

The Outpouring Doesn't Match

by Linda Campbell, Executive Director

October was National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Did you know that it was also National Domestic Violence Awareness Month?

As I sat down to write an article I thought about these two potentially fatal health issues that have such devastating effects on women's lives. There are women near and dear to my heart who suffered from breast cancer and survived the physical and emotional scars it left behind. I also know women who lost the battle and died. At the same time, because 1 in 3 women experience domestic violence at some time in their life, I know many more women who suffered abuse inflicted by an intimate partner. Most have survived the physical and emotional scars it can leave behind, but some lost the battle and died. The American Cancer Society estimates that this year alone 207,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. However, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) estimates that this year, and every year, 1.3 million women will be physically assaulted by their partner.

I am not comparing the importance of breast cancer over domestic violence. I am however, frustrated about the overwhelming willingness of communities, sports teams, companies, etc., to acknowledge and support one issue, while turning their heads the other way to minimize the other issue or pretend it isn't important enough to deserve their support. I'm not saying there is no support for the work being done to end domestic violence. I'm saying there is not enough.

Over the past couple of weeks, I have listened to the news and read on the internet about sports teams wearing pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I read that one of the coaches was even teaching his team about breast cancer. What a wonderful thing to do. It would also be a wonderful thing to do if coaches would teach these young men about respect and healthy relationships. Why aren't they taking the opportunity to talk about these issues when they have such a captive audience? Instead, we continue to hear about high profile sports players accused of beating up their partners, sexually harassing or sexually assaulting women while the coaches minimize the accusation or defend the player. What message does this give to young men?

The Family Violence Prevention Fund reports that 74% of employed, battered women are harassed by their partner while at work. Why aren't more employers participating in domestic violence training, establishing policies and safety plans for employees, and insisting on a culture where there is

no tolerance for any form of violence?

Furthermore, domestic violence is a public health issue that directly or indirectly affects everyone, and impedes the well-being of our communities, our homes, schools, workplaces, parks, playgrounds and main streets. Women and children become homeless because of it. Children who witness domestic violence often carry the trauma with them throughout their lives and into the next generation.

With so much at stake, why stand back when you can stand up? Here are some ways you can help put an end to domestic violence:

- Role model non-violent and respectful responses to conflict.
- Find out what schools are doing to address dating and family violence, and insist that schools take action to stop bullying and sexual harassment.
- Become educated about the dynamics of domestic violence.
- If you are an employer, be accessible to your employees and create policies to address domestic violence in the workplace, including safety planning.
- Be aware of what is going on around you and don't be afraid to speak up against violence when you witness it.
- Volunteer for PAVE.
- Give a charitable contribution to PAVE.

Larry Norton, MD, researcher for the Breast Cancer Research Foundation said, "16 years ago we began our sentences with 'If we cure cancer...' Today it is not 'if' but 'When we cure cancer....'" PAVE has been fighting for a cure for domestic violence for 30 years. Please join us in the fight so we can begin our sentences with, "When we end domestic violence..." ■

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“Caring Dads: Helping Fathers Value Their Children” by Christine Williams, Family Time Director



As many of you know, Family Time partnering with Prevent Child Abuse Vermont has been providing a *Nurturing Parenting Class* for the past six years. What you may not be aware of is that over the past year more and more referrals to our program involve men who have extremely serious domestic violence charges. Many have just been released from prison and are beginning to rebuild a connection and relationship with their children.

Apparently, laws have changed, expelling higher-level offenders from jail into the community to be “supervised.” Many of these offenders, at least for a time, are required to wear a tracking device that allows the Department of Corrections (DOC) to record their whereabouts 24-7. They must submit a weekly schedule that requires prior approval by their probation officer. The objective of these changes is to ensure tighter supervision and improved accountability. Like it or NOT these offenders are in our community by increasing numbers. This is the reality Family Time faces, based on the nature of whom we serve.

This said, we find that the curriculum we use for *Nurturing Parenting* is not necessarily appropriate for parents who have perpetrated extreme abuse. The *Nurturing Parenting* curriculum is empathy-based parenting using nurturing and love. To this, we added a specially designed Family Time component on the “Impact of Domestic Violence on Children.” However, even this is not sufficient for the higher-level offender.

We have discovered a huge gap in services involving fathers coming out of repeated incarcerations who newly reunite with their children after long separations. They have little to no education around the impact that their behavior and choices have had on their children, yet they have a Constitutional right to visit and have a relationship with them. Nonetheless, we think there might be a program to fill the gap. It is called *Caring Dads*,

an intervention program designed for men who have abused or neglected their children or exposed them to abuse of their mothers. Designed to fill a significant gap in services to maximize the safety and well-being of children and their mothers, *Caring Dads* was developed and piloted over five years. This 17-session group program draws from best practices in the fields of batterer intervention, parenting, behavior change, child maltreatment, and working with resistant clients. We are committed to being accountable to the safety and well-being of women and children while at the same time working to engage fathers and support them in developing better relationships with their families. (<http://www.caringdadsprogram.com/> *Caring Dads Agency Site*)

We are pleased that DOC is currently reviewing the

curriculum and assessing its appropriateness for their clients. The program could potentially raise awareness and education levels for the community while providing an increased level of scrutiny and accountability for these “fathers.” An integral component of this program is the requirement of “checking in” with the referral source and also the “mother”/“victim” to see how and if he is making any changes, and if so are they sustainable and apparent in his interactions and relationships. The premise of the curriculum is that unless a batterer changes his thoughts, beliefs and attitudes about women, children, and relationships, it doesn’t matter what parenting education he receives. He will ultimately continue in his abusive patterns.

Before a community can provide such a program, one essential component is that it must form a Community Advisory Committee. This group of individuals should include:

members who could speak to the interests of children, women, and men. As such it (should) involve representatives from child protection, women’s advocacy services, police, probation and parole, custody and access and family court services, as well as providers of men’s, children, and families’ mental health services. (*Caring Dads Manual*, p 7)

The formation of such a committee, therefore, would take quite a bit of interest, investment and commitment from the community.

As a PAVE employee and the Director of the Family Time visitation center the lens I always look through focuses on seeing clearly the realities of domestic violence and its impact. My role is to help provide for the increased need for safety for women and children involving visitation orders. For some time, I’ve been thinking about the need for an additional parenting curriculum especially considering the increased numbers of cases involving domestic violence.

I believe it is part of my responsibility to ask others to join in the obvious concern for these families. Please consider what each of us can do to shed light on this gap in services and consider what else each of us can participate in to provide a community that holds batterers accountable for their choices, actions, and behaviors. Our hope is to maximize the opportunity for change by providing a highly specific program designed for abusive fathers, instead of grouping all the fathers and mothers into one parenting class that supposes that parents already have some capacity to empathize. Acknowledge that these parents and families live side by side with us and their children sit side by side our children within their schools. In light of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, think responsibly of how each may provide some vision, thoughts, time or funds to this initiative. Whether you might be interested in serving on an advisory committee, have relations or connections to any of the aforementioned disciplines, or if you just have a genuine concern and want to become involved or provide support in some other way please feel free to contact us at PAVE to see what you may be able to do. ■

How It Feels to Be Bullied

by Tara Parks, Family Time Assistant

BULLY. Just writing or saying the word can provoke many different feelings. A bully is defined as a person who intimidates, or is cruel to a weaker person. However, the word as each of us defines it takes on its own meaning. What does the word mean to you? Maybe in the past you were a bully or maybe you were the victim of a bully. Either label could make you feel uncomfortable because of the emotions that are linked to those memories.

Looking back, I can certainly remember being picked on and embarrassed by people who claimed to be better than me. I was often teased for the way I dressed and sometimes called a wannabe. I am 26 now and those incidences of bullying took place over ten years ago, but the feelings I had then are just as real now. I have always been quite shy and was too intimidated to stand up for myself in any way, and I didn't want to tell anyone for fear of further harassment. The bullying took place only at school, so I tried to ignore it and just get through the school year. Every decision I made that year was based on avoiding certain people and trying to find a group of peers that would accept me into their clique. Eventually I found a few friends I could sit with at lunch or talk to in the hallway, but I was still very lonely and lacked the self-confidence to initiate any healthy relationships. That summer as school ended, my mother and I decided to move out of state. I was relieved that I wouldn't have to see those cruel girls any more.

However, once I moved to a new school I had to overcome more taunts and bullying for different reasons. Now I was the new kid in a small school of kids that had known each other all their lives. I didn't realize it then but these instances of bullying no matter how large or small would affect me for the rest of my life. Although I know that it was wrong for my peers to treat me the way they did, I never actually faced the situation head on, nor did I deal with the feelings I had, not only about them but also about myself.

Now, as I get older, I have some regret about the way I handled the bullying. The people that teased me had actually convinced me that they were better than I was and that I deserved to be treated that way. I also realize that although I was excited to move away thinking things would be better they were not.

Many of my friends, family and co-workers shared with me their own accounts of being bullied, and it demonstrated overwhelmingly that I am not the only adult who carries around the pain of being tormented and harassed by bullies. I still struggle with building friendships or other healthy relationships due to not having developed the necessary coping skills all those years ago.

As we look for remedies to this ongoing crisis, seeing it happen all too frequently, try to remember that **even minor instances** of bullying can effect a child's emotional development. In every instance, try to be an active bystander when you know someone is being bullied and go to his/her aid. She/he may feel too ashamed to ask for help and be left

not knowing what to do. That person may carry invisible scars for a lifetime...or worse.

Resources:

<http://facs.pppst.com/bullying.html>

<http://momshomeroom.com>

<http://kidshealth.org> ■

Testing Employees Knowledge of Sexual

Violence by Nancy Feinberg, Volunteer Coordinator

During an all-day safety fair at one of the manufacturing companies here in Bennington, I had the opportunity to ask the employees to answer a short questionnaire on their knowledge of truths and myths around sexual violence. Employees from all three shifts were represented; they could refuse to take the survey; all answers would remain anonymous. The only demographics I collected were gender and (as an afterthought, unfortunately) their age if they cared to divulge it.

Out of the 102 employees who came to the PAVE table, seventy-three were willing to take the test—forty-two men and thirty-one women. Out of those, only forty-eight revealed their age, which I represented as men or women under the age of forty or as forty and over. The questionnaire consisted of thirteen questions.

I wondered if the survey would show men's and women's perceptions about sexual violence to differ significantly? Would age play a factor in how a person responded? Both men and women answered correctly to ten out of the thirteen questions at 83% or better. The following questions showed the most disparity:

One of the causes of sexual violence is exaggerated female and male sex role stereotypes.

48% of men and 61% of women thought this statement was a myth.

Men who follow rigid stereotypical roles tend to maintain dominance in a relationship; they need to be in control and make the decisions. Women are the submissive ones, stereotypically the nurturers and caretakers. When these stereotypical roles translate into sexual conduct, men feel it is their right to sexually assert themselves. The woman might be too scared to challenge his control.

Rape is an act of uncontrollable sexual desire.

33% of all the men and 22.5% of all the women thought this was a true statement.

58% of men under 40 and 6% of men 40 or above thought this was true.

20% of women under 40 believed the statement to be true.

100% of women over 40 thought the statement to be **false**.

Rape is not about sexual desire or passion. Rape is a non-consensual sexual act using power and control to get one's way—sex as a weapon. Forcing someone to have intercourse

continued on page 4

Testing Sexual Knowledge continued from page 3

is an angry response to not having sexual expectations met. Physiologically, men can control their sexual urges.

Telling your partner that you love them (when you don't) so (s)he will engage in sexual activity is a form of sexual violence.

36% of men and 32 % of women thought this statement was false.

Lying is a form of psychological manipulation to get one's way. It is a power dynamic that forces another person to not be able to make free and informed decisions. Violence is using one's

might, one's position to take advantage of another person.

The word "violence" confounded some survey-takers. They related the word to physical violence only. Sexual violence constitutes any form of non-consensual sexual activity and, at its most basic level, proceeds from verbal harassment to voyeurism, to lewd and lascivious, to sexual assault and rape, and ultimately to sexual homicide.

Did the survey serve a purpose? The results of the survey, though informal and unscientific, are interesting nonetheless. The day had eye opening moments. It got people thinking, asking questions, and friends comparing notes and chatting about their answers. Finally, it shows we have a lot of education still to do. ■

Understanding Cultural Differences

by Mary Grey, PAVE Advocate at the Bennington Police Department

On October 12th I attended a conference at St. Michael's for victim advocates and refugee/immigrant service providers. The intent of this conference was to provide opportunities for refugee service providers to learn about victim services...and for victim service providers to learn how to better serve Vermont's refugee and immigrant communities. I especially wanted to attend this conference because of a recent domestic violence case involving a woman whose Visa had expired and who needed help fleeing from her husband. She was now here in the U.S. illegally and that, in addition to her culture barriers, made this case most challenging.

At this conference, there were a number of workshops and one that I chose was: Defining Victimization Through Many Cultures. For the most part, the keynote address and introductory remarks were about the need for knowledge and understanding and compassion for immigrants and refugees who are victims of domestic violence. Barriers such as language, culture, socioeconomic, and legal issues make immigrants and refugees more vulnerable to domestic violence and sexual violence victimization in our society.

Reference was made to the **Iceberg Concept of Culture**, which is used as a metaphoric comparison to explain culture differences. This model demonstrates that people behave the way they do for a reason. The comparison to an iceberg

illustrates that we see only what is visible above the water: dress, age, race/ethnicity, gender, language, facial expressions. But the observable behaviors we see are only a small part of an individual's culture. There are many factors that are "submerged" in all cultures, including body language, sense of self, notions of modesty, concept of cleanliness, rules for social interactions, family practices, concept of justice, patterns of superior and subordinate rules in relation to status by age and gender, etc. Knowing where a person's behavior is coming from does not mean that you have to like it or accept it; however, this knowledge provides an understanding, and this helps to establish a successful interaction. The following are guidelines for a successful cross-cultural communication:

- **Pay Attention:** Try to clear your mind and concentrate on what is being said...listen and HEAR what is being said.
- **Set Your Assumptions and Values Aside:** Try to hear what they mean by what they say. It is easier to understand if you set aside your ideas.
- **Withhold Judgment:** Remember that other people do not have to agree with your ideas and you do not have to agree with theirs.
- **Be Complete and Explicit:** Be ready to explain your point in more than one way. Make clear "where you are coming from." Much meaning derives from the context. Communication is more successful when all involved know the context of the conversation.
- **Ask For Verification:** After you have spoken, try to confirm that you have been understood. ■

THE GIFT OF GIVING

Remember, you can always give a gift to PAVE in the name of a friend, colleague, or loved one. We will send a gift card to you to send them and share that they have sponsored a woman or child in need.

Second Time Around

will accept clothing in the name of PAVE.

Call PAVE to arrange for appropriate outfits for women and children for the new challenges in their life.

Family Emergency Services: Support Program for Families in Crisis

by Nancy Feinberg

PAVE and Family Emergency Services (FES), the Specialized Children's Services division of United Counseling Service, have collaborated for fifteen years to provide temporary, short-term emergency shelter beds for the community youth of Bennington County. Because of the diminishing number of shelter bed host families at this time and the indispensable need for them to fulfill a gap in services, I would like to offer the following Q&A with Keili Trotter, Family Outreach Clinician at FES.

What does a family crisis look like?

A family crisis varies according to families as everyone's needs and problems are different. However, some more "typical" calls concern a youth who is out of control of the caregiver, a caregiver is unable to protect or care for the youth, or alternative resources have been tried and been unsuccessful.

Whom do you serve?

FES serves any youth related crisis in Bennington County. Youth refers to families with children up to 18 years of age and young adults up to 21 who are homeless/runaways. Anyone can call with a youth related crisis including caregivers, service providers, and youth themselves.

What is the goal of the program?

The goal of FES is to de-escalate crisis situations and link families/youth to services for longer term as appropriate.

Are family crises reparable?

Yes, as long as the family is willing to work towards it.

What would warrant placing a child into a short-term shelter bed?

We do an assessment on the physical safety of a child prior to placement. Placement in short-term shelter is generally utilized as a preventative to custody of DCF or runaway/homelessness by providing a "break" for the youth and family.

Do you take kids and place them in custody?

No

How many children do you serve during the year?

The number varies but we receive around 160 FES calls a year in which services are appropriate and needed. Our division also serves a number of youth in the community, which at times need shelter beds and may not go through the FES on call system.

How often do you use the shelter beds?

We attempt to place young children in alternative

placements about fifteen to twenty times a year. If a shelter bed is available we prefer to utilize these, but at times we are able to find alternative placements if necessary. At times, we have young adults (18-21) who are in need of temporary housing and if necessary we can place some of these in hotels. However, some young adults being served do not have the necessary skills to be safe alone in a hotel, so we seek out shelter beds for them.

What happens to children if there are no shelter beds?

If there were no shelter beds, many more youth would be homeless, in custody, or have a legal charge against them.

What part does the Shelter Bed Program play in the resolution of a family crisis?

At times families just need a break in the moment "to cool off" in order to be able to come back together and work through distressful circumstances. Shelter beds allow this to happen for families who don't have natural supports. Additionally, shelter beds can help prevent runaway/homelessness by having a place for a child to go, when they are unable or unwilling to go home.

The Shelter Bed Program hasn't placed a child in a family home for quite some time. Why do you suppose that is?

We haven't placed any youth in a shelter bed for a variety of reasons, primarily unavailability of shelter beds in the home community of youth. Home community placement is a key component to longer-term success in many instances. Community-based placement is closer to services, school, and any job or activities in which the youth is involved.

What do you think I need to tell a host family to get them to sign up?

Shelter bed families/hosts provide an opportunity for youth to get out of the situation that they are in and begin to change their circumstances. Allowing a safe home environment where they can continue their daily lives and a level of normalcy is central to allowing youth to be open to the services needed to make their lives better, from counseling, to mediation, and vocational or economic services. Being a host family is an opportunity to volunteer your time, care, and home to a youth in need. Additionally, youth are screened by the FES worker on call for safety. You have 24-hour support to carry out responsibility and to address any and all concerns.

Please call PAVE at 802-442-2370 if you would like to volunteer to be a host family. ■



CONNECTIONS Literacy Program

Vermont Humanities Council sponsored the reading of author Mary Childers' *Welfare Brat* in the Bennington community. Individuals from The Tutorial Center, United Counseling Service, Southern Vermont College, Sunrise Family Resource Center and PAVE and Family Time Visitation Center read and discussed this memoir about the author's childhood growing up in poverty in the Bronx, New York. At the end of October, readers convened one last time to meet Mary and hear her read a passage from the book. She answered questions and filled in the gaps about her life, siblings and mother. (Mary, seated, is autographing a copy of *Welfare Brat* for Sarah, PAVE intern.)



PAMPER YOURSELF Workshop For Women

The premise is that if you take care of yourself you will be better able to take care of others in your life. This series of workshops is open to all women in the Bennington County communities. [Photos L to R, clockwise: Allison Bishop and co-worker Samantha (not shown) from JCPenney donate their time to give manicures; Laura Bull, owner of Massage For You, gives chair massage; Bishop Robin Hood Greene (not shown) gave make-up consultations using Mary Kay Cosmetics. These two women seem completely satisfied with their consultation.]

DEDICATED INTERNS are making a presence in town presenting a healthy behaviors activities group to children, and sponsoring the Healthy Mind Body and Family workshops for women; **on campus** informing students about a campaign for men to speak out about violence against women by men, and **at Pave** working on housing issues with clients. Thank you Sarah Y, Jessica, Sarah G., and Adam.

Children's Activity Group at Willowbrook



Give me a "P" for PAVE. Interns cheer for awareness during Domestic Violence Awareness Month



About Tiff

by Tiffany Blair, Outreach Assistant

When I became pregnant with my son at 17, I left the high school to finish school in the Opportunities Program at Sunrise Family Resource Center. This gave me the opportunity to have my son and still graduate on time. I finished my classes in January and received my diploma in June 2010.

In 2009, while attending Sunrise, I did a summer work experience through the Department of Labor (DOL). The Department of Labor has a program called the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) that provides a salary to young adults to get a foot in the door of a company in their field of interest in order to gain work experience. The program helps prepare them to enter the workforce, and gain the skills they will need to get and sustain a job.

When I began the WIA program, I was interested in working in an office setting. The DOL case manager suggested PAVE because they often need help in the office to help answer phones and other office assistant type things. This sparked my interest because I had heard of PAVE, and the mission of PAVE is something I think is very important. I know many people who have used PAVE's services and been thankful for all PAVE has done.

In February, under the WIA program, I joined PAVE. The position was to last three months. I got comfortable and was able to extend my experience for at least six months. After that, I was told, I would have to leave unless there was a job opportunity there. Knowing PAVE works from a budget that is grant funded, the possibility of a position was unlikely. However, the DOL also sponsors an on-the-job training program, which they presented to PAVE. After much deliberation and thought, the Executive Director offered me a position as Outreach Assistant.

What will I do as Outreach Assistant? Part of the job will be putting together the *Healthy Mind, Body, and Family* Workshops offered to women in the community. In addition, I will help with Family Time's *Hands Are Not For Hitting* and *Come Draw With Me* classes. When opportunities arise to go into the schools to do a presentation or event, I will help do that as well. Like all PAVE employees, I am an advocate and work directly with clients. I completed the volunteer training in September. Because I'm starting out, I do get nervous, like all new advocates, but I just take a deep breath, relax and do my best. I know it's a learning process that I have to get used to.

I am glad I have this opportunity to be part of PAVE's staff. I support the cause. Domestic violence affects everyone directly or indirectly. It is an issue I have grown up with and have experienced myself. Trying to get people to realize it is not okay to abuse someone is a rigorous task. It will be difficult to change the minds of those who think it is acceptable and those who know abuse is wrong but just pass it by. As Outreach Assistant, I hope I do my part to help educate the community about domestic violence in order to end it. I'm so glad to be part of this mission. ■

DV

The perpetual confounds
The ups and downs
Of a place so peaceful
Yet so violent.
Where teenage pregnancy and domestic violence
are commonplace
And people hide the fact simply to save face.
But that never works,
The batterer, the jerks
Infect those around them like a cold.
99% of the stories remain untold,
And children grow up to see this as normal.
And of those cases that are told, the formal court
system solves only few.
If there ever was a solution to this perpetual
problem, I wish I knew.
BE THE SOLUTION.

Adam Northup
Senior at Southern Vermont College
Internship at PAVE ...
Domestic Violence Awareness Month ■



Tiffany and Jessica, SVC Intern, working on their project

Giving Thanks

by Erin Skaar, PAVE Advocate to DCF

Hi. My name is Erin Skaar, and I am lucky enough to be the new PAVE Advocate to DCF. I'd like to tell a quick story about how I came to this position.

On Thanksgiving of 2009, I was home in New Mexico spending the holiday with my family; some of whom live there still, and others who came from as far away as British Columbia, Canada. After an incredible meal, every one gathered around the table to play cards. My stepfather and I chose instead to stay in the kitchen to clean up. He washed, I dried. We were just chatting. I had recently decided it was time for a change, and this man who has been in my life since I was seven years old put a question to me. If money were not a consideration, what would I want to do? The answer was easy, I wanted to advocate for victims, possibly patients in hospitals. Basically, I wanted to be a voice for people who felt they weren't being heard, or were having a hard time asking the questions they needed answered. At that time I was unaware that advocacy of any kind was an actual job. His next question to me was, "Why don't you do that?" I didn't have an answer, but the seed was planted.

When I got back to Vermont I talked to the man in my life about that conversation, and his response was that he thought I would do very well in this line of work. He is one of the great cheerleaders in my life. I next relayed the idea to a great local therapist. She was excited at the thought and asked if I knew about the Guardian ad Litem program. She gave me a brief explanation of what that was all about along with a name and phone number to call and off I went. I met Tony Krulikowski who interviewed me and accepted me into the program as an advocate for children who are in any way involved in the court system. It wasn't that simple, of course, there was training and a mentoring process to go through before I was able to take any cases of my own. Margaret Uebelaker was my mentor and she taught me how much a volunteer could do for a child in need of help.

At the same time I was told about PAVE, an agency that advocates for victims of domestic and sexual violence. I walked in the door, asked to speak to Linda Campbell, the director, and asked for a job. There were none available, but she asked if I would be interested in being a volunteer. The answer was, "Yes".

I started training as a PAVE volunteer just after my training as a Guardian ad Litem, or GAL, had begun, and I wondered if I were crazy. Not just to be training for two programs at virtually the same time, but to be working in two volunteer positions at once when I didn't even have a paying job. This is where my family came in again. Here I had the opportunity to learn all that I could about something that I had always wanted to do, but how would those close to me react when told that I was going to take both positions, immerse myself in them, while not bringing home a paycheck. My boyfriend said one hundred percent, "Do it!" I made the calls to my dad and step-mom, my mom and step-dad (he had planted the seed after

all). I told them that I wanted to take six months to really learn everything I could from and about these programs so as to do justice to both of them. Again, "Do it."

All of this was back around February. I worked the hotline for PAVE at least once a week, and took on a few cases as a GAL in the family court. In the months since, I feel that I've been constantly learning from incredible people who have dedicated their lives to helping others.

As a Guardian I have been able to be face to face with young people who, while in very different situations, have one thing in common: they need a voice. I have also been lucky enough to meet so many of the great players in these young lives, so many people whose one goal is to make things better and safer for their charges.

As an advocate on the PAVE hotline, I have learned to help empower women during what are often very scary and dangerous situations. I am fortunate to now be able to do what I've always wanted.

Though PAVE and the GAL program are very different entities, with different rules and procedures, I have found that they are often more alike than different. So much of what I've learned from one serves me well with the other.

Now that I have been fortunate enough to become a staff member at PAVE, I realize that my education has only begun. The people that work around me are more seasoned, have vastly more experience, and a wealth of knowledge that they are generous enough to share with me on a daily basis.

So, come the last Thursday in November, I will be giving thanks for a whole new chapter in my life. But mostly, I will be giving thanks for that night in the kitchen when a very wise man asked just the right question at just the right time. I also want to thank Linda Campbell and all of the people who work at PAVE for welcoming me into their number, and sharing their wisdom. ■



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What do we live for, if it
is not to make life less
difficult for each other?
~ George Eliot

I want to help make this a safer community.

I have enclosed a tax-deductible check payable to PAVE.

Please charge a donation to my credit card:

VISA Mastercard Exp. Date _____ 3-digit Security Code # _____

Card # _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$500 _____ Other

Name _____ Day Phone _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Contact PAVE to discuss volunteer opportunities. Thank you.

Mail to: PAVE, P.O. Box 227, Bennington VT 05201

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Miss ion Statement

To end domestic and sexual violence
and to provide supportive and
educational services to individuals,
families and the community.

We are grateful to the volunteers of R.S.V.P. who help assemble this newsletter.