



# AVANZAR

SAFETY, JUSTICE, EMPOWERMENT

*A Place for Us, Atlantic County Women's Center (DBA) AVANZAR*

A 37-year-old client visited AVANZAR for the first time two years ago. At that time, she was in complete despair; in physical and emotional pain, sadness and most of all, she had no hope. She disclosed that she didn't like to wear earrings, and she did not even put color on her lips. After a few sessions, she stopped coming to counseling. There was a silence.

A little more than a year later, she initiated counseling again. She described how she tried (again) to keep her family together and give another opportunity to the relationship. She said the abuse increased so badly that he threatened to kill her, and she filed for a restraining order. The journey began again, one step at a time, one Domestic Violence counseling session at a time. She said, "I am rebuilding my life in a space named AVANZAR."

Six months later, she came to a counseling session. This time she wore earrings and color on her lips. She told her counselor, "It's the first time in my life, after 12 years of marriage, that I finally feel happy. This place called AVANZAR has helped me to feel happy again and to be where I am today." She now lives in a new apartment with her two children. She says, "I have peace and my children are happy in their new home." Transformation is a journey. It's a journey that for this woman and her family began with a first step – a first step made at AVANZAR.