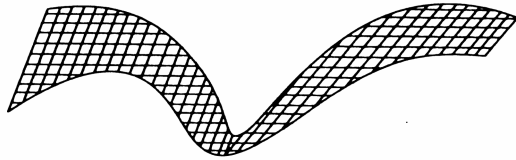


The Network for Women's Lives



Fall 2007

THE SAFETY NET

*A non-profit volunteer organization of citizens
dedicated to the eradication of domestic violence.*

Preventing Domestic Violence Through Education

The Network for Women's Lives (NWL) helps prevent domestic violence through education and outreach programs. This past year, NWL sponsored events that were attended by hundreds of people, including a production of *The Vagina Monologues*, which was an enjoyable way to learn new perspectives on women's lives. NWL also actively reaches into local schools to educate our youth about the causes, effects, and prevention of domestic violence. These events are possible only with the help of dedicated volunteers, to whom the NWL gives a warm and appreciative thank you.

The Cycle of Domestic Violence — A New View

Domestic violence may seem unpredictable, simply an outburst related just to the moment and to the circumstances in the lives of the people involved. In fact, however, domestic violence follows a typical pattern no matter when it occurs or who is involved. The pattern, or cycle, repeats. Each time the level of violence may increase. At every stage in the cycle, the abuser is working to control and further isolate his victim.

Understanding the cycle of violence and the thinking of the abuser helps survivors recognize that they truly are not to blame for the violence they have suffered and that the abuser is the one responsible.

The well-known Tension Building/Explosion Model of the cycle of domestic violence was developed in 1979 and has been used to describe what happens in the lives

of domestic abuse victims. This model involves three stages of abuse.

- **Tension Building Phase**

During the tension building phase the abuser becomes more temperamental and critical of the victim. As the tension escalates, the victim feels as if she were "walking on eggshells". The victim may try to placate the abuser to prevent the abuse.

- **Acute Explosive Phase**

The abuser verbally or physically attacks the victim. This is much more intense than during the tension building phase and may increase in intensity with each explosive phase.

- **The Honeymoon Phase**

The batterer expresses remorse over his behavior and promises to change. The batterer is charming and may offer gifts such as flowers, jewelry, perfume and candy.

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue

- The Cycle of Domestic Violence—A New View
- NWL School Educational Activities
- NWL Calendar of Events
- Support Group for Women With Controlling Partners
- World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse
- Plan Now for The Vagina Monologues
- Silent Vigil
- Ten Things Men Can Do to Prevent Gender Violence

(Continued from page 1)

An alternative view of the cycle of violence presents six distinct stages that an abuser goes through during his cycle of violence: the set-up, the abuse, the abuser's feelings of "guilt" and his fear of reprisal, his rationalization, his shift to non-abusive and charming behavior, and his fantasies and plans for the next time he will abuse.

- **Abuse**

An abuser can inflict emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, economic, and social pain onto his victim. In an abusive relationship, the abuser may use a number a tactics to maintain control over his partner.

- **Guilt**

A non-abusive person experiences guilt very differently than an abusive person. A non-abusive person may feel guilty about how she has impacted the life of the person they harmed (victim-directed guilt). An abuser experiences self-directed guilt. He does not feel guilty or sorry for hurting his victim. He may apologize for his behavior, but his apology is designed so that he will not face consequences or be held accountable. The goal of the guilt stage is to reassure himself that he will not be caught or face consequences.

- **Rationalization**

The abuser makes excuses and blames the victim for his behavior. Common excuses usually revolve around the abuser being intoxicated or abused as a child. However, alcohol use and being abused as a child does not cause the abuser to be violent. Instead, the abuser will focus on the victim's behavior. For example, "If you had the house cleaned, I wouldn't have had to hit you," or, "If you had cooked dinner on time, I wouldn't have had to hit you." The goal of this stage is to abdicate responsibility for his behavior.

- **"Normal" Behavior**

During this stage, the abuser may use different tactics to achieve his goal to regain power over the victim. The abuser may act as though nothing happened, everything is normal. This often confuses victims, as they do not understand how he could pretend nothing happened.

If the victim has visible injuries, she will have to explain how she got the injuries in a way that does not implicate the abuser. This is designed to maintain the appearance of normalcy of the relationship. The goal is to keep the victim in the relationship and present the relationship as normal.

Another tactic an abuser may use after he has chosen to be violent is to become the thoughtful, charming, loyal, and kind person with whom the victim fell in love. He may take her out to dinner, buy her flowers and

convince her he will change. This can be a huge incentive for women to stay or return to the abuser because they believe that this time he will change.

- **Fantasy and Planning**

Abuse is planned. In the initial stages, an abuser fantasizes or has a mental picture of the next time he will abuse the victim. During the fantasy and planning stage, the abuser is the actor, producer, director, and the star.

The abuser experiences his power from activating the fantasy. The planning phase details more specifically what the abuser will need to have and to do in order to abuse his partner.

Abusers may spend minutes, hours, or days fantasizing about what the victim has done "wrong" and how he is going to make her "pay." Often he will fantasize she is having an affair. Most abused women do not have the time, energy, or interest in having an affair. However, it is the most common accusation, because she can never prove she is not having an affair.

- **Set-up**

This is when the abuser puts his plan into action. He sets the victim up as being the one responsible for his abusive actions.

The Full Cycle

Here is an example of the cycle of violence through all its phases.

A man abuses his partner. After he hits her, he experiences self-directed guilt. He says, "I'm sorry for hurting you." What he does not say is, "Because I might get caught."

He then rationalizes his behavior by saying that his partner is having an affair with someone else. He tells her "If you weren't such a worthless whore I wouldn't have to hit you". He then acts contrite, reassuring her that he will not hurt her again.

He then fantasizes and reflects on past abuse and how he will hurt her again. He plans on telling her to go to the store to get some groceries. What he withholds from her is that she has a certain amount of time to do the shopping. When she is held up in traffic and is a few minutes late, he feels completely justified in assaulting her because "you're having an affair with the store clerk". He has just set her up.

A Final Thought

The Network for Women's Lives would like to acknowledge that men also can be victims of domestic abuse. This cycle of abuse affects men who are victims too.

Network for Women's Lives School Educational Activities

The goal of the Network for Women's Lives (NWL) is to help prevent domestic violence through education, safety, and respect for all. The primary communities in which the NWL extends its educational work are Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln, Maynard, and Stow. The following report provides information about some of the activities that the NWL sponsored in these schools and the volunteers who made these activities possible during 2006-2007.

Acton-Boxborough Schools

With thanks to Liza Cormier and Joan Rubin-Deutsch for being volunteer/parent liaison, the NWL provided an evening performance on June 4 of **The Yellow Dress**, a play that describes the effects of teen domestic violence. The performance was attended by an attentive and interested student group, some of them being peer leaders who were there to lead the student discussion. Meredith Trueblood, from **Rape Crisis Center**, was also there with information/brochures and student support if needed.

Joan Rubin-Deutsch, LICSW, helped secure a \$3000 grant from Acton's **Danny's Place** to print the booklet that she authored, **Love Is Not Supposed to Hurt**, that will be distributed to the Acton schools.

Also active in the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School (ABRHS) is the **Mentors in Violence Program (MVP)**. Lindsay Rosenman, high school guidance counselor, received NWL funding to train a new group of students this past spring to make presentations in health classes in the R.J. Grey Junior High School and during the Junior High's Project Wellness Day in March. Shirley Ormsby is the NWL liaison to the **Acton-Boxborough Coalition For Healthy Youth (ABCHY)**.

Liza Cormier worked with Carolyn Imperato, Health Coordinator for ABRHS, to develop **anti-bullying and healthy relationship programs** for the next school year. Both Liza and Pam Johnson, chair of the NWL Education Committee, attended United Way grant review sessions to explain these programs.

Liza Cormier also has been instrumental in forming the community **AB Coalition for Healthy Youth**, and she is a member of its steering committee.

Bedford Schools

Thanks to Nancy Asbedian and Carla Baer, both NWL volunteers, for being the NWL liaisons to the Bedford schools. The Bedford High School hosted an

in-school April 5 presentation of **The Yellow Dress** for 300 students. Students participated in a follow-up discussion after the performance.

The NWL funded the production of the **Golden Rule Quilt** in the Lane Elementary School. The Golden Rule program lets students develop their own guiding rules for respecting others' feelings, property, opinions, and personal space, which culminated in a student-designed quilt to display these rules. Carla Baer has continued discussion with the Bedford Middle School to have a violence education program offered to students during the 2007-2008 school year.

NWL received a \$250 **Social Action Award** for domestic violence school education from the First Parish Unitarian Church in Bedford for a grant written by Pam Johnson.

Concord-Carlisle Schools

The Carlisle elementary schools will continue during 2007-2008 with **The Second Step** program, which the NWL initiated. The Second Step program is a violence prevention curriculum that teaches social and emotional skills, focusing on empathy, impulse control, problem solving, and anger management.

Many thanks go to Mary Jane Nichols and Anne Rarich, who are NWL Board members and the liaisons in the Concord and Carlisle schools. The NWL continues to work closely with Kathy Bowen, health coordinator. The NWL has suggested and presented many program opportunities to her, which are still being considered for implementation in the Concord and Carlisle schools.

In the fall 2006 the NWL partially funded the **STEP program** for students "at risk" who could not complete a traditional program of studies and would not have graduated without involvement in this program.

The NWL also arranged for and funded the sixth grade presentation of **Doing the Right Thing** in November, and the eighth grade presentation of **The Improbable Players** in March. These presentations focus on relationship violence in an age appropriate dramatic performance. The students completed evaluation surveys on both events.

Anne Rarich championed our participation and partial funding for **Challenge Day**, which was held for two days in April and May at the Concord-Carlisle High School. Challenge Day presents a three-step process that leaves each participant feeling safe, loved, and celebrated. Anne will pursue the annual continuation of this program.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

For the fourth year, the NWL participated in the **Health Week** event that occurs in the high school. In February the NWL joined with **The Concord Round Table** and **Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Services** (DVVAP) to sponsor a very **popular contest** for the high school students about their knowledge of domestic violence warning signs, with prizes awarded for correct answers. The prizes were pens inscribed with "Love Is Not Supposed to Hurt".

The NWL also funded the printing of **Love Is Not Supposed to Hurt** booklets, which were distributed to contest attendees and in the high school health classes.

Maynard Schools

Mary Jane Nichols and Pam Johnson continue to meet with guidance counselors in the Maynard schools to promote domestic violence educational programs for students. The NWL sponsored **The Yellow Dress** play in an all-school performance in December. After meeting with the Maynard superintendent of schools and high school principal, the NWL was able to have the Maynard High School host its annual production of **The Vagina Monologues**. Many Maynard community leaders were involved with this event. Korey Barkley, a Maynard guidance counselor, has also agreed to attend the **Mentors in Violence Program** (MVP) training at Northeastern University. Kathy intends to involve students in this program.

Stow Schools

Thanks to Sue Allaire, NWL liaison to the Stow schools, for her dedicated work on violence prevention's behalf. Sue requested and received grants from the NWL that have provided for **The Responsive Classroom** in the Pompositicut Elementary School and the Center Elementary School, and anti-bullying and conflict resolution video material from the **Search Institute** for the Hale Middle School.

Support Groups for Women With Controlling Partners

The Network for Women's Lives helps sponsor a twelve-week support group for women with controlling partners. These groups encourage women to achieve safety and self-care, to understand the insidious and coercive behaviors of the abuser, and how this control affects their lives. Issues of shame, loss, and anger are addressed within a safe environment with other women in similar situations. For information, call Carol Lambert, LICSW, 978-369-0259 or 617-484-2272.

Please Help the Network for Women's Lives

Name _____ Tel. (home) _____
Address _____ Tel. (work) _____
Email: _____

I can help in the following areas:

Education Special Projects Membership Publicity
 Newsletter Fundraising Grant writing Other

I support the Network at the following level :

Individual \$25 _____ Family \$50 _____ Group/Agency \$75 _____ Senior/Student \$5 _____

To help even more, I'm sending an additional donation of \$ _____

Please send your check made out to:

Network for Women's Lives ♦ P.O. Box 276 ♦ Concord, MA 01742

Donations are tax deductible.

Domestic Violence Prevention Dates of Interest

- September 10** Network for Women's Lives Board meeting
- September 15** Bedford Day, 10:00 am—2:00 pm
- September 18** Rachel's Box Project Celebration, 5:30—6:30 pm, Trinitarian Congregational Church, 54 Walden St., Concord
- October 2** O'Naturals Café Community Night, 4:00—8:00 pm, 149 Great Road, Acton
- October 4** "How Dangerous Is the Internet for Our Youth: Caught in the Web," Roundtable Internet Safety Panel with Middlesex District Attorney, 7:00—9:00 pm, Alcott School, Concord
- October 6** MaynardFest, 9:00 am—12:00 pm
- October 11** Silent Vigil, 6:30 pm, West Acton
- October 13** West Acton Oktoberfest, 9:00 am— 3:00 pm
- October 19** "A Forum to Build Community Ties," 10:00 am—3:00 pm, Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 1276 Main Street, Concord
- October 24** "Cyber-bullying," presented by Violence Prevention Coalition of Bedford, with speaker Elizabeth Englander, 7:30—9:30 pm, John Glenn Middle School, Bedford
- November 4, 18** Auditions for "The Vagina Monologues," see <http://www.networkforwomenslives.org> for time and place
- November 12** Network for Women's Lives Board meeting
- November 19** World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse, with speaker Joan Rubin-Deutsch, 7:00 pm, Trinitarian Congregational Church, 54 Walden St., Concord

The Network holds monthly board meetings on the first Monday of the month. All are welcome. Volunteers, members, and other interested persons are encouraged to attend to help work on projects and carry our mission of education throughout the community. For information about board meeting times and locations, as well as other events, please refer to our web site: <http://www.networkforwomenslives.org> Or contact us at: info@networkforwomenslives.org.

**Please support
The Network for Women's Lives!**

Tuesday, October 2nd

4 - 8 pm at

O'Naturals Café

149 Great Rd. Acton

(near Trader Joe's)

*O'Naturals will donate 10%
of all sales that evening to NWL!
Bring your family and friends!*

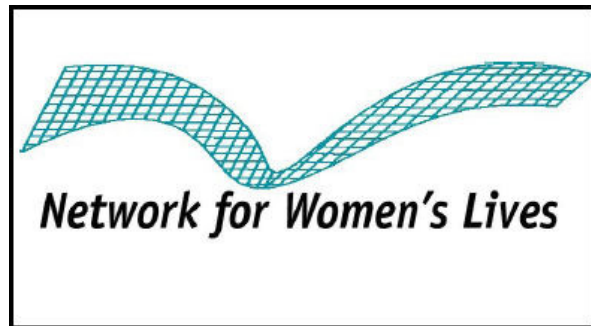
www.networkforwomenslives.org

19 November – World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse©

The Network for Women's Lives is honored to be able to participate in the 2007 World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse by offering to the public a presentation by Joan Rubin-Deutsch, LICSW, entitled "Lost Childhoods and Broken Dreams: the Legacy of Domestic Violence" to be held on November 19 at 7:00 pm at the Trinitarian Congregational Church, 54 Walden Street, Concord. This community outreach program will address the long-term effects of growing up in a home where domestic violence occurred. The focus of this talk will be on identifying the psychic wounds around trust, intimacy and self-esteem that are carried into adulthood and how patterns of unhealthy relationships are replicated. Additionally, attention will be given to women who are or have been in abusive relationships so they may see that as they heal, they empower not only themselves, but also provide a model and a foundation for their children to heal. Joan Rubin-Deutsch, is the author of **Why Can't I Ever Be Good Enough?** and is a psychotherapist in private practice in Acton specializing in relationships and women's issues. She has also been a member of the Network's Board of Directors. World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse was launched in 2000 by Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF), Geneva, Switzerland, for the creation of a global culture of prevention and for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the recommendations contained in the United Nations Study on Violence against Children. WWSF, an international, non-profit, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with United Nations consultative status, serves the implementation of the rights of women and children to be protected from sexual exploitation and violence.

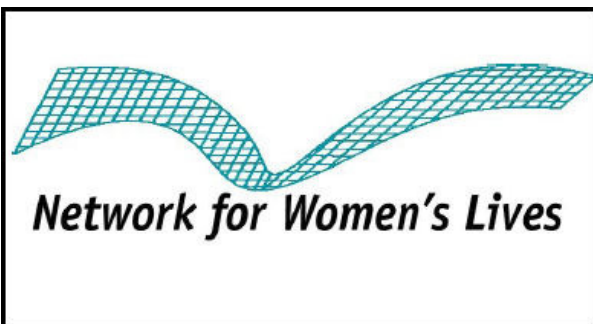
Plan Now — "The Vagina Monologues"

Join us as we celebrate women, raise awareness and envision a world without violence! VDAY 2008 is a worldwide campaign event to stop violence against women and girls. The Network for Women's Lives will be participating in VDAY's 10th anniversary and will be presenting a benefit production of Eve Ensler's play "The Vagina Monologues" in February 2008. If you would like to get involved with this production, let NWL know by contacting us at info@networkforwomenslives.org. Auditions for the play will be held on November 4 and 18 for on-stage volunteers, but we need behind the scenes help as well. Details on the date and location of the play will be announced as we get closer to the date. Check the NWL web site at <http://www.networkforwomenslives.org> for information about the November audition times and locations and for getting involved.



Silent Vigil in West Acton

On Thursday, October 11, the Network for Women's Lives will join with the Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex to hold a Silent Vigil in West Acton. The Silent Vigil includes reading of the names of domestic violence victims who were murdered by their abusers during the past year, lighting candles, and walking silently through the West Acton village area. All advocates and volunteers who work to end domestic violence are invited to gather at 6:30 pm in West Acton village for the Silent Vigil. During the week of the vigil, silent witnesses also will gather to remember the victims of domestic violence.



10 Things Men Can Do to Prevent Gender Violence

1 Approach gender violence as a MEN'S issue involving men of all ages and socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds. View men not only as perpetrators or possible offenders, but as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers.

2 If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing his female partner — or is disrespectful or abusive to girls and women in general — don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him about it. Urge him to seek help. Or if you don't know what to do, consult a friend, a parent, a professor, or a counselor. **DON'T REMAIN SILENT.**

3 Have the courage to look inward. Question your own attitudes. Don't be defensive when something you do or say ends up hurting someone else. Try hard to understand how your own attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.

4 If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.

5 If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abusive to women, or have been in the past, seek professional help **NOW**.

6 Be an ally to women who are working to end all forms of gender violence. Support the work of campus-based women's centers. Attend "Take Back the Night" rallies and other public events. Raise money for community-based rape crisis centers and battered women's shelters. If you belong to a team or fraternity, or another student group, organize a fundraiser.

7 Recognize and speak out against homophobia and gay-bashing. Discrimination and violence against lesbians and gays are wrong in and of themselves. This abuse also has direct links to sexism (for example, the sexual orientation of men who speak out against sexism is often questioned, a conscious or unconscious strategy intended to silence them. This is a key reason few men do speak out).

8 Attend programs, take courses, watch films, and read articles and books about multicultural masculinities, gender inequality, and the root causes of gender violence. Educate yourself and others about how larger social forces affect the conflicts between individual men and women.

9 Don't fund sexism. Refuse to purchase any magazine, rent any video, subscribe to any Web site, or buy any music that portrays girls or women in a sexually degrading or abusive manner. Protest sexism in the media.

10 Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don't involve degrading or abusing girls and women. Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including anti-sexist men's programs. Lead by example.

*Network for Women's Lives is funded
in part by grants from:*

*Concord-Carlisle Community Chest,
Maynard Community Chest,
Stow Community Chest,
And
Private Donations from Individuals,
Churches, and Local Organizations.*

*Thank you for helping make our
community a safe place.*

*The Network for Women's Lives is a volunteer
organization dedicated to ending domestic
violence and promoting healthy
relationships. Our goal is prevention;
our vehicle is education.*

***Network for Women's Lives
Prevention through Education, Safety and
Respect for All***

*The Network for Women's Lives serves the
communities of Acton, Bedford,
Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln,
Maynard, and Stow.*

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