



The Voice

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Quarterly Newsletter

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What's In A Word?

The phrase “actions speak louder than words” is powerful. It provokes us into action. It tells us that our word means nothing if we fail to follow through. It is something that ultimately can be seen, so the impact can be direct and long lasting. Who can dispute the value of a community cleaning up a dump site? How many of us would not be moved to act if witnessing animal abuse? The visual stimuli of these deeds incites in us a sense of right and wrong. It also encourages us to join the collective whole because our actions, or lack thereof, become a representation of who we are and where we fit within our community.

What of the power of words? Words, with their connotations and subtle nuances, can be ambiguous and subjective; certainly left up to individual interpretations based on one’s personal experiences. A word can have infinite meanings when based upon each person’s perception rather than a definition. However, words have the capacity to inspire, arouse, charm, enrage and terrify. They can convince or dissuade on either a personal or societal level. A word can also trigger all our other senses, including visual. As a result, words take on a much more powerful role than that the opening phrase implies.

With this in mind, words in the context of domestic violence take on a whole new meaning. Domestic Violence is not about physical abuse. Domestic Violence is about *power and control*, which can be shown in both a physical and non-physical capacity. The spoken word can instill paralyzing fear, especially for someone who has experienced domestic violence in the past. The words “I will love you forever,” spoken by a true love, will warm your heart and make you feel safe. The words “I will love you forever,” spoken by an abuser, will wrench your heart and can make you feel trapped. Ultimately, victims of domestic violence are the ones who should judge which words and actions are the most intimidating to them because they are the ones who will walk the path to becoming a survivor.

Conversely, the words we use should be considered by each of us before we speak. The things we say casually in public or in small groups may have a major effect on a survivor or an individual currently experiencing domestic violence. A prime example is the word “only.” **Only** *adv.* **1.** without anyone or anything else **2.** no more than; merely; just. Statements like, “He *only* yells a lot” or “He *only* stood in the doorway, he didn’t punch her” minimizes the significance of the abuser’s behavior. It implies that living a life in which a person is controlled by intimidation, threats, or isolation is not as bad as being controlled physically. In fact, it may be much harder to get help from the police, court, or even friends and family with *only* the subtle tactics abusers use. It may also be harder for victims to acknowledge an abusive relationship when society focuses mainly on the physical.

The words, “It can’t be that bad because she doesn’t leave” are only words, but it does more damage to an individual and our mission of ending the cycle of violence than you may ever know. It negates the responsibility the abuser holds for his actions, it dismisses the barriers individuals face when leaving, and it disregards the many strengths that a victim must possess to survive in the first place. Let’s recognize not only the damage abusers’ words have on their victims, but the effect our words can have on others. Our words have the power to take the focus off of blaming the victim and put it where it belongs, with abuser accountability.

~Tina E. Direct Service Advocate

Inside this Issue

What's In a Word?	Pg 1
Community	Pg 2
Survivor Thank Yous	Pg 2
Wish List	Pg 2
Board Hello and Good Byes	Pg 3
Donor Thank Yous	Pg 3

What Happens When a Community Works Together

As we have voiced many times before, domestic violence is not just one person's, one gender's, or one race's problem, it's a community problem and everyone's problem. With that being said, domestic violence cannot be solved by one person or group alone, it takes a community to end the cycle of abuse. Over the past couple years Voices Against Violence has been able to build strong bridges with different community members and agencies that have changed the lives of the survivors we work with for the better.

There are many barriers our diverse group of survivors face when trying to leave an abusive situation and become safe. Unfortunately as hard as a survivor or individual agency may try, some of these barriers cannot be overcome by that one survivor or agency. This is when those bridges we have built make a huge impact on our agency and the survivors are beyond grate-

ful. We want to take a moment to thank several key members who have gone above and beyond to help us better serve our clients.

Bridget Manning, at the Whole Village Family Resource Center, has spent numerous hours with many of our clients trying to help them meet their needs. Bridget has assisted many of our clients with overwhelming state assistance paperwork and acted as his or her tireless advocate throughout the process. Bridget has also helped our agency in making sure our clients basic and imminent needs are met. Whether a new shelter resident needs diapers for her child or a client needs a winter coat, Bridget does her best to find them in the community.

Laurie Kass has been a key collaborator with our agency when it comes to helping us assist clients find housing. Laurie's knowledge and insight into the housing process, as well as her understanding of

challenges survivors of domestic violence may face through this procedure, has made it possible for clients to finally have a safe home to call their own.

For years Ron Moffette has collected much needed furniture for clients who are relocating to a safe place, but have nothing. He is constantly checking in with our agency to see if we have a need for objects he comes across in the community. If we are in need of specific things, Ron always makes himself available to connect with the community to help obtain these various items for our clients.

These are only a few examples of how community connections can greatly change a fellow member's life. We continue to build bridges and strengthen the ones already in place to better our community. We are grateful for these connections that help us reach our goal of ending the cycle of domestic violence.

A Special Thank You From Our Clients

"We want to thank Voices for always helping us and our Mom with clothes and things we need. Because of Voices we have good friends, we play sports, and are very involved at school. Thank you Voices for our amazing home. You changed our lives."

"I want to say thank you to Voices for giving me my life back. Between them and the community, I have a beautiful home, a car, and ongoing support. They have changed my life from a nightmare to happiness, love, and a beautiful life."

Wish List

- Trash bags
- Pillows & Pillow cases
- Kitchen dish cloths, hand towels & wash cloths
- White or cream colored Panel Curtains (63-64 inch)
- Full length mirrors
- Step stools for children
- All baby products: diapers- size 4, wet wipes, baby shampoos, baby lotions, baby powder, diaper rash ointment
- Gift certificates to Hannaford's and Wal-Mart and local area services or stores. These make a positive difference in the lives of our clients.
- Hygiene products: razors and lotions
- Gift certificate to Staples (office supplies are things we have to pay for and we would rather spend that money on our clients, not on paper or printer cartridges)
- Socks & underwear for women & children (various sizes)

To donate any of these items, please call 536-5999

Say Hello to our New Board Members!

And Goodbye to our Amazing Members who completed their terms!



From top left: Joan Clay, Wendell Broom, Heather Chabot, Kristen Vachon, Betsy Cheney, Veronica Barton Bottom row from left: Patricia Rella, Karen Mann Boyd, Sally Bevan. Missing from photo: Rosemary D'Arcy



Robin Derosa has served on our board for the last four years and the last two as our enthusiastic President. Robin always spoke so passionately about Voices' cause and doing whatever she could to raise awareness.

Cathie LeBlanc served on our board for the last two and half years. Even after completing her term as a board member Cathie recently donated a considerable amount of time helping set up donated refurbished laptops and changing over our computer system's server.



Matt Cheney served on our board for the last year and a half. Matt played a key role with last year's silent auction at our Annual Winter Ball and in our ongoing fundraiser Antiques = Assistance.



Peter Pettengill served on our board for the last two and a half years. Peter has played a significant role in connecting Voices with the community. Peter also was able to gather community event passes for clients and their children.



Thank You to Our Spring Appeal Letter Donors

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| Karen Mann Boyd | Warren Family Foundation |
| Robert Miller | Paul & Elizabeth Wilson |
| Daunice & John Hughes | RJ Crowley Moving & Storage |
| Alan & Patricia Cantor | Jennifer Highland |
| Michael Conklin & Deborah Reynolds | Marilyn Walter |
| Mary Cornish & John Kruerkeberg | Baker Valley Motors |
| Charles Barilla & Susan Durgy | Arthur & Priscilla Ulene |
| Daniel O'Neil | Thomas Garesche |
| Mega Print | Paul & Judith Floyd |
| Forest & Beverly Seavey | Ellen & Peter Rawlings |
| David & Enid Reed | William & Nancy Dailey |
| Rockyworld- Deephaven Camps | Lynn & Gary Goodnough |
| Tim & Julie Hussman | John Noyest & Rebecca Helme |
| Paul Scibetta | William Clark |
| Katherine & Frederick Kelsey | Ann McClellan |
| Cynthia Dussault | Cathie LeBlanc |
| Granite United Way | Sally Bevan |
| Shane Sirles | Joel & Melody Funk |
| Bristol Shop N' Save | Plymouth Rotary Foundation |
| | Bank of New Hampshire |
| | NH Electric Cooperative Foundation |

We are sad to see these amazing members leave, but very excited to continue to work with our great Board along side some new team mates!

To make a monetary gift to Voices Against Violence, please visit: www.voicesagainstviolence.net

All donations are tax deductible

Voices Against Violence

PO Box 53
Plymouth, NH 03264

Office Phone:

1(603) 536-5999

1(603) 536-3423

24 Hour Hotline:

1 (603) 536-1659

1 (877) 221-6176 (toll free)

www.voicesagainstv violence.net

www.facebook.com/



Reaching Out
Speaking Out

Since 1981 Voices Against Violence has been reaching out to and supporting victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Our advocates provide understanding, information, and support to victims, survivors, and non-offending family and friends. Our services include a 24-hour Crisis Line, Court Advocacy, Police and Hospital Accompaniment, Systems Advocacy, Emergency Shelter, Support Groups, and Education and Outreach. Domestic and sexual violence can take many forms including physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual assault, verbal threatening, and name calling. It can affect anyone at any time: friends, coworkers, relatives, children, teens, men, and women. By acknowledging the existence of domestic and sexual violence and stalking in our communities, we can raise awareness of the problem and enable both victims and witnesses to take action and break the cycle of violence.

Free and Confidential

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Return Service Requested

Voices Against Violence
PO Box 53
Plymouth NH 03264

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