



Network of Victim Assistance



NOVA NEWS

Advocacy, Prevention & Support for Victims of Crime in Bucks County

Winter 2010

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Shifting the focus to primary prevention of sexual violence

One day, a man fishing along a riverbank found himself repeatedly jumping into the water to rescue yet another person who was being swept downstream right in front of him. Finally, he said to himself, "I can't go on like this. I'd better go upstream to find out why this is happening."

At NOVA, we, too, are heading upstream to find and address the source of the problem. We want to change attitudes and behaviors surrounding violence so we can help stop it before it begins. Integrating this concept into every program at NOVA, we move closer to ending sexual violence instead of just reacting to it. This vision requires a cultural shift that moves beyond small prevention efforts toward a community that adopts healthy and caring relationship attitudes and practices.

For more than 30 years, part of rape crisis work has been teaching risk-reduction strategies to victims: be aware of your surroundings, walk with your keys in your hand, tell a friend where you are going, take self defense courses. As important as risk-reduction strategies are, however, they have not stopped sexual violence. It's time to stop questioning victims' responsibilities and shift the focus to primary prevention. That is, we must start looking at how the perpetrator might prevent the sexual assault by using such risk-reduction strategies as NO means NO.

A comprehensive approach is required to create the changes that will result in primary prevention of sexual violence. This approach includes measures aimed at changing individual behaviors, interactions between people, community policies and social norms about gender and violence. More than just an awareness of sexual violence, prevention promotes healthy behaviors that replace sexually violent behaviors and works to change minds and attitudes. Further, recognition that prevention of sexual

More than just an awareness... prevention promotes healthy behaviors that replace sexually violent behaviors.

assault is a public health issue involving both men and women means encouraging the commitment of men to model intolerance of sexual violence.

It is time to take the focus off of the victim and focus on the perpetrator—and on

ourselves as members of a community in which sexual violence continues. We need to take action and become part of the solution.

NOVA is committed in its efforts to fulfill the vision that sexual violence be eradicated from our society. As community partners, you can join us upstream at the source of the problem. ♀

2010 National Crime Victims' Rights Week
April 18 - 24
NOVA's Candlelight Tribute
Thursday, April 22



Reclaiming Dignity



Volunteer Opportunities

Sexual Assault Counselor Training for Volunteers to help staff 24-hr Crisis Hotline

7-week Tu & Th 6-9pm class begins in March at Jamison office
Call Julie Dugery for details
215.343.6543

NOVA Thrift Shop Orientation Meetings

1st Sunday & 3rd Thursday
1628 Swamp Rd., Fountainville
Call Karen Corbett or Camille Whiteman for details
215.249.8000

Support Groups

New groups are forming, including one for victims of clergy abuse.

For more information or to request a group, contact Patti Levenberg
Patti@NOVABucks.org
215.343.6543

Bearing gifts

Besides the counseling, accompaniment services and other support that NOVA provides its clients throughout the year, it coordinates a big Holiday Program for clients in need—about 25 families this year—using food and gift items generously provided by wonderful folks from all around Bucks County.

For the second year in a row, the Central Bucks South Lacrosse team and its parents' group gave a huge boost to the Holiday Program. The team's three collections during its Winter Session practices brought in enough food to provide meals to more than 20 families.

The staff and volunteers spent several days wrapping packages and creating food baskets that were delivered the week of December 21. If you are interested in participating as a donor or a "wrapper" in next year's great holiday endeavor, leave your name and contact information with Julie Dugery or Angela McGettigan:
215.343.6543 or
JulieD@NOVABucks.org or
Angela@NOVABucks.org.

Shining STARs advance NOVA's mission

We're always willing to try something new to help us fulfill NOVA's mission to counsel, advocate and educate. Nearly a year ago, NOVA received funding from the Bucks County Women's Fund to bring young women of middle school through college age into a new program that taps their experience, enthusiasm and access to other young women. Students Talking about Relationships, or STARs, has grown from humble beginnings into an active and exciting role in NOVA's peer-to-peer educational programs.

STARs is a small group of young, dedicated women who meet monthly to discuss issues facing other young women in their own schools as well as in other schools and colleges in Bucks County. To date, STARs representatives have helped to provide educational programs on healthy relationships to more than 400 middle school students. They have also helped raise awareness for NOVA and its mission through public outreach programs. Currently they're heading up a drive at local schools and colleges to collect used cell phones, which will raise funds for NOVA programs. Future plans include refurbishing the waiting rooms at NOVA's three offices to make them more kid- and teen-friendly.

"This group of young women has shown the power that young people possess to create change within their community," says Mike Pesce, NOVA's Secondary Education Coordinator. "We can only imagine how much more they can accomplish once they direct their efforts toward an issue."

Any young woman interested in joining STARs should contact Mike Pesce at 215.343.6543 or Mike@NOVABucks.org. ♀



Mike Pesce, Secondary Education Coordinator, solicits ideas from STARs participants.

Thrift Shop donations often prove valuable

We never know what will turn up in the boxes and bags people donate to NOVA's Thrift Shop. For example, a donated toy bear will be auctioned for us by Carversville resident Noel Barrett of Antiques Roadshow at his New Hope auction in May. He says the antique is worth \$400.

Two shop volunteers, one of whom is also a jewelry artist, clean, repair and price all our jewelry donations. Their

expertise ensures that we don't give away any true "gems." Over the years they've discovered a few treasures the untrained eye might miss, such as the lovely tsavorite (green garnet) necklace valued at \$8,000 and a genuine diamond ring worth \$800. They recently sold some broken 14k and 18k chains and other items for \$2,500! All proceeds benefit NOVA's education programs and services for crime victims. ♀



Building Strength



PARX Casino presents 'holiday' gifts to NOVA and others

PARX Casino, Philadelphia Park's new and expanded facility in Bensalem, held a "test day event" prior to its official December 18 opening. Proceeds from the event were distributed to several area organizations, including NOVA. On December 23, Ron Davis, right, director of Diversity and Community Development, and Carrie Minelli, left, director of Public Relations, presented a check for \$10,000 to Jan Finnegan, NOVA's director of Development & Community Relations.

"We're grateful for PARX Casino's support not just of NOVA but also of other organizations in the community that serve the needs of those who live and work here," says Finnegan. "This is a very welcome holiday gift." ♧



7th Annual William J. Neff Sr. Symposium on the Prevention of Crimes Against Older Adults

Tuesday, May 25
Bucks County Community College, Newtown Campus
Swamp Road, Newtown
(For Professionals only)
CEU hours available for
Nursing Home Administrators
Personal Care Home
Employees
Social Workers
Nurses

For more information, contact
Nicole Armani
NArmani@NOVABucks.org
215.343.6543

Training Institute Training Opportunity for Professionals

Can You Hear Me Now?: Interpersonal Communication Skills for the Workplace

Wednesday, February 10
9:00 – 12:00

Trainer: Douglas Rosentrater, MA,
Communications Professor, Bucks County
Community College

Creating a New Family Play: Creative Interventions with Children and Families

Tuesday, March 2
1:00 – 4:00

Trainer: Jennifer Bullock, M.Ed, MLSP, LPC,
NCC, Director, Greater Philadelphia Centers
for Social Therapy

\$90/pp for individuals or \$80/pp group rate

3.0 CEU hours for PA Social Workers, Marriage &
Family Therapists, Professional Counselors

3.0 ACT 48 hours by the PA Department of Education

The Young Man Behind the Image: How to Understand and Work with At Risk Young Men

Thursday, April 8

9:30 – 12:30

Trainer: George James, Marriage and Family
Therapist, Council for Relationships

Preventing Interpersonal Violence: Helping Children Care

Tuesday, May 4

9:00 – 12:00

Trainers: Mary Worthington, M.Ed,
NOVA Elementary Education Coordinator, and
Leanne Hibbs, School Counselor, Leary Elementary,
Centennial School District

Trauma Informed Care

Thursday, June 3

9:00 – 12:00

Trainer: Patricia Levenberg, MA, NCC, LPC,
NOVA Counseling Coordinator

All trainings are held at the NOVA office,
2370 York Road, Suite B1, Jamison PA 18929.

To register, contact Mandy Mundy, 215.343.6543.

Elder Abuse Training for Law Enforcement

Thursday & Friday
February 25 & 26

Bucks County Community
College, Lower Bucks campus

For more information,
contact Leslie Slingsby
Leslie@NOVABucks.org
215.343.6543

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Contributing writers: Mike Pesce and
Mandy Mundy, NOVA educators

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Address inquiries or comments to
NOVA, 2370 York Road, Suite B1,
Jamison PA 18929 or 215.343.6543.

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Support



Prevention



Community Development Block Grant replaces old computers

All three NOVA offices are rockin' with new computers and other up-to-date technology, thanks to a \$15,000 Community Development Block Grant from Bucks County.

"All client records are maintained and accessed via the Internet using a web-based company, and we use email for most of our office communications, so we're dependent on the technology," says Meg Burger, administrative coordinator and NOVA's IT expert.

The grant provided 15 desktop systems,

two laptops and two projectors, and "a couple of extra monitors to replace aging equipment. Seventy-five percent of our equipment is over five years old, and thirty percent is older than eight years," she says.

"The education department uses the projectors and laptops for videos, PowerPoint presentations, community programs and professional trainings. This is much more efficient and easier for all of us, with no more crashing computers to slow us down." ♻️

More gifts

When Middletown Township Parks & Recreation Department hosted its annual Gallery of Trees and Holiday Open House on December 9, the festivities included a display of trees decorated for the holidays by local nonprofit organizations and Township departments. The more than 1,000 residents who attended were invited to vote for their favorite tree with coins... with the donation designated to go to NOVA this year. Thank you to Parks & Rec and to those who voted so generously. To see photos of the event: www.middletowntwpbucks.org/news/article.aspx?aid=93

24 Hour Victim Support Hotline
1-800-675-6900
www.novabucks.org

For Victims of Crime in Bucks County
Advocacy, Prevention & Support

of Bucks County



A Member Agency

Remember to designate NOVA

Tel.: (215) 343-6543
Fax: (215) 343-6260

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Network of Victim Assistance
2370 York Road • Suite B-1
Jamison, PA 18929

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