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New Hope for Women

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Fall 2011 Newsletter



NEW HOPE *for* **WOMEN**

New Hope for Women offers support to people in Lincoln, Knox, and Waldo counties affected by domestic and dating violence and provides resources to assist our communities in creating a safer and healthier future.



Kathleen Morgan
Executive Director

An amazing thing happened on August 18th. New Hope for Women quietly slipped into its fourth decade of existence. From a single employee and a single office in Rockland, we've grown into an organization with nearly twenty workers and offices in Damariscotta and Belfast, as well as Rockland. To the core services of a 24-hour hotline, support groups, and emergency shelter, we've added six units of transitional housing, extensive youth and community education programs, a liaison position at Child Protective Services, a full-time attorney, and services for batterers. A handful of clients in the beginning grew last year to over eleven hundred. This year, we moved our victim services to our new building on Beech Street, and moved our certified batterer intervention program to our former home on Park Street.

It has been my great honor to work for New Hope for over half of its history, and one of the most astonishing things about working here is the constant reminder of how many lives have intersected with ours. Often I have heard my colleagues say that everywhere they go, they run into someone who has used our services. This has been my experience as well, and I find that the encounters are affirming. We owe so much to our clients; without their courage to call or walk in, without their strength to make change, we would have no reason to exist.

New Hope's staff members are not alone in their commitment to our clients. Over the years, we have depended heavily on the generosity of our volunteers. Volunteers have responded to hotline calls after hours and on weekends for thirty years! They have opened

their homes to victims and their children, even their pets. They have served on our Board of Directors. They have gone to court with victims. This type of hands-on help from such a committed group of individuals has been invaluable, and enables us to reach clients we otherwise wouldn't.

We have also enjoyed a broader type of support, which has made it possible for us to keep our doors open, connect with new clients, and build a safer community for victims. Friends throughout our service area have partnered with us on projects, contributed to our annual appeal, donated items to clients who were starting over, and organized some truly fun and memorable fundraising events. Businesses have enacted policies on domestic violence in the workplace. Professionals in other fields have referred their clients when they disclose information about abuse. Individuals have passed our hotline number to friends and family members who needed services. Others have attended New Hope presentations and used what they learned to become part of a helpful and consistent community response to victims of domestic and dating violence.

The miracle of New Hope truly has been the thirty years of support from our clients and the communities we serve. We would not be the agency we are today without your help and support, and I hope you will drop by our new office on October 6th so we can thank you in person.

30th Anniversary and Open House

October 6, 2011, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Please join us to celebrate our 30th Anniversary and the opening of our new office at 5 Beech Street in Rockland.

There will be light refreshments, and all who attend will be entered in a drawing for a wine and cheese basket.

Come experience the dramatic restoration of this classic building.



Getting the Call

In our last two newsletters, Anne learned about several of New Hope for Women's services, including our 24-hour hotline, office hours, court advocacy, and safe homes. She left her abusive relationship, obtained a Protection from Abuse Order, and has been working to build a safer life for herself and her son, Patrick. The first and second parts of this series are available at: newhopeforwomen.org/newsletter.php

Anne's story is representative of many that we hear at New Hope for Women, but is not about any particular client.

Front door opens to New Hope for Women's Rockland Office.

Advocate: Hi, Anne. How are you?

Client: Hi, Gina. I'm pretty good.

Advocate: Come have a seat in my office, and we can talk.

The advocate and client move to the advocate's office and close the door.

Advocate: I usually only see you when you are coming in for support group. How is that going for you?

Client: Group has been great. I really like all the women, and it has felt good to talk to people who are going through the same stuff. I don't feel like I have to hold back.

Advocate: What do you mean?

Client: Well, my friends and family have been very supportive, but I sometimes think it is hard for them to hear how bad the abuse was. It is hard for them to picture Kurt that way, and it is still hard for them to understand why it took me so long to leave. They want me to talk to them and they are always saying that they are here for me, but I can see that it gets to be too much.

Advocate: That can happen. People want to help by letting you share, but sometimes they can get overwhelmed hearing about all the abuse you endured.

It is hard to process. That's why support group can be a great tool. Those women have had similar experiences, and that perspective helps them understand what you're going through and how to help you.

Client: Yeah, I also feel like I am giving something back by sharing with the women still in their abusive relationships how I finally found the courage to leave. When the time comes they will know they have had enough and we will all be there for them. I like that I can tell them, "You can leave and be okay. You can make it without him, and it will feel great to not be in constant fear."

Advocate: Wow, it sounds like you are getting a lot out of support group, and giving a lot to the other members.

Client: It really does make me feel good.

Advocate: So, how have things been going with Kurt? Has he been following the Protection from Abuse Order and the schedule for visitation with Patrick?

Client: He has been following the Order. I think the idea of going to jail and having his reputation tarnished scares him too much. But sometimes in emails about Patrick's schedule he will say something about Patrick wanting us to be a family again.

Advocate: How does that make you feel?

Client: At first I get upset, and I have to talk myself out of believing it. I know it's been tough on Patrick not having his dad around all the time and still not having a home with his own space, but I know what Kurt writes is just twisting Patrick's words and that Patrick and I will be fine.

Advocate: Kurt shouldn't use Patrick to intimidate you or make you doubt yourself. You've worked hard to keep Patrick safe, and you've accomplished a lot.

Client: That's what all the women at group say. Having them reinforce that I did the right thing leaving Kurt and that

I can make it on my own has really kept me going.

Advocate: You said Patrick has had a tough time. How has all of this been on him?

Client: He has had a tough time with all the changes, but I think he really is happier and he seems more relaxed and able to enjoy himself. I guess I didn't realize before how tense even he was around his father, and now I see the abuse affected him more than I thought. When he comes back from visits with his father sometimes I see changes in his behavior. It takes a while for him to decompress.

Advocate: It might help to have him talk to someone, like a therapist or guidance counselor at school who is not emotionally close to the situation. That way he can be honest about his feelings and work through his thoughts.

Client: I have been thinking that, too. I worry that if he is hearing different stories from his parents, he won't feel like he can trust either of us.

Advocate: Do you feel that you could talk to his guidance counselor about Kurt abusing you, and Patrick needing a supportive person to talk with?

Client: Yes, Patrick does like his guidance counselor, and I have already talked with the school because of the Protection from Abuse Order. They have been very understanding, and willing to help Patrick and me. There is one other thing I have been worried about though.

Advocate: What's that?

Client: In his last email, Kurt said he was going to report me to Child Protective Services if Patrick continued to come to his house hungry and in dirty clothes, and that I need to find housing soon if I think I am going to keep him.

(continued)

Advocate: Why is he saying that Patrick arrives hungry and in dirty clothes?

Client: I don't know. Usually by the time he goes to his dad's house he has managed to get dirty, but he always starts out the day in clean clothes. And as for being hungry – I drop him off at 11:00, so he is starting to get hungry for lunch at that time, but he isn't starving.

Advocate: In that case, it sounds like Kurt is just trying to intimidate you by making those threats. Are you still working with Jennifer, New Hope's attorney?

Client: Yes, she is helping me with the divorce.

Advocate: Have you told her about this email?

Client: I've mentioned other emails when she has asked me how the communication between us is, but I have not mentioned this one. He just sent it a couple days ago. I can forward the email to her, and see what she thinks.

Advocate: I think that's a good idea. As far as the threats to report to Child Protective Services – coming to the house hungry and in dirty clothes seems a little far from what they deal with. New Hope does have an advocate that works as a liaison at Child Protective Services, and you could talk to her about all this. She could explain what is reportable and what isn't, and ease your mind about these threats.

Client: That sounds good. I would feel more comfortable talking to someone from New Hope. It would be helpful to know if he can really do that and what would happen.

Advocate: Sure. I'll give you her number and let her know you might be calling. You said he also mentioned housing.

Client: Yes. I think that bothered me a little more than the other stuff he wrote because housing has been tough and I know Patrick and I could use our own space. Even though my friend says we can stay with her as long as we need to, I do feel we are wearing out our welcome.

Advocate: How long have you been living there?

Client: Almost a year. We moved in when I left Kurt and I didn't intend to stay long, but it has been quite a process to get this far.

Advocate: Physically leaving an abusive relationship is a big step, but only the first step in really getting free from the abuse. It is a long process – housing, figuring out how to be stable and independent, and going through a divorce. It is a lot, and for some people it is more overwhelming and scary than the abuse that they grew used to. It is not an easy road. You've had to be so strong to come this far.

Client: Thanks. All the support I have gotten has really helped keep me going.

Advocate: So where are you in the process of looking for housing?

Client: Well, I am on waiting lists for low-income housing in the area and for housing voucher programs, but it seems like all the lists are so long and I am not even close to the top. Both Jennifer and Nicky from support group have mentioned New Hope's housing. I think I'd like to know more about that.

Advocate: Well, Anne, you probably would be a good candidate for the housing. It is called transitional housing because it is a program that provides housing for up to two years while you transition to becoming independent and self-sufficient. The transitional services advocate works closely with you on your goals, such as education and employment.

Client: I think that is what I need – some extra support figuring out what those next steps are, and our own place to live while I work on them.

Advocate: Let me get you an application. You can bring it back at the next support group meeting.

Client: Okay. Thanks so much, Gina. You have all been so helpful.

Advocate: You've done all the work and have stayed strong though it all.

Anne is approved for New Hope's transitional housing, and continues to work with New Hope on her goals. Like many of our real clients, Anne will work with New

Hope for years. It takes a lot of support for a victim of domestic violence to leave an abusive relationship and become empowered and self-sufficient enough to maintain independence.

New Hope for Women's Child Protective Services Liaison:

This is a position funded through a statewide grant. The liaison helps clients understand the Child Protective Services process, so that victims of domestic violence can be informed participants in the services their families are receiving.

This advocate educates New Hope advocates about Child Protective Services, and helps Child Protective Services workers connect clients with New Hope services in cases where domestic violence has been identified in the home. With this open line of communication, New Hope advocates and Child Protective Services workers are able to collaborate to provide services that will best help our clients and their children.

New Hope for Women's Transitional Housing Program:

Our transitional housing program is designed to provide homeless survivors of domestic violence housing and support while they become self-sufficient. Support includes weekly meetings, help with budgeting, and referrals to other resources and services as needed.

Clients in this program are expected to pay rent and follow the program guidelines, and commit to working towards their goals. Applications are available on our website.

Find out more about New Hope for Women's services by visiting our website. www.newhopeforwomen.org

Remember My Name

Ryan Mayo

Age 20 / Dover Foxcroft, Maine
Shot and killed outside his home.
His brother, Steven Mayo, 22, is charged with murder.

Marie Flewellen

Age 75 / Skowhegan, Maine
Shot and killed inside her home by her husband,
Barbour Flewellen, 86, who shot and killed himself.

Sarah Gordon

Age 30 / Winslow, Maine
Shot and killed outside her home by her husband,
Nathaniel Gordon, 32, who shot and killed himself.

Amy, Coty, and Monica Lake

Ages 38, 13, 12 / Dexter, Maine
Shot and killed inside their home by Amy's estranged husband and Coty and Monica's father,
Steven Lake, 37, who shot and killed himself.

Richard Jeskey

Age 53 / Bangor, Maine
Killed inside his home.
His wife, Roxanne Jeskey, 48, is charged with murder.

Alfred Licata

Age 63 / Cambridge, Maine
Beaten to death outside his home.
His son, Angelo Licata, 33, is charged with murder.

Renee Sandora

Age 27 / New Gloucester, Maine
Shot to death outside her home along with Trevor Mills, 28.
The father of Renee's four children, Joel Hayden, 29, is charged with two counts of murder.

Domestic violence is a crime.

24 hour crisis hotline | 1-800-522-3304

Belfast

111 Church St.
207-338-6569

Rockland

5 Beech St.
207-594-2128

Damariscotta

17 Water St.
207-563-2404



New Hope for Women is a non-profit organization funded by the Maine State Department of Health and Human Services, United Way of Midcoast Maine, United Way of Eastern Maine, United Mid-Coast Charities, and local donations.

Return Service Requested

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