Picking grapes light & lively at the 2020 Annual National Gathering
Table of Contents

AVP-USA Over a Decade [3]
Committee for Local and Regional Groups (CLARG) [5]
2020 by the Numbers [7]
2020 wasn't about the numbers [8]

Regional Data [16]

- Central Midwest [17]
- Mid-Atlantic [21]
- Midwest [26]
- New England [29]
- New York [36]
- Northern Midwest [39]
- Northwest [43]
- PA & NJ [46]
- Rocky Mountain [48]
- South Central [51]
- Southeast [52]
- Southwest [56]
AVP-USA over a DECADE
2010-2019

Workshop Growth

Participant Growth

Our cumulative power for peace has reached 148,633 participants in 11,469 workshops over the last decade.
AVP-USA's prison workshops have consistently grown over the years. Community and youth workshops have experienced hills and valleys with numbers, showing it is much harder to sustain community based programs.

Similarities in percentages of participants to workshops could indicate local groups are holding less workshops in the community to have larger participation groups.
Committee for Local and Regional Groups

CLARG supports existing and emerging local groups, and is responsible for empowering and nurturing existing and emerging local AVP-USA groups.

We are one of many national committees comprised of facilitators from across the country. Each year we offer up to $6000 in grants to local groups and work to collect data from our grassroots efforts to show the collective impact of AVP-USA through an annual report.

This report was completed by CLARG Co-Chair Mital Lyons-Warren with support of the CLARG Representatives and local groups.
Co-Chairs Mital Lyons-Warren and Alphonso Simmons

Reach out to us at CLARGREPS@AVPUSA.ORG
For calendar year 2020, AVP-USA received a total of $24,213.50 in donations. This includes donations through the store, recurring donations, annual fund appeal donations, donations from Friends Meetings, and memorial gifts.
What we learned last year is that 2020 wasn't about the numbers. It was about the sense of community we built through what seemed like a bajillion zoom calls. We all made major moves in both our personal and AVP lives. With health and safety restrictions we pivoted how we engaged our AVP community, with adaptations becoming the new normal. We harnessed our collective creativity to stay connected. At the beginning we were there for one another providing space online for check-ins so that everyone had a chance to share in detail about the challenges of coping during the pandemic.

Acquiring technical skills took time but allowed us to host virtual workshops, create space for continued engagement of facilitators through gatherings, brainstorm and practice sessions and team building. Some local groups took this time to focus on their local organization, updating by-laws and policies and working towards intentional anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion. We also continued to strengthen local relationships through non technology forms to be inclusive to all technology levels.

Many local groups had to put the standard engagement they had with inside facilitators on hold. Filling their engagement opportunities with newsletters, emails through JPay and regular mail. Some were able to use new technology to meet with inside facilitators virtually.

All of this to say, AVP did not go on pause in 2020. We learned we are resilient because we are together.
It was about strengthening our existing community bonds.

It was about the desire to grow with one another even through conflict and difficulty.

It was about creating structures for long term growth prosperity.

It was about maintaining beloved community in the face of pandemic.
Even though in-person workshops were put on pause starting in March 2020, AVP-USA utilized our creative conflict resolution skills to continue to create community.

*Held virtual minis to keep up the energy for AVP*
(AVP CA, AVP NY, AVP IN, AVP DE, AVP MD, AVP MN)

*Created newsletters to connect both inside and community based facilitators*
(AVP NE, AVP FL, AVP MA, AVP CA, AVP NY, AVP MD, AVP MN)

*Practiced AVP in any way they could!*
Compassionate Witnessing, Restorative justice practices, trauma informed care, AVP club, community circles, and book clubs
(AVP CA, AVP CO, AVP NE, AVP DC, AVP MN)

*Hosted virtual gatherings*
(AVP CA, AVP MD, AVP IN, AVP CO)
The pandemic changed how we create and sustain communities. AVP is all about sharing who we are and where we are going. With the majority of our workshops being in prisons, many groups had to adapt how they communicated, if they could at all, with their inside facilitators, key parts to the AVP community.

Groups continued to send The Transformer, as well as their own newsletters in. Some groups were able to send messages through the volunteer coordinator, while some were able to hold virtual workshops.

In addition to monthly letters, we worked on developing a virtual workshop, which allowed us to meet twice with trios of inside facilitators. Their enthusiasm and innovative thinking contributed importantly both to our understanding of how they were handling virus restrictions and also to how we inside and outside facilitators could develop a hybrid-virtual agenda (AVP Northern New Mexico).

To keep in touch with our inside facilitators, we have been sending power point slides to be added to the "titler" for access for each individual who knows of us or may be interested in AVP (AVP CO).

Some Prison Coordinators have gotten approval from administrators at certain prisons to bring AVP exercises and related written activities to share with inside facilitators. (AVP CA)
Many local groups have pushed themselves to innovate around how we connect and open the possibility of who we can connect with. Some of the ways local groups fostered a sense of connection and support was...

- Joining other local groups online workshops as participants to learn from one another. This was at the national and international level
- Submitted articles to The Transformer
- Attended the 2020 virtual Annual National Gathering
- Made connections within their regions via Zoom
- Attended the virtual AVP International gathering
- Joined or continued work on AVP-USA committees
- Peace Fellows Program
In 2020 TWO AVP-USA local chapters started...

AVP Rhode Island (AVPRI) & AVP District of Columbia (AVPDC)
The story of AVPRI began in 1988, when Bobbi Houllahan organized a prison workshop led by “Smilin'" Steve Angell at the ACI (Adult Correctional Institute) of Rhode Island (RI). A program of workshops was created and continued at the ACI with a group of five stalwart facilitators through 2001. The RI Council of Churches held AVP donations in a special account. When the group of five AVP RI trainers disbanded for professional, health or site reasons, the group members continued to offer community workshops.

During fall 2019 Em McManamy contacted Bobbi with a meeting arranged to share all RI contacts, history and updated information to reignite the flame! In January 2020, Em, with the assistance of Bobbi, held a teaser event at the invitation of the Nonviolence Institute in Providence RI, where it was determined that there was a lot of interest in re-building AVPRI. Accordingly, 3 workshops were held via zoom in the midst of COVID-19, which were very well attended, some with two simultaneous zoom rooms to accommodate the interest. Yes, the lions, the tigers, the bears, and the Oh! and My! Thirteen new facilitators were fully trained! Local seasoned facilitators (Chris Campbell, Sandra Thaxter, Kathy Desilets and Donna Nowak from MA) and visitors from afar (Kevin King from Texas and Margaret Lechner from Indiana) worked hard to adapt AVP to zoom.

Out of this group of trainees, Em’s group organized an official AVPRI non-profit organization, with apprentice facilitators Pastor Howard Jenkins, Marcus Mitchell, Michelle Miceli, and Robert Watt Esq. joining her on the board of directors. The project has experienced tremendous interest, including from the RI Training School (RI’s youth detention program) and other RI organizations. AVPRI is alive and growing!

Reported by Bobbi Houllahan and Em McManamy, April 2021
We have worked out a hybrid-virtual workshop for a correctional facility, but have not yet tried it because of intermittent COVID outbreaks at the facility. Because insiders are not allowed to use the internet at individual computers (thus, no true Zoom), we developed an agenda that has two outside facilitators attending virtually on a Smartboard while the insiders social distance in a large room. Many meetings (inside and outside and together) led to the development of this untried agenda, as we worked out groupings, facilitation assignment, and how to incorporate Zoom functions.

**Community Spotlight: AVP California**

The CA Steering Committee is reviewing recommendations from the "Special Training Team" for best practices in virtual workshop training.

1. Incorporate "Community Agreements" for virtual environments along with the in-person "Community Agreements".
   a. Examples include: We agree to (a) Keep video on until a break so that we don't break the circle; (b) Have many short breaks; (c) Keep muted until your turn to speak; (d) Stay in the "Circle" or "Breakout Room"; be in a room without distractions, including outside cell calls; (e) Sit close to the computer . . . so that all participants can be seen; this is good for gatherings.

2. Some sample best practices recommendations for virtual workshops (These are under review, and therefore revisions, additions, deletions are probable):
   a. Give phone numbers for the tech and host in case someone is kicked off Internet and cannot get back in; (b) Include at least one Zoom technical expert on the AVP team, best to have 2 or 3; (c) Agree that the host will turn off Chat for participants during a session and while on breaks; (d) Recommend that participants use a desktop or laptop rather than a phone or ipad, for the best experience; (e) Have one facilitator enter questions/prompts, gatherings into chat box, while presenter is speaking.
Regional Data
ISP (a correctional facility) has a new Treatment Director who started just before the pandemic. We had had the same one for years and he was not a fan of treatment programs including AVP. The new Treatment Director seemed like he was going to be great to work with. We met him once when he came down to the room where we have our workshops during a workshop break and was very encouraging.

Inside facilitator who was transferred to Anamosa encouraged the treatment director there to contact the group to help them re-start AVP. Planned to meet when the pandemic hit. Not sure what will happen with that now.
Nebraska

REPORT BY: Marge Schlitt, Nan Schweiger, Joan Wagerman and Pam Hart

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
1 Basic, 17 participants
1 Advanced, 16 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

Lincoln Friends Meeting House

JOYS

Efforts are made to connect our Omaha group by Zooming each month. For 3 months we studied and discussed topics from the manual especially 1) transforming power 2) violence. Another time, Pam Hart (who had taught Criminal Justice) gave a presentation. AMERICAN POLICING- How did we get here? Now the Omaha group zooms monthly with the Lincoln AVP group, to stay connected, to share prison news and to share educational opportunities.

JOYS CONT.

Our greatest joy has been the realization that we could keep our AVP group together with a monthly newsletter. Almost all of our facilitators, inside and outside have sent at least one message to the newsletter, making it for interesting reading. Three of us who do workshops at the NE State Penitentiary were able to record holiday messages, solicited by the Department of Corrections, which were played on the in-house TV channel.

We also have had monthly "business meetings" via Zoom. Since there hasn't been much business to make decisions about, we have broadened the discussions to include current events and other topics. The combination of the newsletter and the Zoom meetings means that our AVP family is nearly as strong as it was before we shut down.

We have been able to help several folks transition to life outside and on parole, which is another joy. We are pleased that our financial situation is doing just fine, even though we skipped our annual fundraising letter. All of us are excited about the day we will be able to resume workshops in person.
Not having workshops. Hoping that our newsletter will keep people engaged and feel supported. It's challenging not being able to have direct contact (volunteers are not allowed by the Department of Corrections) with our inside colleagues and friends.

We probably have lost momentum in some ways and some folks have dropped out. We should be realistic and remember that this happens even without the handicap of a pandemic.

Since the pandemic and the death of the coordinator, Maureen Connolly, the Omaha Community group has not had any workshops. We've made efforts to stay connected by Zooming.

To the AVP community as a whole, and maybe more so to those who are not yet convinced that this program works, I would like to offer some testimony to the effects of AVP.

You should know, I'm an incarcerated individual (prisoner, inmate, convict) serving a life sentence. If you don't know, they don't hand those down to people just for missing church on Sundays. You have to do something bad.

So, my journey into and with AVP started while I was locked up. I didn't originally go to AVP looking to make a change in my life. I went because a friend insisted (many times, over and over again) that I attend. I did so, with my mind made up, that I would sit through the hours needed to say, "I completed the workshop, stop bugging me...", but I wouldn't drink the Kool-Aid. Something happened in those three days that caught my attention. I wish I could explain it, but I can't explain it to myself. At first I was skeptical; I knew if I attended another workshop I would see through the illusion and reveal this program as a farce. But that didn't happen; the more I examined the exercises and activities, the reality of it sunk in. The program isn't designed to "change you." It offers "tools" in the form of these exercises that you can use to change yourself, but only YOU can make the change. You could attend 100 workshops, know the exercises verbatim and it won't cause you to change.

Let's move on to the reason I was inspired to write this. Two weeks ago a counselor brings me a message, "Call _____ at phone number_____." I make the call, I says "It's me what's up?" He says "I hate to be the one to have to tell you but your daughter has been shot.......the bullet struck her in the neck.......the doctors say she's paralyzed from the neck down.......the bullet may have damaged her vocal cords so she may never speak either........" I'm standing, but I don't fall or sit down. I'm numb and can't bring myself to speak, maybe I mumble something audible because he goes on.
I'm not moving or making a sound but I'm raging inside. I may not be hearing everything that is being said but my anger latches onto what it wants to hear, "...they know who did it, the cops caught him." I want to ask "what's his name, where is he?" but I don't and this makes me angrier. Again I catch the parts of the conversation I want to focus on. "...Bro, I've gotten several messages on Facebook from people who still remember you, they still got respect for you and what you know 'you know what it is homie.'"

I know exactly what it is and all I have to do is say a word, say "Yeah" I try to tell myself. It's a single syllable. But again I can't.

I'm struggling to make this decision. And I know the why. In my head there are two voices trying to get my attention. The one I know right off, it's my own voice and it's telling me "do it!". The other voice is not mine, but it is familiar I just don't place it right off. But, it is at this point the voice's message starts to become more clear. It is the voice of reason, the voice of Smiling Sandy. If you know who I'm talking about you are a very fortunate individual (blessed some would say). She (Sandy) is repeating a conversation we had once.

At a point in life I decided to not be a part of AVP and go back to my old ways. I had not only continued with the group, I had become a facilitator. I'd developed a great deal of respect for Smiling Sandy as well as AVP, so I felt that I owed her the courtesy of letting her know I would not be coming back. Smiling Sandy for whatever reason, was not having it. She didn't tell me "don't do what you're about to do." Instead it was more along the lines of "do what you must but promise to come back to one more workshop." I'm sure I made it clear I was going back to doing bad things and I didn't want my actions to reflect poorly on the group. By now most everybody in the institution knows me as __________, AVP member and facilitator, but she insisted, "Come back to one more, even if it is just that one."

I concluded the phone call. I let the counselor know I'd received some very bad news. How I was feeling must have be written across my face because the counselor asks me if I want to talk to a psychiatrist. The lady says "yes you do" so I say yes. So I have time to start to break down what it is I'm feeling. I'm Mad, Angry but those are only surface feeling masking my real emotions. This comes easy now because AVP taught me first to look and what to look for.

Days pass, I'm reluctant to let go of the "Anger" I feel toward the person who hurt my little girl, but this voice is persistent. It makes me think the question "why are you in prison at this very moment?" I did something, I hurt someone once, caused a family grief that they may still wrestle with to this day. The thought of forgiveness crosses my mind. Why should I forgive? Remember, I tell myself, how bad you felt when the reality of what you had done set in, remember the remorse. How do you think he feels right about now? Forgiveness, Empathy; two subjects that do not come easy to me. Sandy can attest to this. I must not or my rage will consume me. I have meditated on this; the "Common Ground" between me and this person runs deep and is as clear as the ground I'm standing on now.

I have moved past my anger and any inclination of retaliation. Because of the lessons I learned, I was able to help my son-in-law deal with this situation. Once upon a time not too long ago my advice would have landed him in a cell right next to me.

To my community, thank you for all the help and support you lent me in my journey from then to now and moving forward.

Thank you for not giving up on me, even when I wanted to do so.
Delaware

REPORT BY: Rachel Grier-Reynolds

**IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA**

- Prison workshops
  - 7 Basic, 91 participants
  - 1 Advanced, 12 participants

**WORKSHOP LOCATIONS**

- Howard Young Correctional Institution- state men’s prison in Wilmington, DE
- James T. Vaughn Correctional Center- state men’s prison in Smyrna, DE
- Sussex Correctional Institution- a state men’s prison in Georgetown, DE
- Baylor Women’s Correctional Institution- state women’s prison in New Castle (only state correctional institution that was not able to hold any AVP Workshops in 2020)

In the summer, volunteer coordinator at Baylor Women’s state prison invited all volunteers to create and send encouragement notes, poems, art, etc. to cheer the women who were without any visitors for many months. I sent a few things including a bit of grandchild art in response. In mid-November one unit had a flurry of positives. Volunteer coordinator asked for donations of toiletries for the women who were moved from their unit w/out any personal belongings. I purchased a bag of the items requested and dropped them off at Baylor. The volunteer coordinator wrote a nice New Year “thank you” to volunteers for supporting the women.

We are all missing our connections with our inside Facilitators and the whole AVP experience. Communications with the staff have been challenging- for us and also for them. Because of virtual technologies concerns we have not been given access to virtual meetings with our inside team or workshops.
Mital and a few AVP-MD facilitators organized a virtual Basic Workshop that further grew our community, as it stretched out over the month of September 2020. Members were recruited through the Quaker Meeting, friendships, shared conflict resolution programs, connections with other congregations, and participation in other virtual workshops. A (hopefully lasting) connection was made with two facilitators from AVP-NC who organized a Basic workshop with a local organization and joined one of our monthly meetings.

Since spring of 2020, Gerry Fitzgerald, an elder of Friends Meeting of Washington who had carried his AVP experiences from Ireland with him for years, was finally able to find others to pass on the spark of his enthusiasm; and in July 2020, AVP-DC became an official Taskforce under the Peace & Social Concerns Committee of the Quaker Meeting. Despite the pandemic forcing everything to remain virtual, we continued to grow and build momentum as a new chapter, thanks partly to Mital Lyons-Warren's veteran AVP presence and her connections with AVP-MD, etc.

A concern is being able to build trusting relationships with individuals in education and/or a youth detention center and/or returning citizen programs in order to take AVP workshops/training to those realms.

**JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.**
Maryland

REPORT BY: Nancy Hutchins, Melissa Metzger, Bill Denison, Martha Baer, Edward Sabin and Rich Thayer

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
4 Basic, 65 participants
3 Advanced, 35 participants

ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT

We have offered a number of social and learning opportunities through Zoom calls as well as upped our number of email newsletters in an attempt to sustain engagement and awareness of our presence. These virtual gatherings have been helpful to keep community going and as a place to share ideas.

Our Volunteer Activity Coordinator has been exemplary in keeping us informed and ‘in the loop’. We have circulated updates regularly to keep people engaged. AVP Maryland has held social Zooms to keep us all connected. In addition, one of our facilitators linked us up with Heart-2-Heart, a nonprofit that also works in prisons. We held a mini-workshop sampler with them and are exploring possibilities.

Power-Up Weekend Workshop
Topic "Preparing for the Future"
23 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Maryland Correctional Institution - Hagerstown
- MCI-J
- Patuxent Institution - State prison
- Maryland Correctional Institutions - Women
- Baltimore Youth Detention Center*

*This facility is an unusual one for AVP. Residents can range from 12 to 17 years of age, most are 17. Their stay is rarely long enough to take facilitator training. However, the staff have a very different role than at adult prisons, more of mentor or guardian than guard. Four of them have now been fully certified as AVP facilitators. We are moving to an approach where workshops are led by a staff facilitator on a team with one additional staff facilitator and two from outside.
At the time of the shutdown, the group was planning to expand into doing workshops for the men in the protective custody area. This would have been staffed with outside facilitators only. We had an engaged staff person at the prison supporting our AVP efforts.

We started the year with high group participation (20+) per workshop (January and February) and an energized and engaged facilitator team. We welcomed 4 new inside Apprentices to the Facilitator team. We held a Power-Up weekend workshop (Sat/Sun) on Shaping My Future Self. It was well attended and proved to be a deep and meaningful topic. We were permitted to send a Newsletter to our Inside Facilitators via the warden at the end of the year. The Outside facilitators shared self-care ideas, exercise reflections, suggestions for practicing Transforming Power, and some motivational quotes.

We began the year with a new cohort of inside facilitator apprentices and some new outside facilitators. One of our facilitators created a newsletter that was sent in via the wardens in Jan 2021. While we do not know how it was received by those inside, we did receive notes of appreciation for AVP back from the wardens.

In the midst of all this, they were able to plan and carry out a very successful Powerup. Our external facilitators remained committed and stood by, waiting for things to open up.

We had a full slate of workshops lined up both on the men's and women's sides well into 2020 but of course had to stop in early March due to COVID. The energy before the pandemic was high and our VAC was engaged and helpful. On the regional front we had a well attended facilitator social gathering in early 2020 and then a robust turn out for our virtual Mid Atlantic Gathering in the fall. We have formed working groups to tackle a variety of issues. One being high level DSPCS conversations to ensure a smooth transition back to in person prison workshops. Another being a group dedicated to marketing support for virtual workshop possibilities. We look forward to in person workshops continuing sometime in 2021!
We have lost a number of trained outside volunteers due to age, health, etc. but do have a core of trained facilitators still. We also have experienced attrition in our inside facilitator group. The only contact we have had with our inside volunteers has been through the distribution of the "Transformer" and we are grateful that the institution has made that possible. We hope that the Volunteer Coordinator position will be staffed again when we are able to gather again.

All programs at the MCI-J were shut down in March 2020 due to COVID. An anticipated 2-week “pause” ended up extending the whole year. Our volunteer coordinators have been reassigned, and communication has ceased completely from inside. Our team is hopeful to be able to return to programming in 2021.

Our major concern is lack of communication with our inside team and the potential loss of our core facilitators due to shifts and movement during this past year. It's possible we may have to start over building the program. We also have lost some momentum with our outside facilitators but hope reengagement will not be too big an issue.

Our January 2020 Basic was a very challenging weekend with well-intentioned by not well-received comments around race that involved a new apprentice and briefly threatened the program's continuance there. It is a reminder of the importance of the words we use, the assumptions we make about others' experiences, and the need for outside facilitators to come in as learners and with humility. The shut-down in mid-March was, of course, worrisome as we were not able to effectively communicate with the women inside or find out how they were doing.

This was a tough year for AVP at YDC. The lockdown came right as we were getting into a regular sustainable routine. Our dedicated staff facilitators were faced with managing the safety of a highly vulnerable resident population. They are our heroes as they carried on capably under difficult circumstances.
Illinois

REPORT BY: Tom Forbes and Miriam Bunner

NO WORKSHOPS REPORTED FOR 2020

JOYS & CONCERNS

My joys are seeing that the other facilitators that I work with are thriving in their areas. Even with Covid, their dedication has permitted new growth.

Illinois has yet to begin. There was some hopeful prospects, but once Covid happened, those fell apart.

BROADENING OUR AVP COMMUNITY

Members of AVP Indiana have connected in multiple ways with facilitators across the country and with AVP USA. Some of our facilitators attended the virtual Annual Gathering; a couple facilitators joined the AVP USA Virtual Visioning Session in September; several Indiana facilitators are on the AVP-USA board and also serve on various AVP-USA committees; two or three of our members joined the AVP-USA book club on Anti-racism; and one facilitator joined teams on the east coast to help conduct AVP T4F workshops via Zoom.

Indiana

REPORT BY: Miriam Bunner

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
1 Basic, 13 participants
1 Advanced, 10 participants
1 T4F, 6 participants

Youth workshops
2 Basic, 20 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Plainfield Correctional Facility;
- Correctional Industrial Facility
- Richmond High School
In early spring, we welcomed Margaret Lechner back to Indiana after many years of being away. It was great to have her experience and wisdom to add to our group. We also had the opportunity to welcome a couple of recently returned formerly incarcerated AVP facilitators. A couple periodically joined us at our Core Organizing Group virtual meetings when they were able to.

Because of the pandemic and the closing of correctional facilities to outside volunteers for most of the year, our one major concern was not knowing how our inside facilitators were coping. Communication with the DOC Community Engagement staff was very sporadic. We could only pass along general messages that we were thinking about our inside facilitators and hoping they were able to stay well.

Last April, we conducted our first online AVP mini via Zoom to introduce Earlham School of Religion students to the work of AVP as part of a class on Diversity, Community, and Conflict. It was well-received and gave us the sense that it was possible to adapt AVP to Zoom and still be effective. Other facilitators worked together to present AVP activities in Recovery Cafe circles in the Indianapolis area.

One of our returned citizen facilitators was part of a community group consulted by the mayor of Elkhart, Indiana after the killing of George Floyd. The mayor hoped to conduct community dialogues to break down barriers and train city leaders to counteract the violence. Kendall helped organize an AVP mini which included the mayor, government and community leaders. It was held in person last July and facilitated by three of our Indiana facilitators, and one from Illinois, two of whom were returned citizens. The workshop was so successful that efforts are underway to include regular AVP workshops at a new grant-funded community center in Elkhart.

Since Covid coincided with the great social unrest and consciousness raising following the death of George Floyd, AVP Indiana began exploring its own racist tendencies and white supremacy behavior. We formed a small sub-group of facilitators which meets monthly and are creating exercises and resources for facilitators and possible future participants who wish to engage in this needful, challenging labor. We held our fifth AVP Indiana Annual Gathering virtually in July with a focus on anti-racism. Most of our regular twice monthly AVP Core Organizing Group meetings have been regional meetings, because neither AVP Ohio, nor AVP Illinois have an established group. Facilitators from those areas meet regularly with AVP Indiana. This led to our collaborating with Ohio facilitators in the fall on a virtual AVP Advanced workshop that was conducted this January.
Kentucky
REPORT BY: Miriam Bunner
NO WORKSHOPS REPORTED FOR 2020

Michigan
REPORT BY: Joe Ossmann
Prison workshops
3 Basic, 41 participants
2 Advanced, 14 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS
• Muskegon Correctional Facility (state, adult, men)
• Ionia Correctional Facility (state, adult, men)

Ohio
REPORT BY: Miriam Bunner
NO WORKSHOPS REPORTED FOR 2020

JOYS & CONCERNS
Before things shut down for COVID, our new prison program at Ionia Correctional Facility completed its first two Basic workshops with apprentice inside facilitators.

When programs are allowed to re-start after the pandemic, how will our inside facilitators respond to the opportunity to re-engage and continue with AVP?

We became acquainted with Zoom and made preparations to participate in a virtual workshop to be conducted in 2021.

We were unable to conduct in person workshops because of the pandemic.
Our one and only workshop of 2020 was a fantastic T4F! The women ranged in age from late 20s to early 50s. Everyone was supportive and encouraging of each other and the teamwork was strong, even though some had just met each other that weekend. By the end of the workshop we had a self-confident, excited, passionate group of new facilitators who were ready to get involved.

Our last contact with our wonderful facilitators at Osborn CI was a Gathering on March 7, 2020. We had just completed an excellent T4F in February and used our 3/7 Gathering to plan a Basic workshop and an Alumni Gathering, both to take place in March. We left that day in high spirits, all the new trainees excited to be part of facilitating teams in the next few weeks. Our closing was a welcoming ritual where, in turn, each new person stood inside the circle, and others came forward to say, "I am so glad to be working with you because....." I am SO grateful we did not know the next week would bring a total closure of the facility. We have that great memory of time together.

Our outside facilitators have met via Zoom on three occasions. We were also able to hold one socially distant meeting outdoors during the summer. As Coordinator, I send frequent emails to the group relaying what news I have of conditions at Osborn and welcoming ideas of books to read, activities, etc that might connect us.
Connecticut

JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

We cannot make personal contact with the men inside Osborn. We are so accustomed to having a Saturday each month when inside and outside facilitators are together practicing exercises, planning workshops and learning new skills. These Gatherings have really bonded our group of facilitators and made AVP at Osborn very strong. Regrouping will be difficult -- and the configuration may be quite different.

We are not allowed to correspond with the women in our program. This rule was never a problem before--we held a facilitator meeting every other month and a workshop every other month. Not being able to communicate with the women during COVID was devastating. We did send in an encouraging note that a Counselor graciously delivered on our behalf and we made sure that everyone had an updated subscription to the Transformer so they could at least keep updated with AVP news. We heard that a few of our facilitators were released on parole and wish we could have celebrated with them in person!

ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT

We arranged to have a subscription to the Transformer sent to each of our inside facilitators. That helps keep AVP alive. Even more importantly, the counselor who is our contact at the prison has allowed me to send a message of greeting and encouragement to our inside facilitators each month. The message is not personal, but with AVP language and carefully chosen quotations and stanzas from poems, the men feel our AVP connection. Each message ends with the adjective names of all the outside facilitators. Our inside contact copies the message and distributes it to each of the facilitators. We are VERY grateful.

Maine

REPORT BY: Karen Tucker Knox

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
2 Basic, 18 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

• Maine State Prison
Maine

JOYS & CONCERNS

Although our planned Advanced workshop on March 20-22 was cancelled when the COVID virus shut down access by outside volunteers, we had already established a strong presence at the Prison. In August 2019 we reached an agreement with the Warden to conduct ten AVP workshops between September 2019 and June 2020, in exchange for a $4,999 payment to AVP-Maine from the Warden’s discretionary fund. When outside access ended in March 2020, AVP-Maine had completed six weekend workshops and was on track to fulfill the contractual goal. In 2019 no fewer than 121 workshop participants received completion Certificates, so we had demonstrated to MSP administrators our capacity to follow through on commitments made to them and to incarcerated men.

In the months since March, AVP-Maine has been in periodic contact with the Warden and the Deputy Warden for Programs to discuss the shut-down and prospects for its ending and to request forwarding messages to the ten inside facilitators still at the prison.

JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

AVP-Maine continues to be a very small team of outside volunteers and the shut-down of programming at the prison has created an obstacle in recruiting new volunteers and doing community outreach. Because there are no active AVP-Maine workshops right now, it is difficult to enlarge the current group of six interested outside volunteers. This is an abiding challenge. The fact that Maine-AVP secured tax-exempt status in 2020 thanks to the invaluable assistance of AVP USA will make it easier for us to fundraise when in-person workshops resume. At present we are seeking to use GoogleMeet for Basic workshops at the prison but we don’t yet know if the Prison administration can accommodate this format.

SUSTAINING FOR THE FUTURE

We have been in communication with the administrators at Maine State Prison regularly and have been, with the guidance of Trish Carleton, who also facilitates in Arizona, we are working towards having some virtual contact with inside facilitators and hopefully in the not to distant future, a virtual workshop.
In the tumult of the Trump presidency, the narrowing election, the pandemic, social isolation, and the economic fall, fear and anxiety weighed heavy, but the AVP community in large part came together in mutual support. We began a series of community circles on Zoom, focused on topics such as loneliness, resilience, loss and hope. "We asked: What is AVP when we can’t go into prisons? And where is nonviolence now?" Shut out of prisons, we studied and practiced the skills of doing workshops online.

As we developed this new skills set, a mostly-Massachusetts team held the first in a series of three virtual workshops which would launch a new AVP chapter, AVP Rhode Island, spearheaded by former Massachusetts facilitator, Em McManamy.

I feel grateful to be able to say that when crisis arrived, the AVP community of Massachusetts met it proactively, caring for its own and for the community beyond our organization. Amidst all of this adaptation and challenge, many of us came to know each other in new ways - in zoom calls that spanned the silos of our traditional workshop locations, in collaborating to face new challenges, and in learning together with other AVPers as far away as the other side of the globe.

---

**JOYS & CONCERNS**

**Massachusetts**

REPORT BY: Chris Campbell

**IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA**

- Prison workshops
  - 3 Basic, 50 participants
  - 5 Advanced, 76 participants
  - 1 T4F, 5 participants

Does not include data from Essex County House of Corrections and from Essex County Prerelease

**WORKSHOP LOCATIONS**

- Northeastern Correctional Center
- MCI Norfolk
- MCI Shirley
- NCCI Gardener
- Old Colony Correctional Center
- Essex County House of Corrections
- Essex County Prerelease Center

---

In the tumult of the Trump presidency, the narrowing election, the pandemic, social isolation, and the economic fall, fear and anxiety weighed heavy, but the AVP community in large part came together in mutual support. We began a series of community circles on Zoom, focused on topics such as loneliness, resilience, loss and hope. "We asked: What is AVP when we can’t go into prisons? And where is nonviolence now?" Shut out of prisons, we studied and practiced the skills of doing workshops online.

As we developed this new skills set, a mostly-Massachusetts team held the first in a series of three virtual workshops which would launch a new AVP chapter, AVP Rhode Island, spearheaded by former Massachusetts facilitator, Em McManamy.

I feel grateful to be able to say that when crisis arrived, the AVP community of Massachusetts met it proactively, caring for its own and for the community beyond our organization. Amidst all of this adaptation and challenge, many of us came to know each other in new ways - in zoom calls that spanned the silos of our traditional workshop locations, in collaborating to face new challenges, and in learning together with other AVPers as far away as the other side of the globe.
JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

Coordinator Jane Cutting at Gardener reported the specific joys that the Feeling Faces exercise "was a favorite as it allowed the men to name feelings and understand what they had in common" and also, reported that meditation helped provide centering and clarity. She also celebrated that they successfully responded to requests of the groups when choosing exercises.

Coordinator Donna Nowak at Shirley reported that: "We had 9 new volunteers signed up and ready for a prison orientation that was scheduled and then cancelled just before lockdown. Hopefully they will continue with us as the prisons re-open with restrictions," and also that "AVP MA no longer feels like a separate entity. Online facilitation, meetings and creative planning sessions have created more opportunities to work together and benefit from the knowledge and passion of AVP of facilitators from around the world. We are now a truly functional global community." Donna also helped lead the team that began our study of how to do AVP exercises on zoom, and singlehandedly combed through the exercises in our manuals to identify those exercises that most lent themselves to on line execution.

At MCI Norfolk, a series of three new advanced workshops has been developed to meet the demands of a population that has become familiar with AVP over many years. Reports Coordinator Mike Kutter: "the new workshops were very well received and invigorating to hold. Exciting the see the launch." These workshops are now available to others to run as well.

In Concord, Coordinator Julie Crawford reports the victory of being able to have two "really awesome workshops" before Covid completely shut everything down. "Our last group was probably one of our largest and it was a great weekend."

AVP Massachusetts celebrated the long and productive tenure of coordinator Susan Jordan, a trained psychologist and also leader of the Emotional Awareness program at MCI Norfolk. Susan has been a guide an advocate and a friend to many, and built what may be the most robust AVP program in the state. We celebrate also that when it came time for her to move on, the facilitators at Norfolk came together to decide on the fate of that program and we’re determined to continue. Facilitator Mike Kutter stepped up to lead as coordinator after Susan’s departure.
A broad concern is that, when prisons shut down, many in the AVP of Massachusetts community seemed to unplug from active engagement. We need to deepen connections between facilitators so that they know that this community exists on many levels beyond the functional one of holding workshops. Additionally, we must remember that if we wish to have lasting impact, we need to change our culture, and if we wish to change our culture, the work of nonviolence does not die when we cannot go into prisons, but continues on in the broader society.

Other specific concerns include:

- The in-person mask requirement has caused us to lose one prison volunteer who must depend on lip reading.
- At one institution, cameras have been placed in every room.
- At a number of institutions, entry is difficult with long waits.
- We continue to be prohibited from bringing paper in or out, which can extend to manuals.
- In restarting workshops, the challenges will be starting to train/recruit a new in-house facilitation team, as many former facilitators are likely to have been released by now, especially at the minimum security prison.
- We will also need to recruit new outside participants/facilitators, so it is a process that may take some time.

Finally, one coordinator expresses the concern for those most vulnerable that has weighed on all of us: "just the sadness of not being able to continue the work in person, and knowing how much isolation and suffering the inmate population had to endure during this time, not only from being disconnected to programs like AVP, but also to family and friends."
Rhode Island

REPORT BY: Em McManamy

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
1 Basic, 19 participants
1 Advanced, 14 participants

JOYS & CONCERNS

I am concerned that AVP International often does not center the voices from developing countries, in the zoom groups I have seen. I struggle with the old basic manual and some of the outmoded concepts ("rap", acting out as zoo animals, Mrs. Mumbly who appears to have a speech difficulty, etc.) We are working to update big by bit and looking forward to a new manual.

Zoom makes it easier to get together across distance, but we miss the sheer silliness of being together as well as some tools of deep sharing (Howdy Howdy, Big Wind, moving around the circle easily to listen to groups, see them across the room and hear how they are getting along).

We are so excited to be re-starting AVPRI after a 20 year hiatus. We were able to tackle the challenge of offering AVP on zoom with gusto, adapting the exercises and light and livelies, learning how to form a "circle" on a zoom screen, setting up breakout groups and creating a slide deck to manage shared documents during the workshops. Antelope Valley lent us a good model for a streamlined and organized google file, as this became critical to participants and facilitators alike. We learned to create a text group for quick back channel communication among facilitators. Most important, we were thrilled to welcome a diverse group of participants who are already building a diverse AVPRI. We have a new non-profit organization with officers representing a local AME Church, a local community organizer, an immigration and indigenous rights attorney, a local educator, and a Quaker voice therapist with deep involvement in peace and justice work. What a team!
New York

REPORT BY: Shirley Way and Jill McLellan

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
17 Basic, 211 participants
12 Advanced, 137 participants
3 Spanish or Bilingual

Community workshops
1 Basic, 6 participants
1 Advanced, 7 participants
1 T4F, 7 participants

Youth workshops
2 Advanced, 26 participants

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
1 Basic, 10 participants
1 Advanced, 13 participants
1 T4F, 13 participants

OTHER WORKSHOPS

- Five in-person youth mini workshops: Four simultaneous mini workshops (3 hours) with the entire 6th grade class at Walton School, 78 youth. One six-hour mini with 16 teens at the Lanza Family Center.
- Two mini workshops on zoom: one with 4 participants, one with 2.

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Purchase Friends Meetinghouse, West Harrison, NY
- Park Central Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, NY
- White Branch Library, Syracuse, NY
- Walton School, Walton, NY
- Perry City Friends Meeting, Perry City, NY
- Lanza Family Center of Westchester Family Services, White Plains, NY
- NYS men's: Clinton Annex, Clinton Main, Greene, Woodbourne, Cayuga, Elmira, Fishkill, Green Haven, Wende, Otisville and Sing Sing
- NYS women's: Albion and Taconic
- Westchester County Jail
AVP in person workshops happened in prisons, schools and community until mid March. Then Zoom workshops, minis and full length workshops of all three levels happened in several area councils. We were able to send emails to the inside facilitators through our official correspondent who is not a prison volunteer.

Our biggest concern was for the safety of the men and women inside because we knew there were COVID cases in the facilities and had heard that masks, gloves and hand sanitizer were not always available. We could not communicate directly with our inside facilitators so newsletters in the mail and emailed letters of encouragement had to suffice. The AVP family in the community could at least call each other and connect via Zoom but many expressed loneliness.

"Black Lives Matter" (B) (L) (M)
(B)e forgiving of our ancient bondage
(L)et go and embrace: "Victory Comes To The One That Endures" (author unknown), and
(M)ake a proud statement of: Survival Homage," for life today is yours.
(B)lack Lives do Matter - So,
(L)et go of killing each other & end this shameful chatter - It
(M)akes more sense to gather.
(B)lack is Deliciously Beautiful.
(L)ove one another as your sister & brother,
(M)oving mountains together is more suitable.
—Instrumental Ivi’e, Bedford Hills Prison

This letter is to let you know that I carry you all in my heart everyday. Being around people like Carolyn (Contagious CC) and (Easy) Eddie helped me keep my life balance and together with God’s help, I still continue to transform powers everyday. It’s tough but my family, AVP and my future is depending on me to continue to do right so I trust my inner sense of what’s needed and seek to resolve conflicts by reaching for common ground everyday.
—Joyful Jef’e, Green Haven Prison
Tensions are high with everyone worried about loved ones and friends, so using our A.V.P. skills daily we are able to help all around us as much as possible. Along with all the bad things going on there are also positive outcomes in our lives that happen. For 27 years I have been hoping and trying to communicate with my daughter. We now talk on the phone regularly, which brings my heart so much joy.

I hope everyone has good things happen during our times of troubles. I'm thankful for the skills that A.V.P. has given me in coping with this crisis. Thank you all for thinking about us during this time. May you all stay safe and healthy.

—Forever Building Builder Bruce, Cayuga Prison

First off I send my love and good vibes in these difficult times. I know that many of my AVP brothers and sisters are the proactive, and caring people who have BEEN protesting and speaking out against the injustices of the world today. Saying that, I hope everyone is safe and showing what AVP is really about because the world needs AVP right now. Hopefully this program will be able to play a major part in the change being asked for right now. The world is looking for an answer, the crazy thing is we have at least one part of the answer already! This program can be pivotal to not only bringing the outside closer to the inside, but bringing PEOPLE together no matter what walk of life.

I've met people that I've seen more than my "real" family, who I would of NEVER stopped and talked to in the town because we just would have been in different groups of friends, but, now they are my FAMILY, and I would call them nothing less. I would do anything for and with them without a question. Please, stay safe due to this covid-19 and now the protest too. My heart and love is out there with all of y'all. The country needs help, AVP can and will be the answer.

—Fair Forty, Elmira Prison
In December 2020 we began publishing the AVP Inside Out Newsletter. This publication is helping us to maintain supportive organization-level contact with incarcerated AVP facilitators and workshop participants during the pandemic. Through the AVP Inside Out Newsletter, members of the AVP community, inside and outside correctional facilities, can connect with one another about the effects of violence on us all and the strategies we use to transform the violence in our lives and communities. This publication is currently distributed in paper format to over 300 incarcerated people and in digital format to an additional 1464 people. Each week the FNVW office receives mail from incarcerated members of our community expressing gratitude for the AVP Inside Out Newsletter and the AVP program.

In response to the pandemic, we successfully adapted AVP Workshops to a virtual format. We held 4 virtual AVP Mini-Session for the FNVW community in 2020. These Mini-AVP Sessions helped prepare AVP facilitators to lead full-length Virtual AVP Workshops in 2021.

**JOYS & CONCERNS**

**REPORT BY:** Leah Robshaw Robinson

**IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA**

- **Prison workshops**
  - 1 Basic, 17 participants
  - 2 Advanced, 21 participants

- **Community workshops**
  - 1 Basic, 9 participants

**WORKSHOP LOCATIONS**

- Faribault State Correctional Facility
- Stillwater State Correctional Facility
- Friends for a Non Violent World Office

Also held two 5 hour long mini-AVP workshops at Sherburne County Jail.
AVP MN organized monthly “AVP Connects” throughout 2020. AVP Connects offer typical AVP exercises in a shortened format. Each of these gatherings provided an opportunity for participants to share ideas, experiences, and energy around a different AVP theme. This year’s themes reflected current events in Minnesota and the country, including a session focusing on the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis and another on the intersections between COVID-19 and AVP. Thirteen different facilitators and facilitators-in-training led sessions in 2020. We welcomed presentations and discussions from other FNVW teams, including the Volunteer Engagement Team and the Bridging the Divides Team, as well as AVPers from other states and countries. AVP Connects gatherings are a consistent source of connection, support, creativity, and joy for AVP-MN.

We are very concerned about the health and well-being of the incarcerated members of our AVP MN community. We tried to offer wardens and correctional facilities staff a variety of options for offering Virtual AVP Workshops at correctional facilities with no luck. We are hopeful that we'll be able to resume prison workshops in 2021, but some correctional facilities, such as Stillwater State Correctional Facility, are requiring us to submit new program applications, which is concerning.

We are in the midst of creating AVP based mini-sessions on Active Bystander Intervention and Conflict Transformation trainings for groups and organizations interested in re-imagining safety in their community. These will be offered as a partnership building resource to organization and groups.

To nurture the well being of our group, we celebrate birthdays together each month. For outside facilitators this looks like a zoom party. For inside facilitators, we send them a birthday card from the FNVW/AVP office.
South Dakota

REPORT BY: Eve Fisher, Mary Montoya and Chet and Colleen Cordell

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
3 Basic, 71 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- South Dakota State Penitentiary, Sioux Falls

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
1 Basic, 10 participants
Certain chaplains have been allowed back into the penitentiary, which has allowed AVP Renewals to be held at both the Hill and Jameson in Sioux Falls under the Native American Chaplain, Mary Montoya, a/k/a Merry Mary. These are held on the first Saturday of the month at the Hill, and the last Saturday of the month at Jameson.

Chatty Chet and Calm Colleen are hopefully going to begin having workshops again at the Women’s Prison in Pierre.

The groups has concerns about the impact of the pandemic and the ongoing need for more outside facilitators. We have lost at least 3 outside facilitators to age and illness. Another one has simply gone silent. No communication for over a year. The percentage of Native American inmates is again around 30%. They continue to be overrepresented in our groups as they continue to make up at least 50% of our participants. The need to get more outside facilitators for the Women’s Prison who live closer to Pierre. It is currently a 3-4 hour drive one-way for facilitators from the Sioux Falls team to go there. And waiting, waiting, waiting for the prisons to be opened.
A second round of trained (T4F) Inside Facilitators actually got a chance to be mentored and they were able to present/co-facilitate before COVID shut down the program; Hands of Peace held two community Basics (January, 2020) in Anchorage before COVID; One long term Inside Facilitator was released and made contact with HOP in Dec., 2020.

HOP was able to get permission from Alaska Dept. of Corrections to send two letters of encouragement to the Inside Facilitators at Wildwood Correctional Center. Then, over the winter holidays, HOP Board was allowed to send a virtual video sharing holiday wishes that was then played for the Inside Facilitators at Wildwood.

Not having a steady schedule of workshops in the community or prisons due to COVID hampered our abilities to recruit and mentor both inside and outside potential Facilitators; Impact of virtual formats (like Zoom) have caused our facilitator volunteers to have "Zoom exhaust" over this last calendar year.

**IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA**

**Prison workshops**
- 2 Basic, 27 participants
- 1 Advanced, 10 participants

**Community workshops**
- 2 Basic, 27 participants

**WORKSHOP LOCATIONS**
- Wildwood Correctional Center (Kenai, AK)
- Springcreek Correctional Center (Seward, AK)
- UAA Center for Human Development - Alaska Training Cooperative in Anchorage, AK

**BROADENING OUR AVP COMMUNITY**

HOP Board member Michele Waclawski attended the virtual National Gathering and both Michele and Ginger Bryant attended a virtual Advanced workshop for AVP-NY. In addition, Michele joined the AVP-USA Adaptations Committee.
We're grateful we had a busy AVP calendar in the first two months of 2020.

Our Department of Corrections has not allowed any volunteers since March of 2020, not even religious volunteers. We have had no contact with inside team members or anyone, for that matter. With the abrupt stop in workshops, we outside facilitators have periodically done group email check-ins periodically.

The AVP Trauma Seminar provided good information, discussion and it was good to meet facilitators from other parts of the country. I was interviewed by Salem CCTV about AVP. Looking forward to facilitating AVP at OSP again, when the Department of Corrections allows outside groups back in. The AVP International Resource is great, with a wide variety of exercises and L&L's.

Need Basic AVP Workshops in the Salem Area.
Washington

REPORT BY: Skyler Reep

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
1 Basic, 6 participants

Community workshops
1 Basic, 6 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Geiger Corrections Center - Spokane County, WA
- Unity Church of Truth

JOYS & CONCERNS

Monthly meeting via Zoom
New Jersey

REPORT BY: Eleanor Novek

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
2 Advanced, 48 participants
1 T4F, 17 participants

Community workshops
1 Basic, 15 participants
1 Spanish or Bilingual

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
2 Basic, 25 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Garden State Youth Correctional Facility
- Yardville, NJ (state prison, men 18-30)
- Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, Clinton, NJ (state prison, women)
- Madison

JOYS & CONCERNS

In 2020, we conducted 3 prison workshops before the pandemic lockdown began and 2 virtual workshops after. Efforts to reduce crowding in prisons meant at least 6 of our young male facilitators were released – a joy! – and we have been able to keep up with some of them on Facebook as they resume their lives. We were able to get virtual workshops going with a minimal amount of struggle and a number of our outside facilitators welcomed the chance to stay active in AVP even if they were not particularly tech-savvy.

Most long-time inside facilitators from Garden State Youth Correctional Facility have left or been transferred; the few remaining are new and have not facilitated. The chaplain/volunteer coordinator there left for another job. A number of our inside facilitators at Edna Mahan women’s prison have also left. Conditions at Ft. Dix federal prison where we have done past workshops are bad and we have had no contact during the pandemic. Whenever restrictions are eased at these facilities, we will have to rebuild all of the relationships necessary for a strong program from the ground up.
Pennsylvania

REPORT BY: Joe Moore and Anne Wallace-DiGarbo

NO WORKSHOPS REPORTED FOR 2020

JOYS & CONCERNS

Gaining some proficiency in online facilitation through multiple teachings on zoom and connecting through AVP online events with people from all over the USA & beyond.

A local group of prospective participants have been waiting to participate in a Basic Workshop as a group. Since they experienced the mini workshop tasters of AVP as a group, they prefer to wait for South Central Penn to offer the workshop. They’ve been waiting almost a year.

BROADENING OUR AVP COMMUNITY

One South Central AVP facilitator joined 3 other facilitators from central and east coast locations to lead a breakout session in Embodied Peacemaking at the AVP-USA Conference in May 2020. Subsequent practice sessions semi-monthly are held for the participants. That facilitator is collaborating with 3 other facilitators in central & east coast locations to developing a second level topic specific workshop adaptation in addiction.

South Central Penn Council is preparing our first online Basic Workshop for 6 3-hr sessions beginning of May. Some of us have attended the Education Community Circles and the AVP USA Research Team as it developed online facilitation skills with the guidance of Australia and Asia West Pacific facilitators' presentations.

A South Central Penn Facilitator participated in a Racial Justice AVP group discussion of the book Radical Dharma.
Colorado

REPORT BY: Stephanie Krucher

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
- 4 Basic, 47 participants
- 4 Advanced, 57 participants
- 1 T4F, 11 participants*

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshop
- 1 T4F, 11 participants*

Community workshops
- 1 Basic, 6 participants
- 2 Advanced, 10 participants
- 1 T4F, 8 participants

*This T4F prison workshop started in person and ended virtually, right as the prisons went on lockdown.

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Denver Women's Correctional Facility (Women)
- Denver Women's Correctional Facility - Close Custody (Women)
- Denver Diagnostic and Reception Center (Men)
- Colorado Correction Center (Men)

JOYS & CONCERNS

We feel we've had many joys this past year:
- utilizing online workshops to connect with participants and facilitators that are otherwise disconnected from in-person workshops
- hosting a training workshop for our facilitators and others from around the country - connecting with inside facilitators during the pandemic
- being forced to adjust from "the way we've always done it" to "what is needed to keep programs running"
- We completed an in-person prison workshops with the last day fully remote due to the start of the pandemic.
Colorado

JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

We have a few concerns from this past year:

- many of our regular facilitators are hesitant or have no interest in working online
- the time commitment of workshops is more evident and seems to be a barrier to some who want to engage in AVP as a participant or volunteer
- the mental and emotional exhaustion of adapting to new programming this year is evident - looking to the future, how will we continue to adapt to our busy society with short attention spans?
- We’ve struggled with getting participants to commit to the online workshops. This is something we are working on for 2021.
- Funding continues to be competitive and seemed to be extra difficult this past year. Some of our most secure funding comes from religious organizations. In 2020, two of the four religious organizations that have supported us for years greatly reduced or stopped their donations. One group reduce it to 10% of the previous year's donation, and the other organization was not able to donate in 2020.

New Mexico

REPORT BY: Margaret Willen

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
2 Basic, 20 participants
1 Advanced, 16 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Penitentiary of New Mexico (Santa Fe; men)
- Springer Correctional Center (Springer NM; women)
- Western New Mexico Correctional Facility (Grants NM; women)
New Mexico
JOYS & CONCERNS
We did only 3 in-person workshops (usually do 18 or more), but they were excellent. Work of inside facilitators (total of 11) was outstanding for 2 reasons: the most experienced ones did much of the pre-workshop organizing, using facility resources to anticipate needs; and apprentices exceeded all expectations. Outside facilitators pioneered new exercises on diversity/racial equity in the Advanced. At men's prison, evals showed strong sharing as a helpful, new experience. Good support by staff, although security personnel 70% understaffed at 1 facility. After pandemic closed down workshops, we worked with new Director of Recidivism Reduction to prepare for hybrid-virtual sessions, beginning with a 2-hour pilot. Inside staff worked diligently to eliminate problems after the pilot, though we've not yet attempted our planned virtual workshop because of COVID outbreaks. (We met virtually with inside facilitators--joyful reunions.) April-December we mailed monthly letters to AVP insiders with encouragement and refresher of AVP ideas. AVP-NNM has benefited from an active steering committee to keep volunteers engaged and to work with Corrections personnel. We had two new volunteers, and one completed a virtual Basic with AVP-California in the summer.

JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.
As the pandemic progressed and we had only snail-mail contact with insiders, we felt bereft at the sudden break in the continuity of workshops that allows for individual growth as well as program growth and innovation. Another change of director of DoC volunteer services once again led to confusion and more work for AVP-NNM's leadership. Although we had new staff contacts at the 3 facilities where we hold workshops, 2 did not work out. We are still struggling to try a hybrid virtual inside, because our AVPers who are incarcerated are not allowed to use individual computers for a Zoom event. We're holding our breaths that we won't have to do too much rebuilding of our programs once we're allowed back inside.

ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT
Although we have done little "across the world," we have worked hard to maintain the enthusiasm of our members/facilitators. We have maintained our listserv and used it to share info about life inside (e.g., Marshall Project), as well as announcements for AVP-NNM. Post-pandemic-restrictions, we held two online gatherings which we also used to check in with how members were coping with the pandemic; outside AVPers participated in generating regular letters to our insiders.
TX AVP was invited back into FCI Bastrop by a returning warden who asked his staff to invite AVP back. We had one basic workshop before COVID-19 lockdown. It had been twenty years since TX AVP was in FCI Bastrop. We also had two inactive outside facilitators come back for the prison workshop. Sarah Davenport graduated from her apprenticeship and is a facilitator. One facilitator became active online, joining two workshops for AVP-RI.

It is over two years since TX AVP's last Training of Facilitators and there has been little opportunity to give workshops and for apprentices to stay active.

In 2016 & 2017 TX AVP had regular community meetings. None since. TX AVP is planning to revive community meetings in 2021.

With one TX AVP facilitator experience joining another community's online workshops, there is the confidence TX AVP could have a workshop if we had someone who set one online.
Southeast

Florida

REPORT BY: Dawn Addy

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
2 Basic, 38 participants

Community workshops
Every Wednesday April -December 2020 taster sessions on self-actualization and conflict resolution topics.

Youth workshops
1 Basic, 10 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Dade CI
- County housing group home -working with court mandated participants

JOYS & CONCERNS

Once things were shut up tight due to Covid 19 I created a newsletter to cheer up all my inside facilitators. I looked up their addresses on the Florida DOC website and sent it off to them. I heard back from many of them throughout the year and it was such a joy to hear they have been keeping AVP alive by using their AVP skills and exercises in many creative ways.

With the help of AVP USA we began a Florida facilitator on-line discussion group. Also I have directed our group members to work with other groups in California and Australia to keep practicing their AVP skills.

ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT

- We have begun holding regular monthly AVP Florida meetings on zoom the first Saturday of each month to stay connected, make plans and generally support each other.
- The newsletter was very helpful. Also one of our members stays connected with many of the wardens on facebook so there is continuous communication about when and how to resume AVP once Covid is under control.
- Our Jacksonville group has run youth programs in Palatka, FL by holding workshops outside and social distancing.
Georgia

REPORT BY: Heather Pincokc

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
1 Basic, 9 participants
1 T4F, 3 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

• Emory Faculty Building at Grady Hospital, Kennesaw State University

JOYS & CONCERNS

After a normal start to 2020 with 2 in person workshops (T4F and Basic) we were excited to keep rolling with our newly trained folks. Of course the pandemic required us to put in person workshops on hold. We held a few check in meetings with our steering committee group as lockdown began to check in with each other. We also organized a phone tree to reach out to all our community facilitators and to see how they were doing and offer support. It was great to have formed and be able to draw on this caring community at such a stressful and uncertain time.

While we did not venture into offering virtual workshops like many other AVP groups, we have done a mini virtual workshop in early 2021 and are getting ready to offer a virtual Basic. We are also excited to be working with friends in LaGrange GA on building an AVP chapter there in the coming year!

Our chapter more or less chose to take a full year off from offering workshops so that our facilitators could focus on other responsibilities during a very stressful year for everyone. We think this was a good choice for our group but now we do face some challenges in getting "up and running" again and rebuilding our momentum! We also miss offering prison workshops, especially after a year that was so difficult and scary for prisoners. 2021 will be a rebuilding year for AVP GA and we are already off to a great start! Thank you to the Atlanta Friends Meeting for continued support, and thank you to all our new and continuing facilitators who are working so hard to make AVP Georgia great!

SUSTAINING FOR THE FUTURE

We have just begun some AVP offerings online in 2021. So far we have done a mini session for interested folks and we are now planning a full Basic over 9 weeks (one evening session per week).
In Nashville, we were fortunate to have been very busy from January 1- March 13, 2020. Our community workshop was facilitated by our newly trained facilitators with supervision from some of the more experienced facilitators. Thanks to the contacts that the new facilitators brought with them, the participants were mainly young and active in many parts of the community, especially to the homeless population. We continued our work in the Davidson County Women's Jail and completed a 9 week course as part of a program called The Academy. Our county sheriff was so pleased with this program that he asked that a promotional video be produced, and AVP was prominently featured in the video. The program with our middle school partners was progressing well and was well-received by a diverse group of students. The most significant part of 2020 was the fact that we were able to get into the Tennessee Prison for Women (now called the Debra K. Johnson Rehabilitation Center) as part of a six month long program called Building Entrepreneurs for Success in Tennessee (B.E.S.T.) We were scheduled to offer ten 2 and a half hour sessions to women who were within three years of release, but we were only able to have 5 of our sessions.

JOYS & CONCERNS

In Nashville, we were fortunate to have been very busy from January 1- March 13, 2020. Our community workshop was facilitated by our newly trained facilitators with supervision from some of the more experienced facilitators. Thanks to the contacts that the new facilitators brought with them, the participants were mainly young and active in many parts of the community, especially to the homeless population. We continued our work in the Davidson County Women's Jail and completed a 9 week course as part of a program called The Academy. Our county sheriff was so pleased with this program that he asked that a promotional video be produced, and AVP was prominently featured in the video. The program with our middle school partners was progressing well and was well-received by a diverse group of students. The most significant part of 2020 was the fact that we were able to get into the Tennessee Prison for Women (now called the Debra K. Johnson Rehabilitation Center) as part of a six month long program called Building Entrepreneurs for Success in Tennessee (B.E.S.T.) We were scheduled to offer ten 2 and a half hour sessions to women who were within three years of release, but we were only able to have 5 of our sessions.

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

Prison workshops
1 Basic, 8 participants

Community workshops
1 Basic, 15 participants

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- Davidson County, Tennessee Jail for Women
- Germantown Co-housing Commons House
- Nashville Friends Meeting

ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT

One facilitator checked our email and kept our Memphis AVP Facebook presence current. Another attended two virtual workshops for facilitators hosted by AVP International Education. Other facilitators continued to use AVP concepts, tools and activities in their daily work with youth at Bridges, Inc. and in the outreach they did.
Tennessee

JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

Nashville AVP: Our main concern is that the people with whom we were working must feel forgotten. Once the jail was closed due to the pandemic, no contact was allowed including mail, but the director of the Academy was able to produce a newspaper starting in the Fall of 2020 to distribute to the women in jail. When the prison shut down to visitors and programs in Mid-March, we were able to write letters to the participants, send letters to the parole board in support of individuals who had been part of the program and to participate in a program called "The Best Pitch" to award cash prizes to released B.E.S.T. graduates who had written business plans. We were able to attend online partner meetings with the middle school, but due to the upheaval in the school, we were never able to have online meetings with students after March.

MEMPHIS AVP did not facilitate workshops during 2020. Due to an increasing number of local organizations requesting volunteer opportunities and limited physical space in the Women’s Jail, our request to facilitate a March AVP workshop was denied. Then in March the jail closed its doors to all volunteer opportunities.

REGIONAL SUPPORT SPOTLIGHT

AVP Nashville & AVP South Carolina

The pandemic allowed facilitators to attend the National AVP conference, participate in International calls with AVP International and Friends Peace Teams. It also fostered a regional connection!

A facilitator originally from Nashville moved to South Carolina and built a bridge to connect the two groups. This led to AVP Nashville helping facilitate a Basic community workshop with AVP-SC. It was an enriching experience.

When we worked with AVP-SC, we saw the value of putting the agenda and other documents on Google docs for easy access for others.

South Carolina

REPORT BY: Sylvie Dessau

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops 1 Basic, 11 participants
**Arizona**

**REPORT BY:** Suzy Gebhardt Clarke

### IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

- **Prison workshops**
  - 2 Basic, 36 participants
  - 1 Advanced, 13 participants
  - 1 T4F, 9 participants
- **Community workshops**
  - 1 Basic, 20 participants

### VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

- **Prison workshops**
  - 2 Basic, 19 participants

**WORKSHOP LOCATIONS**

- Perryville Women's Prison, Goodyear, AZ--State prison
- Barchey Unit, Lewis Corrections, Buckeye, AZ--State prison
- Amity, Tucson

**JOYS & CONCERNS**

We had 2 virtual gatherings for Arizona facilitators. Virtual made it easier to gather from around the state! We still had an opportunity to learn from each other & connect. Thanks to an officer at Barchey prison, we were able to have 2 Basic workshops via Google Meet. The inmates saw "us" outside facilitators on a TV screen & they had a microphone to pass around. The inmates liked having many (up to 9) outside facilitators from France, Maine, Northern California & different parts of Arizona. It is not as fulfilling as an in person workshop and so much more than nothing. We will start an Advanced workshop in February.

We now have our Non-profit 501C status under the AVP-USA umbrella! It took some collaboration to complete which is gratifying. We have more connection with the officer in charge of the yard at the prison.

It is more challenging to connect with our inside facilitators and participants. There is some conflict with the inside facilitators which is harder to clarify and deal with.
California

REPORT BY: Betty McEady

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA

State Prison workshops
38 Basic, 552 participants
32 Advanced, 490 participants
7 T4F, 96 participants
4 Spanish or Bilingual

Camp Fire workshops
5 Basic, 96 participants
1 Advance, 20 participants

County Jail workshops
1 Basic, 5 participants
1 Advance, 4 participants

Community workshops
12 Basic, 84 participants
5 Advanced, 42 participants
3 T4F, 19 participants

IN PERSON WORKSHOP DATA CONT.

Youth workshops
2 Basic, 15 participants
1 Advanced, 6 participants

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP DATA

Community workshops
5 Basic, 31 participants
2 Advanced, 22 participants
3 T4F, 19 participants

Annual Number of Workshops - 2004 Through 2020

- Community
- Other Corrections
- State Prisons
California

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

- California City Correctional Facility, California City (men)
- California Correctional Center, Susanville (men)
- California Correctional Institution, Tehachapi (men)
- California Men’s Colony, San Luis Obispo (men)
- Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria (men)
- Centinela State Prison, Imperial (men)
- Central California Women’s Facility, Chowchilla (women)
- Correctional Training Facility, Soledad (men)
- Folsom State Prison, Folsom (men)
- High Desert State Prison, Susanville (men)
- Ironwood State Prison, Blythe (men)
- Mule Creek State Prison, Ione (men)
- R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility, San Diego (men)
- Salinas Valley State Prison, Soledad (men)
- Sierra Conservation Center, Jamestown (men)
- Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, Corcoran (men)
- Wasco State Prison, Wasco (men)
- Ben Lomond Conservation Camp, Santa Cruz (men)
- Camp Antelope, Chico (men)
- Camp Delta, Suisun City (men)
- Camp Konocti, Lower Lake (men)
- San Luis Obispo Jail, San Luis Obispo (men/women)
- Lancaster
- Oakland
- Sacramento
- San Luis Obispo
- Santa Monica / Los Angeles
- Stockton
- Yucca Valley
- Santa Barbara
- Antelope Valley
California

JOYS & CONCERNS

Joys in General: Prior to Covid-19, CA conducted 108 in-person workshops in State Prisons (83), County Jails (2), Community (23) and 10 virtual workshops. In the County Jails, all workshops were planned by inside Team Coordinators, with one outside facilitator. The inside female participants in the County Jails were extremely pleased to have AVP training.

Joys of Working with Youth in Santa Barbara, California:
Youth participants manage their isolation because of Covid-19, with reminders of exercises they have done during the workshops. We hear a lot about our participants providing a sympathetic ear for their friends or families when trouble arises and calling in for help to make referrals. School administrators and some community members have reported that when violence occurs around our youth, they take a leadership role to stop it and bring in adult help to de-escalate the situation. We have Youth facilitators that are gang affiliates starting to put together a few workshops in rival cities to show the other gangs the benefit of AVP. Our youth facilitators are taking on roles as mentors to other youth in their neighborhoods.

Joys Generated by Virtual Workshop Trainings:
- Increased Diversity Within and Across Workshop Levels: (a) More returning citizens among participants and facilitators; (b) professionals; (c) people looking for self-help; (d) international participants; (e) a variety of ethnicities represented among facilitators, and (f) a variety of age-groups.
- Connections & Community Building: (a) Interested persons from all over the world; (b) More people signing up for Basic, Advanced, and T4F than when we met in person, (c) Excellent community building because of diversity and support of one another.
- Versatility/Flexibility in Time Formats: (a) Restrictions on travel led to us setting up workshops in different time formats; (b) One workshop can be set up at a reasonable time to accommodate participants across the U.S.A., and can be repeated at another time to accommodate more international participants.
- Use of Zoom and Google together: can be more effective when experienced facilitators and facilitators with strong technological skills work together.
- Enhanced Commitment Among Facilitators: (a) Planning for online training requires lots of meetings, extensive and intensive planning, planned practicing, and problem solving; (b) Strong teamwork is necessary.
California
JOYS & CONCERNS CONT.

Need Support for Virtual Training:
Given the growth in virtual workshops during Covid-19 restrictions, and given that similar workshop formats will continue, AVP should consider developing and publishing resources, materials, adaptation of exercises and “light-and-livelies” and guidelines or best practices for virtual training;
Zoom and Google Drive work well together, but we need more training for facilitators who are using Zoom and Google Drive for workshops; again AVP needs a repertoire of activities and exercises that have been revised and adapted for virtual presentation;
Need more publicity regarding our workshops, e.g., centralize publicity via social media, local and U.S.A. websites, AVP-I websites;
Evaluate our virtual workshops to determine effective common practices and exercises, and develop training in best practices for virtual training in AVP.

Research Postponed: Because of Covid-19, AVP-CA had to postpone its research activities on the effectiveness of AVP in the schools. Thus, anxieties escalate because of uncertainty about schools opening again.

Special Training Needed: More AVP facilitators need special training in trauma resilience and grounding practices. For example, during a role play exercise, a participant was traumatized and was not debriefed or deroled in a way that helped the participant to feel taken care of or supported.

OTHER AVP CALIFORNIA ACTIVITIES

• CA is supporting facilitators who are doing special training workshops in (a) "Compassionate Witnessing," (this is a weekly workshop); (b) "Restorative Justice Practices," (will be 3 four-hour sessions online), and (c) an AVP mini workshop on "how to use Zoom tools to do AVP training" (this mini will be recurring, if facilitators request it).
• At least 2 CA facilitators have done "community circles" presentations for AVP-International Education Committee. International participation has been impressive.
• CA continues to sponsor its regional Fall Gathering, which also includes an invigorating auction and fundraiser.
This report was compiled by Mindful Mital Co-Clerk of the Committee for Local and Regional Groups.

Please send corrections, questions or additions to clarg@avpusa.org