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**Local Domestic Violence Group at Risk of Denying Services to Those in Need,
*Issues Plea to Concerned Citizens to Provide Support***

October 16, 2013 (ZION, ILL) — It's been four months since Lake County-based A Safe Place received its grant funds from the federal government, which account for 50% of the agency's support and nearly \$1 million annually. It remains unclear why the federal funds have been halted and, unfortunately, the reopening of the government doesn't promise to be the agency's saving grace, as the funds have been withheld for far longer than the "shutdown" period. A Safe Place is a leading advocate for eliminating domestic violence in Northern Illinois, and it relies equally on government funding and the generous donations of individuals and corporations. So even as the shutdown comes to an end, every day of lost funding counts, and countless victims could be turned away. A Safe Place stands at the threshold of a major crisis that could put lives in danger.

A Safe Place serves more than 10,000 people in Lake County with crisis services, intervention services and education services each year and, to date, has not had to diminish its services. Currently, the agency's shelters, programs and 24-hour crisis line remain open. In order to continue providing these life-saving services, the agency is seeking the support of corporations and the public with a goal of reaching \$25,000 — a small amount considering it takes \$6,028 per day (\$42,196 per week) to operate the many services at A Safe Place. Donations can be made at www.GoFundMe.com/4sr4bk or at www.ASafePlaceForHelp.org/Donate. The need is staggering.

"We are truly shocked to find ourselves in this situation — without the necessary funding to provide the life-saving services that our clients need," said Patricia Davenport, Executive Director of A Safe Place. "Our mission is to help victims become survivors. But without the resources it takes to provide emergency shelter, counseling and court services to the victims of domestic violence, we can't fulfill that mission. Without further support, how many victims will stay with or return to their abusers? How many children will continue to witness violent crimes? How many people will be hurt or worse — right here in our local community."

The recent impact is not just felt at the federal level. Just last week, domestic violence programs across Illinois were informed that state funding for their life-savings services will be

suspended due to unavailable Title XX funds. Still many are continuing to support the organization in this time of need, including Lt. Governor Sheila Simon, Congressman Brad Schneider, Lake County Board member Carol Calabresa, Lake County States Attorney Mike Nerheim, and Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence CEO Vickie Smith.

Noelle Dupuis, JD, Director of Policy at the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, states, "Many programs are in imminent danger of having to shutter their doors to victims that need them most during periods of economic downturn. In rural areas, where one shelter may serve as many as nine counties, tens of thousands of victims and their children will have nowhere to turn for help in escaping their abusers."

A Safe Place has been relying upon the generosity of vendors, many of whom have extended their credit terms, and upon private donors, in order to continue to serve hundreds of victims across Lake County.

As the days and weeks pass with limited funding, the leaders at A Safe Place remain hopeful. "We are touched and humbled by the compassion of complete strangers, who have begun to offer assistance in the form of volunteer hours, monetary donations, and even the chance to take up a collection at their place of worship," said Davenport. "While there is a real chance we will need to diminish or discontinue our services, we are holding onto hope right now. The power of ordinary citizens is an amazing thing. We believe in it with all our hearts."



A happy time would be
No more hurt or sadness
Everyone should have
A Safe Place

A Safe Place is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization based in Zion, Illinois. A Safe Place is the sole provider of services exclusively addressing domestic violence in Lake County, though it serves clients from many counties and states, never turning away a victim in need. Through multi-faceted programs, A Safe Place assists victims in transforming their lives after domestic violence, preventing future abuse by addressing its root cause through abuser intervention programs, and educating the community about domestic violence and how we can all be involved in its end. Learn more at www.ASafePlaceForHelp.org.