



Inspire

Inspiring change. One person...One family... One world.

Center for Nonviolence

Fall 2012

The Mother's Group...

Dear Inspire Readers,

In this issue I was asked to highlight the Mother's Intervention Program, which is a small, but important and unique program of the Center. I hope I am able to give you, our Inspire readers, a glimpse into it and a better understanding of the program...

Some history...The Mother's program began in the late 90's when I began to notice that women who had lost custody or were in danger of losing custody of their children because of violence in the home were not having their needs met. They just didn't seem as open as the other women and I suspected that they felt ostracized by the loss of their children and needed to be in an environment with other women who had been in similar situations. The Mother's groups was born out of the understanding that many times women are struggling to deal with their own victimization and are not always able to focus on how it effects the children.

Who the mothers are...These are women who don't fit into the "traditional" domestic violence services. Most are referred by the Department of Child Services (DCS). DCS workers often know that the mothers are involved with violent men, but don't have a lot of good options available to them. The mothers are usually victims – but they are not seen that way by the court system. They are seen as perpetrators, either by using violence themselves or by remaining in a violent relationship. They can be any race, age, or socioeconomic status.

How the program is run...The 26 week program attempts to address the multifaceted wounding a mother and her children suffer from while encouraging her to envision a future free of violence. Through the use of interactive classes, we present information on topics such as critical thinking, child rearing, safety, communication styles and community resources. We look at isolation, feelings of powerlessness, fear, the effects of terrorizing in the home, victim blaming, and the gender messages young women receive that encourage them to "give up themselves" in relationships.

What the program offers...We have found that there is tremendous power in groups. When a woman sits with other women who have been through the same kinds of things she has, an environment of trust and safety is developed. In a safe and respectful atmosphere, women are encouraged to engage in dialogue about these and other issues helping them better "read their world" and act in their own best interest. They don't feel judged by the other women and they are more comfortable opening up – which is when real change can happen. This in turn begins to nurture homes free from violence.

I take great joy in this work every day and love watching the Mothers' "light bulb" moments as they realize that there is a pattern to behavior and that they have the power within to change that pattern.

Sincerely,

Maralee Martin, Women's Program Coordinator

To find out more about us, visit our website: www.centerfornv.org



Inspiring Change...It takes a family...

What do the mother's involved in the program think?

Mothers are given space to write any of their thoughts, good or bad—with anonymity. Each response is typed verbatim. Here are some from the Mother's program:

"It really helped to talk about children and their behavior and how to learn how to understand them more. I also learned of all kinds of abuse and how to deal with certain scenarios. Maralee has been a positive impact on my life."

"The experiences have all been very positive, facilitators is very helpful and understanding to each of our issues we are facing and she never talks to us as if we are less than each other. The group has been helpful and enlightening and I've enjoyed being part of CFN when I needed it."

"Very good leadership and knows a lot of what we have been thru. Very grateful for the experience. Enjoyed it and very insightful and helpful in some aspects of my life. Thank you."

"Thanks CfN. Maralee has been a blessing she has taught me so much. I just really want to say thank you for all your time and support!"

"I have learned a lot from this class and think this type of programs should be taught in high schools when relationships and being a mother can start."

Recognition of the Mother's Group – Celebrating Solutions

The Mother's Program has been chosen as a finalist for the "Mary Byron" award twice in the past three years. We are anxiously waiting to hear if we are selected as the winner for 2012. The Mary Byron Project was established in 2000 in memory of the young woman whose tragic murder led to the creation of automated crime victim notification technologies. As a nationally recognized thought leader on domestic violence, the Mary Byron Project cultivates and supports efforts that extend beyond crisis management to attack the root causes of this epidemic and help build safer, healthier communities.



CfN's Coordinating Panel

Laura Boyer

Trish Fox

Kim Miller

Sherwin Kepes

Barbara Linden

Jennifer Mabe

Deb O'Kelley

Staff Administrative Team

John Beams

Ana Giusti

Robin James

Maralee Martin

Tasha Sare

Dawn Witte

Come visit us on Facebook...Fort Wayne Center for Nonviolence

Upcoming Events 2012

September 29th: *Fort4Fitness* CfN is proud to be a partner charity!

October 9th & 10th: Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Indianapolis – Center staff will facilitate three different trainings to more than 500 professionals from across the state.

October 16th: *“A Day in the Life of a Victim”* CfN is collaborating with the Wells County DV Task Force to put on this day long conference...call (260) 728-9800 for details or to register.

October 19th: *Harvest Open House* Please join us at the Center from 5-7:00 pm, food provided by Queenie! The fruits of our Capital Campaign will be revealed as we show our renovated third floor and thank those who made it possible.

November 5th - 9th: *Duluth Training* Indianapolis, IN– CfN staff will be conducting a training on the internationally recognized Duluth and In Our Best Interest Curriculums.

December 1st & 2nd: *Holiday Tea House* Will be held at the Center as part of the Woodland Williams Holiday Home Tour with bakes goodies and decorating provided by local Fort Wayne businesses. This Center event is open to the public, free will donations appreciated. For tickets and information for the Holiday home tour, please visit:

www.williamswoodlandpark.com

Tips to nurture meaningful relationships with kids....

*Stop what you are doing, sit down, make eye contact and really listen when conversing with a child.

*Instead of asking the usual, “how was school today?” Try asking “what was the best part of your day and what was the worst part of your day?” You can share you own responses to that question with your child.

*Share some of your thought processes in coming to good decisions. “I really felt like yelling at the man in the car ahead of us, but I didn’t. He crowded in front but maybe he’s really late for something important. I guess it’s not that big of a deal if he goes first.”

*Look for opportunities to let your child take the lead or sometimes ask for their opinion.

*Appreciate the positive, catch them doing things right and name it.



PLAY TOGETHER

LAUGH TOGETHER

SING SONGS

~Parents are the first and best teachers of children. By example, parents teach children how to live in relationships with other people ~

Prefer to get Center updates in your inbox? Email: mmeinert@centerfornv.org

Center's Wish List

Digital camera
Video Camera (which support DVDs)
Instrumental CDs
Laminator
Diapers & Wipes
Bubbles
Playground balls
Office supplies
Boxes of Kleenex
Gift Certificates to...

- Lowes
- Home Depot
- Meijer
- Target
- Michaels

Flat Screen TV
DVD Player
Volunteers for Building & Maintenance



Services of the Center

All services are also available in Spanish

- Adult Violence Intervention Programs
- Support Groups
- Mother's Intervention Program
- S.A.F.E. (support groups for survivors of sexual assault and their families)
- Mujeres Unidas (Latina support group)
- Violence Intervention for Youth
- Thinking Errors Intervention for Youth
- FACES (school-based leadership programming)
- Trainings

Mission: To provide education, support, and advocacy to end domestic and other forms of violence while modeling equality and power sharing



Check us out on

235 W. Creighton Ave.
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
www.centerfornv.org



Center for Nonviolence