

STAND!
Against Domestic Violence™

32 years
of service

Options

SPRING 2010

Embrace Change

“The important thing is this: To be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become.” ~ Charles DuBois

Dear Friends,

Everyday we ask our clients to embrace change in their journey toward rebuilding lives for themselves and their children. We are now asking ourselves to do the same. **It is with great excitement that we announce the merger of STAND! Against Domestic Violence and the Family Stress Center.**

Joining together with the Family Stress Center (FSC) will enhance services to vulnerable families, strengthen our mission, and benefit the community.

In keeping with our values, our decisions at STAND! are driven by the needs of our clients. Many victims of domestic violence go to courageous lengths to protect their children from abusive partners. As mothers and sometimes fathers, our clients worry that the abuse that their children have witnessed or experienced will have a severe and long-lasting impact on their development. And this parent's intuition often proves correct: studies show that children who witness abuse or are abused themselves are much more likely to grow up to be abused as adults or abuse their own family members.

Understanding the need to address children's recovery from trauma, STAND! has run children's counseling programs for over thirteen years. However, we recognize that serving traumatized children **holistically** can mean stepping into areas with which STAND! has little experience, such as addressing child abuse directly and specifically. The Family Stress Center (FSC) has over thirty years of experience confronting child abuse as a core component of its mission.

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Chard-N-Hay!



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from the Executive Director

BY GLORIA J. SANDOVAL



STAND!'s current mission is to lead the community in ending domestic violence and rebuilding lives. Having worked with victims of domestic violence and their children for over thirty years, we

know that those with the greatest power to end the cycle of violence are the children. If we can stop the violence for a child and help that child recover - never to be abused or commit abuse in the future - we will have intervened in the cycle and taken a huge step toward ending domestic violence in our communities. Working seamlessly to end child abuse and

domestic violence while promoting healthy families are the best ways to prevent family and community violence from occurring in the future.

As part of the battered women's movement, STAND! has worked tirelessly over the years to move violence in homes from a dark and secret private matter to recognition as a pressing national public health concern, a serious law enforcement issue, an educational priority, and a community initiative.

As a merged agency we will continue our critical work with victims of domestic violence and child abuse. We see all types of violence to be profoundly interrelated – intimate partner violence, child abuse, and community violence all reinforce each other. We know that children replicate the behavior they learn in the home, and when children are abused they tend to be violent in their schools, the community, and as adults. As we jointly expand our impact into the realm of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, our combined expertise will help us to reach more families in need to stop the violence and abuse.

Merging our agencies, our reinforcing services, and our complementary mission statements will lead to better outcomes for vulnerable families, a stronger commitment to our mission to

end domestic violence and child abuse, and more focused services in the community.

Let me share with you some of the process that went into making this merger a reality. While in conversation about our services in late 2008, STAND! and FSC devised a radically simple idea for surrounding the problem of family violence in our community. That idea was to merge into a single agency with a broader scope of services and a deeper experience with all clients, from newborn infants to whole families. We then convened a joint task force of Board Members and Executive Directors to study the idea in detail, fleshing out the possible risks and benefits of creating a unified family violence agency. As a member of that task force, I am proud to say that our work was extensive, collaborative, and successful.

The deep, intensive discussions necessary to make a decision to merge would not have been possible without specific funding support from local foundations. The Leshner Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, and the Y&H Soda Foundation, each a leader in our community, provided the support that allowed us to carry out the conversations that led us to this momentous point. Effective July 1, 2010, STAND! and FSC will become one; a stronger agency providing even more comprehensive and encompassing services.

You may be asking, "What will this new agency look like?" Well, neither STAND! nor FSC will lose any of the services that we currently provide. We have each made a commitment to assist domestic violence and child abuse victims maintain safety and rebuild their lives, and we will continue to meet the needs of victims of family violence. However, as a merged agency, we will now be able to address the problem of family violence holistically. We will integrate services for healing child abuse victims and programming for domestic violence victims, combining our shared experience and

the expertise necessary to make a real difference in the lives of our clients, including the youngest victims. For example, FSC has a strong focus on promoting healthy parenting skills, and unifying this focus with STAND!'s current programming for mothers and fathers will strengthen both agencies' ability to serve children and families.

Don't worry; we are working hard to preserve the core elements that make STAND! the organization that you have come to respect and support. A task force is partnering with the branding agency that helped BWA change our name to "STAND! Against Domestic Violence." The task force will create a name for the new agency that keeps the STAND! brand while integrating FSC's focus. I will remain as the Executive Director of the new unified agency, and our focus will be working to end child abuse and domestic violence and promoting healthy families. We will continue to work hard as a new agency to earn your support anew everyday.

Bringing together these two agencies into one and expanding the scope of violence intervention, prevention, and treatment services will position STAND! at the forefront of the family violence movement, striving toward holistic family violence solutions. This is the direction that the growing body of research on family violence points. Leaders among domestic violence and child abuse agencies are beginning a shift toward understanding the dynamics of violence within the whole family. The new STAND! will remain focused on self determination and safety for victims and will continue to press forward with the mantle of leadership as a strong voice on behalf of victims.

This is an exciting moment of transformation, as we bid farewell to STAND! Against Domestic Violence and our *Options* newsletter and welcome a new STAND! agency into our hearts. I look forward to bringing you a summer newsletter from the new STAND! organization in a few months. In it, I will tell you all about our new organization, our array of services, and our philosophy of holistic solutions to family violence. In the meantime, we will continue working hard to ensure that we provide the very best services to the people who need them the most.

Thank you for everything that you do for and with STAND!. We couldn't provide the lifesaving services that we offer without your support. In the spirit of Charles DuBois I ask you to "sacrifice what we are for what we will become." As we ask our clients to do, and I have committed myself to doing, please STAND! with us as we embrace change. I know we can count on you as we emerge from this journey a stronger, more vibrant agency.

Sincerely and with great excitement,



Gloria Sandoval

A Call to Men

A *CALL TO MEN* is a leading national men's organization addressing domestic and sexual violence prevention and the promotion of healthy manhood through workshops, trainings and speaking engagements.

A *CALL TO MEN* is centered on the belief that "preventing domestic and sexual violence is primarily the responsibility of men. Although historically it has been almost entirely women who have been at the forefront addressing this issue, we think it is essential that men play a primary role in the solution." It is their mission to galvanize a national movement of men committed to ending violence and discrimination against women and girls.

STAND! Against Domestic Violence is proud to announce the Bay Area Regional Men's Institute Conference on June 23 & 24 at Contra Costa College facilitated and with keynote engagements by the staff of A CALL TO MEN. The conference will focus on men's engagement as part of the solution to ending domestic and sexual violence.

The impetus for this conference began in January 2009, when the men of the DELTA Project (Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances) began talking about putting an event for the community to encourage men to "move from bystander to action." DELTA is a group of male community leaders who meet on a monthly basis to promote the collaboration of men in the fight to end domestic violence.

Just as DELTA began to really think about what a conference with A *CALL TO MEN* might look like, Sharon Turner, Director of Prevention at STAND! and a member of the DELTA project received a phone call from the California Partnership To End Domestic Violence asking if STAND! would like to co-sponsor a conference in response to the Richmond High School rape. With the DELTA discussion in mind, Sharon jumped at the chance. "It just seemed like the universe was aligning and pointing to the fact that our community needed to seize upon the awareness and good will created by this terrible event and turn it into action for the future."

Community members are encouraged to attend this conference to give their input and learn what they can do to help move from bystander to action. For more information and to register for the conference please visit, www.calcasa.org/emb. **For more information please contact Terrence Ivory at (925) 603-0103.**

The Bay Area Regional Men's Institute is sponsored by STAND! Against Domestic Violence, the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, and California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Contra Costa County Zero Tolerance Initiative, Contra Costa Community College, Community Violence Solutions, and the Contra Costa Violence Prevention Coalition.



Kaley's Journey

From an outsider's perspective, Kaley had a charmed childhood, her father was a well-known musician, and traveled the world. His band had multiple hits and the family name was known throughout the world, however her reality was no fairytale. Though her parents split when she was young, she remembers, "My mom and dad were very verbally abusive. I remember my dad throwing and breaking things a lot and my parents screaming, I never witnessed them physically fighting but I know they did." Kaley's childhood was difficult. After her parents separated, her mother depended on Kaley to help with the house, to pack her older brothers' and twin sister's lunch and to support her. Her mother would wake young Kaley in the middle of the night and bring her downstairs to the dining room. Kaley would sit on the table as her mother got drunk and cried to her about all her problems.



She became her mother's protector when what she really needed was protection in her own home. Kaley's older brother, James, was abusing her, exerting the same power and control he had watched his dad exercise. He treated Kaley as his own personal punching bag; an experience that she says influenced her as she got older and got into her own abusive relationship. "All my life, I wanted to be friends with [James]. I wanted to save him, and I wanted to fix him."

For all the difficulties of her childhood and teen years, Kaley thought she had found the one in her boyfriend Greg. They were happy, and after nearly 10 years together they began to plan their wedding and their family. "There was no jealousy, or anything, [our relationship] was pretty much fifty-fifty." When she got pregnant though, everything changed. Greg would disappear for long periods of time and half-way into her pregnancy Kaley realized Greg was using drugs. Kaley worked a steady job and dreamed of buying a house with a pool for their children.

The man who had been her partner in that dream for nearly a decade—her friend, her new husband—became a man she no longer even recognized. "The day I came home from the hospital was the first time he beat me. I had just had a c-section, and it felt like he ripped out all the staples."

Four months later after numerous beatings and having stashed a baseball bat under the couch and bed to fight back, Kaley carefully made plans to leave. She told Greg that the baby was just too much, she was too tired, so she was going to stay with her sister for a little bit and get some help. Miraculously, he allowed her to leave, even rejoicing a bit because he could go out and party with his friends. She made her way back to the Bay Area to rebuild her life, supported by family and friends.

Kaley was referred to STAND! by Hercules Welfare and has been active in our support groups ever since. She continues to make progress: changing her son's last name, finalizing her divorce, earning an Associate's Degree, and working towards her Bachelor's. She feels that she has found a kindred spirit in her support group leader Patricia Duncan-Hall, "Patricia totally understands." She is a former STAND! client and now a STAND! staff member. Patricia focus for the support group is to create a safe space for survivors to share their experiences, ask questions, explore their relationships, talk about parenting, receive support as they rebuild their lives, and "be surrounded by a community of people who uniquely understand the situation more than friends or family can." It is a community that mourns together and most importantly celebrates each other, on birthdays, graduations, or a decision to go back to college.

Support groups are all about meeting each individual where they are, whether they are unsure if their relationship is abusive, they have been mandated by Children and Family Services to come to meetings in order to keep their children, or they are a long-time survivor who comes to meetings for the continuing support and information provided by the group. Group meetings are often centered around a topic that is helpful to clients, such as "What does a healthy relationship look like?" or Patricia may bring in a guest speaker on a topic that participants have

"It is a community that mourns together and most importantly celebrates each other..."

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Hats off to Volunteers

April 18 - April 24 is National Volunteer Appreciation Week.

In a county with over 1 million citizens, covering 802 square miles, there is only one agency that provides comprehensive domestic violence programming—one agency with 15 essential services and 50+ dedicated staff members. One could look at the domestic violence statistics for the last 18 months, the last 12 months, even the last few months (more than 9,000 calls on the crisis line and 10 deaths since July 1st) and wonder how so few could possibly help so many? The only way we are able to do so much is there are 200+ treasured volunteers working by our side—on the crisis line, in the schools, running groups, working on special events, painting at the shelter, and taking on almost any task big or small.

For more than 20 years, Roberta Stern, winner of the Catalina Torres Volunteer of the Year Award in 2009, led a support group for women dealing with violent relationships. As a dedicated group facilitator, Roberta offered years of time, knowledge, and support to numerous clients, impacting the lives of countless individuals in positive and genuine ways. Roberta's approach to her support group was simple: provide a comfortable environment for women to come together and share their experiences so they can learn about options, safety plans, domestic violence education, and know that they are supported and not alone. "I experienced so many inspiring moments over the years of leading the support group. I learned that fully disengaging from an abusive relationship requires that women fight their natural instinct to 'fix their partner' — to help them 'learn to love.' I observed that to leave, women must turn away from their natural inclination to hope for change when change is truly impossible."

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expressed interest in or asked a lot of questions about. The goal for each session is to provide information and support that will lead the individuals in the session to feel empowered to take the steps they need to ensure the health, safety and happiness of themselves and their children. The discussions by the group are often guided by an urgent issue of an individual participant, which also helps to inform other members of the group of options and possibilities in their own lives. The group aims to leave participants with more knowledge than when they came in the door that day, whether clients are dealing with an

Since 1996, Susan N. has been a calm voice on the other end of the line for countless women and men calling our crisis line.

She has a valued ability to project her calmness and empathy through the phone, allowing others to open up and tell her their story, so she can offer them the resources they need. She has watched as the crisis line went from operating only during the day, to a 24/7 hotline, there whenever people need a stable voice. When asked why she has continued to volunteer and answer the line for so many years, Susan's response is "To be honest, I think it is for selfish reasons. I enjoy talking to people on the phone. I enjoy supporting people to make better and healthy relationship decisions. Doing my weekly shift enhances my retirement life by being a part of the community. I know the agency is very appreciative of the time I have volunteered, but I am very grateful to have this continuing experience."

Last year, STAND! initiated a new award for the volunteer who has gone above and beyond in helping STAND! and our clients. Named for former client and volunteer, Catalina Torres, this award is meant to embody her spirit of giving and caring. Before her tragic death in 2008, Catalina volunteered for STAND! as a member of the Speaker's Bureau as well as for numerous other agencies. Catalina was a woman who understood the value of her community and worked each and every day to make it a better place. **Please join us as we award the 2010 Catalina Torres Volunteer of the Year Award and celebrate all of our STAND! volunteers at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, April 23rd. For more information please contact Susan Woodhouse at 925.603.0175.**

upcoming court date, interactions with Children and Family Services, or the decision to leave the abuser.

For Patricia, "the most rewarding part of my job has been coming full circle, from support group participant to facilitator. My hope is that I'm able to support clients on the path to empowerment the same way STAND supported me." Kaley's journey has been difficult but it has helped her to realize, "everybody always pushed me to be a nurse, but that's not what I really wanted to do. I am going back for my B.A., and this might be my life's work: helping women."



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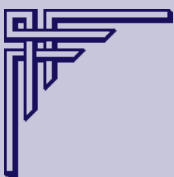
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