Observations of a Former Campus Advocate

Anne Smith, Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator

Campus sexual assault has received considerable attention lately due to several high profile sexual assault cases, a recent White House report on Sexual Assault and the accompanying “It’s On Us” public awareness campaign. As we know, sexual assault is not a new issue. Years ago, I had the privilege of working as a campus victim advocate, supporting student, staff and faculty victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking. I learned so much from the survivors I worked with and as the dialogue about campus sexual assault continues, I return to one particular lesson learned from my work on college campuses: The issue of sexual assault on campuses is not just a college issue — it is OUR issue.

The same underlying dynamics that support the perpetration of sexual assault on college campuses support sexual assault in our communities. Rape Culture is defined as “a culture in which rape and sexual violence are common and in which prevalent attitudes, norms, practices and media condone, normalize, excuse, or encourage sexual violence”. Rape culture exists on college campuses because it exists in our culture at large. The victim blaming, lack of understanding about consent and rape myths that exist on campuses aren’t a reflection of unique cultural circumstances on campuses – they are a reflection of our own culture. Just as campus communities struggle to believe a student leader, professor, beloved staff member, or student athlete would ever sexually assault someone, local communities may equally reject the notion that a minister, teacher, law enforcement officer, or beloved community leader would ever commit sexual assault. As a result, both communities can be unwilling to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

We still struggle to acknowledge the often inconvenient truth that people who sexually assault others are not strangers lurking in bushes, or an isolated bad actor at a frat party – they are members of our communities. They are our neighbors, classmates, leaders, relatives, and students.
Observations of a Former Campus Advocate
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and we have a responsibility to survivors, perpetrators, and ourselves to hold them accountable. And if we believe victims have ulterior motives in coming forward, or couldn’t possibly be telling the truth, we can hold on to our comforting myths that help separate us from perpetrators (and victims) just a little bit longer. If we blame the victim and downplay the devastating impact of rape, we relinquish our own responsibility to hold perpetrators accountable. As a victim advocate in the criminal justice system, I saw many not guilty verdicts and reduced charges in sexual assault cases that resulted from jurors and attorneys not wanting to “ruin a young man’s life” with a sex crime conviction even in the face of strong evidence. I have also observed campus judicial processes where virtually the same concern about the perpetrator’s future impacted the outcome.

As our discussion of campus sexual assault continues, we need to acknowledge the ways higher education is unique and creates unique complexities for survivors without categorizing campususes as a place separate from our communities where “risk taking behaviors” of college youth lead to sexual assault. Also, while there are campus administrators who seek to push the problem under the rug, I have seen many administrators grapple with how to address the reality of rape on campus and champion the cause of victims. Just as there is resistance, resilience and bravery among survivors of sexual assault and their supporters in our communities at large, there are college students, staff, faculty and many Network programs mirroring these efforts to dismantle rape culture, deepen our understanding of consent and healthy sexuality, and working to end sexual violence in Vermont every day.

Statistics – Campus Sexual Violence

- 40% of colleges and universities reported not investigating a single sexual assault in the previous five years. (U.S. Senate Subcommittee, 2014)
- 70% of colleges and universities did not have a protocol for working with local law enforcement. (U.S. Subcommittee, 2014)
- One in 5 women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted while in college. (Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007)
- Among college women, 9 out of 10 victims of rape knew the person who assaulted them. (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner)
- More than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault. (Fisher et al., 2000)
- Nearly two-thirds of college students experience sexual harassment and less than 10% of these students tell a college employee. (Hill & Silva, 2005)

Campuses Benefit from a Coordinated Response to Sexual Violence

Chani Waterhouse, Associate Director of Program Member Support

The member programs of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence work with their local colleges and universities to address sexual violence in students’ lives. At SACT, PAVE and other Network Member Programs, these efforts have been driven by the needs articulated by survivors of sexual violence.

All Students Need Information about Sexual Violence

Network Member Programs employ a range of strategies to reach students, including speaking directly to students in classes, at orientation, or at campus events. Safeline provides an information table at the Vermont Technical College cafeteria. Network Member Programs train (Resident Assistants), faculty and campus advocates to encourage referrals for services. Network Member Programs work with institutions to ensure written information is provided to incoming students and utilize creative strategies to reach out in other ways. WISE advocate Chelsea Williams reported, “Dartmouth is in our service area so it is our responsibility to assure that students know we are a resource. They are a unique population so our usual outreach efforts likely do not resonate with them. We implemented a strategic marketing plan to assure that Dartmouth students know we are a resource.”
WISE was invited to use the Dartmouth’s food court “splash screen” for a week, they hung a “Stall St. Journal” in all bathrooms during domestic violence awareness month, and they developed a mobile-optimized web page designed specifically for Dartmouth students to email an advocate from the site.

**Survivors of Sexual Violence Need Confidential Support**

Network Member Programs provide direct services to students at local colleges and universities in addition to providing outreach and information. Students value the confidentiality offered by community-based advocates. Network Member Programs employ creative strategies to respond to the unique needs of this group of survivors.

SACT staffs an on-campus office at Norwich University with regular hours throughout the week plus late-night weekend shifts. They are able to respond immediately when a survivor seeks support or wants accompaniment to a forensic medical exam (a “SANE exam” – performed by a specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner). Bobbi Gagne, Executive Director of the Sexual Assault Crisis Team explains, “They need confidential support throughout the process. It should be up to them who they want to speak to, or to know about the sexual assault. That is rare for a university to open their arms and say we’re just going to trust this process, because we want what’s best for these students.”

AWARE, WomenSafe and WISE offer support groups on campus making it much easier for students to access the groups, and provides a student-only environment which appeals to many students. Increasingly more Network Member Programs offer email as an option for communicating with advocates. H.O.P.E. Works offers a live “Chat Line” as a youth-friendly alternative to a traditional telephone hotline.

Network Member Programs actively recruit volunteers from local colleges and universities. WISE took this a step further in 2011, working with a group of Dartmouth students to create WISE@D. WISE acts in an advisory and oversight role with WISE@D, comprised of Dartmouth students who completed WISE’s thirty hour volunteer training, serve as advocates on WISE’s 24-hour hotline, and facilitate WISE’s on-campus support group for Dartmouth students.

**Survivors Need Policies that Work**

Federal laws like the Cleary Act and Title IX have changed college campuses. It is important that victims of campus sexual assault have a voice and are informed about their options if an assault occurs.” — Lauren Wilcox, Project Against Violence Encounters (PAVE) Advocate

Vermont colleges and universities to institute better policies for survivors. SACT has a leadership role on a Norwich committee, approved by the President of the University, which is responsible for policy reviews, training, and programming for intervention and prevention through all levels of the Norwich campus. WomenSafe is working with Middlebury College to refine cross-disciplinary protocols for responding to campus sexual assault.

These policies and protocols can be especially critical in cases where a student reports a sexual assault to off-campus law enforcement and a criminal prosecution is proceeding at the same time as a campus judicial process. While a criminal proceeding can move very slowly, and is strictly constrained by evidentiary issues defined in statute, campus judicial processes may be resolved within a matter of weeks. Despite efforts to improve, advocates hear from some survivors that the campus judicial and other responses are not working. Network Member Programs strive to mitigate the negative outcomes survivors may experience when a campus judicial process undermines a criminal proceeding because of differences in evidentiary requirements or other process issues.

Some survivors of campus sexual assault tell advocates they do not want to reveal their assault to campus security because they feel they will be blamed because they were using alcohol or drugs, or were drugged. “There is the impression that disclosing a sexual assault to campus authorities will not result in any action being taken, so victims are very reluctant to come forward,” explained one advocate. Strong collaborations between colleges and universities and Network Member Programs can help to improve on-campus responses to better align with survivors’ needs and create more meaningful accountability for perpetrators.

**One sexual assault is too many. Student involvement can change rape culture.”** — Bobbi Gagne, Executive Director of the Sexual Assault Crisis Team (SACT)

**All Students Need a Well-informed and Engaged Community**

Providing volunteer training for students and opportunities for student internships are the most common activities Network Member Programs engage with campuses. “I see our volunteer trainings as the way that college women access education and support,” explained...
Survivors, Students and Network Member Programs Interrupt Campus Rape Culture

Survivors Need to Share, Connect with and Support Other Survivors, and Change the World

Kerri Duquette Hoffman, Executive Director of Womensafe. “Many decide that working on the hotline is not for them, but the training was really good ‘soul food’ for them.”

Bystander education efforts engage the campus community proactively. “Bystander intervention training is a powerful tool to invite all members of the community into sexual violence prevention,” explained Umbrella advocate Kerry Holden, who works with Lyndon State College and the Community College of VT in St. Johnsbury. Karis Williams, advocate at Rutland County Women’s Network & Shelter, adds,

“Sexual assault is happening all the time on campus and yet is not recognized as being as prevalent as it is. Teaching students, professors, and staff to be aware of what is happening on their campus, and to be responsible for one another as active bystanders, is the only way that we can reduce the number of assaults taking place on campuses.”

As a companion to student training efforts, staff and faculty training is critical. AWARE provides a yearly training on Title IX for the entire faculty of Sterling College, and Safeline trains RAs at Vermont Technical College and “Ambassadors” at Vermont Law School, students serving as mentors to the incoming class. Collaborations in support of campus-based conferences are common. H.O.P.E. Works supports the University of Vermont (UVM) Women’s Center to host the annual Dismantling Rape Conference. Safeline participates in numerous panels and workshops, including a recent Vermont Law School event on street harassment.

Sexual Violence Awareness Month in April provides the impetus for collaborations between Network Member Programs and campuses. PAVE works with college interns, faculty and campus security to organize events in April to raise awareness of sexual violence and resources for survivors.

1 in 4: College Men Working to Change Rape Culture

The 1 in 4 Men’s Group at UVM derives their name from the infamous statistic indicating one in four college women report surviving rape or attempted rape. 1 in 4 is a nationwide, non-profit organization that was founded by Dr. John Foubert. Their mission is to provide researched based, prevention programming that is targeted towards high schools, colleges, the military and local community organizations. UVM has one of 14 college chapters in the United States. Keith Smith, UVM’s Men’s Outreach Coordinator, heads up the group of 8 to 10 men that began in 2013.

The members of 1 in 4 receive a 15 hour training from Dr. Foubert in presenting the Men’s Program titled How to Help a Sexual Assault Survivor: What Men Can Do. The Men’s Program is a one hour presentation designed to be given by men to men to increase their empathy towards rape survivors and to inform them of

Network Office Staff

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Auburn Watersong .......... Associate Director of Public Policy
Alex Bottinelli .......... Clearinghouse & Resource Coordinator
Doreen Fournier Merrill ...... Community Change Coordinator
Kelli Risitano .................... Legal Projects Coordinator
Sarah Kunz Robinson ......... Special Initiatives Coordinator
Anne Smith ............... Training & Tech. Assistance Coordinator

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Title IX

Michele Olvera, Supervising Attorney

“No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”
— 20 U.S.C 1682 (Title IX)

When students are bullied and an atmosphere of aggression is allowed in schools, particularly on the basis of sex and gender identity, students are denied equal access to educational resources and their civil rights are violated. Title IX, as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, set out particular requirements in order to ensure students’ rights are protected in their educational institutions. To ensure full compliance with Title IX, schools should take proactive measures to prevent sexual harassment and violence.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) recommends that all schools implement preventive education programs and make victim resources, including comprehensive victim services, available. Schools may want to include these education programs in their orientation programs for new students, faculty, staff, and employees and in their training for student advisors, athletes and coaches. These programs should include a discussion of what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence, the school’s policies and disciplinary procedures, and the consequences of violating these policies.

The education programs also should include information aimed at letting students know of their right to report incidents of sexual violence to the school and law enforcement authorities. OCR recommends that schools inform students that the school’s primary concern is student safety, that any other rule violations will be addressed separately from the sexual violence allegation, and that use of alcohol or drugs never makes the victim at fault for sexual violence.

OCR also recommends that schools develop specific sexual violence materials that include the school’s policies, rules, and resources for students, faculty, coaches, and administrators. Schools should also include such information in their employee handbook and any handbooks that student athletes and members of student activity groups receive. These materials should include where and to whom students should go if they are victims of sexual violence. These materials also should tell students and school employees what to do if they learn of an incident of sexual violence. Schools also should assess student activities regularly to ensure that the practices and behavior of students do not violate the schools’ policies against sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Title IX requires a school to take steps to protect the person complaining of sexual or gender based harassment as necessary, including taking interim steps before the final outcome of the investigation. The school should undertake these steps promptly once it has notice of a sexual harassment or violence allegation. The school should notify the complainant of his or her options to avoid contact with the alleged perpetrator and allow students to change academic or living situations as appropriate. For instance, the school may prohibit the alleged perpetrator from having any contact with the complainant pending the results of the school’s investigation. When taking steps to separate the complainant and alleged perpetrator, a school should minimize the burden on the victim. In addition, schools should ensure that complainants are aware of their Title IX rights and any available resources, such as counseling, health, and mental health services, and their right to file a complaint with local law enforcement.

Schools should be aware that complaints of sexual harassment or violence may be followed by retaliation by the alleged perpetrator or his or her associates. For instance, friends of the alleged perpetrator may subject the complainant to name-calling and taunting. As part of their Title IX obligations, schools must have policies and procedures in place to protect against retaliatory harassment. At a minimum, schools must ensure that those students who file complaints and their parents, if appropriate, know how to report any subsequent problems, and should follow-up with them to determine whether any retaliation or new incidents of harassment have occurred.

When OCR finds that a school has not taken prompt and effective steps to respond to sexual harassment or violence, OCR will seek appropriate remedies for both the complainant and the broader student population. When conducting Title IX enforcement activities, OCR seeks to obtain voluntary compliance from recipients. When a recipient does not come into compliance voluntarily, OCR may initiate proceedings to withdraw Federal funding by the Department or refer the case to the U.S. Department of Justice for litigation.
1 in 4: College Men Working to Change Rape Culture
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things they can do to help prevent rape. The presentation includes defining rape and consent, a video of a male police officer describing a rape by two men which is intended to help men identify with victims of rape, and a discussion of bystander intervention.

Group members, like Elliot DeMatteis, a 20 year old sophomore, facilitate the presentations, which can be intimidating according to Smith. Despite this, they have been successful in presenting to various groups including 40 fraternity members, a large group of athletes at St. Michael's College, and at the 2013 Dismantling Rape Culture Conference at UVM. This is merely a drop in the bucket, according to Smith, who says that certain arenas, such as sports teams and fraternities are very much a closed system and difficult to get into.

A main challenge, discussed by presenter DeMatteis, is the cultural norm on campus around language. He would like to raise awareness about how the use of sexist language is connected to sexual violence. In his opinion most guys they talk to don't believe that sexual violence is ok, yet try to excuse sexist statements as just being jokes. Awareness of this connection between language and sexism is a way the program suggests men can help to stop sexual violence.

A key aspect of this program and a reason that DeMatteis was drawn to be a member is that it's a program designed for men and run by men. According to the 1 in 4 website, all-male environments are more successful at changing men than mixed environments. In this way, along with research-based content presented in a carefully constructed, non-confrontational tone, men are invited to be part of the solution. I am grateful to these brave, young men for choosing to be a part of this work to end sexual violence.

Interested in learning more? Visit www.oneinfourusa.org or contact Keith Smith, UVM Men's Outreach Coordinator, 802-656-4428, keith.smith@uvm.edu

New Resources

Alex Bottinelli, Clearinghouse & Resource Coordinator

“The Hunting Ground”: Piercing Documentary on Campus Rape Culture

Amy Ziering and Kirby Dick, the producer and director respectively of the new documentary “The Hunting Ground”, were recently interviewed by Amy Goodman (Democracy Now) at the Sundance Film Festival. Asked why they decided to make a film on campus rape, they said it was because of the responses they received from the audiences of their previous, academy-award nominated documentary “The Invisible War”, a film on sexual assault in the military; over and over again, at the premiers and also in letters received, the public disclosed they, or their daughters, had been raped at college.

In the film, student after student speaks of being raped and their college’s failure to respond. Also highlighted is the courageous work of Annie Clark and Andrea Pino, two student survivors of rape from the University of North Carolina who came together to organize a country-wide movement to break the silence, demand that university administrations protect victims and stop shielding rapists from accountability. Many women are filing Title IX antidiscrimination complaints against their schools to the Department of Education, who, according to the film, is currently investigating 90 colleges for their handling of sexual assault complaints.

Who Are You?
Conducting Primary Prevention of Sexual Violence With Young People

Out of New Zealand comes a powerful bystander education tool. Social change, including losing one’s biases and challenging one’s assumptions, requires openness. This is why “Who Are You” works so well—the video is authentic in spirit, and presents the consequences of two possible scenarios: a rape occurs because the victim is drunk, or a rape is averted because bystanders take action. Importantly, continued on page 7
Network Office Welcomes New Staff

Sarah Kunz Robinson  
**Special Initiatives Coordinator**

I am thrilled to join the Network as the Special Initiatives Coordinator. In this new role, I will be working to advance our shared work in areas such as systems collaboration, sexual assault and homicide prevention. I have been working in various contracted roles with the Network since 2012, and I am honored and privileged to work with the talented staff at the Network, our Member Programs and allies. Prior to joining the Vermont Network, I was the Community Advocacy Manager at Hunger Free Vermont where I worked with a team of anti-hunger advocates to expand access to federally funded nutrition entitlement programs.

Anne Smith  
**Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator**

While I still feel new to the Network, this is actually my third role at the Network Office. I started as the Safe Havens Grant Coordinator and then became the Sexual Violence Specialist until I left in 2008 to care for my children. In the interim, I served in part-time roles as State’s Attorney’s Victim Advocate in Lamoille County and the Victim Assistance Program Coordinator for the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services. I gained so much knowledge and insight about the criminal justice system and learned how deeply important the collaborative work of State’s Attorneys Victim Advocates, prosecutors, law enforcement and Network Programs is to victims. I am honored to return to the work I love and share these insights as I help to provide training opportunities to the Vermont Network and its partners.

Doreen Fournier Merril  
**Community Change Coordinator**

Since joining the Network in January as the new Community Change Coordinator, I have been coordinating the Rape Education and Prevention Grant with the Vermont Department of Health, and facilitating efforts to develop community change strategies. I arrive from Maine with experience in the anti-violence movement working for the Abused Women’s Advocacy Project for just under six years and for two years at the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault. More recently, I worked in the workforce development field and for the University of New England in the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

New Resources

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it addresses one probable audience response, blaming the victim. It addresses this issue by not addressing it, leaving the viewer to look squarely at her/his own prejudice and thus come to realize no one deserves to be raped.

The curriculum is easy to use with learning objectives and exercises addressing consent, being a bystander, and identifying potentially sexually harmful situations in a college peer group. For international orders contact whoareyounz@gmail.com.

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## Vermont Network Member Programs

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<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addison County &amp; town of Rochester</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 67, Middlebury, VT 05753 Hotline: (802) 388.4205 or 1.800.388.4205</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bennington County</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 227, Bennington, VT 05201 Hotline: (802) 442.2111</td>
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<td><strong>Caledonia, Orleans &amp; Essex Counties</strong></td>
<td>1222 Main St. #301, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 Hotline: (802) 748.8645</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Newport Office</strong></td>
<td>93 E. Main Street #1, Newport, VT 05855 Hotline: (802) 334.0148</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Caledonia, Washington, &amp; Orleans Counties</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 307, Hardwick, VT 05843 Hotline: (802) 472.6463</td>
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<td><strong>Chittenden County</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 92, Burlington, VT 05402 Hotline: (802) 863.1236</td>
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<td><strong>Women Helping Battered Women</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 1535, Burlington, VT 05402 Hotline: (802) 658.1996</td>
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<td><strong>Franklin &amp; Grand Isle Counties</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Voices Against Violence</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 72, St. Albans, VT 05478 Hotline: (802) 524.6575</td>
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<td><strong>Lamoille County</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Clarina Howard Nichols Center</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 517, Morrisville, VT 05661 Hotline: (802) 888.5256</td>
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<td><strong>Orange County &amp; Northern Windsor County</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Safeline, Inc.</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 368, Chelsea, VT 05038 Hotline: 1.800.639.7233</td>
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<td><strong>Rutland County</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Rutland County Women’s Network and Shelter</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 313, Rutland, VT 05701 Hotline: (802) 775.3232</td>
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<td><strong>Washington County</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Circle</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 652, Barre, VT 05641 Hotline: 1.877.543.9498</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Assault Crisis Team</strong></td>
<td>4 Cottage Street, Barre, VT 05641 Hotline: (802) 479.5577</td>
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<td><strong>Windham County &amp; Southern Windsor County</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s Freedom Center</strong></td>
<td>P.O. Box 933, Brattleboro, VT 05302 Hotline: (802) 254.6954 or 1.800.773.0689</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Springfield Office</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Central Windsor County &amp; towns of Thetford &amp; Fairlee</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WISE</strong></td>
<td>38 Bank Street, Lebanon, NH 03766 24-Hour Crisis Line: 603/448.5525 or toll-free 1.866.348.WISE</td>
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* Indicates Shelter