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## **LONELINESS PROFILE**

### **AMISH SUPPORT**

**Overview:** Elijah Haven works very heavily with the Amish Community. The Amish women find themselves “cut off” from their world when they leave their abuser, especially if they receive a protective order to protect themselves and their children. If an Amish victim has a protective order, the church no longer supports them or their children. In the Bishop and church’s eyes this is equivalent to a divorce. In 2022 the Amish women started meeting outside of their services from Elijah Haven. In a normal setting, Amish women and children get together and clean each other’s houses, can vegetables out of the gardens, etc. This is a type of fellowship and support for them. When an Amish victim leaves her abuser, she no longer has this type of support and feels excluded from the Amish Community, including her family, causing severe loneliness. To help fill this loneliness void and feel extended support, the Amish women began meeting and doing these things that help with the burden of everyday household chores. They talk and laugh, share their struggles, and support one another in their journeys.

**Successes:** The Amish women have felt that this has really helped them feel more accepted and more understood. The Amish women can speak to each other in their own language, unlike when they are in support group at Elijah Haven. Amish women speak Dutch and English. This helps them feel more comfortable along with being in an Amish home setting. They each have grown in their own way and feel more empowered because of this group.

**Challenges:** There have been no challenges for this group. They all find their own transportation to each other’s houses. (Amish have driver’s that they pay to travel from place to place.)

**How we pay for it:** There has been no expense for Elijah Haven. Each Amish woman provides a snack for the other women that attend. They enjoy providing this as it makes it feel “more normal” for them. Overall, this has been a great way for the Amish women to build strength from each other.

**For more information:** Please contact Kathy Dunafin at Elijah Haven Crisis Intervention Center at (260) 463-8700 or at [kathy@elijahhaven.org](mailto:kathy@elijahhaven.org) with any questions.