



Newsletter

www.shelterhousenwfl.org
24 Hour Hotline: 1-800-44-ABUSE
Administrative Office
102 Buck Drive
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548

Fall 2009

Primary Prevention: by Emily Snipes

The objective of the Primary Prevention Program at Shelter House is "Creating a Healthy Community." Slowly but surely, our Prevention Team is doing just that; with established community partners such as Nellie Bogar's Youth Village and Crestview High School, growing programs with the Boys and Girls Club of Fort Walton Beach and Shoal River Middle School, and developing relationships with local faith leaders and Walton County schools, the Primary Prevention Program at Shelter House is steadily gaining strength.

Our Prevention Program has completed five rounds of primary prevention already this year. Groups cover anywhere from eight to twenty-four weeks and include youth from 11 to 17 years of age. Additional rounds of primary prevention are already underway with Shoal River Middle School, Youth Village, and Crestview High School. Groups with Niceville High School and the Boys and Girls Club will begin the 2010 year.

But what is primary prevention? The Prevention Institute defines it as "taking action to build resilience and to prevent problems before they occur" (www.preventioninstitute.org). By not only addressing the issue of intimate partner violence (IPV) and recognizing the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to IPV, but also by presenting positive alternatives to these views, primary prevention strives to stop violence *before* it occurs.

Assertive communication, defining and recognizing dating abuse, and overcoming and deconstructing gender stereotypes are just a few of the topics covered in groups. These healthy relationship skills are beneficial in *all* relationships, from friends and classmates to family members and loved ones. Youth become empowered, respectful, and are encouraged to take a stand against violence.

Brian*, a sophomore at Crestview High School, is just one example of the benefits of healthy relationship skills. Before

participating in group last spring, Brian was withdrawn, sullen, and verbally abusive to classmates. At the end of just eight weeks, Brian was visibly more confident, outspoken, and friendly. He even shared that he was interested in a girl at school. During the final session, in which a review game was played, Brian helped his team correctly answer all of their questions to win the game. Each time a teen or child is reached in this way, we are that much closer to a violence-free world.

As exciting as it is to help our youth create and maintain healthy relationships, groups are not the only component of the Primary Prevention Program; we also seek to educate the parents, teachers, and other mentors of the youth and to engage the entire communities of Okaloosa and Walton Counties in the Prevention effort. When everyone is involved, the skills learned in group are refined and strengthened. Only at this point of societal involvement can we begin to see an end to IPV.

Parents, teachers, mentors, community members- whoever you are, Shelter House invites and challenges you to join us. Join our Prevention Committee on the second Thursday of the month from 2—3 p.m. at the administration office to help the program grow; Volunteer with our Primary Prevention Program and work with youth directly; Help set up groups with our community partners; Donate materials or money for the program. The possibilities are endless and Prevention can't grow without your help. So... Join us in Creating a Healthy Community!

To help create a healthy community, contact Emily at esnipes@shelterhousenwfl.org or 850.243.1201.

**Name changed for anonymity.*

Emily Snipes is the Prevention Coordinator/Community Organizer at Shelter House, Inc. She has been with the agency since March of 2009 and has passionately and enthusiastically embraced the effort to end intimate partner violence.

What's Happening This Month?

Shelter House and Bridgeway received the **Office of Violence Against Women Recovery Act Transitional Housing Grant!** (See page 2 for more details).

"Promote Peace, Prevent Domestic Violence Annual Award" has been presented to Shelter House for our successful efforts with Primary Prevention in Okaloosa and Walton Counties (See page 2 for more details).

DVAM—October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. DVAM is devoted to local, state and national activities that help with mourning for those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrating those who survived and connecting those who are working to end violence.

Vigil—A candlelight vigil will be held Monday, October 19th in Niceville across from City Hall 208 N. Parton Drive at 6:00 p.m. Please join our staff and board members as we honor the voices of individuals who have been touched by domestic violence.

The Clothesline Project—Stop by the Northwest Florida Regional Airport to see a variety of adult, child and baby t-shirts of various colors and designs that serve a reflection of people's experiences with domestic violence. The project allows each victim to tell her story in a unique way with words or artwork. Shelter House is excited to be part of this social change project. For more information about the Clothesline Project visit www.clotheslineproject.org.

Executive Director's Report

There are so many exciting things happening at the agency this fall!

Shelter House and Bridgeway received a \$400,000 Office of Violence Against Women Recovery Act Transitional Housing Grant! With this grant we will be able to provide our women with victim-centered transitional housing services and related support services that move women into permanent housing. It will allow us to provide more services that promote self-sufficiency which are critical to creating a violence-free life.

On another note, Shelter House received an award from Governor Charlie Crist. We were presented with the governor's "Promote Peace, Prevent Domestic Violence Annual Award" for our successful efforts with Primary Prevention in Okaloosa and Walton Counties. I am thrilled that Shelter

House has been recognized for all the hard work the Prevention Team (Amy Hanes, Kristin Atkins, Aimee Tabb, Emily Snipes and the DVCC Prevention Committee) has put into the program. I am so proud that Shelter House is being looked at as prevention role models for the entire state. We are doing amazing things in our community and it is being noticed at a state level!

DVAM has already taken off with our Clothesline Project on display at the Northwest Florida Regional Airport. I encourage everyone to stop by the airport during the month of October to see the colorful and thought-provoking display.

After 18 months of talking about beginning Economic Empowerment classes, the day has come for Shelter House to start the program thanks to a grant from Allstate. The first workshop will

start at the end of October and the community workshops will start in spring. We are calling the program Women and Money! (WAM!) I am so proud that we are going to be able to offer this workshop to the women we serve and the local community. Understanding money equals power and we are going to make our community more powerful.

The Shelter House Board, staff and volunteers completed another successful yard sale. They worked tirelessly for the event and even though we were rained on the event was a success. I can not express how grateful I am to have such wonderful support from the community.

As you can see we have a busy road ahead of us. I look forward to reporting back to you in the spring and even share some of our success stories.

- Michelle

Here's How You Can Help!

November 5-8— Taste of THE Beach

November 22— Evening of Giving

December 3— Volunteer Appreciation Potluck

January 29, 2010— Howl at the Moon fundraising event

March 20, 2010—The 7th annual Purple Passion Gala and Auction

April 23-24, 2010—Wine and Dine in Paradise

For those who can volunteer now, we need help in the following:

Weekly - Helping us sort cell phones for our cell phone campaign.

Weekly- Helping us sort food donations, rotate new items and check expiration dates on all perishables.

Monthly—Fundraising committee members

Monthly—Shelter Landscape Days (the third Friday of every month).

If you have never volunteered at the Shelter house but would like to start, our next volunteer orientation is on January 7, at 5:30 PM.

Your volunteering for these projects help us aid women and children in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Shelter House would like to thank you in advance for donating your time on their behalf. If you have any questions or will like to come volunteer do not hesitate to call (850)243-1201 or email info@shelterhousenwfl.org.

Save The Date

Shelter House will host the seventh annual Purple Passion Gala and Silent Auction, our largest fundraising event of the year, March 20, 2010. Our volunteer fundraising committee is forming now. If you are interested, call (850) 243-1201 or email info@shelterhousenwfl.org.

Evening of Giving

Tickets are on sale for Evening of Giving at Silver Sands Outlets, Sun. Nov. 22. The event will be held 3—8 p.m. Tickets are on sale for \$5 and can be picked up at our administration office or purchased from board members. Please join us for this event to spread awareness about Shelter House.

Taste of THE Beach

Shelter House is proud to be a charity recipient of Taste of THE Beach and charity auction as it returns to the Gulf Coast November 5—8. For full list of events, to purchase tickets or for any additional information you can call (850) 267-0683 or visit www.tasteofthebeachfla.com/Events.aspx.

Thank You, Target!

Shelter House was the recipient of a Family Violence Prevention Grant through the Target Foundation. This grant of \$2,500 is awarded to nonprofit organizations that prevent family violence. Shelter House is honored to receive such a grant and thanks Target!

Getting to Know Board Member Karen Lauer

Shelter House would like to introduce board fundraising chair, Mrs. Karen Lauer. She was asked to come back as fundraising chair for Shelter House in May after resigning for a short time due to time restraints a year ago.

Prior to working with Shelter House, Karen was involved in volunteer work for non-profit organizations such as the Heart Association, the Cancer Association and the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, but her heart lies with Shelter House.

"I am a survivor of domestic violence. My ex-husband was an alcoholic and verbally abused me for years and then one day it turned to physical abuse and he hit me in front of my daughter. There was no place like Shelter House for my daughter and me to go. Shelter House is very important to me and our community," said Karen.

Karen has been living in the Fort Walton Beach area since 1976. She received her Bachelors degree at Syracuse University, her Masters in Counseling from

Troy University and her second Masters in Education from University of West Florida.

"My greatest accomplishment at Shelter House thus far is being part of the search committee that found Michelle Sperzel, Shelter House Executive Director," said Karen.

Karen's goals for Shelter House are to establish a larger donor program and help expand visibility through Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Shelter House Introduces WAM!

Women and Money! (WAM!) is a phrase that will become synonymous with Shelter House this spring. A grant from the Allstate Foundation will allow Shelter House to host four community WAM! workshops and two intensive workshops with Shelter House women. Some of our community partners will co-facilitate these workshops. Workshop topics will include: basic finances, understanding credit and loans, types

of insurance, taxes, budgeting and saving. Shelter House is pleased to be a part of this amazing program because understanding money gives a woman more power to control her life and her future. The community classes are free and will begin in January. Please check our website and eBlasts for dates and times. Thank you to the Allstate Foundation for making this possible.

We need e-mail addresses!

In the near future, we will be relying more on email to deliver updates and news about Shelter House. Please contact Gili at info@shelterhousenwfl.org or (850) 243-1201 with your email address so you can be added to the list and receive monthly eBlasts in your inbox! Also, keep us in the loop of any change of addresses you may have.

The Results Are In!

Purses with a Purpose— Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northwest Florida and Shelter House recently joined forces to raise funds for the two local nonprofit organizations with Purses for a Purpose. The event was held at Silver Sands Outlets and raised more than \$4,000 through the auction and sale of donated new and "gently used" designer bags. We are excited to announce that this event will be put on again in May 2010 due to the successful turnout!



Michelle Sperzel, Devero Bogart & Kim Henderson

Yoga Mala— With 50 people in attendance, this year's event raised \$215 from profits made from shirt sales and love donations.

United Way Day of Caring—Twenty-four volunteers from four different local companies came out to help Shelter House organize their second annual yard sale and help out with yard work at the shelter. Shelter House would like to say thank you to all of those who came out to help.



United Way volunteers

Shelter House Yard Sale— Our second yard sale at Central Park in Uptown Station was Saturday, September 19. Although it was a rainy day, the yard sale still raised \$3,600. Thank you to all those who donated their items, volunteers that donated their time and stuck it out through the rain, and a big



thank you to all of those who came out to support Shelter House. All leftover items were donated to Goodwill for the Good Samaritan Program. This program allows us to receive vouchers to give to women receiving services so they can purchase needed items from Goodwill.

Regatta Bay Golf Tournament and Shelter House Charity Event— On September 20th Regatta Bay residents hosted their sixth annual Regatta Bay Shelter House Golf Tournament and generously donated all proceeds to Shelter House. The event raised over \$9,500 for the fight against domestic violence. Shelter House would like to thank Dianne and Mike Carpenter of Regatta Bay for hosting the event year after year, those who donated items for the auction, and those who participated.



P.O. Box 220
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

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HOLIDAY WISH LIST

This Holiday Season, in following with our empowerment based philosophy, we are requesting that donors donate gift cards. Gift cards alleviate some of the space challenges we face and allows us to better serve the women and children. Department store cards make women feel empowered by the fact that they can go shopping for their children's presents themselves and get exactly what they want. Grocery store cards give the women the chance to buy food for their family so they may have a holiday dinner together, and gas cards give them the option to travel to spend the holiday season with their families.

We would also like to extend the opportunity to our donors to help the women and children in our community enjoy a nice holiday meal, so we are now accepting donations to create a traditional meal for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Items needed:

Canned vegetables
Turkey/Ham
Gravy mixes
Dry mashed potato mix
Canned pumpkin pie filling
Pie crusts

Drop donations at our Administration Office:
102 Buck Drive
Fort Walton Beach, FL

For the complete wish list please visit our website at www.shelterhousenwfl.org or call 243-1201.

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