



You Are Not Alone
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www.safelinevt.org, or check us out on
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Safeline, Inc.

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Many of us take pride in the fact that our community has only one traffic light and we have been able to preserve the integrity and character of the landscape. Given the beauty of our home, especially at this time of year, it is easy to forget how dangerous living in a rural area can be for people experiencing domestic and sexual violence. They face geographic isolation, severe weather conditions, limited public transportation options, long waits for emergency response and few affordable housing and employment opportunities.

Over the years, Safeline has restructured our staff make-up and service delivery to address the unique issues facing victims in our rural community.

This work has been supported by organizations and foundations as well as community members like you.

For example, the **Green Mountain United Way** recently donated a laptop computer to Safeline that victims and survivors can use to access the Internet and do word processing. Safeline also received funds this year from the **Smith-Donison Foundation, Rebekah Assembly of Vermont, Ben and Jerry's Community Action Team, Kinney Drugs Foundation** and **Hypertherm HOPE Foundation** to help us afford critical operational expenses like maintaining Safeline's 24/7 Hotline. Thanks to this support, Safeline is able to reach victims and survivors in the furthest reaches of our catchment area.

As illustrated in the **Safeline Stars**

section of this newsletter, private donors are also responsible for Safeline's ability to meet the needs of these victims and survivors, as well as our community at large.

Please join Safeline in extending support to those suffering from domestic and sexual violence. It is as easy as saying to someone you think might be experiencing abuse, "If you ever need anything, I am here." Safeline is here too. Together, we can and will make our community a beautiful, caring and safe place for everyone.

Warm Regards,
 Nika Graci
 Executive Director



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Safeline Stars

Safeline Stars: The People Who Support Safeline's Mission and Work

* - Indicates consecutive years of giving

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 CVC Paging
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THANK YOU!

Complete list of donors, except for foundations, staff and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Spotlight on Community Partners: Lieutenant Tracy Simon



Safeline has solid relationships with many community partners who support and encourage our work. One of these partners is Lt. Tracy Simon, Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Lt. Simon is one of the two Special Investigators for the Orange County Special Investigations Unit (SIU), a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of cases involving sexual violence. The SIU also provides an array of services for victims of sexual violence.

Lt. Simon recently sat down with Safeline to talk about her work to end domestic and sexual violence in our community.

Safeline: How long have you been a law enforcement officer?

Lt. Simon: It's hard to believe, but I have been an officer for 19 years.

Safeline: What made you decide to apply for the Investigator position with the Orange County SIU?

Lt. Simon: I already had a lot of training in the area. It's also just the right thing to do. I wanted to be part of the solution.

Safeline: How many sexual violence cases are you investigating a week?

Lt. Simon: We are working on about 2-3 cases a week. There can be more or less depending on the week. The number is on the rise from last year.

Safeline: What are the demographics of the cases you are investigating?

Lt. Simon: About 25% of the victims are adults, the rest are children. That said, do I think for one minute that adults are not being abused at the same rate as children in this county? My gut instinct says no, but there is a lot less reporting. That is why it is so important we serve both adult and child victims-everyone deserves the best possible criminal investigation. The majority of the crimes we investigate involve a suspect that is either a family

member or someone known to the victim. Stranger violence is a very rare occurrence.

Safeline: What would you say is the greatest challenge for the victims you are working with?

Lt. Simon: A lack of access to resources. Many of these people live in isolated places and are without reliable transportation. It's unfair that people in our community have to travel such long distances to get basic services.

Safeline: Why is Safeline important to you?

Lt. Simon: Safeline is a part of the team. It is vitally important that victims get support from people who can relate to them and have training and an understanding about what they are experiencing. That's why it is critical to have Safeline there when victims are going through the process, especially the court process. In addition to the support factor, Safeline has unique resources and wrap around services to offer people in this situation. I sound like a grant application-but it's true! -Interview 09/2010

"Safeline is a part of the team. It is vitally important that victims get support from people who can relate to them and who have training and an understanding about what they are experiencing."

Effects of AHS Modernization

Vermont's Agency of Human Services (AHS) is undergoing a process of modernization. As part of the AHS transformation, all public inquiries are directed to one central call center in Waterbury. This change is part of an effort to streamline services and cut costs. Unfortunately, the new process has resulted in Safeline service users waiting for up to 45 minutes on the phone before they can apply for services. The new system also makes it so service users speak with different people each time they call. AHS is well aware of the difficulties callers are experiencing and they are making every effort to smooth the transition, but at the same time people are still waiting longer than the legal maximum for

essential services like food-stamps, fuel assistance and health insurance. These changes have a huge effect on victims and survivors who often rely on state benefits for survival after fleeing abusive situations. In response to these challenges, Safeline has supported more and more victims and survivors to utilize the on-line signup for Economic Services. Service users can come to Safeline's office, use a computer connected to high-speed internet and receive assistance from an advocate as they apply for benefits. Many people are not familiar with electronic information sharing and feel intimidated by the process. A large number of people in our community also do not have access

to a computer, let alone high-speed internet. Having a reliable computer and an advocate available to answer questions can make all the difference in a survivor's ability to stay safe and independent.

-Monique, Economic Justice and Housing Specialist

More than 500,000 single women with children who worked full-time, year round in 2009 were living in poverty. -The National Women's Law Center



Migrant Farm Workers and DV



Safeline continuously strives to make our services available to everyone in our community. For the past several months, we have worked on an outreach program to immigrant and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in Vermont.

In April, Safeline's two Legal Advocates attended the Vermont State Conference on Migrant Farmworkers. Government agencies and local groups supported the conference held at Middlebury College. Many area farmworkers attended the conference and gave first-hand accounts of their struggle to get to Vermont and the joy and despair they find once they are here. Students from

Middlebury's Spanish language organization, Juntos!, provide on-site English lessons to the farmworkers at their farms and provided interpretation services at the conference. Listening to the farmworkers recount their stories and having the opportunity to ask them questions about how organizations such as ours can better serve them was a unique opportunity. Most of the farmworkers reported that they rarely, if ever, leave the farms where they work. To overcome this hurdle, as well as language barriers, Safeline is working to make our materials and our services available in Spanish and other languages.

Over the past several months Vermont Law School students have taken time out of their busy schedules to help translate brochures and policies into Spanish, create Spanish public service announcements and

spend hours of their time in training sessions to gain crisis worker privilege as interpreters in various languages. Most of the volunteers have come from outside Vermont to attend Vermont Law School, but have chosen to make an important contribution to their adopted state. Without this group of committed and extraordinary volunteers, Safeline would be facing a great challenge communicating with these historically underserved populations.

In the coming months, Safeline will post Spanish public service announcements in local papers and on local radio stations. We will also continue to distribute brochures and flyers throughout the community.

If you know someone who needs our services, but is worried that their immigration status or English skills will be an issue, please let them know Safeline is here to help and that they are not alone.

-Jenny, Legal Advocate

Safeline is working to make our materials and our services available in Spanish and other languages.

Women Who Matter — Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman was born in Hartford, Connecticut to Mary Perkins and Frederic Beecher Perkins. Her father moved out when she was a child, leaving Charlotte, her mother and her brother in an impoverished state. Charlotte's mother was often depressed, showing little affection and rarely playing with her children, so her father's aunts, Isabelle Beecher Hooker, the well-known suffragist and Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, often cared for the children.

Charlotte was a virtuoso, teaching herself to read at age 5. She spent a great deal of time at the local library learning about ancient civilizations and reading books from a list that her father sent her. At age 18, she attended the Rhode Island School of Design, becoming an artist of trade cards. She painted and encouraged others to pursue their skills. She also started writing. One of her most famous stories,

The Yellow Wallpaper, illustrated the attitudes of the nineteenth century toward women's physical and mental health.

Charlotte married Charles Stetson in 1884 and had one child. She suffered from postpartum depression and separated from her husband after spending a month in a sanitarium in Philadelphia getting treatment for nervous prostration. The sanitarium forbade any type of physical activity or intellectual stimulation. Charlotte moved to California, where she became involved in feminist and reformist organizations, such as The Pacifist Coast Women's Press Association, The Women's Alliance, The Economic Club, and The State Council of Women. She also produced the incisive feminist monthly, Forerunner from 1909 until 1916.

When Charlotte moved back to the east coast she began seeing Houghton Gilman, a first cousin and attorney. They later married and lived in Norwich, Connecticut and New York City until Houghton died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1934. Charlotte then

moved back to Pasadena, California where she was diagnosed with incurable breast cancer. Charlotte believed in euthanasia and took an overdose of chloroform a year later.

Throughout her life Charlotte worked against classism and tried to promote a peaceful, ethereal and progressive human race through poems, essays, novellas and books. She was and still remains well known for her lectures on ethics, labor, women's rights and social reform. Her legacy lives on today.

-Sue, Legal Advocate



"There was a time when Patience ceased to be a virtue. It was long ago." -Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was first observed in October of 1987. Since that time, every October, domestic violence organizations across the nation mourn those who have died, celebrate those who have survived and engage in various activities designed to increase awareness of domestic violence in our local communities.

During October of 2010, Safeline plans to write a series of Letters To The Editor and conduct a poster blitz, distributing posters and fliers in every town in our service area. We also plan to partner with area organizations such as the Rotary Clubs, SafeArt and Orange County

Sheriff's Department to educate our community about this silent killer. Please call our office number at (802) 685-7900, if you would like to help us raise awareness about the issue by distributing posters and fliers in your town. It takes a community wide effort to end domestic violence!

-Judy, Program Educator



October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Upcoming Events

VT Victim Assistance Academy, Oct. 5th & Oct. 6th, Montpelier

SafeArt is proud to announce the publication of On Our Way....An Anthology of SafeArt Writing 2000-2010.

SafeArt will be doing readings from On Our Way. The next performance is **Oct. 15th, 6:30-8:00pm** at the **Plainfield Community Ctr.** For more info visit:

www.safeart.org