

WomeneWS

W o m e n ' s C e n t e r o f M o n t g o m e r y C o u n t y

Executive Director's Notes



Submitted by Maria Macaluso

Since April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, I had the opportunity recently to reflect on the many ways that our work here at the Center impacts on children. The most obvious connection we see, on a daily basis, is the effect domestic violence has on children. Beyond the direct exposure to violence and the vicarious trauma that impacts these young witnesses to family violence, we know from our work that children carry these learned behaviors into their own relationships, creating generations of unhealthy interactions and perpetuating an abusive dynamic. When I first came to the Center, one of our volunteers said something to me that has forever shaped my work with children and family violence: “We are now counseling the daughters of the women we counseled 25 years ago!” A statement that simple serves as a daily reminder to me that as we focus on providing direct services to victims of domestic violence, we must be ever-mindful of the need to do prevention education, self-esteem building and healthy relationship work with children to break this generational cycle.

This critical goal of reaching young children is one that our Community Educator, Janine Kelly, has so brilliantly incorporated into her work, in particular with programs like the “Hands Are Not for Hurting” workshop for pre-school and early elementary education students. Her program combines music and art to help children learn positive conflict resolution skills and non-violent behaviors. It is an amazing and joyful experience to see young children embrace her positive message!

Another way that our work impacts on young children is our efforts to build self-esteem in young girls through the development of programs and initiatives that teach positive messages. While this is an area in which I see the need for future growth and development, again, on a daily basis, we need to be aware of our duty, as mentors and as a Women’s Center, to cultivate and nurture a sense of empowerment and healthy self-esteem in our future generations of women. Beyond our mission to end domestic violence, as we work with young women and young men, we are shaping the volunteers of the future, so it is up to each of us to model and instill values of leadership, community and responsibility.

As heart-breaking as our work with young victims of family violence can be, there is so much good that we can do to make their futures more secure and hopeful. Part of that comes from thinking globally about the impact of our work – beyond the immediate adult client or victim – to see the world in which s/he interacts, which includes the children affected by family violence. Another part comes from our active involvement with other community organizations in a collaborative approach to provide a holistic response to family violence. To that end, I have had the great privilege to serve for the past five years on a multi-disciplinary taskforce for the eastern region of the Office of Children and Youth. In that capacity, I have had the opportunity to see, first hand, how often domestic violence is a component of child abuse and neglect, along with substance/alcohol abuse, mental health issues, inadequate parenting skills and unemployment. Through these regular meetings of interdisciplinary professionals, we are able to get a larger sense of the scope of the problems and, in turn, a broader vision of the solutions.

Finally, as we enter Child Abuse Prevention Month, I wanted to take the opportunity to recognize the work being done at a local level by our Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth. For those of you unfamiliar with all that they are doing, in 2005, this office provided assistance to 7,186 families impacted by child abuse and neglect. In addition to case management, they provide information and referral to assist families in developing the skills that need to create a sense of stability and permanency for children. Through their Ungovernable Youths Program, they provide training, mentoring and intervention for behaviorally-challenged teens to before they are lost to juvenile crime. As they work toward ensuring positive outcomes for kids, they share with us the awareness that the future – our future - truly does rest on our ability to eliminate violence and create a world safe for future generations!

WALK-A-THON A GREAT SUCCESS BECAUSE OF Y-O-U

*Submitted by Denise Flynn, WAP Program Director
And Chair of Walk-a-thon Special Event Committee*

On October 29, 2005 the Women's Center of Montgomery County and the Soroptimist International of Pottstown presented our first annual Unmask the Abuse Walk-a-thon at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell.

On a beautiful fall day, 101 walkers and 31 volunteers joined together for this walk to bring awareness about domestic violence and raise needed funds for the Women's Center of Montgomery County totaling more than \$7,500. Prior to us getting to walk day, our many sponsors got together to support this worthwhile endeavor. Without our committee members, sponsors, walkers and volunteers, walk day would not have been possible.

With dedication, commitment and determination, the committee members from the Women's Center (Brenda Poe, Cassandra Jefferson & myself) and Soroptimist (Debby Werner, Chris Babel, Diane Albright, Donna Beck, Rosemary Hoffman) organized this walk-a-thon, getting support, donations and sponsorships from all over Montgomery County and elsewhere. For privacy purposes, we cannot list the names of all those who walked to raise money and awareness, but we want you – and all of those who volunteered to help that day and the days leading up to this event – how much we appreciate all of your efforts. We would also like to thank those community sponsors, including businesses, colleges, and non-profit organizations, who supported this event so enthusiastically! Thank you all for your hard work and commitment!

The list of *Community Sponsors* includes:

Kitty Cottage Adoption Center, Inc.	Cindy Schoenly Certified Massage Therapist
Why Not Prosper Inc.	Ray's Diner
Plaza Flowers of East Norriton	Brown's Shoprite – E. Norriton
Bio Cleaning Services	Citizens Bank
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program	Laurel House
Victim Services Center	Del Monte Produce
Mary Kay Cosmetics	Bryn Mawr College
Pottstown Walmart	Infinite Graphic Imaging
Reflections Hair Salon	New Choices/New Options
Bath & Body Works	Ringling Hill Orchards
Pottstown Police Department	Suzy-Jo Donuts
Amelyn Donuts	Einstein Brothers Bagels
Kathy Del Conti	Arts & Graphics
Nidira	Verizon
Styles to Suit Salon	Old Country Buffet – E. Norriton
Comcast	Community Connections
Talk Marketing	Good Shepherd of the Hills
Winnin' Times Sportswear	Bloomsburg University
New Beginnings Evangelistic Outreach	Pottstown Community Television
Norristown Area School District	WBYN 105 Alive/Kathy Pipemeier

With Special Thanks to our student supporters, faculty and administration at Montgomery County Community College the Blue Bell and Pottstown Campuses!

And

Starbucks - "Make Your Mark" Program and Scott Brady (Manager).

And we gratefully acknowledge all of the support and guidance we received from Montgomery County Community College staff members Pat Drewicz and Bruce Bach; members of the Soroptimist International of Pottstown; and the Board, staff and volunteers of the Women's Center of Montgomery County!

News From Elkins Park Office

This newsletter was brought to you courtesy of the **Tea Party / newsletter folding & stapling committee / In-service** held on April 4 in the Elkins Park office. Each month we will have a date scheduled for this event. The In-service this past month was on DV 101. Next month will be a review on ISMS (cultural diversity). The In-services will focus on experiential, learning activities and I will try to slide in some didactic information.

New Resource Manuals are available at the office. A valiant attempt was made to update all possible information and to include new resources wherever possible. The *payment* for a new manual will be a new resource that you know of, a brochure or even just a name/explanation/phone number so we can all benefit from each person's knowledge. This way I can continue to expand the resource base for all of us by sending on the new information to each counselor. (If you don't have anything new to offer at this time, I will accept a future promise.)

Submitted by Deanna Linn
Elkins Park Volunteer Coordinator

Norristown Volunteer Update

Our next WAP in-service is scheduled for **April 18th, 2006** from **1-3 pm** in the Norristown office. This will be an Advocates Issues in-service. We will be discussing office/prothy updates and the recent amendments to the Protection from Abuse Act. Several of our Court Advocates/staff were able to attend this informative LAC- East meeting this month and will be able to give us valuable information.

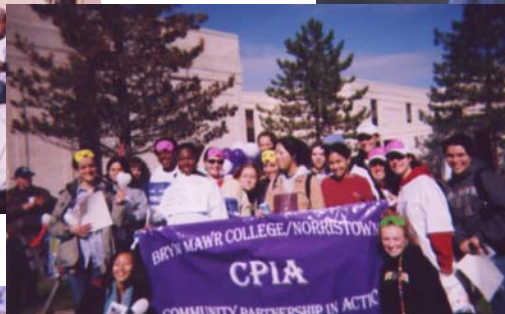
Sincere condolences to Court Advocate, Debby Kaas and her family on the loss of her father who passed away in March, our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.

Tuesday, April 18, 2006 is our next Legal Remedies Workshop. The information session will be held at our Norristown office at 18 West Airy Street, 4th floor from 5-7p.m. Please call 610-279-7474 to register to attend. Also, please refer a family member or friend to this valuable program! Facilitator is to be announced.

Jenn B.
Norristown Volunteer Coordinator



Walk-A-Thon 2005



Walk-A-Thon 2005



You are invited to attend a

Fabulous Jewelry Show and Sale
by Leslie Carroll Designs
to benefit
The Women's Center of Montgomery County

June 7, 2006
7:00 to 9:00 PM

Dessert and Coffee/Tea

90 High Point Road
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Please RSVP: Women's Center
215-635-7340

Due to spatial limitations, reservations are a must!

Hosted by Marilyn Rosskam

Directions: From Elkins Park. Rt. 611 (Old York Rd.) North to Davisville Rd. (Willow Grove train station intersection) Rt. on Davisville to 1st light, Terwood Rd. Rt on Terwood to first street on left, Huntingdon Rd. (NOT Huntingdon Pike) Left on Huntingdon Rd. to first private road on left, High Point West. Turn left. #90 is on the rt., the only ranch.

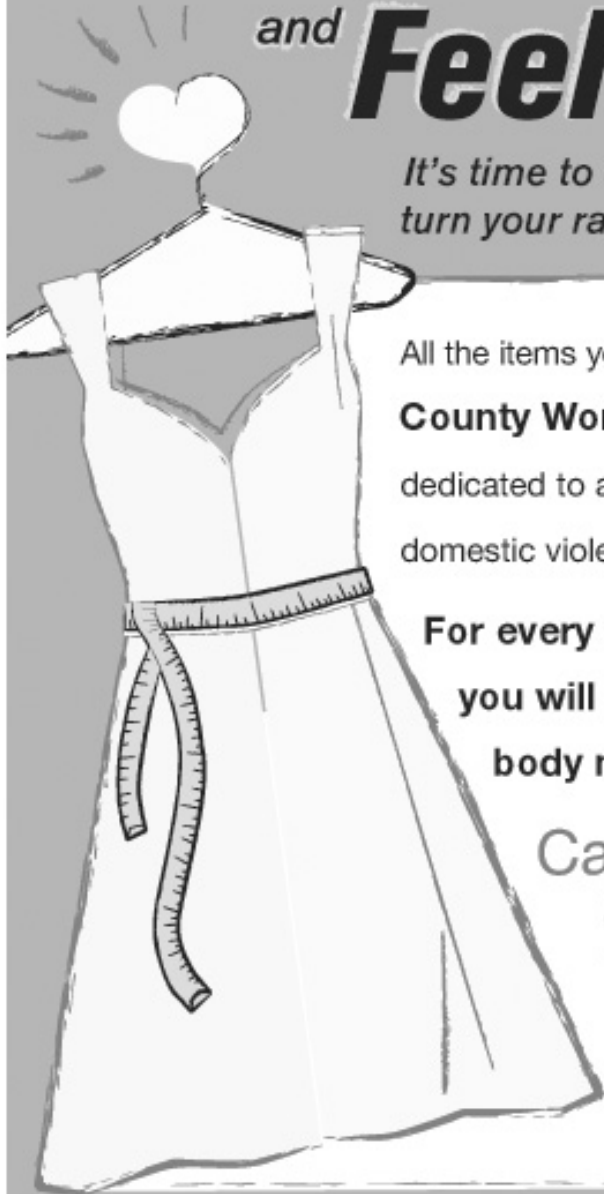
Directions: From Turnpike Willow Grove/Jenkintown Exit: after toll take left ramp toward Abington/611 South. Go several lights to Fitzwatertown Rd.(Dunkin Doughnuts on far left corner). Turn left on Fitzwatertown. (After the next light, name changes to Terwood Rd.) Go through 2nd light, Davisville Rd. to the first street on left, Huntingdon Rd. (NOT Huntingdon Pike). Left on Huntingdon Rd. to first private road on left, High Point West, and turn left.



The Women's Center of Montgomery County gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support we receive from the Montgomery County Commissioners. On February 17, 2006, Commissioners Thomas J. Ellis (Chair) and Ruth Damsker presented Executive Director Maria Macaluso with our annual award of \$15,350 to support our domestic violence program.

Shape in 8, Donate and **Feel Great!**

*It's time to clean your closet and
turn your rags into someone else's riches!*



All the items you donate will be given to **Montgomery County Womens Center**, a community organization dedicated to assisting women achieve freedom from domestic violence and other forms of abuse.

**For every article of clothing you donate,
you will receive \$10 OFF* an 8-week
body makeover system from Shape in 8!**

Call 888-SHAPE-05
for more information!



**Shape in 8 is a revolutionary approach to body
reshaping that is completely customized to your
problem areas. The result...a guaranteed body
makeover in just 8 weeks!**



* First time members only. Customers will receive \$10 dollars off an eight-week body makeover program for each article of clothing they donate; with a maximum discount of \$50. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Offer valid 5/01/06 through 5/05/06 ©2006 Shape in 8.

**Bring in your donations
between Monday, May 1st
and Monday, May 8th!**

*To end domestic violence, we must change our behavior.
To change our behavior, we must change our attitudes.
To change our attitudes, we need education.
To educate our communities, WE NEED YOU!*

We Welcome all Volunteers to the Upcoming Events for Community Education

MY HANDS ARE NOT FOR HURTING

April 18, 2006–Jenkintown Day Nursery –10:00-11:30 AM
April 20, 2006 – Lower Providence Library – 10:30-11:00AM
April 27, 2006 – Lower Providence Library – 1:30-2:00-PM

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WORKSHOPS And SPEAKING EVENTS

April 3, 2006 – New Choices – Montco. Comm. College – Blue Bell- 6:00-7:00 PM
April 4, 2006 – Parent /Teen Task Force- 9:30 – 11:30AM
April 4, 2006 – Montgomery County Community College – Blue Bell – 11:10-12:30 PM
April 5, 2006 – Western Center for Technical Studies – Royersford – 9:30-10:45AM
April 11, 2006 – Montgomery County Community College –Pottstown – 8:30 -10:00 AM
April 11, 2006 – Manor College – Jenkintown – 11:00-1:00PM
April 12, 2006 – Police Training – Upper Dublin Police Department – 6:00AM
April 17, 2006 – Montco. Comm. College- Pottstown – 6:30-7:30PM
April 21, 2006 – Healthy Lifestyles Expo – Pottstown – 1:30-2:00PM

TABLE EVENTS

April 5, 2006 – Raising Healthy Kids Expo – Human Services Center – Norristown 10:00AM-2:00PM
April 21, 2006 –Tri County Interagency Consortium – Healthy Lifestyles Expo–10:00-2:00PM
April 22,2006– International Spring Festival –North Penn High School 11:00-5:00PM
May 4, 2006 – 17th Annual Teen Parent Conference – 9:00-10:00 AM
May 12, 2006 – Montgomery County Senior Games and Expo – 9:00-12:00PM
May 17, 2006 – Bryn Mawr Hospital Health Fair – 1:00 – 7:00 PM
May 25, 2006 – Fort Washington Expo Center – Senior Citizen Expo – 10:00AM-1:30PM
October 14, 2006- Community Harvest Festival '06 – Whippain Township -11:00AM-5:00PM

Facilitators needed for Panel Discussion
“The Yellow Dress”

April 7, 2006 – Upper Merion High School- 7:55-8:55AM

Congratulations

On behalf of the Board, staff and volunteers, we would like to congratulate staff member Denise Flynn who is the proud new grandmother of Joshua James. Joshua was born on March 20th, weighing in at 7 lbs., 5 oz. His mother, Yolanda, is doing well. We are all thrilled for the proud “Grandmom” Denise, and we offer our sincere congratulations to her and her family!

Book Club Updates

- April 19th "Straight Man" by Richard Russo
Discussion will be led by Dorothy at Ellen's house.
- May 17th "Crow Lake" By Mary Lawson
Discussion will be led by Sunny at Sue's house.
- June 21st "The Known World" by Edmond P. Jones
Discussion will be led by Sue at Helen's house

All book club meeting start at 7:30 for socializing and 8:00 the discussion begins. Any questions call Dorothy at 215-782-2259.

As some of you may remember, the issue of online access to Protection from Abuse court records has been one that has caused domestic violence advocates great concern because of the potential harm it represents to victims and witnesses to family violence. In December 2004, with the support of our County Commissioners, we were successful in restricting public online access to County PFA records. With the possible passage of this bill, the issue may arise again on a statewide level, as you can see from this article which appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer on March 4, 2006.

Pa. courts get advice on electronic data

A prosecutor and a victim advocate were among those who spoke about online access.

By Mark Scolforo Associated Press

HARRISBURG - The state court system heard advice yesterday about how its electronic-access policy should balance individual privacy with its tradition of keeping most records open to public review.

The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts is formulating a policy to govern which records - and what case information - will be available over the Internet. It can be viewed at <http://go.philly.com/records>.

A prosecutor, a victim advocate, a Pennsylvania Newspaper Association lawyer, and employment-background investigators were among more than a dozen people offering points of view.

Larry Frankel, Pennsylvania legislative director for the American Civil Liberties Union, argued that criminal case records should not be on the Internet before a defendant is found guilty. Frankel said many people wrongly consider an arrest equivalent to a conviction.

"We think that excluding such information will greatly enhance the privacy rights of all Pennsylvanians," he said.

The policy will address whether a defendant's year of birth or birth date should be part of what Web surfers can see. Sharon Dietrich, a lawyer with Community Legal Services Inc. of Philadelphia, said greater detail will help prevent false identifications.

The records policy would not limit the paper records that traditionally have been available at county courthouses, but Pennsylvania Newspaper Association lawyer Teri Henning said Internet users should have access equal to that of people who are able to get to the courthouse.

She said the electronic-access policy should make records available after an arrest, whether or not there is a conviction.

"The fact that someone has been charged with a crime is significant. It is also public information," Henning said.

The Philadelphia Bar Association believes posting information about people who have not been found guilty could unfairly tarnish their reputation, said Alan M. Feldman, the association's chancellor. He said a uniform, simple method for correcting errors should be in place before the system goes online.

The state Supreme Court would have to adopt the proposal for it to become official policy.

Seeking Volunteers for Our Community Education Work

Hopefully many of you have seen the announcements in our recent newsletters informing you about upcoming community education events around the county. Much of this impressive work in getting our name out there has been coordinated and conducted by our Community Educator, Janine Kelly. Janine has done an amazing job in establishing contacts and getting us on the speaking schedules for many local organization and civic groups, as well as our inclusion in informational tabling events and health fairs, but she needs help. This is a large county to cover, and we really need your help to ensure that these events have adequate representation, in all parts of the county.

We realize that many of you may feel ill-prepared or uncomfortable doing community outreach, but we'd like to assure you that there are many ways that you can support this effort in a most meaningful way, even if you haven't been through the 45-hour counseling training. Volunteers are always needed to help staff information tables, deliver brochures and posters, designing table displays, and administrative functions such as contacting organizations to schedule events. Many of these activities can be done in your local community or at your nearest Women's Center office, and require minimal travel.

If you are interested in joining this growing effort, please contact Janine Kelly in our Bryn Mawr office at 610-525-1428!

Women's Center of Montgomery County

Elkins Park Office

215-635-7344

Thrift Shop: 215-885-0620

FAX: 215-635-7347

Norristown Office

610-279-1548

FAX: 610-279-7740

Pottstown Office

610-970-7363

FAX: 610-970-0705

Lansdale Office

215-853-8060

FAX: 215-853-8065

Bryn Mawr Office

610-525-1427

FAX: 610-525-1429

www.wcmontco.org

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