

# NEWSLETTER

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## *Inside this Newsletter*

- 1 Cost of Abuse-CDC Study
- 2 Children of Domestic Violence
- 3 Donors
- 4 Donors' Statement

### **Cost of Abuse**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report April 28 on the health-related costs of rape, physical assault, stalking, and homicide committed by intimate partners. The report shows Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States exceeds \$5.8 billion each year [CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control]. Nearly \$4.1 billion are direct medical and mental health care services, and nearly \$1.8 billion are for the indirect costs of lost productivity or wages.

The study breaks down the direct health costs by type of assault. The total medical and mental health care cost estimate per victimization by an intimate partner is \$838 per rape, \$816 per physical assault and \$294 per stalking incident.

The CDC suggests these limitations of the data: First, the report is based on reported

incidents of intimate partner violence in 1995. Often victims do not report or disclose such abuse. A recent study by the U.S. Department of Justice found that slightly less than one-quarter of rapes/sexual assaults and just over half of simple assaults committed by intimate partners were reported. Second, the study likely underestimates the economic burden of intimate partner violence in the U.S. This study excluded costs related to the legal and judicial systems and other comprehensive costs.

Although this study is not a reliable basis for calculating benefit-cost ratios for violence prevention programs, it can be used to determine the savings from reducing injuries resulting from intimate partner violence and demonstrate the magnitude of intimate partner violence in the U.S.

Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States is available through the CDC's web site, [www.cdc.gov/ncipe/jub-res/ipv\\_cost/ipv.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipe/jub-res/ipv_cost/ipv.htm). Reprinted and adapted from 'News Flash' (<http://www.fvpf.org/newsflash>), an online newsletter of the Family Violence Prevention Fund.

## HELP STOP ABUSE

## **Children of Domestic Violence**

Children living with violence in the home are at-risk psychologically, socially, emotionally, economically and physically. Research shows that exposure to violence may have injurious effects on boys and girls of all ages; some showing immediate consequences while others are affected later in life. Infants and toddlers living in a hostile environment often seem cranky, restless and slow to relax. Changes in sleeping and eating patterns may signify the distress that a child is experiencing. Pre-school aged children have been found to reenact violence especially during play with other children and with pets. They may revert to younger behaviors such as wetting themselves, sucking their fingers, and baby talk.

School aged children have shown a number of internal and external consequences. Separation from home may intensify the traumatic experience for the children.

One study found that children living with violence are absent twice as often as their counterparts and perform less well in their academics. These children may have numerous visits to the school nurse, can be disruptive in class, and may sometimes become the classroom bully. Other children

may internalize the turmoil within the household by becoming withdrawn and disinterested in previously enjoyed activities.

Older children may find solace in drinking and taking drugs. Teenagers may replicate the violence by becoming an abuser or a victim of abuse.

A number of children each year are physically harmed by the violence in their homes. Many because they have attempted to intervene, others have been hurt because they were caught in the crossfire. In addition to being physically harmed, children may be at-risk for parent abduction, witnessing the abuse of their siblings or the abuse or death of a parent.

Today an increased number of agencies and programs serving battered women are addressing the needs of children within the family. Some programs are offered to the children of women in safe shelters while others are offered through mental health organizations. The programs generally focus on providing the children with a supportive atmosphere and activities to channel the myriad feelings associated with witnessing violence. This environment provides the children with a place to express their feelings of loss, guilt, self-blame and fear. Many courts

now recognize the need to offer services to children and will encourage counseling and mandate supervised visits. All children and parents need a support network, safety plan and a trusted adult.

In the absence of a structured program, individuals in the children's lives are strongly encouraged to seek assistance for the children. Children, their mothers, and family members are best served when professionals and non-professionals alike recognize and seek assessment and intervention.

Mary Montminy, PhD

Salve Regina University

## **Web Sources on Children & Violence**

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu/hart/risks&r.htm>

<http://www.4children.org/news/7-97fact.htm>

<http://www.vaw.umn.edu/documents/vawnet/witness/witness.html>

<http://www.hsus.org/ace/11462>

<http://www.asafeplaceforhelp.org/childrenstatistics.html>

## **Women's Resource Center of Newport and Bristol Counties, Rhode Island**

### **Honors Supporters**

Mary Montminy, PhD was recently one of 25 honorees celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women's Resource Center. Mary's work with children who witness violence was recognized. She is a board member of FRWC.

## FRWC DONORS

**Karen L. & Richard A. Black**

**Chris & Lea Hehman**

**Zane Henderson**

**Earline Kendall**

**Georgia Mattison & Steve  
Glickel**

## MONTHLY DONORS

**Jennifer Aldrich**

**Becky Porter**

**Dana Demoulin**

**Margory Sweetser**

**MADISON, TN**

**MORNING STAR  
SANCTUARY**

### UPDATE

The FRWC mentor program in Tennessee is continuing under a new name, Morning Star Sanctuary with Rachel Stottman, director. Their monthly programs for women, mentors, and children include special activities for the children. Women and their mentors hear presentations on topics such as parenting, personal safety and self-defense, getting the most from your money. Two local churches sponsor retreats, picnics, grocery coupons, counseling, and resources to support women and children trying to make it on their own. Women are working, studying, and surviving with help.

## DON'T KEEP THE SECRET

Does the person you love . . .

- Keep track of all your time
- Accuse you of being unfaithful
- Discourage relationships with family and friends
- Prevent you from working or going to school
- Criticize or humiliate you
- Anger easily when drinking
- Hit, slap or punch you, your children or your pets
- Threaten you with a weapon or gun
- Force you to have sex against your will
- Act jealous and possessive
- Yell and call you names
- Blame others for problems & mistakes

If you answer yes to these questions, you may be at risk.

From Community Coalition on Family Violence

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2003 ROUNDTABLE

Gena Hull, Rachel Stottman, and Earline Kendall attended the Domestic Violence 2003 Roundtable at the Nashville YWCA July 16. Approximately 75 attendees represented the General Sessions Court, the District Attorney's Office, the Court Commissioners, local and state social service agencies working with

domestic violence victims. Topics of discussion included: Orders of Protection, Mutual Stay Away Orders, Ex-parte Order, and State Requirements for Batterers Intervention Programs.

This was the first such meeting in nearly ten years. Consensus of the group was that this forum should eliminate some difficulties in carrying out the duties of the courts and meeting the needs of victims and perpetrators.

**Reviewers needed for new  
"Surviving a Money Crisis"  
feature at**

**[www.frwc.org](http://www.frwc.org)**

FRWC has added a new section to its website called "Surviving a Money Crisis." Now, we need your feedback. The first 10 persons who indicate their willingness to evaluate the new pages by using the "Contact Us" link in "About FRWC" will be asked to complete an on-line response form. Once the completed form is submitted, FRWC will send you a copy of *Smart Women Finish Rich* by David Bach as a way of thanking you for your participation in this process.

Information at this site may be used by victims, mentors, family or other supporters of women in crisis or having financial difficulty. Let us know if the information is relevant and how you used it.

## **FRWC Asked Two of Its Monthly Donors Why They Support FRWC. Here Is These DONORS' STATEMENT**

Every month, we give FRWC a donation. The sum we give may not seem like much to many, but if the philosophy is “give until it hurts,” it about represents our threshold for pain. I’m not sure that our check really impacts FRWC’s bottom line, but we give it faithfully nevertheless. In preparing this piece, we spent some time reflecting on why we donate. Although Becky was raised in an atmosphere of tithing, my attitude is more self-serving. For instance, I am fond of pointing out that the only value better than a monthly donation to public radio is listening to public radio without donating anything!

Essentially, we support FRWC because it fits with our values. We both really believe that women can never be free of whatever oppresses them (whether it’s a batterer, a job they hate, or a bullying landlord) unless they are financially self-sufficient. We have each learned this from experience. And as the saying goes, you can give a woman a latte and she will be happy for an hour, or you can teach her to grind beans and she’ll smile for a lifetime. Or something like that. Anyway, FRWC doesn’t give handouts; it sees that women learn life skills that will buy the best thing of all—freedom. Becky has been connected with the founders of FRWC for decades, and we know that our donation is used

responsibly with the least amount of administrative waste.

In the end, we all just want to change the world. But who has a million dollars? We have enough to live on, and so we share with FRWC so that someone else may get a little bit more of what she needs. Each one of us who is financially secure has others to thank—so thank them by giving some back. Safety is even more important than public radio.

**Dana DeMoulin and Becky Porter**

*FRWC appreciates each donation and particularly the continuing support of monthly and annual donors. Each donation does make a difference in the bottom line of FRWC, and more than that, it helps women become financially self-sufficient and to live free of abuse.*

## **YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS HELP WOMEN SURVIVE**

### **PLEASE SEND THEM TO**

**Financial Resources for Women & Children, Inc.**

**645 Boylston Street**

**c/o PPUF, Old South Church**

**Boston, MA 02116**

## **SOJOURNER HOUSE UPDATE**

FRWC’s newest project is in Roxbury, MA. It is linked with the Roxbury Highland Cooperative Bank as a source of loans for families who are financial stable enough to secure a loan. A recent meeting with Anastasia Puopolo, director, and Zimma Mercer-Drake, house coordinator, indicates that there are former and current residents who are nearing loan recipient status.

Mentors are assisting residents to help them get out of debt, establish budgets, and find permanent housing. The program is helping families secure jobs and their own homes. Families, who are past crisis, are able to repay a loan, who can demonstrate financial viability become eligible for a loan.

FRWC is excited about this model of linking a bank, a social service agency, and FRWC to provide women and children a chance to live financially independent of abusers and creditors. We believe that this model has potential as a model for other programs in the country.

### **FRWC Has Helped Women**

- **Learn money skills**
- **Go to school**
- **Get reliable vehicles**
- **Move to better housing**
- **Improve their lives**
- **Support their children**