



Women's Resource Center, Inc.
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Please visit our website at www.wrcnepa.org. On the home page, click on **"Make Online Donation."** This will direct you to PayPal. PayPal is a safe way to make a contribution to WRC online using a credit or debit card. Thank you for your journey with us in getting up to date! We are currently working on updating our website, however, the PayPal button is up and running! Please direct any feedback to Sushma at (570) 346-4460, extension 242.

WRC Wish List

Past issues of WRC Speaks have included a wish list of items that WRC uses. We are beginning a new trend with this issue and will now be highlighting just one item at a time. This issue the need is for COLTS bus passes. COLTS bus passes are utilized by WRC program participants, especially women and children residing in our safehouse as a resource for transportation to their various appointments. COLTS bus passes are available at the COLTS office on North-South Road in Scranton from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Passes are also available at Boscov's at the Mall at Steamtown and Frank's News on the corner of Linden St. and Washington Ave. in Scranton.

Please accept our apology...

The Summer 2009 issue of WRC Speaks featured a story about the Great Chefs Special Occasions Cake Challenge. Although the photo was that of the winning cake, the name of the winner was not correct. Please note **the winner of the Cake Challenge was Kelly Alexander of "The Cake Studio."** Thank you to everyone who participated in the Cake Challenge.



First place winning entry, Kelly Alexander.



WRC SPEAKS

FALL 2009

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY APPLE FESTIVAL
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

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What Can I Do? Be an Ally!

By Sharon Brittingham and Ashley Costello

Many of us are faced with the question "What can I do to help?" when we know a woman who may be a victim of domestic violence. We want to assist the woman in recognizing the signs of a battering personality, reaching out for help while considering what is the safest action for her and her children, coping with loss and adjustment, and locating community resources that can assist her in this process. Most of us feel inadequate to this task, so we often do nothing.

There is a way to help. Think of yourself as an ally. According to Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language (1966), an ally is "someone joined with another for a common purpose." We at Women's Resource Center 'support and uphold the principle that women have the right to choose and maintain a life free from oppression and violence.' Join with us in a common purpose and you can be an ally to your friend or relative.

Recognizing the signs of an abusive personality

In order to be effective allies in assisting women involved in abusive relationships, we too must be aware of the signs to look for. As we are listening to her story, we can be alert for certain 'red flags.' Below is a brief description of common signs of a battering personality:

Jealousy: An abusive individual may try to reassure a victim that this is their way of expressing love. It is really a way for the abusive person to be possessive and controlling of their partner. It is their inability to trust.

Controlling behavior: An abusive individual may try to disguise his concern about the woman's well being and safety. In reality, he wants to control where she goes, who she interacts with and what she does with her money. Control is often about limiting access to any individuals or any means that may lead a woman to feel more independent of the abusive person.

Quick involvement: Many abusive individuals pursue a woman relentlessly, wanting a short and intense initial involvement before wanting some kind of commitment. An abusive person will often attempt to make the woman feel guilty if she attempts to slow down or stop the relationship.

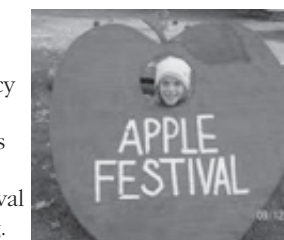
Isolation: An abusive individual will attempt to cut the woman off from any or all forms of support so that the woman will rely solely on the abusive person.

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WRC Participates in 15th Annual Apple Festival

Amy Clark, MSW

It was apple time in Susquehanna County as the Susquehanna County Literacy Program held its 15th annual Apple Festival and bike race on September 12, 2009, on the green next to the courthouse in Montrose. Apples of all varieties were available for purchase. You could also find delicious treats like apple cider, apple cider donuts, apple pie and caramel and candy apples. The festival also featured food stands, children's activities, craft vendors and face painting.



Women's Resource Center, as part of the Susquehanna County Alliance of Faith and Advocacy, joined in the fun by taking on the task of providing games for the young children attending the festival. Children tackled the obstacle course, which ended in a haystack where they got to dig for prizes. They also had the chance to play the bean bag toss, tin can challenge and croquet. Prizes were awarded to all children.

It is the mission of the Alliance of Faith and Advocacy to be bridges of hope until the life and voice of every child, woman and man is respected. Any profits earned by the Alliance will help bring this mission to fruition by funding "Time to Break the Silence," a domestic violence awareness walk to be held on October 3, as well as other domestic violence and sexual assault awareness events. Call Women's Resource Center at 278-1800 for more information about events and educational opportunities.

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Margaret A. Ruddy, MSW, LSW



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is a terrifying, brutal, and all too often lethal crime. Consider that since Memorial Day, 50 Pennsylvanians have lost their lives to domestic violence.

These murders took place in 19 counties, including Lackawanna County. Male violence against women and children is pervasive across all cultures and communities. The details of each incident demonstrate disregard for life, a chilling pattern of premeditation, a reckless endangerment of children, and a compelling need for coordinated responses to secure protections for victims, to assure accountability for offenders, and to ensure not one more life is lost to domestic violence.

Domestic violence is complex – victims and perpetrators represent a diverse cross-section of society and their circumstances are as varied as their experiences. There are steps we can take in our community to mitigate the risks and reduce injury and death.

We can urge our elected officials, policy makers, judges and law enforcement leaders to improve collaboration and coordination between county-wide systems that will bring about the development and implementation of uniform protocols, policies and training to improve response, protect victims, and enforce existing laws.

We can urge elected officials to ensure adequate funding and resources exist for Women's Resource Center's community based domestic violence services that provide the safety net for battered victims and their children in times of crisis, and the support necessary to help rebuild their lives free of violence.

We can ask our school leaders to allocate resources to cover the costs of the Women's Resource Center's "dating violence prevention" programs for students so we can stop the generational cycle of abuse.

We can take personal responsibility to learn the facts and get involved. We can stop blaming the victims and start holding batterers accountable for their actions.

We can make a donation to the Women's Resource Center by visiting our website at wrcnepa.org.

We can ask our community, civic and faith groups to sponsor a donation drive for the women and children served by the Women's Resource Center. We need diapers, gas cards, retail store gift cards, COLTS bus passes, and new baby strollers. Perhaps your group may wish to "adopt a room" here at WRC and help remodel our highly utilized safe house facility.

Yes, all of this seems easier said than done. But it can be done. And the need and the time to work together to make it happen has never been more urgent. You can make a difference.

Respectfully,

Margaret A. Ruddy

October Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 3rd

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Time to Break the Silence

A two-mile walk in remembrance of victims of Domestic Violence. Starts at Montrose United Methodist Church, and ends there. Refreshments will follow. Organized by the Susquehanna County Alliance of Faith and Advocacy.

Sunday, October 4th

10:30 a.m.

Fall Charity Ride Fundraiser

East Coast Biker Chicks' 3rd Annual Fall Charity Ride. Registration from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Electric City Harley Davidson, Dickson City. Ride begins at Noon. Return to Quaker Steak & Lube for food and entertainment. Live music by The Fuzzy Park Duo!

Tuesday, October 13th

6:00 p.m.

An Empty Place at the Table Exhibit - Local

IHM Center at Marywood University. Family time at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. prayer service open to public. Refreshments following prayers.

Saturday, October 17th

8:30 p.m.

NE Social Dance Club

NE Social Dance Club will conduct a benefit dance for WRC at the DAV Hall on Storres Avenue, Dickson City. Admittance is \$5.00 with complimentary snacks, coffee, tea, dessert and cash bar. Fifty percent of the proceeds will be donated to the Center.

Monday, October 26th

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

An Empty Place at the Table Exhibit - Local

The Patrick and Margaret DeNaples Center, Room No. 405, University of Scranton.

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Blames others for feelings/actions/problems: An abusive individual will often blame someone else for his abusive behavior, saying things like, "If they wouldn't do that, then I wouldn't get so mad and hurt someone."

Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde: An abusive individual may sometimes confuse their intimate partners by their drastic changes in mood and behavior. At one point they may be angry and threatening and then turn around and be apologetic and remorseful. This is another aspect of control... doing what seems to work at the time to get the results they want.

Cruelty to animals/children: An abusive individual will strike out at animals and children in an excessive manner over minor infractions. The abusive person does not seem to recognize these actions as excessive or harmful in any way.

Hypersensitivity: An abusive individual may often rant and rave about injustices done to him. An abusive person feels that everything is about him, that someone is out to get him.

Use of force in sex: An abusive individual will often find ways to use force in sex, sometimes in a seemingly 'playful' way. Often the woman will find that this force is repeated and becomes increasingly more controlling. The woman's feelings or wants are usually ignored.

Verbal abuse: An abusive individual will often use verbal abuse and demeaning language towards a woman without regard to who is around. Many times, the abusive person will be verbally abusive in social or public settings without regard for the woman's feelings.

Rigid gender roles: Many abusive individuals hold to rigid ideas of gender roles and often verbalize these thoughts and feelings in front of others, especially other men. An abusive person usually sees women as inferior, weaker and less capable than a man.

Being an effective ally

The key to being an effective ally is using alert listening. Alert listening is possible once you have an awareness of what you are listening for. Being aware of the signs of a battering personality and the effect that it has on the woman is the beginning of the process.

The next and sometimes greatest concern of allies is how to bring up your concerns, based on what you have heard and observed. Often key phrases will assist you with that. Starting a conversation with the woman by stating, "I am concerned..." is often a good way to begin. Repeating what she has already told you in conjunction with this phrase is helpful. For instance, "I am concerned because you said that he often forces you to do things that you object to..." This gives a woman the opportunity to hear what she has said and reflect on the fact that it also causes you to be concerned. She may then open up with her own feelings, concerns and fears.

The next step is to let her know you are sorry this has happened to her and want to help in some way. Find out what she wants to do. An ally wants to support the woman in choosing the most appropriate next step for her. Remember you are not expected to be an expert. Knowing the resources in the community that can assist her is the most helpful thing to pass along. If you only know one resource, let it be the nearest domestic violence agency's contact information, including an 800 number. Our agencies have trained staff that are able to give comprehensive information, resources and referrals based on the woman's individual needs. Women's Resource Center's hotline numbers are (570) 346-4671 and 1-800-257-5765.

Finally, encourage your friend/relative/acquaintance to contact a domestic violence agency. Assure them that you will keep their information confidential and be there if they need support. Support comes in many different shapes and forms. Do what is comfortable and safe for you to do. Listening and understanding is a helpful means of support. Giving them a place to turn to for assistance could be a life saver, literally.

You don't have to be an expert to be a help. We know that because you are reading this, you will be more prepared to be an ally to someone in need. Thanks and congratulations in advance for standing up for the rights and safety of women everywhere!

SANTA'S SNIPPERS CUT-A-THON — DECEMBER 6, 2009

Save the date for the Center's 20th Annual Santa's Snippers to be held on Sunday, December 6, 2009, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Empire Beauty School, Birney Plaza, Moosic, PA.

Once again, professional licensed cosmetologists will donate their time and talent to the Center by providing haircuts at a cost of \$12.00. The money that is raised will provide shelter and new lives for many battered women and children from our area.

If you are a licensed cosmetologist and would like to donate an hour or two of your time on Sunday, December 6, call Bert at 346-4460, ext 211.

THANK YOU!

WRC would like to thank Peg Ruddy, Judy Copeland and MaryClare Mecca for their 25 years of service in the domestic violence movement. Peg, Judy and MaryClare are being recognized for their work by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence at a luncheon scheduled for October 8th in Harrisburg.

Peace Works Fair

"Peace Works Fair" will take place November 27-29 at the Vintage Theater, Scranton. Featuring: Folk arts and crafts by women artists from around the world. Presentation: 'Empowerment of Women through Tradition.' Visit WRC website in November for details. Any questions: Call Sushma @ 346-4460, ext. 242.