




# Sounds of Survival

## *Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties*

### *Where is the Blue Line?* By Lindsay Gullingsrud

Dear Coach/Athletic Decision Makers:



As a parent, mentor, and responsible adult, you have made my job of raising a boy to become a responsible man increasingly more difficult over the years. I have a 13-year-old son who strongly identifies as an athlete. In fact, if he isn't playing sports with his friends, he is watching them on television. When he was a toddler, my husband and I supported extracurricular activities, and any opportunity that he had to engage in constructive time with adults and his peers. It didn't matter to us whether it was sports or drama, musical instruments or the chess club—we were more interested in providing opportunities to support and nurture our son's interests and talents. As responsible parents, we knew that by starting him early and getting him into a healthy peer group with healthy adult mentors, his chances of having a positive school experience would increase. And, that ripple effect would travel far into adulthood.

Over the past few years, however, we have had more conversations about what it means to be an athlete. We have initiated these conversations because we have seen more and more examples of athletes who do not act with integrity *on* the field, much less *off*. Moreover, we are also seeing institutions that continually choose not to hold such athletes to a high level of accountability. This makes my job as a parent increasingly more difficult as I talk with my 13 year old about concepts of not only skill and athletic ability, but the fact that what happens both on and off the field is what makes an athlete both a leader and role model.

Given the recent filing of child sexual abuse charges against former Penn State University football coach Jerry Sandusky, as well as the actions Penn State has chosen to take to hold all involved accountable for their inaction, our conversations have shifted to include the responsibilities of those who are in leadership and role model positions. The parents and guardians of these victims did the right thing. They tapped into the interests and talents of these young boys in order to provide a positive opportunity for them to be nurtured and grow. As parents, they did what was right. It was Jerry Sandusky who chose to use his position as an opportunity to sexually harm. And, people in leadership positions chose not to intervene and stop that harm, for whatever reason, allowing even more children to be harmed.

I watched the Penn State football game last Saturday and, after the game, reporters asked about the shifts coaches may have had to make without their former head coach. Jay Paterno made an insightful comment when he talked about there being a blue line when coaches and athletes enter the stadium. That blue line stands for focusing on the task at hand and leaving everything else that is out of their control behind the blue line. My question is: Where is the blue line for athletes, coaches, and decision makers when they step off the field? Where is the blue line that holds everyone to a standard of honor and integrity? Where is the blue line that tells us that we must step in when we see someone being sexually abused? Where is the blue line that tells us that this is within our control, and as leaders and mentors, we must intervene to stop sexual abuse?

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#### *Inside this issue:*

Community Ed 2  
Update

CHATting 2

Anishinabe 3  
Equay program  
update

For the Love of 3  
the World

B-SMART Corner 3

Mark Your 4  
Calendar

## *Community Education and Outreach Program Update*

As the Holiday Season approaches, we are reminded to take joy at the simple things in life and be thankful for the many gifts and opportunities we have been given. This fall has indeed been busy for Community Education, but we are excited and happy to bring sexual assault awareness and prevention to new places. We were honored to return to the Path/Kindered Family open house for a training for foster parents, and excited about bringing sexual violence prevention for the first time to Bemidji State University "First Year Experience" class! We also visited several Kindergarten classrooms in Red Lake, and made another return trip to Bemidji High School's 10<sup>th</sup> grade Health Classes. We got some "on air" time at Paul Bunyan Broadcasting "Chat About" noon show as we have been busy gearing up for the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual **Radiathon to End Child Abuse this coming December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>**. (This year's "Silent Auction" items are going to *blow your socks off!* Be sure to tune in to any of Paul Bunyan Broadcasting stations on those days, or stop in at Paul Bunyan Mall to catch the action live!) We also were invited to the Bagley High School health classes and hope to make that a quarterly gig! The Red Lake High School invited us again for their annual health fair, where we gave out tons of information and some yoyo's, bags and pencils to kids. Calvary Lutheran Church invited us to talk about "Building a Web of Support" for parents, and the most exciting thing yet, is we are helping a sister agency in Thief River Falls train their staff to be a dual agency, not only helping domestic violence victims and survivors, but sexual assault victims/survivors as well! Truly, we have a lot to be thankful for! Besides the prevention efforts, we have the privilege of working with victims and survivors every day in some of the darkest hours imaginable. The work we do is humbling, and the clients we see are incredible examples of strength and courage. For those that read our newsletter, thank you for caring about our agency and being a support to us! We appreciate you as well!

## *CHAT*

*"To ensure victim centered response through effective coordination, cooperation and communication across the community and partner agencies."*

CHAT members have been busy reading, proofing and editing protocols. The DOC, Prosecution and Advocacy Protocols have been approved, and Law Enforcement Protocol is very nearly complete.

We decided to include a section for the area hospital protocols that are not part of CHAT but where local victims may present. The hope is that CHAT members will then know what to expect from those hospitals. We have received and reviewed the protocols for the three hospitals in Itasca County; we are hoping to receive protocols from the Brainerd, Wadena, Staples and Detroit Lakes hospitals as well.

CHAT decided to add a statement in front of book, similar to a Ramsey County Protocol statement, to address warrant status for victims. It will read something like: "CHAT would recommend that, unless the victim has a warrant for a serious felony offense (robbery, homicide, etc) Law Enforcement agencies should encourage the victim that the reporting of the sexual assault is a priority and take appropriate steps to deal with the warrant at a different time." Issuing this statement as a recommendation still leaves law enforcement some discretion, and it is how most local law enforcement handles similar situations at the present time.



## B-SMART CORNER

### *For the Love of the World*

*By Charlotte Tall Mountain*

*“To implement and sustain a compassionate, victim-centered response to sexual violence that is inclusive of all communities, and promotes victims’ definitions of healing, justice, and accountability”*

BSMART is still working on a satisfaction survey for victims regarding their experience with any member agencies with which they had contact. The challenge is always to keep it short so it is not so overwhelming as to prevent the victims from completing it, but yet collects the valuable information needed so we can access our progress in working with victims successfully.

BSMART was able to access up to \$2000 in Mini grant funds through SVJI this year. We will be sending 2 members to MNCASA’s training symposium in December. We will be getting a Survey Monkey subscription to use for victim evaluations, to hopefully make it easier for victims to respond and we will purchase some gift cards to use as an incentive for the return of evaluations.

Members discussed creating posters supporting BSMART and identifying participating agencies similar to the drug task force ones in the ER and clinics “This facility works with the Drug Task force to .....” Kim Z is working on a draft.

In an effort to enhance attendance, meetings were shortened to an hour. Folks are encouraged to bring their lunch, making it a brown bag meeting. Members could possibly have a few longer meetings each year for special speakers or training. Speakers may include victims talking to the group regarding “What did agencies do well, and what could they have done better” for example.

For the love of a tree, she went out on a limb.

For the love of the sea, she rocked the boat.

For the love of the earth, she dug deeper.

For the love of the community, she mended fences.

For the love of the stars, she let her light shine.

For the love of the spirit, she nurtured her soul.

For the love of a good time, she sowed seeds of happiness.

For the love of the Goddess, she drew down the moon.

For the love of nature, she made compost.

For the love of a good meal, she gave thanks.

For the love of family, she reconciled differences.

For the love of creativity, she entertained new possibilities.

For the love of her enemies, she suspended judgment.

For the love of herself, she acknowledged her worth.

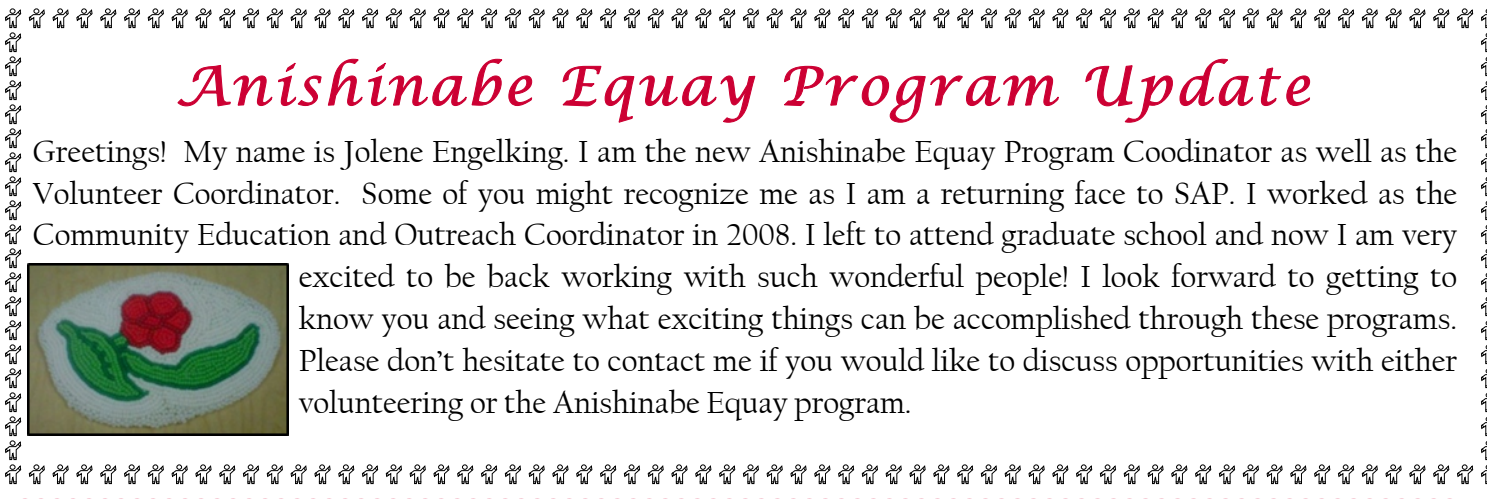
And the world was richer for her.

## *Anishinabe Equay Program Update*

Greetings! My name is Jolene Engelking. I am the new Anishinabe Equay Program Coordinator as well as the Volunteer Coordinator. Some of you might recognize me as I am a returning face to SAP. I worked as the Community Education and Outreach Coordinator in 2008. I left to attend graduate school and now I am very



excited to be back working with such wonderful people! I look forward to getting to know you and seeing what exciting things can be accomplished through these programs. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss opportunities with either volunteering or the Anishinabe Equay program.



*Sexual Assault Program of  
Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties*

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Check out the Sexual Assault  
Program's Website at  
*www.sapbchc.org*  
We are also constantly adding  
new content, blog postings  
and videos to our  
facebook page.  
Visit and Like us on facebook!

*Mark Your Calendar*

**December 2011**

- **Thursday and Friday, December 1 and 2**, Radiothon to End Child Abuse, Bemidji

**March 2012**

- **Thursday and Friday, March 29 and 30th**, Annual Evergreen Strengthening Youth and Families Conference, Bemidji

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

- **Thursday, April 12, 2012** 30th Annual TAKE BACK THE NIGHT, Bemidji
- **Saturday, April 14, 2012**, 5th Annual 5K/Run Walk for Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness, Bemidji
- **Thursday and Friday, April 19 and 20, 2012**, Breaking the Silence conference, Bemidji

SAP staff, board and friends revisited the successes and challenges of the last year at our Annual Meeting October 24. SAP board and staff provided refreshments for those in attendance at Beltrami Electric Co-op's Roger Spiry community room. Attendees heard from a strong and brave woman who shared her story of survival. We were delighted to honor three local champions of our cause that evening: Kay Rodgers, SANE with the Family Advocacy Center of Northern Minnesota, Investigator Sam Lundquist of the Beltrami County Sheriff's Office and Tim Hall of Sanford Hospital. We hope to see you at next year's event!