

The Lorena Panozzo Center for Domestic Violence Services and Prevention *Four Key Service Areas*



1

Professional, Confidential Programs Area

Behind these doors, survivors find support. For the first time for many, they are not told what to do, but asked what they need. This area includes, but not limited to, offices for counseling, legal advocacy, case management, client advocacy, and more.



2

Thomas and Maureen O'Connor Family Foundation Group Healing Area

A space where everyone is welcome and no one has to feel alone. They can connect, heal, and grow side-by-side with fellow survivors. Spaces included here are the children's playroom, living room, recreation room, kitchen, and more.



3

Family Rooms Shelter Area

The large and small family units are where children play during the day and dream at night. Families can gather in apartments filled with gentle routines, warm meals, and the quiet comfort of safety.



4

Charlton Family Foundation Individual Rooms Shelter Area

Within these walls, silence is peaceful, not punishing. Survivors are able to have their own room to rest, reflect, and rise again.

The Lorena Panozzo Center for Domestic Violence Services and Prevention



What is a trauma-informed facility?

Trauma-informed care is a framework that shapes how organizations should design services, spaces, and interactions to support people who have experienced trauma. For Harbor House and for survivors of domestic violence, this approach is essential. It recognizes that survivors are not just seeking physical safety, but also emotional security, dignity, and the opportunity to heal.

At its core, trauma-informed care is grounded in understanding how trauma impacts the brain, body, and behavior. Survivors of domestic violence often experience heightened anxiety, hypervigilance, and difficulty trusting others. Trauma-informed care doesn't ask, *"What's wrong with you?"* instead, *"What happened to you?"* and *"How can we create an environment where you feel safe and empowered?"*

When Harbor House says the Lorena Panozzo Center is a **trauma-informed facility**, it means we are integrating the trauma-informed care philosophy into the design of the facility.

After site visits to other shelters, phone interviews with agencies throughout the state, internal focus groups, and research of best practices, Harbor House's board of directors, staff, and contractors created a survivor-centered, trauma-informed floorplan with with three key objectives:

- **Safety** – Both physical and emotional safety are prioritized. This means creating spaces where survivors feel secure, but also where they are free from judgment, pressure, or re-traumatization.
- **Trust** – Clear communication and consistent expectations help rebuild a survivor's sense of trust, which is often deeply impacted by abuse.
- **Empowerment** – Survivors are given options and autonomy whenever possible. This restores a sense of control that may have been taken from them in abusive situations.

So what does that actually look like in practice?

The Lorena Panozzo Center for Domestic Violence Services and Prevention will have **thoughtfully-designed spaces** that **reduce stress and promote calm** through **natural lighting, soft colors, and private areas** where survivors can decompress. It means balancing safety with comfort and ensuring secure entry points without making the environment feel institutional or restrictive.

For families, trauma-informed design considers the needs of children and teens, who are also impacted by domestic violence. Safe, welcoming play areas and family-friendly spaces help children feel secure and supported. Louder, game-focused spaces provide teens a place to be themselves and meet new friends.

Even small details matter. The layout of rooms, noise levels, accessibility, and the ability for residents to make choices about their daily routines all contribute to a sense of stability and empowerment.

Ultimately, trauma-informed care is about restoring what trauma takes away: safety, control, trust, and connection. By embedding these principles into both its services and physical space, Harbor House is not just providing programs—it is creating an environment where survivors can begin to heal, rebuild, and move forward on their own terms.