MID-YEAR SUMMARY

## WOMEN'S FUND FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE INITIATIVE

This document summarizes mid-year grantee reports for the Freedom from Violence Initiative of the Women's Fund. Eight grantees and community partners (Magdalene Omaha, Immigrant Legal Center, WCA, Youth Emergency Services, Survivors Rising, Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers, Project Harmony, Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence) submitted mid-year grantee reports describing their work from January to December 2018. Key accomplishments are described below.

# Key Accomplishments to Date

### Infrastructure Building

For many organizations, activities focused on recruiting, hiring, onboarding and training new staff. Across organizations, 10 new staff were hired. In preparation of the implementation of new programs and partnerships, organizations focused on clarifying practices and policies such as the development of medical clinic processes, referral processes, screening tools, process for responding to survivors afterhours, and social media policies. Other organizations conducted community listening sessions to inform program design and niches within the larger service provider community. A survivor-led small business, Thistle Lights, officially launched, including securing office space and initiating retail operations.

#### Front Line Staff Support

To be inclusive of the needs and availability of multiple agencies and individuals, providers have the opportunity to participate in varying-intensity resilience strategies grounded in mindful-based stress reduction, trauma-informed care, circle practice, and psycho-education provided by Julie Luzarraga and Abra Poindexter. These resilience strategies are designed to support individual providers, agency teams and the interconnected provider community engaging survivors of sexual exploitation and sexual assault/domestic violence.

#### **Trainings**

Organizations also spent significant time developing training standards and implementing trainings for professional audiences. This process includes researching best practices, social justice approaches to trafficking, impacts on particular populations (LGBTQ+, Latinx, Indigenous, Black and other people of color, male-identifying and immigrant populations), and the development of legal training for legal professionals. Survivors shared their stories and lived experiences with college and medical students, criminal justice professionals and forensic nurses.

# **Survivors Served**

Expanded services became available for survivors seeking holistic supports and legal services and increased efforts were made for early identification of youth at risk of exploitation.



# Additional and Continued Support Needed

Grantees reported the following opportunities for additional and ongoing support.

# Continued and Expanded Funding to Meet Ongoing and Emergent Community Needs

- Staff experience tension between meeting immediate client needs and investing in long-term strategies, such as targeted outreach efforts and efforts to increase identification of youth and adult survivors not actively seeking services.
- High demand for Spanishspeaking staff exceeds available resources: therapists, trained advocates, attorneys, and other legal staff.
- Additional discretionary funds to help meet the needs of families.

Leadership in Policy and

Community Awareness for the Needs of Immigrant Survivors It is crucial to defend and advance immigrants' interests through policy and advocacy work, as well as through outreach and direct services. Grantees recommend prioritizing implications for immigrant victims when advocating for effective policy solutions at the state and local levels.

# SURVIVORS SERVED

## Legal Services

168 survivors accessed legal support; over 90% were immigrant survivors.

#### **Holistic Survivor Services**

- 71 survivors of sexual exploitation and violence provided holistic array of support services including case management, peer support, and leadership opportunities.
- At least 30% of survivors served are under the age of 25 years.

## **Early Identification**

33 missing youth (ages 6-18) at risk for sexual exploitation were identified through police reports and completed screenings. 19 youth and families became engaged in therapy. These youth were previously slipping through the cracks with no community intervention.

## FRONT LINE STAFF SUPPORT

#### Community Case Consultation

The Community Case Consultation is a bimonthly convening to provide support for Omaha-based responders of domestic/sexual violence and exploitation, engaging 29 individuals across 13 different agencies.

#### Mindfulness Retreat and Workshops

- A mindfulness retreat for trauma responders engaged 46 individuals across 19 different organizations and independent providers.
- Participants reported:
  90% the experience taught them something new about stress and how to handle it.
  - **92%** felt equipped to use the skills practiced in the future for their own self-care.

**86**% felt equipped to use the skills practiced with clients or the staff that they supervise.

# Individual Care Coaching for Responders and Staff

Care coaching is a one-on-one support model for responders and staff to provide confidential space for de-briefing, support and psychoeducation on mitigating secondary trauma, compassion fatigue and burnout. To date, 65 hours of individual care coaching has been provided to local service providers.

#### Centering Series

> The multi-week centering burnout prevention series includes monthly individual touchpoints with a care coach in conjunction with agency-specific team sessions, including mindfulness activities, basic medical wellness topics, individual coaching, and the setting of health and wellness related goals.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING**

Across organizations, 10 new staff were hired. Creation of new policies such as the development of medical clinic processes, referral processes, screening tools, process for responding to survivors afterhours, and social media policies.

## TRAININGS CONDUCTED

- Over 30 trainings conducted including topics such as trafficking identification, services available for trafficking survivors, risk factors, trauma- informed services, working with children and families, forensic interviewing, the intersections of trafficking and domestic violence/ sexual assault, and the legal needs of immigrant survivors.
- Engaging over 1,000 attendees including law enforcement officers, advocates, mental health professionals, medical providers, and employees with Department of Health and Human Services.