Sesame Street Comes to CCADV

On March 24, 2014, child advocates and re-entry staff from CCADV member organizations participated in an interactive workshop presented by CCADV Diversity and Accessibility Coordinator, Wendy Mota Kasongo, and Sesame Workshop Senior Director of Community Engagement, Rocío Galarza. The workshop - Sesame Street - Little Children, Big Challenges: Resources to Promote Resilience in Our Children – was a unique opportunity for our child advocates to explore some of the serious challenges that children of domestic violence victims face. Using Sesame Street’s Little Children, Big Challenges modules, participants examined the impact of incarceration and divorce on children and ways in which resiliency can be strengthened.

Goals of the workshop included:

- Expanding knowledge on available resources including activities to engage children experiencing divorce or incarceration of a parent
- Increasing ability to discuss divorce and incarceration with children in an age appropriate manner
- Exploring strategies to support parents on developing strength-based routines for safe engagement during visitation
- Developing safety planning approaches for children with incarcerated parents

When considering the impact of incarceration, participants discussed the importance of honesty. While it can be scary to talk to children about the incarceration of a parent, telling the truth helps them to feel loved and to build trust. Establishing a routine will also help the child feel secure and reassure them that some things will stay the same. Participants were given tips for how to address visitation to ensure that the child feels protected and that appropriate safety planning is done in advance.

Continued on page 6...
CCADV Training Institute

Upcoming Trainings

Don’t miss out on these exciting opportunities through CCADV’s Training Institute! Click on the training opportunities below for a description and registration information.

All Welcome

Understanding Domestic Violence: What Every Professional Should Know
May 1 | 10:00am - 3:00pm I CCADV

Harm Reduction
May 20 | 10:00am - 1:00pm I CCADV

Motivational Interviewing
May 30 | 9:30am - 4:30pm I CCADV

Intersection of Domestic Violence, Mental Health & Substance Abuse
June 3 | 10:00am - 1:00pm I CCADV

Online Privacy & Safety for Victims
June 10 | 10:00am - 1:00pm I CCADV

Members Only

New Staff & Volunteer Orientation
May 12 - 15 | 9:30am - 4:00pm I CCADV

Facilitating Effective Support Groups
May 16 | 9:00am - 1:00pm I CCADV

Strengths Based Advocacy and Case Management
June 19 | CCADV
9:00am - 12:00pm OR 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Preparing to Become a POST Certified Domestic Violence Trainer
June 25 | 10:00am - 4:00pm I CCADV

Please Join Us

Spring Reception
to Benefit CCADV

Tuesday, June 10, 2014
5:30pm - 7:00pm

Governor’s Residence
990 Prospect Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105

Support Levels
$250 patron
$100 supporter
$50 per person

Light refreshments will be served.

RSVP by June 3, 2014
Purchase tickets at www.ctcadv.org

Please contact Heidi Jarvis with questions
(860) 282-7899; hjarvis@ctcadv.org

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Capitol News

Judiciary Committee Votes Unanimously on Measure to Strengthen Domestic Violence Laws

On April 2nd, the Judiciary Committee of the CT General Assembly voted unanimously to pass House Bill 5593, An Act Concerning Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. If enacted, this measure will make several key changes to state law, including adding teen dating violence to the state’s Safe School Climate. According to the 2011 Connecticut School Health Survey Youth Behavior Component Report, which is administered by the CT Department of Public Health, 16.7% of Connecticut students reported that they were emotionally abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend (e.g., called names, made fun of in front of others, ridiculed about their body or looks or told they were worthless). Additionally, 8.2% of CT high school students were hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend. Revisions to this law will allow for more training of school staff and students related to teen dating violence and healthy relationships, as well as to create an overall zero tolerance policy for abusive behavior.

House Bill 5593 will also make it tougher for offenders to get out of jail by requiring that professional bondsmen take a down payment of at least 35% when establishing financing arrangements with offenders looking to bond out. A similar premium financing arrangement exists for surety bondsmen, but it doesn’t currently apply to professional bondsmen. This bill will also make it a Class A misdemeanor for anyone who maliciously discloses the location of a domestic violence shelter without the written authorization of the shelter.

CCADV’s other priority bill, Senate Bill 462, An Act Concerning Civil Restraining and Protective Orders, was passed by the Judiciary Committee with an overwhelming vote of 37-3. This measure, if enacted, will address one of CCADV’s key issues – the inclusion of financial relief as part of the civil restraining order. Connecticut would join at least 36 other states that allow judges to require offenders subject to a restraining order to continue to pay household expenses or child support for a temporary period, in this case, up to 120 days. The measure will also increase penalties for violation of restraining or protective orders, as well as create a task force to study issues with service of restraining orders.

Both bills have headed to other committees of cognizance and onto the floor of the House and Senate. The 2014 session ends on May 7th so both measures need to be passed by that date. Slight changes to both bills are anticipated prior to final passage. Many thanks to both of our bill champions this year, Senator Martin Looney (D-New Haven) and Representative Mae Flexer (D-Killingly).

CCADV Director Meets with Congresswoman DeLauro

In April, CCADV Executive Director, Karen Jarmoc, met with Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro while in Washington, DC for a national Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Council Steering Committee meeting. Jarmoc and NNEDV representatives met with DeLauro to seek her support for increased funding under the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA). They also discussed various pieces of legislation that will improve the economic security of domestic violence victims, such as paid sick and safe days, equal pay and access to affordable child care.

Funding for FVPSA is authorized up to $175 million. President Obama has proposed an allocation of $135 million for FY15, only $1.5 million over the FY14 allocation. As the only federal funding source dedicated to domestic violence shelters and support services, increased funding is critical to support the demand for services. In CT, our shelters continue to run at or above capacity and there were over 1,300 denials due to lack of beds in FY13.

Congresswoman DeLauro serves as the ranking member on the Labor, Health, Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, which oversees FVPSA funding through the Dept. of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families. She is also playing an active role in the House Democrats’ efforts on When Women Succeed, America Succeeds: An Economic Agenda for Women & Families. The agenda offers a number of solutions to many of the economic barriers facing women.
Member Spotlight On...

Prudence Crandall Center, Inc

Helping Victims Achieve Safety and Stability Through Transitional & Permanent Supportive Housing Programs

The need for safe, affordable housing is one of the most critical problems victims and their families face as they strive to move forward to safety and stability in their lives. The relationship between homelessness and domestic violence is well documented, and in a state with some of the highest housing costs in the nation, the issue is acute.

In 2003, the leadership of Prudence Crandall Center tackled this challenge head-on, beginning the long, arduous journey to establishing the first program with both transitional and permanent supportive housing for victims of domestic violence in our state. Over the next five years, with tremendous support from public and private sector partners dedicated to its mission, Prudence Crandall Center raised over $8 million dollars in capital funding to make this vision a reality. Funding was used to fully renovate and rehabilitate a 45,000-square-foot landmark structure in New Britain known as Rose Hill. Leased from the Daughters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception, the facility sits on several private acres in a serene yet central location in the heart of New Britain. On a city bus route, it offers easy access to local schools, courts, social service agencies, health care and other service providers.

After several years of construction and intense planning, in 2009 Prudence Crandall Center opened the doors of Rose Hill, transforming the agency, its services, and nearly doubling its staff. The secure residential facility includes 18 apartments ranging in size from efficiencies to three-bedroom units, together with an on-site health room, adult resource room, children’s play room, teen recreation and homework center, support group offices, playground, basketball court and picnic area for residential clients. It also houses the agency’s administrative offices, counseling and community education programs.

With the opening of Rose Hill, victims of domestic violence and their children now have access to permanent supportive housing at the end of a shelter stay, giving them the gift of time, security and the resources needed to heal and move forward from the emotional, physical, and financial impacts of domestic abuse. Unlike other permanent supportive housing, Rose Hill’s program is specifically designed to address the unique needs of victims of domestic violence and their children, with access to the agency’s broad array of coordinated, trauma informed services critical to meeting their complex needs. Rose Hill’s housing programs are open to homeless victims of domestic violence from throughout our state, most often through referrals from domestic violence shelters. Given the lack of safe, affordable housing statewide, both programs consistently operate at full capacity with wait lists for available units.

Rose Hill’s Transitional Living Program (TLP) includes eight apartments where victims and their children may stay for up to two years while receiving intensive case management services and working on individual goals to rebuild self-sufficiency, financial stability, and, ultimately, permanent housing. In Prudence Crandall Center’s Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program, victims with physical and/or mental disabilities are offered a long-term solution to their housing needs, together with vital services to support them on their path to improved health, well-being and maximum independence. The PSH program includes 10 on-site and 10 scattered site apartments, where residents and their children may stay indefinitely while receiving case management services and access to the agency’s wide range of client-centered programs and services.

In both housing programs, residents are supported by dedicated Adult and Child/Family Advocates who provide individual and family counseling, support groups, and assist residents in establishing and working toward their individually determined goals. To reduce transportation, childcare and language barriers, the agency collaborates with several local agencies to
continually expand the availability of on-site services critical to improving the health and self-sufficiency of clients. For example, through a partnership with Community Health Center, residents receive on-site medical and dental health care. Community Mental Health Affiliates provides vital mental health and substance abuse services for residents in need. And Human Resources Agency of New Britain offers an on-site “Job Club” for residents, where participants are provided with individualized work-force readiness, job search and financial literacy assistance to support them on their path to financial stability and independence.

In addition to Rose Hill’s housing programs, Prudence Crandall Center has a 22-bed emergency shelter located at an undisclosed, off-site, confidential location. With its unique continuum of emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing, Prudence Crandall Center is able to address both the urgent and long-term housing needs of victims, a critical step forward in our state’s efforts to end cycles of homelessness and abuse among this vulnerable population in need. And the results are evident. Children who struggled in school have become successful students and young adults, with some achieving high honors. Clients who had been financially dependent on their abuser have received job training or completed their education, moving forward to steady employment. After five years of experience with these programs, we can clearly see the difference safe, stable housing makes in the lives of women and families moving past abuse.

Established in 1973, Prudence Crandall Center is the oldest domestic violence agency in Connecticut, serving the communities of Bristol, Berlin, Burlington, Kensington, New Britain, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Terryville. Services include a 24-hour crisis hotline, emergency shelter, supportive housing, court advocacy, counseling, support groups, and community education. For additional information about Prudence Crandall Center and/or to apply for our housing programs, please call 860-225-5187 or visit www.prudencecrandall.org.

One success story is that of a former resident of Prudence Crandall Center’s emergency shelter, who we will call Marie. Marie had suffered nine years of severe emotional and physical abuse from her boyfriend and his family. For nearly a third of her life, she was told on a daily basis that she was worthless and could never survive on her own. Upon entering shelter, she was severely depressed and often angry. She received daily counseling from shelter staff and was referred for mental health services. After several months of intensive work with staff, Marie’s trust, self-esteem and outlook improved and she began planning for her family’s future. She applied for Prudence Crandall Center’s PSH program and was thrilled when she learned an apartment had become available and she was accepted into the program. Her anxiety eased as she knew she would now be able to provide a safe, stable home for her young family. With her family’s housing needs secure, and the continued support of PSH staff, she was able to focus on her lifelong dream of applying for college, including seeking financial support from the Women’s Independence Scholarship Program.

Last August, Marie experienced a tremendous sense of accomplishment when she was accepted into college and awarded a $1,500 scholarship, helping to pay for books and other necessities. Since last fall, everyone has noticed the tremendous difference in Marie’s demeanor and attitude—she starts each day beaming as she heads out to catch the bus to a local community college, full of renewed hope and purpose as she is now able to model for her children the path to a better life, independence and a future free from violence.
Honoring Victims’ Rights

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

April 6 – 12, 2014 marked National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. This year marked 30 years since the passage of the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in 1984. Prior to this historic legislation, there was little funding for service providers seeking to meet the needs of victims and the criminal justice system often failed to recognize the importance of including victims in the justice process. This had a profoundly negative impact on victims of domestic violence seeking help.

To honor the 30 year anniversary of VOCA and National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, Connecticut’s Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) spearheaded a reception and recognition event on April 9, 2014. CCADV partnered with OVA, the Judicial Branch’s Office of Victims Services, CT Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving to highlight just how far we’ve come in meeting the needs of crime victims.

Attended by more than 60 people, the event included a panel discussion about how the field has changed in the past 30 years that included CCADV Executive Director, Karen Jarmoc, and was moderated by Mike Lawlor, Under Secretary for Criminal Justice Policy and Planning at the CT Office of Policy and Management. Participants heard from the International Institute of Connecticut regarding human trafficking victims and how government and service providers are responding to these victims. The night also included a student art contest in which a junior from Amity Regional High School was awarded first place for a photograph that addressed bullying of Muslim women who choose to wear hijab.

Participants received a number of toolkits related to the issues discussed that included parent guides, story books and DVDs. The toolkits addressed some other big challenges that children face - separation anxiety, frustration with mistakes or their emotions, difficulty with bedtime, sibling rivalry and relocation – all things that can be exacerbated when a family is coping with abuse. The workshop also highlighted the comprehensive set of online resources that Sesame Street offers to caregivers and professionals working with children. Advocates have access to videos, printable resources such as coloring books, and interactive apps that they can use with children on mobile phones or tablets.

Children often struggle with complex feelings following the separation or divorce of their parents. The workshop stressed the importance of telling children that having those feelings is ok, while reassuring them that the separation is not their fault. Participants learned ways to address children’s questions about divorce and tips for encouraging them to express their feelings. Practical methods for facilitating transitions to blended families were also explored.

To learn more about all of the great resources offered by Sesame Street, visit www.sesamestreet.org.
Congratulations to Barbara Spiegel, Executive Director of Susan B. Anthony Project (a member of CCADV), on being named 2013 Person of the Year by The Register Citizen!

The Register Citizen bestowed this honor on Barbara because of the passionate leadership she has demonstrated in providing services and raising awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault, and in particular for her response to a rape involving two young girls that occurred in Torrington last year.

As media attention focused on the community’s response to the rape, Barbara spoke out about the re-victimization the young survivors faced by the friends and classmates of their rapists via social media. She was a positive voice both locally and nationally as she urged the community to learn from what had happened. Domestic and sexual violence is very much preventable and Barbara and her staff work diligently to get accurate information into the hands of students, parents, educators and all members of the community.

Read The Register Citizen article to learn more. And again, congratulations, Barbara!

Technology & Teen Dating Violence

A recent report by the Urban Institute examines the use of technology in incidents of teen dating violence and bullying. The project sought to expand knowledge about the types of violence and abuse experiences youth have via technology (e.g., social networking sites, texting on cell phones), and how the experience of such cyber abuse within teen dating relationships or through bullying relates to other life factors.

The study, which included 5,000 teens from 10 schools in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, found:

- 18% reported cyber abuse (e.g., “my partner used my social networking account without permission” or “my partner sent texts/emails to engage in sexual acts I did not want”).
- 20% reported physical violence (e.g., “my partner pushed” or “kicked me”).
- 32% reported psychological abuse (e.g., “my partner threatened to hurt me” or “my partner would not let me do things with other people”).
- 17% reported being victims of cyberbullying (e.g., “a student got other students to send a rude video message to my cell phone”).

Based on the findings and general conclusions, several implications for policy and practice were discussed. The report suggests that schools should raise awareness about the harmfulness of perpetrating such acts and educate victims about the importance of reporting and seeking help. Because so few victims seek help, schools should create more formalized reporting mechanisms to ensure that such abuse is being addressed effectively and promptly for both female and male victims. Parent support networks would also be beneficial so that parents can share advice and resources regarding preventative measures.

Click HERE to read the full report.

Social Networking Safety Tips

- Only post things you want the public to see or know. Once it’s online, it’s no longer under your control.
- Be protective of your personal info. Your phone numbers and addresses enable people to contact you directly, and things like your birth date, the schools you attended, and photos with landmarks may make it easier for someone to find where you live, hang out or go to school.
- Set boundaries and limits. Tell people not to post personal info, negative comments or check-ins about you on social media.
- You can keep your passwords private -- sharing passwords is not a requirement of being in a relationship.
- Don’t do or say anything online you wouldn’t in person. It may seem easier to express yourself when you are not face-to-face, but online communication can have real-life negative consequences.

Stay Tuned!

CCADV will launch an improved teen dating violence app - td411 - later this spring
Financial Literacy and Moving Past Financial Abuse

April is Financial Literacy Month. As you may know, financial abuse is present in 98% of abusive relationships and leaves many victims feeling trapped because leaving without financial resources could mean they will face homelessness or poverty. A 2009 national poll conducted by the Allstate Foundation found that 86% of Americans did not associate "economic abuse" with domestic violence. Though far less commonly understood, financial abuse is one of the most powerful methods to keep a victim in an abusive relationship and deeply diminishes the victim’s ability to stay safe after leaving.

There are generally three categories of financial abuse: preventing the victim from acquiring resources, preventing the victim from using resources, or exploiting the victim’s resources. Examples can be withholding money or only providing limited amounts of money through an “allowance,” forbidding a victim to work, hiding family assets and running up debt in the victim’s name.

Since 2005, NNEDV and Allstate have been working together to help survivors move toward long-term safety and financial security. The Moving Ahead Through Financial Management Curriculum was developed to help victims understand their financial circumstances and create short-term and long-term plans to move forward. The curriculum includes both basic and advanced topics, such as:

- Financial abuse
- Financial fundamentals, including budgeting, identifying assets and managing liabilities
- Mastering credit basics
- Building financial foundations
- Creating budgeting strategies.

As with all forms of abuse, financial abuse can affect any person at any time - regardless of a person’s age, race, education level, or gender. Learn more so that you know the signs of abuse and can pass along the knowledge to help others. Visit NNEDV’s Economic Justice Project page for more information.

Youth Take Pledge While They Ball Out Against Domestic Violence

CCADV Training & Prevention Coordinator, Linda Blozie, has been busy taking our 10x10 Campaign on the road. The 10x10 Campaign launched this past November as a way to get men and boys involved in preventing intimate partner and teen dating violence. Men and boys learning and teaching each other about the value of healthy relationships and respecting women is an important part of preventing abusive behavior.

In March, the campaign was included as part of the Ball Out Against Domestic Violence Basketball Tournament held at Trinity Magnet Middle School in Hartford. The event was co-sponsored by CompassYC, the city of Hartford, and CCADV, through the 10x10 Campaign. Eighty-four (84) young men signed the pledge not to use violence and to talk to with at least one other friend or family member about dating violence prevention.
CCADV, Office of the Chief State’s Attorney Host Evidence-Based Prosecution Training

In March, CCADV and the Office of the Chief State’s Attorney’s hosted AEquitas, a Washington, DC-based organization that works to improve the quality of justice in sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking and human trafficking cases by developing, evaluating, and refining prosecution practices that increase victim safety and offender accountability. In total, 99 attendees participated in the training, including 33 advocates, 41 law enforcement, and 25 prosecutors/employees of state’s attorney.

Domestic violence advocates, prosecutors and law enforcement were all invited to participate in one of two half-day sessions offered on Evidence-Based Prosecution. The training focused on evidence collection, the practical application of evidence based prosecution of family violence cases and a coordinated community approach to increase victim safety and offender accountability. Presenters discussed applicable state and federal case law, tools and strategies for successfully prosecuting these difficult cases and practical steps necessary to achieve success.

The training included contextual analysis of domestic violence cases in which the number of barriers that victims face when trying to leave were highlighted. Additional conversations included effective investigation and documentation, collaborating with local domestic violence agencies, the use of non-testimonial statements, forfeiture by wrongdoing, and forfeiture crimes.

Witness intimidation and the tools and methods to prevent it were discussed. It is important for the criminal justice system to recognize that domestic violence victims are at an elevated risk for retaliation, especially when living with or economically dependent on the offender, or in contact with the offender because of shared parenting. Various intimidation tactics were reviewed, including explicit and implicit threats of physical violence, property damage, court room intimidation, economic threats and threats related to child custody or deportation. Participants also discussed the emotional appeals that many domestic violence offenders will use to minimize their actions and gain the sympathy of the victim.

Click HERE to view a past AEquitas webinar on evidence-based prosecution.
Statewide Hotline - 888.774.2900
Call to be connected with your local domestic violence service agency.

**CCADV is the state’s leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those agencies that serve them.**