



BOARD PACKET

2021



OUR MISSION

At DIVAS Who Win, we meet women in various stages of recovery and healing. We look for every possible opportunity to help them **Develop Intentional Victory And Success.**

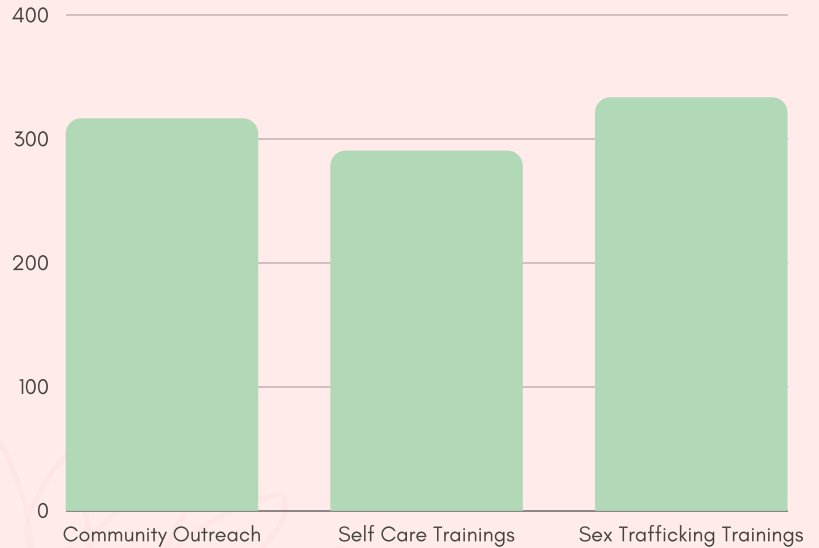
DIVAS mission is to create a safe space that destroys stigma and restores dignity to help women overcoming addiction, sex work, and/or sex trafficking. DIVAS provides services, training workshops, peer support, advocacy, and referrals using community partners and the DIVAS staff who serve Northeast Georgia.



STATISTICS 2017-2020

14,260 Peer Support Services

In the three years prior to COVID-19, DIVAS Who Win Freedom Center has impacted clients across the greater Athens-Clarke County area to support women in a variety of micro-related ways including, but not limited to: workplace preparedness, legal peer advocacy, mental and emotional peer support, providing referrals, offering a place to practice creativity in the art room, offering therapists and counselors a location to lead group therapies, providing clients with housing options and clothing, as well as acting as a place of belonging for survivors, those in recovery or those working toward recovery, and those aiming to find female-led peer support in a safe environment. In addition DIVAS leads prevention and awareness efforts through our community outreach efforts, self-care trainings, and our sex trafficking trainings.



A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDER



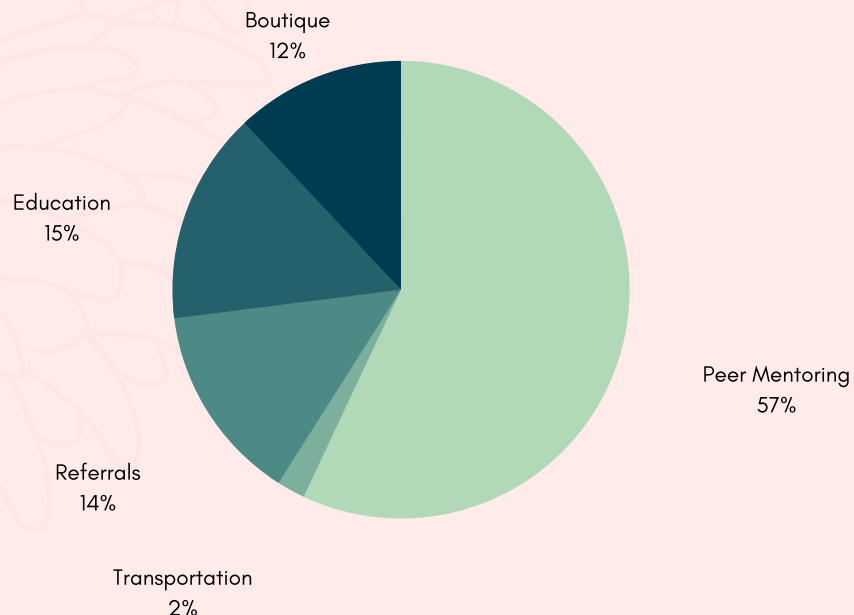
"I am a survivor of sexual trauma, domestic violence, divorce, addiction, and the parent of a child that was trafficked. And, based on my own experience and transformations of women around me, I have no doubt that women recover better from hard experiences when they do so together. That is why I opened the doors of the DIVAS Who Win Freedom Center.

Women everywhere are hurting and alone. I'd like to change that. Through the grace of God and with your help, I am confident we can."

With hope,
Chanda

WHO WE IMPACT

DIVAS have a large reach because we address the intersections of substance abuse, trafficking, and sex work. We believe women face multiple barriers to success and in order to serve clients well we have to be willing to understand how trauma(s) impact survivors and those in recovery. We offer multiple services and on a weekly basis, we on average use our time based on the chart on the right.



THE FREEDOM CENTER

The Freedom Center is DIVAS Headquarters located on Hawthorne Avenue, we are open for women to come and go during business hours. The Freedom Center is focused on restoring dignity and dissolving shame by providing a place for women to connect with a peer support counselor and support groups in order to receive a variety of services.

When women enter for the first time, they are greeted by our founder, Chanda, or one of our peer coaches, all of whom are survivors of trauma and have overcome addiction themselves. Throughout their initial tour, women hear stories of survival and clearly see that, with the right support, wellness is within their reach. From here, clients are given free access to an array of programs, including:

- Work Readiness Program
- Self-Care Parlor
- Faith Pathways & 12-Step Programs
- Resource Center
- Community Kitchen
- Art Center
- Massage & Retreat Center
- Living Room (Support Groups)
- Leisure Room





THE FREEDOM BOUTIQUE

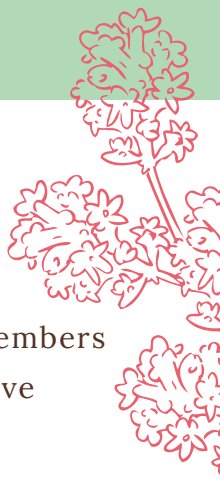
The Freedom Boutique located on Tracy Street has walls adorned with anti-trafficking messages, data, and shelves filled with “power” as we boast the creations of human trafficking survivors both far and wide.

The Freedom Boutique carries preloved lines of women’s apparel, moderately priced \$5-\$35 clothing, shoes, jewelry, intimates, and more. Community members can fill their basket, educate themselves, and empower survivors buy shopping at our boutique. ALL proceeds directly support the mission of DIVAS Who Win Freedom Center and our efforts to launch, the Freedom House.

The Freedom Boutique aims to become a sustainable retail location which helps to fund small portions of DIVAS work. Additionally, the boutique will one day employ survivors in need of employment. We hope to make the boutique adjacent to our current efforts to launch the Freedom Experience, an exhibit aimed at educating the public about sex trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.



BECOME A BOARD MEMBER



Our Board of Directors serves as the heart of our organization, consisting of members with unique strengths. Many of our Board of Directors are visionaries, or creative thinkers, or worker bees, or money-savvy planners, or people connectors.

We do not discriminate on any basis, nor do we tolerate bullying, hate, or unproductive negativity. As our organization grows and evolves, we strive for diversity on our Board—diversity in age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, and life experience.

Board members are chosen based on a person's skill set and past experiences with the goal of creating a well-rounded board that represents the community we serve.

The Need for Peer Support Services and Our Impact

Women have long had specific needs related to healing and recovery, but particularly women who have experienced various traumas including, but not limited to: sexual violence, domestic violence, substance abuse disorders, and/or the impacts of being a mother in prison, women need other women to support their wellness and roads to recovery.

In addition, substance abuse in the state of Georgia is far reaching. According to the Southeast Addiction Center, in 2018:

- There were over 130 opioid-related drug overdoses every day in America.
- Over 10 million people reported that they misused prescription opioids in one form or another in 2018.
- 47,600 people died from opioid-related overdoses in 2018 (15,349 attributed to heroin).
- 2 million people reported that they had an opioid use disorder.
- Over 800,000 people reported that they used heroin.
- 81,000 people reported that they used heroin for the first time.

These numbers have only become larger over the last two years according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And according to the CDC, women struggling with traumas related to sexual or domestic violence are at an even higher risk of (ab)using substances.

WHAT WE DO



How does DIVAS work?

DIVAS Who Win is a 501(c)(3) structured by a community-controlled peer support methodology and community-based participatory model. In addition, DIVAS acts as a wraparound services facility where clients can engage in various services in one location. DIVAS thrives, because every staff member and DIVAS founder have personally experienced the same struggles many of DIVAS's clients seek assistance with when they arrive at our Freedom Center.

A Community-Controlled Peer Support Method

Peer support services have become an innovative and grassroots method to providing behavioral healthcare support systems.* Peer support centers the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced trauma(s), substance abuse, and/or economic struggles. The use of peer support is central to our mission and DIVAS staff use our lived experiences to guide how we approach our work with clients. While every client is different and our lived experiences are individualized, we help clients to access their agency, find a place of belonging, and we empower them and assist them in seeking healing services while also providing them with: clothing, artistic healing, work-readiness training, peer support groups that are informed by the 12-Step program, and by offering them a safe place to find support.

Prevention Efforts

As DIVAS has grown, we have seen a real need for prevention through trainings related to sex trafficking and storytelling. We believe storytelling is a key aspect of healing and making visible the stories of women who have survived and recovered. In our sex trafficking training workshops, attendees learn more about the personal experiences of our founder's story and they gain valuable knowledge about preventing the sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of youth. As we move to expand DIVAS's mission, we hope to build new prevention trainings and experiences, like: The Freedom Experience exhibit which will act as an interactive training for those interested in learning more about the stories of trafficked youth.

*Citation: Myrick, Keris and Paolo del Vecchio. "Peer Support Services in the Behavioral Healthcare Workforce: State of the Field." *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal* 39, no. 3 (2016): 197-203.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT DIVAS

DIVAS is in the process of expanding our efforts. We have more than doubled in size and square footage in the last three years! And now we are looking for board members who are willing to:

- **Support DIVAS mission** to serve women with intersecting traumas, strengths, and barriers;
- **Advance DIVAS development and fundraising** by leading donor efforts;
- **Increase DIVAS visibility** across various agencies and community partners;
- **Assist DIVAS in future efforts** including, but not limited to launching the Freedom Experience and in the opening of the Freedom House.

We are looking for new Executive Board Members to sustain our work while assisting DIVAS to grow and thrive!



TIME & DONTATION EXPECTATIONS

As a future Board Member, we anticipate you will be involved with DIVAS events, community outreach, and financial development support. We anticipate all board members to attend 1-hour Board meetings every other month or attend 4 of the 6 Board meetings annually. We value board members who are willing to assist DIVAS with outreach, event attendance, volunteering, and/or fundraising efforts. You are welcome to serve on the board for two years and return to the board after one year off for another two years.

All board members should make DIVAS one of the giving commitments you donate to annually. DIVAS does not require a set amount of monetary donations, and you are welcome to give in the form of volunteering as well, particularly if you are in recovery yourself.



DIVAS GOALS FOR 2021 AND BEYOND

Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 has certainly impacted the number of hours we have been able to directly connect with our community and clients. The Boutique (a source of funding for DIVAS) was delayed in opening as a result of the pandemic.

Future Projects:

DIVAS is the process of creating the **Freedom Experience**, an interactive child sex trafficking and child commercial sexual exploitation training center, where participants will walk through a museum-like exhibit with data and personal items to give voice to the stories of women and girls who have survived being trafficked and/or exploited.

DIVAS is also looking to expand our Board, broaden our impact, and extend our training and prevention efforts. We hope to create:

- **The Freedom House:** A safe house for women and their children to heal in a cost-free residence with other women who have experiences trafficking and/or substance abuse
- **The Fight Inn:** A hotel training designed by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to educate hotel and motel owners on how to identify trafficking
- **She Sews:** A place for survivors to learn how to develop a skill in textile work so she can make her own clothing and potentially sell her items
- **Clean Life:** A brand designed by DIVAS to sell products made by survivors living the Freedom House.



SELECT COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Our community partners help to serve our clients, make up our referral list, and provide financial support.

Acceptance Recovery Center

Advantage Behavioral Health Systems

Classic City Church

Creature Comforts Brewing Company

Freedom From Bondage

Georgia Counsel on Substance Abuse

Give Back Real Estate

Lion Leadership

New Beginnings

New Life Bible Church

Northeast Georgia Hospital System

Palm House Recovery Centers

Project Safe

Salvation Army

Second Chance Recovery Center

Southside Church

The Cottage Sexual Assault and Children's Advocacy Center

Are you ready to become a Board Member?

Thank you for considering becoming a Board Member at DIVAS!

Please click on the link below to complete the online application, and we will be in touch with additional details soon.



[BOARD APPLICATION LINK \(click\).](#)

DIVAS Freedom Center Location:

645 Hawthorne Avenue, Athens GA
30606



Contact Information:



706-850-5945



info@divaswhowin.org



Website: divaswhowin.org

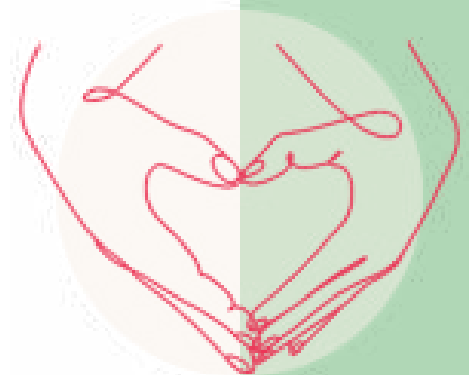
DIVAS Freedom Boutique Location:

160 Tracy Street, Suite 2B & 2C,
Athens, GA 30601

Store Hours:

Monday-Friday: 10:00AM-6:00PM

Saturday: 10:00AM-3:00PM



@divaswhowin1