

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



March 28, 2008

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Delaware, OH – April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. During this month, HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, Inc. (HelpLine) will be joining with people throughout Delaware and Morrow Counties, and the nation to focus the public's attention on this important issue.

Sexual violence is a crime of pandemic proportions. It affects everyone. The FBI estimates that one in three women and one in ten men will be raped in their lifetimes. Of these assaults, at least 80% are committed by someone the victim/survivor knows.

In Delaware County, there were 48 sexually related offenses reported to law enforcement in 2006. In this same year, Delaware City police investigated 78 offenses, while Morrow County investigated 43.

“Sexual assault is not an isolated event, it's a community epidemic that will take a community solution,” said Julianna Nemeth, Prevention Director at HelpLine.

“Every two minutes someone in the United States is assaulted and we want to change that disturbing occurrence into every 2 minutes a sexual assault is prevented – we can only do this through community education and empowerment.”

At HelpLine, more than 127 survivors and their friends or family received crisis intervention and support services in 2007. The Sexual Assault Response Network (SARN) program has been the difference for many who are learning to live past the pain and move beyond the traumatic memories.

Local HelpLine activities to raise awareness of sexual violence include:

April 3, 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Screening and Discussion of No!

No! is a documentary about rape in the African-American Community. HelpLine is partnering with Sisters United from Ohio Wesleyan University.

Location: Mean Bean Caffeine Lounge, 2 N Sandusky St. Delaware, OH 43015

April 7, noon

Silence Isn't Easy

Performance artist Kit McCann exposes the reality of sexual violence.

Location: J-Walk, Ohio Wesleyan University

April 11, 9:00 a.m. to noon

Stewards of Children

Stewards of Children is a free training to empower adults in preventing child sexual abuse. Ideal for parents, volunteers, groups or organizations that instruct, serve or interact with children.

Location: Trinity United Methodist Church, 75 E. High St., Mt. Gilead, OH 43338

The training is free but seating is limited so please RSVP to Corina Klies at (419) 946

1350 by April 9.

April 23, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Stewards of Children

Stewards of Children is a free training to empower adults in preventing child sexual abuse. Ideal for parents, volunteers, groups or organizations that instruct, serve or interact with children.

Location: Delaware Hayes County Services Building, Room G22, 140 N. Sandusky St. Delaware, OH 43015

Seating is limited; please RSVP to Julianna Nemeth at (740)363-1835 by April 21.

April 24, 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Open Mic including performance art *Silence Isn't Easy* created by Kit McCann and Musical performance by Robyn Leah Case

Bring your own poetry, song, or art to share in recognition of sexual assault survivors

Location: Mean Bean Caffeine Lounge, 2 N Sandusky St. Delaware, OH 43015

April 28, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Film viewing of *Searching for Angela Shelton* and book discussion of *Finding Angela Shelton*

Location: Cardington-Lincoln Public Library, 128 East Main St. Cardington, OH 43315

April 29, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

National Report It Day

This is a day for all survivors of sexual assault to tell their stories. Sexual Assault Response Network Advocates will be available to speak with from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Delaware and Morrow County HelpLine office sites. Advocates can offer you support and help you get voluntarily connected with law enforcement or other community resources. Make this day be the day you break the silence -- you are not alone!

Location: 11 N. Franklin St. Delaware, OH 43015 and 950 Meadow Drive, Suite B Mt. Gilead, OH 43338

For more information on Sexual Assault Awareness Month, contact HelpLine at 740.369.3316 or 419.947.1850. If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, confidential help is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week at 2-1-1 or 1-800-684.2324.

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10 Ways You can Stop Sexual Violence in Your Community

1. Acknowledge that all people are vulnerable to rape including men, women and children.
2. Educate yourself about sexual violence and challenge the perception that it is inevitable and acceptable.
3. Resist and confront rape culture in our society such as gender role stereotyping, victim blame, glamorized and sexualized images of violence against women and the media that reinforces these elements.
4. Respect your partner and the boundaries she or he sets.
5. Unconditionally recognize and value women as human beings.

6. Hold perpetrators of sexual violence accountable for their actions; do not expect women to prevent rape.
7. Be supportive of a friend who has been raped by believing her or him and by listening without blaming or judging.
8. Volunteer at HelpLine.
9. Support organizations that work to end sexual violence with your charitable gifts.
10. Invite a HelpLine educator to speak to your class, workplace, church or community organization.

About HelpLine

HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization that provides a 24-hour crisis support hotline, information and referral to direct services and advocacy, and serves as the area's only volunteer center. Committed to empowering people through knowledge, support and resources, HelpLine facilitates the stability and self-sufficiency of the emotional and financial needs of the Delaware and Morrow County communities. HelpLine is a contract provider of the Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board and partially funded by the Council for Older Adults. A United Way Agency, HelpLine is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology, National Alliance of Information & Referral Systems and certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health. For more information, please visit: www.HelpLinedelmor.org.

Contacts:

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