out housing forms so they can get their own place away from their abuser, or sitting with them while they talk about their feelings and how hard their last week has been. It can be difficult to not get emotional working with a client and be upset for what has happened to them, and it comes with the job title. However, I have learned more and more every day how important it is to keep my work life and personal life separate, because it is better for both of us.

*"you care so much about the people in this shelter and the calls coming through"*

Something that is really nice, though, to take home is the knowledge that no matter what, you are making a difference in this person's life. When a client leaves shelter or hangs up the phone, they will remember you as someone that helped them during a time they needed it the most, and maybe didn't have many people in their corner fighting for them. Not to say that it is always like that: there will be some clients that you may not click with and some crisis callers that you cannot help as much as you want, but even the occasional success means more than anything, and that is the most rewarding part of this job. There are times that the job can be tough and frustrating, but that simply means that you care so much about the people in this shelter and the calls coming through. The tough part comes with the job, but being a fill-in advocate has taught me how to validate people, how to understand different perspectives, how to critically think on the spot, and how to put someone else's feelings and goals in front of my own and what I might think is right. I could not imagine my life at this point in time not being able to be a victim advocate; I love it!

# Helping survivors in the Trans, Non-binary and Gender Non-conforming Community

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By Sam Church, Sexual Assault Campus Advocate (she/they)

Survivors of sexual and domestic abuse know that reaching out for help can be ridiculously tough. For survivors who identify in as Trans, Non-binary, and/or Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC), asking for help is just as challenging. Not only do they have to explain their trauma, which could possibly trigger them (*see sidebar*), they may also have to come out to the person whom they are using for support. This is a common obstacle for all folks in the LGBTQ+ community. This is why, at CASDA, we are constantly taking steps to create a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The first step that CASDA takes to help TGNC survivors is asking everyone who seeks assistance how they identify, what they'd like to be called and what pronouns they use. Our shelter is gender inclusive; you will not be denied entry based on how you identify. If you use our offices or shelter space, you will also notice that all of our bathrooms are gender neutral.

Here are some ways that you, too, can be gender inclusive and a better ally to the TGNC community. One easy start is to ask (when it is appropriate) what someone's pronouns are, and use them once you know. When you use someone's pronouns correctly, you are showing them that you are someone who cares and respects their identity. This also allows for the person to feel gender congruence, where they feel harmony and comfort in their gender. Being seen consistently by others as we see ourselves is reaffirming.

Another way to be inclusive is to use the name with which someone identifies themselves to you. For example, you may know someone whose name was Brian when you first knew them. Now, they have come out as trans, and would like to be called Brianna. Calling Brianna by the name she requested, and not referring to her old name, also known as her "deadname," is basic allyship.

Introducing yourself with your pronouns, even if you identify with the sex you were assigned with at birth, which is known as cisgender, is another way to show that you are an ally. If you already do all of these things, start to stop yourself from imagining what someone's assigned sex at birth is. When someone comes out to you as TGNC, your first thought as a cisperson could be to imagine what their "original gender" could have been. This is harmful to the person who came out to you. If you are actively trying to dismantle the gender binary within your own mind, it can be easier to be an ally to TGNC survivors.

## WHAT IS A TRAUMA TRIGGER?

For someone who has experienced a traumatic event, a 'trigger' is when they are around something that reminds them of the event. Sometimes, it can make them feel as though they are re-experiencing their trauma.

## RESOURCES

More on pronouns:

<https://www.them.us/story/gender-neutral-pronouns-101-they-them-xe-xem>

On the performativity of gender:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/02632769922050476>



## Virtual Support Group

NEW DAY AND TIME

THURSDAYS

1:30 pm-2:30 pm or 7:00pm-8:00 pm

**Come to support group and win a prize!!**

Join us a get your name put in for a drawing at the end of the month to pick a prize. Each time you join us in October, your name will be put in the drawing. The more you come the better chance you have to win!

For more information and to sign up, contact your advocate.

715-392-3136

**Oct 1: Maintaining, Repairing, Ending Relationship Pt 1**

**Oct 8: Maintaining, Repairing, Ending Relationship Pt 2**

**Oct 15: Life Coaching Managing a Financial Budget**

**Oct 22: Maintaining, Repairing, Ending Relationship Pt 3**

**Oct 29: Future Planning –Barriers to Healthy Relationship Pt 1**

# New needs, new routines during Covid-19

## Creating a New Work-Day Routine During Covid-19

By Nicole Thole, Sexual Assault Program Coordinator

Getting into routines is a great way to maintain organization and mental health. Finding a way to get through a work day with less structure has been quite the educational opportunity. While living and trying to work through this tumultuous time has been a challenge, it has also given many folks an opportunity to slow down and become more mindful in their routine. Below I share my ideal daily routine that I have tried to maintain while working from home.



**7am:** Wake up, brush teeth, start coffee, finish off my morning skincare routine. I use skincare as my self-care and have utilized my extra time to give my skin some extra love.

**7:30am:** Check emails and look at the schedule for the day.

**7:45am:** Take a shower and get dressed. I have invested in a few pieces of what I call "professional loungewear:" clothing comfortable enough for being at home all day with a nice enough look for Zoom meetings. I also bought a pair of house shoes, which are amazing. (Thanks, Grandma!) Seriously, they are a game changer.

**8-10am:** Begin my work day. Typically, I use this time for administrative work since it helps me get into the flow of the day. My roommate usually makes breakfast so I can eat as I work.

**10am-12pm:** Typically, I attend staff or agency meetings during this time, which allows the chance to engage with my colleagues during the most productive period of my day.

**12-1pm:** Lunch break. For the first half of my lunch break I do

sort of physical activity and get my body moving, whether just dancing around my house or doing a 30-minute cardio session. Next, I eat my lunch without looking at a screen. It usually is my first break from my computer and helps me recharge for the rest of my day.

**1-4pm:** I typically try to reserve this time for meeting with clients, the majority of whom appreciate meeting in the afternoons.



While working from home, some people have found it hard to transition out of working time at the end of the day. A few ways shared with me include having a designated workspace, changing into different clothes, or even playing a special song. ("Closing Time" is a personal favorite.) However, I have found that leaving my house for at least an hour has personally worked the best. I run errands, visit a friend, or simply go for a walk.

As I stated previously, this routine is the ideal; it doesn't always happen this smoothly. Some days, I am simply too busy, or scheduled meetings fall outside of my routine. I adjust and do my best. But having this routine to strive for has provided something to come back to when I am having a difficult or chaotic day -- just asking myself "how can I make my situation better?" and figuring out the choice that will lead to the best outcome. **Developing a routine shouldn't be about being perfect. It's about figuring out what helps you be at your best and working towards it every day.**

During the current public health crisis, CASDA is still supporting victims and survivors of all ages.

### THE NEED FOR OUR CRITICAL WORK WILL CONTINUE BOTH DURING AND BEYOND THE PANDEMIC.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we cancelled our spring, summer, and fall in-person Donation Drives, where every year, generous community members re-supply our shelter with many of its most-needed items.

If you are in a position to help, we are most in need of:

### DISINFECTANT SPRAY, LAUNDRY SOAP, GARBAGE BAGS, TOILET PAPER, AND PAPER TOWELS.

Also, on our website, [www.casda.org](http://www.casda.org), you can find a Paypal "Donate" button and a link to our Amazon wish list

(OR - consider shopping locally for similar items, especially if a business will ship or deliver directly to CASDA!)

**Thank you to our community for all your help during challenging times!**



# AT CASDA ALL ARE WELCOME



CASDA was honored to participate in this year's virtual **Duluth Superior Pride Festival** over Labor Day Weekend. Since the parade was cancelled this year, several of our advocates shared on camera what Pride means to them.

We can't state this commitment too many times: When it comes to our services for victims and survivors of abuse, all are welcome. Your identity is a crucial part of your being, and we take pride in helping you as best as we can. We also invite feedback about how we can do better, so please contact us with any ideas you may have.

We hope that **anyone** struggling with the trauma of current or past abuse will feel comfortable reaching out to us for support, and we hope that everyone who attended this year's virtual Pride festivities experienced a sense of affirmation, celebration, and community during this particularly isolating time!

You can find a link to our video, created by Sexual Assault Campus Advocate, Sam, at [casda.org](http://casda.org) in the News section.

**New Year's Eve Alert: In the interests of public health, we will not gather in person this year to celebrate. Please watch our website ([casda.org](http://casda.org)) and Facebook page ([CASDAorg](https://www.facebook.com/CASDAorg)) for news of a virtual reimagining of "Behind the Mask."**



Mailing label here

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