Victim’s Rights Still A Challenge

Even with all the education and prevention activities that take place across the country, a challenge still exists regarding understanding of a victim’s rights and how agencies work with those dealing with the outcomes of violence. This is particularly true for campus communities trying to enforce Title IX, the 1972 law requiring schools to protect students from rape and sexual assault. Currently, the Department of Education is looking at how this should happen when considering the dynamics of violence. The Education Department Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Candice Jackson recently created a controversy with her seemingly uninformed comments on the topic. In an interview with the New York times, Ms. Jackson said that 90 percent of sexual assault accusations on campus, “fall into the category of ‘we were both drunk,’ we broke up and six months later I found myself under a Title IX investigation because she just decided that our last sleeping together was not quite right.” Ms. Jackson later apologized, calling her remarks “flippant” and said they were based on feedback from accused students. That did not mollify victims of sexual assault and supporters, who staged a protest outside the Education Department in July. According to the National Women’s Law Center, these types of comments are very damaging for victims. “Unfortunately, those remarks are now out there, and at the very highest levels they need to undo that damage by countering those myths about rape,” said Fatima Goss Graves, President of the National Women’s Law Center. The Law Center points out that as with any system, there are flaws and not every case is perfectly handled. Statistically, it is likely that some false accusations do occur which in turn damage the entire justice system. Yet, rape is a real problem and a system must be in place to take care of victims. Well documented cases with scientific backing and perpetrator confessions verify the high number of sexual assaults occurring on college campuses, from small schools to large ones. The numbers indicate a need for improved response systems and better methods for holding perpetrators accountable. In referring to the role of Education Department Secretary Betsy DeVos in addressing this national concern, Graves said, “She has to reject the idea that rape is just regretted sex. She has to reject that idea that most women lie, and she has to say it and say it and say it again.”

SAFE Harbor Match Game Is Hit At Salish Kootenai College

Innovation was the driving force behind the activities hosted in April of 2017 by SAFE Harbor as part of National Sexual Assault Month at Salish Kootenai College. Based on research presented by the Office of Violence Against Women regarding efforts over the past decade related to prevention education around violence and sexual assault, it has been recommended that those working on this topic think about new ways to build up partnerships with different segments to be more inclusive in their outreach. Specifically, groups have been challenged to work more closely with all possible allies, including males from the target population. Keeping this in mind, SAFE Harbor hosted a lunchtime, Match Game with Salish Kootenai College staff and students, presented an educational forum on healthy relationships and distributed materials on local resources to the entire campus. Based on the positive response, Match Game 2 is already on tap for 2018.

Classy, Caring & Committed

She is one of those amazing people who loves life, is always loyal, and who is willing to take action that benefits her community. In addition to a long career in nursing, including most recently offering hospice care, Traudel Stockstad devoted herself to the victims of violence as a member of the SAFE Harbor Board of Directors for nearly a decade. Her gracious style and genuine concern for others has set a high standard for all those she knows. She was a mentor to the staff and other board members, providing thoughtful ideas, practical insights and a well-balanced vision. Recently, Traudel retired from the board, leaving an empty place that won’t be easy to fill. No matter what the situation, Traudel always sees the positive in others. Her humor and love of life bring out the best in others. Cheers to a great person & community asset.

Thanks for all the good work

SAFE Harbor campus advocate Kayla Ridgely with Salish Kootenai College staff member Juan Perez, who really got into full character, wig and all for Match Game.
Local performers donated their time and talents to add extra magic at the carnival. Above: (L-R) James, Marry Lou & Travis Bynum. Great job!

All the way from Utah, Brianna Fife helped “scare” up some laughs.

The roping arena was a popular stop.

Community Comes Together for Carnival
It was a sunny and gorgeous Mission Valley day when the circus and carnival came to town. Hosted by SAFE Harbor with the support of community partners, this day was all about family and fun. With various groups volunteering their time and offering resources, the event included the circus, a bouncy house, crafts, roping stand, dunking booth, food stand, a haunted house and numerous games of chance. THANKS ALL!

Loyal Friends Make All The Difference for SAFE Harbor Clients
It is the assistance and sincere dedication of friends and supporters from across the community that helps ensure SAFE Harbor can provide high-quality, victim centered services. Thanks to everyone who helps us with this work. Below are a few recent “heroes”:

Ronan Fairgrounds  Glacier Bank  The Gillhouse Family  Job Corps
The Country Store  Crepeau Family  The Olsson Family  Walsh Family
Lorraine Frost  Zach Miller  The Seventh Day Adventist Church

With more than 1200 attendees and 100 vendors, the Annual Women for Wellness Health Fair, hosted by the Salish Kootenai College Center for Prevention and Wellness was a great event. The day included screenings, referrals and direct services that many would otherwise not be able to access. SAFE Harbor, as a designated honoree received more than 50 baskets from community groups and individuals filled with household supplies for clients to use. These contributions help the program serve clients throughout the year. THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT!

Women For Wellness
May 18th, 2017
It was a time to honor those who work on behalf of victims including Lake County Prosecutor James Lapotka and Prosecutor Brendan McQuillan.

Talking to family or a friend about violence they might be experiencing is never easy. It is often easy to put a person on the defensive and they will then end up blocking any conversation on the topic. Still, it is a conversation that can be valuable, even if it is only to help them with options and to let them know someone cares. Here are some examples of statements and phrases that might be helpful when having a conversation.

- It’s not easy.
- I’ve noticed a few things I wanted to touch base about.
- I have to let you know, I’m concerned about you, about your safety.
- Just remember, you are not responsible for your partner’s violence.
- I’m really, really so sorry about what has been happening to you.
- I’m worried about your safety as well as your children’s safety.
- How can I help? Please, I’m here for you in any way that you want.
- I understand why people stay with abusive partners. There are lots of reasons—financial support, love, guilt, fear, housing, children.
- Can I connect you with someone to do safety planning?
- What if I help contact someone who can provide professional help?
- Can we reach out to anyone who can support you and help you stay safe—a friend, a family member, a pastor? I’ll help you.

SAFE Harbor Executive Director DeeAnn Richardson delivers good wishes and a big thank you to Polson Chief of Police Wade Nash and Ronan Chief of Police Ken Weaver as part of the SAFE Harbor Hometown Heroes Honoring.

SAFE Harbor partnered with the Spirit of Many Colors at Salish Kootenai College for the UnVariety Show. It was a night of karaoke, burlesque, singing, comedy and drag performances, set up as a scholarship fundraiser and a chance to demonstrate support of diversity and the LGBTQ community. More than 200 people attended the inaugural event.
A little ice cream, outstanding conversation and a few games were all part of the VIP Recognition Night held at the Miracle of American Museum. All VIP attendees have shown high levels of support for SAFE Harbor. Special thanks to Gil Mangels and MOA staff for their assistance with the event.

Outreach As Avenue To Change

Issues of consent continue to be one of persistent challenges for juries, with victims of sexual assault. Court cases can be traumatic and the outcomes of the trials often revictimize the plaintiff. To promote awareness and community understanding, SAFE Harbor hosted educational workshops for more than 200 community members including high school and college groups on topics the dynamics of violence, consent, communication, societal roles, referrals and local resources. For info. call 676-0800.