

Sounds of Survival

Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties

29th Annual Take Back the Night held in Bemidji on April 28, 2011



Mayor Dave Larson attended his first Take Back The Night event, but it was the 29th for the Bemidji area! He read and signed the proclamation stating that, "...in recognition of the important work done by our Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Programs, I do hereby proclaim the night of April 28th, 2011 as "Take Back the Night in the city of Bemidji" and urged all citizens to work toward the elimination of any and all forms of violence against women and children. Mayor Larson reported that the Family Advocacy Center saw 76 victims, and the Sexual Assault Program served 285 victims in 2010. He read statistics from the Femicide Report provided by Northwoods



Coalition for Family Safety. The clothesline project was on display; it is very humbling to see all the t-shirts that honor a life lost to violence.

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Inside this issue:

Community Ed 2
News

SAP Welcomes 2
new staff

Anishinabe 3
Equay Update

SAP gets grant 3
from MN State
Bar Foundation

B-SMART Corner 3

Mark Your 4
Calendar

Larry Aitken blessed the event and spoke of a violence free life. Marc Bloomquist from the Department of Corrections was our guest speaker. He spoke about his work with sex offend-

ers. Marc mentioned what a benefit it is for him, the other agents, the victims and even the offenders when advocates are involved with the victims early and throughout the whole process. Tandy Bowman of R n 'B Therapeutic Reflection Empowerment Drumming brought all kinds of musical instruments and led the participants in therapeutic drumming. The excellent dinner was once again donated by the Headwaters Unitarian Universalist Fellowship following the march.

We were anticipating a great show of support from BSU athletes, better than last year even. Unfortunately the Athletic Banquet was scheduled for the same time. However, several BSU athletes wanted to show their support for TBTN, so they created a video message that we played before the march began.

Next year will mark the 30th anniversary for Bemidji's commitment to Take Back the Night. The event is slated to take place April 12, 2012. Save the date as plans are to make it a night to remember! One plan is to hold a t-shirt design contest; the winning design will be on the new shirts to celebrate our 30 year fight to end violence in Bemidji. If you would like to participate on the planning committee, please contact Kim at the Sexual Assault Program office.

Community Education Update

The 4th Annual 5K Walk/Run was held on Saturday, April 9th, at the Gillette Rec Center on BSU campus. We were co-sponsored by the BSU Lifestyle Educators, which allowed us to use the rec center at no charge. We had about 80 people pre-register for the event, about 50+ people register the day of the event and over 20 volunteers that helped out. With that being said, we had an estimated 156 people in attendance, which doubled our efforts from last year. We were very excited at the crowd! Many of the runners were indeed BSU students, so we very much value our partnership! We had lots of prizes to give away that were donated by various community businesses, and had displays from our agency and the Beltrami Child Abuse Prevention Council on hand for people to check out. We also had the National Honors Society from Trek North stationed throughout the race route holding signs that talked about prevention of sexual violence. As runners returned, many of them commented on our "singing volunteers", as it turns out, our sign holders were not only cheering the runners on, but some of them were singing to them as well. We had an incredible day, and were extremely pleased with the event, the turn out, and with the fact we had to order more t-shirts because we ran out! Thanks again for everyone who supported us! We are excited to start planning the "5th Annual" 5K event next year.

April was a busy month! We kicked it off with a visit on "Chat About" and followed with nine presentations throughout the community. We were also busy with the signing of Proclamations from our service area,

where city councils declared April as "Sexual Assault Awareness Month". Bemidji, Bagley, Park Rapids, Cass Lake and Akeley all made such declarations. This was a great way to acknowledge survivors and our commitment to stopping sexual violence and the need for partnership with the entire community to make this goal happen. Speaking of collaboration, we have been excited to be a part of the Bemidji Area Service Collaborative. "BAPA" formed a year ago and is dedicated to pooling resources within our community to help spread drug and alcohol prevention. As an active member, we are looking forward to further partner with agencies in the name of prevention.

Sadly, this month SAP said goodbye to two dedicated employees. Kate, the BSMART/CHAT coordinator was scooped up by Beltrami County. Ashley graduated from BSU and moved with her family to find full time employment as her Anishinabe Equay position was just part-time.

Of course we were very sad to see them go, but are very thankful for their tireless work and numerous contributions to SAP during their time here. We wish them well on their new adventures!

CHAT

The coordinator created a couple of possible mission statements, using the Memorandum of Understanding as a guide. From these examples, both teams were able to agree on one mission statement: "To ensure victim centered response through effective coordination, cooperation and communication across the community and partner agencies." In addition to creating a mission statement, the CHAT teams have begun reviewing B-SMART's protocols and discussing how to adapt them to create their own. The teams heard from law enforcement members of B-SMART in April. The Hubbard County Sheriff chose to implement the protocol immediately and disperse it throughout the entire department, including dispatch.



SAP receives North Country Health Services Foundation Grant

Sexual Assault Program staff and board are pleased to announce a grant from the North Country Health Services Foundation. The grant will support the Anishinabe Equay Program in Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard and Clearwater counties. Executive Director Cassandra Johnson Blackbird stated, "We are so grateful for the support of the North Country Health Services Foundation. The Anishinabe Equay program really thrived last year under Ashley's leadership. We are glad to be able to continue to build on her work. We know the program will flourish with the addition of Aurora."

STAFF CHANGES At SAP

Since we have some staff departures this month, there have been changes in positions. Kim has moved over to take the BSMART/CHAT Coordinator position that was held by Kate. BSMART and CHAT members are happy to have a familiar face with whom they will continue their work (Kim has stayed put in her pink office, however.)

We are also pleased to announce the new addition to our staff, Aurora. Aurora will be working part time as the Anishinabe Equay Program Coordinator and part time as the Advocacy Services Coordinator (Kim's old job.) We are excited to have these two great women in these positions!

Anishinabe Equay Update

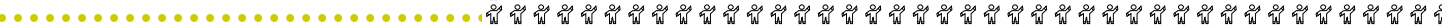


Boozhoo! With the new season of spring there has been lots of commotion in the native community as the people prepared tradition maple sugar and geared up for the powwow trails! As the end of March approached the beading circle

group came to a close and will begin again in October following ricing season. I was able to attend the Walker Women's Expo at the Northern Lights Casino again this year and was excited to be there to raise awareness. Sexual Assault Awareness Month was kicked off with a photo at the North Country Health Services Foundation for the acceptance of a grant to continue the program! The AE program was also invited to attend Nokomagiisis' Spring Gathering that was co-sponsored by the Council of Indian Students at Bemidji State University. This was a great community event that focused on teachings of the season changes from local elders. Following the 5k Walk/Run, AE enjoyed the beat of the drum at the BSU Annual Powwow. To top off the busy month of April I attended the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition's 5th Annual Restoring the Sacred Trails of Our Grandmothers Conference in Carlton, MN. I look forward to the continuance of the program and I am pleased to be passing the program over to the new AE coordinator Aurora! Working with SAP has been the most rewarding experience I have ever had and look forward to continuing my career in the field of advocacy! Miigwetch and good luck Aurora!

B-SMART CORNER

Are agencies still invested in B-SMART? Is the time invested into B-SMART worth what is gained from the team? Is the knowledge learned at meetings brought back to the rest of the agency? Is the right person from each agency chosen to represent B-SMART? These are all questions the team hopes to have answers to soon with a survey intended for department heads. The next steps will be to find a format that is most suitable for the team, decide who should present the survey, and who should take the survey. Once the protocols are written and distributed, it is not uncommon for teams to go through a period of lower attendance and less enthusiasm, as we have seen these last months with BSMART. With the results of this survey, it is our hopes that the team can take the proper steps to boost morale and energy and get back to the work of evaluating and monitoring our progress with the protocols.



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Mark Your Calendar

June 2011 through August 2011

- SAP will be conducting a 50/50 raffle. Call 444-9524 or visit the SAP office in Bemidji for ticket info

August 2011

- SAP will be the Charity of the Month for Brigid's Cross Irish Pub's Brainstormer Trivia
- **Monday & Tuesday, August 8 & 9th.** MNCASA Annual Meeting and Training Symposium, Rochester MN

April 2012~SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH & Child Abuse Prevention Month

- **Thursday, April 12, 2012** 30th Annual TAKE BACK THE NIGHT, Bemidji

Trivia Teams raise funds for SAP

Is your head full of useless knowledge? Well, we have the perfect outlet for that knowledge. Gather with your friends for Brainstormer Trivia every Monday night in August at Brigid's Cross Irish Pub in Bemidji. Brigid's donates a dollar for every team member present to the Charity of the Month. SAP is Charity of the Month for August. (Flanagan the Flying Pig also takes donations at the bar.) You can compete against other teams for prizes. Registration starts at 7pm and Trivia begins at 7:30pm. So gather your brainy friends, put on your smarty pants, have fun and raise money for SAP all at the same time!