

ABOUT US

Compass Center for Women and Families is a nonprofit that helps people navigate their journeys to self-sufficiency, safety, and health. We empower individuals and promote equal access to opportunity regardless of gender or economic status. Our services include career and financial education, domestic violence crisis and prevention programs, assistance with legal resources, and youth health programs. We serve more than 6,500 people a year in Orange and surrounding counties. We are the state-designated domestic violence service agency for Orange County, North Carolina.

Our History

Compass Center was born of the merger of two strong agencies with successful track records serving women and families in the community — The Women's Center and the Family Violence Prevention Center of Orange County.

Founded in 1979, The Women's Center helped women in transition. The organization partnered with women and girls to build their knowledge, skills, and confidence to become self-sufficient through financial literacy education, career exploration and preparedness, legal information, adolescent empowerment programs, and connections to community resources.

Family Violence Prevention Center of Orange County (FVPC) opened in 2000 in response to Orange County's need for a county-specific agency to work with victims of domestic violence, their friends and families. FVPC's mission was to prevent and end domestic violence through direct services and community education.

HOW WE HELP

Giving a Lifeline to Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Leaving an abusive relationship is a process, not a one-time action. Compass Center's comprehensive services provide the emotional and practical support to help survivors of abuse find safety and self-sufficiency for the long-term. Our domestic violence services are available in English and Spanish.

Crisis Counseling:

Trained staff and volunteers provide in-person counseling and phone support through our 24-hour crisis line. Domestic violence advocates provide emotional support and discuss strategies to keep victims of abuse safe before, during, and after domestic violence incidents.



Emergency Housing/Shelter Placements:

The most dangerous time for a victim of domestic abuse is when they leave their abuser. We get survivors into immediate, 24-hour emergency shelter and provide them with toiletries and food during their stay. Orange County does not have a shelter for survivors of abuse, so we coordinate victims placement to shelters in surrounding areas. **Compass Center provides housing assistance for up to 120 days for some clients needing transitional or "bridge housing."**

Court Advocacy:

Compass Center court advocates help people navigate both civil and criminal court as they take legal action to find safety and move forward with their lives. Court advocates help victims file Domestic Violence Restraining Orders and stay with the clients in the courtroom throughout proceedings to offer guidance and moral support.

Support Groups:

Survivors of abuse have often been isolated from typical support systems such as friends and family. Our support groups help alleviate some of the stigma and shame associated with abuse. Participants say they gain strength from sharing their experiences and feeling heard.

Therapy:

Compass Center connects survivors of abuse and their children to trained therapists. More details to come.

Domestic Violence Awareness Training and Education:

Our vision is for a safe and equitable society in which all individuals and families thrive. Nationally, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. We provide trainings to community groups and professionals such as first responders to raise awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence in our society's dynamics of abuse, and how to connect people to services that help.

Coaching People to Financial and Career Stability

Financial Literacy:

We provide one-on-one counseling and workshops that help people learn to manage their money, save to buy a home, and address credit and debt issues. These services are available to all people and can be tailored to each individual's needs. Many domestic violence clients use these services as they rebuild their lives.

Career Exploration and Preparedness:

We provide the skills to help people land their next job. Our one-on-one coaching sessions and workshops help people write resumes, build interviewing skills, and tailor their job searches.

Legal Information Services:

Our court advocates help people navigate both civil and criminal court as they take legal action to find safety and move forward. We offer free, 15-minute phone appointments with a volunteer attorney and 30-minute appointments with UNC law students. Once a month, local family law attorneys lead Legal Information Sessions where people can ask general questions regarding separation, divorce, child custody, and more.

Empowering Adolescents to Make Healthy Choices

Compass Center provides medically-accurate sexual health education and teen dating violence prevention educations to middle school students in Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools. Our programs teach life skills and critical thinking to help students make positive life choices and avoid teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Connecting People to Community Resources

Our Information and Referral Services connect people to vital information. Sometimes people call not knowing what they need or where to turn to. Our trained volunteers practice active listening and think through the best community resources to get people the help they need, such as government agencies that provide housing, immigration assistance, and nonprofits that specialize in sexual assault services.

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