



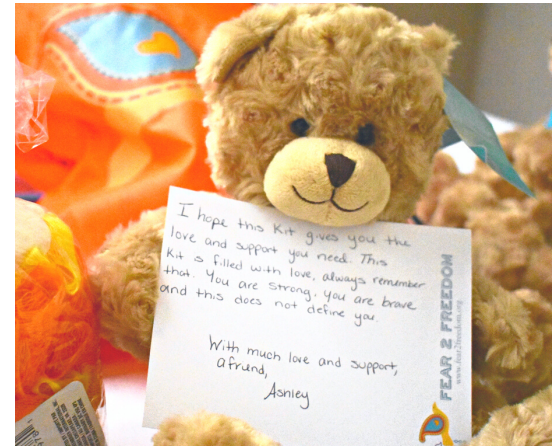
EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

OCTOBER 2022

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is such a horrendous issue. Lack of trust, fear, abuse...& then there are the children. Some scars remain for life. F2F partners with shelters, resource centers & children's hospitals to provide AfterCare Kits to survivors of IPV, domestic violence & child abuse. Since F2F started in 2011, over 7,000 children have received our AfterCare & iCare Kits. An important part of our Kits is Freedom Bear, F2F's special trademarked therapy tool. Over the years Freedom Bear has helped many children & adult survivors of DV on their healing journeys.



Last month a survivor who recently moved to Canada reached out to us. (Shared with her permission.)

“

Several years ago, I received a Fear2Freedom care bag in the emergency room on the most terrifying day of my life. To this day I am so unbelievably grateful for what your organization does for survivors of sexual abuse. I was only 15 and had always been terrified of hospitals, so that fear made a horrible experience even more scary. The care bag was very comforting during a horrific time. I became extremely attached to two items that were in my bag – my teddy bear and the beautiful handwritten note from one of your volunteers. I actually folded up my note and carried it in my wallet for years. Bear came with me to my sleepaway summer camp, to sleepovers, anytime we traveled. During our recent move, several boxes didn't arrive at our new home. Unfortunately my box of 'special things' was one of the boxes that was never located. Both the bear and my note were in that box. I am crushed as these were my most cherished possessions and I am desperate to get them replaced... Crossing my fingers for a miracle!!

”

We can report that Freedom Bear (& a new note) made it safely to Canada & was gratefully received!

MISSION MOMENT

This month here are words of comfort from Someone Special:

"I'm a bear that cares about you. You are special. There is no one in the world like you. Sometimes in life it hurts a lot! Write your sadness on my special paper... Put your note inside my heart & hold me near. Remember, it was not your fault. You did not deserve this pain. No matter what wounded your heart, you are worthy of love & caring..."

Whatever has broken your heart, whatever has stolen your joy, I hope you'll believe that the cycle of fear can be broken and lost joy can be found again." - Freedom Bear



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Boundaries are about saying "Yes"

When considering boundaries, it's easy to fall into thinking that they're all about don'ts & won'ts. While our noes are an important piece, our yeses are also essential. By setting & maintaining boundaries we're building authenticity & balance in our relationships. These boundaries allow us to understand & connect on deeper levels with those around us without losing ourselves in the process. When we say "No" to one thing, we're also saying "Yes" to so many others that help us stay healthy, safe, & whole.

Overcoming our barriers

Even after we reframe boundaries in this more positive light, we can still run into obstacles when we try setting & enforcing them. This is no surprise since so many of us were conditioned to be agreeable. Viewing our sharing our needs as shameful or burdensome are barriers to maintaining our wellbeing. How can we overcome these myths?



1. EXAMINE YOUR BARRIERS

What myths are you telling yourself & what makes you believe them?

- *Myth: "It's a sign of weakness to need this boundary..."*
- *Myth: "I don't deserve to get the things I need/want..."*
- *Myth: "Others needs are more important than mine..."*
- *Myth: "It'll just create a conflict I can't handle..."*
- *Myth: "It's wrong/selfish of me to ask..."*
- *Myth: "I'm responsible for other's reactions..."*

2. CHALLENGE YOUR MYTHS

Flip the script & remind yourself of the truth rather than the myths.

- *Truth: "It shows courage to establish boundaries. I am strong enough to do this."*
- *Truth: "My needs are valid & deserve to be prioritized."*
- *Truth: "My needs/wants are just as important as anyone else's"*
- *Truth: "Catastrophizing isn't helpful. If conflict arises, I am capable of handling it in this way..."*
- *Truth: "Asking for what I want shows that I care, both for my wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of this relationship."*
- *Truth: "Others emotions are valid but I am not responsible for how they choose to react. A negative response doesn't mean I'm wrong for having this boundary."*

Recognizing red flags

Compromising or burying our boundaries just to fit in, be liked, or avoid conflict are not healthy nor sustainable ways to cultivate lasting, safe, & fulfilling relationships with others nor with ourselves. Just as we're all entitled to set our limits, others are entitled to have conflicted and/or opposing feelings to them.

Sometimes our wants/needs/boundaries conflict with another's in ways that just aren't compatible. This is ok, so long as everyone is being respectful. However, not everyone will choose to do so. Someone being disrespectful of your wants/needs, trying to force you into compromising in ways you aren't comfortable with, or regularly overstepping your boundaries are big red flags that this is not healthy & it may be time to reconsider this dynamic.

Boundaries can feel complicated & scary. Reminding ourselves that they're not just about saying "No", they're also about saying "Yes" (to our time, our agency, our wellbeing) can help us see the fuller, more positive, picture. Recognizing the harmful myths we're telling ourselves & countering them with the truth (which is often much more empathetic) can help us overcome the barriers we face in establishing our boundaries. We can find comfort in knowing that setting our boundaries oftentimes goes much more smoothly in reality than what we work up in our heads. Acknowledging red flags we see from others & considering how we want to approach those dynamics is essential to looking out for our own health & safety. Remember each of our boundaries are valid & doing what we need to maintain our wellbeing & safety should be a priority.

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Virginia Beach Police Department

Fear 2 Freedom expresses our appreciation to our newest partner, The Virginia Beach Police Department's Special Victims Unit.

VBPD received 50 of our AfterCare Kits which were compassionately packed by students at Norfolk State University during their Hour 2 Empower event in August.

The Special Victims Unit specializes in investigating crimes involving sexual assault & other non-sexual crimes involving young people, elderly people, & people living with disabilities.

F2F thanks VBPD for their continued dedication, making a difference in the community when it comes to sexual violence.



CNU DAY OF SERVICE

Fear 2 Freedom is grateful for all of the volunteers who show up to support our mission. We have had an influx of volunteer sign ups from the students of Christopher Newport University.

Thank you to all the volunteers who came out during CNU's annual Day of Service to help fold clothing items for our F2F AfterCare Kits.

Do you need volunteer hours? Please contact our Logistics and Partnerships Director, Savannah Gall, at savannah@fear2freedom.org to assist with all things logistics and in administration.



WELCOME FALL INTERNS

F2F could not do what we do without dedicated interns & volunteers who help us fulfill our mission! Each semester they are an integral part of the F2F team. This fall we welcome Josie Carter, our F2F Logistics intern. Josie is a senior at Christopher Newport University with a double major in Criminology & Psychology. Thank you for helping us Be The Change!

We also welcome Abigail Sams, our committed volunteer who has served F2F every semester since fall of 2019, including 3 internships! Abby is a senior at CNU with a major in Political Science & a double minor in Leadership Studies & Women & Gender Studies.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Making our mission possible

Join us in sharing some love with a few of our recent donors. Our hearts are full & our mission empowered by their generosity.

CarMax

In July CarMax volunteers spent an afternoon sorting inventory for F2F Kits. At the request of these committed employees, CarMax Cares Foundation provided a grant of \$500 to match the contribution of their time spent making a difference in survivors journeys. A big thank you to Charlotte McDonald, Danielle Hicks, & CarMax for their dedication!

Priority Charity Bowl

F2F is honored to be one of this year's 45 beneficiaries for Priority Automotive Charity Bowl & Golf Tournament. Last month F2F received a \$5,000 grant check to provide F2F AfterCare Kits & iCare Kits for children. A huge shout out of thanks to Troy Clifton, Jessica Harvey & everyone at Priority Automotive Charities for helping F2F help more kids!

Coastal Fermentory

Thank you to everyone who joined us for Brew For Good at Coastal Fermentory! With your support, F2F was able to raise over \$850 to support survivors & spread awareness for the Red Zone. Huge shoutout to Seth Caddell & everyone at Coastal Fermentory for making this event a success!

Community Knights

F2F thanks Community Knights for their generous 2022 Summer Cycle GIFT Grant of \$750! Their ongoing support helps F2F spread awareness for our mission to support sexual assault survivors & empower students & communities to Be The Change.

Red Zone Supporters

A big thank you to the many donors who responded to our Red Zone appeal that has raised \$3,000 & counting! Thank you for joining F2F's campaign to create safer college experiences by working to end campus sexual violence.



Thank You Verizon!

A huge shout out of thanks to Verizon for featuring F2F on their Citizens Verizon Volunteers portal!

To raise awareness for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Verizon employees can write notes for survivors & gift F2F items from our Amazon Wish List for our AfterCare & iCare Kits.

The huge piles of wish list packages & meaningful notes we have received through the portal this month have blown us away!

Thank you to Sabrina Hammond-Williams & Anna Hardin at Verizon for making this initiative possible.



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Engaging Our Community

Fear 2 Freedom has been so busy with our sexual violence prevention programs!

Students at Norfolk State University's Hour 2 Empower created 100 kits for the community while learning through our educational program about bystander intervention. With funding from the Langley for Families grant (Langley Federal Credit Union), these students have shown their dedication to the community & to F2F's mission to support survivors of sexual violence. These F2F Kits were then donated to the Virginia Beach Police, Special Victims Unit as well as the LGBT Life Center in Norfolk.

F2F addressed the incoming Christopher Newport University Class of 2026 during our Be the Change Orientation in the first week of their freshman year. It was inspiring to see 1,100 students taking the pledge to help end sexual violence & be the change that the community needs to meet that goal.

We were excited to connect with Water's Edge Church in Yorktown for another Hour 2 Empower event to help pack F2F Kits for sexual violence survivors. Water's Edge Church packed 120 kits for Laurens County Sheriff's Department in SC & learned more about our educational program on supporting survivors.



TRANSITIONS AT F2F



Thank You & Farewell

F2F says farewell to our COO & Development Coordinator!

Over the past 2 ½ years, January Serda served as an integral pillar of F2F's programs & operations. As she navigated F2F through the challenges of COVID-19, she inspired our team so much! Last month January started a new opportunity with Riverside Health System leading a Violence Intervention program & team serving populations impacted by violence who come through the ER.

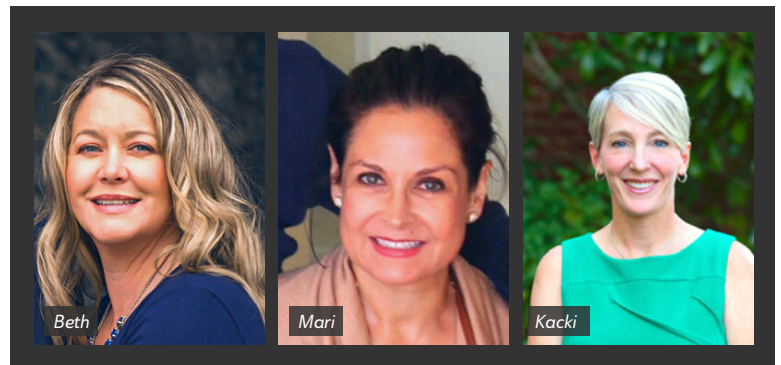
F2F's Development Coordinator, Shelly Averett, also started a new leadership opportunity last month with another local non profit organization. Over the last year Shelly did so much that contributed to the success of our Gala & development initiatives.

Our F2F team is incredibly grateful for all January & Shelly did to help us with our mission. They both shared their hearts with us! We wish them every success in their new endeavors, but they will always be part of the F2F family!

BOARD WELCOME

Meet Our Newest Board Members

F2F is excited to welcome 3 new board members to our Board of Directors. The depth of expertise represented in these strong women will definitely contribute to our mission and programs! For your time, treasure, and talent to help F2F Be The Change & restore the Joy for survivors of sexual violence, a big thank you to Beth Walters, RN BS SANE-A SANE-P, Mari Bonnemaision-Moore, Kacki Haggery, NP. Welcome to F2F!





ESSENTIAL DV AWARENESS

At some point all of our lives will be impacted in some way by domestic violence. Learn what you can do to recognize the survivors in your life & help them get the support they need by reading our latest blog (linked below).

KEY F2F KIT VIDEOS

Do you know an agency/medical facility who'd benefit from our AfterCare or iCare Kits? Share our NEW F2F Kit videos with them to get the conversation started & connect them with resources that can revolutionize their programs (link below).

SAVE THE DATE



Out of Darkness Walk

SATURDAY | OCT 15, 2022 | 9:00AM

Suicide & mental health awareness walk at Newport News Park.

Shadow Event

WEDNESDAY | NOV 2, 2022 | 7:30PM

Survivors share their stories during this moving event hosted by the Where Is The Line club at CNU.

Giving Tuesday Brewery Event

TUESDAY | NOV 29, 2022 | 5:00PM

Celebrate Giving Tuesday with the F2F team at Wasserhund Brewing in Virginia Beach.

