

Office of the County Executive: Parisi announces \$1 million for domestic abuse intervention services to expand efforts as part of 2023 budget

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Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi joined Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS) Executive Director Shannon Barry and Dane County Sheriff Calvin Barrett to announce that his 2023 budget will prioritize emergency services for those facing the fear and uncertainty of how to leave abusive living situations. Parisi is allocating \$1 million for DAIS to expand crisis intervention, prevention, outreach, and education efforts in the Dane County community. These funds will help DAIS add staffing and resources, improving the ability to respond to those in crisis.

“With domestic violence, the ability to move quickly and get support to individuals in a timely fashion can be the difference between a close call and a tragic outcome. These situations can quickly become emergencies,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “It is critical that DAIS has the around the clock resources it needs, so when the window of opportunity presents to get people removed from danger, professional help is available. This \$1 million investment will help DAIS expand essential services.”

The recent tragedy of an apparent murder/suicide in a Madison home and on the Interstate raised the profile of a hidden peril too many face from domestic violence. The extreme nature of that incident highlights the need for a strong community support system for those looking to escape troubled environments before things escalate and, in some cases, turn tragic.

According to [End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin](#) (EDAW), 80 people in Wisconsin lost their lives to domestic violence in 2021, at a rate of approximately one death every 4.5 days. Of the deaths, 65 were victims of domestic violence homicide – up from 58 in 2020 – and 11 were perpetrators of homicide who died by suicide – up from 8 in 2020.

DAIS also announced today that it is launching a new 24/7 text line. The line (608-420-4638) will provide a new, confidential way for those living with abuse to reach out for assistance on everything from safety planning to the services the organization offers. This new \$1 million investment from Dane County will help DAIS add a Crisis Intervention Services Coordinator, along with three new Crisis Intervention Advocates.

“During the early days of pandemic, it became devastatingly obvious to all of us at DAIS that not everyone is ‘safer at home,’” said Shannon Barry, DAIS Executive Director. “With so many spending more time at home with their abusers, a phone conversation through our help line often wasn’t a safe option. With this new text line, people living with abuse can talk with an advocate and access DAIS services any time and do so securely and silently. It will also increase access to DAIS for those who may rely on texting as their primary mode of communication. This new text line is a game changer for many living with abuse, and we are so grateful for Dane County’s support of this life-saving program.”

More staff means more in-person support to those living with abuse and ensures the new crisis text line is monitored around the clock. These positions—along with others focused on prevention, outreach, and education—will bolster DAIS case management services for those in need of long-term support due to the barriers they face in finding safe distance from abusers and better serve those at greatest risk in the DAIS Homicide Prevention Shelter.

County Executive Parisi will introduce his full 2023 budget on Monday, October 3, 2022.