

In this issue

Tactics and Barriers Faced
 by Elders Experiencing
 Intimate Partner Violence..... 1

Shine a Light on Domestic
 Violence 3

New Web Site Launched 3

Domestic Violence Fatality
 Review..... 4

TaeKwon Do K.I.C.K.S Summary.. 5

Food For All Program 5

Vermont 2012 Legislative
 Update 6

I Have The Right To 7

Nominations for the Kimberly
 Krans Women Who Change the
 World Award..... 8



**Tactics and Barriers Faced
 by Elders Experiencing
 Intimate Partner Violence**

By Foresta Castañeda, *Outreach Advocate*

Domestic violence can happen to anyone—women, men and gender-non-conforming individuals of any age, sex, gender identity, marital, cultural, geographic or socio-economic status. Sadly, able-bodied and ill and/or disabled elders are no exception. According to a 2005 study in the *Affilia Journal of Women and Social Work*, “older women are more likely than younger women to experience violence for a longer period of time, be currently experiencing violence in their relationships and have health or mental health problems.” Domestic violence experienced by elders, sometimes referred to as abuse in later life, refers to the physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and/

or financial abuse that is perpetrated against adults age 50 and older. While there is limited data on the prevalence of domestic violence in later life, what research that does exist is imbedded within the larger topic of elder abuse and neglect. In this research the term domestic violence includes not just intimate partners but also close family members, care givers or people with whom they reside or are involved in their care at home. This article will use the term elder intimate partner violence to focus on violence perpetrated by an elders’ spouse, former spouse, or dating partner. Elder survivors of domestic violence face unique challenges. Like younger survivors, elder survivors endure acts of physi-

(continued on page 2)

WomenSafe, Inc.
PO Box 67
Middlebury, VT 05753

24 Hour Hotline
 802.388.4205 or 800.388.4205

info@womensafe.net
 www.womensafe.net

Office: 802.388.9180
 Fax: 802.388.3438

*Language interpretation
 services available. Deaf callers
 please use telephone relay.*

**The Supervised Visitation
 Program**
 (The SVP) 802.388.6783

Tactics and Barriers (continued from page 1)

cal and sexual violence and emotional violence designed by their perpetrators to humiliate, intimidate, frighten, demean and isolate them in order to take away their power and control; in addition elders are often subjected to tactics which specifically target their vulnerabilities. For example, a perpetrator of elder intimate partner violence may restrain the victim to a chair or bed as part of the physical abuse. They may also remove or hide assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, hearing aids, glasses, medication and other devices used for mobility, communication and daily living. A perpetrator may also refuse to assist with transportation, dressing, and may deny or create long waits for food, heat, care or medication or may deliberately over medicate the victim to sedate them. Perpetrators may also refuse to follow medical, therapy or safety recommendations, or cause their victim to miss medical appointments (NCALL and BWJP, 2010).

Elder survivors also experience sexual violence, any forced sexual experience such as rape, unwanted touching or groping, forcing an elder to watch pornography or harming sexually during genital care.

Verbal, emotional and psychological tactics are also frequently used and include: yelling, insulting, name calling, blaming, withholding affection, using silence or profanity, engaging in crazy-making behaviors, and intimidating them by threatening to leave or commit suicide, displaying or threatening with weapons, threatening to institutionalize them, or abusing or killing pets or prized livestock.

Isolation: controlling where the elder goes, who they see, what they do and whether or not they have access to phone and mail is a frequently used tactic by perpetrators of elder abuse and can include denying access to transportation, assistive devices used in communication, limiting access to friends and family and/or using them as part of the abuse by creat-

“Older women are more likely than younger women to experience violence for a longer period of time, be currently experiencing violence in their relationships and have health or mental health problems.”

—Affilia Journal of Women and Social Work, 2005

ing or magnifying conflict, limited or restricting access to church, spiritual material or items, clergy and other social or community engagements that are important to the survivor. Isolation can be a major obstacle to victims being able to reach out, get support, ask for help or leave a violent partner.

Perpetrators may also use their privilege to speak for the elder at financial and medical appointments or make all the major decisions about their life. They may steal money, titles or possessions, and/or misuse power of attorney or guardianship roles as a means to further the abuse.

In addition to the barriers created by the tactics of abuse used against them, “there are numerous reasons why victims retain contact with an abuser or remain in an abusive relationship. Older victims of abuse often love or care about the people who harm them. Keeping the family together may be very important to the victim for many reasons, including religious and cultural beliefs. Some victims fear that they will be seriously hurt or killed if they leave their abusers. Others do not have the financial resources and/or housing they need to leave. Medical conditions and disabilities may make living on their own difficult or impossible or the abusive

individual may need the victims care.” (Koenig et al, 2006).

Elder survivors may not feel comfortable calling a hotline to disclose abuse and may see domestic and sexual violence as private family matters and may not want to discuss these issues with a stranger outside the family. The elder may also feel uncomfortable working with younger advocates and may prefer to speak to someone their own age. Some elders may be hesitant to go into shelter if they would need to share their space with others who are younger than them. Medical or health issues requiring specialized care, fear of losing loved ones, fear of losing their homes, and loss of personal autonomy are also important factors that an elder may take into account when deciding to seek assistance around domestic and sexual violence.

.....

If you or someone you know is an elder experiencing abuse, please contact an advocate at 388-4205.

Koenig, T.L., Rinfrette, E.S. & Lutz, W.A. (2006). Female Caregivers' Reflections on Ethical Decision-Making: The Intersection of Domestic Violence and Elder Care. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 34, 361-372.

National Coalition on Abuse in Later Life and Battered Women's Justice Project (2010). *Aging with Dignity and in Safety: Strategies for Communities Combating Elder Abuse.*

Wilke, D. and L. Vinton. "The Nature and Impact of Domestic Violence Across Age Cohorts." *Affilia Journal of Women and Social Work* 20, no. 3 (2005): 316-328.

Additional information supporting this article came from: The National Center for Elder Abuse www.ncea.aoa.gov ; and The Special Collection: preventing and responding to domestic and sexual violence in later life, part of the National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women- VAWnet.org.



SHINE A LIGHT ON Domestic Violence

**Silent Auction
Friday, October 12
5:30–8:30 pm**

■ Carol's Hungry Mind Café
Merchant's Row
Middlebury, VT

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (ACCADSV) is proud to announce a Shine A Light on Domestic Violence event scheduled for Friday, October 12, 2012.

Local artists have volunteered their time and talents to transform second-hand lamps into beautiful and interesting pieces of art. At the Shine A Light on Domestic Violence event on Friday, October 12, 2012, the ACCADSV will host a silent auction for these beautiful working lamps and all proceeds from the auction will go back into community education and awareness.

Please join us! The Shine A Light on Domestic Violence event will take place at Carol's Hungry Mind Café in Middlebury from 5:30-8:30pm.

Jim and Anna Lienau will provide the entertainment. You may recognize the father/daughter music splendor through their local band, Bandanna. Appetizers will be provided. Carol's Hungry Mind Café will be selling their food, wine and other beverages. Domestic and sexual violence information and resources will also be available. For more information, please contact Melissa Deas at 349-3059.



WomenSafe

Launches New Website

By Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, *Advocacy Program Coordinator*

Technology is a valuable tool for many survivors. However, in this growing digital age privacy controls do not always keep pace with technological advances. This is a particularly difficult challenge for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. WomenSafe staff members actively seek continuing education and resources for assisting women in the safest possible uses of technology. Additionally, we work to utilize the tools available in the most efficient and productive ways that we can. One tool that we have updated recently is our website. We have put up a fresh new page with photos of local community members who are speaking out in support of women who experience violence. We very much appreciate their willingness to help us in our community response to violence against women. The website is still under construction and new information will added over the next several month. We are excited to be able to provide this new resource. You can visit our new site at www.womensafe.net.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM VERMONT'S 2012

Domestic Violence Fatality Review

By Kara Francis, *Legal Advocate*

THE CURRENT SITUATION

- There is currently one coordinator for two vastly different programs; 2,400 offenders registered in Vermont's Sex Offenders' Registry, and an additional 400 in the medical marijuana program.
- With such high caseloads, the existence and development of new protocols around coordinated community response weakens.
- Only 3 out of 13 VT Network DV programs have a full-time children's advocate.

On May 2, 2002, H.728 was signed into law, marking the conception of Vermont's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission. Annually, the Commission examines one of Vermont's domestic violence related homicides with the intent of improving the systematic approach in which our state can collaborate to improve safety and work to prevent domestic violence (DV) homicides.

The report looks at related data, current policies and practices, and then offers findings and recommendations to potentially implement in the future. This article summarizes the recommendations of the 2012 report.

For the first time, the 2012 report looks at Vermont's Sex Offender Registry as one of the entities selected for review. The other agencies include the Vermont Department of Education; Domestic and Sexual Violence Programs; Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families. A commonality in all of the

recommendations was acquiring and allocating more funding for new and existing programs.

It was recommended that funding for The Vermont Sex Offender Registry is needed to reduce the enormous workload for the current employees. There is currently one coordinator for two vastly different programs; 2,400 offenders registered in Vermont's Sex Offenders' Registry, and an additional 400 in the medical marijuana program. With such high caseloads, the existence and development of new protocols around coordinated community response weakens.

The report noted that there was no communication between the prosecuting office and the registry when a registrant failed to comply with their requirements. The report recommended that a more developed relationship would hold offenders more accountable by increasing supervision and making the 'non-compliant' information available to the public.

The main recommendation for the Department of Education was to have schools expand to not only educating students about domestic and sexual violence but educating and providing resources to all employees of the school system.

Housing was also an issue—two out of the three recommendations addressed a lack of safe housing. Currently in Vermont there are only ten domestic and sexual violence specific shelters. Additional funding is recommended to increase safe emergency housing as well as transitional housing, particularly for families with children. Thirty six percent of domestic violence homicides have occurred in the

presence of a child. For that 36%, The Department of Children and Families (DCF) will become involved, if not working with them already, but due to cuts in federal funding, DCF has been forced to significantly reduce many resources.

A lack of funding is also the reason that only 3 out of 13 VT Network DV programs have a full-time children's advocate. The report recommends increasing the number of programs with advocates that specialize in children's exposure to DV. The review also recommends providing training for law enforcement officials in dealing with a child's presence at domestic violence crimes, with a focus on the safety of the child and accountability of the offender.

In the past, to expand training to more law enforcement agencies, on-line training was preferred to in-person, but much of that has been eliminated due to federal funding cuts. Eliminating these trainings goes against the recommendation of the review.

Though this report takes the first steps in implementing change around improving DV prevention, education, response, and above all, safety and accountability, the report illustrates that limited funding undermines existing programs and policies as well as many of the new recommendations made.

Source data for this article is taken from the 2012 State of Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission Report.



TaeKwon Do K.I.C.K.S Summary

By Master Kellie Thomas

I know this is later than one would expect to receive an article about an event that occurred on Saturday April 28th—however we just collected and received the last of our pledges and I wanted to wait to thank our community until I had a total.

On Saturday April 28th, 72 TaeKwon Do K.I.C.K.S. students of all ages arrived throughout the day at The Bridge School excited to break boards and earn their pledges to help raise money for WomenSafe. It was an outstanding day which was made possible by many businesses and individuals in our community. The Bridge School donated their beautiful facility for the event. As a group we broke about 2000 boards, which were purchased from Lamell Lumber, who generously gave us a discount and was delivered free of charge to the Bridge School by R.K. Miles. The following businesses donated money to help us purchase our boards: Feed Commodities Inc., National Bank of Middlebury, DR Power Equipment, Shields Construction, Wow Toys, South Mountain Surveying & Mapping PC, Roberta Cooper (Silpada Rep), Town & Country

Homes, Middlebury Eye Associates, Comfort Hill Kennel, Tori Hovde (acupuncturist), Middlebury Fitness, Ben Franklin, and C & J Haulers in Ferrisburg.

We also had a food sale to help raise money for the boards and received generous food items from the following businesses: Champlain Valley Discount Foods, Subway, Middlebury Discount Beverages, Hannafords, Shaws, Bristol Bakery, Middlebury Bakery & Deli, Green Peppers, Cubbers, and Ramuntos.

The students all worked hard on asking for pledges and breaking boards—kids 8 and under broke up to 20 and older students broke up to 30. I am very proud of them as we had no prizes for the one who raised the most or anything—they all went out and did their best purely to give back to the community. I am very happy to report that we have now collected all of our pledges and we were able to raise just over \$6500—with all going to WomenSafe. A heartfelt thank you goes out to my students, the businesses and of course our family & friends who pledged and helped make this such a huge success.



Food For All

is a member program offered by the Middlebury Natural Food Co-op (MNFC).

Through the program, members of the MNFC, who are currently recipients of Three Squares (Vermont's food stamp program) or are participating in the WIC program, receive a 10% discount on their purchases every day.

It is part of their dedication to “the health and well-being of the whole community.” Statistics of food insecurity in Vermont indicate that many in our community do not have access to healthy foods. MNFC believes if everyone in our community

has access to a minimal standard of nutritious food, our community will be healthier. For more information the Food for All program, visit www.middleburycoop.com and click on the Membership tab or call them at 388-7276.



Vermont's 2012 Legislative Update

By Anne Burmeister, *Transitional Housing Program Coordinator*

The Vermont legislature was very busy during the 2012 legislative session. The following is a highlight of passed laws that impact survivors of sexual and domestic violence as written by Sarah Kenney, Associate Director of Public Policy Director at the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Relevant statutes are noted in italics. More information is available about these acts and others not listed that are related to domestic/sexual violence on the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (VNADSV) website: www.vtnetwork.org—or the hundreds of other bills that didn't become law this session—on the legislative website: www.leg.state.vt.us. If you'd like to be added to the Network's legislative alert email list or if you would like more information, contact Anne at 388-9180 or ab@womensafe.net.

Human Trafficking: S.122/Act 94
13 VSA § 2658 (new), 15 VSA § 1151–1160

This law permits a person to file a motion to vacate a prostitution conviction if the conviction was the result of the person having been a victim of human trafficking. It also adds victims of human trafficking to the Secretary of State's "Safe At Home" address confidentiality program.

Effective Date: May 1, 2012

Unfair Housing Practices: S.99/Act 137

9 VSA § 4503

One part of this much larger bill makes it illegal for any person to discriminate in land use decisions or permitting of housing because of presence of minor children or receipt of public assistance benefits, as well as all other protected classes.

Effective Date: May 14, 2012

Racial Disparities In The Vermont Criminal Justice System: H.535/Act 134

20 VSA §2358, §2366, 24 VSA §1939

Directs and funds the Vermont Center for Justice Research to analyze data related to whether racial disparities exist in sentencing and corrections supervision in Vermont. The law mandates that bias-free policing policies shall be adopted by all law enforcement agencies in the state, and that criteria for training standards adopted by the VT Criminal Justice Training Council shall include anti-bias policing. Also encourages all criminal justice entities through their professional rules of conduct to ensure that all actions taken are done in a manner that is free of bias.

Effective Date: July 1, 2012

Harassment In Educational Settings: H.412/Act 140

16 VSA §14

Changes the school harassment law to clarify that in order to prove unlawful harassment in a claim under the Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, an individual must demonstrate that:

- the student was subjected to unwelcome conduct based on the students or the students family members actual or perceived membership in a category protected by law under 9 V.S.A. § 4502; AND

The conduct was either:

- for multiple instances of conduct, so pervasive that when viewed from an objective standard of a similarly situated reasonable person, it substantially and adversely affected the targeted student's equal access to educational opportunities or benefits provided by the educational institution; or

- for a single instance of conduct, so severe that when viewed from an objective standard of a similarly situated reasonable person, it substantially and adversely affected the targeted student's equal access to educational opportunities or benefits provided by the educational institution.

The Human Rights Commission is encouraged to apply for funding to provide training on harassment, bullying prevention, and response initiatives.

Effective Date: May 15, 2012

Miscellaneous Changes To Education Law (Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying): H.771/Act 129

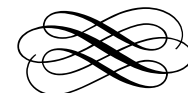
16 VSA Chapter 9, Subchapter 5 (new)

Part of a much larger bill, this law creates official state policy that "all Vermont educational institutions provide safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environments. Harassment, hazing, and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated in Vermont schools."

Each school board shall develop, adopt, ensure the enforcement of and make available harassment, hazing, and bullying prevention policies. School boards that fail to create their own policies shall be presumed to have adopted the most current policy created by the commissioner of education.

Effective Date: May 11, 2012.

School boards must adopt and implement bullying prevention policies no later than January 1, 2013.



Special Thanks

A special thank you to Yvonne & Connie for helping us remedy a last minute error on the Spring 2012 newsletters! We could not have completed the newsletters in time for mailing without their help!! In addition, thanks to Yvonne for her endless hard work on our many projects throughout the year!

Cheers to RSVP Volunteers

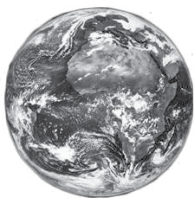
Thank you to Faith, Sylvia, Constance, Mary, Anna, Joyce, Judy, Lucille, Janice, Michelle—the RSVP volunteers who have spent many hours preparing over 2,000 newsletters for our mailing. We couldn't get this information out to our readers without their help. We appreciate all their hard work and dedication!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

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.



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 75 people who have already signed up! If you would like to “Go Paperless,” please let us know at info@womensafe.net. In order to avoid gaps in delivery, please inform us of any email address changes. Call Carol at 388-9180 for more information.

I Have the Right To:

- Have my own friends
- Go out with friends
- Be supported in the decisions I make
- Have male friends
- Be able to spend time away from my children without guilt
- Go to school
- Express myself without fear
- Not feel guilty about everything
- Not be put down
- To have time to myself to do what I want to do
- Be trusted
- Say no
- Grow as a person
- To have fun
- To live without fear
- To have another relationship
- To leave or take time away from an unhealthy relationship
- To feel good about myself



WomenSafe

Committed to ending domestic and sexual violence

The Advocate

Newsletter of WomenSafe

WomenSafe Provides:

Advocacy Services ■

(Free and Confidential)

24-hour Hotline

Information & Referrals

Emotional Support

Medical Advocacy

Legal Advocacy

Transitional Housing Support & Advocacy

Systems Advocacy

Support Groups

Community Outreach ■ and Education

Supervised Visitation ■ & Monitored Exchange

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, her efforts and the reasons you believe she should be the recipient of the 2013 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, 2012.

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

The Advocate
WomenSafe
Spring 2012: Volume 17 • Issue 2

Editor: Christina Grier
Graphic Designer: Valerie Costello
Printed at Reprographics



Non-Profit Organization
Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage Paid
Middlebury, VT 05753
Permit #36

Return Service Requested
PO Box 67
Middlebury, VT 05753

WomenSafe
Committed to ending domestic and sexual violence