

LINKS



Family Sunshine Center

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE • FOSTERING HOPE & HEALING

Fall 2009

Volume 24, Number 3

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

FSC Service Area Prepares for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The Family Sunshine Center is joining other agencies, entities and task forces to prepare for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October.

First, the Alabama Council Against Domestic Violence will hold its 2009 Governor's Conference on Domestic Violence on October 20 and 21, which will feature presentations by Casey Gwinn, J.D., leader in the Family Justice Center movement, Dr. Carole Warshaw, executive director of the Domestic Violence and Mental Health Policy Initiative and director of the National Center on Domestic Violence and Oliver Williams, PhD, executive director of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community. On the second day at lunch, the Family Sunshine Center will co-host a presentation of "Yellow Dress," a one-woman production about the dangers of dating violence and sexual assault. Other performances are also scheduled at Maxwell Base Theater and Gunter SNCOA on October 22.



In addition, the Family Sunshine Center is working again this year with the Montgomery Transit System to post placards in 20 buses. "We are especially looking forward to this year's special effort to raise awareness in our community regarding the impact domestic violence has on children. As part of that effort, we plan to present our mayor and county commission with a piece of children's artwork prepared by a child in our shelter, counseling center or Exodus transitional housing community. We further hope to develop a collection of children's artwork and post it for one week in October at Eastdale Mall," said FSC Executive Director Karen Sellers.

The Family Sunshine Center also looks forward to participating in the special event, Public Witness Against Domestic Violence, sponsored by Interfaith Montgomery and scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 3:00 p.m. in Cloverdale Park. Interested parties may call Rev. Paul Britner at 334-782-0810 for further information.

In addition to the activities planned in Montgomery, the Crenshaw County domestic violence task force is coordinating its second annual teen summit for

DV Awareness Month Activities

- Sept 30 — Proclamation signing with Prattville Mayor Jim Byard, Jr.
- Oct 1 — DV and Dating Violence presentation, Alabama State University, Alabama Room
- Oct 3 — Tennis Across Montgomery
- Oct 13 — DV 101 and FSC Services presentation to the staff at CITY Program in Clanton
- Oct 18 — "A Day in the Park" @ Cloverdale Park (time TBA)
- Oct 20-21 — Governor's Conference on Domestic Violence @ Embassy Suites
- Oct 21 — Autauga County Domestic Violence Task Force to speak to Prattville Chamber of Commerce
- Oct 22 — "Yellow Dress" @ Maxwell Base Theater and Gunter SNCOA
- Oct 25 — Second Annual Teen Summit in Crenshaw County
- Oct 30 — 8:00 Montgomery County Domestic Violence Task Force Monthly Meeting

Visit www.familysunshine.org for further details

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A Message From the Executive Director



Dear Gentle Reader,

I am writing this to let you know of a recent decision that will change the structure of the FSC service delivery system. Currently, our direct service staff are diligently preparing to transfer the E.V.E.N. (End Violence Effectively Now) program to another provider effective October 1, 2009.

As you may know, about this time last year, downturns in the economy and continued funding cuts forced our board to take a hard look at essential services. At that time, they made the difficult decision to discontinue services at the E.V.E.N. program in order to sustain the full range of services we provide to victims. However, operations continued thanks to a generous citizen whose donation allowed for an extended amount of time to try to relocate the program. Fortunately, our conversations with local officials and service providers have yielded a program — Montgomery County Community Corrections — willing to take on E.V.E.N. conditionally. On July 16, 2009, the Montgomery County Community Corrections Authority voted to assume the batterers' intervention program on a six-month trial basis, reviewing it after three and six months to determine its financial viability.

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"DV Awareness" continued from page 1

October 25, from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. The Butler County domestic violence task force is printing resource directories to give to local law enforcement agencies at the Greenville City Council meeting during October. And, the Autauga County task force will host a proclamation signing with Mayor Byard and make a special presentation to the Prattville Chamber of Commerce.

Agency Links

Perpetrators Intervention Program to Have a New Home

A letter from Paul Brown, Director, Montgomery County Community Corrections

In its August, 2009 monthly board meeting, the Montgomery County Community Punishment and Corrections Authority board met and unanimously approved for the Community Corrections Department to take over responsibility for providing domestic violence education services to offenders/perpetrators referred by the Courts. The E.V.E.N. (End Violence Effectively Now) program for many years in Montgomery has been operated and funded by the Family Sunshine Center under the very capable leadership of Karen Sellers, executive director. Fiscal realities of operating the program in a faltering local and regional economy, as well as the recent departure of a key supervisor for the program, caused the Family Sunshine Center to seek an outside entity that could take on the responsibility for keeping the E.V.E.N. program operating and financially feasible. Local community leaders, elected officials and judges supported the concept of the Community Corrections Department assuming this worthwhile program. The Community Corrections Department is working with the Family Sunshine Center to assimilate all of the program educators as contract staff for the Community Corrections Department and should be in a position to accept clients and new referrals the first week in October, the start of the department's fiscal year. Locally, referrals from the City of Montgomery Municipal Court, the County District Courts and the 15th Judicial Circuit Courts may be made to the E.V.E.N. Program. In addition to referrals from the local community courts, the E.V.E.N. program will continue to accept self-referrals, as well as referrals from the other six counties served by the Family Sunshine Center, which include Autauga, Butler, Chilton, Crenshaw, Elmore, and Lowndes counties.

The Montgomery County Community Corrections Department was constituted in its present configuration in early 2001 and provides a range of court and offender services, which include: Pre-Trial Release, Drug Court Supervision, Community Service Restitution, County Probation and Jail/Prison Diversion services. The agency operates its own drug screening lab utilizing modern "EMIT" technology, with a fully certified lab technician. Additionally, the department has recently initiated an offender GPS model offender Electronic Monitoring Program. This technology is made available to both the district and circuit courts and is expected to provide additional accountability and surveillance capability of domestic violence defendants/offenders who may be released from custody.

The ability of the Montgomery County Community Corrections Department to assimilate E.V.E.N. into the services offered by the agency and to maintain the program with offender service fees is primarily due to the fact that the Community Corrections facility and infrastructure costs (utilities, insurance, building

Continued next page

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maintenance, support staff, etc.) are already covered in the overall operational budget of the program(s). The direct access the Community Corrections Department enjoys with the judiciary is also expected to be a contributing factor in increasing offender compliance with attendance and payment of fees.

We are pleased that the Family Sunshine Center views our agency as an organization capable of taking on this very important mission and we are confident that, with the guidance and continuing technical support of the Family Sunshine Center, we shall succeed in keeping the E.V.E.N. program a viable and valuable community asset with the goal of breaking the cycle of domestic violence perpetration and advancing the cause for restorative justice in our communities.

Volunteer Links

Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who helped us perform our mission this year!



"Dear Gentle Reader" continued from page 2

It is gratifying to know that Montgomery will maintain a program designed to end the cycle of family violence by helping batterers understand that victimizing an intimate partner or other family member is a conscious choice, and no one else's fault but their own. Fortunately, several of the E.V.E.N. staff will move with the program, which will help maintain program continuity and ease of training. In addition, Community Corrections will continue using the existing training curriculum, which is a detailed approach to changing the behavior of domestic violence perpetrators that focuses on personal accountability. The FSC program director will be working closely with her staff and staff of Community Corrections between now and October 1 to ensure a smooth transition of duties and resources.

I also want to say a huge thank you to Marjorie Baker, Laura Reid, Debby Moseley and the E.V.E.N. staff for their hard work and commitment to seeing this transition through.

As this fiscal year closes, and we embark on a new one, we are deeply grateful to all of our volunteers and donors who continue giving generously and consistently to the FSC mission. It is your love, your support and your encouragement that sustain us during difficult times. Personally, I appreciate not only your personal and corporate gifts, but also your willingness to share your advice and wisdom with me when I call.

'Til next time,

Karen
Karen Sellers

Developing Links

Safe in the Sunshine

Imagine this. It is summer and our Outreach office is hosting a mini-camp for the children in our shelter. During this time, we have fun, play games and talk to the children about personal safety and daily living skills. We have a wonderful lunch donated by Hamburger King, and the children are relaxed—laughing, joking and enjoying every morsel of their food. Afterwards, we ask them to draw, write or otherwise depict their thanks to the individuals who donated lunch and snacks to the camp. One child drew overlapping circles. In the midst of those circles she wrote the words, “I am safe.” On the outside of the circles, she expressed her thanks.

It was this experience and our general commitment to make safety the first priority for the victims we serve that led us to the theme for this year’s annual campaign: *Safe in the Sunshine*. So, it is the time of year again when we appeal to our donors to make an annual commitment to our mission to keep victims safe and bring shelter, counseling and follow-up services to those who show up at our door scared, scarred and fearful about their future.

Only you know how you can help. But we can tell you this: **YOU** can make a difference. Whether your donation is large or small, every penny counts when it comes to building a mission of hope and healing. When it comes time to make the decision, remember the smiles on the faces of the children who can finally relax, sleep on a peaceful pillow and picture themselves encircled in a web of safety. Remember that it is within your power to help them become “safe in the sunshine.”

Please call the development office at 334.206.2100 if you would like more information or to schedule a time to visit with us. We honor you all and depend on you always!

What’s Hot? The 14th Annual Tennis Across Montgomery!



The heat may have gotten the best of you this summer, but there’s something else hot on the horizon that you are sure to enjoy. Tennis Across Montgomery (TAM) is scheduled for Saturday, October 3, 2009 at Huntingdon College from 9 a.m. until noon. We want **YOU** to be a part of the fun.

TAM was created in 1995 by Coach John McWilliams to offer a free tennis clinic for high risk children and to raise money for the Family Sunshine Center. For the fourteenth consecutive year, 60-75 children will attend the clinic while local volunteers raise money. The event has harvested increasing funds annually, from \$2,000 in 1996 to more than \$27,000 in 2008.

“Tennis” continued on page 6



Honorariums & Memorials

September 1, 2008 — February 28, 2009

HONORARIUMS

In Honor of Joe & Jaeri Ellis
Byron D. & Kitty C. Collier

In Honor of Karen Fisher
Lee & Lan Florist Inc.

In Honor of DJ Flippo
Katherine C. Conely

In Honor of Shawna Hansen
Ralph & Ellen G. Loeb

In Honor of Katherine Jackson
Karen Stankard

In Honor of Dr. Barbara Manning
Margaret Nodine
Phyllis J. Springen
Kevin J. & Melanie F. Carter
J. Nicolas P. & Sally Robinson Corley
Anna Lee Ingalls

In Honor of Nathan Murray
Lindy Julian Beale

In Honor of Darrell & Linda Pearson
Byron D. & Kitty C. Collier

In Honor of Ms. Janice Purefoy
Edith Langan

In Honor of Daniel Robinson
BBVA Compass Bank

In Honor of Mrs. Mamie Sellers
Sable S. & L. D. Marzella

In Honor of Mayor Todd Strange
Brenda Hellums

In Honor of Frank & Shelia Vickery
Byron D. & Kitty C. Collier

In Honor of Mary S. Williams
J. Greg & Jane H. Allen

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Ruthie Adair
R. L. & Ann L. Blackmon

In Memory of Wilson & Madeline Benton
Karen Heydon Benton

In Memory of Alma A. Brooks
Kate G. Gordon

In Memory of Lawson Goings
William R. & Mary S. Davis

In Memory of Mrs. Mike Harris
James K. & Margaret Lowder

In Memory of John Dow Holley
R. L. & Ann L. Blackmon

In Memory of Craig L. Jackson
Emily H. Bowdoin

In Memory of Grace Preiss Jones
Emily H. Bowdoin

In Memory of Ray Melton
Carol T. Melton

In Memory of the Robinson children
Steve M. & Stacey L. Searcy

In Memory of Patricia Canterbury Sanders
Caroline C. Carr

In Memory of Robin Shaw
Stephanie A. Singleton

In Memory of Elizabeth Smith
Donald K. & Karen Fisher
Anna Lee Ingalls

In Memory of Mr. Maury D. Smith
Emily H. Bowdoin

In Memory of Jody Sylvest
Emily H. Bowdoin

In Memory of Margie Wilke
Blake & Peggy Jeffcoat

In Memory of Eloise Tatum Williams
Laura Burford Sullivan
Ann C. Lewis

In Memory of Pat Seales Young
Ann C. Lewis

We appreciate each gift and strive for accuracy in donor recognition.
If there is an error, please contact the development office at 206-2100.

A list of financial and in-kind donors and volunteers can be found on our Website at familysunshine.org/thankyou

His Presence Is Real!

The sound of his truck
brings chills down my spine

God protect my children
for they're yours not mine

Come we must hurry!
Grab your blanket and things

For I know not what
his anger might bring.

We hid in the closet all huddled in fear

God gently said be not afraid
for I am here!

I could feel His hand of comfort
holding my babies and I.

He gently said No more tears my child,
do not cry.

You are safe now my child, I am here

Do not be afraid, be of good cheer.

Your life and theirs is in my hand

Be still my child, I have a plan . . .

For you see, the man's hatred
and bitterness comes from within

A soul without peace, hardened by sin

Although the man looked,
he could not find

God's hand of protection
had made him blind

The man finally left.
I knew what I must do

It was time to start over, life anew

I went to a big city
to right all the wrongs

Although it was scary
my faith kept me strong

It's been three years since that day

He has sent many along the way

To touch my life and teach me things

In times of trouble I hear angel wings

To help me along life's twists and turns

For He knows what our hearts yearn

Life is planned out before we are born

He knows what happens in every storm

Trust Him and know the real deal
My God's presence is oh so real!

TERESA MCCONNELL WEINRICH

"Tennis" continued from page 4

The weather is sure to be inviting and you will not want to miss being a part of this heartwarming event that brings opportunity and hope for families imprisoned by violence.

A serve-a-thon engaging volunteers to gain monetary pledges for each mile per hour they serve on event day is key in the fundraising success. We are urgently requesting your participation in this event as it could easily double the profits. Tennis skills are not required — only a willingness to ask for pledges and come out on October 3 to serve a tennis ball. We do all the follow-up in collecting pledges.

Call now to see how you can help by recruiting pledges for your serve in the hottest thing going...TENNIS ACROSS MONTGOMERY. 206-2100.



Stimulus Award Allows FSC to Maintain Programs

Thanks to the hard work and diligence of FSC Executive Director Karen Sellers and Grant Writer Amy Newell, the agency was one of about 30 around the nation identified so far to receive a grant award from the Office of Violence Against Women. The grant is part of the nation's move to provide stimulus money to maintain jobs and sustain programs at the grassroots level. "We are very excited about this three-year award, which will allow us to keep some existing services that we would have otherwise lost," said Karen Sellers.

Grapevine Links

Congratulations to long-time victim's advocate counselor and FSC volunteer Dr. Carolyn Thomas for being selected to receive the first annual Auburn Montgomery Excellence in Faculty Outreach award to recognize the outstanding efforts of faculty whose work has benefitted the community. Dr. Thomas is Professor and Coordinator of Counselor Education in the Counselor, Leadership & Special Education Department of the School of Education at Auburn Montgomery. According to Karen Sellers, "As one of the founders of the center, Carolyn was involved in establishing our program and hiring me. Because of her commitment to helping victims of domestic and sexual violence, many of the women who seek services through the Family Sunshine Center have access to group counseling, which helps them understand that they are not alone in bearing the scars of violence, that the situation they find themselves in is not their fault and that they are worthy of healthy relationships. She has helped unknown numbers of women regain a sense of dignity, self-worth and purpose." Auburn Montgomery officials say, "Dr. Thomas' work gets to the direct heart of the Outreach mission which is to extend the resources and expertise of the Auburn University System to individuals, organizations, the community and the environment in a manner that enhances productivity and the quality of life for individuals."

Holiday Links

Generosity Brings the Magic of the Holidays



The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of the Holidays ~W. C. Jones

If you have the desire to brighten someone's life during this holiday season, consider one of four ways you can help

one of our families: family adoptions, holiday sunshine trees, purchase of items from our holiday wish list, or financial contributions.

Adoptions: The FSC adopts out families of all sizes and needs to individuals, groups and corporations. Families, Sunday school classes, and groups of coworkers have been among those adopting families in the past. Adopters purchase new gifts from a "wish list" prepared by their adopted family. This way individual needs are met for each family. The support of the adopters ensures that each of our families enjoys the happiness of being together during the holidays.

Holiday Sunshine Trees: Some companies like the option of hosting a Holiday Tree (like an angel tree). Employees or customers can choose a printed ornament off the tree that has a specific single gift idea for a child or adult client of the FSC. They make their purchase and return it to the company, which then delivers all the collected gifts to the FSC.

Holiday Wish List: Consider purchasing individual items from our holiday wish list. We always have a need for these items during the holiday season, and they are placed in gift baskets for clients.

Financial Contribution: If you would like to make a monetary donation, you can either mail a check to the FSC or donate electronically on our website with a credit card. Visit www.family sunshine.org and click on the "donate now" button. Please specify that it is a holiday donation.

Your time is a donation, too. Anytime you offer to shop, wrap, and deliver gifts can be counted as volunteer time. Volunteer hours are required for many grants and can be used as matching dollars for the FSC. These hours are converted to an equivalent dollar amount that we report to our grantors; last fiscal year this was 11,370.75 hours which is equivalent to 206,070.30 in volunteer service. As you can see, recording and turning in your volunteer time is very important. Please take a few moments to complete the volunteer time sheet and fax to 206-2111 or mail to the Family Sunshine Center, P.O. Box 5160, Montgomery, AL 36103, Attn: Volunteer Coordinator.

If you are interested in assisting in any way this holiday season, please call the FSC at 206-2100 by November 3 to let us know your plans. If you are purchasing items from the wish list, please deliver them UNWRAPPED to the FSC by December 8. Any of the above options are welcome, and each allows us to provide assistance to families who would not otherwise be able to enjoy the magic of the holidays.

Holiday Wish List

General Needs: wrapping paper, tape, boxes, and name tags for gifts. Please include batteries in gifts that need them.

Gifts for children and adolescents:

- Fisher Price or V-Tech Toys
- Shape sorters
- LEGO blocks
- Leap Frog/ Leap Pad
- Infant toys
- Puzzles
- Musical books
- Activity books
- Crayola sets
- Hero action figures
- Baby dolls, Barbies, Bratz & accessories
- Styling heads
- Build-A-Bear
- Wonder Pets
- Webkinz
- Handheld electronic games
- Portable game unit/plug-ins
- Board games
- Balls (football, soccer, basketball)
- Watches (girls and boys)
- Remote control cars
- MP3 players, CD players or CD/Radio Walkman
- \$15 Best Buy gift card
- Diaries
- Stationery kit
- Rose Art nail salon set
- Teen purses
- Bath & body sets
- Wal-mart gift cards
- Art supply kits for teens

Popular themes right now are the movies *Cars*, *Spiderman 3*, *Batman*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Up*, and *Harry Potter*; *American Idol*, *Hannah Montana*, *Wizards of Waverly Place*, *iCarly*, *Transformers*, *Camp Rock*, *Dora the Explorer*, *You & Me* dolls

Gifts for Women:

- Prepaid gas cards
- Bath towel sets
- Robes/gowns (especially large sizes)
- House slippers
- Lotion sets
- Brush sets
- Journals
- Stationary sets (paper, stamps, ink pens)
- Manicure sets
- Laundry baskets (large plastic)
- Umbrellas
- Calendars
- Disposable camera
- Small photo albums

Montgomery Area Family Violence Program, Inc.

/d.b.a./

Family Sunshine Center

P.O. Box 5160
Montgomery, AL 36103-5160

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Office: 334.206.2100
E.V.E.N. 334.262.3219 or 3319
24-Hour Crisis Line 1.800.650.6522
24-Hour Local Crisis Line (collect calls accepted) 334.263.0218
TTY Hotline for the Hearing Impaired 1.800.787.3224
Fax: 334.206.2111

www.familysunshine.org



The Family Sunshine Center is a River Region & Chilton County United Way Agency.

Our Mission: To end family violence and foster hope and healing. To offer immediate response and a safe haven in crisis. To provide advocacy, counseling, and support for families to empower them to lead safe and violence-free lives. To promote community awareness through education and training.

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Client Links — letters from clients

This letter is to the entire Sunshine Center family. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for the caring support you have given me.

I came into the center hurt, confused and ashamed. I was truly a broken vessel. With each passing day I was given encouragement and support and gentle guidance into the right directions. I thank each of you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you so much for everything that you have done. Please never think that you are unappreciated. Without you, none of this would be possible. May God bless you and guide you in all you do. The FSC has helped me get my life together. I entered here with two pairs of pants, two t-shirts, underwear and two pairs of sandals. Look at what is in my apartment now! I am very blessed to have been able to come here and been helped so very much. Y'all are a very wonderful group of women! Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

I thank God and the Family Sunshine Center for helping me and others to get the help that they need and deserve. Because being alone in this world, its so, so hard to move on. With kids — especially with problems. I thank everybody so much for everything they did for me and my kids.

There is no other place better than the FSC. I did feel safe here with my kids.

I really thank everybody who supported me. And I thank everybody who works in this place. They do a really good job.