

Conversations of Accountability

By Willow Wheelock, Outreach & Education Coordinator

In this issue of *The Advocate*, there is an essay written by Chaz Wheelock from October 2010 for a Community College of Vermont class. Chaz was 17 when he wrote and presented this piece on teen dating violence to his class. He

and his work to address and end sexual violence on campus. I am in awe of his accomplishments and passion to end violence against women. Young men's involvement in the efforts to end violence against women is important, and it shows the progression of society's response to domestic, dating and sexual violence.

Addison County shows a lot of dedication to supporting those who experience violence. The formal and

ability for our friends, family, co-workers or neighbors who perpetrate abuse or violence in their families. These are conversations we need to have more of. There may be legal responses and consequences for someone who perpetrates domestic violence, but we are less sure how to respond when it's someone who is close to us. The people who perpetrate horrific acts towards family members are not monsters. They are people we interact with each week

"Addison County shows a lot of dedication to supporting those who experience violence."

articulates the dynamics of and speaks clearly to those who are affected by dating violence. This is important outreach and support for people who live with the (verbal, physical and sexual) abuse and battering of a partner. There is also an article by Luke Carroll Brown, who is an extremely engaged man and Middlebury College Student. I got to know Luke through his internship with the Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

informal outreach to women who experience violence continues to improve; the many (and increasing) referrals to WomenSafe from people in our community who care about a person who is experiencing abuse or violence is testimony to that.

In addition to the support for those who experience violence, it is equally important to have community conversations about how to impose account-

and have close relationships with. How do we respectfully hold these people in our lives accountable for their hurtful actions and support them to change? I look forward to more of these conversations, and I'm so grateful that the voices of young men are part of the conversation.



Looking for Nominations!

WomenSafe is now accepting nominations for the Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award. Each year, a nomination committee selects a local woman whose work or volunteer efforts have had positive impacts on the women and/or children in our community. If you know a local woman who deserves recognition for her amazing work, submit an essay in 500 words or less that describes her and her efforts and the reasons you believe she should be the recipient of the 2012 Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award. Please email your nomination to info@womensafe.net or mail them to the Nomination Committee, PO Box 67, Middlebury, VT 05753 no later than December 31, 2011.

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Book Review

Faultline

By Willow Wheelock, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Faultline by Janet Tashjian is a fictional story that succinctly captures the dynamics of a romantic teen relationship that also encompasses jealousy, abuse and controlling behavior. Tashjian hits the nail on

the head as she depicts the main character, Becky's, thoughts and confusion around her boyfriend, Kip's, behavior. Kip's dotting manner, caring demeanor and kindness initially attracts Becky, yet as the relationship deepens, Kip's demeanor slowly twists into abuse. He begins to pressure Becky to spend more and more time with him, leaving Becky to often have to choose between her best friend or family and Kip.

His increasing put downs and humiliation interspersed with the caring, loving attitude he initially exuded on Becky keeps her guessing and questioning herself. When Kip resorts to acts of physical violence (pulling Becky back by her ponytail, violently ripping an earring out of her ear), followed by remorse and regret, Becky is left to sort out Kip's mixed messages along with her own increasing mixed feelings. Abuse and control in dating relationships is often very subtle and very tricky to identify, and this book captures that feeling with great accuracy. Coupled with Becky's experience of the relationship are snapshots into Kip's thinking about his behavior. While he is ashamed of his behavior and he vows to himself that he will not walk in his father's footsteps, the more Becky pulls away from him because of his treatment, the more controlling he becomes. Tashjian does a good job of providing three-dimensional characters who readers will care about. *Faultline* is a very quick, enjoyable read, and it is recommended for anyone who cares about a teen, as well as teens, themselves.

Men and the Movement

By Luke Carroll Brown, Middlebury College Junior and Addison County Council Against Domestic & Sexual Violence Summer Intern

A few weeks back I took a short vacation to my home in Amherst, MA. Whenever I drive, I connect my iPod to my car audio system, throw it on shuffle, and listen to whatever song the device happens to play. Of the 20,000 tracks available, my iPod stumbled

ization clouded my nostalgia-induced nirvana: while I had memorized every word when I was just 10 years old, this was the first time I had considered what the lyrics actually meant.

I won't repeat the lyrics, as they are more of the same shock theme we have come to expect of Eminem, but suffice it to say that the rapper is able to encourage armed-robbery, rohypnol date-rape of a 15-year-old, and violent domestic abuse all in one 3 ½ minute song. Of course, this sort of music should come as no surprise to anyone

to a few deranged misogynists. Instead, Eminem's music plays to a pernicious but absolutely ubiquitous understanding of ideal masculinity--one that praises violence, manipulation, and cold-hearted stoicism as the character traits of a "real man."

I am an ardent feminist--a member of multiple college and community-based organizations that seek to reduce domestic and sexual violence--but my instantaneous recall of these malicious lyrics served as a reminder that I am also a man who has been raised in a

". . . I am [also] a man who has been raised in a culture that directly and indirectly idealizes a terribly violent form of masculinity."

upon what we kids would consider an oldie--rapper Eminem's 1999 hit single "Guilty Conscience." Having not heard the song in over a decade, a current of nostalgia surged through me. I began singing along, recalling every verse verbatim. It was incredible--my atrocious memory was proving not so terrible after all. I was hitting every word, keeping with every beat--what a shock!

But while zooming my little Honda Civic down I-89, stereo turned to max and gas pedal to the floor, a terrifying real-

who has lived in this country for more than a few days--we all know controversial media sells--but the thought of these horrifically violent lyrics coming out my pre-teen mouth was enough to make me sick.

It would be cliché for me to cast blame onto Eminem--lord knows we feminists have done it enough--and individual accusations against specific artists and individuals reduce what is very much a systemic problem, not at all isolated

culture that directly and indirectly idealizes a terribly violent form of masculinity.

I thought of my 10 year-old self singing along to the music video on MTV, head bobbing to the beat of the song the cool kids played on their Walkmans toward the back of the bus. I thought of the James Bond movies I watched and the unhealthy ideas I had regarding women and relationships. I needed some help--and luckily I met an inspiring cast of

(continued on page 3)

Men in Movement

(continued from page 2)

mentors and friends who helped me see just how destructive and unfulfilling that notion of masculinity actually is. Frankly, it took my friends being victimized before I thought to join the movement against domestic and sexual (d/s) violence. Even then I was appre-

hensive, as I'd always seen the movement as one that was by women for women.

But my logic for becoming involved was simple: since men commit the vast majority of domestic and sexual violence, we men have a responsibility to work towards its prevention. Additionally, our participation in the d/s

violence movement is personally beneficial, as any man who subscribes to violent masculinity is himself a victim of a very difficult, unfulfilling lifestyle—one that has been pushed upon him by a culture reflected in Eminem's "Guilty Conscience." For so many reasons, d/s violence is a man's issue and men must become more involved in the prevention movement.

Realities of Crime in Vermont

By Christina Grier, The SVP Coordinator

On Tuesday, July 19, I was at home multi-tasking between summer cleaning and cooking dinner and had the Channel 3 news on in the background. Towards the end of the show there was a "Crime by Numbers" segment. I wasn't paying much attention until I heard the topic, because it related to my work. A reporter talked with the Director of the Vermont Center for Justice Research at Norwich University, Max Schlueter, Ph.D., about "The Face of Violent Crime" in Vermont. I have been working in the anti-violence field locally for 10 years and wondered why I hadn't heard of this organization.

They got my attention, so I immediately sat down (cleaning can always wait!) and watched the segment. The statistics were based on statewide reports of violent crimes from 2006-2010. In general, Vermont is a very safe state with a low crime rate. However, the most powerful take-away reiterated my belief based on working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence—

WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE HURT OR INJURED BY SOMEONE WE KNOW THAN BY A STRANGER.

I don't think I'm the only one who checks her backseat before getting into a car or who holds her keys in a way so that she can use them as a weapon when walking at night. However,

Figure 1



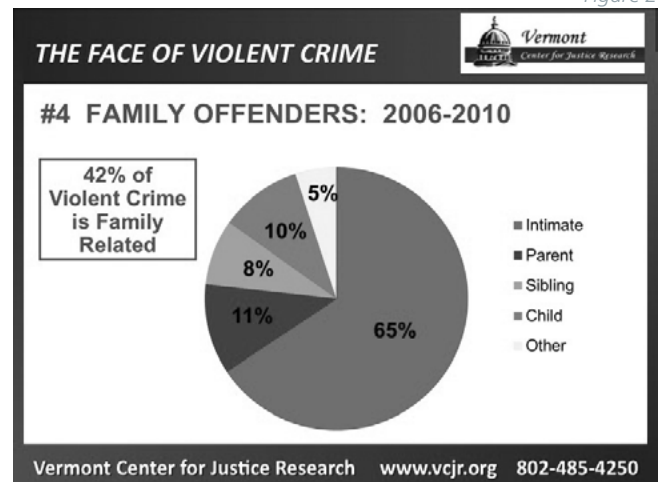
Reprinted with permission from VCJR

as this study shows, we don't necessarily need to worry about "stranger danger" or the person lurking behind the bushes. We should be more concerned with people we know, including those closest to us - family members and acquaintances. According to the study, the vast majority of reported crimes are committed by family members (42%) or acquaintances (51%) and only 7% are committed by strangers. (Schlueter, Max, Ph.D. (July 2011). *Face of Violent Crime*. Vermont Center for Justice Research. Retrieved August 2, 2011 from <http://www.vcjr.org/>) (Figure 1)

Furthermore, the study touches slightly on the prevalence of domestic violence. The majority (65%) of those family members who commit violent crimes are intimate partners (boyfriends, girlfriends, spouses, etc.). (Figure 2) Other violent crimes are perpetrated by parents, siblings, and children against their parents. The number of violent crimes committed by family members is probably even higher than this report shows because this report is based on REPORTED crimes. As we know, domestic and sexual violence are underreported crimes.

This study opened my eyes to the realities of reported crimes in Vermont and has me questioning my own prevention strategies. I think we always need to trust our "gut" instincts, reactions and feelings to certain situations and people. This report is also a good reminder to pay attention to the potential risks posed by those directly around us. For more information about the study, please visit the Vermont Center for Justice Research's website at: www.vcjr.org.

Figure 2



Breakdown of the 42% of family members from Figure 1 "

Are You Aware?

By Chaz Wheelock, Teen Community Member

You are a teen with your whole life ahead; does that mean you can't be a victim of abuse? No. Abuse can affect anyone, anytime, anywhere. There are several warning signs to watch out for. Awareness is a key component in staying clear from an abusive partner. Some things to look out for would be your partner declaring his or her love for you immediately. This is the number one sign of an abusive partner. With a very, VERY small exception, love takes time; you don't just love somebody the first date you ever have. That love turns into wanting to know who you're with, what you're wearing, how long you're going to be, etc...

Don't worry though; it's only because they love you, right? No, it's because they want control. Then you find yourself in an argument because you took too long, or you gave that person at the party a hug. This argument leads to a shove or a slap. Then uh-oh, the person who you thought loved you so much just abused you, but no, not me, this can't happen to me. One in four teen women will experience some sort of dating violence before they turn twenty. Whether it is verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, etc... It can happen to anyone. When you realize that and decide you need to get out, your partner threatens you again, "If you leave I'll kill myself," or "You can't leave baby, I make all the money" or "Honey, if you think about it, it was really your fault." It can be said in so many different ways, you just need to get out. 80% of teen women who are victims of dating violence continue to date the offender.

The bottom line is, if you're uncomfortable with your relationship, something's wrong. You need to mind your instincts, and go with your gut feelings. A gut feeling is the most solid, down packed system of internal warning that any of us have.

It may not be safe to abruptly break off with your abusive partner or threaten to break up. This could end up bad, or they will find a way to guilt you to stay with them. Plan ahead. Talk to someone you trust. Call Addison County Dating Violence Hotline at 1-802-388-4205 or 1-800-388-4205.

Battering is the greatest cause of injury to women- more than car accidents, muggings and reported rapes combined. It is never too late to get out, and be happy. Find someone who makes you feel good about yourself. Don't become a statistic. Enjoying your relationship means enjoying your life. Hope this has been helpful to all of you.

Where Do Butterflies Go in the Rain?

Where do butterflies go in the rain?

How do they find refuge

From the storms that can destroy their fragile wings

Why can't I find safety

Why can't I find shelter

Or hide from the rage

That ruins my wings

That keeps me from learning to fly

That throws me to the ground

That destroys my grace and beauty

And trust

I can't be delicate

I can't be tender

Or gentle

Or weak

I don't know where butterflies go in the rain

I can't be a butterfly

I can't fly away

Or hide

My wings are shredded

I lose all that is soft and gentle

I face the rage

And keep the tears

By Sam



Update on Probation and Parole in Addison County

By Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Advocacy Program Coordinator

Two years ago our community faced many cuts in state government. Among these cuts was the closing of our local Probation and Parole Office. As a community we worked together to preserve our office, or at least a presence in our community by the Department of Corrections. Our voices

“As a community we worked together to preserve our [local Probation and Parole] office”

were heard, and together with the generous help of donated space from the courthouse, we were able to have at least one probation officer in the county each day of the week. Though this was not everything that our community needed, it was more than we were slated to have otherwise, and it enabled folks with limited transportation the option to meet with an officer in Middlebury, rather than in Rutland or Burlington.

As with any change, there were lots of challenges that arose with the new part time presence. Among these challenges was the fact that the demand for meeting folks in county was greater than the officers could accommodate with their schedules, and that the county was divided in half with the northern section being monitored and supervised by the Burlington Probation Office, and the southern part of the county being monitored by the Rutland probation office. This created challenges both in consistency, and in communication

and records retention, as the prospective offices held files on probationers, which meant that the officers may not have a probationer’s file if they were not planning to meet with them or about them that day.

At a meeting in May including many community members, House Representatives Willem Jewett and Betty Nuovo, and supervisors at the Department of Corrections, these concerns and others were aired. In response the Department has made several changes which have directly addressed the concerns raised including: Rutland is now supervising all of the coun-

ty, Addison County files are being stored in Middlebury, and there is a greatly increased presence of officers in the county.

Though there is still work to be done (for example, in the switch 2 years ago we lost our work crew, which has had an impact both on folks trying to get to a 6:00am work crew in Rutland with no transportation, and on our community by no longer having that resource), great strides have been made. This is a reminder of the power of our community to serve and care for itself and others.



Thank you . . .

for your feedback about this newsletter. Below are some of the comments we received from our readers.

“It is full of education on the issues of domestic violence and update on the work in our county.”

“The [news]letter is great. Somehow these messages need to get to young people. Perhaps it is.”

“Willow Wheelock wrote a fantastic article a few months ago that I feel should be made into mandatory reading for all teens because it gets to so much of the delicate and untangible emotional abuse that needs to be put into words for young people. If I had understood that the things I thought were wrong and hurtful but didn’t know how to put into words....anyway. Keep up the good work.”

“I am so glad that *The Advocate* is being produced electronically, both for ecological reasons and for good stewardship of finances.”

“[I enjoy] Specific, concrete descriptions of a variety of situations in which WomenSafe might be involved. I also appreciate the articles written by a variety of people out in the field.”

If you would like to share your feedback with us, please complete the online survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FYWDJZP> or email us at info@womensafe.net.

Cash for Consignment

If you have gently used clothes or household items, consider donating them to Neat Repeats and designating WomenSafe as the recipient of the proceeds. If you're able to contribute in this way, Neat Repeats has the following reminders to donors:

- They gladly accept clean, current styles of clothing
- Consignments must arrive in the shop during business hours.
- Please do not drop them, with a note, into the outside donation box
- If Neat Repeats has to launder items, they become the property of the shop and not a sale for WomenSafe
- There is a difference between sellable and useable items; WomenSafe only makes money on the sellable items
- For more information, call Neat Repeats at 388-4488 or Carol at 388-9180.

RSVP

Thank you to Faith, Sylvia, Gertrude, Anna, Joyce, Judy, Agnes, Phyllis, and Lucille - the RSVP volunteers who spend many hours preparing over 2,000 newsletters for our mailing. We couldn't get this information out to our readers without their help. We appreciate all their hard work and dedication! A special thank you to Sylvia who coordinates the biannual RSVP mailing for WomenSafe.



Thank you to Yvonne for her endless hard work on our many projects!

A SafeSpace for LGBTQ Survivors

By Ann Atkins, Program Director, SafeSpace @ RU12?

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior that one person uses to exert and maintain power and control over another person. Often the world is made aware of domestic violence as a result of something tragic happening. Typically news media outlets sensationalize domestic violence, reporting on it only when a life has been taken, or someone has been seriously injured as a result of the violence.

The truth about domestic violence is it occurs every minute of every day, and according to national statistics one out of four of all relationships contains some form of abuse – physical, sexual or emotional. Domestic violence knows no boundaries, it is not partial to any particular socio-economic class or background, and it does not discriminate. Domestic violence affects everyone, short people and tall people, the rich and the poor, as well as heterosex-

ual people and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and /or Queer (LGBTQ) identified people.

Anti-violence programs exist in every county throughout Vermont. Each of these programs provides services in designated counties to victims of sexual and domestic violence. SafeSpace, located in Burlington, is the only program that exists in Vermont that provides support and advocacy services specifically to LGBTQ victims of violence. SafeSpace is a statewide program, meaning services are available to all LGBTQ Vermonters throughout the entire state.

SafeSpace was formed by a sub-committee of the Domestic Violence Task Force of Chittenden County. The task force identified the need for services specifically for gay men originally and the idea expanded to meet the needs of all LGBTQ victims who had been or were experiencing sexual, domestic and/or hate violence. As a result of this working committee SafeSpace was born and began providing services to the LGBTQ community throughout Vermont in 2002.

Each year the number of LGBTQ survivors served continues to grow. The SafeSpace Program provides support and advocacy services, resource and referrals, court and hospital advocacy and training opportunities for the greater community to learn more about the issues of domestic, sexual and hate violence and how it impacts an LGBTQ person and the larger community.

If you or someone you know is in need of support please contact the SafeSpace Program. Advocates are available Monday through Thursday from 9am until 6pm, and on Friday's from 10am until 2pm. If there is a crisis emergency and immediate help is needed outside of regular SafeSpace office hours, Vermont has a 24 hour domestic violence hotline that can be reached by calling 1-800-228-7395 and a 24 hour rape crisis hotline available at 1-800-489-7273. Advocates are available to help.



Help Us By Going Paperless

WomenSafe works hard to conserve our environment. Please help us by signing up to receive The Advocate via email. Your participation means that not only would we save more trees and use less petroleum products in the production and distribution of this newsletter, but you would also be helping us to continue to raise awareness and consciousness of the issues faced by our family, friends and neighbors who are being victimized by their partners or other people in their lives - but in a cost-effective manner. Thank you to the nearly 70 people who have already signed up! If you would like to "Go Paperless," let us know at info@womensafe.net.



Accessing Language Interpretation at WomenSafe

By Foresta Castañeda, Outreach Advocate

Thanks to a partnership with the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, WomenSafe is able to connect hotline callers speaking languages other than English to an interpreter through Language Line Interpreting Service. Callers simply need to dial our hotline at 802-388-4205 to speak to an advocate who will then connect them to the interpreting service on a three way call. If possible, callers should let the advocate know which language they speak. If callers speak no English, the interpreting service will assist us in identifying the language of the caller and connect to an appropriate interpreter.

Access to Language Line Interpreting Service has assisted WomenSafe tremendously in our ability to connect with Spanish speaking immigrants who live and work on farms in Addison County; however, we recognize that there are other limited English language speakers living in our service area who may benefit from this service. With Language Line we are able to provide interpretation in over 170 languages. If you are or know of any speakers of other languages who would like to speak to an advocate on our hotline or in-person, please do not hesitate to contact us. All of WomenSafe's services, including over the phone and in-person interpreters, are free and confidential to everyone regardless of their country of origin or legal status.

POEM

When I think about my life
I can't put a point on what I'm here for
But I fear I am broken
Then brokenness fills me like gun shots
The realm of my body is numb
I don't know why alcohol, weed, narcotics are the only way
The fun in my life is outweighed with tremendous pain, hurt and terrible sadness
I feel sometimes like my life will end
That it will end with no reason
But I fear to betray people still
I gotta keep my head up
And when I lose
I will get up
When I fail to achieve
I will get up
Never leave
I will stay ~~

The Advocate

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WomenSafe does not necessarily share the opinions expressed by the writers and reserves the right to edit and determine the content of *The Advocate*.

Mission Statement: WomenSafe works toward the elimination of physical, sexual and emotional violence against women and their children through direct service, education and social change.



WomenSafe

Committed to ending
domestic and sexual violence

The Advocate

Newsletter of WomenSafe

Volume 16, Issue 2, Spring 2011

WomenSafe Provides:

- **Advocacy Services
(Free & Confidential)**
 - 24-hour Hotline
 - Information & Referrals
 - Emotional Support
 - Medical Advocacy
 - Legal Advocacy
 - Transitional Housing
Support & Advocacy
 - Systems Advocacy
 - Support Groups
- **Community
Outreach & Education**
- **Supervised Visitation
& Monitored Exchange**

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24-hour Hotline:
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info@womensafe.net
www.womensafe.net
office: 388-9180
fax: 388-3438

Language interpretation services available.
Deaf callers use telephone relay.

The Supervised Visitation Program
@ WomenSafe (The SVP): 388-6783

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