Sexual Violence Awareness Month

by Rose Pulliam, Statewide Coordinator
with Chani Waterhouse, Program Support Coordinator

In the eve of April 2004, Sexual Violence Awareness Month, we are as conscious as ever of the prevalence of sexual violence in our communities. Vermont’s crime statistics for 2002 showed a 20% increase in forcible rapes reported to law enforcement as compared to 2001. In 87% of these incidents, the assailant was known to the victim. (2002 VT Crime Report) Nationally, military women continue to speak out about being raped while serving their country in Afghanistan and Iraq, by “comrades”, fellow soldiers with whom they should have been able to trust their lives. And as the spectacle of the Kobe Bryant trial grinds on, and the plaintiff’s underwear, sexual and psychiatric history are paraded before a voyeuristic public, we are reminded again and again of why rape and sexual assault continue to be the least reported of all violent crimes. (National Crime Victimization Survey, September 2002).

Sexual Violence takes many complex forms, from rape, to sexual abuse of children, to sexual coercion and violence in intimate relationships, to sexual slavery. We know that rape is not just a big-city problem. Most assaults do not occur in dark alleyways in big cities. They happen in the victim’s own home or in the home of the assailant, in our own community and in communities just like ours. The common thread in these incidents is the abuse of power, a sense of entitlement, and the use of sex and sexuality to dominate. Sexual violence damages individuals, families and communities, and supports an orientation toward sexuality that is fundamentally dependent on an imbalance of power, on dehumanization, on degradation.

Yet even as we see evidence of sexual violence all around us, and of a culture that remains profoundly ambivalent about sexuality, violence, victims and perpetrators, the chorus of voices speaking against sexual violence grows louder, more varied, and ever more interesting. As we continue our slow march forward in this work, we find a surprising group of allies walking beside us, and we find more creative ways to keep moving toward our goal of a world in which sexual violence is a memory.

Here in Vermont, the legislature has been addressing a number of bills that could affect survivors and perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence. Sarah Kenney’s Legislative Update looks at our local government’s activities around these issues. Vermont Network Programs have always raised their voices against the cultural forces that support or ignore sexual violence.
Sexual Violence Awareness Month

sexual violence, and continue to explore creative and radical ways to respond to sexual violence. In *Legal Assistance for Victims of Sexual Violence Grant Program*, Celia Cuddy highlights a successful effort to improve the Criminal Justice System response to sexual violence in two Vermont communities.

*The Joy of Sexual Violence Prevention* by Amy Torchia and Meg Kuhner describes an exciting new perspective in sexuality education which Network Programs are exploring and elaborating. The Joyful Sexuality project is a vital new voice in the cultural conversation about sexuality, reminding us all of our complex humanity and teaching young people to hold that of others in highest regard.

Finally, the Network will be ushering in Sexual Violence Awareness Month with a Statewide “Healing Fire” in Montpelier on March 31st. Chittenden County was the first to incorporate aspects of this First Nations tradition by holding a four-day Healing Fire on the UVM campus three years ago for SVAM. Since then the practice has spread to other communities around the state. While survivors who visit the fires may have wide-ranging spiritual and cultural beliefs, and differing intentions or goals, the fires provide a place for reflection and healing, symbolizing a community's support for survivors and commitment to shining light on the issue of sexual violence. The statewide fire will bring together Vermont policymakers and advocates to highlight the work being done and to raise awareness of the work yet to be done in ending sexual violence.

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**The Joy Of Sexual Violence Prevention**

*By Amy Torchia, Children’s Advocacy Coordinator*

*With support from Meg Brooks Kuhner and Sarah Kenney*

All humans, it seems, have a yearning for wholeness — a wholeness that includes our sense of sexuality as a joyful, meaningful and fulfilling experience. Imagine the shape of an hourglass, the contents — our sense of sexuality. In childhood, many of us are able to fill the top of the hourglass to full measure: experience the wonders of all our senses and bathe in the intimacy of our relationships with nature, with others and with ourselves. As we emerge into adolescence, cultural silence and messages of secrecy and danger surrounding sexuality restrict our experiences and language to create the small middle of the hourglass. Our primary educator becomes the media, and our feelings become fear-driven. Many of us, and our children, find ourselves in this stuck place, in the middle of the hourglass where there is no room for wholeness or fluidity or joy.

Outside, it is ten below zero. Inside, a fire is crackling in the stone fireplace. We, Sexual Violence Advocates - many of whom provide sexual violence prevention education to youth and adults in Vermont, get up from the chairs to which we have been affixed for this two-day training on *Teens and Sexual Violence*. We have been asked to explore a beautifully arranged display in the middle of the room. A top a green velvet cloth is an unusual collection of items: a gathering of heart shaped rocks, ceramic bowls of dirt, flax seed, orange lentils, purple beans and sand; chocolate covered peanuts and dried apricots; books with black and white photographs of people in nature, dancing, climbing trees; lavender, vanilla, and eucalyptus oils; a flawlessly round rock that fits perfectly in any hand, a brass bell, a bouquet of dried flowers, lit candles, and a balancing stick found on a magical hiking journey. Together with native flute, we hear whispers of ‘yum’ and ‘oooo’ and the spontaneous sharing of stories.

When invited to speak about this experience, we talk about our grandfathers and family- propagated heirloom beans, of childhood rock collections, of our inspiring, insightful sons and daughters, of smells and tastes that evoke memories of our past or of our childhood. We share a sense of slowing down, of being sensual, of connecting.

The group looks at the words *intimacy, erotic, sensuality, and sexuality*. We talk about how these words describe our relationships with the world around us: with babies and children, with our partners, with nature and with ourselves. Then, when we look at a handout with the root origins and current definitions outlined, we discover that these words were once wholly connected in their full definitions and have been separated over time. *Intimacy* now implies a sexual relationship, *erotic* relates to pornography, *sensuality* is about being sexy, and the meaning of *sexuality* has been reduced to *the act of having sex*. We list together the messages that we got as children about sexuality. They
are, for the most part, steeped in negativity and emanate messages of silence and secrets.

The connection has been made and as Prevention Educators we know: sexuality education has been put into a disconnected and scary box confined to the biology of reproduction, abstinence education, birth control, rape avoidance, and sexually transmitted infections. We — and our children — have had our sexuality appropriated by a culture that only allows us to be sexual in the extreme (as the media would have us be) and does not support us in integrating our sexuality into our wholeness. We have not been encouraged to nurture our sexuality as we have other parts of our ‘humanness’ — like our intellect or physical health. Few of us have been able to hold onto the joy that we instinctively felt as children around our sense of sexuality and connection to the world. We mourn together the loss of this sense of joy. We understand this cultural circumscription of our sexuality as part of sexual violence, and its reclamation as a crucial part of sexual violence prevention. Each of us considers how we will bring this learning into schools, incorporate these ideas into our work and raise our children in a different way.

Since 2001, Vermont’s Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force’s Workgroup on Joyful Sexuality has focused its work on the concept of Joyful Sexuality as Sexual Violence Prevention. The mission of the workgroup: to shift the cultural norm toward joyful and healthy sexuality by creating opportunities for individuals and communities to explore, reclaim, and discover a deeper and more expansive understanding of how sexuality informs our humanity. To this end, the group is committed to promoting joyful and healthy sexuality as a step toward ending sexual violence by bringing these types of trainings and experiences to educators, parents, and youth in our state and nationally.

The Joyful Sexuality workgroup began its work with the goal of deconstructing the negative violent understandings of sexuality and exploring ways to reconstruct a joyful, healthier way of both teaching about sexuality and preventing sexual violence. Similar to the experience described above, the members of this group explored joyful sexuality through intentionally experiencing their senses. They began to regain a broad organic definition of sexuality by listening to music and poetry, writing, cooking, eating, finger painting, and talking. Through recognizing that the sense of joy and self and connectedness that was most often held by children was at the core of joyful human sexuality, the group identified that prevention might most effectively focus on helping children retain that sense and helping adults reclaim it.

After developing some language and form to their experiences, the Joyful Sexuality Workgroup has begun to create opportunities for individuals and communities to take part in this learning. The group has brought this thinking to other professionals who do statewide sexual violence prevention work including advocates of the Network Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Nationally, the group’s work will be presented at the Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women on Campus Program Training and Technical Assistance Institute. Current work includes developing a manual that will summarize guiding principals of this work and outline activities that can be used to further the learning and joy.

In September of 2003, the group collaborated with the Women’s Rape Crisis Center in Chittenden County to organize a flag-making booth at Marketfest in Burlington. Children were invited to answer this question by writing their answer on a cloth flag: “What are you doing when your body feels the happiest?” The answers were clearly indicative of how children are naturally tuned in to their sense of joyful sexuality: petting my dog, singing, running, dancing, jumping on the bed, sharing a toy, etc. The children painted their flags with runny rainbow colors and took them home.

The tasks at hand for Sexual Violence Prevention Advocates are challenging and exciting: to support a shift toward incorporating joyful and healthy sexuality into sexual violence prevention work; to support a shift toward cultural understandings that allow children and youth to experience and express their sexuality - rather than feel forced to consider it in a narrow and scary box; and to support adults in exploring, discovering and reclaiming personal understandings of intimacy, sensuality, eroticism, and sexuality.

The Advocates at the Teens and Sexual Violence Training are asked to make rainbow flags and answer the same question: “What are you doing when your body feels the happiest?” We are wondering what kinds of answers we will get from adults. Our answers are amazingly similar to those of the children.

When we, as adults, feel free to invite wonder back into our lives and, in turn, teach our children the fullness of human sexuality, the feeling that our sense of sexuality is stuck in an hourglass will disappear. Connection and sensual delight will move more freely within us and throughout our lives. If we can do this, we will become a culture of whole, sexually healthy adults and our children will follow our lead. Here is where we find the joy of sexual violence prevention.
Legal Assistance for Victims of Sexual Violence Grant Program

By Celia Cuddy, Executive Director of Women’s Rape Crisis Center, Burlington

Since the opening of the first rape crisis hotline in Vermont in 1973, advocates across the state have provided essential assistance to thousands of survivors of sexual violence. We have accompanied survivors to the hospital to offer support during the process of a rape exam. We have provided survivors with information about their options in making a report to the police. We have assisted survivors who do choose to report, and very often have continued to support survivors as their cases are prosecuted by a state’s attorney’s office.

Survivors whose cases go forward benefit from the assistance of victim advocates based in the states’ attorneys’ offices. These advocates provide information about the status of the case and about available community resources like the Victims’ Compensation program. They also work to convey the wishes of the survivor to the prosecutor, on matters such as plea agreements and sentencing. This is critical assistance for survivors. However, the assistance provided by the state’s attorneys’ advocates is limited by the state in important ways. For example, communications between the state’s attorney’s advocate and the survivor are not confidential; this advocate shares information from and about the survivor with the prosecutor. Also, the relationship between the state’s attorneys’ advocate and the survivor generally ends with the resolution of the case.

Similarly, there are certain constraints that can shape the relationship between the state’s attorney and the survivor. Many survivors whose cases have been prosecuted have benefited from the sensitivity and experience of a skilled sexual assault prosecutor. But the very processes and structures of the criminal justice system are such that the primary focus is on a successful prosecution of crime. In this process, the role of the victim is to function as a witness to the crime. Ultimately the prosecutor is working on behalf of the state, not the victim.

In our experience at the Women’s Rape Crisis Center, for a number of years we had been aware that many survivors felt disenfranchised and disempowered during their experiences within the criminal justice system. As advocates working within a community-based program, we speculated that the very structure of the criminal justice system created barriers to survivors fully participating. We worked to provide our advocacy in a way that could complement what was available within that system. For example, advocates at Network programs are able to offer survivors a confidential relationship. Network advocates can also work to meet the ongoing, holistic needs of survivors (for example, help with finding a counselor or support group, or assistance with relocating to safe housing). However, in many cases (and certainly at the WRCC) our limited resources prevented us from doing as much as we knew was needed. We also recognized that our expertise was in the realm of advocacy and offering information about options — we were not prepared to give legal advice. Yet very often, survivors had questions for us about their legal rights during the criminal justice process that we weren’t able to answer.

It was from our experiences with survivors – and our frustrations about the shape of the need and our limitations in meeting that need – that the goals of the first Legal Assistance for Victims of Sexual Violence Project were developed. Initial federal funding for this project was applied for and received in 2001, with our continuation application funded in 2003.

Project Goals

The work of this project has been guided by two overarching goals. The first goal has been to expand the capacity of the community-based rape crisis centers in Chittenden and Washington counties to provide survivors with information about their legal options, and also to provide expert legal advice and representation for those who seek resolution within the criminal or civil legal systems. Toward this goal, both the Sexual Assault Crisis Team of Washington County (SACT) and the Women’s Rape Crisis Center of Chittenden County (WRCC) received funds to hire Legal Advocates. These advocates work closely with survivors throughout the survivor’s experience with the legal system. With the permission of the survivor, they also work in collaboration with the advocates based in the state’s attorneys’ offices in order to provide coordinated, comprehensive support. Through contracts with local law firms, survivors are now able to consult with attorneys within 48 hours of a sexual assault…
48 hours of a sexual assault, to learn about their options and their rights, and access legal representation in civil and criminal proceedings all free of charge.

The second overarching goal of the project is to support rape crisis centers to develop partnerships with local service providers and other organizations, to better meet the legal needs of sexual violence survivors throughout the state. Work in this area focused on developing educational materials and trainings for advocates, attorneys, law enforcement, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and others throughout the state who work with survivors.

Outcomes So Far
The first three years of this project have been a tremendously exciting time of creating and implementing a new resource to meet a very critical community need. We have accomplished a great deal. Dozens of survivors have received free, expert legal advice about their options and rights, and skilled representation. This is a virtually unprecedented resource for rape survivors in Vermont. While the state’s attorney is working on behalf of the state and the state’s interest in a successful prosecution, LAV project attorneys work in the courtroom solely on behalf of the survivors and the survivors’ rights, interests, and safety. With this additional support, many survivors have been able to participate more fully in the prosecution of their offenders. Survivors have also had increased opportunities to be heard during the processes of plea agreements and sentencing.

Hundreds of survivors have benefited from the skilled and compassionate support of the new Legal Advocates at SACT and WRCC. These advocates work with survivors throughout their full experience with the legal process to provide information about their options and ongoing emotional support. They also make the referrals to our project attorneys. These advocates can assist survivors in accessing community resources to meet their other needs, such as follow-up medical care, counseling, or replacement of property that was damaged or taken as evidence. We understand that sexual assault is an experience that can impact the survivor on every level, and that comprehensive support is key. The Legal Advocate can serve as a point of continuity and comfort for the survivor, available before a report is ever made to the police, available throughout the process, and still after the legal case has come to completion.

In our experience, the most comprehensive advocacy is often possible when advocates from both the state and the community based program work together, bringing in the resources of our different vantage points. This is done with the explicit permission of the survivor. In this way, for example, a survivor might enjoy the unique access to the criminal justice process that a state’s attorney’s advocate can provide, as well as the more ongoing advocacy and confidential support that the community-based program offers.

While we have been working to meet the needs of individual survivors, we have also been building our collaborative partnerships with investigators and prosecutors and finding new ways to work together to support survivors and help them access resources.

Finally, last year we organized two rounds of trainings for advocates, lawyers, and others throughout the state who work with survivors. In these trainings, we shared what we had learned about opportunities for advocacy and legal assistance for survivors of sexual violence.

Next steps
During the three years of the project, we have worked with survivors whose situations were complicated by other issues. We have negotiated challenges of overlapping family court involvement, immigration status issues, and working with survivors who also have simultaneous involvement with the system as a defendant. We have deepened our appreciation that every situation is different, and every survivor’s needs are unique. And we continue to think of this project as a learning experience for ourselves as advocates -- and also for the system as a whole -- about what survivors need and deserve during the criminal and civil legal process.

RAINN Pocket Stats
*Every two minutes, another American is sexually assaulted*

- More than 260,000 Americans are sexually assaulted each year.
- About 10% of victims are male.
- 80% of rape victims are under age 30.
- More than 62% of sexual assault victims know their attacker.
- Only about 30% of sexual assaults are reported to police.
- Of every 20 rapes, only one will result in the rapist spending a day in prison.

This session has been unbelievably busy so far — the House and Senate are considering many pieces of legislation that could affect survivors of domestic and sexual violence and victim service providers. If you would like more information on a particular bill, you can visit the legislature’s website at www.leg.state.us.gov. You can also email Sarah Kenney at sarahk@vtnetwork.org to be added onto the Network’s legislative alert email list.

S.255 – Access to Juvenile Proceedings – SIGNED INTO LAW ON FEBRUARY 6th!
This law provides victims of crimes perpetrated by juveniles with increased access to juvenile court proceedings and information. The law also prohibits defendants who cannot meet bail from harassing or causing to be harassed a victim or potential witness. Sandy Hart, Advocate from Umbrella, did some wonderful advocacy on this bill.

H.590 – Open containers of an Alcoholic Beverage in a Restaurant – SIGNED INTO LAW
This bill contains an important provision that requires the DLC to change its rules to eliminate the antiquated – and now dangerous – rule banning patrons from bringing their drinks onto the dance floor (which has resulted in patrons leaving drinks behind, making them targets for perpetrators of drug-facilitated sexual assault). The bill allows a patron to maintain control over his or her open container of alcoholic beverages at all times while on the licensed premises.

S.227 – Sex offender registration and community notification
This bill expands public access to sex offender registry information – individuals can request information about a particular sex offender if they have a fear for their safety or that of another. The bill also creates an online sex offender registry for certain higher-level offenders. The bill is now in House Judiciary. *The Network supports this bill.*

H.35 – Child support, custody and visitation
This bill has been combined with H.70 – relating to child support – and passed the House. The combined bill has several provisions relating to child support computation and enforcement and visitation. The bill also calls for an extensive study of the family court system and laws relating to child support, child custody, parent/child contact, domestic violence, and any other relevant issues. The committee will report back with findings and recommendations by December 2005.

H.79 – Evidentiary privilege for interpreters for the Deaf and hard of hearing
This bill establishes an evidentiary privilege to prohibit the disclosure of communications made to interpreters by hearing impaired persons. The bill also calls for a study of whether a similar privilege should be provided to interpreters for people for whom English is not their first language. Passed the House. *The Network supports this bill.*

H.498 – Advertisement of change of name
This bill proposes to repeal the requirement of publication of a change of name. Passed the House. *The Network supports this bill.*

H.528 – Probation and pretrial detention
This bill proposes to limit the term of probation for misdemeanors to an automatic two years (current default is indefinite) unless the judge specifically finds that they require a longer or an indefinite period. *The Network is opposed* due to concerns that some offenders – such as domestic abusers and sex offenders convicted of lower-level offenses – may slip through the cracks and be discharged from probation without completing the necessary treatment or other probation requirements. The bill passed the House and is now in Senate Judiciary.
H.661 – Economic safety and security for domestic violence survivors

This bill proposes to provide survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking with unemployment compensation benefits when they are forced to leave employment because of the violence. The Network supports this bill. The Administration opposed the bill; it was defeated in Committee on a straight party line vote of 6 to 5.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Jenny Beaudin Ring — the Network’s Legal Issues Coordinator

Recently, I was asked where I went to school. My reply was “which time”? “Are you one of those permanent students”? “I used to be”, I said.

This dialog allowed me to reflect on my passion for learning and how much I enjoyed the challenges of college life. It occurred to me, shortly thereafter, that in the six months I’ve spent at the Network office, I have had more opportunity to learn, participate, and educate myself than any college curriculum could possibly offer.

I am amazed daily at the opportunity I have been given. I am in awe of the incredible commitment and energy Program advocates sustain and the kindness and passion with which they aid victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. I am equally astonished at the sincerity, support, compassion, and energy the Network office staff offers daily. Instead of the warnings from family that this career change might be depressing, I find myself inspired.

As many of you know, I have taken on many new tasks since my induction to the Network last August. These tasks range from organizing the Court Advocate’s Task Force and the Police Academy’s four-day Train the Trainer to encouraging dialog regarding the use of expert witnesses during sexual assault and domestic violence cases.

I’m involved with many upcoming trainings concerning the Department of Corrections, Confidentiality, and the Family Court Innovations Project. I’m serving on committees addressing offender reentry, victim wrap-around services, offender classification, and Project Safe Vermont. If you would like to speak to me in regards to my work please feel free to call or email at 223-1302 Ext. 22 / jennyb@vtnetwork.org.

Bethany Pombar — the Network’s Training & Outreach Manager

I’ve recently made it past my three month point working with the Network, and I am definitely starting to feel nestled into my new career. One initiative that I have begun is the training calendar, which includes information on various learning opportunities in three sections: national and regional trainings (including many teleconferences); statewide trainings; and Network program trainings. I do an emailing each month containing the information I have compiled. If you are interested in receiving this list, feel free to contact me at the Network office [bethany@vtnetwork.org or 802-223-1302 ext.23]

Some of the other projects I am working on are Sexual Violence Awareness Month activities and campaign materials, Domestic Violence Awareness month campaign activities, providing logistical support for meetings and trainings coming out of the Network Office, and looking for ways to improve our media outreach and training priorities. Along with these various tasks, I will be updating our website sometime this summer, making our training schedules available there, updating contact information and useful links, and all around site improvement.

It has been a steep learning curve for me yet I have been supported by a strong and extremely knowledgeable and compassionate organization. I am very happy to have this opportunity to work with the Network programs, and I hope that the work I do will provide meaningful support.
### SOME RECOMMENDED RESOURCES ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

#### BOOKS


**Date Rape: Feminism, Philosophy, and the Law** by Leslie Francis. Pennsylvania Univ. © 1996.


**Woman-To-Woman Sexual Violence: Does She Call It Rape?** by Lori B. Girshick. Northeasten Univ. © 2002.


**A Very Touching Book…for Little People and for Big People** by Jan Hindman © 1983.

**Sexual Abuse in Nine North American Cultures: Treatment and Prevention** by Lia Aronson Fontes, editor; SAGE © 1995.

#### MANUALS


**E.C. in the E.R.: A Manual for Improving Services for Women who have been Sexually Assaulted** by the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project 2003.

**The Prosecution of Rohypnol and GHB Related Sexual Assaults** by the American Prosecutors Research Institute, US Department of Justice 1999. [w/ 50-minute video]

**Widening the Circle: Sexual Assault / Abuse and People with Disabilities and the Elderly** by the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault 1998. [w/ 23-minute video]

**Preventing Pregnancy from Sexual Assault: Four Action Strategies to Improve Hospital Policies on Provision of Emergency Contraception** by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center 2003.

#### VIDEOS

**Love: All That and More** [a six-session curriculum w/ three videos – for teens] by the National Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. 2000.

**Beyond Killing Us Softly: The Strength to Resist** by Cambridge Documentary Films 2001 [33-minutes]

**The Healing Years: A Documentary about Surviving Incest and Child Sexual Abuse** by Future Educational Films, Inc. 1999. [50-minutes]

**Flirting or Hurting?** by Nan Stein of Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College 1997; 6-12 grades w/ Teacher’s Guide. [60-minutes]

**Restoring Dignity: Frontline Response to Rape** by the Long Island College Hospital & the Junior League of Brooklyn. SAGE © 1998 [30-minutes]
WEBSITE RESOURCES

WEBSITES
Advocates for Youth  www.advocatesforyouth.org
Women’s Rape Crisis Center  www.stoprapevermont.org
Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network  www.rainn.org
National Coalition Against Sexual Assault  www.ncasa.org
National Sexual Violence Resource Center  www.nsvrc.org
Teen Action Campaign  www.seeitandstopit.org
Family Violence Prevention Fund  www.fvpf.org
Men Can Stop Rape  www.mencanstoprape.org

National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women  www.scircle@sacred-circle.com
Miles Foundation, Inc. (Military)  www.Milesfdn@aol.com
Planned Parenthood of Northern New England  www.ppnne.org
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault  www.calcasa.org
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape  www.pcar.org
Lifetime Television for Women  www.LifetimeTV.com
National Center for Victims of Crime  www.ncvc.org

Partners in Making a Difference

Working Towards Ending the Abuse of the Elders, People with Disabilities, and Deaf Individuals

A conference for Advocates, Allies, Law Enforcement and Prosecutors

April 22nd, 2004
Stoweflake Conference Center, Stowe, VT

Registration: 8:30 Conference
Events: 9:00-4:00

All Advocates and Allies Conference 2004

Sponsored by the Center for Crime Victim Services: Office on Violence Against Women
Training Grants to Stop Abuse and Sexual Assault Against Older Individuals or Individuals with Disabilities

Crime Victims Rights Week
April 18 - 24, 2004

Eleventh Annual Vermont Victims Rights Awards Ceremony
Friday, April 23, 2004
Vermont Statehouse, Montpelier

Reception following the ceremony in the Cedar Creek Room

Keynote Speaker: Anne Seymour, Director, Justice Solutions, Washington, D.C.

Please join us to honor the people and programs who, through vision, action and leadership, have worked to improve the lives of victims in the aftermath of crime.
These events are free and open to the public. All are welcome.
Co-sponsored by the Vermont Victim/Survivor of Crime Council. The Council is creating a Memorial Garden in Montpelier to honor survivors of crime. To help or find out more, contact Barbara, 241-4334 or Sharon, 241-4335
Aid to Women, Men and Children in Abuse & Rape Emergencies  
Hardwick, Vermont

AWARE has a Children’s Services Program that delivers sexual violence prevention education to area middle school health classes. The Teen Group also has a strong focus on sexual violence prevention with the members often getting involved in community education efforts.

Ongoing sexual violence education to students with special needs in area schools is provided by the Safe & Strong Program. The AWARE staff has been focused on the role media plays in building our society’s tolerance for sexual violence and its relation to a lack of empathy for its victims; this information is being woven into existing programs as well as impetus for future stand-alone programs.

Battered Women’s Services and Shelter  
Barre, Vermont

A student from a Washington County high-school wrote this after a BWSS presentation in her health class: “I appreciate the fact that you asked us about our feelings and opinions surrounding certain issues. I believe that being listened to in this way allowed us to pay better attention and participate more.” At Battered Women’s Services and Shelter, we feel that we can learn from everyone we serve, whether it is a woman in shelter, or a student in the classroom. By giving students the chance to share their own experiences and knowledge, he or she feels more comfortable and therefore willing to truly take in and remember information we work so hard to give them.

Clarina Howard Nichols Center,  
Morrisville, Vermont

Sandra Brauer, Outreach Educator of Sexual Violence Prevention, has been working with Lamoille County youth of all grades about issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Feedback indicates they are learning valuable lessons around the difference between flirting and harassment, about warning signs to watch out for, and actions to take if they have been assaulted or threatened. Also, the youth are developing awareness about the legal penalties for harassment and assault, and communication skills for dealing with difficult situations.

Project Against Violence Encounters (PAVE)  
Bennington, Vermont

During a recent presentation to high-school students of My Choice, a program designed to help empower individuals by teaching practical skills to express emotions in a healthy, non-violent manner, PAVE’s Youth and Community Educator had a unique opportunity to discuss sexual violence. A student in the class experienced a paradigm shift when at first he could not believe that a community person accused of rape could have committed it – and after learning about the cultural aspects of entitlement and control inherent in perpetrator behavior, he came to see it as possible. The class also explored the victims’ experience, emotional and physical boundaries, and goals for protection planning.

Rutland County Women’s Network & Shelter  
Rutland, Vermont

RCWN sees the many benefits to talking in the classroom about the prevention of sexual violence. Teaching the awareness of personal safety to children feels paramount to the program’s prevention education efforts; this includes teaching children that they can say “no” and seek help if the “no” is not respected. It is always beneficial to help prevent abuse through education, and it is also deeply rewarding when children come forward and disclose abuse – this has occurred as a result of presentations given in both the elementary and high school.

Step ONE  
Newport, Vermont

Step O.N.E. was thrilled earlier this year when the North Country Union High School’s SADD group and peer leaders decided they wanted to spend the month of February 2004 educating their school community about Dating Violence, Date Rape and Drug Facilitated Rape. Step O.N.E. was able to provide some “mini trainings” for students, as well as help brainstorm ways to break the silence within their school. The events of the month culminated with a parent/student film discussion night of which Step O.N.E. helped to facilitate.
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**Program Highlights of Sexual Violence Awareness Work**

**Safeline Randolph, Vermont**

On February 20th students at Vermont Law School presented The Vagina Monologues. Displays of The Clothesline Project and Finding Our Souls, presentations created by and for survivors of sexual violence, were set up at the entrance to the performance. The commitment and diversity of the many hands who helped make the whole event possible were nothing short of inspiring; these included the amazing cast, directors and crew, the dedicated people involved in ticket sales, refreshments and publicity, the South Royalton School for use of their light board, Hopkins Center for use of their lights, Cornell Library for printing, South Royalton house for donated beverages, and the Law School for funding expenses in order that all profits directly benefited Safeline. Let it be noted that a number of the individuals involved in this undertaking were a group of supportive and compassionate men.

**Sexual Assault Crisis Team (SACT) Barre, Vermont**

A new outreach program is announced — the SACTMOBILE — made possible through a grant from the Northfield Savings Bank Foundation, Inc. This traveling information center will cover all communities in Washington County. The purpose is to make all services of SACT easily accessible and increase awareness on issues of sexual violence. SACT has been serving male and female survivors of sexual violence since 1984 and provides hotline, advocacy, shelter, support groups, community education programs, professional training and school programs.

**Voices Against Violence St. Albans, Vermont**

In her short time at Voices, Emily Allard, the Children’s Services Coordinator, has already delivered 20+ presentations in the junior high and middle schools of Franklin and Grand Isle counties. Emily’s programs — which have focused on dating violence, bullying and harassment, healthy boundaries, and joyful relationships — have been responded to with great enthusiasm by the students.

Exciting news on the horizon for Voices is the imminent hiring of a full time Prevention Educator who will focus on advocacy and outreach primarily in the teen population.

**Women’s Information Service (WISE) Lebanon, New Hampshire**

WISE serves lower Grafton County, NH and upper Windsor County, VT. To expand the awareness of sexual violence to young people, WISE visits six Vermont schools throughout the year. Prevention work is done with presentations about gender stereotypes, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

This year WISE offered a support group for adult survivors of sexual assault. The group was facilitated by an advocate and a licensed therapist. Also, a wallet-size card was created with information about what might happen after a hospital sexual assault exam.

**Women’s Rape Crisis Center Burlington, Vermont**

WRCC is excited to welcome two new Victim Advocates, Iwona Zitsch and Sandra Bevans. Iwona and Sandra join our Hotline and Advocacy Team to ensure skilled hotline coverage on weekends. Iwona comes from Poland via Germany, and has volunteered at a women's center in Munich. Sandra is a recent graduate of Vermont Law School, and completed an internship in South Africa focusing on issues of human rights and prisoners’ rights. We were also pleased to welcome Jim Leahy as our new Volunteer Coordinator/Educator. Jim’s experience includes working for four years with Men Advocating Change at Colgate University.

Our other news from Chittenden County is troubling: the first medically confirmed case of the use of GHB to facilitate a sexual assault. WRCC is working with the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners program (SANE) and Chittenden County Sexual Investigation (CUSI) to respond to this development.

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**Human Trafficking**  
*Addressing Modern-Day Slavery*

The Freedom Network: Institute on Human Trafficking, a national organization that works to empower trafficked and enslaved persons through advocacy and public awareness initiatives, will be coming to Vermont to give a one-day training that will focus on issues of human trafficking for prostitution and labor into the U.S. and across state lines.

**April 2nd, 2004, Location TBA**

**Sponsors:** The Vermont Network Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, The Office of the Vermont State Refugee Coordinator, and The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

**Space is limited. Registration deadline: March 25th, 2004**

Call Will Roberts at 241-4331 for information and to register.
Vermont Network Member Programs

H = Hotline Phone Number     0 = Program Office Number     * = Shelter

**AWARE**
P.O. Box 307
Hardwick, VT 05843
O: 802-472-6463

*Battered Women’s Services and Shelter (BWSS)*
P.O. Box 652
Barre, VT 05641
H: 877-543-9498   O: 802-476-6010

**Clarina Howard Nichols Center (CHNC)**
P.O. Box 517
Morrisville, VT 05661
H: 802-888-5256   O: 802-888-2584

**New Beginnings**
12 Valley Street
Springfield, VT 05156
H: 802-885-2050   O: 802-885-2368

**Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE)**
P.O. Box 227
Bennington, VT 05201
H: 802-442-2111   O: 802-442-2370

*Rutland County Women’s Network and Shelter (RCWNS)*
P.O. Box 313
Rutland, VT 05701
H: 802-775-3232   O: 802-775-6788

**Sexual Assault Crisis Team (SACT)**
4 Cottage Street
Barre, VT 05641
H: 802-479-5577   O: 802-476-1388

*SafeLine*
P.O. Box 446
Randolph, VT 05060
H: 800-639-7233   O: 802-728-5647

**Step O.N.E.**
P.O. Box 1004
Newport, VT 05855
H: 800-224-7837   O: 802-334-0148

**UMBRELLA**
970 Memorial Drive
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
H: 802-748-8141   O: 802-748-8645

*Voices Against Violence*
P.O. Box 72
Saint Albans, VT 05753
H: 802-524-6575   O: 802-524-8538

**Women Helping Battered Women (WHBW)**
P.O. Box 1535
Burlington, VT 05402
H: 802-658-1996   O: 802-658-3131

*Women’s Information Service (WISE)*
79 Hanover Street
Lebanon, NH 03766
H: 603-448-5525   O: 603-448-5922

**Women’s Crisis Center**
P.O. Box 933
Brattleboro, VT 05302
H: 802-254-6954   O: 802-257-7364

**Women’s Rape Crisis Center**
P.O. Box 92
Burlington, VT 05402
H: 802-863-1236 or 800-773-0689
O: 802-864-0555

Statewide Hotlines:
1-800-228-7395 (Domestic Violence)
1-800-489-7273 (Sexual Assault)