



Response Center

Concept Paper Presented by





Safe Futures Collaborative Overview

The Maryland Safe Futures Collaborative is a collective impact project focused on improving service coordination among state and local agencies and regional service providers and filling critical service gaps in support of those impacted by intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and/or sex trafficking (relational violence).

This is a cross-sector collaborative effort has been guided by nonprofit, public and private leaders including funders, advocates, service providers and people with lived experience as survivors.

Safe Futures Collaborative model for victim-centered collective impact brings together five agencies making up each knowledge center:

Backbone – **YWCA of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County.** State Futures Collaborative design team and guiding coalition.

Empowerment Center – **Mid-shore Council on Family Violence.** Support and empower survivors on their journey to improve self-sufficiency and break the cycle of violence in families.

Prevention Center – **Family Crisis Center of Baltimore City.** Stopping violence before it starts.

Response Center – **Turn Around.** Crisis response once violence has occurred.

Knowledge Center – **House of Ruth Maryland.** An easily accessible clearinghouse for curated content, tools and training.

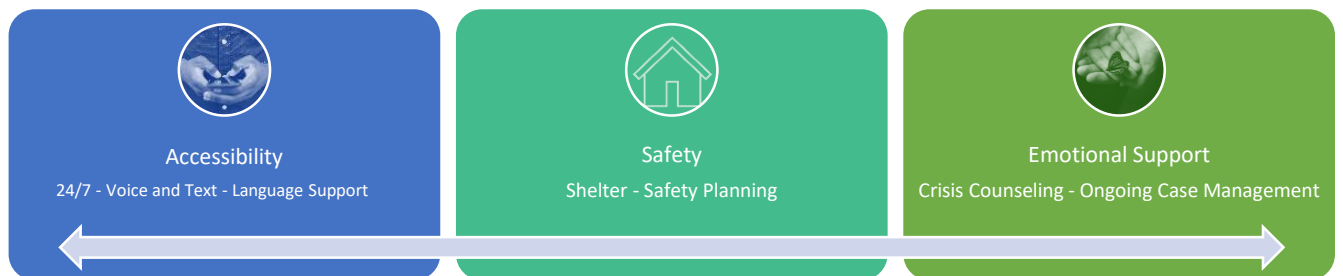




Response Center Overview

TurnAround, Inc. is the designated rape crisis center for Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and a comprehensive domestic violence center. The agency's mission is to educate, advocate for, and empower all people impacted by intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking. Victim-centered advocacy is a core service that is woven throughout TurnAround's crisis response and case management activities. In FY20, TurnAround responded to over 2,000 hotline calls. With over 40 years of experience working with survivors, extensive community partnerships, and currently serving multiple victimizations across two of the most populous jurisdictions in the state, TurnAround is well suited to take on the role of Response Center lead.

The purpose of this Center is to improve crisis response for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking through innovation, collaboration, and education. TurnAround has identified three core components of high-quality crisis response based on its extensive work in the field as depicted in Figure 1, which will be evaluated and refined through the work of the center.





Four primary goals will guide the work of the center:

1. Standardize best practices for client-centered crisis response
2. Explore and innovate 24/7 crisis response models
3. Improve warm handoffs through system-wide collaboration
4. Develop a common measurement framework for crisis response programs

Aligning with Safe Futures Maryland

The response center is critical to the collaborative's overarching goal to strengthen the continuum of care for victims and survivors in Maryland. Victim service providers often meet people for the first time at point of crisis. A single parent fleeing their abusive partner; a young victim of sex trafficking escaping their pimp; or a college student seeking support after being sexually assaulted on campus – all are in acute crisis and at risk of falling through the cracks and being revictimized if they are not quickly able to connect with trained crisis response professionals who understand the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence and know how to access community resources like shelter and counseling support.

To build the capacity of providers across Maryland to offer trauma-informed, knowledgeable crisis support, TurnAround will accomplish the following objectives:

Audit and disseminate best practices

Provide trainings on innovative 24/7 response models

Develop policies and processes for navigating warm handoffs

Develop metrics and tools for program evaluation

Key Learnings and Challenges

TurnAround operates a 24/7 Crisis Response Program focused on maintaining a hotline, facilitating access to basic needs (shelter, transportation, food, clothing), and linking victims to intensive ongoing support through clinical and case management programming. Through this work, TurnAround has developed a strong network of partners who share knowledge and resources to ensure that every victim who needs shelter in the county can access it without having to navigate the system on their own, which can be an overwhelming task for someone in crisis (See Figure 2). This experience, paired with TurnAround’s extensive history of clinical intervention, informs TurnAround’s understanding of the key components of crisis response.

1. **Accessibility** – 24/7 availability; multiple communication options (voice and text or chat); bilingual staff and/or access to language interpretation services; knowledge of and strong connections to other community resources for effective referrals.
2. **Safety** – facilitating emergency shelter arrangements, transportation, and a safety plan that is tailored to each client’s needs, circumstances, and goals.
3. **Emotional support** – having counselors available to offer grounding and coping sessions; connecting clients to case managers for ongoing support.

What’s working

Having dedicated, trained staff or volunteers on a consistent schedule to run the hotline has been invaluable to TurnAround’s ability to respond to victims in crisis. In addition, retaining a licensed trauma therapist on call for crisis appointments has strengthened TurnAround’s ability to get victims the emotional support they need in the moment of crisis without overburdening the regular clinical staff and risking their burnout. Having strong local partners has

FIGURE 2 – CASE STUDY

COORDINATED ENTRY IN BALTIMORE COUNTY

TURNAROUND, FAMILY CRISIS CENTER, AND NORTHWEST HOSPITAL’S DOVE PROGRAM FORMED THE COORDINATED ENTRY NETWORK IN EARLY 2020 TO STREAMLINE ENTRY OF VICTIMS INTO THE SYSTEM OF CARE. BY WORKING COLLABORATIVELY, THE PARTNERS DEVELOPED PROCEDURES FOR EFFICIENTLY SHARING INFORMATION AND LEVERAGING EACH ORGANIZATION’S RESOURCES, THIS REDUCES DUPLICATION OF EFFORT, ENABLES EACH PARTNER AGENCY TO FOCUS ON ITS STRENGTHS, AND ULTIMATELY CREATES A MORE EFFECTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE EXPERIENCE FOR CLIENTS.



bolstered capacity for a comprehensive, coordinated response to each client's unique circumstances. Finally, the pandemic fast-tracked the implementation of technology tools that further accessibility, such as TurnAround's new text-based hotline.

Challenges

Crisis work has significant challenges, most commonly:

- Adequate coverage for 24/7 hotline; creating backup plans for staff/volunteer absences with limited resources
- Investment in staff/volunteer training to ensure consistent and high-quality response is significant
- Incorporating new tools like texting requires thoughtful consideration and planning for security risks
- Lack of research on crisis response models necessitates constant learning, evaluating, and adjusting in real time

Knowledge + Resource Sharing

- Best Practice #1 – Provide accessible, comprehensive services
 - Bein, Davis & Green, 2016; Macy & Johns, 2011; Recknor et al., 2020; Ogbe et al., 2020
- Best Practice #2 – Staff/volunteer training and management is critical to foster client-centered, consistent service
 - Hopper, et al., 2010; Recknor et al., 2020; Ogbe et al., 2020
- Best Practice #3 – Safety first
 - Hefferman & Blythe, 2014; Logan & Walker, 2018; Ogbe et al., 2020
- Best Practice #4 – Empowerment based and customized approach
 - Hefferman & Blythe, 2014; Decker & Naugle, 2009; Logan & Walker, 2018; Ogbe et al., 2020

Links to helpful tools

- Creating a safety plan: <https://www.thehotline.org/create-a-safety-plan/>
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center Library: <https://n80002.eos-intl.net/N80002/OPAC1/Index.aspx>



- Safety planning with human trafficking victims:
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/faqs/safety-planning-information>

Looking Ahead

TurnAround will launch the Crisis Response Center in early 2021. The Center will continually evaluate for innovative and effective responses to crisis intervention. Training on TurnAround's response to crisis response and emergency services will be made available on the Salus Community.

About TurnAround

TurnAround provides comprehensive services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, Maryland. We are the only organization in the Baltimore area with the mission, expertise, and capacity to work with this range of victimizations and we are the designated rape crisis center for those jurisdictions. In addition, TurnAround is one of Maryland's comprehensive domestic violence providers and runs a certified Abuser Intervention Program. For more information, visit www.turnaroundinc.org.