



SAFE ESCAPE

Providing help for those fleeing
domestic violence.

Imagine...

... a scene of domestic bliss. A family gathered around a dinner table enjoying the evening meal. You pass the potatoes to your 5-year old sister, 3 years your junior. She takes the spoon, too large for her small hands, and tries to ladle out a portion. It slops over the plate and lands on the table. She laughs.

You smile at your mother, then feel that familiar tightening of your chest as her face suddenly pales. You slowly shift your gaze and focus on a pair of glowering, red tinged, eyes.

Without a word a ham sized fist lashes out and slams across your sister's face sending her sprawling to the floor, nose pouring blood, her wails fracturing any pretense of normalcy.

The monster rises and looms menacingly over the small huddled figure and raises the fist as he bellows for her to shut up. Your mother screams, rushes over and a second later his thick fingers are around her frail throat, choking the life from her.

You are terrified. You want to flee... but you can't. You grab onto an intractable arm, trying to save your mother's life, knowing full well there's going to be pain, terrible pain. And of course there is, exploding as your arm is twisted in a way nature would never condone and then beyond until there is a muted crack...

...and darkness

“SAFE ESCAPE”

If the scene described sounds like a nightmare, it is... a reoccurring nightmare that is the every day real life drama than victimizes too many families enslaved in a world dominated by domestic abuse.

In a single year, in the United States, more than 10 million women, men and children, are physically abused by an intimate partner. And for those who are victims of repeated abuse these situations can be life threatening.

Every year about 10 or more people are killed in Montana as a result of domestic violence not to mention thousands of brutal assaults. On a single day in September 2014, in Montana, 238 domestic violence victims (122 children and 116 adults) found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs. Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crimes.

In Deer Lodge County in a single year there were 128 reported domestic assaults and 6 chokings, many of them repeat offenders. And while these statistics are extremely disturbing, they do not accurately reflect the full extent of the problem as 50% to 70% of domestic abuse goes unreported.

For many of these families there is no viable way to escape. The families live in abject fear so intense that it is paralyzing. Many of the abused women have self-esteem beaten so low they actually believe they deserve their fate.

And there are countless obstacles to escaping their horrible existence. They are terrorized by threats from the abusive partner that if they leave they will be hunted down and beaten or killed. Often the abusing partner controls all the money so in order to escape the family will have to leave with little more than the clothes on their backs. They might have to move far away, leaving behind all of their family and friends.

Even the few that find the courage to leave, face fierce uphill battles. These families have few or no resources to provide even the basic needs, nor have the skills necessary to navigate the path to a safe environment. Many are unable to make it on their own and are forced to return to a life of pain and misery.

SAFE ESCAPE is a community based program that is being created and sponsored by the **Rotary Club of Anaconda** and the **Anaconda Community Foundation** to help these victims of domestic violence, living in Deer Lodge County, to start a new life. The intention of Safe Escape is to provide an initial leg up to assist families trying to move on from abuse. If the program is successful it could potentially be expanded to other Montana Rotary clubs and possibly Nationwide.

The **Rotary Club of Anaconda** would coordinate with the Anaconda Victims Advocate to identify qualifying families. (Should the program expand to other Rotary chapters without Victim Advocates, Public Defenders and existing Domestic Abuse programs could be consulted)

Candidates would be selected based on several criteria that would provide the best potential for a successful outcome. Of course the severity of the abuse will be a leading factor to consider. However, to insure that our limited resources are not wasted, it is important that the parent or family head should be free from drug and alcohol abuse. Another factor to consider is whether the parent is truly looking to start a new life or just take a break from abuse. For our program to succeed we would want to be reasonably certain that the family is committed to making a new life.

The **Rotary Club of Anaconda** would select from two to four families a year, depending on fund raising and expenditures. In a program such as this, it is important to be flexible as to the aid and services we provide. We will be filling gaps left by other government and charitable programs, which can be a changing landscape. Each family will come with their own unique set of circumstances, problems and needs. Some families will have nothing, while others might have some minimal resources. Some will also come with unique medical needs or problems and many will suffer from PTSD as well as esteem and other issues that will require psychological counseling to allow them the tools to succeed.

The **SAFE ESCAPE** program will initially be broken into three initiatives:

- 1) FRESH START** - will provide initial funding for basic necessities such as clothing, furniture, educational supplies, baby supplies and paper products.
- 2) LEG UP** - will provide ongoing support for day to day expenses such as utility assistance, transportation costs, food, household supplies, uncovered medical supplies and clothing. Our initial term for a sponsored family will be about 2 years at which point the family will be able to go forward without assistance or we will reevaluate.
- 3) MOVE FORWARD** - At the start of year 2 (or as needed) additional one time purchases of clothing, school supplies, other one-time items purchases.

Unlike many charitable programs with stable fixed costs, **SAFE ESCAPE** has many variables such as family size, initial and on going needs that will make it impossible to present a specific budget. What will be important is to raise sufficient funds to be able to meet these changing requirements as they are identified.

Initial outlays for furniture and clothing might require that a rotary member accompany the family and that receipts are marked so that items cannot be returned for cash. Utility assistance could be by direct deposit and all other items will require proof of expenditures to prevent fraud.

For the sake of creating an estimate we will use 2 representative family types A) a head of household with 2 children 1 younger school age child and one teen, and B) a head of household with 3 children, a baby, a toddler and one younger school age child.

INITIAL ESTIMATED OPERATING BUDGET

YEAR ONE FRESH START

Fresh Start Expenses

Clothing: \$100 per adult and child:	
Family A:	\$300
Family B:	\$400
Furniture:	
Family A:	\$300
Family B:	\$400
School supplies	
Family A:	\$100
Family B:	\$50
Household supplies, toiletries:	
Family A:	\$100
Family B:	\$135
Baby supplies:	
Family B:	\$75
Medical supplies and services:	
Family A:	\$100
Family B:	\$200
Donated emergency phones for 911 access	\$0

ESTIMATED TOTAL: \$2160

YEAR ONE LEG UP

Monthly Leg Up Expenses

Household supplies, toiletries:	
Family A:	\$25
Family B:	\$30
Baby supplies:	
Family B:	\$50
Utility assistance:	
Family A:	\$75
Family B:	\$75
Gas and transportation assistance	
Family A:	\$30
Family B:	\$30
Child care assistance:	
Family B:	\$50
Misc. supplies and services:	
Family A:	\$35
Family B:	\$35
Monthly Total	\$435
ESTIMATED TOTAL FOR LEG UP	\$5655
TOTAL BUDGET FOR YEAR ONE:	\$7815

YEAR TWO FRESH START & MOVE FORWARD

Fresh Start Expenses:

Clothing: \$100 per adult and child:	
Family C:	\$300
Family D:	\$400
Furniture:	
Family C:	\$300
Family D:	\$400
School supplies	
Family C:	\$100
Family D:	\$50
Household supplies, toiletries:	
Family C:	\$100
Family D:	\$135
Baby supplies:	
Family D:	\$75
Medical supplies and services:	
Family C:	\$100
Family D:	\$200
Donated emergency phones for 911 access	\$0

Move Forward Expenses

Clothing: \$75 per adult and \$100 per child:	
Family A:	\$275
Family B:	\$375
School supplies	
Family A:	\$100
Family B:	\$50
Misc. costs and expenses	
Family A:	\$50
Family B:	\$50

ESTIMATED TOTAL: \$3060

YEAR TWO LEG UP

Monthly Leg Up Expenses

Household supplies, toiletries:	
Family A:	\$25
Family B:	\$30
Family C:	\$25
Family D:	\$30
 Baby supplies:	
Family B:	\$50
Family D:	\$50
 Utility assistance:	
Family A:	\$75
Family B:	\$75
Family C:	\$75
Family D:	\$75
 Gas and transportation assistance:	
Family A:	\$30
Family B:	\$30
Family C:	\$30
Family D:	\$30
 Child care assistance:	
Family B:	\$50
Family D:	\$50
 Misc. supplies and services:	
Family A:	\$35
Family B:	\$35
Family C:	\$35
Family D:	\$35

Monthly Total \$870

ESTIMATED TOTAL FOR LEG UP YEAR TWO \$10,440

TOTAL BUDGET FOR YEAR ONE: \$7,815
TOTAL BUDGET FOR TWO YEARS: \$21,315

FUND RAISING

SAFE ESCAPE goals will be to have funds sufficient to cover 2 to 3 years of operations. If goals are not achieved, the program would be downsized to 1 new family a year or no new families as required.

FIVE YEAR FUND RAISING GOAL: \$110,000

Year 1:	\$30,000
Year 2:	\$20,000
Year 3:	\$20,000
Year 4:	\$20,000
Year 5:	\$20,000

Fund raising will be achieved through several methods:

Private donations: Companies and individuals
The **Rotary Club of Anaconda** and the **Anaconda Community Foundation** would coordinate solicitation of donations.

Fund Raising Events:
Rotary Club of Anaconda and the **Anaconda Community Foundation** would organize fund raising events that could include concerts, movie event, parties and more. Members can approach local churches to see if they will do fund raising with their congregations.

Local Business Participation:
Local businesses could donate a portion of proceeds for **SAFE ESCAPE** or have point of purchase donation vouchers. Possible partners are the Anaconda Brewery, local supermarkets, Dee Motors (special event where all car purchases create a donation) and other businesses. We might attempt to do a month long event promoting local businesses that will donate a portion of their sales to safe escape.

Grants:
Rotary Club of Anaconda and the **Anaconda Community Foundation** would apply for grants or matching grants from various sources including the Rotary Foundation, Town Pump, Northwest Energy, WalMart, Washington Company and various charitable organizations.

The fund will be started with a matching donation of \$6000 which will be increased to \$8000 in mid 2019) The program will begin when funds equaling 75% of 2 years of operations are raised.

SAFE ESCAPE is a humane endeavor that could in some small way help protect families that are the victims of dangerous abuse. Not only will it

improve the community and send a message to potential abusers, but it will be a very strong and visible addition to the many great programs offered by the Rotary Club of Anaconda and the Anaconda Community Foundation.