



April 2010

The Advocate

The Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center monthly newsletter

Tips to remember when supporting a survivor

by Andrea Mikina

Survivors of sexual violence often experience immediate trauma that may continue, in some degree, throughout their lifetime. Healing from sexual violence is a process that is as unique as each survivor. What may be experienced by one survivor is not necessarily the same path that another survivor will take. Healing often includes depression, anxiety, flashbacks and/or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is important to be sensitive and knowledgeable about these and other issues when working with survivors.

Here are some useful tips for working with survivors:

- Always believe the survivor.
- Listen.
- Do not criticize or judge.
- Show concern and empathy but don't be confrontational or argumentative.
- Remind the survivor that he or she does not have to go through his/her circumstances alone. Also remember to point out any progress the survivor may have made.
- Be patient.
- Offer help and provide resources, but do not take control. Your goal is to give the survivor the tools for empowerment, not to control their healing process.
- Identify and focus on the survivor's strengths and positive traits in order to increase his/her feelings of self-worth and dignity.
- Be honest. Discuss confidentiality and mandatory reporting, and answer questions as truthfully as possible. Don't just tell survivors what they want to hear.
- Don't 'victim-blame' by asking questions such as, "Why were you doing _____?" Help them to understand that the perpetrator is the only person responsible for creating the situation, and the only one that should face consequences for his/her actions.
- You may choose to verbally disapprove of the abusive behavior, but do not openly criticize the abuser. The victims, especially if they are children, will often still love the person who assaulted them. This can be a very confusing time for them, and hearing negative things about the perpetrator is unnecessary.
- Ask them how they feel. Don't tell them how they feel or how they should feel.
- Be conscious of your own baggage. Don't bring your personal issues to the victim's situation.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and realize that not everyone will share your beliefs.
- Encourage the survivor to share his/her story with family, friends, or a counselor when he or she feels ready to talk about it. Getting things out in the open can often be a means of valuable healing.

(Adapted from www.speersociety.org)

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

by Shanna Bell-Ahmad

In 1976 on the street of Brussels, a candlelight procession began to bring public awareness about the brutal and discriminatory crimes against women.

Today, that procession has become a march filled with speakers who shatter the silence about sexual violence. The title of a memorial written and read by Anne Pride at an anti-violence rally in 1977 coined the slogan, "Take Back the Night." For 32 years, rape crisis centers around the world have used this slogan for their events during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April as a noticeable stand against sexual violence.

On April 30th, the Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (WASAC) will hold the 24th annual, "Take Back the Night." This year's theme: Stand up ~ Speak Out will charge the Wichita Community to support, listen and become educated

about sexual violence. Often, we hear from people in the community who are unaware of the prevalence of sexual violence. In 2009, there were 356 people who were sexually assaulted and seen at the hospital and over 600 calls made to the 24-hour crisis line. Sadly, there are many more sexual assaults that are not reported and calls not made due to the guilt and shame by those who have been sexually assaulted. Please join us as we promote awareness and support and BELIEVE all those affected by sexual violence.

Take Back the Night
Friday, April 30th
Old Town Plaza (located
in front of the Downtown
Warren) 6pm-8pm.



If you any questions please feel free to contact Shanna at 263-0185 or shanna@wichitasac.com

Denim Day in USA

by Tisha Whitehead

Denim Day in USA is a rape prevention education campaign in which community members, elected officials, and businesses are asked to make a social statement using fashion. The community is asked to wear jeans as a visible means of protest against misconceptions that surround sexual assault. In Italy, 1992, the Italian Supreme Court overturned a sentence for rape stating that "because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex." Women of the Italian Parliament were enraged and within hours, were on the steps of parliament wearing jeans in protest.

This call to action has reached many states throughout the US including the California State Senate. If you would like to participate in this campaign encourage your employers, community members, and elected officials to support wearing jeans on Wednesday, April 21st, 2010.

DENIM DAY IN LA & USA	SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN WEDNESDAY APRIL 21, 2010
PEACE OVER VIOLENCE ONE ON ONE, ONE BY ONE	For more information or to download free awareness flyers please visit http://denimdayinla.org/ (All information was obtained from http://denimdayinla.org/ .)

Community Calendar

Brown Bag Learning: You Bring Your Lunch Immigration Then and Now



Presenter: David Osio, LMSW, is currently the Early Childhood Assistant Manager (Assistant Principal) at Plaza De Los Ninos Headstart Program. David has worked as Director of Hispanic Ministries and Coordinator of Immigration Services and Adult ESL Programs at United Methodist Urban Ministries, along with other employment with the Wichita Police Department and SRS. After graduating from KU, he went to work for Catholic Charities as director of Immigration and Refugee Services and ESL Adult Education Services. During this tenure as Director of Immigration, David became a voice for the immigrants in the community during the past effort to reform immigration laws in the United States in 2007 – 2008.

This presentation will summarize past and current government immigration acts and the current challenges that immigrants face in their process to become permanent residents and/or US citizens. It will also address the barriers they face in trying to bring in family members or apply for relatives in and outside the United States. It will also address the many obstacles encountered by social service providers and agencies in trying to help some undocumented immigrants.

When: Wednesday, April 14, 2010 from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.

Where: State Office Building, 230 E. William. SRS Room 3080



Call WSU School of Social Work at 316-978-7250 if you have questions.

Pre-register by calling Angelica Salas at 337-6795

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