

UPCOMING TRAINING - RESOURCES - SUPPORT**FALL 2007
GROUPS AND CLASSES****BEGINNING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 10TH****“FOOLPROOFING” GROUP**

This is an educational support group focusing on identifying abusive patterns in relationship, understanding our responses to abuse, finding new ways to maintain safety, sanity and integrity and making wise life choices.

This group meets weekly for 12-weeks.

PERSONAL GROWTH AND MINISTRY CLASS (PGMT)

Nancy will be teaching two separate sessions of the Personal Growth and Ministry Training class. This class meets weekly throughout the school year and is designed to equip participants to understand people and pain from a Biblical perspective and explore principles of ministry needed to reach out to our world.

For more information about either group or to reserve a spot, please call or email us



Safe
Place
Ministries

P. O. Box 4892
Boise, ID
83711
208-323-2169

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
BOISE ID
PERMIT NO. 157

We want very much for **SAFE PLACE NEWS** to be a helpful resource for many people. With this in mind, permission to duplicate this newsletter for free distribution is granted. Any quotations or references to it should give proper credit to SAFE PLACE MINISTRIES. We encourage input and suggestions. Send correspondence to:
SPM, P. O. Box 4892, Boise, ID 83711, or call 208-323-2169.

An annual tax deductible gift of \$10.00 is welcome to help cover expenses.

SAFE PLACE NEWS

*Promoting safe places, consistent with the character of Christ,
for women and their families to heal and grow.*

Issue 31

August, 2007

REDEEMING OUR PAIN

*“Which areas of your life
have you tried to silence?”
“The painful parts of our
stories equip us to be
beautiful bearers of healing
for others. Will you stop
running long enough to let
them bless you?”
Heather Webb,
Redeeming Eve*

Anne is one of the most beautiful women I know. Her wisdom and compassion have both drawn my heart toward God’s kindness and fueled the temptation to run far, far away from entering the painful parts of my story. Why would I or anyone want to revisit the past I had tried to put so far behind me? Instead of answering my question, she told me a story—her story. Evil had lived in her home, stalking little girls in the dark, leaving secrets too horrible to be believed in the light. Her young life had been filled with betrayal and powerlessness, confusion and terror. By the time she graduated Anne had learned how to run—from one accomplishment to another,

from one relationship to another, always from the pain that shadowed her days and intruded into her nights.

*Praise be to the God
and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of all compassion
and the God of all comfort,
who comforts us
in all our troubles,
so that we can comfort
those in any trouble
with the comfort
we ourselves have
received from God.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

One in three women and one in six men are set up by childhood sexual abuse (CSA) to flee from their own lives. Having lived through the confusion, fear, pain and powerlessness of being used to satisfy someone else’s sexual desire, most victims of abuse run from the memories or numb the pain with whatever works for them. To people accustomed to running or numbing, to be told that the only way out of the pain is to plumb its depths seems more like a suicide mission than ‘good news’.

Even when the pain of forgetting becomes too great, most abuse survivors don’t know where to turn for help.

For many survivors of abuse, the safest place to begin listening to another’s journey through pain may be found on the printed page, whether on a website, in an article or a book. An educational website or book can give an aerial view of the journey and give the reader the assurance that they are not alone and that others have survived the journey and are enjoying life on the other side of the pain.

Books and other sources of information are invaluable tools. Abuse victims, however, were abused in the context of relationship and need healthy relationships in which to heal and grow. A few will stumble into a friendship with someone like Anne who is willing to walk with them as a friend and mentor, but most will have to find the courage to walk past their own mistrust and fear to seek out someone who listens and understands.

A counselor who has worked with other survivors of childhood abuse and understands the dynamics of trust, betrayal, and powerlessness and is skilled at working with those (page 2)

Redeeming Our Pain	1
In Brief	2
Redeeming Our Pain cont.	2
CSA Facts	3
The Best Defense	3
Upcoming Training	4

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Forrey
Judy Gordon
Kim Peake
Cris Polk
Tim Rosenvall
Thom Wierenga
Rob Zacklan

STAFF

Nancy Edwards
Executive Director
Angela Hills
Support Services Manager
Linda Bothman
Education / Client Care
Jodi Goettmoeller
Client Care Provider
Gail Rubelt
Office Assistant
Kapri Nabel
*Strengthening Grassroots/
Client Care*

IN BRIEF

Over the past eight months Safe Place Ministries has been a part of the Strengthening Grass Roots Initiative, funded by the Federal government and administered in Idaho by Advocates Against Family Violence in Caldwell. Participants in the Strengthening Grass Roots project were to be either community or faith based organizations in rural areas that are helping address the problem of domestic violence. We were invited to be a part of this project because of our work in rural communities throughout Idaho.

Since our beginning, 12 years ago, Safe Place Ministries has been reaching out to church leaders with training, resources and support to help congregations become safer places for victims of abuse to heal and grow. We enthusiastically accepted the invitation to be a part of the SGR project. We are thankful for the opportunity being provided for us to grow our ministry to rural victims and congregations. With funds from the SGR grant we have been able to do the following:

- We hired Kapri Nabel to be our Outreach Coordinator. Kapri spends a good deal of her time networking with community and church leaders in Canyon, Payette and Gem counties. Since beginning the SGR project, Kapri and other staff members have increased the number of churches we are working with from 20 to 50!
- SPM staff members have also been provided time to develop more resources and provide more training for church leaders and victims of abuse. We offered our Victim Advocate Training in Canyon County to a group of men and women from half a dozen congregations in May. We have also developed and distributed over 90 of our new educational packets, "Introduction to Domestic Abuse for Church Leaders."
- Underway and soon to be completed are both a new Network Data Base to track our work with churches and a completely reformatted website with new features for church leaders.
- We have purchased books and booklets to provide core libraries on abuse for six congregations.
- We will be finishing up our work under the Strengthening Grass Roots grant this fall with another Victim Advocate Training in Canyon County as well as a Community Awareness Radio Campaign.

If you would like more information about our work with church leaders and congregations, please contact us at splace@spro.net

REDEEMING OUR PAIN *continued from page 1*

wounded by abuse is worth his or her weight in gold—and may have a long waiting list. Finding the right counselor may take time. Abuse victims can begin the process by determining what qualities and qualifications they want their counselor to have. Some counselors are willing to do an initial consultation to answer the counselees questions and determine if they are a good fit.

Another level of relationship that many find helpful is a support or recovery group. Sometimes these are led by licensed counselors, sometimes by people who have a heart for those marginalized by abuse and have found the group setting a place of healing for themselves. Groups can provide a place to listen to others stories, explore the distorted images of oneself, others and God; explore how abuse has changed them; and a place to wrestle with the thorny questions and relational issues that survivor's experience.

A church that accurately teaches God's word and whose leaders understand and demonstrate grace and compassion and invite people to get to know Jesus provides a wonderfully safe place to experience healing and growth. Churches that teach the Bible in ways that help people understand that their faith is relevant to the real issues of life provide a strong foundation for those rebuilding their lives from the rubble of their pasts.

Educational resources, counselors and communities of faith provide invaluable information and support for victims and their families. To live in such a time when so many resources are available is a blessing and we are thankful for all of them. But we often overlook the way God uses friendship to offer hope and encouragement to others. We all need an "Anne" in our lives—a mentor who has reconciled the painful parts of his or her own story with God's bigger picture of redemption. One who has not forgotten her journey and is willing to re-enter the unedited painful parts of her own story as a way to bring hope, encouragement, and healing to another. Victims of child sexual abuse, neglect, and domestic abuse desperately need our stories to dream better futures and discover the kind gracious face of the God who loves them.

FACTS ABOUT CSA

- ♦ 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused by the time they reach 18.
- ♦ 88% of all reported sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child or his or her family knows and trusts.
- ♦ Nearly 5 out of every 6 sexual assaults of young juveniles occurred in a residence.
- ♦ Young juveniles are at the highest risk for sexual assault in the after school hours and at meal times.
- ♦ One in every seven victims was under the age of six and over a third of all sexual assaults involved a child under the age of 12.
- ♦ The most vulnerable age for sexual abuse is between 7 and 13 years.
- ♦ 75% of all sexual abuse victims were abused more than once.
- ♦ The severity of the trauma a child experiences is directly related to his or her ability to talk about the abuse, and the effect of the abuse on the parental bond and the duration of the abuse.
- ♦ The internet is the fastest growing medium for introducing children to pornography and sexual abuse.
- ♦ 75% of all teens say that they have seen unsolicited pornography or have been contacted by someone soliciting sex via the internet.
- ♦ Most abusers carefully choose which children to victimize and build trusting relationships by giving them attention, affection, gifts, privileges, and appropriate touch before moving to improper touch.

THE BEST DEFENSE

The best defense against sexual abuse is to develop a healthy family system and teach our children ways to protect themselves from potential abusers. We can teach them about healthy boundaries and equip them with the skills to "say no and go tell". We can and should pray for them and protect them from known danger, but we cannot guarantee that they will not be victimized. We can be alert to the fact that our children may be in danger in time to minimize the damage, hold the abuser accountable for his actions and get the help we need.

- ♦ Does your child not want to be left alone with a babysitter, a friend, a relative, or some other child or adult?
- ♦ Have you noticed a change in your child's behavior around certain people?
- ♦ Has your child begun to have difficulty sleeping? Is she having nightmares?
- ♦ Has he or she developed extreme fears without an obvious explanation?
- ♦ Does your child's play, writing, drawing or dreams express sexual or frightening images?
- ♦ Does your child seem "spaced out", distracted or distant at odd times?
- ♦ Has there been a loss of appetite, or trouble eating or swallowing?



- ♦ Is your child talking a lot about a new older friend?
- ♦ Does your child suddenly have money, toys or other gifts for no apparent reason?
- ♦ Is your child intentionally hurting himself (cutting, burning, using drugs, alcohol, sexual promiscuity, running away from home, joining a new peer group)?
- ♦ Has there been a change in your child's self-image? Has there been a change in clothing styles—to conceal the body or a desire to dress in obvious revealing clothing?
- ♦ Has there been a dramatic change in your child's emotional well-being? Level of anger? Fear? Sadness?
- ♦ Has your child expressed a desire to quit an activity that he has enjoyed in the past?
- ♦ If your child is spending lots of alone time on the internet, the chances are great that they have found pornography or have been contacted by a sexual predator.

If you suspect your child is being sexually abused:

- ♦ **Keep calm.** Your child needs to know that you are not angry with her and that you do not blame her for the abuse.
- ♦ **Listen to your child.** Let her tell you about what has happened in her own words.
- ♦ **Respect your child's privacy.** Don't discuss the abuse with people who do not need to know what happened.
- ♦ **Seek medical help** and legal assistance from those trained to identify and treat child sexual assaults.
- ♦ **Report the abuse** to the police. Sexual abuse is a crime and sexual abusers do not stop.
- ♦ **Find confidential help and support**