



Spring 2017 Newsletter

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH ENGAGING NEW VOICES

APRIL 2017

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), and Family Support Center is excited to be spreading awareness about Sexual Abuse to Chippewa County. I'm Blythe, the Sexual Assault Victim Services Coordinator, and I'm happy to be a part of SAAM in Chippewa County for the second year in a row!

The frequency of sexual assaults is alarming. The current statistics are that every 107 seconds, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted. That means that each year, there are approximately 293,000 victims of sexual assault (rainn.org). At Family Support Center, we provide free and confidential services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence 24 hours a day with our crisis line. We provide one to one counseling during regular business hours, and provide legal and medical advocacy for survivors of violence and their families. We provide presentations and group sessions in many local schools and businesses.

In honor of SAAM, we have a few activities planned in Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire this April. On **Tuesday, April 25th**, Family Support Center is hosting a walk from Wilson Park to Phoenix Park in Eau Claire to show support for survivors of sexual violence. We are also pleased to present the **Chippewa Valley Area KNOW More event**. The event will be held right after the march, at The Plus (208 S. Barstow Street, Eau Claire). We will have local performers and a resource fair of information for survivors, their friends and

families. The focus of **KNOW More** is two-fold: showing support for survivors of sexual violence, and demonstrating our collective commitment to the safety and health of Chippewa Valley communities. *Please join us!*

On **Wednesday, April 26th**, we are celebrating **Denim Day in Chippewa Falls!** On this day, please wear denim jeans to show your support for survivors of sexual assault. In honor of Denim Day, we are hosting displays at various public spaces in the Chippewa Valley which call attention to sexual assault awareness. These displays will feature jeans that community members have decorated with messages for survivors and their loved ones. They include information about Denim Day, its purpose, and resources for area survivors. You may also start to see the color teal in a few places around Chippewa Falls this April. This color symbolizes Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and our willingness to recognize and honor the millions of people around the globe who have experienced Sexual Violence.

This year during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Family Support Center would like to invite you to participate in raising awareness in our community about the realities of sexual assault and its effect on survivors. Family Support Center supports women, men and children in the Chippewa Valley who have experienced sexual and domestic violence through education, prevention and intervention services.

~Blythe
Sexual Assault Victim
Services Coordinator

Local events in honor
of Sexual Assault
Awareness Month:



Survivors, their allies, and all supportive community members are invited to attend and show their solidarity.

6:00-Walk with us from Wilson Park to Phoenix Park

7:00-Join us at The Plus for local performers and a resource fair



END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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2017 FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER- BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mark your calendars! Here is what is happening at Family Support Center

Parent Café

River Source Family Center has an exciting new program which began in February, called Parent Café. Parent Café is a *free family event*, which brings together families in our community to share a meal and helpful parenting discussions. There is one more spring Parent Café at River Source Family Center on **Thursday, April 13th**. The topic of the evening is *“What is healthy eating for my family?”* Watch for our fall Parent Café dates. Beginning in May, River Source Family Center will bring Parent Café to rural communities in Chippewa County. On May 15, June 19, and July 17, Parent Café will meet at the First Presbyterian Church in **Cornell**. On May 4, June 1, and July 6, Parent Café will meet at the Stanley-Boyd School in **Stanley**.

For information or to register for Parent Café, please call **715-720-1841** or go to our website,
www.riversourcefamilycenter.com

New to Family Support Center:

Breaking the Silence Support Group.

This in-house support group is open to all adults who have experienced or witnessed any form of domestic violence. Join us **Tuesdays from 3-4 PM starting on May 9th and ending June 13th** here at Family Support Center. Learn how to cope and relax, understand the cycle of violence, identify red flags, create a safety plan, empower yourself, and break the silence. Children are welcome to attend a Youth Support group at the same time. Remember, our services are always free and confidential! No registration is required. If you have questions, please call Cara at Family Support Center 715-723-1138.



Neaux Violence at Eaux Claires

Bon Iver, Embrace, and Family Support Center proudly announce a partnership at this year’s Eaux Claires Music Festival: **Neaux Violence**, brought to you by the band’s own gender equity campaign, **2 A Billion**.

An effort to eliminate barriers and create pathways for women and girls to live safer, more prosperous lives, **Neaux Violence** intends on helping to move the needle on gender equity and domestic abuse.

“One of the biggest problems with domestic abuse is that people don’t talk about it. It’s insidious, stigmatized and hushed,” says Justin Vernon. “It’s very important to us to encourage dialogue and support the incredible work of our nonprofit partners.”

Embrace and Family Support Center will partner with Bon Iver to raise awareness and stir up conversation around such issues at Eaux Claires on June 16 + 17, 2017.

In 2016, 7,397 people benefited from Family Support Center Services

Save the date for our fourth annual Walk A Mile-Chippewa Valley event on October 22nd 2017 at Carson Park, beginning in the Pine Pavilion!

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month



Child Abuse Prevention Month!

Your reaction to this title may be something like, “how in the world can someone hurt a child,” or “wherever child abuse is in the world, it must not be happening in my community.” It feels unfathomable that anyone would use violence against a child, *and* most of us do not see what happens behind closed doors, so family violence may *seem* to be an isolated and irrelevant issue. We could just ignore the fact that it is Child Abuse Prevention Month- it’s too sad of a topic and one person can’t possibly do anything about it, right?

Wrong.

Child abuse and the exposure to domestic violence are happening in our community at an alarming rate. When I write “child abuse,” I am thinking of children experiencing chronic stress or trauma by physical injury inflicted by a caregiver. I am also thinking about children’s exposure to family violence. An example of this exposure is a child watching a parent hurt another parent. Exposure to violence also includes a child merely listening to fighting in the home. Imagine your safe person, your caregiver, is being physically or emotionally hurt by her partner. Now imagine your safe person, maybe it’s your mom, is getting yelled at, or threatened, or hurt, and you have no control over the situation. You can’t stop the yelling. You can’t stop the violence. You are terrified. This manifestation of helplessness, fear, and worry can have a detrimental impact on a growing brain. Whether a child has witnessed or experienced violence one time or once a month, the impact is serious.

According to statistics released by the National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse, close to 5 children die every day as a result of child abuse. More than three out of four are under the age of four years old. Once we understand the pervasiveness of domestic violence in our community—1 in 4 women and 1 in 16 men experience do-

mestic violence—we are more able to quantify the number of youth impacted by trauma. Think about the youth walking through school hallways, playing at daycare, or attending community events. Many of them are carrying the weight of trauma in their hearts, minds, and bodies.

The good news: it takes one compassionate adult to change the life of a child- an adult that nurtures reflection, relationship, and resilience. It can be a parent, a neighbor, or a youth-serving professional. You may already be a superhero to one young person!

What can you do -or keep on doing- to be that superhero?!

Safety plan: We can’t foster healthy relationships, perform well in school, remember our chores, or regulate our emotions if we don’t feel safe. Safety is the priority. Start exploring safe people, places and things with every young person

Expectations: Children that have experienced trauma are often very sensitive to change so be consistent with schedules. If you make a promise to a child, follow through with it. Be predictable.

Positive self-image: In order to be resilient, we must believe in our own strength, capabilities, and worth. Society infiltrates young minds with messages about having perfect bodies and being “successful.” Challenge that message by complimenting actions of kindness, thoughtfulness, creativity, perseverance, and hard work. Help children understand that their body is beautiful the way it is. Help them develop their own body rules and boundaries.

Name it to tame it: Help youth broaden their vocabulary of feeling words. Then, demonstrate to them that expressing feelings like embarrassment, jealousy, worry, and fear make you brave and strong!

Seek to understand rather than to be understood: Challenging behaviors come from somewhere and are, more often than not, an expression of the insecurity, pain, and fear they may be carrying. When children have challenging behaviors, think about it as an opportunity to learn a skill, like emotional regulation, healthy communication, or empathy. These are skills that can be taught at any age!

Listen and Believe: Children’s experiences, realities, and thought matter are often more brilliant, authentic, and creative than our own. Children respect adults who are genuinely curious about what they have to say and what they need.

Model positive behavior: The child or youth won’t do it if you don’t. For example, have you ever shouted at a child to stop yelling? If we practice our coping strategies and positive behaviors, children will too.

Connect: Connect children and youth to supportive people. Connect them to other children in play group. Connect them to after school programs. Connect them to counselors, and teachers, and daycare providers, and advocates and friends. Connect youth to their communities of healthy adult role models.

Empower youth leaders: When children and youth are provided with choices and control over their own actions, choices, and experiences, they feel safe and worthwhile.

Spread awareness: Think about your own circle of influence. Teach them what you know about family violence. Help them feel empowered to be compassionate youth leaders.

~Erin

Domestic Violence Youth Advocate



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The Family Support Center is an equal opportunity agency. The Family Support Center celebrates the diversity of all people and does not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, ability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. The Family Support Center's programs are funded in part by United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley.



Thank you to the following churches and schools for your donations of personal items for clients of Family Support Center this quarter.

- Central Lutheran Church, Chippewa Falls
- First Presbyterian Church, Chippewa Falls
- Central Lutheran Church Women Congregation, Chippewa Falls
- Women of St. Simeon's Episcopal Church, Chippewa Falls
- English Classes of Monika LaPoint, CF Senior High School
- W/ELCA Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Cornell
- W.E.L.C.A. English Lutheran Church of Bateman, Chippewa Falls

We are in need of the following items for client use.

Please drop off items at **Family Support Center.**
With a little help you, too, can make a difference!

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Gas gift cards | • Tampons |
| • Grocery gift cards | • Cleaning disinfecting wipes |
| • School supplies | • Hand sanitizer |
| • Facial tissue | • Baby socks |
| • Baby wipes | • Young Girls Underwear (new) |
| • Toilet paper | • Sweat Pants |
| • Paper towels | • Dixie cups |
| • 33 gallon garbage bags | • Healthy snacks |
| • Dish soap | • Paper plates |
| • Large latex-free plastic gloves | • Plastic (disposable) spoons |

Save *the* Date!

Join us for the **10th annual Ladies Evening Extravaganza** to benefit the Family Support Center!
 This year's event is being held on **Tuesday, September 26th, 2017**
 Doors open at 5:30 at the Heyde Center for the Arts in Chippewa Falls. There will be delicious food and beverages as well as amazing prizes and raffles.

Ladies Evening Extravaganza
an evening of elegance ☆☆☆☆☆

Tickets on sale soon at:
www.familysupportcentercf.com

Donating Is Easy!

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familysupportcentercf.com
 And click on **Donate!**