



One Mission, One Voice

For Better Times

a quarterly publication

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Illinois Domestic Violence Helpline: **1-877-863-6338**

State TTY: 1-877-863-6339

National Domestic Violence Hotline: **1-800-799-7233**

National TTY: 1-800-787-3224

Survey of Survivors Indicates Gaps in Services, Prompts Call to Action.

Contributor: **Kathy Doherty**, Current ICADV Board President and Executive Director of Between Friends, a victim services agency in Chicago.

Beginning in fall 2007 through winter 2008, the ICADV Services Committee began conducting a series of survivor and service provider surveys with one goal in mind; to better serve survivors of domestic violence through a more effective course of action. Each of the Coalition’s 54 member service providers participated in gathering over 900 survivors’ responses throughout the entire state. The results were compelling and led ICADV to develop a plan to help communities step up and take action against domestic violence.

The survivors who shared their experiences and insights identified these as the areas of greatest need:

- Access to safe shelter and housing;
- Resources for increasing economic sufficiency;
- Accountability for the batterer; and
- Resources to heal from the trauma of domestic violence.

A summary of these findings was compiled by Dr. Diane Zosky of Illinois State University (ISU). Dr. Zosky is the Interim Director of the ISU School of Social Work, where she also teaches as a professor in this field. Her research and teaching interests center on domestic violence and the experiences of victims and survivors. As such, she was instrumental in assisting the Services Committee throughout the entire three-year process of surveying survivors to identify gaps in services and resources.

Based on survey results, ICADV published the October 2010 report, *From the Front Lines: Survivor and Provider Perspectives on Illinois Domestic Violence and Action Initiatives*. Both the full report and a summary of the “Call to Action” are available at www.ilcadv.org.

The report outlines what various entities--such as banks and financial firms, credit counseling agencies, tax assistance firms, job training and educational services, child care agencies, employers, federal and state agencies, legislators, community organizations and advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, community members and the media--can do to improve outcomes for domestic violence survivors.

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(“Survivor survey,” continued from page 1)

Some examples of action steps outlined by the report are:

- Employers can create personnel and health care policies, security procedures, and management and staff training that are survivor-sensitive.
- Faith-based organizations can ensure that their domestic violence outreach materials are available in multiple languages for effective communication with non-English-speaking survivors.
- Community organizations and advocacy groups can partner with domestic violence agencies and work to improve their ability to recognize and address financial abuse.

For their part, the ICADV member service providers are reviewing their own procedures and are strengthening their collaborative relationships in their communities, with the intent to ensure survivors the greatest possible access to those things which will enable survivors to escape abuse and rebuild their lives in safety.

Dr. Zosky’s analysis of survey results proved immensely helpful in learning what additional services and resources communities must provide if we are to ensure the success of survivors working to create violence-free lives for themselves and their children.

Dr. Zosky was able to use survey results to contextualize the impact of recent human services budget cuts on domestic violence services, and to show what could happen to survivors in our state in absence of the existing services that domestic violence agencies in Illinois provide.

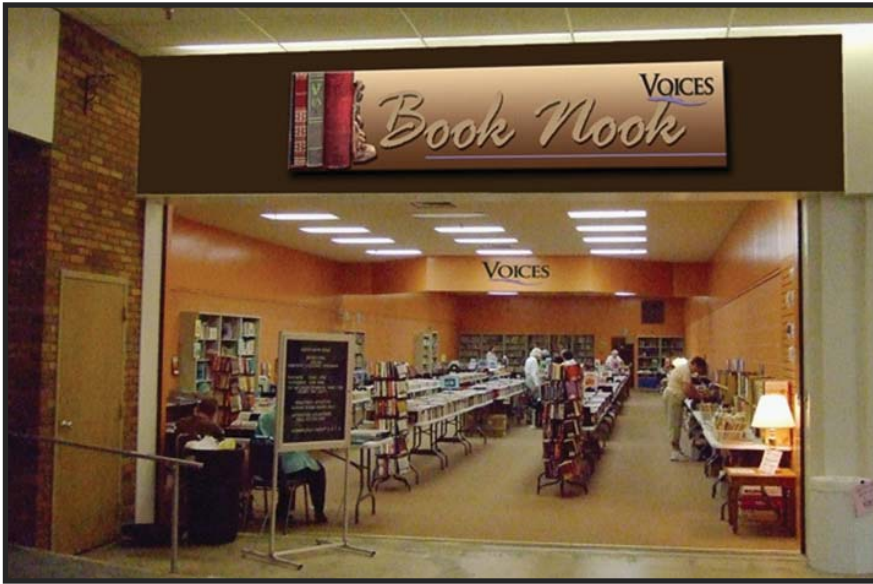
“The voices of survivors of domestic violence can be valuable to inform policy decisions on what women need to escape violent partnerships. The women’s narratives may also be instrumental in advocating for sustained or increased funding. From these narratives of abuse, it is apparent that the stakes are high and that for some women, receiving services is literally a matter of life and death.”

-Dr. Diane Zosky in “A Matter of Life and Death”

The same findings used to inform ICADV’s action steps led Dr. Zosky to write an article entitled, “A Matter of Life and Death: The Voices of Domestic Violence Survivors.” This article is currently in the May edition of *Affilia*, a feminist journal that publishes research on women and social work. A link to Dr. Zosky’s article is available at <http://aff.safepub.com/content/26/2/201.abstract>.

In her article’s abstract, Dr. Zosky explains, “In light of recent threats to funding for essential services, this qualitative study asked women survivors of domestic violence what they would do if their current services were no longer available. The themes seemed to span a continuum of resilience, from continuing to look for a way to escape the abuse, to uncertainty, to hopelessness and fear, and to resignation by staying in the abusive relationship. The majority of women reported that if domestic violence services were not available, they would remain with their abusers with dramatically negative consequences.”

By urging greater community-level and statewide investments in survivors, groups and individuals can save lives.



VOICES Book Nook: "Books, Music & More"

Contributor: **Laurie Gungle**, Manager of VOICES DV Book Nook

Built on a tradition that traces back 42 years ago to the YWCA, a not-for-profit bookstore located in Freeport, IL continues to offer "Books, Music & More." Staffed entirely by volunteers, the Book Nook is the premier fundraising arm supporting the advocacy, programs and services for victims of domestic violence in Stephenson County through VOICES DV.

Book Nook has its origins in the work of a group of women committed to helping other women. Looking for a way to raise money for the Freeport YWCA, they organized their first used book sale in 1969.

Those same committed volunteers stepped up again when VOICES DV was founded in 1982 to serve the needs of battered women in Stephenson County. Book sales continued supporting this new organization, providing much needed funding, for more than a decade. At this time, there was no Book Nook store. Instead, the book sales were special events that were held a couple of times each year in the Jane Addams Community Center in Cedarville, a small town north of Freeport.

After the fall book sale in 2008, VOICES DV Executive Director Anita Ramage was working with volunteers to re-pack boxes and move them to storage, as was done after each book sale, and she realized that the process was taking much too long. Something needed to change.

Fortunately, space for book storage was available in a vacant indoor mall on the northwest side of Freeport, which needed tenants to revive this once thriving strip. In January, 2009, the Book Sale group rented space and moved their boxes to this new location.

Customers came calling immediately. They saw the activity and wanted to know why they had to wait six months for the next sale. Why not open a store?

That year in April, Book Nook held its first sale in its retail space.

By June, Book Nook was open for four hours on Tuesday and Thursday, and the first Saturday of each month. All work continued to be done by volunteers, with VOICES DV staff handling volunteer scheduling.

From that point forward, things progressed rapidly. The Book Nook's hours of operation grew and the levels of staffing increased.

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("Book Nook" continued from page 3)

Last year, hours were expanded again to twenty hours per week. In January of this year, Laurie Gungel was hired as manager of Book Nook for ten hours per week. Most recently, in May of 2011, Book Nook hours were doubled. The store is now open forty hours each week.

Today, Book Nook is one of many stores in a very active mall, and volunteers continue to support store operations by doing the following: supervising store activities during open hours; serving as cashiers; sorting books; reviewing donations; setting prices; determining how best to display materials; and helping out during the special "Half-Price" book sales Book Nook hosts three times each year.

VOICES Book Nook hours of operation:

Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Thursday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

As Book Nook Manager, Laurie Gungel is responsible for volunteer recruitment, training and scheduling. This can be no small feat, given the roster of 90 active volunteers presently working at the store, but Gungel and all the volunteers are motivated by what they see as Book Nook's finest distinction.

"I have been involved with a number of volunteer programs in my career," Gungel explains, "and this program is different. When you ask volunteers why they volunteer, donors why they bring in their books, customers why they shop at Book Nook; you get the same answer: Because all proceeds go directly to support the programs of VOICES DV."

Anita Rumage, VOICES DV Executive Director, echoes those sentiments. "The money we receive from Book Nook is used for our overall agency operating expenses, specifically providing legal advocacy, domestic violence counseling, and transitional housing." That is truly something to be proud of.

A Snapshot of How the Book Nook Operates:

Our inventory of "Books, Music and More" include new and used books, books on tape (and CD), records, sheet music and music books, videos, DVDs, puzzles, magazines, and patterns for needlework and woodworking. We estimate that we have more than 50,000 items in the store at one time. Our volunteers have categorized these items into more than 150 topics, with explanatory signs. We recently updated our "map," showing customers where various topics are located.

Pricing: Our prices are based on used book pricing websites and our experience watching what sells. We do pay Illinois sales tax. We also have 10 corporate sponsors which help underwrite our rent. Each has a large sign posted on the walls of the store.

Tallying Donations: We invite customers to bring donated books and materials to the store any time we are open, and folks bring books every day. Once or twice a year, we also hold a "Book Drop." At those times, we post volunteers at the mall entrance and invite area residents to drive up and let us unload books from their trunks.

Domestic Violence Spotlight: Family Rescue Develops Sexual Safety Plan

Contributor: **Theresa DuBois**, Family Rescue, Chicago

If we are talking to women about safety, we need to talk to women about their health and their sexual health.

It is not uncommon for sexual abuse to be part of the domestic violence experience for women, and many victims are unable to negotiate safer sex practices. Women who are abused often have difficulty accessing services such as health care, and abusers may prevent victims from receiving needed medical attention. HIV/AIDS is the number one cause of death in young African American women, and the fourth leading cause of death for Latinas, and the number six leading cause of death for all women.

For all these reasons, Family Rescue began working with Susan Spencer in 2009 on bringing sexual safety planning to survivors. Spencer, a nurse and social worker from Pennsylvania, operates a consulting firm that works on the issues of domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. She has done extensive work with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Women's Health, and she has been active with both homeless services and domestic violence services, focusing on bringing health resources to these communities of clients.

Spencer first learned about Family Rescue through the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network. To better facilitate collaboration, Spencer contacted Family Rescue and Chicago House, a local HIV/AIDS awareness and service provider.

Once program directors began meeting with Spencer, they came up with the following ideas to guide their work together:

- Family Rescue staff would be trained on how to address HIV and other sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) during group and individual intervention work.
- Spencer would provide basic training on the intersect of domestic violence and HIV. Spencer would also provide training on facilitation using the Health Group Intervention Model.
- Chicago House would provide monthly check-in educational meetings with the Family Rescue Staff. Family Rescue staff would then facilitate discussions on those topics with clients, individually and in groups.
- Family Rescue would institute a sexual safety plan with clients.

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("Family Rescue" continued from page 5)

Program directors also agreed to continue working together, discussing needs for further training with Chicago House and talking about client needs around the intersect of domestic violence and HIV/AIDS and other STIs.

From 2009 to 2010, Family Rescue implemented a number of important changes that reflected the insights and expertise gained from working with Susan Spencer and Chicago House. At the Rosenthal Family Lodge Program, (one of the programs operated by Family Rescue), staff and clients embraced the idea of doing group sessions every six weeks on the topic of HIV and sexual safety, as well as incorporating the topics into individual work with clients. Rosenthal and Ridgeland (a family apartment housing program operated by Family Rescue) also sponsored Chicago House to come to their site to talk about HIV/AIDS and other STIs with clients. Community Outreach programs at Family Rescue also decided to introduce this information in groups and individually with clients when opportunities to do so arose.

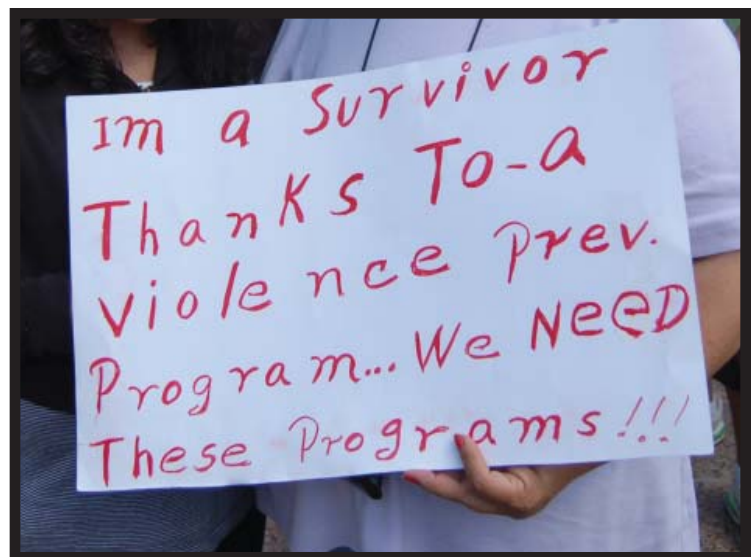
At the same time that these other changes were taking place, Family Rescue's Residential Programs instituted a sexual safety plan with clients who came in for services. *(A copy of this safety plan is included on the adjoining page.)* The sexual safety plan helps inform women of their options when seeking safer sex practices. As with all safety plans, the focus is on helping the individual figure out what works best for her.

In 2011, Family Rescue continues collaborating with Susan Spencer on the intersect of HIV/AIDS and domestic violence, while bringing greater focus to the role of sexual assault and abuse in intimate partner violence.

One of the key trainings Family Rescue hosted was one on "Strategies to Address Reproductive Coercion," which explains how the power-control dynamics of abuse can jeopardize victims' sexual safety and limit their access to family planning. Presenting along with Susan Spencer was Dr. Anna Nunez, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Women's Health Education Program at the Drexel University College of Medicine.

Presenters emphasized that often domestic violence includes sexual assault and rape, fear of negotiating birth control use, and interference with birth control and health care. By specifically addressing sexual assault and sexual safety, Family Rescue is working in conjunction with a nation-wide movement to bring greater awareness about the additional layers of health care needs that victims and survivors of domestic violence have. Though emergency medical treatment is important for victims and survivors, ongoing and preventative health care is vital as well, especially considering sexual abuse, coercion and control that often occurs within a larger pattern of domestic violence.

Having completed some "Train the Trainers" work, staff from Family Rescue are now in the process of training additional agencies on the intersection of HIV/AIDS and domestic violence. By sharing all that we've learned, we hope to ensure that across the state, survivors of domestic violence have greater access to life-saving information and services.



Sexual Safety Planning

A sexual safety plan can help you identify ways to protect yourself from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI). It will give you an awareness of your personal and community resources.

Safer Relationship with an Injection Drug User:

- Have access to safer injection kits and information about safer injection practices
 - Find out if partner is sharing needles with other users
 - Cook partner's dose (allowing you to control if the needle is clean or not; or if your partner shares their works)
 - Clean partner's needles and syringes
 - Use condoms when you think your partner might be sharing needles/syringes
 - Talk to your partner about testing for HIV and other STIs
 - Get tested for HIV on a regular basis, as well as other STIs
 - Don't touch sores like herpes or genital warts.
- Visually inspect your partner's genitals before engaging in sex

Safer Sex with a man who is HIV +:

- Talk to your partner about using male condoms and female condoms
 - Use extra lubricant during penetrative sex
 - Have your partners pull out before ejaculating if you are not using a condom
 - Have information about PEP (post exposure prophylaxis)
 - Talk to your partner about medication adherence and their viral load
 - Negotiate for vaginal sex over anal sex
 - Negotiate for oral sex or mutual masturbation instead of intercourse
 - Avoid coming into contact with bodily fluids as much as possible
 - Get tested for HIV on a regular basis (every three months), as well as other STIs
 - Don't touch sores like herpes or genital warts.
- Visually inspect your partner's genitals before engaging in sex

SIGNATURE: _____

FR#: _____

DATE: _____

Safer Sex with a man of unknown HIV status:

- Talk to your partner about using male condoms or female condoms
 - Use extra lubricant during penetrative sex
 - Have your partners pull out before ejaculating if you are not using a condom
 - Negotiate for vaginal sex over anal sex
 - Negotiate for oral sex or mutual masturbation instead of intercourse
 - Avoid coming into contact with bodily fluids as much as possible
 - Get tested for HIV on a regular basis (every six months), as well as other STIs
 - Don't touch sores like herpes or genital warts.
- Visually inspect your partner's genitals before engaging in sex

Safer Oral Sex with a man:

- Do not brush or floss your teeth before performing oral sex
 - Use a male condom if possible during oral sex
 - Have your partner use a dental dam if they are performing oral sex on you
 - Learn how to cheek a condom for oral sex
 - Don't touch sores like herpes or genital warts.
- Visually inspect your partner's genitals before engaging in sex

Safer Sex with a woman:

- Keep sensitive mucous membranes (vagina, anus, mouth) away from your partner's fluids (particularly vaginal discharge and blood) by using barriers like condoms or dams
- Don't touch sores like herpes or genital warts.
- Clean sex toys before sharing, or use a new condom on toys for each partner

I HAVE REVIEWED THIS SEXUAL SAFETY PLAN WITH MY ADVOCATE.

Executive Director's Note: International Delegates Seek Information on Victim Services; Show Scope of Movement to End Domestic Violence

Contributor: **Vickie Smith**, Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer of ICADV

Over the past year, I along with some other ICADV folks have had some wonderful opportunities to meet with three delegations from other countries. These delegations traveled to the United States and met up with us in the Chicago area to learn about our responses and services to victims of domestic violence.

Delegates in the the first group visited last fall, coming from a number of countries in North Africa. ICADV Chief Operations Officer, Sarah Conlon, and I went directly from our annual retreat to the Apna Ghar offices to meet with them. The second delegation was from St. Petersburg, Russia. Linda Healy (former Executive Director of Mutual Ground in Aurora) and Gretchen Vapnar (Executive Director of Community Crisis Center in Elgin) attended that meeting with me, as they had previous experience going to Russia and Poland to discuss victim services.



Finally, this spring in Chicago I met a delegation from Serbia. Representatives from the Illinois Department of Human Services—including Sharon Spinks, Karin Manning, and Secretary Michelle Sadler--joined us.

Each delegation was unique, but shared similarities. Each group brought representatives of government agencies looking at violence against women. It appears that the governments of a number of these countries are very serious about addressing domestic violence. It also appears that issues of inequality are universal.

Each group had great questions and expressed a lot of interest in what we do here in Illinois. I was most fascinated by the ability of the translators to listen and then repeat what was being asked or shared. I was also very impressed by the sincerity of the members of each delegation, and their dedication to addressing domestic violence in their countries. All delegations asked questions about how to get professionals to follow the laws.

I hope to have more opportunities to meet with delegations from other countries in the future. I am also very interested in hearing from any readers of *For Better Times* about your experiences going to another country to discuss violence against women.

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For \$25 a year, you can support our mission to end domestic violence in Illinois. Friends of ICADV receive public policy alerts as well as information about any upcoming ICADV trainings and events.

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http://www.ilcadv.org/Get_Involved/JoinICADV/join_icadv.html

