



Sexual Assault
Crisis &
Support Center

Helping Our Community Become Silent No More



CHILDREN'S
Advocacy Center

of Kennebec & Somerset Counties
A Program of the Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center

SUPPORT ADVOCACY EDUCATION COMMUNITY



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2020

DEAR FRIENDS,

As we moved through the spring into the summer and now the fall, it is usually a time for new beginnings, students going off to school or college for the first time, gatherings with friends and families being planned for the holidays, but things look a lot different this year.

We are all working hard to keep those we provide services to, as well as our staff, our community partners and our families safe by social distancing, wearing masks etc. while still providing important support and comfort to those experiencing sexual violence.

Sexual violence does not stop or lessen because of a virus, it is more important than ever that we are able to continue to provide 24-hour, free, confidential support services, trauma-informed forensic interviews for children affected by sexual abuse through our nationally accredited Children's Advocacy Center along with prevention education and outreach. Although we are providing these services in a different way, remotely and safely in person, we are committed to provide effective wraparound services to survivors and those who care about them.

Now more than ever as victims may be experiencing isolation, we want to make sure they know, and YOU know, that we will continue to be here for them! I truly appreciate the local heroes, our sponsors, our donors, board of directors, staff, and community members who stuck with us on behalf of survivors to ensure that during this challenging time, survivors were never left behind.

With kindness and gratitude,

Donna Strickler



Donna Strickler
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Lessen the trauma-related suffering of sexual assault and promote healing by guiding those affected by sexual violence toward survival through **support, advocacy, education, and community** collaboration.

I have the privilege of serving as the President of the Board. It is a privilege because of the importance of the mission and the people with whom I work with in furtherance of that mission.

As a board member I am given an inside view as to how Silent No More is pursued 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Literally the hotline is always available with advocates ready to respond to hospitals in Kennebec and Somerset Counties whenever needed. Plus, the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is the first center in Maine to be fully accredited and, sadly, the need for its services continues to grow. With every visit to the center, I see more painted handprints on the wall from the children the CAC has helped to find justice and counseling to pull their lives back together.

I have met the advocates working to prevent sexual assault through teaching children in the schools about respecting one another and bringing together community partners to help every victim of sexual assault become a survivor. I have also met the advocates at the protection from abuse hearings helping victims to understand a confusing system at the most terrifying time in their lives.

And though less glamorous, it is no less important, that I carefully review the financial information at every board meeting with a steely eye to keep forever the fiscal strength of the organization.

While pandemic restrictions required a brief shut-down, the dedicated people of the Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center never stopped working, even when the work had to briefly be done at home. As soon as possible, the CAC resumed interviewing children, the advocates returned to the courts, and, of course, the phones never stopped ringing.

All of this is possible because of our supportive community, our volunteers, our donors, our board members, our staff, and our Executive Director—the greatest imaginable.

Thank you to everyone who is a part of the critical mission of the Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center!



Board of Directors

President

Maeghan Maloney

Vice President

Jared Mills

Secretary

Michelle Galego

Treasurer/Fundraising Chair

Dot Randall

Morgan Allarie
Julie Armstrong
Elizabeth Jean
Hannah Longley
Anna Love
Raymond Moinester



Maeghan Maloney
Board President

Education & Outreach

Prevention Education – Making our Community Safer!



Just as schools and the rest of the world are adapting to coronavirus guidelines, so is our approach. We recognize the many ways that our students and parents have been impacted by this pandemic and our mission is to continue meeting people where they're at. Currently, that means we are meeting with folks virtually.

Working closely with the Maine Department of Education and Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA), our education team utilizes best practices in preventing sexual violence. Boiled down, that means having lots of conversations with as many people as we can. Folks experiencing poverty, neglect, or abuse. People with disabilities, mental health challenges, or PTSD. Teachers, law enforcement, and students. We are encouraged by finding innovative ways to still reach all members in our community.

Things we talk about include the roots of sexual violence and how words matter. Depending on our audience, we may discuss consent, harassment, boundaries, or assault. Whether we're having a one to one conversation with a student on the lawn or providing a zoom training for a school district of teachers, we will continue to have these important, sometimes uncomfortable, conversations. Primary prevention is about changing the culture and the way we view sexual violence.

One program that we have worked with weekly since they opened is Day One. Day One provides residential treatment to youth from all over the state. As Maine's only agency whose primary focus is adolescent substance use and mental health concerns, our partnership has provided us the opportunity to reach youth in a way that visiting health classes in public schools can't. The average length of stay in the program is 3-6 months. This provides our educators with the ability to spend as much time as needed around topics that are relevant and crucial in their lives. As one student recently said, "I never really thought about gender roles before."



Community Educator, Katie Laflamme, at Day One



Mental Health Initiatives at the Kennebec & Somerset Children's Advocacy Center



The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) serving Kennebec & Somerset counties has completed 2,058 interviews to date. We are set to celebrate our one year anniversary on October 1st of being in our newest second location in Winthrop, ME. The new space has allowed us to continue to serve families and children safely during this unprecedented time.

We are excited to share two new endeavours that the CAC has been collaborating on. The first exciting update has been working in coordination with Kennebec Behavioral Health, in order to provide a licensed clinician at our Winthrop CAC location. Tina York has office hours at our CAC, as a licensed clinician helping families, children, and Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center staff. Our collaboration will encompass various topics, such as risk of burnout, secondary victimization, and compassion fatigue to our center's staff, volunteer advocates and MDT partners. Our families will greatly benefit from Tina's years of clinical work with children and families. We look forward to helping minimize the stress for children experiencing trauma the same day they visit the Children's Advocacy Center.

Our second mental health endeavour started back in November of 2019. Our CAC has been participating in the E3 Mental Health Project, a research project conducted collaboratively by the National Children's Alliance and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. The focus of this study is aimed at family engagement in mental health services, as well as ensuring families are receiving the mental health services that are most appropriate and beneficial for their individual and family needs. During designated data collection periods, we have collected and submitted a variety of information from our client families such as demographics, willingness to participate in mental health services, and overall thoughts and attitudes regarding mental health services. As a result of our center's participation in this project, we have seen an increase in the number of caregivers requesting mental health services for both themselves and on behalf of their children.

Wish List:

- play-doh
- books for all ages
- puzzles
- cleaning supplies
- markers
- crayons
- construction paper
- drawing paper

Check out our
Amazon Wish List:

amzn.to/2RZ0wQs

HOW YOU CAN HELP OUR COMMUNITY BE 'SILENT NO MORE'

Invite our Outreach & Development Coordinator to speak

Unfortunately, many people are not aware of the sexual violence that happens in our community. Becoming aware is key to being able to stop it. We are committed to go wherever in our community we are asked to educate people about our much-needed services.

Volunteer on our development committee

Our event committee is instrumental in helping with our fundraising events. We collaborate with a variety of people with expertise in how to create a successful fundraiser.

Become a donor/sponsor

Day after day, you see news of sexual assault online and in the papers, and shake your heads at the unbelievable crisis going on in your own back yard. You are most likely wondering how this nightmare will stop? You can get involved by becoming a sponsor or a donor of our agency. Just knowing that you are helping victims by directly donating to the "boots on the ground" advocates gives you the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping in a cause that is worthy. Your donations allow us to offer our programs for free!

Follow us on social media

Head to our Facebook & Instagram page (@silentnomoreorg) and share our posts as often as you can. Many in our community do not know we offer free services to victims of sexual assault and their families. We need to get the word out. Ask ten of your friends to like our page and they each ask ten of their friends!

Party for a Purpose/Crowdfunding

With your help, we can spread the word about the sexual crimes and abuse that happens in Kennebec and Somerset Counties, so people can be on the lookout for perpetrators and know how to report it to the authorities. We can't be silent; the consequences are too high. Consider asking your friends and family to support a party or activity, such as a yard sale and donate the proceeds to our agency. This supports funding but more importantly it helps our community become aware of these much needed services.

Participate in our events

We do our very best to make sure that our events are loads of fun! We get rave reviews in the survey that follows each event. You can help by buying event tickets, bid on auction items, buy raffle tickets, sell raffle tickets, share the event with friends and family, or make a general donation.

Outreach

Seek us out and pick up our literature to share in your community, place of business, schools, and more.

Become a volunteer advocate

Volunteer advocates receive 40 hours of free training in order to support survivors by answering hotline calls and accompany survivors to the hospital for a forensic medical exam.

GIVING TUESDAY

GivingTuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world.

GivingTuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Over the past seven years, it has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

We are planning on participating in this year's GivingTuesday and our goal is to raise \$2,500! Here is a break down of how your donations will support us on December 1st:

- **\$5** provides play-doh for a child being interviewed at our Children's Advocacy Center to help them relieve stress while telling what happened to them.
- **\$25** provides new clothes to a rape victim who had to relinquish their clothes as part of evidence collecting during a forensic exam.
- **\$50** provides an hour of free prevention education to students.
- **\$100** provides a free support group session to help sexual assault victims heal.
- **\$150** provides 24-hours of free, and confidential sexual assault helpline service for victims and their families.
- **\$250** helps provide support and advocacy for a victim seeking a protection order and/or a trial.

Mark your calendars for December 1st!
silentnomore.org/giving-tuesday

SUPPORT GROUPS

The Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center offers many different types and options for support groups. The free & confidential support groups that we offer are a wonderful way to start the healing process in the aftermath of experiencing sexual trauma. There are many positive outcomes that can occur when participating in a group setting that will assist someone in reconnecting to the community around them in a safe and supportive way and provide a safe space for a survivor to grow, discover and heal their mind, body, soul & spirit.

Why Groups?

- **Groups promote reconnection with others.** One impact of sexual assault is that it isolates us from ourselves, others and the world around us. In groups, survivors begin to form new attachments that lay the groundwork for their ability to heal and recover.
- **Groups provide safety and support.** There is opportunity to meet and gather support from other people with similar experiences. Being with others who understand makes it easier to share without fear of being judged. In groups, survivors safely share their experiences, feelings and concerns.
- **Groups validate a survivor's experience.** When survivors see others with similar situations as theirs, they recognize their experience as important too. Groups validate the survivor's experience as worthy of attention and concern.
- **Groups universalize the problem.** The power of seeing your experiences in the lives of others is immeasurable. Groups allow survivors to begin to recognize they are not alone, making it easier to diffuse their sense of blame and responsibility.
- **Groups present role models for expressing and coping with feelings.** When you see how others cope with their experiences, it not only provides examples but promotes confidence that healing is possible.
- **Groups promote trust.** Survivors learn that others want to help and will be there for them. They begin to trust again.
- **Groups provide survivors an opportunity to help others.** Helping others helps promote a sense of self-worth and value. Groups give survivors the chance to get outside their own experiences and help others in the healing journey.
- **Ultimately, groups promote empowerment, the key to sexual assault recovery.** Groups are a place for information sharing and problem solving. Engaging in problem solving with others gives survivors a sense of power and control that is the backbone of recovery.

"If I could offer inspiration to other survivors, it would be that if there is hope for me, there is hope for EVERYONE."



"I cannot express how grateful I am that [the support group] did not require payment and that I was able to feel safe and respected as I met others who have survived and were working on healing themselves. There is power in numbers and in sharing in these ways."



Our 24-hour, confidential sexual assault crisis & support line:

1-800-871-7741

Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

Advocates are the backbone of the Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center. Advocates provide essential support to individuals impacted by sexual violence in many ways.

Advocates understand that survivors need respect, control over their bodies and experiences, information, access to treatment and support and support through the many systems that they may encounter throughout their healing journey. Advocates provide accompaniment and support to law enforcement interviews, accompanying survivors through a sexual assault medical forensic examination at the hospital, and through the civil and criminal justice system and judicial systems. Advocates are there each step of the way to provide information and support, access to resources such as legal, medical, mental health and others. Advocates allow individuals to make decisions about the process and assure them that sexual violence is never their fault and acknowledge their strength. Advocates support and respect a survivor's decision about reporting or disclosing.

Advocates can support and empower survivors and their loved ones for as long as needed, confidentially. Advocates can help provide information and answer questions about the process for the survivor along the way and help to be a liaison between the survivor and the systems that they encounter. Advocates help survivors with crime victim's compensation applications, filing for protection from abuse orders as well as other civil legal remedies and can accompany survivors to hearings. Advocates provide non-judgmental support, 24/7 through our free, confidential support line.



Survivors will often hear advocates say: "I believe you. This was not your fault. I'm sorry this happened. I'm here for you. You deserve support right now. You don't deserve what happened to you. I'm glad you came in tonight. You are not to blame. No one has the right to do this to you. I'm proud of you for taking care of yourself." Advocates focus on the emotional well-being of the survivor.

Advocates will not talk to others without consent from the survivor, nor will they tell the survivor what to do. Advocates begin by believing and provide information, options, referrals and support; and empower survivors to make decisions that feel right for them.

Additionally, Advocates promote multidisciplinary collaboration and help to create and maintain an effective and coordinated victim-centered response to sexual violence. Sexual Assault Teams create guidelines and protocols for response to sexual assault across disciplines and hold regular meetings to address training needs, gaps in services, problem-solving and system accountability.

Survivors often just need someone to listen. Advocates do that and much more. Advocates help survivors build emotional and physical safety, normalize and validate their feelings, instill hope for healing, point out strengths and decrease self-blame, debunk misconceptions and provide facts, help survivors brainstorm healthy coping skills and encourage self-care as well as helping survivors explore their options and validate their concerns.

Interested in becoming a volunteer advocate?

Call 207-377-1010 and sign up now or fill out a form on our website.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

\$5,000+



\$3,000+



\$1,000+

Pine State Trading Co.
Morgan Allarie
Maine General Health

Winthrop Commerce Center
Tex Tech Industries
Central Maine Motors Auto Group

\$500+

New Dimensions Federal Credit Union
Fortin's Home Furnishings
Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare
Winthrop Fuel Company

Anne Jordan
Granite Corp.
O'Connor Auto Park

\$250+

Huhtamaki
Maine State Credit Union
Monmouth Federal Credit Union
NLC Ink Screenprinting & Embroidery
One River CPAs
Winslow Community Federal Credit Union
Finn Accounting

Realty of Maine
Bangor Savings Bank
Mattson's Flooring & Lighting
William Trahan
Dot Randall
Don Percious
Gardiner Federal Credit Union

In-Kind

Connected Credit Union
Kennebec Journal / Morning Sentinel
The Mix 107.9
News Center Maine
Hassenfus Family Dental
High Hopes
Hometown Vet
KeyBank

KVCC
PepsiCo
Sports Cuts
Suntan City
Thomas College
United Way of Mid Maine
Mark & Deanna Photography



Helping Our Community Become Silent No More

PO BOX 417
WINTHROP, ME 04364
(207) 377-1010



24/7 Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Line: 1-800-871-7741

www.silentnomore.org