



NEBRASKA COALITION

TO END SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



NO MORE
TOGETHER WE CAN END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

NO MORE in Nebraska Newsletter

3rd and 4th Quarters 2016
Editor: Michelle Zinke

A publication of the
Nebraska Coalition to End
Sexual and Domestic
Violence

This project was supported by Grant
No. 2014-MU-AX-0008 awarded by
the Office on Violence Against
Women, U.S. Department of Justice.
The opinions, findings, conclusions,
and recommendations expressed in
this publication are those of the author
(s) and do not necessarily reflect the
views of the Department of Justice,
Office on Violence Against Women.

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No More in Nebraska Conference September 28-29, 2016

On September 28-29, the Nebraska Coalition hosted the No More Crimes of Power and Control Conference in Lincoln. This year's conference was provided in conjunction with the Nebraska State Patrol. Two pre-conference events also were held on September 27.

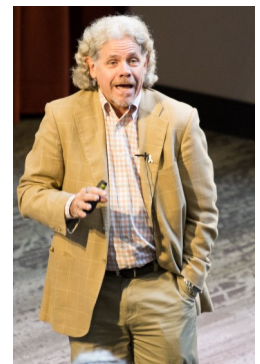
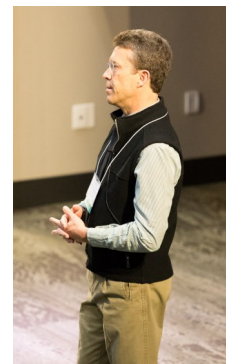
The conference featured five national speakers:

- ♦ Linda McFarlane and Joe Booth, Just Detention International;
- ♦ Russell Strand, United States Army Military Police School;
- ♦ Matthew Dale, National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative; and
- ♦ Rus Funk from Center for Women and Families.

Each organization provided a keynote address and breakout sessions. Additional workshops were provided by presenters from Nebraska.

Approximately 260 people attended the conference, including law enforcement, domestic/sexual violence advocates, mental health staff, probation staff, and HHS staff, among others.

*Top Row: Colonel Brad Rice, Nebraska State Patrol, and Lynne Lange, Nebraska Coalition, Making Opening Announcements; Conference Participants during Keynote.
Bottom Row: Keynote Presenters: Linda McFarland and Joe Booth, Russell Strand, Matthew Dale, Rus Funk*





Nebraska Advocates at National Sexual Assault Conference

by Rachel West, Prevention Coordinator

The Coalition selected eight advocates to travel to Washington, D.C. and attend the National Sexual Assault Conference (NSAC) 2016!



NSAC is an annual, two and a half day conference that offers advanced training opportunities for advocates and other professionals working to prevent sexual violence and provide critical intervention services to people who have experienced sexual violence. This year's conference theme was "Hopeful future, honored past."

Kudos to the eight advocates who applied and won the opportunity to attend NSAC 2016 through scholarships provided by the Nebraska Coalition.

Morgan Beal
Voices of Hope
Lincoln, NE

Emily Elsbury
Bright Horizons
O'Neill, NE

Lindsay Spaulding
Voices of Hope
Lincoln, NE

Mindy Burns
Hope Crisis Center
Fairbury, NE

Debby Ferguson
Haven House
South Sioux City, NE

Jennifer Thomason
The Bridge
Fremont, NE

Rebekah Ehly
Heartland Family Service
Papillion, NE

Leaghia Lynch
Sandhills Crisis Intervention Program
Ogallala, NE

In addition to those who attended through a prevention scholarship, an additional 10 advocates from the local community-based programs attended, as well as several Nebraska Coalition staff.



Victim Offender Dialogue

By Nancy J. Vossler, Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services provides the Victim/Offender Dialogue (VOD) program to victims of crime that request to participate in a structured, face-to-face meeting with their offender of crime(s). The dialogue is held in a secure, safe environment, in order to facilitate a healing recovery process.

The process in victim initiated. Once a request for a VOD has been made by a victim, an initial interview is held with the victim by the Victim Services Coordinator. At that time the victim is provided with a copy of the Department's Administration Regulation that covers Victim Offender Dialogue, and answers questions for an initial case screening.

Appropriate Mental Health staff and Unit Classification Committee members are contacted to make certain there are no reasons the offender would not be appropriate for VOD. If it were concluded the offender is not appropriate for the VOD, the case is closed and the victim would be notified.

The offender must take responsibility for the crime-admitting to the wrongdoing and be accountable for their participation in the crime. If the offender meets all criteria of acceptability into the process, two facilitators will be assigned to the case to begin the working with the victim and the offender in preparing for the face to face meeting.

All aspects of the process are victim centered, meaning the focus is absolutely on the needs of the victim. The preparation time for the victim and offender is usually lengthy. This helps the victim and the offender remember, acknowledge, and articulate many painful and complex feelings they have possibly waited many years to express. The VOD is about whatever the victim wants/needs it to be. The primary goal is about the victim being heard by the offender about what the crime has done to their life and to get answers to the WHY. The victim wants the offender to fully understand the effects of what they have done. VOD is rarely about forgiveness, unless it is something the victim wants it to be about.

There is not a set time allotted to face to face meetings. They are as long as they need to be. I have experienced one that lasted 15 minutes and others up to hours. The face to face is a one-time only meeting.

There are follow up meetings with the victim and the offender by the facilitators. The first is within 12 hours after completion of the VOD, then within 30 days another contact is made by the facilitators, and lastly, the Victim Services Coordinator performs a 60-day follow-up evaluation with both the victim and the offender.

Outcomes of VOD are always varied due to the uniqueness of each case and the factors that are brought into it by preparation. However, the most important factor will always be that the victim feels they have been completely heard by the offender. This is always achievable, to a greater or lesser degree, and remains our highest goal as a VOD facilitator.

Editor's Note: For more information, contact Nancy at Nancy.Vossler@nebraska.gov.

Annual Awards Ceremony and Fundraiser Beach Retreat

On September 29, the Coalition hosted its 3rd annual awards ceremony and fundraiser. The theme this year was “Beach Retreat” and focused on celebrating the work we do and our connections as advocates.

Six people were honored with awards:

- ⌘ Capt. Paul Schwartz (Lexington Police Department, Lexington): Community Partner of the Year;
- ⌘ Ella Herrarte-Monterroso (Parent-Child Center, Lexington): Domestic Violence Advocate of the Year;
- ⌘ Phyllis Heidzig (Project Response, Auburn): Above and Beyond Award;
- ⌘ Tabitha McCloud (The DOVES Program, Gering): Sexual Assault Advocate of the Year;
- ⌘ Lisa Peden (The DOVES Program, Gering): Prevention Advocate of the Year; and
- ⌘ Donna Goad (Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Services, McCook), Above and Beyond Award (not pictured).



The Coalition extends heartfelt thanks to the sponsors of the event.



The Power of Language

by Marla Sohl, Prison Advocacy Coordinator

Language is an important piece of our culture. Language shapes our norms; a standard of behavior that is generally accepted as normal or acceptable. It colors, shapes and informs our beliefs and perceptions which influences our behaviors. When we dismiss messages that reflect sexism, female objectification or descriptions of sexually harassing or assaultive behavior, we are essentially establishing this type of rhetoric as our norm. While the majority of individuals who hear and dismiss these messages will never commit acts of violence against others, those who will interpret these messages accordingly. Research has revealed that people who commit sexual violence overestimate the extent to which their behavior is viewed as acceptable by 200 to 300%. Rape jokes, objectification and the like just reinforce this misperception.

Unfortunately, that's not the only way a norm of sexually abusive acceptance affects our culture. These messages serve to silence victims. The messages trivialize the trauma that hundreds of thousands of girls, boys, women, and men have endured. However, we have the power to correct the misperceptions with what we know to be true. Most people do not view sexual violence as acceptable or funny.

Sexual violence is an epidemic affecting our nation and world. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old. One in five women and one in 71 men will be raped at some point in their lives. These numbers represent more than a distraction, it's an epidemic. In fact, annually, rape costs the U.S. more than any other crime (\$127 billion), followed by assault (\$93 billion), murder (\$71 billion), and drunk driving (\$61 billion).

The Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (Nebraska Coalition) is a fierce and unapologetic voice for survivors of sexual and domestic violence in Nebraska, the nation and the world. Tolerance of misogyny, sexism, objectification of women, sexual harassment and assault in our country continues to occur at troubling rates across economic, education, racial, gender, and religious boundaries. The mission of the Nebraska Coalition is to enhance safety and justice by changing the beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence and sexual assault.

We need to speak up when we are confronted with this type of attitude and messages that dismiss sexual assault because silence will only imply support. What we say and what we do *not* say matters. So what can you do? Speak out anytime you hear, see or experience jokes, commentary, or behaviors that reinforce rape culture. Some examples to use on social media are provided below, as created by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence. Actively promote respectful and consensual interactions for all people. Recognize that ending sexual assault and other forms of violence is on all of us. Join with the Nebraska Coalition to speak out in support of survivors and against rape culture.

Every allegation of sexual assault must be taken seriously. Survivors must be believed & supported. No matter what. #SupportSurvivors

Many survivors have been deeply hurt by how they've been treated by the criminal justice system. That's never ok. #NotOkay #SupportSurvivors

Often, family members make excuses 4 offenders & don't support victims leaving them 2 suffer alone. Never ok. #NotOkay #SupportSurvivors

Sexual harassment is sexual violence & women still have an uphill battle to be believed and supported. #NotOkay #NotOk #SupportSurvivors

To obtain the sources of the statistics included in this article, email michellez@nebraskacoalition.org.

What's New at the Programs?

Coalition Welcomes New SASA Executive Director



Jo Springer recently began as the Executive Director at SASA Crisis Center. Jo earned a bachelor's degree in social work at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a master's degree in social work at Newman University in Wichita, Kansas. While in Kansas she worked in child welfare and served as a therapeutic foster parent. Upon returning to Nebraska, Jo worked as a hospice social worker. Welcome, Jo!

Domestic Violence Council Merges with Omaha Women's Fund

The Women's Fund of Omaha and the Domestic Violence Council (DVC) have announced that the two nonprofit organizations will join forces in a merger as part of an effort to further improve the ways in which the Omaha community addresses domestic violence and sexual assault.

"The Women's Fund exists to bring research, resources and awareness to issues that impact women and girls in our community, and domestic violence and sexual assault have been priorities for us since our inception in 1990," says Michelle Zych, Executive Director of the Women's Fund. "The DVC has done incredible work on this front over the years, and we believe that joining forces will strengthen our efforts and improve the lives of women and girls."

In anticipation of the merger, the Women's Fund has hired Christon MacTaggart to serve as the domestic violence/sexual assault response coordinator. MacTaggart has spent the last 15 years working in a variety of roles to enhance the response to domestic and sexual violence at both the local and state levels and is passionate about systems change through community collaboration. Zych says this will enhance their focus and reinforce the organization's long-standing commitment to ending violence against women.

The Women's Fund has a history of tackling similar issues.

"Our Sex Trafficking and Adolescent Health projects use research and best practices to shine a light on the impact of sex trafficking and STDs in our community, while convening stakeholders to the table to develop and implement sustainable solutions. Our approach with domestic violence and sexual assault will be the same," Zych says, adding that sex trafficking, domestic violence and sexual assault often overlap, and that incidents in all three areas are too high in our community. "This is an opportunity to join forces and ultimately change the landscape of violence against women and girls in our community."

Since its inception, the Women's Fund has not been a service provider. Zych says the Women's Fund will continue this tradition, and will not be providing domestic violence and sexual assault services. "Our community has many quality service providers for victims and survivors," she says. "What we will do is provide the research and resources needed to better coordinate our community's response to domestic violence and sexual assault-from law enforcement to prosecution to critical services for victims and survivors."

What's New at the Coalition?

Executive Director Selected for Greater Good Program

Lynne Lange was selected to be part of The Allstate Foundations' Greater Good Program. As part of the Class of 2017, Lynne will participate in sessions focused on strengthening leadership in the nonprofit sector. The program begins with a 360-degree assessment of each leader, and then includes four academic sessions, one-on-one executive coaching and individual development opportunities. Approximately 40 people have participated in this program since its inception in 2014.

A national program, Greater Good is a partnership between The Allstate Foundation and the Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management's Center for Nonprofit Management.

Information from https://www.allstatefoundation.org/greater_good.html, retrieved November 3, 2016.

Coalition Staff Present at National and Regional Conferences

Recently several Coalition staff have presented at national conferences. **Sarah Balcom** presented at two conferences, including the National Center for Victims of Crime's annual conference. Her presentation focused on stalking through the use of technology. **Marla Sohl** and **Michelle Zinke** presented at the National Sexual Assault Conference. Their presentation focused on the rape crisis and domestic violence movements, specifically the leadership strategies used and considerations for the future. **Michelle Zinke** also provided a presentation for a multi-state health ministries videoconference with sites in Nebraska and Colorado. In November **Lynne Lange** will present at the National Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) Conference for State Administrators regarding meeting the growing needs of sexual assault survivors through SASP funding.

Training Provided for Heartland Deaf Abuse Advocacy Services



*Keri Darling and
Lynne Lange.*

In August, the Coalition provided an intensive 2.5 day training for the Heartland Deaf Abuse Advocacy Services (HDAAS). The training was provided by Keri Darling with Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services. HDAAS formed several years ago and are working to create an infrastructure for service provision to victims who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Coalition provides support as requested to HDAAS, who also work with the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Coalition Staff Receives Mayor's Arts Award

Michelle Zinke, Training and Resource Coordinator, received the Artscene Backstage Award as part of the 2016 Mayor's Arts Awards. This award recognizes extraordinary service to the arts through behind the scenes efforts. Nominations are submitted to the Lincoln Arts Council each year, and a selection committee decides who will receive the award. This award, as well as several others, are presented at an annual banquet.

Since moving to Lincoln in 2000, Michelle has been heavily involved with several local theatre companies, including Flatwater Shakespeare Company, The Lied Center for Performing Arts, Lincoln Community Playhouse, The Angels Theatre Company, and Haymarket Theatre.



Nebraska Coalition to End
Sexual and Domestic Violence
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Community
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Mark Your Calendar

November 2016

- 2-3 Directors Days, Kearney, Nebraska Coalition, 402-476-6256
- 9 Prevention Summit: Bystander Intervention, Grand Island, Nebraska Coalition, 402-476-6256
- 16 Webinar: Holidays, Stress, and Self-Care, YOUR DESK, Nebraska Coalition, 402-476-6256
- 17 Legal Advocacy: An Overview, Grand Island, Nebraska Coalition, 402-476-6256

December 2016

- 14 Webinar: Boundaries and Ethics in Victim Services, YOUR DESK, Nebraska Coalition, 402-476-6256

“We don’t do this work because it’s easy. We do it because we must.”

-National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

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