

## Message from our Executive Director

### Let Me Introduce Myself

My name is Kathy Allen and I am honored to serve as the new Executive Director of the Bay Area Women's Center. I have demonstrated my devotion to the mission of eliminating domestic violence in our communities for the last ten years. For six years, I was an active member of the Board of Directors.

In my short tenure, I have learned a great deal about the commitment of this community to end domestic violence and sexual assault. Victims and families of victims of domestic and sexual assault rely on us to heal from this violent crime. We could not do this without your help.

The generosity of our community is amazing and inspiring. Now, the Bay Area Women's Center would like the opportunity to give back. Jessica Gregory, Prevention and Education Advocate, will offer local businesses the opportunity to bring sexual harassment prevention training to the workplace. Jessica also has the skills to work with management teams to put in place, guidelines for recognizing and providing support to employee who are victims of domestic violence. Please contact us at 686-2251 if you are interested in these services.

Reminder! 2011 is the last year for the State of Michigan tax credit for homeless shelters. Please consider a donation to the Bay Area Women's Shelter which qualifies under homeless shelters. Your help is appreciated.

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## Can She Count On You?

Our critical work of empowering victims of crime as they become survivors with hopes & dreams for the future continues...



### The Cost of a Gift...

\$400 Donation  
- 200 Michigan Tax Credit  
- 112 Federal Tax Savings\*  
**\$88 Cost to Donor**

\*Assuming 28% tax rate and itemization.



CALL BAWC FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
989.686.4551 | www.bawc-mi.org



*Kathy Allen*

## Special Thanks to...

- Bay Area Community Foundation and its supporters
- City of Bay City
- Dow Corning Corporation
- GM PowerTrain
- J.R. Heineman and Son
- Martini's Custom Catering
- Rotary Club of Bay City
- SC Johnson
- St. Anthony & St. Joseph Parish Community
- St. Mary of the Assumption
- St. Vincent DePaul Church
- United Way of Bay County
- Westminster Presbyterian Church

Bay Area Women's Center would like to thank the above corporate donors. These local businesses have made significant contributions in 2011 for the work that we do. Their gracious gifts are very much appreciated. Together we serve our community and make strides to end domestic and sexual violence.

**BAWC is in need of  
Awareness Ribbon Teal and  
Purple found at Craft Stores**

### Miscellaneous Needs

- Diapers size 4 & 5
- Baby Wipes
- Baby monitors
- Personal care needs
- Feminine products
- Batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9V)
- Cleaning and paper supplies
- Towels, washcloths, dish towels
- Bedding and New pillows
- First-aid supplies
- Over-the-counter medications (adults and children)
- Pocket calendars
- Planners or journals
- New underwear and socks (adults, children, teens)
- Bathing Suits, including plus size
- Fabric paint
- Copy paper
- Packing tape
- Ink pens and highlighters
- Dry erase markers
- Legal pads (8 1/2 x 11)
- CDR-R disks
- Used computers, speakers, printers winXP or newer
- Certificate frames
- Cell phones (working or not)

### Women's Equality Day Celebration

presented by...

AAUW, BAWC and YWCA

Friday, August 26, 2011

5:30 - 7:00 PM

at the Historic

Trombley House

901 JFK Dr.

Bay City, MI

Admission is Free

Register to VOTE and sign up to win a \$91 VISA Card

For more information call Debbie Keim at 989-686-2251 Or Lisa Grills at 989-894-9055

## It All Starts with One Call

Imagine for a minute living in a home where you are constantly in fear, always walking on eggshells...and at the same time feeling like you are alone, like no one understands, like no one will care about or help you. Alice Walker once said, "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any".

My job as a residential advocate at the Bay Area Women's Center is to help clients get their personal power back.

In order to illustrate my purpose for working in this field I would like to share with you one situation of many that a shelter employee could encounter.

It's a Monday afternoon and shortly after I put my things in my office the phone rings. I pick up the crisis line and at the other end I hear crying; it is very clear to me that this woman is in a state of panic. The woman states she is being abused physically and verbally by her husband. She tells me she has an hour to pack up as many of her belongings as she can and get her two young children together so that she can leave for the shelter before her husband gets home from work.

As I am safety planning with the woman and giving her directions to our shelter, my heart goes out to her. I cannot imagine what it must feel like to leave the place you call home to come into a shelter that you know nothing about. As well, you will be living with other women, children, or men, who are also seeking safety from the domestic violence in their own life. The shelter itself has the capacity to house thirty-two survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault for approximately four to six weeks, based on individual situations.

While waiting for the family to arrive in shelter, I start to gather up the things she will need upon her arrival, things that are so easy to take for granted. I gather pillows, bedding, shampoo, toothbrushes, body wash, and any other personal care items I can find that she may need. I do this because I know these personal care items will be the last thing on her mind when she is packing to come to shelter.

A short while later the woman arrives with her two

children, a five-year-old boy and an eighteen-month-old girl. The woman is wearing her sunglasses, and it is clear to me that the children have been crying. I do my best to make the woman feel comfortable and welcome. The woman and I take the children to the play room, where hopefully they will feel comfortable enough to play with toys while their mother completes her intake paperwork.

When I bring the woman into my office, she sits down and at that point removes her sunglasses. Her left eye is black and blue and clearly she is in pain. I make eye contact with her in an attempt to convey that I am here for her. She smiles, and I can see she is starting to feel more comfortable with me. The woman and I complete the intake paperwork, during which she shares her history of domestic violence with me. We discuss the available services at the Bay Area Women's Center, and I reassure her over and over again that her and her children are safe.

By the end of the intake process, the woman states that she is ready to start over. I ask her what starting over means to her. The woman tells me she has no income, credit problems that will hinder her from finding affordable housing, has no employment history because her abuser did not allow her to work, and needs information on obtaining a Personal Protection Order (PPO). I explain to the woman that in order to help her through this process she will first be assigned a primary case manager who will work on completing a service plan with her. I tell her that the barriers she listed to me are all things that the primary case manager could assist her with in order to minimize those barriers and accomplish her goals. I explain that the primary case manager provides community referrals and information on resources available in order to EMPOWER the woman to make the best possible decisions for herself and her children. Empowerment allows the woman to make her own choices, keep herself safe, and learn the depth of her own inner strength.

I do my best to give her positive encouragement as I want to convey to her that I believe in her, that the Women's Center believes in her.

## The Impact of Our Services

846	4,191	715
Adults Served	Hours of Individual Counseling	Hours of Childcare
296	1,887	447
Children Served	Advocacy & Supportive Services Hours	Hours of Support Group
7,251	2,049	59
Shelter Nights	Counseling & Support Calls Received	Sexual Assault Exams Provided
22,563	488	2010 Data
Meals Served	Hours of Phone Counseling	



## Happy Bear Educates Children

Bay Area Women's Center has been taking its cuddly costumed character Happy Bear into classrooms and other educational settings for the past 10 years. The Happy Bear program teaches children about a subject that is not easy to talk about: sexual abuse.

With the help of myself, "the professor" and the eager children attending the program, Happy Bear learns the difference between a good and bad touch and the importance of personal safety. The highly-interactive and fun program is tailored to children from ages 4 to 8, presenting itself in a way that is age-appropriate, nonthreatening and easily understood. The intentions of Happy Bear are to begin a conversation with young children about what kind of touches are appropriate and not appropriate, and empower children to express their personal boundaries by saying "no" to any touch that doesn't feel right. Children also learn what to do if they experience a bad touch, and to recognize the adults in their support system like police officers, teachers, caretakers, and family members as the people they can confide in.

Via the school or organization, parents receive a letter from BAWC in advance of the Happy Bear presentation, allowing parents to call the BAWC prevention educator and ask questions or discuss concerns they may have. Parents always have the option of not having their child attend.

"This is a delicate subject introduced to young students in a very positive format." States Lisa Somalski, counselor for Essexville-Hampton Elementary schools. "The students love Happy Bear. I hope Happy Bear will visit us again next year!"

During the 2010/2011 school year eight schools in Bay and Arenac County have participated in the Happy Bear Program.

On behalf of the Bay Area Women's Center and the entire community I would like to extend a big THANK YOU to the following schools for their participation in the Happy Bear program.

- Arenac County Migrant Head Start Program
- Lindsay Elementary School
- Bay County Public School Academy
- Bay County Head Start Program
- Essexville Schools- Bush Elementary
- Sterling and Omer Head Start programs
- Arenac Eastern Elementary School
- Linwood Elementary School

Your interest in the education and safety of your students is admirable!



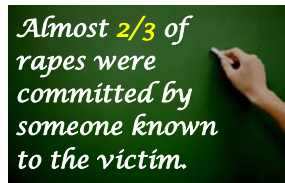
## The Statistics are Shocking

- Every 2 minutes, someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted\*
- 44% of victims are under age 18.
- 80% are under age 30\*
- 60% of sexual assaults are not reported to the police\*
- Males are the least likely to report a sexual assault, though they make up about 10% of all victims\*
- Only 6 percent of rapist will ever spend a day in jail\*

\* U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey 2005, 2007

In 2010, Bay Area Women's Center served over 200 victims in our sexual assault program. Of those, 25 were adult survivors of child sexual abuse, 64 were sexual assault victims, 84 were child victims, and 44 parents of child victims received counseling.

Our SANE program provided 40 medical forensic exams for adolescent/adult cases and 19 exams for pediatric cases.



## Caring and Committed...

One of the most important services we provide to the community is medical forensic examinations. The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program has been in operation for eight years. This year, we have expanded services to pediatric victims of child sexual abuse. During the past twelve months, our crisis team, made up of a nurse examiner, advocate, police officers and child protection workers has been called upon nearly 40 times to meet with child victims of sexual assault or abuse. This service is vital to keeping our community safe.

## Teen Sexual Abuse, Myths and Facts

Examining common myths associated with sexual violence reported by teens can provide accurate information to utilize in support of the survivor.

One common misconception states that teen victims often fabricate stories of sexual violence as a way to get even with a romantic partner, when statistics have shown that less than 3% of sex crimes reported are fabricated or unfounded.

Another widespread myth is that sexual violence cannot occur in teen dating relationships. According to the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, one in five female high school students reported being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.

Another fallacy is that older women are more often the victims of sexual violence but, according to the MCADSV 32.4% of women who experienced rape in their lives were between the ages of 12 and 17 when it occurred.

Teens often disclose sexual violence slowly, only revealing small amounts of information at a time in order to gauge the response of the person they tell. They may disclose details to different people based on trust and safety. If a teen survivor discloses sexual violence to you, begin laying the groundwork for trust and safety by telling the teen that you believe them and the violence was not their fault.

Report the sexual violence to law enforcement or child protective services and help the teen to engage in the process of reporting the crime.

Encourage the teen to seek supportive counseling services so as to begin to heal from the trauma they have experienced.

Listen to the survivor as they communicate what they need, and respect their right to make decisions for their own well being. If we do these things, we can help teen survivors feel safe and trusted.

## Take Action Decide to End Sexual Violence



Bay Area Women's Center  
P.O. Box 1458  
Bay City, MI 48706  
Return Service Requested

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U.S. Postage Paid  
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"Peace"ing lives together since 1975

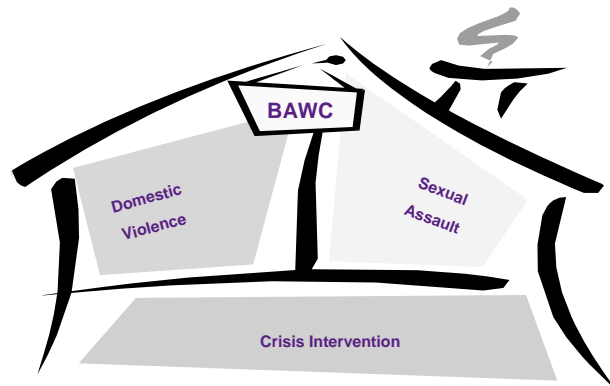
## Bay Area Women's Center

*PO Box 1458  
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Bay City, MI 48706  
Crisis Phone (989) 686-4551  
Administration (989) 686-2251  
Toll Free (800) 834-2098  
Fax (989) 686-0906*

Check us out on the World Wide Web  
[www.bawc-mi.org](http://www.bawc-mi.org)

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newsletter via e-mail

We now accept major credit cards



Bay Area Women's Center offers free, confidential help to adults and families who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, and preventive education to the community. Client support services include a 24-hour crisis line, shelter, housing advocacy, legal advocacy, support groups, and children and teen services. For more information, call (989) 686-4551.

### BAY AREA WOMEN'S CENTER MISSION...

To eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault in our community.