



Susan B. Anthony Project

Safety • Healing • Growth

Newsletter - Fall 2003

Executive Director's Message:

Domestic Violence Affects Children...*millions every year*

When you hear about domestic violence, you may be like many people and think of a woman beaten by her spouse or partner. Do you also think of the children who either witness or experience the violence too? Many children along with their mothers are physically abused; others may be sexually or emotionally abused; and some suffer from neglect. Even those children who themselves are not abused may suffer tremendously from living in a violent home.

What is it like for children to grow up in a violent home? Like adult victims of domestic violence, not all children will experience the same things. Some may find home life chaotic. They may not know what to expect as their parent's mood can change instantly from loving to rage. They may live with daily fear and tension that affects their ability to trust, not only their

parents, but others. An abusive parent may use isolation as a way of controlling his victims. If children are shut off from the outside world, they may withdraw from friends and other adults. It's not unusual for children to blame themselves for what goes wrong in a family. When they can't control the violence around them, they may feel hopeless. Children from violent homes may be confused from the mixed messages they receive. They may have learned that hitting is wrong. Then, at home they experience hitting as a way to solve problems.

Think of the complexity of feelings of a child who is trying to protect his parent from being abused. And, that same child who becomes angry with that parent for not stopping the violence and not protecting the child. Imagine the emotional turmoil of a child who at one moment loves the

abusive parent and at another moment wishes that parent would go away or die.

We cannot let children who grow up in violent homes be the

forgotten victims of domestic violence. At Susan B. Anthony Project, our child advocate is available to work with children, to listen to them, to help them understand that they are not responsible for the violence. Children need to understand that it's not their fault if their mother was abused, and it's not their fault if they witnessed the violence or were themselves abused. The abuser is responsible for his actions and should be held accountable. Children need to understand this.

If you're a relative, friend, teacher, nurse, coach or neighbor, you too can help. If you see unexplained injuries, notice a child's behavior change, notice a child is more withdrawn, or see a child using violence to resolve a conflict, pay close attention. The child may be living with domestic violence and may need your help.

For information, resources, or someone to talk to call the Susan B. Anthony Project 860-482-7133 or make an appointment with one of our child advocates.

Barbara Spiegel

The following are Gillian Hanna's reflections on the time when Susan B. Anthony Project was created. This newsletter is dedicated to our founders, in particular our true founding mother, Gillian Hanna.

".....Back about twenty years ago, I was a member of Al Anon, and I met many women who were being abused at home. At that time, I was working for the Visiting Nurse Services, and some of the aides were also being abused. These women had nowhere to go for help. My sister-in-law, a social worker, knew about a training on battered women that was going to be held in New Haven. I went to the 2-day training. It was excellent with many very knowledgeable presenters.

After the training, I invited local people to the first organizational meeting to discuss setting up a hotline in Torrington. Fortunately for me, I had a long invitation list from the Community Council. Our attendance at the first meeting was great. We passed a hat (*Con't on page 2*)

IN THIS ISSUE

Domestic Violence Affects Children... Millions Every Year	Cover
Reflections from Our Founder, Gillian Hanna	Cover
Agency Programs & Services	2
A Rural Domestic Violence Initiative	2
Agency News & Notes	3

(Con't from Front Cover)

around, collected \$35 to buy stamps, and went to work at Trinity Church where we had a desk and a telephone.

The energy and support in the early days was strong. Some of the people at the organizational meeting volunteered to answer the hotline. Others joined the Board of Directors. We invited staff from the Waterbury Battered Women's Program to train our volunteers. One of the first things we did was print cards that we put in every women's bathroom in the area. And, people began to call our hotline. In those early days, some of the volunteers took women into their own homes. The organization grew like "topsy."

One of the people who joined the Board in the early days was Kevin Brophy from Connecticut Legal Services. He was experiencing the same thing I was. Battered women would come to him looking for help, and he had nowhere to send them for support or shelter.

Polly (Doremus) and I wrote our first grant for state funding. We were shocked when we got the grant funds since neither of us knew how to write grants. That's when we hired our first part-time staff person to do outreach into the community. The experts from the State told us it would take us five years to get a shelter. We opened our shelter in 2½ years.

The growth never stopped. We started the Sexual Assault part of the program, and then when state funding became available for Transitional Housing, we found the perfect building and used State funds to purchase it for our Transitional House.

Oh, of course there were frustrations, but not many. The day we moved into our first real office, the furnace blew up, so we had no heat, and we had no money. But, there were always people who wanted to be helpful who would donate things and money to help us out.

I enjoyed those early days. You know, I was one of those hands-on kind of Board members. We ran the program. I was one of the people who took women into my home."

Today, Gillian Hanna lives in Kalamazoo, Michigan with her extended family. She has toured the domestic violence shelter there.

Agency Programs & Services

Self-Esteem Workshop: A six-week peer support group for women who want to develop more positive views of themselves will be forming in the near future. Call Lois for more information and to reserve a space.

H.E.A.R.T. GROUP: (Help End Abusive Relationship Tendencies) An on-going, peer support group for women who have experienced any form of family violence meets Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Trauma Survivors Group: An on-going group that meets on Thursday evenings for women survivors of trauma. Call Molly for more information.

For more information about exact dates, times and to pre-register, call 489-3798 and reference the title of the program of interest.

Announcing...

A Rural Domestic Violence Initiative

Susan B. Anthony Project has been awarded a two-year grant to enhance the safety of women and children in domestic and dating violence situations by working cooperatively with the community to develop education, outreach and prevention strategies to address these issues. Federal funding from the Office of Violence Against Women, a division of The Department of Justice, will allow members from Susan B. Anthony Project, The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and the State of Connecticut Office of Personnel Management to work collaboratively to form a multi-disciplinary task force to develop a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

The project objectives are to:

1. improve access to services and interventions for women and children victims;
2. enhance community awareness of domestic violence;

3. create or enhance collaborative partnerships between providers of domestic violence and police departments, community groups, mental health organizations, faith communities, housing authorities, welfare agencies including DCF, hospitals, judicial officials and business organizations;
4. create a coordinated community response to violent crimes against women and children;
5. develop community awareness and education of domestic violence services and interventions including materials tailored to meet the needs of the northwest Connecticut community.

In addition, there will be attention given to developing a needs analysis identifying areas of focus for task force direction.

Susan B. Anthony Project will collaborate with local service providers to identify partners within the combined service areas and invite the participation of these partners. The agency will work to enhance collaborations with current partners and will deliver all necessary and appropriate training and outreach activities related to the Rural Initiative.



**24-HOUR
CRISIS LINE:
860-482-7133**

Statewide Toll Free Hotlines:
Sexual Assault: 1-888-999-5545
Domestic Violence: 1-888-774-2900
En Espanol: 1-888-568-8332



Susan B. Anthony Project

Susan B. Anthony Project Wish List

If you have a question about an item listed, please call 489-3798.

On-going needs:

- * Cash donations designated specifically for client assistance
- * Gift certificates to be used at local grocery stores for food, prescription and basic living needs
- * Phone cards
- * Gas cards
- * Diapers for older babies and toddlers including pull-up training pants
- * Diaper wipes
- * Household cleaners for shelter
- * 2-4 Wet mops with changeable mopheads
- * New curtains and window blinds for shelter

Holiday Wish List:

- * Gift Certificates for Haircuts
- * Gift Cards to local department stores
- * Movie Passes
- * Gift Cards for small electronics such as walkman stereos, CDs, DVDs
- * Gift Cards for athletic supplies
- * 19" color TV
- * VCR/DVD player

In addition to the many donations of toys we receive for younger children, we are often in need of gifts or cash to purchase gifts appropriate for teenage girls and boys and for adult women.

To adopt a family, call for details about the family.



Holiday Wreath *Handmade in Maine* Sale

- 20" @ \$15
- 28" @ \$25
- 38" @ \$40

Wreaths are available December 1st. Place your orders early.

Are you busy but interested in volunteering your time to Susan B. Anthony Project? Consider becoming a Wreath Friend. Call Lisa at 860-489-3798.

**100% of the annual Holiday Wreath Sale proceeds are used to provide shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse here in Litchfield County.

Polly's DreamThrift Shop

To benefit Susan B. Anthony Project, Inc.

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday,
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Thursday evenings until 6 p.m.

Donations accepted during business hours only.

Furniture donations: please call for an appointment.

Volunteers are always needed - please call if you are interested.

114 Water Street Torrington, CT 06790
860-489-2808

Agency News & Notes

Thank you to Burns, Brooks & McNeil, Litchfield Bancorp and Northwest Community Bank for all of your efforts in hosting the recent "Golf for Two Good Causes" tournament at Fairview Farms. Susan B. Anthony Project and FISH were, once again, the beneficiaries of this successful event.

EVE's (Ending Violence Everywhere) Fund recently awarded the agency a grant to underwrite the cost of the Fall and Spring newsletters commemorating Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Awareness Months.

The Maximilian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation, Inc. have funded a program to underwrite support services for clients in transition. The agency gratefully accepts these funds to provide shelter and transitional housing clients with apartment security deposits, medical assistance for emergencies, childcare costs, job interview assistance and assistance for essential car repair or insurance payments. The program will also assist with food and clothing certificates for clients in need.

Education assistance grants will be available to residential clients through the generosity of the Melville Charitable Trust. These grants are available to residents seeking to update their education for the purpose of improving their employment options with the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency to end the threat of homelessness.

Thank you to Thomaston Savings Bank for a grant to support a Community Education Program which serves all of the school systems in northwest Connecticut.

The Elizabeth Carse Foundation (Carse/Robinson et al Foundation) awarded the agency a grant to support child advocacy in domestic violence and sexual assault.

Thanks to the support of the George A. and Grace L. Long Foundation, a grant to underwrite domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy for adults has been awarded to the agency.

The Swindells Charitable Foundation has awarded a grant for the support of crisis counseling and advocacy services for children.





SINCE 1983

Susan B. Anthony Project

SAFETY • HEALING • GROWTH

works to promote the autonomy
of women
and the safety of
all victims of domestic
abuse/sexual assault
in northwest Connecticut
as well as to promote
community action
toward ending
domestic violence
and sexual abuse.

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Barbara Spiegel

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