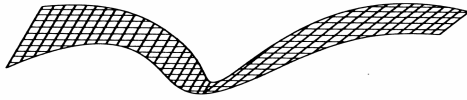


The Network for Women's Lives



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

THE SAFETY NET

Spring 2008

www.networkforwomenslives.org

This issue of *The Safety Net* describes the new alliance between The Network for Women's Lives and the Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc. (DVS). This joining of ambitions, goals, and resources will enable both organizations to expand their work to prevent domestic violence in our local communities and to raise awareness about domestic violence by offering education, information, and resources to victims and those who care. Also included in this issue are some facts about how unemployment, access to guns, and threats of violence can foreshadow domestic violence. You'll find a report on an anti-bullying workshop sponsored by The Network that includes a recommended book list.

A Renewed Connection, A New Direction

By Jacquelin Apsler, DVS Executive Director

Since 1992, the all-volunteer *Network for Women's Lives* has worked tirelessly to end domestic violence and promote healthy relationships. Servicing nine local communities—Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Lexington, Lincoln, Maynard, and Stow—the *Network* builds awareness and promotes education through a variety of methods and venues.

Accomplishments

For the past ten years, the *Network's* Rachel's Boxes have been a resounding success in more than 55 locations. Displaying a myriad of materials in public spaces of all types, the boxes give interested parties and passersby ready access to information, resources, and help lines. Twenty-two volunteers refill these boxes on

a regular basis. The *Network's* information tables at town festivals, restaurant evenings to raise funds and awareness, and extensive collaboration with numerous domestic violence agencies have been the cornerstone of raising awareness about domestic violence in our local communities. A capstone of the *Network's* awareness efforts has been its annual presentation of *The Vagina Monologues* in several of the nine communities served. Money raised from the *Monologues* supports a variety of awareness-building programs in the schools of each hosting town.

The *Network* also obtains grants providing educational programming in the local public schools to address bullying and dating violence while promoting healthy relationships. The booklet, "Love Is Not Supposed to Hurt," written by *Network* volunteer and former Board Director Joan Rubin-Deutsch, is used extensively by many of the local middle and high schools. Education for the public at large has included programs on batterer psychology with Lundy Bancroft, several

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domestic violence symposia for clergy, and a number of programs in conjunction with *Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc.*, a sister agency that provides direct service to victims of domestic violence.

One of the most effective programs for survivors of domestic violence founded by the *Network* is the *Support Group for Women with Controlling Partners*. Due to the *Network's* successful fundraising for this program, no survivor has been turned away for lack of money or daycare. This program is highly regarded and is a main resource for *Domestic Violence Services'* clients who are ready to develop skills to empower themselves.

Growing Demands and Shrinking Resources

The demands on the *Network's* volunteers have grown exponentially. Shrinking resources have led to fewer funds from local charities and more demands regarding the allocation and management of those funds. The effort to fulfill the educational mission as an all-volunteer organization needed more administrative support and greater financial stability. Searching for a way to maximize the dedication and commitment of their volunteers, the *Network* explored options for sustaining its organization and mission.

A Renewed Connection

In 1998, the *Network* had worked closely with Chief Wetherbee of the Concord Police Department to establish the *Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Program* and to hire its first Program Director to provide direct services to victims of domestic violence in Concord. In 2000, the *Network* chose to focus primarily on its educational mission, and Chief Wetherbee established a new non-profit, *Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc.*, which now works with nine local police departments and Hanscom Air Force Base.

Recognizing the successful and mutually respectful collaboration with *Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc.* over the past two years, the *Network's* Board of Directors approached *Domestic Violence Services* about the possibility of becoming a *Domestic Violence Services'* program for education and outreach.

The prospect was intriguing to both organizations. *Domestic Violence Services* fosters communities united to end domestic violence. It provides direct services to victims of domestic violence in the same communities

served by the *Network*, adding Wayland and Hanscom Air Force Base to the mix. *Domestic Violence Services* is currently the parent agency of three programs dedicated to preventing domestic violence and helping its victims.

These programs include:

- ***Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Program*** (DVVAP), the original program established by Chief Wetherbee and the *Network*, collaborates with the police departments of Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln, Maynard, Stow, Wayland, and Hanscom Air Force Base. Well-trained, community-based advocates offer unconditional support that respects victims' dignity and choices while promoting safety. They are available to individuals who call the program and provide outreach to victims on behalf of ten police departments. They listen to callers' stories in a safe and secure environment; assess the level of violence; identify options for action; develop safety-planning tools with callers; and refer callers to the wide array of confidential resources in our community.
- The ***Court Support Program*** (CSP) provides court accompaniment for individuals seeking abuse prevention orders from the Concord District Court.
- ***Lawyer for A Day*** (LFAD) provides answers to legal questions involving domestic violence for eligible individuals through our collaborating partner, South Middlesex Legal Services (SMLS).

For each of these programs, an Advisory Council meets regularly to plan programs, review protocols, and develop training, materials, and services for clients. The *Police Chiefs' Council* works with the *Domestic Violence Services'* Executive Director and Board to manage DVVAP. The Court Advisory Council serves the same role for CSP, and SMLS provides guidance for LFAD.

Domestic Violence Services has worked closely with the *Network* on numerous educational events and often shares in public awareness raising activities. The staff and advocates of *Domestic Violence Services* also present domestic violence programs and materials to a wide variety of groups and believe that education is ultimately the primary way to address domestic violence in our communities.

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Thus, the concept of combining the efforts of the two organizations was worth exploring from the perspective of both organizations.

In the fall of 2006, the two boards independently listed the following possible benefits, challenges, and outcomes.

Analyses of Network for Women's Lives Becoming the Education & Outreach Program for Domestic Violence Services	
Network for Women's Lives Board Analysis	Domestic Violence Services Board Analysis
<p>Benefits to the organization and the community:</p> <p>Public will see both as part of a whole; not fragmented Easier for public to go to one place for help or to volunteer Funders want the clarity of one DV agency to fund Collaboration raises everyone's profile; better focus on DV We are all part of the same whole; providing different services with the same goal: eradication of DV Share resources and volunteers to support victims before police intervention is needed As a whole body, all are empowered; joining forces creates synergy NWL offers 15 years of success; a small but committed volunteer base, financial assets</p>	<p>Benefits to the organization and the community:</p> <p>Better coordination of programs and services Provide a greater wealth of programs Defuse the confusion of who each of our organizations is and to whom to give money Tying the education component into our services makes sense Special events will be better coordinated and more successful Mission of two entities is the same; we will be more effective operating as one entity It's the right thing to do DVS offers infra-structure, staff support, financial stability</p>
<p>Challenges:</p> <p>NWL does not have the volunteer numbers to fully achieve all that is committed Change is difficult; unknown how new relationship will be defined and where NWL will fit in under the umbrella Concern about NWL losing autonomy/control Communication may be more complicated</p>	<p>Challenges:</p> <p>How will finances be handled: bank accounts, fundraising, grant writing Workload: NWL doesn't have enough resources; DVS is at its limit; who will be doing all the work Keeping existing NWL volunteers involved under DVS Composition of board and advisory council What do they need from us to allow a smoother transition What do they bring to the table for DVS</p>
<p>Expected Outcomes:</p> <p>A stronger more vigorous organization where the mission and the successes of both organizations in direct service, advocacy, and education will be better understood by the public A higher public profile through collaboration A better use of resources A reconnection to the police chiefs that NWL had in the beginning A strengthened volunteer base Continued good will and mutual respect</p>	<p>Expected Outcomes:</p> <p>An opportunity to incorporate educational efforts seamlessly Education will no longer be an issue between NWL and DVS Community will see us as one An opportunity to focus on prevention efforts prior to police intervention Offers Advocates and other volunteers a better opportunity to work on outreach and awareness-raising events</p>

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In winter 2007, an 'Exploration Committee' formed to explore the issues and logistics involved with the *Network* becoming the outreach and education program for *Domestic Violence Services*. The group included Shirley Ormsby, Mary Jane Nichols, and Susan Vine from the *Network* Board and Marilyn Peterson, Judy Liss, and Jim Terry from *Domestic Violence Services'* Board. Jacquelin Apsler, the Executive Director of *Domestic Violence Services*, facilitated this task force during four meetings between February and June 2007.

A New Direction

In September 2007, each board reviewed the key components of bringing the *Network* under the *Domestic Violence Services* umbrella as the *Domestic Violence Services' Education & Outreach Program*. Each voted unanimously to pursue the change. Both groups agreed to use the remainder of FY 2008 through June 2008 as a transition period with changes being incorporated in a logical fashion.

Features of the *Domestic Violence Services Network for Women's Lives Education and Outreach Program (NWLEP)* to Be Fully Implemented by July 2008

The *Network's* current board will become *DV Services' Network for Women's Lives Council* and will work with the Executive Director to develop programming and funding sources.

The *Network* will keep its name as the Education & Outreach Program for *DV Services*, the parent organization.

The *Network* will continue its educational mission as the NWLEP Council with oversight by the *DVS* Board via its Executive Director.

The Executive Director is writing grants to community funders for FY 2009 with input from the *Network's* Education Coordinator and Treasurer to include funding for educational programming. All grant writing and grant management will continue under the direction of the Executive Director.

The current *Network* board President, Vice President, and Treasurer are members of the *DV Services* board.

The current *Network* board President and Treasurer sit on the Executive Committee.

The current *Network* Treasurer serves on the Finance Committee.

The Executive Director participates in all current *Network* board meetings.

Current *Network* board President and Vice President will serve as the Council's Chair and Vice Chair.

Current *Network* board members will become members of the Council.

Financial resources will be combined at the beginning of FY 2009 (July 1, 2008) and will be overseen by the Finance Committee; *Network* reserve funds will be dedicated to educational programming.

Websites will remain independent for the foreseeable future; *DV Services* has a grant to develop a new website which will link to the *Network* website.

While the *Network's* Help Line phone still exists, the *Network* office was closed to minimize unnecessary costs while a plan for realigning office space is developed.

All current "members" of the *Network* will continue to receive the newsletter—"The Safety Net." All future donors to *DV Services* will receive electronic copies of "The Safety Net."

DV Services' staff will be augmented to accommodate increased educational planning, bookkeeping functions, database maintenance, and administrative assistance needed for developing and funding educational programming through the *DV Services* NWLEP Council.

A legal review is being conducted to develop a formal agreement between the two organizations.

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Progress to date has been smooth, upbeat, and minimally problematic. Both boards are encouraged by the new direction. The Police Chiefs very much welcome a reconnection with the *Network* under the *Domestic Violence Services* umbrella. They feel that the council model is excellent and effective in allowing them to focus on important issues related to their DVVAP program. They believe the *Network* will find the council model under the auspices of *Domestic Violence Services* to be an enormous advantage to fulfilling the educational mission.

A Signature Event

Celebrating the synergistic efforts of *DV Services* and the *Network* is this year's Clergy Symposium, scheduled as a morning workshop on Wednesday, May 7, 2008.

Domestic Violence Services took the lead in building on the *Network's* excellent work with past symposia, collaborating closely with *Network* members and with the Sudbury-Wayland-Lincoln DV Roundtable to reach out to several clergy groups, and arranging for Middlesex County District Attorney, Gerry Leone, to be the keynote speaker about domestic violence in the suburbs. The theme of the symposium is "Looking at Domestic Violence through Pastoral, Legal, and Professional Prisms." Clergy from over a dozen towns will be invited to attend, and many are already expressing interest in attending. Our goal is to provide clergy with tools that meet their needs within their congregations. This event, which we expect to provide annually, illustrates the rich programming possible with the creation of *Domestic Violence Services' Network for Woman's Lives Education & Outreach Program*.

Predictors of Domestic Violence Homicide of Women

A batterer's unemployment, access to guns and threats of deadly violence are the strongest predictors of female homicide in abusive relationships, according to a study in the *American Journal of Public Health* (July 2003, Vol. 93, No. 7). *Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study* finds that a combination of factors, rather than one single factor, increases the likelihood of intimate partner homicide involving an abusive man who kills his female partner.

Study researchers interviewed family members and other acquaintances of 220 female victims of intimate partner homicide from eleven cities across the country, as well as a control group of 343 women who reported being the victims of physical abuse in the past two years. The researchers – all carefully chosen for their close collaborations with domestic violence advocates as well as knowledge of domestic violence and interview skills – asked questions about the victim and the perpetrator, characteristics of their relationship and details about the abuse including type, frequency and severity of violence.

"In the United States, women are killed by intimate partners more often than by any other type of perpetrator, with the majority of these murders involving prior physical abuse," said *Risk Factors for Femicide's* lead author, Jacquelyn Campbell, Ph.D., R.N., Anna D. Wolf Endowed Professor at The Johns Hopkins

University School of Nursing and Family Violence Prevention Fund board member. "Determining key risk factors, over and above a history of domestic violence, that contribute to the abuse that escalates to murder will help us identify and intervene with battered women who are most at risk."

Predictors of Intimate Partner Homicide

The "strongest" contextual risk factor for intimate partner homicide is an abuser's lack of employment, finds *Risk Factors for Femicide*. In fact, unemployment increased the risk of intimate partner homicide fourfold. The study notes that instances in which the abuser had a college education, compared with a high school education, "were protective against femicide."

Other factors that can help predict homicide are an abuser's access to firearms and use of illicit drugs. Access to firearms increased the risk of intimate partner homicide more than five times more than in instances where there were no weapons, according to *Risk Factors for Femicide*. The findings also "suggest" that abusers who possess guns "tend to inflict the most severe abuse." Illicit drug use also was "strongly associated" with intimate partner homicide, although the abuser's use of alcohol was not, finds the report. In addition, neither a victim's alcohol abuse nor drug use "was independently associated with her risk of being killed."

Risk Factors for Femicide also explores relationship variables that can increase a woman's risk of becoming a victim of intimate partner homicide. Never having

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lived with an abusive partner "significantly lowered" a woman's risk of becoming a homicide victim, according to the report. Separating from an abusive partner after having lived with him, leaving the home she shares with an abusive partner or asking her abusive partner to leave the home they share were all factors that put a woman at "higher risk" of becoming a victim of homicide. Having a child living in the home who was not the abusive partner's biological child also contributed to intimate partner homicide – more than doubling the risk, according to *Risk Factors for Femicide*.

An abuser's behavior also is a factor in predicting homicide. The risk of homicide "was increased nine-fold by the combination of a highly controlling abuser and the couple's separation after living together," finds *Risk Factors for Femicide*. An abuser's threats with a weapon or threats to kill his victim also "were associated with substantially higher risks" for her murder. But stalking and threats to harm children or other family members were not "independently associated with" homicide. The study also found that an abuser's previous arrest for domestic violence "actually decreased the risk for femicide." *Risk Factors for Femicide* concludes that, under certain conditions, "arrest can indeed be protective against domestic violence escalating to lethality."

Preventing Intimate Partner Homicide

According to Campbell, the study suggests that steps such as increasing shelter services for battered women, increasing employment opportunities, and restricting abusers' access to guns can potentially reduce intimate partner homicide.

The study also highlights the critical role health care professionals can play in identifying victims of abuse and helping to increase the safety of battered women who are at increased risk for homicide. "It is important to consider the role medical professionals might play in identifying women at high risk of intimate partner femicide," concludes the study. It encourages health care providers to screen female patients for domestic

violence and assess their danger by asking questions about abuse, such as "Does your partner try to control all of your daily activities?" and "Is there a gun in the home?"

"These are all relatively simple questions that can help assess the level of risk," continued Campbell. "In cases of extreme danger, such as a situation where the abuser is highly controlling and the woman is preparing to leave him, it is important for practitioners to warn the woman not to confront the partner with her decision and to alert her of the risk of homicide and the need for shelter."

Campbell also has developed an instrument, the Danger Assessment, to help women assess their own risk of homicide in abusive relationships. The Danger Assessment can be accessed through the Nursing Network on Violence Against Women's web site.

Risk Factors for Femicide was supported by funding from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institutes on Aging, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institute of Justice.

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Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study by Jacquelyn Campbell, Ph.D., R.N.
American Journal of Public Health (July 2003, Vol. 93, No. 7) <http://www.endabuse.org/programs/display.php3?DocID=242>

Support Group 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.

Dates of Interest

- April 15** “Crucial Conversations: Ways Parents Can Help Bully-Proof Their Kids,” guest speaker Lisa Sjostrom, 7:00 pm—8:30 pm, Gleason Public Library, Carlisle, MA
- April 23** Advocacy Day, 1:30 pm—4:30 pm, Massachusetts State House, Nurses Hall
- April 26** “Wellness U.,” sponsored by the Acton Public Health Dept., Parker Damon School, Charter Road, Acton, MA
- May 6** Community Night at O’Naturals Café, benefit for The Network for Women’s Lives, 4:00 pm—8:00 pm
- May 7** Clergy Symposium, guest speaker Gerry Leone, Middlesex County District Attorney, 8:00 am—1:00 pm, for location information, visit The Network for Women’s Lives web site at <http://networkforwomenslives.org>
- May 10** Teen Summit for 6th to 9th graders, 9:00 am—3:00 pm, sponsored by Acton Boxborough Coalition for Healthy Youth, Parker Damon School, Charter Road, Acton, MA
- June 9** Annual Meeting of The Network for Women’s Lives, 6:00 pm—9:00 pm, Concord Police Station, 219 Walden Street, Concord, MA
- June 17** Annual Meeting of Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc. , 6:30 pm—9:00pm, Acton, MA

The Network for Women’s Lives Board of Director meetings are held bi-monthly. Volunteers, members, and other interested persons are encouraged to attend to help work on projects and carry out our mission of education throughout the community. For information about The Network for Women’s Lives, please refer to our web site at <http://www.networkforwomenslives.org> or contact us via email at info@networkforwomenslives.org.



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.

Bullying — Creating Climates of Respect and Safety

The Network for Women's Lives was pleased to sponsor a three-hour workshop on March 2 that focused on how bullying affects children and teenagers. Geared for youths in grades 7 through 12 and their parents, the workshop had these goals:

- Understanding why bullying is an important issue and the types of bullying to which students are exposed
- Exploring what issues students identify as important when it comes to bullying
- Identifying the differences between bullying and teasing
- Determining what follow-up and support is needed for ongoing safety

Two students from Acton-Boxborough Regional High School who were trained in the Mentors Violence Program helped the group engage in the discussions. Guidance counselors from the Acton-Boxborough high school and the Westford middle school were also on hand to field questions and to provide resources to students and parents.

During the workshop, students shared their thoughts and feelings about friendships and the need for personal boundaries with each other and with the adults. Parents contributed their experiences with bullying. One parent of adult children who were bullied in high school said she was still angry at the "system" for scarring her sons. Through this workshop, this parent expressed that she had found new hope.

Parents and students learned how bullying is not just between peers, but also between adults and children. Packets of information, one for students and a different one for parents, were distributed. Guidance counselors also provided new resources and people to contact for support for students transitioning from an 8th grader to high school.

A booklist was available for everyone to take home. Some of the recommended books included:

- ***Bully Free Classroom*** by Allan L. Beane. Shows how to stop bullying by creating a peaceful, caring classroom.

- ***Get Out of My Life, but First Could You Drive Me and Cheryl to the Mall: A Parent's Guide to the New Teenager*** by Anthony E. Wolf. Describes adolescent and parent relationships and how teenagers are affected by a faster, less clearly anchored world.
- ***Mean Girls 101 1/2, Creative Strategies and Activities for Reducing Relational Aggression*** by Kaye Randall and Allyson A. Bowen. Explains how to encourage empathy and tolerance, and how to improve self-control and coping skills.
- ***Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*** by Rachel Simmons. Spotlights bullying that girls and women have endured silently and painfully, using perspectives of both the victim and the bully.
- ***Queen Bees & Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends & Other Realities of Adolescence*** by Rosalind Wiseman. Takes you inside the secret world of girls' friendships so that parents can better understand and help their daughters navigate these crucial years.
- ***Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*** by Dan Kindlon, Michael Thompson, Teresa Barker. Reveals a nation of boys who are hurting — sad, afraid, angry, and silent.
- ***Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*** by William S. Pollack, Mary Pipher. Explores why many boys are sad, lonely, and confused although they may appear tough, cheerful, and confident.
- ***Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*** by Mary Pipher. Poses provocative questions: Why are American adolescent girls falling prey to depression, eating disorders, suicide attempts, and dangerously low self-esteem?
- ***Second Step Program*** created by the Committee for Children. Teaches children how to effectively manage their emotions and to demonstrate self-control.

Summaries of these books were paraphrased from online descriptions at Barnes & Noble.com or from catalogs for teachers and mental health providers.

**Domestic Violence Services and The Network for Women's Lives
Are Pleased to Present:**

2008 Interfaith Clergy Symposium

**“Looking at Domestic Violence Through Pastoral,
Legal, and Professional Prisms”**

Wednesday, May 7, 8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Speaker Gerry Leone, Middlesex County District Attorney

Who should attend? All clergy who are concerned about the dynamics of domestic violence from pastoral, legal, and professional viewpoints are encouraged to attend. Clergy, Pastoral staff, Youth Ministers, Pastoral Associates, Directors of Religious Education, and Lay Leadership from our local communities are invited to attend this symposium.

For more information: Please contact The Network for Women's Lives by emailing info@networkforwomenslives.org or visiting the Network's web site at <http://networkforwomenslives.org>

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

Tuesday, May 6th

4:00 - 8:00 p.m. 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

*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, Lexington,
Lincoln, Maynard, and Stow.*

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