



# In Touch

Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition

2nd Quarter 2012

*It isn't  
enough to  
talk about  
peace.  
One must  
work at it.*  
-Eleanor  
Roosevelt

## Coalition Hosts National Domestic Violence Hotline and National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

On May 9-11, The Coalition hosted trainers from the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline (NTDAH), Melissa Kaufmann and Rebecca Donley. Melissa and Rebecca provided a three day "train-the-trainer" conference for advocates from local domestic violence/sexual assault programs. Several Coalition staff also attended the training.

This training was a pilot training created by the NDVH and NTDAH. The training was condensed from a five day training that they provide to new staff and volunteers for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline.

Some of the topics included:

- ⌘ Sharing tools on serving those with mental health issues,
- ⌘ Sexual violence (including reproductive coercion and intimate partner sexual violence),
- ⌘ Working with teen callers,
- ⌘ Discussing "off target" callers who don't fit our services,
- ⌘ Disengagement techniques,
- ⌘ Fielding calls from male abusers who are misusing the line,
- ⌘ Using strategic questions,
- ⌘ Crisis Intervention Model for answering crisis line calls, and
- ⌘ Advocate self-care and healing from secondary trauma.

The Coalition was excited to serve as the pilot site and to bring this great training to Nebraska.

### In this issue:

<i>Step Up, Speak Out: Prevention Update</i>	2
<i>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day; VINE</i>	3
<i>Legislative Update: Protection Orders</i>	4
<i>Local Communities Support Work to End Violence</i>	5
<i>Nebraska's Network of DV/SA Programs: Program Updates</i>	6
<i>What's New at the Coalition</i>	7
<i>Mark Your Calendar</i>	8



Left Photo: Melissa facilitates an activity during the training.

Right Photo (above): Michelle, NDVSAC; Rebecca, NDVH/NTDAH; Melissa NDVH/NTDAH; Lynne, NDVSAC.

## Step Up! Speak Out! - Prevention Efforts in Nebraska

The Coalition recently hired a new Prevention Coordinator, Rachel West.

Rachel has a Master's Degree in Sociology from University of Nebraska -Lincoln, and a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Women's Studies, also from UNL. Her previous position was a Program Specialist for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in the Comprehensive Quality Improvement/Operations Division of Children and Family Services. Rachel had been with the DHHS since 2007.

Prior to that time, Rachel was employed at the Center for Effective Public Policy in Maryland. She designed and implemented national training programs offered under the Center for Sex Offender Management project, including training events and curricula. She also provided technical assistance on a national level to the grantees of the Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management Grant program.

Rachel has an in-depth understanding of prevention in the area of sexual assault, and was employed at the Coalition from 2001 to 2004. She left her position with the Coalition to become a full time student working on her Master's Degree. Rachel held the Sexual Violence Program Coordinator position, as well as the Sexual Assault Program Assistant position. Rachel has experience with providing direct services, having worked at the Friendship Home before joining the Coalition staff.

One of the primary projects of the Prevention Coordinator is the implementation of the statewide sexual violence prevention plan. This plan was created in conjunction with Sexual Violence Prevention Advisory Committee (SVPAC) and focuses on young people ages 11-17 years. The plan includes seven recommended goals for sexual violence prevention:

1. To improve and expand capacity for effective educational programming about healthy relationships.
2. To promote healthy relationship norms and behaviors for Nebraska youth.
3. To decrease social norms that promote a general tolerance of sexual violence among Nebraskan youth, especially in rural areas and underserved populations.
4. To increase accuracy and availability of statewide and local data sources providing information on perpetrators of sexual violence, victims of sexual violence, and attitudes regarding sexual violence.
5. To improve and expand capacity for effective educational programming about healthy relationships.
6. To increase public and community awareness about the prevalence and impact of sexual violence.
7. To increase public and community awareness about available state and local resources and tools promoting the primary prevention of sexual violence.

The plan also includes recommendations for school-based education strategies suited to prevention efforts among teens and young adults.

For more information about the statewide sexual violence prevention plan, primary prevention in general, or other prevention related topics, contact Rachel at [rachelw@ndvsac.org](mailto:rachelw@ndvsac.org) or 402-476-6256.

## World Elder Abuse Awareness Day - June 15



Each year June 15th is recognized internationally as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. There are many types of elder abuse, including domestic and sexual violence against older adults.

The Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services has a variety of materials available to raise awareness and support for abused older adults and vulnerable adults. These include a brochure on abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults; a Stop Elder Abuse bookmark; and wallet cards with warning signs and information about the statewide vulnerable adult reporting hotline (1-800-652-1999).

If you notice warning signs of elder abuse, speak up! Warning signs include:

- S**udden changes in behavior or finances
- P**hysical injuries, dehydration, or malnourishment
- E**xtrême withdrawal, depression, or anxiety
- A**bsence of basic care or necessities
- K**ept away from others
- U**nsanitary living conditions
- P**ersonal items missing

The Coalition also has a brochure available, *Domestic Violence in Later Life*. It is available in both English and Spanish. Another popular resource for older communities is the brochure *What Every Congregation Needs to Know About Domestic Violence*, available in English and Spanish. Publications are provided free of charge.

For more information about abuse of older adults, contact the local DHHS office, local Area Agency on Aging, or the local domestic violence/sexual assault program. Information can also be obtained from the Coalition, 402-476-6256 or michellez@ndvsac.org.

## VINE Materials Available

The Coalition is the clearinghouse for materials related to the VINE program in Nebraska. VINE signifies Victim Information and Notification Everyday. This program provides a valuable resource to victims of crime, including survivors of domestic & sexual violence.

A variety of publications are available, including:

- ▶ Victims Have the Right to Know/VINE Brochure,
- ▶ Victims Have the Right to Know/VINE Tear Off Pads, and
- ▶ Victims Have the Right to Know/VINE Posters.

Large quantities of these items are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Also available, in limited quantities, are pens, personal medical kits and brochure display stands. These are available while quantities last.

To request materials, call the Coalition at 402-476-6256 or email Michelle (michellez@ndvsac.org) or Lili (lilio@ndvsac.org). For more information about VINE, visit the Nebraska Crime Commission's website at [www.ncc.state.ne.us/services\\_programs/vine.htm](http://www.ncc.state.ne.us/services_programs/vine.htm)

## Legislative Update - Protection Orders



Photo Credit:  
Nebraska  
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Information Office

During the last few years the Supreme Court of Nebraska and the Court of Appeals of Nebraska have had to make tough decisions in cases involving Nebraska's protection orders. An appellate court will consider a number of factors when it reviews a case. These factors include, among other things, the plain meaning of the words used in the statute; the legislative history; the legislative intent; and public policy. The court is to rely on the plain meaning of the statute whenever possible.

State Senator Amanda McGill recognized a need to review Nebraska's protection order laws as the plain meaning of the statutes in question was interpreted by the courts in such a way as to contradict the original legislative intent and public policy concern behind these laws. She introduced LB 310 in 2011 to try to correct the problems identified up to that point by the courts. While LB 310 was pending, additional court opinions were released and additional changes were recognized leading Senator McGill to introduce LB 920 in 2012.

During the legislative session senators debated and ultimately amended parts of LB 920 into LB 310. LB 310 was passed and signed into law by Governor Heineman. The law will take effect three months from the close of session.

As passed, LB 310 amends Nebraska's protection order laws in the following ways:

- ▶ A respondent to either a harassment protection order or a domestic abuse protection order will not need to be served with the final order if the respondent was present at a hearing on the application for a protection order and the order is not dismissed.
- ▶ The definition of domestic abuse found in 42-903(b) was changed to remove language regarding physical menace and imminent bodily injury. The new definition for domestic abuse will read "placing, by means of a credible threat, another person in fear of bodily injury." Senators then went on to define "credible threat" for purpose of domestic abuse. Among other things this definition recognizes that a credible threat can be made even when the respondent to the protection order is incarcerated.
- ▶ A petitioner has an additional option of available relief. Now a petitioner can specifically ask that the respondent be prohibited from possessing or purchasing a firearm and the court can specifically grant that request.
- ▶ The filing of a request for a domestic abuse protection order does not automatically require the court to schedule a hearing. The respondent or the petitioner can request that a hearing on the protection order be held. The respondent's request for a hearing must be filed within 5 days of service. A judge can also schedule a hearing on the application if the judge feels a hearing is needed.

The Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation is working to update the standardized forms to ensure that they will be available for use by the time the changes go into effect.

For more information about the legislative changes related to protection order, or for information related to other legislative issues, contact Robert at the Coalition, [roberts@ndvsac.org](mailto:roberts@ndvsac.org) or 402-476-6256.

## Local Communities Provide Support to Programs

Domestic violence/sexual assault programs depend on the generosity of local communities for volunteer assistance as well as financial support. Programs are grateful for the support provided to raise awareness, improve shelter facilities, and provide financial resources to fund services for survivors. Here are just some of the recent ways that communities are making a difference.

**Auburn Area:** Peru State College is in the process of building a new community services building. They have decided to dedicate an office space for Project Response. This will help to increase the services and support available on campus.

**Ogallala Area:** Local youth participated in a poster contest sponsored by the Sandhills Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP). The event was part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Another community member organized a "Pay It Forward" raffle to raise money for SCIP.

**Lexington Area:** The United Methodist Church selected the Parent-Child Center for a service project. They provided volunteers for renovations in the shelter (i.e. removing wallpaper, painting).

**Lincoln:** Friendship Home was the recipient of StarTran's "Stuff the Bus" event for the 13th year in a row. Community members filled local buses with donated items to be used by Friendship Home.

During Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April), Voices of Hope, held a bowl-a-thon to "strike out sexual assault." Although the primary focus of the day was about collaboration and raising awareness, approx. \$2,000 was raised.

**Norfolk Area:** Positive Painters, a group of youth from Elkhorn Valley School, held an art auction and created original artwork to be sold. Other local artists also donated items. Their project received \$1,000 from the Northeast Nebraska Philanthropy Council. Between the grant and the art auction, Positive Painters raised \$2,129 as a donation for Bright Horizons.

**Broken Bow:** Healing Hearts & Families (HHF) was involved with a chili cook-off and auction. The event raised \$8,000, and HHF received a portion of the proceeds. The community also held a food drive for local social service organizations. Each team was asked to pick a charity and then match the amount of pounds donated with a financial contribution. HHF received \$800 from this event.

**Fairbury Area:** Hope Crisis Center held their annual 5K Walk/Run for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, followed by a Pancake Feed. They raised \$14,000 through the donations and contributions to the event.

**North Platte:** The Rape/Domestic Abuse Program recently received a \$25,000 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation. A local business man challenged other business to match the amount. This raised an additional \$75,000 for R/DAP. Most of the funds will be used for shelter renovations.

**Kearney Area:** The Safe Center held its 8th Annual Purse Auction. Over 530 people attend the event this year, and \$52,000 was raised.

Contact the domestic violence/sexual assault program in your area to get involved and/or to make a donation. If you are not familiar with your local program, visit [www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org).

## Program News

### Local Advocate Receives National Award



Marla Sohl, with the Visionary Voice award.

Each year the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) accepts nominations from state Coalitions for an award that is distributed during National Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April). This award, now called the Visionary Voice Award, is given to people who have provided significant contributions to ending sexual violence and promoting safe, healthy individuals and communities.

**Marla Sohl**, Sexual Assault Services Coordinator with Voices of Hope in Lincoln, was selected to receive one of these awards. Marcee, the Executive Director of Voices of Hope, states "Marla is central to keeping victims' voices at the forefront in the local community and beyond." To read more about Marla's nomination, visit the Coalition's website at [www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org). Congratulations, Marla!

### Rape/Domestic Abuse Program Welcomes New Director



Joni Matson,  
R/DAP

**Joni Matson** is the new Executive Director of the Rape/Domestic Abuse Program (R/DAP) in North Platte. Joni began as the Executive Director at the end of April. However, she has been with the program for several years in a variety of advocacy roles. Most recently she served as the Shelter Manager.

Jeanie Gilbert, the former Executive Director, recently retired. The Coalition thanks Jeanie for her years of service to R/DAP and welcomes Joni as the Executive Director.

### Hope Crisis Center Adds Victim Witness Assistance Program

Seward County recently approached the **Hope Crisis Center** (HCC) and asked HCC to be the host agency for the Victim Witness Assistance program for that county. Victim Assistance Programs (also called Victim Witness Units) work with victims of crimes to assist them through the court process and make referrals to other services. Staff of Victim Assistance Programs also act as a liaison between victims and departments within the justice system.

In Seward County, the majority of the cases utilizing the Victim Assistance Program are related to domestic violence. In April the Hope Crisis Center added a staff person to assume these duties.

### WCA Staff Selected for Advocacy Learning Center

Four people from the **Women's Center for Advancement** (WCA) in Omaha have been selected to participate in the next session of the Advocacy Learning Center sponsored by Praxis International.

The goal of the Advocacy Learning Center is to strengthen the core activities, skills, principles, and knowledge used by advocates working in all areas of violence against women. The Advocacy Learning Center is an 18-month experiential course created to examine the vision, identify the principles and knowledge, and practice the skills and qualities that make advocacy a powerful force in the movement to end violence against women.

## What's New at the Coalition?

### Coalition Welcomes New Staff

Three new staff members have joined the Coalition staff during the past several months.

**David James:** David joined the Coalition in April as the Bookkeeper. David has his Bachelor's Degree from UNL in Accounting, and he earned his CPA in the state of Washington. He has over ten years in the professional field of accounting. His most recent position was with the State of Nebraska. David works closely with Lynne, the Coalition's Executive Director, to oversee the budget, grants, and ensure the proper financial controls are in place for the organization. His email address is davidj@ndvsac.org.

**Lili Obakpor:** Lili joined the Coalition in April as the Bilingual Administrative Coordinator. Prior to joining the Coalition Lili was employed with Norfolk Public Schools as a Home/School Liaison and worked with migrant students and families. Lili is fluent in English and Spanish. In addition to her other duties, Lili assists with the immigration petitions and the Linea de Crisis (statewide hotline in Spanish). Her email address is lilio@ndvsac.org.

**Rachel West:** Rachel joined the Coalition in May as the Prevention Coordinator. Rachel has a Masters Degree in Sociology. Her most recent position was as a Program Specialist with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in the Comprehensive Quality Improvement/Operations Division of Children and Family Services. Prior to that time, Rachel was employed at the Center for Effective Public Policy in Maryland. (For more about Rachel, go to page two.) Her email address is rachelw@ndvsac.org.

The Coalition also has an internal transition among positions. The Coalition reinstated the Training and Resource Coordinator position. **Michelle Zinke** has moved back into this position, having held it for several years. Prior to this transition, Michelle served as the Sexual Violence Program Coordinator. She has a Master's Degree in Leadership and has been with the Coalition for nearly twelve years.

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### New Office Space



At the beginning of April the Coalition moved into new office space in the Cherry Hill building, located at the corner of 84th Street and Cherry Hill Boulevard (1 block south of O Street).

The new location better meets the Coalition's needs. It includes space for staff offices, the lending library, and a training room that can seat 30-35 people.

Feel free to stop by and see the new space!

**NDVSAC**  
245 S. 84th Street, Suite 200  
Lincoln, NE 68510  
402-476-6256  
[www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org)



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Sexual Assault Coalition  
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***Please Note Our New Address!***



NDVSAC is a proud member agency of the  
Community Services Fund. Learn more at:  
[www.communityservicesfund.org](http://www.communityservicesfund.org)

### 2012 NDVSAC Board of Directors

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Francine McKenzie, North Platte  
Jamie Snyder, Columbus  
Hilary Wasserburger, Gering

## **Mark Your Calendar**

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **June 2012**

- 14 Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Program Sharing & Training Day, Grand Island, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256
- 15 Batterer Intervention Program Sharing Day, Grand Island, Family Violence Council, 402-489-9292

#### **July 2012**

- 13 Legal Advocacy: Protection Orders and Firearms, Lincoln, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256
- 17 Working with Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse, Kearney, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256
- 18 Working with Male Survivors of Violence Program Sharing & Training Day, Kearney, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256
- 23-25 National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and National Conference on Men and Masculinity, Denver, NCADV, [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)
- 25 NDVSAC Board Meeting, Lincoln, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256
- 26-27 Directors Days, Lincoln, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256

#### **August 2012**

- 17 Legal Advocacy: Economic Issues & Housing, Grand Island or Kearney, NDVSAC, 402-476-6256