



WELLSPRING

Ending relationship and sexual abuse in our community



Get Help FAQs

Wellspring provides comprehensive support services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, even during the current health crisis. Domestic violence and sexual assault are complex issues. Wellspring advocates are our full-time staff who are trained and experienced in addressing the wide range of needs that victims have. Our advocates are available to help people process their individual experience to help identify what is the best fit for the person seeking services.

All of our services are FREE & CONFIDENTIAL. Wellspring cares. We are here to help.

So many services are reduced or completely closed during this health crisis.

Is Wellspring still open?

Yes! Wellspring remains almost fully operational during this time. How we deliver services is a bit modified to meet the social distancing protocols but we are here, as we have always been, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. [You can click here to see a list of all our services and the status of those services](#) but know that a great place to start is just by calling us on our hotline, 518.584.8188, and let us know what you need. And these FAQs only cover a few of the services that we offer so please do check out the link above for more information.

I heard about a “chat” hotline. What is that?

Wellspring offers an internet-based chat hotline which is a way to connect with a Wellspring advocate through the internet (computer, tablet, or smart phone) instead of a telephone. We recognize that so many people communicate through sending written, electronic messages now (email, text message, social media) so this may be a more comfortable way of communicating, no matter the situation. We also know that many victims of domestic violence or sexual assault may not be safe enough to get help “out loud,” meaning that getting on the phone may not be quiet or private enough. The internet-based chat allows a person to connect with us without even saying a word.

How do I access the internet-based chat line?

Go to our website www.WellspringCares.org and click on “chat” which is right next to the hotline number at the top of every page. When you click on that, it will take you to the chat service. Don't worry about going to that link. Lots of people come check it out without chatting with an advocate. That's ok! A message will tell you if we are available or not. You can stay and chat or you can go, whatever makes you comfortable. Say “Hi!” and we will respond.

Please know that your privacy is paramount so any chat is completely confidential. But, while we use a chat service that has high levels of privacy, we cannot guarantee the privacy of the device that you are using. Therefore we ask that people who think that their computer/tablet/phone may not be safe and secure to call out hotline (518.584.8188) instead of using chat. Not sure if your technology is safe? [Click here to read about ways to assess if tech abuse is occurring from the National Network to End Domestic Violence \(NNEDV\).](#)

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU



I am considering leaving my home because of abuse. Is your shelter even open?

Yes! Wellspring and our sister organizations across the state continue to provide safe emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence – as individuals or as families (parent/child). We have protocols in place to reduce the risk of spreading illness. Wellspring work's hard to ensure that our shelter is a comfortable, home-like environment and we do not want people to be nervous to utilize shelter.

[Check out our website to learn more about our shelter.](#) Contact us so we can tell you all about our free and confidential shelter. Being fully informed about your rights, options, and what to expect can help you make the decision that is best for you.

Can I still get an order of protection?

Yes! Not only can you still petition family court for an order of protection, we can still help you do it while practicing social distancing. We can draft the petition by phone or in person and the courts are still presiding over emergency actions, such as an order of protection. Contact us to explore your rights and options.

Also, as always, you can report your abuser's behavior to the police and, if it rises to the level of a crime, your abuser may be arrested for those crimes and a judge could issue an order of protection. Don't know what to expect from contacting the police? Call us and we can describe the possible responses.

I was sexually assaulted. Can I still get a sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE)?

Yes! While there is so much information in the news about the impact that this public health crisis is having on hospitals, the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) and our advocates are still here for you at Saratoga Hospital and Glens Falls Hospital. The SAFE process is a critical need for those that have been harmed. You do not have to report the crime to the police to get a SAFE but you do need to have a SAFE within 96 hours of the sexual assault. While the SAFE process is designed to collect evidence it is also to make sure that your physical health is taken care of. Wellspring advocates will be there with you to discuss your rights and options which include applying for assistance from the New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS). OVS reimburses victims for any out of pocket expenses related to the crime. OVS covers the cost of the exam too so please know that this is a service to victims of sexual assault.

I am not currently being abused but I was in the past and now these recommendations to stay at home or to self-isolate are really reactivating my trauma. Is that normal?

Yes! We are hearing from so many survivors of abuse that the recommendations to stay safe during this public health crisis revive feelings of the isolation that were caused by abuse. We understand these feelings and we are here to talk to you about them. Our phone and internet-based chat hotlines are available to anyone effected by domestic violence or sexual assault, past or present.

I am not the one being abused but someone I know is. What can I do?

We suggest that you approach them with L.O.V.E. *Listen*. *Offer* support and resources. *Validate* their feelings. *Empower* then to make their own choices. Contact us and let's work though this approach so that you can feel more comfortable with helping the person being harmed.

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