



BUILDING BRIDGES

A publication of Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support



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Agency Spotlight

By Lara Rice

LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (LAP)

In the Spring of 2009 the NH Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence hosted a training on the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) for First Responders, by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV). Developed in Maryland, LAP is an effective method of identifying victims of domestic violence who are at risk of being seriously injured or killed by their intimate partners and immediately connects them with the domestic violence support agency in their area. Piloted in 2009 in other parts of New Hampshire, the program resonated with first responders and domestic violence support agencies alike and Bridges made LAP a priority, participating in the program since early 2010. Several police departments within our community have launched the program and we expect several others to follow suit soon.

The Lethality Assessment Program is a two-pronged intervention process that features a research-based lethality screening tool and an accompanying protocol referral that provides direction for officers to initiate appropriate action based on the results of the screening process. By its very nature, the program is designed to create greater awareness of danger and lethality as they pertain to domestic violence.

The process begins when an officer arrives at the scene of a domestic vio-

lence call. The officer assesses the situation and when the standards that indicate danger are met, the officer will ask the victim to answer a series of questions from the Lethality Screen for First Responders, issued to officers in all participating police departments.

The standards are met when:

- 1) There is reason to believe that an assault or an act that constitutes domestic violence has occurred, whether or not there is an arrest; or
- 2) There is a belief or sense on the part of the officer that once the victim is no longer in the care or presence of the officer, the potential for assault or danger is high; or
- 3) There have been repeat calls for service at the residence; or
- 4) The officer simply believes one should be conducted.

If indicated, the officer will ask a series of eleven short questions and will record the victim's responses, including any questions the victim declines to answer. If the answers provided do not trigger a protocol referral or the victim declines to complete the screen, the officer will provide referral information for Bridges and advise that services are free and confidential and that advocates are available 24-hours per day, should the victim decide to seek services at a later time.

Continued on page 6

Important Information

Bridges
24-hour support line
603.883.3044
Collect calls are accepted, and 150 languages are available via the Language Line.

211
Just dial 2-1-1
www.211nh.org

NH Help Line
www.nhhelpline.org
1.800.852.3388

National Domestic Violence
Hotline
1.800.799.SAFE
1.800.787.3224 TTY

NH Coalition Against
Domestic & Sexual Violence
www.nhcadv.org
603.224.8893

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Trudy Matthews



Please join us to see what Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support does to end violence in our community.
Let friends and colleagues know about our tours and encourage them to bring a friend too!



You are invited to a

Bridges Hope Tour

Nashua Office on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Milford Office on Thursday, September 23, 2010 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Nashua Office on Tuesday, October 12, 2010 — 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm
Nashua Office on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Nashua Office on Wednesday, December 8, 2010 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Nashua Office on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Milford Office on Wednesday, February 16, 2011 — 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm
Nashua Office on Thursday, March 17, 2011 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
Nashua Office on Thursday, April 14, 2011 — 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm



Please call 603-889-0858 extension 214 or email
development@bridgesnh.org to reserve your space. Group size limited. Lunch/Refreshments served.

5th ANNUAL Hope Fundraiser May 18, 2011



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Yoga Classes for Trauma Survivors

By Trudy Matthews

Thanks to Erica, a Bridges client, and her yoga instructor Rosemary Clough, Bridges is now offering a free yoga class for Bridges clients.

Erica is dealing with a complicated and heart-wrenching situation involving allegations of abuse of her child by the father. Due to the nature of child abuse cases and the difficulty in meeting the standards of proof, the child continues to see dad via court-ordered unsupervised visitation sessions.

Sadly, this situation is not unique. Even after leaving an abusive relationship, our clients can find themselves dealing with their children having contact with the abusive parent. In response to this on-going emotional stress, Erica has become an expert on relevant aspects of New Hampshire family and criminal law and the New Hampshire court system, and continues her efforts in the legal arena. And, because she must be a consistent source of support for her child, Erica has also become an expert in how to manage and overcome the emotional trauma she suffers.

In the work of Bessel van der Kolk, MD, a clinician, researcher and teacher in the area of posttraumatic stress since the 1970's, Erica found a connection between yoga and trauma therapy. Van der Kolk states that trauma is not only the story of something awful that has happened, but is also the residue of imprints left behind in people's sensory and hormonal systems. Further, he believes that trauma-sensitive people need some form of bodywork to regain a sense of safety in their minds and bodies.

Erica's research led her to Rosemary's yoga studio, Moving Spirit Center for Yoga, Dance and Wellness, in Merrimack, NH. Rosemary is trained in the body therapy that can be effective in healing from trauma. Some of the studio's guiding philosophies are that healing and change are best accomplished in a safe supportive setting, with emphasis on the mind-body connection, body alignment, body safety, and gradual progress, or as Rosemary says, "changing with grace."

We at Bridges are thrilled that Erica recognized that other Bridges' clients may benefit from this type of trauma therapy, and was able to connect Bridges with Rosemary. We are thrilled that Rosemary has set up a free yoga class for our clients. Rosemary's class for Bridges clients is held in a warm and welcoming environment in her private studio. Thanks to both Erica and Rosemary for reaching out to help our clients with this unique healing program.

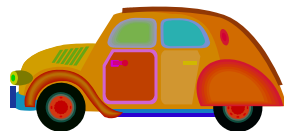
More information about Bessel van der Kolk's pioneering work on the neuroscience of trauma and its impact of development, thinking, feeling and body sensations can be found at www.traumacenter.org.

Learn more about high-quality instruction and personal attention offered at Rosemary's studio at www.movingspiritogadance.com, or call the studio at (603) 886-7308.

Automobile Donation Program

You can donate your old car, boat, RV, motorcycle, jet ski, and/or snowmobile..... RUNNING OR NOT; receive a tax deduction and help Bridges raise critical funding to support services to victims/survivors of sexual and domestic violence and stalking.

DONATE A VEHICLE ONLINE NOW!



**Just Call: 1-877-CARS-4-US
extension 2022**

Janice's House Wish List

- Cell phones
- Gasoline cards
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Grocery store and pharmacy gift cards
- Laundry detergent
- Soap
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Deodorant
- Trash bags
- Cleaning supplies

Thank You for Your Time and Generosity

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In Memory of Frances Becker

Mr. Michael and Mrs. Debora Pignatelli

In Memory of Laura Wolf

Rob and Barb Wolf

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Ms. Vicki Dapolito

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Arlene Helmig

Ms. Linda Kipnes

Lillian and Charles Michaud

SART—Sexual Assault Resource Team

By Dawn Reams

In 2006, the *Violence Against Women in NH Report* found that 22.7% of New Hampshire women have been victims of sexual assault, with 19.5% having been the victim of sexual assault with penetration. These figures represent 112,909 New Hampshire women, yet sexual assault remains one of the most underreported of all violent crimes.

Research studies also show that of the sexual assaults that victims do report, only 5 to 10% of the cases progress through the criminal justice system to conviction and incarceration. This should not be the acceptable outcome for this serious and violent crime in our communities.

The Attorney General's Office has received a grant to increase the successful prosecution of cases of adult sexual assault in NH through the development and sustainability of victim-centered Sexual Assault Resource Teams (SARTs). The SART model will involve a victim-centered, collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to investigating and prosecuting adult cases, with an emphasis on case review.

The core members of the team include law enforcement, prosecutors, victim advocates, and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), with additional members on a case-by-case need.

The goals of SART include:

- To have more streamlined and compassionate response to victims by all partners;
- To hold offenders accountable;
- To enhance and increase the successful prosecution of adult sexual assault cases; and
- To promote public safety

Bridges is pleased to be involved in the development of a SART here in Southern Hillsborough County. Members of the Merrimack, Nashua and State Police Departments, Hillsborough County Prosecutor and Victim Witness Advocate, Bridges Advocate, Southern NH Medical Center SANE's and Emergency Department Physician, all attended the SART Summit training presented by the Attorney General's Office in May of this year.

At this training, we were able to begin developing strategies for success when working with adult sexual assault victims. The team also developed a list of other community partners to join us in our effort. We are pleased that the Hudson Police Department, Gateways, and A Peaceful Balance will be joining us in our work. Our team will be meeting regularly to receive specialized multidisciplinary training and to develop protocols, policies, and procedures for the response, investigation, and prosecution of adult cases and the treatment of adult victims. If you would like to be involved with the SART developing in this community, please email director@bridgesnh.org.

Lethality Assessment Program continued

If the victim's responses to the questions indicate an increased risk for homicide, the officer initiates an immediate protocol referral to Bridges by placing a call to our 24-hour support line. An advocate will respond immediately and, with the victim's consent, engage in a short safety planning and options discussion with the victim, lasting no more than 10 minutes. Best practices indicate that follow-up contact be offered by Bridges to the victim, to allow for a more thorough discussion and a reinforcement of the array of services available.

LAP enables law enforcement and Bridges to work collaboratively to assist victims who might otherwise be unlikely to avail themselves of the support services that we offer. It also promotes a consistent message around the safety concerns for a victim, while still respecting the wishes and concerns facing a victim of

domestic violence. As with all of the services that we provide, communication with an advocate via LAP is voluntary, as are any follow-up services offered.

We are proud to be working with law enforcement on this very important initiative and look forward to achieving 100% law enforcement agency participation within our community. Current police departments participating in the program are: Hudson, Mont Vernon, and Pelham. Soon to become participating members are: Amherst, Merrimack, Milford, and Nashua. Training is available to all towns throughout the state of New Hampshire and all are encouraged to become involved in this coordinated community response, designed to improve victims' safety. For more information on the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), please contact Lara Rice at (603) 889-0858, x212 or shelter@bridgesnh.org.

Media Review

By Gwen Matthews

Back Roads

Tawni O'Dell's novel, *Back Roads*, begins with the aftermath of a family. Mom went to prison for shooting Dad in the back. The family is isolated from the community due to the stigma of being the children of a murderer and an abuser. So, with one parent dead, and the other in prison, we learn through the eyes of their oldest child, Harley, what is left of the family. They still live in the same broken down house, in the same rural landscape within the same impoverished town. Dad may no longer be beating the children for spilling something on the carpet, but they all still have flashbacks to when he did. Mom does still get to see drawings that her youngest daughter, 6-year-old Jody, makes in school – but it's on a monthly visit to the state prison.

Harley, our protagonist, is struggling with what it means to be a man and how to be the head of the household. He is almost twenty and has three younger sisters whom he is now the legal guardian of. "As a kid," the protagonist tells us, "I worried that maybe men could only feel anger and every other emotion had to grow out of it." He fantasizes about beating his sisters in order to feel a sense of power.

After a fight with his sixteen-year-old sister Harley tells the readers, "I wanted to put big red welts on her pretty face and make blood gush from her ears. Not because I hated her. Not because she deserved it. Not because I wanted her to fear me. Simply because it would feel good." However, while Harley justifies his thoughts about violence toward his sisters as a way of release, the readers quickly become aware that his anger and desire to hurt others arise from his perceived lack of control and power. Harley recognizes the

difference between himself and his father as him resisting the urge to violently assault a member of his family, but his violent fantasies seem as disturbing to Harley as to the reader.

Back Roads illustrates how family violence can perpetuate from generation to generation if there is not a conscious effort put in to break the cycle of violence. And Harley displays the conflicted, ambivalent feelings about his parents that many abused children do. He experiences anger at both his father and mother, anger at himself, and anger at his sisters, while simultaneously loving all of them and feeling a sense of duty to keep the family together.

Here at Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support our goal is to help stop the cycle of violence. We do this through providing support to victims/survivors of domestic violence and by holding support groups for children who have witnessed violence in their homes and their non-offending caregivers. We help children explore their conflicting feelings and name the feelings that they have, discuss how to appropriately express and manage anger, and talk about the hurting in our families. By providing a safe environment to discuss the abuse they saw or experienced, we can help children to make the choice to treat their current and future partners and family members with respect and compassion.

For more information about any of Bridges programs, support groups, or advocacy, please call our office at 603.889.0858 or call our 24-hour support line at 603.883.3044.

Please join us on
October 16, 2010
for the
5th Annual Kelly Mann
Memorial 5K and 3K
Fun Run/Walk



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at:

www.firstgiving.com/bridgesnh

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Elementary School
Nashua, NH

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Race starts promptly at 9am

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To eliminate domestic and sexual violence
and provide a safe and empowering environment for victims and survivors

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