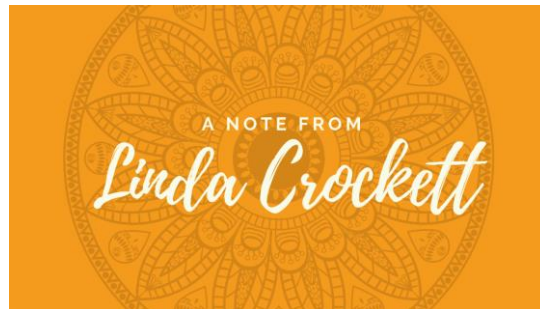




Standing Together Campaign



With support from the Lancaster Cares Fund, Safe Communities, in collaboration with the Spanish American Civic Association, Penn Medicine/LG Health, and Joining Forces for Children, is launching **Standing Together**, a bi-lingual campaign focused on educating adults in our community about child safety in four areas where COVID-19 isolation exposes them to increased risk: sexual abuse, living in a home with substance abuse, mental health, and the coronavirus itself. To learn more about the Standing Together Campaign, please click [here](#).



Letter from Linda Crockett, Founder and Director of Safe Communities

July 29, 2020

In April of 2019 we moved into our new offices at Liberty Place Lancaster as we began the transfer of our sexual abuse prevention and healing-justice programs from Samaritan Counseling Center to the new organization of Safe Communities. As anyone who has ever founded a nonprofit, small business, or has planted a church knows, many challenges you never imagined facing lie ahead, as well as moments of pure joy as you work with others in alignment with a vision that will serve your community and bring more goodness into the world.

One of the unexpected challenges for me (along with a global pandemic!) was that the amazing team that included Deb Helt and Lizz Durbin, who worked tirelessly on all the transition issues during 2019 and into early 2020, was not going to be the team that led the new organization. We shared in our May update that Pastor Deb was transitioning from a staff position to a part time consultant for the coming year. Lizz Durbin, a mom with two young children, left for a job outside of the field of sexual violence prevention in June. Lizz contributed greatly to Safe Communities, creating our new logos, website and totally rebranding our programs. She is cheering us on in this next phase!

With this, I am excited to announce that through some truly synchronistic experiences two new team members are now on board, both of them delightful to work with and highly qualified for their respective roles .



Andrea Stoner Leaman, MSW, our Program Manager, brings years of knowledge and understanding of the field of child sexual abuse. She has worked as a sexual assault prevention educator at the YWCA Lancaster. Her Master of Social Work degree included a concentration in Nonprofit Management and Planning. This led her to co-found and direct a nonprofit arts and environmental social enterprise, taking it from an idea to a full nonprofit. She is an experienced educator in a variety of settings. Andrea can be reached at andrea@safecommunitiespa.org.



Neeta Dedhia, MPA, our Office Manager, brings a strong work ethic, organizational skills and years of experience in grant management and fund raising. Sharing a passion for medicine with her husband Vinesh, Neeta practiced as a homeopathic family physician and counselor in Mumbai India until 2002. In addition, she also worked with children with multiple disabilities as a licensed Special Education teacher. She accepted a professional internship at the American Red Cross in 2003 and later received her Master of Public Administration with major in Nonprofit Management in 2005 at Baruch college in New York City. Prior to moving to Lancaster, she served as Program Coordinator with the Inner Resilience Program in New York, founded in response to the effects of the 9.11 attacks on New York City. She is currently on the Board of the South Asian Association of Lancaster. Neeta can be reached at info@safecommunitiespa.org.

I am also very pleased to announce that Alicia Haigis has agreed to join our Advisory Committee. Her passion and experience will be truly helpful in guiding us on the path forward.



Alicia Haigis, our New Advisory Committee Member, is the Administrative Manager of Kelli Folsom Fine Art. She graduated from Saint Joseph's College of Maine with her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Management. She graduated from Southern New Hampshire University with her Master of Science in Psychology and a concentration in Forensic Psychology. Alicia has been a supporter of Safe Communities since 2011. Beginning in 2018, she became co-lead for Safe Communities Resilience Cohort. Alicia's passion lies in advocating for survivors on their brave path to a healthier mind and body, empowering them to use their voices and be heard, and helping them courageously reclaim their lives. As a survivor of domestic violence, Alicia feels the importance of changing the culture for victims of abuse, and advocating for social justice and equality as a way to build stronger and healthier communities.

WITH GRATITUDE FOR YOUR SUPPORT & AN INVITATION TO DIG UP SOME ROOTS

We are extremely grateful for the support we receive from our community!

Coming into conditions of a worldwide pandemic with stay-at-home orders and widespread shutdowns during the first quarter of the new year was a strain on many mature nonprofits and robust small businesses. We are blessed to continue to receive support from our donors, many of them small contributors who stand with us to say **IT'S NOT OK** that one in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused and align themselves with our nationally recognized work to prevent it.

A recent generous gift from [Clark Associates](#) in Lancaster supports protecting children from sexual abuse, which not only has devastating effects on individuals but on entire communities. It's a root problem that contributes to many social issues when these traumatized children grow up, including addictions, suicide, domestic violence and homelessness. We simply CANNOT become a healthy community unless we pull up the roots of such issues. Local businesses supporting our work invest in the future health and prosperity of our community by stopping sexual violence against children.

Instead of squandering the lives of so many innocent children by not investing in prevention, and using so many of our nonprofit dollars to address the downstream impact of childhood sexual trauma, can you imagine what our community would look like 10 years from now if thousands more people picked up shovels to begin digging up the stubborn roots of addiction? Of suicide? Of homelessness and the many other fruits of this poison tree?

I recently talked with a survivor for whom the losses and trials of the pandemic re-activated childhood trauma. Once a professional with her own small business, she was hospitalized a few months ago by her therapist when she became suicidal. Her business and housing are gone, she lives in a room in a friend's house, and no longer sees any point in living. Memories of her father raping her, and then selling her to his friends, have become more real and present than her own precious life. "I am just a whore" she told me repeatedly, echoing her father's voice. She uses alcohol to numb herself.

If you'd like to join us in digging up these roots that spawn so much pain and creating healing spaces for survivors like this, you can pick up a shovel and get started by making a contribution of any amount. To learn how to donate, visit our web page at <https://www.safecommunitiespa.org/donate.html>

[DONATE TODAY!](#)

