



Diane

The Magazine

From Mortality Rates
to Health Equity:

**Tackling Indiana's
Maternal and
Infant Health
Crisis** P4

**Trust-Based
Philanthropy
at the Heart of
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**Addressing
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Women's Fund of Central Indiana convenes, invests, and advocates so all who identify as women or girls living in Central Indiana have an equitable opportunity to reach their full potential no matter their race, place, or identity.



Diane B. Brashear, Ph.D. was the founding force behind Women's Fund of Central Indiana.
Photo courtesy of IUI University Library Special Collections and Archives

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Letter from the President

I'm a proud member of Generation X. And I remember fondly the women's magazine, *Jane*, that embodied the quirky feminist riot grrrl spirit of its founder, Jane Pratt. (Fun fact for fellow Xers who remember the beloved title: Pratt first wanted to name the magazine *Betty*.)

As the Women's Fund team began brainstorming potential names for a new magazine, we considered whether there was a woman whose name embodies the Women's Fund spirit. There is, of course.

Diane B. Brashear, Ph.D. was the founding force (or founding mother) behind Women's Fund of Central Indiana. She is the one who had the vision and brought together diverse groups of women to discuss the idea. She met with The Indianapolis Foundation to encourage its involvement, and it was her leadership that kept the original Steering Committee on task and ultimately resulted in the creation of Women's Fund.

Fellow Founding Mother Carol Wichman said of Dr. Brashear, "Diane never asked for the praise or glory but she deserves it. Without her, Women's Fund would not be here today. She talked to people, she listened to their thoughts and ideas, and she learned about her friends' and acquaintances' strengths and then wisely made them feel wonderful by involving them. She mixed all ages, ethnic groups, and income groups because she believed that to be successful, all needed to be included and their voices heard."

Welcome to *DIANE Magazine*!

This magazine is just one outcome of my conversations with you over the last year. As I was settling into my new role, I met members of the Women's Fund family—OPTIONS Alumnae, Emeritus Advisory Board members, longtime supporters, and other men and women with a shared commitment to ensuring all who identify as women or girls living in Central Indiana have an equitable opportunity to reach their full potential no matter their race, place, or identity.

You asked for more opportunities to learn and engage with Women's Fund and our mission. This magazine was conceived of that desire. Here, once a quarter, you can learn more about women and girls in Central Indiana; the issues that matter to them; and the individuals and institutions, including Women's Fund, that give their time, talent and treasure to create a world where women and girls can thrive.

As with all things Women's Fund, this is *your* magazine. This space will evolve as you tell us what you want to read and learn.

We hope you enjoy this new offering and that it will inspire in you the commitment to women and girls in our community exemplified by our founder—Diane.

Tamara Winfrey-Harris
President
Women's Fund of Central Indiana



From Mortality Rates to Health Equity

Tackling Indiana's Maternal and Infant Health Crisis

From 2014 to 2022 (the most recent year for complete data as of this writing) Indiana frequently placed in the top 10 of U.S. states for infant mortality according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. This was at a time when the country found itself ranked first in the same metric among the world's 20 richest nations.

Meanwhile, the health of new mothers in the Hoosier state was also faltering. By 2022, Indiana ranked 3rd in the nation for maternal mortality. And in that metric, too, America led the same wealthy countries. (Note: Infant mortality is defined as any death of

a newborn before their first birthday. Maternal mortality is defined as any pregnancy-associated death taking place during or within a year of a pregnancy.)

At Women's Fund, we see the health of new mothers and infants as a bellwether for the health of our entire community.

But given the severity of the problem, the high cost of care in Indiana, and the lack of consensus around policy, where should philanthropic efforts be focused to make the most impact?

EXPERT DIAGNOSIS

This was the topic for our April Women's Fund Community Conversation. We were joined by three experts in Hoosier health at the local, regional and state level.

Debra Draper is Community Health Worker Supervisor at IU Health Infant & Maternal Health's WeCare program. She has over three years of experience in pregnancy care in Indianapolis. She is concerned about the significant disparity in infant and maternal mortality experienced by Black women and children.

When asked what contributes to those disparities and to our region's high rates of mortality, her reply was swift: "Homelessness, unemployment, single moms with multiple children, no support and no education."

As a result, these dire circumstances create more fundamental concerns early in a pregnancy that can postpone a doctor's visit. That may lead to negative and even shaming experiences when women do manage to make an appointment, she said, "because you're four months pregnant and you haven't been to a doctor. Well, these women want a healthy baby, but you got to have lights on. You have to have food."

In many instances, she says, blockages to care can be as simple—and as difficult to navigate—as a lack of private transportation.

In a nearly 400-square-mile city like Indianapolis, a doctor's visit may be an all-day commitment when taking the bus; one that requires time off work, securing childcare, and the physical ability to make a journey that could require multiple transfers and lengthy walks alongside dangerous roads.

And unless one has special coverage under Medicaid or the Healthy Indiana Plan, ride-share apps like Uber and Lyft may be too costly or require a smartphone and credit card that many lack.

IndyGo is currently building out a Rapid Transit network linking schools, hospitals, jobs, and the airport with more frequent and accessible service. However, much of the city still lacks convenient public transit.

Furthermore, a study released this year found Indiana's hospital prices are the eighth highest in the country even as the Hoosier state ranks 37th in median income. For those who are unemployed or working hourly without benefits, they may assume they will be priced out of care.

"They feel if they don't have insurance, they're not going to be seen," Debra said.

Dr. Virginia Caine has had plenty of opportunities to witness the costs of inequity on public health. As Director of the Marion County Public Health Department, Dr. Caine is often out in the community she serves advocating for healthier behaviors and access to care.

She cites two primary causes for the high rate of infant mortality in Marion County: low birth weight and birth defects resulting from malnutrition or unhealthy environments. She says early pregnancy care and good education can prevent both.

However: "If you don't have a minimum of six prenatal visits starting in the first trimester, you don't get adequate care," Dr. Caine said.

Younger women and girls especially, she added, may defer care until the second and third trimester, often due to economic or social pressure.

However, there is an added physiological risk that could help explain the disparity in infant and

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community.**



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Over 91% of young Latino mothers report breastfeeding their infants, but for Black

maternal health for Black families.

The idea is explored in the book *Weathering: The Extraordinary Stress of an Ordinary Life in an Unjust Society* by Dr. Arlene T. Geronimus, a public health researcher and professor at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

In essence, weathering refers to the long-term cellular damage caused by the stress of broad discrimination experienced by Black Americans starting at birth.

Last fall, Women's Fund and The Indianapolis Foundation supported Women on a Mission in bringing Dr. Geronimus to Indy to discuss these findings. Important to note, she said, is that the ill effects of weathering can impact individuals across the socioeconomic spectrum, accounting for the elevated rates of mortality even among high-earning Black Americans. Learn more at stopweathering.in.org.

Women's Fund heard a similar message at the 2023 Power of Women event. Track star Allyson Felix identified her own difficult pregnancy, as well as those of her 2016 Olympic relay teammates, as examples of the elevated risk confronting Black mothers and mothers-to-be.

Three of these four gold-medal relay runners—all Black women—later dealt with troubled pregnancies. One of them, Torri Bowie, would prove fatal.

HEALTHCARE POLICY & HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL

In 2023, Dr. Lindsay Weaver became Indiana's top doctor as chief health commissioner. Before that, she served as chief medical officer at the Indiana State Department of Health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Soon after assuming her current role,

Dr. Weaver took on the new Health First Indiana initiative. This \$225-million-dollar effort seeks to create healthier communities through enhanced state investment into local health departments.

Dr. Weaver emphasized that the healthcare response to infant and maternal mortality should be as broad as possible. "All clinicians

need to be engaged here," she said. "It is often the emergency department that 'diagnoses' a pregnancy. [During that interaction] there's nothing stopping us from doing screening tests, HIV, blood work... Wherever that woman interacts with our system... we can get them connected to early prenatal care."

The logical first connection would be an OB-GYN. Here, too, Hoosiers face a growing challenge.

After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Dobbs v. Jackson* in 2022, Indiana was the first state to enact abortion prohibitions. By many accounts, that is having a negative impact attracting and retaining the doctors who can most improve the health of pregnancy in the state—especially for low-income Hoosiers who are often most at risk for mortalities.

Earlier this year, findings unveiled at the annual meeting of the American College of Obstetrics & Gynecology showed that nearly 97% of surveyed applicants for OB-GYN residencies ranked programs in states with more abortion restrictions lower than states with fewer restrictions.

That preference is already playing out in states. In 2023, the most restrictive states, including Indiana, saw a 10.5% decrease in total applications to OB-GYN residencies versus a 5.2% decline nationwide, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

New state abortion laws are also requiring universities to get creative. Indiana Public Media reports that the IU School of Medicine—America's largest medical school—now asks students and faculty of its OB-GYN program to complete training at a full-access clinic in Illinois, requiring a separate state medical license as well as added travel and lodging.

HELP ON THE WAY

While Indiana's infant and maternal health metrics are disheartening, they are also serving to motivate a growing coalition of women's advocates, human service providers, healthcare workers and philanthropists. And they're making a difference.

Dr. Weaver notes that preliminary data for 2023 points to a decline in infant mortality—from 7.2



Dr. Lindsay Weaver



mothers, only 70% report breastfeeding

deaths per 1,000 live births to 6.5.

Woman's Fund has a long history of supporting programs that offer protections and assistance for pregnancy.

The Milk Bank secures donor breast milk to aid in the health of ill and premature infants.

Women's Fund awarded the organization a \$15,000 grant in 2023 for community education about new laws to protect and aid pumping breast milk in the workplace (see "Women's Fund Grants Foster Awareness and Implementation of Pregnancy in the Workforce Laws" on page 7.)

Dr. Caine sees programs that increase access to breast milk and breastfeeding as critical in reducing disparities in mortality rates. As an example, she notes that while many young Latino mothers miss out on care in the first trimester similar to their Black counterparts, over 91% report breastfeeding their infants, improving the overall mortality rate for the demographic.

"But for Black mothers, we're just barely making 70% [who breastfeed]," Dr. Caine said.

Breast milk contains maternal antibodies that offer enhanced protection to newborns for up to six months while also aiding in physical development. A recent study found that breastfeeding alone can reduce the risk of infant death in the first year by as much as 33%.

Another 2023 Women's Fund grant awardee, **Pretty Passionate Hands**, provides resources for teen parents and pregnancies. Services include mentorship groups, one-on-one visits, resource guidance, diapers, and parenting workshops.


In 2022, the **Community Alliance of the Far Eastside** received a \$10,000 Women's Fund

grant to support pregnant women and new mothers enrolling in assistance programs.


Given the severity of challenges facing infants and new mothers, Women's Fund is always on the lookout for more impactful, evidence-based approaches to support.

During the April 2024 Community Discussion, Women's Fund President Tamara Winfrey-Harris noted the benefits of Rx Kids, a state-funded Universal Basic Income program for new and expecting mothers in Flint, Michigan. While no plans for such a policy are forthcoming for Hoosiers, three local community centers on Indy's eastside have recently shown promising results with a scaled-down version of UBI.

As reported in May by MirrorIndy, 15 Indianapolis households led mostly by single mothers on the eastside received \$500 per month for a year and a half. These payments kept young families current with everything from the grocery bill, electricity, to new clothes for school.

Addressing Indiana's high rates of infant and maternal mortality will require a varied approach from service providers and those who support them. But by listening to community health officials and the women they serve, we can significantly reduce these tragic and often avoidable losses while creating a healthier Hoosier home for generations to come. 

Woman's Fund has a long history of supporting programs that offer protections and assistance for pregnancy.





What we're watching, reading and listening to

As advocates, conveners, community members and investors in women and girls, it's essential that we focus on continued learning. Staying up to date with critical issues keeps us informed and inspired. Below is a list of books, articles, videos and podcasts focused on women that staff at Women's Fund recommend.

WHAT WE'RE watching

9to5: The Story of a Movement

Women office workers in 1970s Boston call for better pay, more opportunities and an end to sexual harassment | Available on Netflix

Women-owned businesses outpace the market

News report from MSNBC

Full Court Press

The series chronicles the historic 2023–2024 women's college basketball season through three of its star players: Kiki Rice, Kamilla Cardoso and Indiana Fever number-one draft pick Caitlin Clark. | Available on ESPN+

WHAT WE'RE reading

Imagine if women's health had the resources it deserves

In this article Anita Zaidi, President, Gender Equality Division of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation proposes global solutions to the persistent neglect of women's health. | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery

Writing in 1993, author bell hooks reflects on the ways in which the emotional health of Black women is impacted by sexism and racism. | Grab the book at one of our community's great local bookshops.

There is no democracy without gender justice

This article by Pamela Shifman, president of Democracy Alliance, addresses what is missing in our current governmental systems. | *Ms. Magazine*

WHAT WE'RE listening to

The rock and roll legends of The Avenue

Weekly documentary focusing on the cultural achievements of Black artists and musicians from Central Indiana. | *Echoes of Indiana Avenue*, available on WFYI.org

The Happiness Lab: Happiness Through Generosity

An episode of The Ted Interview with Liz Dunn, a professor whose research shows that increasing our generosity can significantly boost our own happiness. | Available on Apple Podcast and Spotify

Revisiting songs from artists who performed at GangGang's *I Made Rock and Roll* festival. | **Janelle Monae, Joy Oladokun and Gary Clark, Jr.**



Grants Foster Awareness and Implementation of New Laws Related to Pregnancy in the Workplace

Tucked within the 4,000 pages of Congress's 2022 omnibus spending bill were two little-noticed but critical laws affecting pregnant employees and new mothers in the workplace: The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP).

These laws have the potential to expand employment protections to millions while promoting a healthier society for newborns and new mothers.

Previously, challenging work conditions resulting from one's pregnancy had to rise to the standard of a physical disability to require accommodation in the workplace. Now, PWFA identifies pregnancy itself as a condition meriting special accommodations.

Meanwhile, the PUMP Act requires employers to provide a sanitary and solitary place for employees to pump breast milk. (A legal technicality omitted millions of salaried employees from a previous 2010 law. The 2022 law extends protection to any employee.)

These are bipartisan laws that recognize the unique experiences of the 70% of pregnant Americans who worked during their pregnancy last year (up from 41% in 1973).

Two recent grants from Women's Fund of Central Indiana seek to foster a greater awareness and implementation of these new protections.

ICAA

The Indiana Community Action Association (ICAA) and its Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute, serves low-income Hoosiers in 22 communities. Using a \$15,000 grant from Women's Fund, the ICAA will be holding Know Your Rights workshops in various locations.

These workshops will be open to any currently or potentially pregnant or nursing

employees as well as the healthcare workers who support them. ICAA's effort will also include limited pro bono legal work and a media campaign about the new laws.

THE MILK BANK

As the only tissue bank in Indiana dedicated exclusively to lowering infant mortality, the Milk Bank facilitates breast milk donations and extolls the benefits of breastfeeding.

A study published last year in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* shows that babies who receive breast milk experience a 33% reduction in the risk of early mortality relative to non-breastfed infants.

The Milk Bank, supported by a \$15,000 grant from Women's Fund, will be educating employers about their obligation to provide space for employees to pump breast milk under the PUMP Act. The Milk Bank's program includes a guide and kits for creating a private lactation room in the workplace.

Now, PWFA identifies pregnancy *itself* as a condition meriting special accommodations.



GROWING NEED

As more Americans work during and after pregnancy, reasonable workplace accommodations will play a role in determining the health and safety of both child and mother. Women's Fund of Central Indiana is working to create a Hoosier community where the legal obligation to provide those accommodations is better known and fully embraced.



Trust-Based Philanthropy at the Heart of New Pilot Program

During the pandemic, donors and non-profits saw a shift to trust-based philanthropy. That allowed service organizations to quickly adjust to a new pace of public need and social change. Five years later, that initial shift has become an ongoing trend in the world of philanthropy.

Women's Fund of Central Indiana is partnering with two local community non-profits to put trust-based philanthropy into practice. With an emphasis on community autonomy over funder administration, this approach promises a more inclusive, democratic and effective way for donors to make an impact.

TRUST-BASED PHILANTHROPY

Coming in the wake of years of discussion in the philanthropic world, trust-based philanthropy reimagines the role we can have in building a more just and equitable society through charitable giving. This movement puts donor and recipient on equal footing and fosters mutual accountability through transparency. Many organizations report that a trust-based approach allows for their mission to be guided more by the needs and dreams of the communities they serve than by the foundations that fund them.

But to get to that point, funders must work proactively to change the power dynamics



and structural barriers that get in the way of nonprofits' intended impact.

A trust-based approach relies on six interrelated principles:

- 1 Fewer requirements for application
- 2 Multi-year, unrestricted funding
- 3 Non-financial forms of support
- 4 Simplified administration during the grant period
- 5 Transparent and responsive communication
- 6 Solicitation of and reaction to feedback

WOMEN'S FUND PILOT

Women's Fund of Central Indiana is piloting a trust-based philanthropy approach with two grantee partners, **Constructing Our Future** and **Pretty Passionate Hands**.

Each year for three years beginning in 2024, these grantees will receive \$35,000 in unrestricted operating funds plus \$2,500 in professional development and wellness support for their executive directors. No application is necessary for year one. For years two and three, grantees need only complete year-end reports to obtain the following year's funding.

Staff at Women's Fund will work closely with grantees to ensure the process remains as streamlined and flexible as possible.

Staff will also collaborate with grantees to identify outcomes and a system of reporting that benefits all parties. Women's Fund will offer additional support outside of funds (trainings, connections, etc.) to help organizations reach their goals.

PILOT ORGANIZATIONS

Constructing Our Future

COF provides re-entry housing and assistance for women newly released from prison. It rents a house in Broad Ripple with capacity for up to four women. Rent payments come out of a set portion of take-home earnings once residents find employment (15% of take home pay the first 90 days, 25% the following 90 days), with a maximum monthly payment of \$425.

Residents are expected to work full-time or attend ongoing education while working part-time. COF provides case management and other assistance while also hosting small events at the house for women in the Indiana Women's Post Incarcerated Network.

The organization was founded at the Indiana Women's Prison by incarcerated

Many organizations report that a trust-based approach allows for their mission to be guided more by the needs and dreams of the communities they serve than by the foundations that fund them.



Continued on page 12

Constructing Our Future was created by and continues to be led by previously incarcerated women.



women. Its current board includes those who have transcended structural barriers to re-entry to become successful, contributing members of their community. Rheann Kelly, one of COF's founders, states it plainly when she laments how incarcerated women are viewed as if they were "abandoned houses... having no value." She and others at the COF offer a convincing rebuttal in the value they have generated for others seeking to re-enter society.

Women's Fund has provided COF with technical assistance and funding since the organization's inception, including a capacity grant in 2019-2020 which resulted in a stronger governance structure.



Pretty Passionate Hands

This organization provides services, support and guidance to teen mothers (and their partners) who have little or no adult support.

Beginning with a focus on their essential needs, PPH offers mentorship, a food and hygiene pantry, group discussions, educational workshops (e.g., CPR, lactation, nutrition, safe sleeping habits for infants), mental health discussions, monthly family dinner, assistance with accessing services, diapers, and co-parenting workshops.

Clients come to the office on Saturdays from noon to 6 p.m. Involved fathers are encouraged to attend.

PPH is currently serving 14 teen moms, with a goal of serving up to 20. Its new program,

Pretty Passionate Hands focuses on providing support, mentorship, and guidance to teen mothers' and fathers' families.




My Sisterhood, discusses mental health issues with women ages 18 and up. The group meets once a month and has assisted over 30 women since it began last year.

Executive director Paradise Bradford has lived experience with teen motherhood. She started the organization to provide support to teen girls of color who found themselves in a situation she already had to navigate.

Though initially self-funded, PPH has received several small grants more recently. In 2023 it received \$25,000 from Women's Fund, \$10,000 from The Indianapolis Foundation, and \$15,000 from Glick Family Fund.

THE DIFFERENCE TRUST CAN MAKE

Trust-based philanthropy gets to the very heart of what giving is meant to accomplish. By investing in the people and organizations who know their community best, this form of giving acknowledges and accounts for the social divides we seek to join.

"There are many hard-working, passionate and knowledgeable individuals and organizations working every day to ensure women and girls in Central Indiana thrive," says Tamara Winfrey-Harris, president of Women's Fund. "Our job at Women's Fund is to trust and support that expertise. This trust-based philanthropy pilot is an exploration of how we can do our job well — in a way that honors the Central Indiana community and the people who work hardest to address its challenges and seize opportunities." 

New Partner **audiochuck** Aligns with Goal to Honor All Women Voices

A recent report from Dell Computers and Institute for the Future shared a bold fact: **85% of jobs that will exist in 2030 have yet to be invented.**

But that may seem like familiar territory for Indianapolis-based podcast network audiochuck. They are setting the standard for media and innovation in an industry nobody could imagine less than a generation ago.

Beginning with *Crime Junkie*, her marquee podcast, audiochuck Founder and CEO Ashley Flowers has redefined success in the still-young medium. What started as a few episodes has become a hit series generating millions of weekly downloads.

While true crime is a focal point, it is not the network's sole focus. A passion for advocacy is at the heart of everything the organization does. audiochuck displays that passion through its storytelling hailed for accuracy, respect for those involved and educational value.

Alongside their own good deeds, audiochuck encourages listeners to get involved, including work that has supported new forensic advancements. Through these efforts, they ensure their content informs and empowers their audience to take meaningful action.

audiochuck frequently donates to causes that impact public health and safety. An example is when they used their merchandise revenue to give to the DNA Doe Project, a group that uses

"investigative genetic genealogy" to identify unidentified deceased persons — John and Jane Does — as part of current or historic criminal investigations. After the donation, the DNA Doe Project identified both Pamela Buckley and James Freund, whose stories were featured in the *Crime Junkie* episode "Unidentified: Sumpter County Does."

audiochuck supports non-profits locally and worldwide; in recent years, they have focused on helping those affected by domestic violence, healthcare access, housing instability and food insecurity.

"When I founded audiochuck, I knew I wanted to stay in Indiana," said founder Ashley Flowers.

"It has been incredible to be able to give back to our local community and watch our employees give back to causes they are passionate about. We have been so fortunate to be able to tell stories that affect change around

the world while also honoring our roots and giving back to Indiana in ways that make a tangible impact."

Each year, audiochuck offers an endowment to an organization within this scope; recent recipients include:

- Coburn Place, providing safe housing choices for survivors of domestic violence
- Gennesaret Free Clinics, providing quality healthcare regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay
- Horizon House, supporting those experiencing homelessness with comprehensive services



audiochuck Founder and CEO Ashley Flowers




Women's Fund is proud to have audiochuck as a supporter, including as the Event Champion of the 2023 Power of Women event, as pictured here.

These endowment recipients highlight the shared core values of audiochuck and Women's Fund, as Coburn Place and Gennesaret Free Clinic were both 2022 grant recipients of Women's Fund annual grant round.

While they exist in very different industries, both audiochuck and Women's Fund share at least one unifying principle: to give all women a voice.

Women's Fund of Central Indiana was grateful to have audiochuck as its Event Champion for the 2023 Power of Women event. With their support, we were able to host American Track & Field Olympian, Allyson Felix in conversation with Indiana Fever legend Tamika Catchings. We are grateful to have their support again as we welcome civil rights icon Ruby Bridges for the 2024 Power of Women event.

Through storytelling, philanthropy and community partnerships, audiochuck and Ashley Flowers are fostering a world where women's stories are more visible, and their safety is foundational. 

Addressing Domestic and Intimate

Estimates in 2019 showed around 42% of women and 28% of men in Indiana experience physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner. And in the first year of the pandemic, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department recorded a 65% increase in emergency calls related to domestic violence.

But this impact is not always distributed evenly. Black women are more than twice as likely to experience domestic or intimate partner violence as White women. Transgender people, meanwhile, are over four times as likely as their cisgender counterparts to experience physical or emotional abuse.

Undergirding all of this is the fact that domestic and intimate partner violence represent some of the most underreported crime in America. The true scope of the issue—let alone the individual impact—cannot be captured by statistics.

That's why every year since its founding, Women's Fund of Central Indiana has awarded grants to organizations that address domestic violence (any violence among members of a household) and intimate partner violence (violence occurring between romantic partners specifically, regardless of living situation). We believe that—much like their health—the safety of women and children points to the safety of the larger community.

Coburn Place Safe Haven has been a longtime grant recipient of Women's Fund. Located on Indy's northside, they provide transitional housing for survivors of domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) as well as their children.

Women's Fund spoke with Coburn Place Communications Director Kim Easton. One thing she was quick to note for those who may not closely follow this issue is the far-reaching impact violence in the home can have, especially on childhood development.

"Children who witness domestic violence are 74% more likely to commit a violent crime against someone else," Kim said. Such children are also found to be more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol and are three times more likely to abuse or be abused in adulthood.

At a time when their minds are most impressionable, violence can threaten to shape a child's future relationships.

Kim also notes the impact on a household's economic health. While abuse can and does happen at all income levels, poverty has been found to correlate with a greater prevalence of DV and IPV.

That economic hardship also makes the prospect of leaving a violent home far more complicated than it often appears to those without firsthand experience of living with violence. For many, leaving such a home means

Black women are more than twice as likely to experience domestic or intimate partner violence as White women. Transgender people, meanwhile, are over four times as likely as their cisgender counterparts to experience physical or emotional abuse.

Partner Violence




choosing greater poverty, perhaps even homelessness. In fact, close to 60% of women living homeless report DV as the immediate cause.

Acknowledging that linkage between poverty and DV/IPV, Women's Fund intentionally supports organizations that focus on economic support for vulnerable women.

A 2023 grant recipient, The Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers an Economic Justice program for DV and IPV survivors. Funds are used to remove the financial barriers to emergency relocation, document fees, vehicle repair, medical expenses, and more. Removing that economic pressure can sometimes allow for a full and permanent recovery.

Another of last year's grant recipients, Beacon of Hope Crisis Center offers an Economic Sustainability Program that includes a variety of employment services to assist the 40% of referrals who are un- or under-employed.

Women's Fund is committed to supporting these and other groups that consider the issues of DV and IPV holistically.

By addressing the physical, emotional, and economic risks that survivors confront, our community can ensure more Central Indiana households are safe, nurturing and thriving spaces for all. 



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THE **POWER** OF **WOMEN**

An evening with civil rights activist Ruby Bridges

Monday, Nov. 4 5:30-9 p.m.

The Indiana Roof Ballroom

Join us in supporting women and girls in Central Indiana while getting the rare opportunity to hear about a crucial moment in American history straight from the source.

Ruby Bridges is a civil rights icon, activist, author and speaker who at the age of six was the first Black student to integrate an all-white elementary school alone in Louisiana.

The annual Power of Women event makes it possible for Women's Fund to do its work, granting more than \$500,000 annually to women-and-girl-serving organizations and providing programs, such as OPTIONS, GO! Give Back Reimagined and the Executive Women of Color Leadership Program.



Tickets: www.womens-fund.org/2024-power-of-women

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