

## Another Unreported Incident: Man Holds Woman and Child Hostage *By Linda Campbell, Executive Director*

More than 50% of domestic violence incidents go unreported to the police. The incident I am writing about is a true accounting of another unreported domestic abuse case. You're not going to read about hitting, hair pulling or strangulation. This case depicts how offenders use psychological abuse to intimidate, manipulate, and coerce a person into getting what they want. The events spread over two towns and affect people that I know about and those that I don't.

I was sitting at the red light at the Hannaford Plaza and noticed a car in the driveway of the Carbone dealership. A man was outside the driver's side door, walking back and forth, as a woman appeared from the passenger's side. She was going around the car, opening doors, seemingly distraught. Immediately I thought they were having car trouble.

When the light turned green, I drove slowly toward the couple, but something told me this was not about car trouble. Cars were passing by them, but I continued cautiously. As I got closer, I noticed the woman get into the driver's side. The man reached in through the window and then began walking in my direction, away from the vehicle. In my mind, I was sure he had taken the car keys. It was confirmed. This was not car trouble!

I slowly drove by and watched in my rearview mirror as the woman got out of the car, and ran toward the man yelling something. Then she turned around and went back to the car. Just as I drove around the bend, I saw the man head back to the car. I knew I had to go back. I was truly concerned for this woman!

I pulled up next to them. The man was yelling at the woman as she frantically pulled a stroller out of the trunk. She opened the back passenger's side door. A helpless child was strapped in the car seat witnessing all of this chaos!

I heard the woman say repeatedly, "Give me my keys." I asked, "Is everything okay?" The woman didn't answer, but continued to set up the stroller and get the young child (about 2-3 years old) out of the car. The man turned toward me and answered in a stern, but not loud voice, "We've got it covered. This is a personal matter." I knew this encounter had the potential to escalate, and I didn't want to put the woman, child or myself in (MORE?) danger. I sat there wondering what to do.

He started yelling at the woman again, as if I weren't there, except what he was yelling was obviously for my benefit. He told her "to stop it," "this is crazy," "this is my car," "my name is on the title." His message to me was, "This is her fault and, if she would just stop, everything would be fine."

All of a sudden, she put the child back in the car seat, got in the driver's seat, shut the door, and said, "It was my money," and "Just give me the keys." He turned back to me and said, a little louder this time, "This is a personal matter. You can leave."

I wondered, "Does she want me to leave? Is she afraid? What do I do?" She said again, "Just give me my keys." He responded, "When this lady leaves."

I knew he wasn't going to give back the keys, but I couldn't stand in the way of her having the chance to get away. I drove a little further up the drive. All of a sudden, he jumped in the back seat of the car, and they drove away from Carbone's.

It just so happened they were going in my direction. When I got into North Bennington, I saw the car on the side of the road with the woman inside. The man had taken the child and was carrying him/her up the road.

I pulled over next to the vehicle and asked, "Are you all right?" She was obviously distraught, her eyes fixed on the man and child. She answered, "I'm fine." I asked, "Are you sure?" She glanced at me quickly and said, "Yes, I'm fine." I understood that at this moment her fear was for her child who was being carried away from her. I drove away watching in my rearview mirror as she drove toward them.

This situation worried me. I had no idea whether the

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## Domestic Abuse Education Program for Bennington County *By Christine Williams, Family Time Director*

Many times in our PAVE newsletter, the focus is on victims, the services PAVE offers to them, or efforts made on their behalf. I thought it might be interesting to flip the focus away from who is being abused onto who is perpetrating the abuse. With this in mind, I will concentrate on one of the programs that men who abuse/offend in our community are mandated to take. The program is the Bennington County Domestic Abuse Education Program (DAEP). Following is my interview with Karen O'Mally, co-facilitator of DAEP.

### **What is the DAEP for Bennington County?**

Many still refer to the DAEP program as BIP (Batterers Intervention Program). The name was changed by the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence. The program follows a curriculum using the Duluth Model. It is a 27-week program that covers 9 different topics or themes: 1. Violence; 2. Non-Violence; 3. Sexual Respect; 4. Honesty and Accountability; 5. Trust and Support; 6. Disrespect; 7. Partnership; 8. Negotiation; and, recently added 9. Impact of Domestic Violence on Children.

### **Who is referred? How many?**

The Department of Corrections (DOC) refers men who have been arrested for Domestic Violence. The men are first-time offenders, and the majority of cases are misdemeanor offenses, some resulting in injuries. Many do not have to go to jail (at least not at this point). Occasionally, a man with a felony charge will get a referral. This past year, the program received 36 referrals.

*[Editor's note: We know that many incidents of domestic assault never get reported or prosecuted, or they are plead down to disorderly conduct or simple assault. This is the first time these DAEP offenders were convicted on a domestic assault charge.]*

### **Who would benefit? What are some of the benefits?**

I believe that any man who is in a relationship or expects to be in a relationship could benefit. As co-facilitator, I start with a theme that is a critical component of relationships and then open up discussion around that topic or theme. I ask challenging questions to stimulate thought and more discussion based on the men's replies and peers' responses.

Many of the men say they hadn't realized how many of their behaviors and treatment of women were abusive. Our participants frequently say they wish they had taken this class before "they got in trouble," long before they actually got "caught" and "into trouble."

### **Do participants think they belong in this group?**

Never, or rarely at the beginning. However, many times they can see their beliefs and attitudes change as the weeks pass. So they come to realize that maybe they can benefit from this program. I believe this is because the facilitators are always challenging the men's thinking and attitudes.

### **Do you get repeat(s) offenders in the program?**

Yes. But usually they go to jail and on to the Intensive Domestic Abuse Program (IDAP).

### **What are your favorite subjects/ themes?**

For me, it is the Impact of Domestic Violence on Children. But some of the simple topics such as trust or respect bring out so much through discussion.

### **Why do you choose to facilitate this group? Is it rewarding being involved in this program?**

I don't necessarily find it rewarding in the sense that I don't know how people do after the group. I believe the group is really important. I think often people are brought up in abusive environments and this is the norm for them. So, we are teaching them a new way of life. And they can choose *that* or not. We are giving them options of other ways to treat and relate within intimate relationships.

### **What are some possible shortcomings of the group?**

It's an educational program. I've seen some changes in attitudes within the group. How that plays out outside in their relationships is up to them.

### **Anything else you think might be important for us to know?**

In order to be allowed into the program, initially the men have to admit to some level of violence and take ownership of that violence or they are not allowed into the group. This is in order for them to begin the program with some accountability.

Another added component of this accountability is we do not allow the men to talk about their partners (the victim). We don't care what she said, if she hit him, what she did, etc. The message is, "We're here to focus on you and what you did!"

### **Thank you, Karen, for providing this information.**

I hope the reader is aware of the broader scope of domestic violence after reading this article. In coming newsletters, I plan to continue to explore and share the different programming efforts within our community that focus on and increase the accountability of the perpetrator. ■

Most people know of the popular reality show on MTV, "Jersey Shore". The show recently started airing the fourth season. During the season premiere, MTV showed clips of what is to come this season. As in previous years there are outbursts to be expected. Previews show Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino being brought out on a stretcher after what seems like a fight with roommate, Ronnie Ortiz-Magro.

After viewing this, I remembered quite often one of the roommates getting physical with one another. One incident that sticks out to me is the time Mike "The Situation" hit Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi in the face at the club. This altercation occurred in Season 2. Mike wanted to go home and was trying to get everyone to go. He slapped "Snooki" when she refused to leave. USmagazine.com reports:

"The Situation," 28, tells MTV News he was only trying to protect her and would never hit her.

"Snooki sometimes drinks a little too much," he says. "She is unaware of her surroundings and unaware of what's going on. Everybody was leaving, and she was the only one staying there. We usually go as a group and stay as a group. To avoid what happened in season one [Snooki, 22, was punched in the face by a bar patron], I really wanted to try and keep an eye on her and not necessarily slap some sense into her, but let her know, 'Hey, you can't be here by yourself. You're a little girl, and the whole group was leaving.' It was a little love tap."

Though he says he probably "went about it the wrong way," he tells MTV, "It's not like I punched somebody in the face. It's not like I did a full smack, a hard smack. It was a little tap to her cheek. Like, 'Wake up, you're going to get hurt.' And if you care for somebody, that is definitely acceptable, because you're looking out for somebody."<sup>1</sup>

"The Situation" here is not only minimizing what he did, but also saying what he did is acceptable if you care about someone. Here it is, in our media, minimizing violence and making this behavior acceptable. Millions of viewers watch this show and enjoy the drama that occurs in every episode. This is just another example of violence being acceptable in our media, the message it sends to all who view the show. In reality, violence is not acceptable under any circumstance. There is never a "good reason" or excuse where using violence is okay. Yet violence is in the shows we watch everyday. We must be aware of the messages that are in the shows and movies we watch, not to mention the music we listen to [read the following article about Pop Rapper, Eminem]. What message is the media giving the younger generation when hitting someone to show you care about them is perfectly okay?

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.usmagazine.com/moviestvmusic/news/jersey-shores-the-situation-defends-his-snooki-love-tap-2010810> ■

man was the child's father, or what he was capable of. I made the decision to go back, get the license plate, and call the police.

As I returned, I noticed the car stopped on a different road, by a number of trailers. The woman waited inside the car. The man still had the child. A young girl, probably 12 or 13, was witnessing the series of events. As I turned the car around I saw the man walk up to the car, and the woman jump out and run around to the passenger's seat. The man put the child into the car, got into the driver's seat, and they all drove off. I tried to get close enough to get the license plate number, but a car pulled out in front of me, and I lost track of them.

This is a classic scenario of an abuser using power and control to get what he wants. He was holding the mother and child hostage—by taking the keys, and then by taking the child and using him/her as a pawn to create fear to get his way. When you talk with women who have experienced this type of abuse, they will tell you that it is worse than any physical abuse. Imagine the fear of having your child taken away from you, not knowing what might happen.

Reflecting back on the situation, I wish I had gotten the license plate number sooner. That would have allowed me to call the police when I saw him take the child. I wish I had asked the mother if she and her child were safe instead of just asking about her. That could have given me some understanding of the level of fear she had for her child.

Nevertheless, I did something. Too often, the fear of getting in the middle of someone's business prevents us from doing anything. We shouldn't just drive by, turn our heads and pretend that it's not our business. It is! ■

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## What's a Pop Rapper Got to Do With Gender Violence? EVERYTHING!

Jackson Katz' blog [Eminem, Misogyny, and the Sounds of Silence](#) on the *Huffington Post* is a piece about the 2009 comeback of rapper Eminem. It needs to be read (warning, the language is very graphic). Katz admonishes critics who praise the music but avoid speaking about the volumes of hate-filled lyrics of alter ego Slim Shady that contain messages of rape, torture and even "homicidal misogyny." Katz finds that the acceptance and success of, even demand for, this type of music worldwide, and the accompanying silence by critics points to a huge character flaw in society—the refusal to admit that misogyny exists. Katz continues, "in domestic violence advocacy," enabling abusive behavior, minimization of it, and silence is "colluding with the batterer."

For the blog, Google Jackson Katz Eminem, or [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jackson-katz/eminem-misogyny-and-the-s\\_b\\_211677.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jackson-katz/eminem-misogyny-and-the-s_b_211677.html) ■

**Book Review** By Mary Grey, PAVE Advocate at the Bennington Police Department

*Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

*Chinese Proverb: Women hold up half the sky*

Kristof and WuDunn's book reveals a compelling look at the brutal violence and torture to women and girls throughout the world. And, reveals that females are of no value in many parts of the world. The authors' journalistic journey brings the reader to China, India, Cambodia, as well as the connection to westernized nations. In China for example: 100,000 girls are kidnapped and trafficked into brothels; 39,000 baby girls die annually from lack of medical attention and care; ultrasounds of pregnant women are performed for gender identification and female fetuses are aborted — "gendercide." In India a "bride burning" takes place approximately every two hours. No doubt, these are shocking, horrific and immoral statistics.

This book goes on to tell the story of three women who survived and thrived following their experiences of sexual assault, rape and beatings. Finding help was difficult. However, they are a rare example of women who were able to overcome their ordeals. They went on to recover and become industrious in finding a way to earn money (one woman started a coffee shop in a tent); thus, helping to support their families and thereby establishing "worth" in their communities.

Lest we believe this only happens in poor nations, the United States and other Western countries are not exempt. In America, millions of women and girls face beatings or other violence from their partners, and more than one in six are raped at some point in their lives, according to the National Violence Against Women survey. Runaway teenage girls are beaten, threatened and even branded with tattoos by pimps in our cities. And thousands of foreign women are trafficked into the United States.

Recently, it was brought to my attention that Bill Gates, Sr. had written a personal assessment of this book from the "perspective of a husband, father, lawyer and co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation."

After reading this book, Gates wrote that this book should be on your "must read list" because "it offers perspective, insight and clear-eyed optimism for why and how each of us can and should meet one of the great moral and humanitarian challenges of our times."

In this passionate yet practical book, the authors argue that the struggle for general equality is "the paramount moral challenge of our era. It is also a development challenge: unleashing women's energy is a key to economic success."

In my view, "*Half the Sky...*" is a call to action beginning with the raw reality of women who have been tortured, raped, enslaved and killed with no thought to value of life (of a female). I was shocked and moved by the statistics and stories of these women. This book is certainly a "must read," and, I believe, we all need to unite to end these horrific abuses "worldwide." ■

**"Fox News Compares Helping Battered Women to Getting a Manicure"** By Holly Schmitz, Finance Manager

Really? Whatever are they thinking?

This headline and article were written on August 3, 2011 by Justin "Filthy Liberal Scum" Rosario for AddictingInfo.org.

Rosario states that Fox News responded "against the Obama administrations' [sic] decision to have health insurance companies provide counseling for abused women with no co-pays." The following is a quote from Fox News Correspondent and Family PAC Federal Vice President, Sandy Rios on Fox:

Is the White House out of their mind? Does the West Wing not know what the left wing is doing? We're 14 trillion in debt and now we're going to cover birth control, breast pumps, counseling for abuse? **Are we going to do pedicures and manicures as well?**

So, what they are thinking, Rosario continues, is counseling for abused women "is just as frivolous as pedicures." They are saying counseling is a luxury and shouldn't be funded. Really? What an offensive, hurtful and unacceptable message to all of those experiencing or surviving the horribleness of abuse!

What will it take for the Sandy Rios' of this world to show compassion and empathy, and put an end to such ignorance and vindictiveness? Rios is literally equating birth control, breast pumps and counseling to manicures and pedicures.

Counseling can be such an important component for a victim or survivor to process their experiences and to begin the healing process. It's a way to help the victim feel connected and empowered to take control of her life and try to move forward.

As PAVE advocates, we see on a daily basis the far-reaching negative and costly effects on the well-being of victims, their family, friends, neighbors, communities, and society as a whole. The media, via the Sandy Rios', should be ashamed of themselves for degrading, minimizing and dismissing domestic violence sufferers, and for adding insult to injury with such hurtful sarcasm. Really!!!! ■

There is an ongoing **Women in Transition Reading Group** that meets every Wednesday at noon. If you are interested in

reading books that are inspirational, motivational, as well as informative, please contact Mary at 442-2633 or 442-2370.

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## Starting Point: Not Far From Nowhere *By Nancy Feinberg, Volunteer. Coordinator*

President Franklin Roosevelt stated, “Men [and women] are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds.” “I can’t do this” and “This won’t work because…” quickly become self-perpetuating barriers to someone ever moving forward.

Our clients struggle, and sometimes they struggle more from within than with the actual crisis. They create obstacles before any exist.

I thought of a young woman who recently crossed our doorway, who displayed a certain amount of defensiveness, understandably so because of all that had befallen her so far in her young life. She stated, “I want a different life, but life for me will never change; I might as well give up.” To her, “giving up,” i.e., returning to the abuser and/or ending up like her abused mother, was her only option.

Whatever her deep-seated reasons, she probably does not ask for nor, I suspect, accept help easily from social service agencies. I feel she presumes that “we too will somehow fail her.”

It is not our job to jackhammer away at her defenses. It is not our job to psychoanalyze, treat, diagnose, investigate the truthfulness of, enable or SAVE her. Our job is to support her. The difficulty, as I see it, is that we need to form a partnership where we both work to understand her goals. I should not have to work harder than she does to achieve her outcomes.

The primary barrier to overcome is to gain her trust so that she will feel comfortable articulating her needs – honestly, without a sense of feeling she is “owed” something (the flipside of not asking easily for help). The first order of business is to develop a safety plan with her (even if she plans to stay with the abuser). Then, we will try to provide information that oftentimes is hard to hear but that will help her make informed choices.

The process may extend into weeks, but that is okay. We need to be patient. If the process is working, we then tackle issues of everyday life, the results of which can have a major impact on self-esteem and moving forward.

The reader can only imagine the difficulty of working on goals with someone who sees nothing but obstacles, sees herself as worthless, and sees no potential for success. The tasks I am about to mention will seem daunting — a job, daycare, a G.E.D. [General Education Diploma], affordable housing (taking into account the need for first month’s rent and security, plus a good landlord reference), an updated resume, court hearings, eviction notices, counseling services, divorce and custody, visitation, support groups, outstanding bills, shutoff notices. These are no small tasks to someone wanting to pull the covers over her head.

To boot, many of the resultant problems have more bearing on the actions (or inactions) of the abuser than with our client who was bequeathed these problems through no fault of her own. [E.g., the abuser may sabotage her employment by constant phone calls or causing her to be absent; not pay bills

with money that she allocated for that purpose, ergo, shutoff notices.]

Will she ever see beyond the abuse and dead ends? Will she ever become self-sufficient and confident enough to meet (or exceed!) her basic human needs? We have to be realistic and patient. Along with our help and the collaboration of other agencies and community supports, the client has a better chance to go from victim, to survivor, to ‘thriver’. We know what amazing things women can do when they set their mind to overcome obstacles. ■

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### Gift Card Wish List



- Stewarts Gas Cards
- Stewarts Food Cards
- Kmart or Walmart gift cards (\$25.00 denomination)

### Other Wishes



- Fans
- New linens (twin, double, queen size)
- New bath towels and wash cloths
- Diapers (any and all sizes) ■

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## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Please plan to join us for PAVE scheduled events during this month, to remember and support victims and survivors of domestic violence.

- Domestic abuse is not always visible. It includes emotional, psychological, and financial abuse, as well as physical, all of which can leave scars.
- Remember the silent victims—the children. They may know first hand the abuse or witness it between their parents, on whom they depend. How confusing and damaging it must be for them.
- Be alert to changes of behavior in family members and work colleagues who may miss work or may suddenly seem withdrawn. If they say they are being abused, listen to them and refer them to the PAVE hotline at 802-442-2111.
- Be proactive. If you see or hear something that is demeaning to women, young girls and boys, say so. Put a little peer pressure on your buddies who act disrespectfully. ■

## INSIGHT

By Sandy Kelly, Advocate at Probation & Parole

I facilitate a women's group. It's a group of six or so women. We meet weekly to discuss a topic mutually agreed upon. This gathering can be full of laughs, tears, jokes, tremendous understanding, wisdom, support, and kind words. I have such great respect for each woman who is willing to show up, share and listen.

The most recent topic was on "Healthy Relationships." I asked, "What do you all think?" The response, almost unanimously, was, "Really? Is there such a thing as a healthy relationship?" I think, "Okay. Good topic. Here we go...."

Even though there are many kinds of relationships, our focus this evening was on intimate partner relationships. We took a poll. We all had been in more than one serious relationship. How ideal if it worked the first time, but we all agreed that, unlike pigeons, red tail hawks or coyotes that mate for life, we get the opportunity to keep trying to do it better. The cynics had to be settled down; then we continued.

Each group member wrote out a list of what she wanted in a relationship; the lists went on and on. *Respect, love, great sex, kindness, humor, support, family, trust, encouragement, to be listened to, challenged, and so much more.* One group member, while coming up with these words, said she felt as if she were in a dream as she said them.

Then we all compared our lists to what we have or have had in our most recent relationship. A few women said that "things are okay." Others had tears. Some women felt cheated and used. A few felt pretty defeated. Could it really be this way in a relationship? Why does it always start well and then shift?

One woman kept saying, "We learn by what we see and by what we are exposed to from our past." We all nodded our heads. "It's two people trying to come together, who grew up with and learned very different ways to be in a relationship, and those examples might not have been the healthiest. Now we try to incorporate that into our own relationship. Good luck!"

I wrote on the board:

**YOU + ME + RELATIONSHIP = HEALTHY**

**Vs.**

**YOU + ME = RELATIONSHIP**

Everyone's response was instant. The women were kind of smiling. Yes, we see it but how do we do it. We want it, we look for it, and we expect it. But it just doesn't work that way.

In the first scenario, there are three separate, very important relationships that need nurturing: 1. each individual's own relationship with self, friends, work, enjoyment, etc.; 2. your partner's own relationship with self, etc.; and 3. the relationship that you both have together. Many group members agreed that in the beginning of their relationship, they were "encouraged to spend time with family,

girlfriends, to take some classes."

We moved on to the next scenario: YOU + ME = RELATIONSHIP. Right away, the women were using the words "suffocating," "boring" and "dead end," "abusive." One woman stated, "When I had my own relationship with friends, that is when he gets jealous of my girlfriends and our time together got really bad... Things changed and I went with it, I almost didn't notice or I didn't want to notice. I got sucked in. I got lost. And now...?"

Our final thoughts, "If we know what a healthy relationship is, then why do we settle for less? Why does it change? What is my responsibility to our relationship?" How do we go back to the way it was? Or thought it was? Or do we even want to? All good questions.

Insight is a wonderful thing. It makes it pretty hard to continue to fake it.

It was time to end the group. ■

## FALL PREVIEW

**PAVE'S**  
**An Evening in Vermont with**  
**Vermont Storyteller Willem Lange**  
**And**  
**Made in Vermont Live Auction**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21ST, 2011**  
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**CLUB**  
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*Also for your enjoyment there will  
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### Our new fundraising website has a variety of benefits.

- Check out the Hot Deals page to get access to coupons and more.
- Go to the Partner Stores page to find specific stores that you'd like to shop from.
- Use the Search feature at the top of the page to search over 35 million different products and services.
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- Use Hot Deals to find special deals and coupons to save even more money
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is not to make life less  
difficult for each other?  
~ George Eliot

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**Contact PAVE to discuss volunteer opportunities. Thank you.**

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

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**Mission 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.