

FROM THE DESK OF OUR DIRECTOR

WELCOME TO SPRING!!

I think that all of us are glad to put behind us an unexpectedly challenging winter and look forward to long days and warm nights. Mountain Comprehensive Care Center's Victim Services Program continues in our efforts to end violence in our community.

Several members of our program went to Frankfort on February 26th to participate in the State-wide Sexual Assault Awareness Month Kick-Off at the Capitol Rotunda. Governor Steve Beshear signed a proclamation designating March as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in Kentucky. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services presented an Innovative Program Award to Kentucky's Regional Rape Crisis Centers for their leadership in the Green Dot Initiative, an Innovative Program that is changing how people think and act to prevent rape and other forms of power-based violence. "The programs and people we honor today are making such progress in the prevention of sexual assault," said Janie Miller, secretary of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). "They are teaching, with significant results, that sexual violence toward anyone is not acceptable." As part of the Green Dot Initiative, every act of sexual violence - stalking, partner violence, rape, child abuse -- is considered a "red dot." Each "Green Dot" represents a single incident that can be used to support the victims of sexual violence or decrease the incidences of sexual assault. "By simply raising the topic of sexual assault, we have placed a huge 'Green Dot' on the map of Kentucky today," Miller said. "Discussion is the first step to educate men, women and children that sexual assault hurts us all. Talking about it, or just listening, makes us part of the solution."



Margaret Banks, retired MCCC Victim Services Program Director, was recognized as a 2009 Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAMy) Award winner for her dedication in serving victims of interpersonal violence as well as her leadership in envisioning a future without violence.



On March 18, the Victim Services Program helped co-sponsor the 10th annual Stand Up for a Brighter Tomorrow - A Mental Health Conference on the Emotional Wellbeing of Children and Adolescents at the Ramada Inn, Paintsville. We were able to offer free CEUs to over 275 participants. Most of our workshop presentations were geared toward helping professionals, parents, teachers and others increase their knowledge about issues related to the emotional and/or psychological effects of interpersonal violence on children.

During April, Victim Services Staff provided blue ribbons to Mountain Comprehensive Care Center and others in honor of Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month.

I encourage every person who reads this newsletter to think about what you can do to help the efforts across our communities to bring awareness to the issue of interpersonal violence and to help us in our goal of making our communities a safer place. Please take the time to learn more about the Green Dot Campaign. With enough green dots, we can make a social change.

**WHAT IS
 YOUR
 GREEN DOT?**

**Our Volunteers
 Are
 Truly Appreciated**

On April 20th, 2009, during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, we celebrated the services provided by our volunteers by honoring them with an appreciation luncheon.

Each Volunteer received a gift and a pin, which read "Volunteers The Heart of the Community. You're special to us because of all you do. Your Care and dedication always comes through. Thanks for your efforts and helpful ways. Please accept our appreciation and heartfelt praise".

The Volunteers present to receive these appreciation gifts were Melvin Hamilton, Jr., Bob Hyden, Melissa Cole and Donna DeRossett. We would like to take this opportunity to thank these wonderful people who give of themselves to help make our program work.

A big THANKS!



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the Victim Services Program, please contact Linda Spurlock at 886-4323. You will receive an application packet. Fill it out, return it to Linda, and step up to the best job you will ever love!!!

LEARNING FROM CHILDREN

As she stood in front of her 5th grade class on the very first day of school, she told the children an untruth. Like most teachers, she looked at her students and said she loved them all the same. However, that was impossible, because there, in the front row, slumped in his seat, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.

Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed that he did not play with the other children, that his clothes were messy, and that he constantly needed a bath. In addition, Teddy could be unpleasant. It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, marking bold X's, then putting a big "F" at the top of his papers.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child's past record, and she put Teddy's off until last. However, when she reviewed his file, she was in for a surprise. Teddy's first grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners.....he is a joy to be around."

His second grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student, well liked by his classmates, but he is troubled his mother has a terminal illness, and life at home must be a struggle."

His third grade teacher wrote, "His mother's death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best, but his father doesn't show much interest, and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren't taken."

Teddy's fourth grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends, and he sometimes sleeps in class."

By now, Mrs. Thompson realized the problem, and she was ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents, wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy's. His present

was clumsily wrapped in a heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag.

Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents. Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that was one-quarter full of perfume. But she stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume on her wrist.

Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to." After the children left, she cried for at least an hour.

On that very day, she quit teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Instead she began to teach children. Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy. As she worked with him, his mind seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had become one of the smartest children in the class and despite her lie that she would love all the children the same, Teddy became one of her "teacher's pets."

A year later, she found a note under her door from Teddy telling her that she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in life.

Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it and would soon graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best and favorite teacher he had ever had in his whole life.

Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he ex-

plained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had, but now his name was a little longer.....The letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, MD.

The story does not end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy said he had met this girl and was going to be married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago, and was wondering if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit at the wedding in the place that was usually reserved for the mother of the groom.

Of course, Mrs. Thompson did and guess what? She wore the bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. Moreover, she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together.

They hugged each other, and Dr. Stoddard whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you Mrs. Thompson for believing in me. Thank you so much for making me feel important and showing me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you."

(For those of you who don't know, Teddy Stoddard is the Dr. at Iowa Methodist in Des Moines who has the Stoddard Cancer Wing named after him.) Author Unknown

*The World breaks everyone, and
afterwards, some are strong at
the broken places...
Ernest Hemingway*

More On The Green Dot

If you received our newsletter last Fall, you may have read about the Green Dot Violence Prevention Initiative. Well, there is more to the story.....

As our Educator begins to implement this program into her educational presentations, we have discovered that people are truly catching on to the concept— the concept being "preventing violent acts before they happen"! What a concept! This doesn't mean you put yourself in harms way if you see violence begin to happen (because most violent acts

happen where there are no witnesses), but it means doing little things to prevent violence from occurring, such as teaching our children to respect the rights of others; or by taking friends with you when you attend a party where there may be drinking and returning home with those friends; or by saying a kind word about a child who may be acting out in Walmart to their mother who seems quiet frustrated, any act that can cause the person to think before they use violence to end a situation. You can be the

Green Dot that stops violence before it happens. How can you be the non-violence that you want to see in this world?

WHAT IS YOUR GREEN DOT?

(For more information contact our Educator at 886-4359)

The best way out is always through.
Robert Frost

CHILD ABUSE: YES, IT IS YOUR BUSINESS

Many people are afraid of reporting child abuse. They tend to not report because they think, "I don't want the person I reported to know," or "It's not my business". If you were a witness to a car accident, would you help the people involved? Of course you would, but in the case of someone else's children, most people think that the children are the "parents' responsibility" or "their property". Without caring, aware adults, some children might never receive help. Be an advocate for children by knowing the signs of child abuse and reporting it. You could be saving a child's life! If you suspect a child is being abused, report it and let the people who are trained in such matters to assess the symptoms.

SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:

Unexplained bruises and welts on the face, throat, arms, legs or other parts

of the child's body.

Unexplained burns, cigarette burns, especially found on the palms, soles of the feet, abdomen, immersion burns on hands or legs. Rope burns.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:

Behavioral extremes (withdrawal, aggression, regression, depression).

Inappropriate or excessive fear of a parent or caretaker.

Antisocial behavior such as substance abuse, truancy, running away, fear of going home. Unusual shyness, wariness of physical contact.

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:

Frequent, unexplained sore throats, yeast infections or urinary infections.

Somatic complaints, including pain and irritation of the genitals.

Sexually transmitted diseases.

Bleeding or bruises from external genitalia, vagina or anal region.

Pregnancy.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:

The child's disclosure of sexual abuse.

Regressive behaviors (thumb sucking, bedwetting, fear of the dark).

Promiscuity or seductive behaviors.

Disturbed sleep patterns (nightmares).

Unusual and age inappropriate interest in sexual matters.

Sudden decline in school performance.

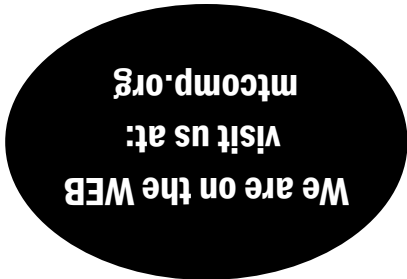
Difficulty in walking or sitting.

SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

Eating disorders, (obesity or anorexia).

Speech disorders

Developmental delays in



CHILD ABUSE: YES, IT IS YOUR BUSINESS

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Weight or height levels well below the normal ranges.

Nervous disorders (rashes, hives, facial tics, stomach aches).

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

Habit disorders (biting, rocking, head-banging).

Behavioral extremes, such as being overly compliant or being very demanding, withdrawn or aggressive, listless or excitable.

SIGNS OF NEGLECT:

Poor hygiene, lice, scabies, body odor.

Unsuitable clothing for the current weather.

Untreated injury or illness.

Height and weight well below normal range.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF NEGLECT:

Unusual school attendance.

Chronic hunger, tiredness, or lethargy.

Reporting no caretaker at home.

If a child you know exhibits these or similar symptoms, report it to the Department for Protection and Permanency at 1-866-229-2196, you may remain anonymous, the child may never know it was you that made the report, but it may just save their life. Report, it is your business!

For more information or to talk to someone who can help you think through the situation call our Crisis Line at 1-800-422-6010.