



July 2026 enCourage Newsletter

Dear Friends and Supporters,

When we talk about safe housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, we usually mean it practically: a place to sleep, a door that locks, somewhere to go. Those things matter enormously. But safe housing is also something more than that.

For some survivors, a home of their own may be the first place where they have genuine autonomy — where the decisions about what to eat, when to sleep, and who comes through the door belong entirely to them. For those who experienced violence in both childhood and adulthood, it may be the first home that has ever actually felt safe. That's not a small thing. That's a foundation for a whole life.

Housing instability is one of the most powerful forces that keeps survivors trapped in dangerous situations. When someone has nowhere affordable to go, or no money for a deposit, or no credit history in their own name, leaving becomes nearly impossible — not because they don't want to, but because the math doesn't work. Our advocates' job is to change the math.

Thanks to new state funding, enCourage has expanded our ability to provide direct financial assistance tied to housing stability. This includes help with security deposits, first month's rent, utility deposits, and other practical barriers that stand between a survivor and a safe place to live. When immediate safety requires it, we also arrange emergency hotel placements. When possible, we work to move survivors directly into stable, permanent housing — and then work with community partners and donor support to help make that space feel like a home.

If your housing has been compromised by domestic violence or sexual assault, please call us at (402) 463-5810 and speak with an advocate about what help may be available. All services are confidential, voluntary, and free.

If you'd like to support this work, cash donations give us the flexibility to meet each survivor's specific needs — the right items, at the right time. You can give at <https://encouragecenter.org/get-involved/giving/>.

With hope,

Jo Bair, MSW



Your Influence Matters More Than You Think

**HOW DO YOU PRIORITIZE
SELF-CARE WHILE
ACTIVELY ENGAGING IN
BYSTANDER
INTERVENTION?**



Every individual has the power to influence their environment. Green Dot reminds us that even small actions can have a ripple effect. A timely word, a supportive gesture, or a distraction can change the course of a situation. This month, reflect on your influence. Identify moments where you can safely intervene, mentor, or guide others toward positive behavior. Awareness and intentional action are key. By consistently making safe choices, you help create a culture where harmful behavior is less tolerated and supportive, respectful interactions are the norm.

For questions or to schedule a Green Dot Training at your business or organization, email greendot@encouragecenter.org



When: Friday, July 24 ■ 9 AM - 12 PM

Where: Encourage Advocacy Center, Hastings, NE

Lunch will be provided immediately following the training.

**Scan the QR Code to register to
attend this FREE training**





You Are Not a Firecracker

Maybe you've said it about yourself: short fuse, explosive temper, I just go off. The people who live with you might believe it too — they've learned to watch every step, waiting for the bang. But here's where the comparison falls apart. A firecracker has no say in what it does. Light the fuse and it goes off — every time, for anyone. You're not like that, and you know it. The same man who "can't help it" at home helps it just fine in front of his boss, a cop, a judge. That's not a fuse burning down. That's a decision about where it's safe to explode.

Which is why there's no such thing as an "anger problem." Everyone feels anger. What we do with it — how we read the moment, what we tell ourselves it means, what we choose next — that's where the problem lives. Lundy Bancroft, who spent decades working with men like the ones in our groups, put it plainly: "He isn't abusive because he is angry; he's angry because he's abusive."

And that's actually good news. A firecracker only ever gets to be one thing. You don't. What was chosen can be chosen differently — and the choosing is yours.

If any of this sounds like you — or like someone you love — that's not a reason to feel ashamed. It's a reason to call. Our office is at (402) 463-5810, and the conversation is confidential. Choosing differently starts somewhere. It can start here.



- Wanting to volunteer at enCourage? If interested in volunteering, please call 402-463-5810 and ask for Shawna.
- We also always accept donations of clothing, household items, gently used toys, kitchen items, toiletries, size 4 and up diapers, laundry detergent, and unlocked, working cellphones.
- We are currently looking for individuals who would be available to foster pets for survivors fleeing violence. If interested, please call 402-463-5810 and ask for Shawna.



Each Tuesday from 4-5 pm (new time) enCourage hosts a peer support group. This group gives attendees time to connect with other survivors and discuss and practice new skills that help attendees recover and thrive after violence. We discuss what healthy relationships look and feel like. Learn healthy ways to manage obstacles and overcome the insecurities that develop from trauma and end the cycle of violence. Email shawna@encouragecenter.org for questions.



- Every Tuesday from 4:30 - 6 pm, we offer a Support Group at enCourage Advocacy Center and a Healthy Healing Educational Group from 5 - 6 pm.
- Each month on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 1 - 3 pm, the Nebraska Aids Project will be at enCourage Advocacy Center providing Free and Confidential HIV and STI Testing. Contact Heather for an appointment by emailing HeatherB@nap.org. Walk-ins are also welcome.
- Bloom Camp 2026 is fast approaching. This is a 3-day camp from 8/4 - 8/6/2026 from 9 am - 2 pm each day at the Prairie Loft. This camp is for youth in 6th - 8th grades for the 2026-27 school year. The curriculum focuses on building confidence and connection with both self and others in a natural outdoor setting.

Bloom Camp

Inspiring youth to *Bloom* into their best selves



For youth grades
6th - 8th

**AUGUST 4TH - 6TH FROM
9 AM - 2 PM EACH DAY**

Prairie Loft Center 4705 DLD Road west of Hastings

CONFIDENCE

CONNECTION

CREATIVITY



For more info or to register your child scan the QR code or call 402-463-5810

