



### **Vision Statement:**

“A society where intimate partners and family members treat each other with dignity, respect and compassion; where oppression is replaced with equality; where the expression of conflict and anger is non-violent; where children grow up with their esteem intact and are nurtured in such a manner they recognize the value of speaking the truth, welcoming diversity and practicing cooperation. Our vision is a society free from intimate and political wars.”

### **Mission Statement:**

The Lee Conlee House (LCH) Domestic Violence Shelter is committed to recognizing and responding to our community’s need for comprehensive, multicultural domestic violence services. We understand that domestic violence, in its fullest scope, impacts primary victims, family members, society and future generations. With this in mind, it is our goal to stop the campaign of violence by providing crisis intervention, emergency shelter, advocacy, treatment, prevention, and education through the establishment of community partnerships.

### **Herstory**

Lee Conlee House (formerly Helping Hands of Putnam County) was the vision and hard work of a group of dedicated individuals who wanted to open a shelter in Putnam County, Florida. Previously, survivors of domestic violence and their children received services in Alachua County and the distance from their support system was often a barrier.

In 1998 the first Putnam County shelter was opened. The first shelter was named after Leon Conlee, a city commissioner who was instrumental in obtaining the house. This structure was a three bedroom home with eight beds, and it also housed the first administration office.

In March of 2002 the Lee Conlee House became one of the 42 certified domestic violence centers in Florida. This certification paved the way for new funding opportunities, and in 2005 Lee Conlee House was awarded a Capital Improvement Grant through the Department of Children and Families for the purchase and renovation of a new shelter. In September 2006, Lee Conlee House was funded by the State Office on Homelessness to build Supportive housing. In May 2008 the new emergency shelter housed its first residents, and in the spring of 2009 the Supportive Housing Facility

began providing longer-term housing to women and families. The two (2) facilities provide a total of 28 community beds for survivors of intimate partner violence and their children.

In 2013 the Lee Conlee House received another Capital Improvement Grant to increase bed space. Up until this time LCH was maintaining an average of 140% of our capacity. The additional space increased LCH Emergency Shelter capacity by 8 beds. LCH now has 24 beds, four cribs and the capacity to sleep 29 individuals. The Supportive Housing Facility can also now house 12 individuals.

**Services available in Outreach, Shelter and Transitional Housing include:**

Individual Counseling  
Support Groups  
Injunction Assistance  
Victim's Compensation through the Attorney General's Office  
Legal Referral  
Community Information & Referral  
Financial Assistance (limited)  
Children's Advocacy  
Criminal Justice Advocacy

**Hope In Recovery: Women's Substance Abuse Recovery Support Group**

We understand that many women who are living in violence turn to substances such as alcohol and drugs to cope with the trauma they have experienced. Advocates with the Lee Conlee House are available to support you in your recovery. Every Tuesday evening at 5:30 p.m. women can come and meet with peers who are also on a path to sobriety. The group is confidential and you may remain anonymous. Each week advocates will facilitate group discussions around sobriety and trauma recovery. For more information about this group please call: 386-325-4447. You may participate in their group regardless of involvement in other Lee Conlee House programs.

**Children of Hope**

COH is available to meet the special needs of children who have witnessed violence. Children are given a safe place to heal from the trauma of abuse, given tools to cope, strategies for safety and educated on healthy relationships and non-violence in the hopes of ending the cycle of abuse.

**Child Welfare Program**

Domestic Violence Advocate is housed at the Department of Children and Families for the purpose of reducing the removal of children from protective parents. Increasing

safety and lower risk to children in the home can reduce the trauma of removal from a parent and reduce the number of children in foster care.

### **Rural Outreach**

Spanish speaking advocates are available in Crescent City and Interlachen to provide culturally and linguistically specific services and increase access to services for Spanish speaking families.

### **Court Program**

Advocates are available to assist survivors with filing the petitions from injunctions for protection from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence and stalking. Advocates also provide core services, make legal referrals and accompany survivors to court.

### **Prevention**

LCH Prevention Coordinator works closely with community organizations serving youth in an effort to prevent future violence. The prevention program staff conducts educational programs on health Relationships and Non-Violence and facilitates a Community Action Team with the purpose of engaging men and boys in the effort to end violence against women and girls. Additionally, the prevention program seeks to teach people how to start change in their personal lives in the hopes of creating a ripple effect that will one day end violence in our community.

### **GIFTED Economic Empowerment Program**

The Supportive Housing Coordinator organizes and conducts a financial literacy program that is offered in a class setting a couple times a week. Participants learn information to create financial independence and empowerment. They learn job skills, resume writing and budgeting.