

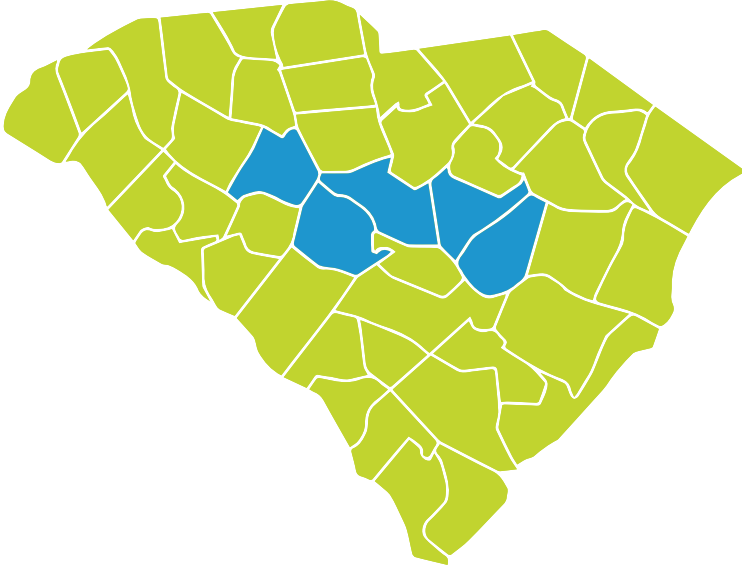


sexual trauma services

2019-2020 IMPACT REPORT

Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands

is represented in five counties across South Carolina—
Richland, Lexington, Sumter, Clarendon, and Newberry.



EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Our team of highly trained staff and volunteers help the community to identify and prevent sexual violence. We offer a variety of training opportunities and information for children, parents, and adults. **STSM** staff can customize any presentation to meet the unique needs of your audience.

LEGAL ADVOCACY

Legal systems are complicated and can be difficult for survivors to navigate after an assault. Legal Advocacy is a service devoted to helping survivors navigate their way through the process if they are already involved or may become involved in a court case. **STSM**'s advocates are specially trained to provide legal advocacy and our goal is to not let survivors fall through the cracks without the support and resources they deserve.

CLINICAL SERVICES

STSM staff and advocates serve survivors of sexual violence from all walks of life and at all stages of the healing process. All our services are confidential and provided at no cost to survivors and their loved ones.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

We believe prevention education is the key to creating a community free from sexual violence. Our evidence-based, primary prevention programming is designed to disrupt harmful attitudes and stereotypes that perpetuate the cycle of sexual violence. We offer an array of opportunities for groups and individuals to learn how they can be part of this solution. From one-time sessions to in-depth trainings, we are committed to helping you find what you need to create change.

STSM is proud to announce our in-house developed curriculum, Building Healthy Communities © (BHC), was proven effective by a thorough evaluation completed by Johns Hopkins University. Designed for adults, middle and high school students, BHC is an evidence-based practice that prevents interpersonal and sexual violence. BHC addresses risk and protective factors associated with perpetration, while simultaneously building skills necessary for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Johns Hopkins found that BHC “...showed positive effects across all topics for high school students, and most topics for middle school students... This study highlights the promising nature of BHC as one avenue to improve sexual violence prevention among adolescents.”



“I believe that this will be a great help to our students, not just now but in the future... This training is much needed for every child so they can have healthy relationships in the future.”

-Teacher whose classroom received BHC education

LEGAL ADVOCACY

STSM's Legal Advocacy program expanded its services to survivors this year. The team's focus has been to support, inform, refer, and connect:

Support – Accompaniment to court, law enforcement or prosecutor meetings, forensic interviews, or any other legal system event as a result of a sexual assault, as well as making efforts to get updates for survivors on criminal cases.

Inform – Answering general questions about the criminal justice system, providing information on what to expect when involved in a legal system, or information on reporting an assault.

Refer – Helping survivors identify legal issues or safety concerns that occur because of a sexual assault, and in appropriate circumstances, connecting survivors with legal services or referrals to address these needs.

Connect – Building strong partnerships with law enforcement, prosecutors, legal agencies, service providers, and others who play an integral role in cases where survivors are involved, to better serve survivors together.

The Legal Advocacy team also trained **55** members of community law enforcement on **STSM**'s services and trauma informed policing.



CLINICAL SERVICES

STSM provided **16,250** services to **1,772** survivors of sexual assault and their loved ones.

STSM now offers services via telehealth, which can remove boundaries for survivors seeking support. All clinical staff members are now trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), adding to the array of services available to all survivors at **STSM**. EMDR is cutting-edge for the treatment of trauma, and we are proud to be able to offer it on such a large scale.

VOLUNTEERS

STSM was founded by volunteers and they continue to be critical in furthering our mission to support survivors and prevent sexual violence. Often, a volunteer is the first contact a survivor has with **STSM**; they are the first face a survivor sees after an assault, voice they hear on the hotline, and the first person who connects them with life changing services at **STSM**. Volunteers answer the 24-hour hotline, accompany survivors at the hospital, attend community events to raise awareness of **STSM**'s services, and assist staff.

Last year, **79 STSM** volunteers donated **15,827** hours. Their collective time is valued at **\$395,675**.

Three **STSM** Volunteers were recognized and awarded for their incredible volunteer service this past year!

Tierra Moore: SC Victim Assistance Network Volunteer of the Year

Darryl Hammond: United Way of the Midlands' Community Impact Award

Marty Pressley-Turner: Direct Service Volunteer Award at the SC Governor's Volunteer Awards

"I've seen my loved ones struggle to heal after an assault due to a lack of community resources. I'm so proud to be a part of this organization and its vision of healthy survivors, thriving in a community free of sexual violence."

-STSM Volunteer



THANKS TO YOU...

STSM's services for survivors and their loved ones are provided at no cost to them – and it's all because of donors and volunteers who give generously of their resources, time, and talents.



Did you know?

Real life examples of the value of **STSM** services:

\$121 provides a counseling or legal advocacy session for a survivor

\$250 provides a classroom of children with violence prevention education

\$1,128 provides clinical services to a survivor for a year

Our donors are individuals, corporations, & organizations. We are so grateful that these people and groups share our mission for healthy survivors and a community free of sexual violence – for all of us.

“Your donations are crucial to the important work STSM does, in the form of clinical services and in prevention education. By focusing on both the treatment and the prevention of sexual violence, STSM is making a significant impact in the lives of all South Carolinians.”

-Virginia, STSM Board Member

“STSM is an organization that supports survivors in every step of their journey. The piece that makes me most appreciative of their services is the preventative work, which includes education to school-aged children and adolescents to develop healthy relationships. Wouldn't it be nice to live in a world free of sexual violence? STSM will make every dollar you give count!”

-Katherine, STSM Board Member

INTERESTED IN GIVING?

Visit **www.stsm.org** and click **Donate Now**, or contact **STSM** at **803-790-8208**.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear **STSM** Supporters:

During the past year, Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands has experienced challenges that have redefined our organization but have not changed the focus on our mission. **STSM** and the Board of Directors selected and onboarded a new Executive Director, worked through changes due to federal budget reductions, and ensured services continue during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite an 18% budget reduction in federal funding that impacted agencies statewide, along with the cancellation of our biggest annual fundraiser, *Walk a Mile In Their Shoes* (due to the global pandemic), we continue to fulfill our mission. Our commitment to serving survivors, educating the community, and preventing sexual violence is as strong as ever. While these challenges have presented growing pains, they have also given us the opportunity to develop creative, more cost-effective ways to achieve our mission and reach more survivors.



In June 2020, we entered a partnership with the Pee Dee Coalition's Durant Center in Sumter, SC. At the Durant Center, a Child Advocacy Center that serves child sexual assault victims, **STSM** provides staff on-site to serve children over the age of 8 and their loved ones. To meet higher needs areas in Lexington County, we entered a partnership with Lexington County Mental Health to provide services on-site at their Gaston office. Recognizing the link between intimate partner and sexual violence, we have also partnered with SisterCare to provide services for domestic violence victims in Lexington County. We are pleased to announce that transitioning to community-based models in these counties not only allows us to serve clients during their greatest time of need, but also reduces leasing expenses.

Like others, we had to adapt quickly to changes COVID-19 forced upon us. To ensure the safety of our clients, staff, and volunteers during the pandemic, we transitioned to telehealth services and will continue this new offering as part of our full menu of services once we are back to the office. Some survivors prefer the telehealth method, mentioning that they feel more comfortable with it than coming to a physical office. Some expressed they prefer telehealth because the name of our agency is often a barrier for them seeking services. Based on this feedback, the Board of Directors is exploring rebranding and renaming our agency to ensure our services are accessible.

Change can sometimes cause discomfort, but the recent changes at **STSM** will allow us to serve more survivors, while continuing to use agency resources in a responsible and meaningful way. We are committed to working collaboratively with the community to eliminate barriers and increase access to supportive services during a survivors' greatest time of need. Thank you for your commitment to our mission and supporting us through this transition. With your invaluable assistance and support, we will continue to serve survivors, educate the community, and work together to end sexual violence.

Please reach out to us with any questions or concerns. We welcome your feedback as important partners of the organization.

Supporting Survivors Together,
Rebecca Lorick, Executive Director



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