

Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County

<http://www.sexualassaultcenter.com>

April 2008

Support—Heal—Educate—Prevent: Helping the Community STOP Sexual



THESE HEELS ARE MADE FOR WALKIN' By Penni Maples, Fund Development Manager

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How can something that is so much fun be so good for you and those you care about? Come join our Third Annual Walk A Mile In Her Shoes “Men’s March to Stop Rape, Sexual Assault & Gender Violence” on April 25, and find out!

Check-in and final registration for the Walk will begin at 11:00 a.m. at the Washington State History Museum, 1911 Pacific Ave. in Tacoma. The Walk will start there at noon and wind through downtown Tacoma. Men in heels, men in boas, men in pink fluffy slippers, and often with supportive women and children by their sides, will take over the streets to support the Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County. Our goal is to raise \$75,000! Trophies for last year’s winning shoes and ensembles will be awarded prior to the Walk and bandages will be distributed at the end of the Walk!

Registration information can be found on our website, www.sexualassaultcenter.com or by contacting Penni Maples at 253-597-6424 x 12 (office) or (email) penni@sexualassaultcenter.com.

There is a link on our website where you can actually set up your own Walk website on firstgiving.com and send it out to your family and friends nation wide! How about including a picture of you in your favorite Manolo, Kate Spade or Steve Madden heels?

Many of our walkers fill out

“In Loving Support” cards stating the names of people they want to honor with their walk; children, grandchildren, wives, girlfriends, partners, parents, survivors, etc. Who would you like to honor? Get together a group of buddies, co-workers, church group, or family and challenge them to walk with you and see who can raise the

most money, wear the highest or fanciest heels and have the most fun. If you can’t join us in downtown Tacoma on April 25 as a walker or supporter you can offer financial support to your favorite walker or send donations directly to the Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County. What a fun way to help us provide serious information on bullying, harassment, acquaintance rape, setting boundaries and rape drugs to elementary, middle school and high school students or to provide advocacy services and the 24 hour crisis/referral line to victims and their families and friends.

We are committed to “Helping the Community STOP Sexual Abuse”. We cannot do it without *YOUR* help. Grab your heels. Grab your boas. Grab your favorite guy. Grab your checkbook and join us for fun and a good cause on April 25th!!



Bring a friend and come to our Open House on September 12, 2008 at noon. You’ll have the opportunity to eat, meet our staff and board, bring ideas, ask questions and dialogue. We are *your* sexual assault center and we want to help and strengthen our community and better our collective lives!



Expansion of SACPC's Education/Prevention Program

By Allen Trimmings, Education Director

For a number of years we have been conducting presentations/interactions in middle and high schools in Pierce County. Each year we reach 7,000 to 12,000 students, depending upon our ability to fund the program. Our presentations consist of sexual harassment, bullying, date/acquaintance rape, rape drugs, and consent and the law concerning sexual assault. Even though we have been doing this for years, we recognize that in order to make this effort successful we must have a collaborative effort from all those involved in the lives of the students. We value the support of school administrators, teachers, community leaders, and funders. We have been able to continuously provide students with information that we feel can help them in some of the challenges they face or may face in life. With each presentation we hope to assist in making a positive change in not only behavior, but attitudes as well.

We realize the need to address some of these issues with the kids in our elementary schools. It is very important that we address these issues early on, because children in elementary school are experiencing and displaying some of the same behaviors that children in middle and high schools are experiencing. They need to know that they too have an option in the choices they make, and the effect of some of their choices. Even though we are having a big impact in working with our middle to high school youth, we feel its time to make that connection with not only our elementary kids, but the staff who work with them as well. We all have the same mission, which is to educate and support the positive growth of the children in our community.

"If we can change the life of one child, then we have given hope to many more."

Allen Trimmings

We are proud to announce that we have added two new components to our Education/Prevention Program:

New Elementary Education Program

With the assistance of Boeing Employee Community Fund we were able to launch our new Elementary Education Program. Their support has allowed us to go forward with this effort to reach our younger children. This program for Elementary kids is focused on the aspect of Respect and Bullying. This is a very important issue for our community and we thank Boeing for recognizing not only the importance of our work, but to help these little ones understand they too can have strong voices and can make positive choices.

This program which initially had two pilot schools, has now expanded to 8 elementary schools. Since the program has started we have completed 4 of the 8 elementary schools. We also want to thank those schools who immediately accepted the program and have allowed us to begin this work.

Stewards of Children

Adults Resolving Child Sexual Abuse in Community

This program was created by **Darkness to Light**, a national non-profit organization committed to increasing public awareness of child abuse, and was founded in response to staggering national statistics: **1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused by the age of 18**. In seconds their childhoods are shattered, their innocence stolen forever. Worse still the effect haunts them for years, increasing the likelihood of drug and alcohol dependency, eating disorder, teen pregnancy, delinquency, violent crimes, and debilitating fears.



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Expansion of SACPC's Education/Prevention Program

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The distinctive feature of this training is a **comprehensive program** that incorporates all of the fundamental mechanics necessary in creating organizational policies and procedures that keep children safe. This is ideal for training staff and volunteers on child sexual abuse prevention.

Within this program you will be empowered as an individual, and as the person who knows best about your life and the life of your community whether you are a survivor, parent, a service provider, or a community leader. You will learn about choices, personal power, relentless compassion, and about becoming conscious in a new way. You will be given some simple strategies for the prevention of sexual abuse through the **7 Steps to Protecting our Children**. It was designed to educate adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child abuse. You will not only learn how to safeguard children, you will learn how to protect and strengthen you organization as well.

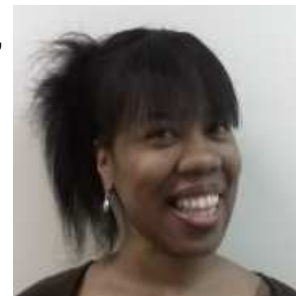
This is a 2.5-hour training program that integrates the simple principles of **choice, consciousness, and personal power** to promote an understanding of the nature and impact of child sexual abuse, and that uses those principles to provide a context for empowered action. The curriculum is direct about **holding each adult accountable**, and generous in providing powerful, specific support for personal change.

SACPC now has a Darkness to Light Authorized Facilitator for the Stewards of Children program. Within the next few months we will be offering training to individuals and organizations in becoming Stewards of Children. Please take a look at our agency website for more information about this and other training opportunities. ♥

Meet the Newest Staff Member

Hello. My name is Tracy and I am the new Administrative Assistant. Although I am new to the world of 'non-profit', I have many years experience with administration. I come to SACPC with a passion to help and learn from talented, knowledgeable, and compassionate staff. I consider myself a honorary native of Pierce County, as I was born in Mississippi, but have lived here since the age of 1. I am most fortunate to have a loving and supportive family which includes my son –11 year old L.D., who is the brightest ray of sunshine that God could have ever blessed me with; a stepdaughter-19 year old Reasha, who is smart and beautiful in more ways than I can count; and my life companion Serena (I won't mention her age...) who makes me laugh and remember the good stuff that this often cruel world can cause one to forget. We enjoy cross-word puzzles, reading, and playing with our 2 new puppies: Sexxy and Prince; and do they ever keep us busy!

I feel very privileged to be part of the SACPC family, and am so appreciative to have been given this unique opportunity to be a small part of the healing process in the lives of the clients we serve. ♥





Military Culture Challenges Surrounding the Issue of Sexual Violence

By Jennifer Cyr, SACPC Intern, Captain, ANC



There are approximately 3.3 million service members and their families' stationed world wide. Military service members are subjected to geographic separation from family and friends, social isolation within the military culture, frequent changes of residence, and financial insecurity. The military operates on very different terms than the civilian community with its own practices, regulations, and laws. Some things are standardized to all branches of the armed forces but others are specific to that branch. Adding to this confusion, each of the specific branches has its own jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms that make it a difficult system in which to navigate.

I am an officer, a captain, and a female military professional that cares very deeply about her fellow military members. A curi-

osity grew as part of my internship at the Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County and my graduate study exploration. I wanted to know how my fellow military members handled sexual assault issues and how to navigate the system within the military culture. I began to explore this issue by conducting my own research as well as visiting the local installation to educate myself on this topic.

The current Sexual Assault Prevention Program came about as part of the recommendations in 2004 by the Defense Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Violence that studied some of the issues faced at the military service academies. The task force determined that sexual violence was indeed a problem that needed to be addressed. As part of their investigation, recommendations were released in April of 2004 and money was budgeted to develop and staff the program as part of the fiscal budget in 2005. The task force's recommendations called for greater support for victims, training for Department of Defense (DoD) personnel world wide, increased guidance for commanders, clarification on reporting, addressing the issues surrounding collateral offenses, clarification on the definitions of the terms sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other sex-related offenses.

The Sexual Assault Prevention Program officially began

in October of 2005. Still in its infancy stage of existence, there continues to be challenges with the program.

I offer my observations from interactions with the Army military culture in my nine years of active duty service. I am a member of the system. I am familiar with both the local installation and the system. I encountered obstacles while trying to investigate this topic, which caused me to think, "if I can't navigate the system successfully, how is a victimized person going to find these resources?"

So, I went in search of some answers and found the following:

- ◆ Many of the services for victims of sexual assault are not co-located in one building.
- ◆ When asking for directions, people in the same building had difficulty directing me to the requested services.
- ◆ The sexual assault nurse is not a Department of Defense employee but hired as a contract worker to provide services for the military installation, so their availability can be an issue.
- ◆ There continues to be a stigma attached to receiving services for sexual assault.
- ◆ Fitness for duty may be compromised by asking for help. Deployment adds additional challenges:
- ◆ The deployment cycle may compromise treatment of the

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Military Culture Challenges Surrounding the Issue of Sexual Violence

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- victim as well as prosecution.
- ◆ While deployed, soldiers have access to two unit victim's advocates for each battalion size element (roughly 300 to 1,000 personnel). It is unlikely, that the soldier is located in the same area as the services even though they are supposed to respond immediately to the call. In a war zone, unexpected things happen every day and it may be difficult to reach that person for help.
 - ◆ There are two echelons of advocates while deployed: the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) and the Unit Victim's Advocates (UVA). There are three echelons while in garrison: the SARC, the UVA, and the Installation Victim's Advocate (IVA).
 - ◆ The SARC is a soldier that takes on this role as an additional duty during deployment.
 - ◆ The UVA's are also soldiers that take on that additional duty.

There are pros and cons to the two types of reporting: Unrestricted and Restricted Reporting. It is important that the victim understand these differences when making an informed decision to report (unrestricted) or not to report (restricted). Unrestricted enjoys the full gamete of support. You can notify certain individuals on the installation regarding the assault: the command, the Chaplin, a health care professional, a victim's advocate, or the SARC to report the assault. They will be familiar with the process and advise the soldier on the next step. Unrestricted reporting includes the

sexual assault exam, the police are notified to file a report, JAG is notified to begin the legal process, and the soldier's unit maybe contacted to assist the soldier in the process. Medical care and emotional support are offered. A 'No Contact Order' and a 'Protection Order' can be put in place as part of the legal proceedings.

Restricted reporting has the advantages of privacy, autonomy, and empowerment. It allows the person freedom to delay making an immediate decision but still receive care within the health care system; However, it may significantly cripple the protection afforded to someone who decides to report the sexual assault unrestricted.

Under restricted reporting the sexual assault is not reported to military police or the Judge Advocate General's office to begin the investigation so a protection order and/or a no contact order may be difficult to obtain. A no contact order and protection order would be difficult to enforce because the command is not part of the structure to report in cases of restricted reporting.

A soldier who perpetrates sexual violence can be punished under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). The command has certain rights to remove that soldier from the home and establish a no contact order with the spouse or significant other. But, due to the unique nature of the circumstances the military has no authority over a civilian. Any actions that are taken must be

handled by civilian authorities to include protection orders. If a soldier decided to violate the civilian protection order they can be punished by UCMJ standards as well as state and local statues. A soldier can not be charged for the same crime by both the military and civilian authorities.

The waters get really muddy if this situation involves a minor child. Prior to action the civilian authorities need to speak with the servicing installation Staff Judge Advocate's Office. In the state of Washington, there is also a county protocol in place that addresses the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse and the coordination of military authorities. This requires an extensive amount of cooperation with civilian authorities to make this a workable situation for all involved as their place of residence.

If the soldier and his/her family live off post, it makes for a challenging situation! This situation occurs frequently due to limited housing on post and troop concentrations rising in certain areas. Civilian authorities have jurisdiction in that case. The crime or alleged crime has occurred off the military installation. But, military personnel need to be contacted to assist in the disposition of the soldier. The soldier can still face UCMJ action.

The situation gets even

A Soldier who perpetrates sexual violence can be punished under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Judge Advocate's Office. In the state of Washington, there is also a county protocol in place that addresses the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse and the coordination of military authorities. This requires an extensive amount of cooperation with civilian authorities to make this a workable situation for all involved as their place of residence.

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"Stop and smell the roses." ...Roses...what roses?

By Kate Walker, Therapist

*H*ave you ever been caught up in thinking about a situation that happened in the past or might be happening in the future and missed what was on right under your own nose, so to speak? Everyone has such moments occasionally, especially when we're feeling stressed or tired. For those who have experienced significant emotional turmoil and/or trauma (such as growing up in a chaotic, unpredictable home, witnessing domestic violence, being sexually abused as a child, or being an adult victim of physical or sexual assault), it can feel impossible--or even threatening--to stay focused on what is happening right now.

Emotional numbing, panic/anxiety, and spacing out are only a few of the adaptive survival strategies that human minds may develop to cope with events or situations that feel physically or emotionally overwhelming or unsafe. However, the same skills that help children (and adults) survive frightening and threatening situations can eventually get in the way of living satisfying or successful lives long after the danger has passed. That's because the brain may still be reacting to the *perception* of danger with fight or flight or freeze responses such as increased heart rate, rapid breathing, and changes in visual and hearing acuity. Over time, the brain's ability to process adrenalin, cortisol, and other neurotransmitters (some of the chemicals that help one part of the brain communicate with other parts of the brain) can be impaired, so traumatized individuals may have reactions that are out of proportion (too big or too small) to the situation or stimulus at hand.

If the idea of staying grounded in the present moment *seems* threatening, you might wonder why on earth I would encourage and teach my therapy clients how to do just that. Mindfulness--the art and skill of paying close attention to what is happening in the present--has become an integral part of my practice as a mental health therapist (and my own life) because, essentially, the present moment is the only place where an individual's personal power to change or grow resides. When a person learns to consciously choose what s/he will focus on, like the breath, over time the brain's structure will change and reactivity transforms to responsiveness.

Emotions, such as fear, joy, anger, sadness, shame, etc., are physiological responses that allow us to gather information about our environment, and make choices about what we want or need to do--or not do--at any given moment. So if I'm making decisions based on



inaccurate perceptions about reality, I may grow to mistrust my emotions/intuition/gut, because what I feel or think is going on isn't being reflected in my external environment. I may stop listening and become emotionally numb. The opposite can also

happen: I may give too much importance to whatever emotion I may feel in the moment, and consequently feel emotionally trapped on an emotional rollercoaster. Either way, the end result is mistrust of oneself or of others or both. Additionally, if my behavior, actions, thoughts, and beliefs as an adult (the only things I have the power to control) are unconsciously driven by patterns ingrained when I didn't have mature adult reason, maturity, resources, information, skills, and wisdom, then the consequences or results of my present day actions will mirror my past and lead me away from, rather than closer to, my goals, aspirations, and vision for my life now and in the future.

The practice of mindfulness is both ancient wisdom and cutting-edge medicine. Yoga, tai chi, meditation, and prayer are some of the ways that mindfulness has been practiced for hundreds, and in some cases, thousands of years by many different cultures. Mindfulness has also come to the attention of modern-day scientific researchers, and is gaining mainstream acceptance as an evidence-based best practice as a non-medication-based alternative or ancillary treatment for emotional disorders such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression, not to mention pain

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"Stop and smell the roses." ...Roses...what roses?

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management, high blood pressure, and many other medical conditions.

Some mindfulness meditation practices can take years of dedicated study to master. Others, such as active meditations, can be taught in a relatively brief amount of time, and integrated into sometimes hectic, full schedules. Active meditations are based on the principle of "doing the ordinary in an extraordinary way". Given this framework, anything can become an active meditation. You could have a "mindful dishwashing" meditative practice, for example. Most of us just go through the motions of scraping, stacking, scrubbing, and drying (or loading the dishwasher) on "auto-pilot" as we mentally multitask and make grocery lists in our heads, rehash a recent fight with a spouse, or mentally rehearse what we want to say or do when we meet with our child's teacher next week. To turn washing dishes into a active meditation experience, you could practice doing just one thing; choose to allow yourself to become deeply attentive to the sensory experience of washing the dishes. You might notice the temperature of the water, the sound of the silverware in the bottom of the sink, the iridescent sheen and scent of the bubbles, etc. When your mind wanders or is caught by something else, gently and compassionately (without shame, guilt, judgment, or criticism), simply come back to the present moment, noticing the sights, sounds, smells, physical sensations/touch of washing the dishes. If you become aware that you are labeling the experience as pleasant, dumb, silly, transcendent, or whatever, allow those thoughts to flow into the background and actively return your attention to the act of washing dishes. If you choose eating as your mindfulness practice, you could allow yourself to become deeply aware of the smells, textures, tastes, sounds, and physical sensations of biting, chewing, swallowing, etc. You could have a walking,

cooking, swimming, gardening or vacuuming meditation, as well. One of the nifty things about active meditations is that they don't require additional time or energy to accomplish. They just take the willingness to do something old in a new way.

How can something so simple reduce stress/anxiety, lower blood pressure, or decrease nightmares? The answer is both as complex as the brain and as simple as the traditional Japanese saying, "How you do anything is how you do everything". Anything done mindlessly can be also done with mindfulness, and anything done with mindfulness can and will add to your overall internal sense of wellbeing, balance, and peace, no matter what else is going on in your life. You don't have to believe me. Just try it consistently for a week. Choose one thing you do repetitively and mindlessly and do it with intention and attention, without judgment or criticism, and just notice what happens. It can't hurt, and maybe, just maybe, it will help. ♥

Monthly Group Meeting

Did You Know That SACPC Has A Support Group That Meets On The Second Tuesday Of Every Month?

For more information, contact our 24-hour crisis-information and referral line at:

(253) 474-7273 or (800) 756-7273



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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more complicated in foreign countries such as Germany or Korea. There are resources via the Army One Source website as well as several 800 numbers that can direct you to the services provided in your area. Keep in mind that those services may be several hours away by train, car, or even helicopter. If a soldier requires different forms of transportation to receive the exam it may be quite difficult to keep the information concerning the victimization restricted.

As you can see, there are many challenges faced by anyone who experiences sexual violence in the military. The previous examples are just a few of the factors that differ from civilian community. We can learn a lot from the civilian community and its model of sexual assault education and prevention. Through working together as a team against violence I think this can be successfully accomplished. The Army Sexual Assault Prevention Program has come a long way in its three years of being an active program. But, there is still much work to be done to stop the incredible amount of violence facing military members today. ♥

Editor's Note: Our intern used and gave us multiple resources which we'll gladly share with you if you contact Jennifer at jennifer@sexualassaultcenter.com.

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