



# The Advocate Aspect

Family Support Center and Kids First Children's Advocacy Center – December 2011  
*Programs of Rural Resources Community Action – a non-profit agency*

## *Dear Friends,*

Family Support Center provides lifesaving services to those who have been victims of crime. Last year, our services helped 900 of your neighbors across this county deal with child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence and other crimes. This year we are close to helping the same number.

*The holidays are about giving.* This year you have an opportunity to help a neighbor in need. Give a gift this holiday season to someone you probably won't meet. Help a victim feel safe by giving them access to vital services to restore their health, healing and security. Our advocates – paid and volunteer – are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help. They provide immediate crisis intervention by working with law enforcement when needed, meeting clients at the hospital emergency rooms, providing emergency shelter for domestic violence victims and their children and offering support. And after the initial crisis, they work with each client to determine the next steps – work that may be one day or may go on over a period of years. As one client stated in her evaluation of the services she received: "My husband and I would have been lost in court without our Advocate".



Today, our Advocates and your neighbors need your help. We all know we are in challenging economic times. Much of our work is currently paid for through government contracts and as you know, the funding is being cut. We already have a large pool of trained volunteers and we fundraise all year long but this year it just won't be enough if the government cuts the programs from 10% to 100%, as proposed. Your donation can help us provide support for people like "Sarah."

Sarah was abused by her step-father when she was just ten years old. Her secret was too hard to tell when she was young but later in college she finally revealed it. An Advocate was there for Sarah every step of the way. The case did not go to trial because "Sam" accepted a plea agreement. An Advocate has helped Sarah connect with the local programs and therapists in her new locations. *Today Sarah is doing well.*

Sarah is not alone. From grandparents that are financially exploited by their grandchildren to women facing domestic violence, Advocates are there for victims. There is no duplication of services as no other agency in this county provides this service.

### ***Here are some ways your gift can make a difference.***

**\$25** buys 5 - \$5 food cards to feed children

**\$500** provides 25 clients \$20 gas cards to get to court or our office

**\$100** pays the cost of lodging for a domestic violence victim

**\$750** pays 30 hours of legal advocacy & support in court

**\$300** pays for supplies to be used in schools for two month's prevention work.

**\$1,000** provides one 40 hour pre-service training for 10 new volunteers

On behalf of all of our staff and the many clients we serve in our programs, we thank you for your generosity and willingness to give back to your community. *Happy Holidays!*

*Nancy Foll*, Family Services Director and *Robert C. Meshishnek*, Advisory Board Chairman

# ***Sexual Abuse***

## ***What is The Cost to our Economy?***

In the United States, someone is sexually assaulted every two minutes. In addition to offering support to survivors, working to prevent such assaults by addressing the causes is also crucial. Because dealing with the aftermath of sexual assault is so costly for our economy and for the quality of life of so many individuals, it is only logical and ethical to equally engage in strategic efforts to prevent sexual violence.

In 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that sexual violence, particularly rape, is a “noneconomic violent” crime.

According to research called “Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look” which explored the costs and consequences of personal crime in Americans, rape has the highest annual victim costs of any crime against persons at \$127 billion per year. Rape and sexual assault account for 1.45 million (9%) of the 16 million violent crimes and for 1.1 million victims (3.5% of all crime victims). The overall cost of violent crime to Americans is estimated to be \$426 billion. On an individual level, this translates into a \$1,800 per year “crime tax” for each woman, man, child in the U.S.

Sexual assault has profound, long-term effects on its victims. Ignoring the monetary benefits of crime reduction can lead to a misallocation of resources. Tangible, out-of-pocket expenses amount to \$5,100 of the total cost, the bulk of the expenses are for short-term medical care, mental health services, and victims’ lost productivity. However, intangible costs like pain, suffering and lost quality of life, is quantified at an estimated cost of \$87,000. While mental health care makes up 43% of tangible costs, the intangible loss of quality of life and diminished mental health contributes to loss in productivity, which is the second largest tangible cost. The policy implications of the study are: that prevention is the best way to reduce the high cost of sexual violence; that rape and sexual assault need to be identified as a public health issue to raise awareness about sexual violence; and that courts and prosecutors need to understand that sexual violence is an economic crime, to better protect victims and survivors of sexual violence.

While all of us lose to violent criminals, we must always remember that it is victims who pay the true price of crime, especially sexual crime, and that the economic costs are far higher than anyone has previously estimated.

Sexual violence prevention costs us less money as an economy, but more importantly it costs us much less as a community. Prevention is something that begins in our homes and in our families. It begins with conversations and actions that challenge attitudes and beliefs that support violence as a norm in our society. Prevention means being vigilant in our response to comments and occurrences of harassment, bullying, sexism and strict gender roles, misogyny and any other contributor to violence. We can all participate in creating tangible social change that influences the prevalence of sexual violence by how we raise our children, how we engage our friends and neighbors and by the kind of collective action we take to work towards non-violence in our everyday lives. Responsibility for this must be owned and embraced by the community as a whole.



From left to right: Paula Spurgeon, Lynn Mydland, Lisa Spurgeon, and Linda Kendall

## Welcome To our Newest Volunteers!

**Our Fall Pre-service Training qualified four new volunteers.**

The training was also attended by three Rural Resources staff members including Sally Jackson (Central Intake), Colleen Watson (FSC Receptionist), and Dianna Michaels (FSC Resource Development Coordinator).

A heartfelt **THANK YOU** goes to the following trainers who took time from their busy schedules to satisfy our training requirements. You were all wonderful instructors and every one of the trainees felt infused with strength and a fuller awareness following your class – you have enabled us to advocate for victims: *Nancy Foll, Linda Norris, Christine Wilson, Michelle Sakurai, Lynn Guhlke, Mary Page, Shamra Coy, Patti Hancock, and Shamra Coy (Oh...did I already mention her...I couldn't have done it without her!).*

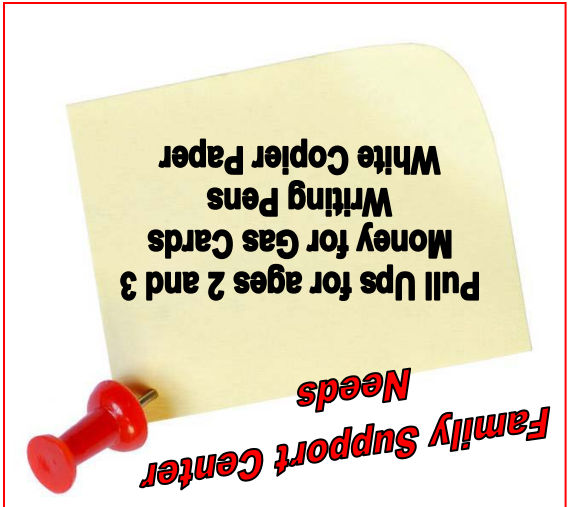
We are pleased to welcome the following new volunteers to the ranks of our other heroines and heroes:

**Paula Spurgeon** of Colville will join us on the Help Line beginning in January. She is also interested in serving as a Medical Advocate as soon as training is completed. Paula is passionate about helping those in crisis due to domestic violence or sexual assault and we all enjoyed her ability to listen and make relevant and helpful recommendations during training. To relieve stress, she recommends a long hot bath infused with lavender.

**Lynn Mydland** is a Chewelah resident and will begin volunteering as a Help Line advocate. She is also looking forward to drawing on her background as a family law paralegal to serve Family Support Center as a volunteer Office or Court Advocate. Lynn advocates the practice of yoga for relaxation and also recommends a monthly “date” with your spouse – a get-a-way weekend is just the ticket for her to de-stress.

**Lisa Spurgeon** lives in Colville and is the mother of Paula. Mom and daughter have both attended several years of Women Making a Difference. Following this year’s presentation, they decided it was time to join the cause as volunteers. Lisa will volunteer for the Help Line, Crisis Day Care, and as a Transporter. During the initial training, Lisa said, “It’s easy to write a check each year, but I want to do more to support this work.” Lisa de-stresses with enjoyable visits from her grandchildren. With a BA from Central and no children living at home, she is considering returning to school for her teaching certificate.

**Linda Kendall** also resides in Colville and comes to us with a wide variety of prior volunteer experience, including Stevens County Guardian Ad Litem, foster parenting, hospital auxiliary and Catholic Charities. She looks forward to assisting on the Help Line, Crisis Daycare and as Office Receptionist and Transporter. Linda recommends taking a nap to de-stress – which is a great idea as not many of us take advantage of making a quiet place in our daily lives to simply settle down and rest to rejuvenate.



**Family Support Center &  
Kids First Children's Advocacy Center**  
Programs of Rural Resources  
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*"Service is the rent we pay for living...it is the true measure, the only measure of our success. Think of those people who have paved the way for you and those who are counting on you to pave the way for them."*

*Marian Wright Edelman*

**Thank You for your donations!**



**Staff Members**

- Laurie Cole
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