

Vol. 4 No. 2

*Everyone Deserves to be Safe*

October 2000

## **FRAGILE: Handle With Care**

An AFS Newsletter on Domestic Violence

### **Domestic Violence 2000**

Whether we tend to be optimists or pessimists about life, and still believing we have a long way to go to make the abuse of women in our society an artifact of the past, most of us will acknowledge that there has been incremental improvement over the past few years in the response survivors receive from our various agencies. Lyndon Johnson used to say that there are no problems that we can't solve together and very few that we can solve on our own. It's no surprise that much of the improvement has been the result of the collaborative and cooperative efforts of all the local agencies which serve survivors of domestic violence. How we got to that point, however, began with the relentless insistence of feminist groups and advocate groups that the bright light of public attention should be focused on society's dark secret of violence against women and its cost to all of us in human lives and public resources. As we continue to work together toward further awareness of domestic violence issues this October, we can also reflect on our thankfulness to those groups for their significant contribution of momentum toward acknowledging and addressing the epidemic of violence against women.

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### **Oregon Looks Good**

The federal Department of Health and Human Services recently funded a study through the Taylor Institute to assess how well states are doing in keeping battered women safe on the journey from welfare to work. Essentially they were looking at state implementation of welfare policies for battered women. Oregon's program was consistently judged as having features beneficial for battered women, some of which were held up as positive examples for other states. The researchers found Oregon to be among a handful of states which "we think do a good job of clearly explaining the Family Violence Option (FVO) to TANF applicants and recipients, describing domestic violence without using the term, or labeling or characterizing women in detrimental ways." They cited Oregon's Domestic Violence Reference Card as a useful tool to remind workers "to send important messages to the victim: 'We believe you. You are not alone. We will not share this information without your permission.'" (*Note: Mandatory reporters of child abuse are not required to report all cases of domestic violence when children are present. However, if, as a result of the victim's disclosure, a judgment is made that the child is at serious risk of harm because of the violence, in the interest of the victim's safety she should be informed that a report will be made to SCF.*) The researchers believe it is important to include child support when talking to applicants and recipients about domestic violence and found Oregon to be one of only nine states which mention child support in the context of domestic violence waivers available under the FVO. Oregon was found to be among only seven states which accept the victim's statement about domestic violence to support a claim of "Good Cause" for not pursuing child support. By contrast, one state requires a central office committee to review corroborative evidence and rule on claims of domestic violence. The report also noted AFS district office collaboration with local domestic

violence service providers which has resulted in on-site availability of a DV provider as a resource for assessment expertise and safety planning.

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## Update on TA-DVS

Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors (TA-DVS) supports domestic violence survivors in crisis and offers many advantages over the traditional 30-day emergency assistance program. When safety is an issue, TA-DVS can provide up to \$1,200 to meet the needs of the survivor and children during a 90 day period.

TA-DVS can cover moving costs, rent/house payments, emergency medical/food (if client is not eligible for other medical programs or food stamps), items to keep the client safe (such as new locks, deadbolts, etc.) as well as essential household or personal items that had to be left behind when the client fled domestic violence.

Payments are generally issued directly to service providers such as landlords, utility companies, or in payment for train/bus/plane tickets, or for u-hauls or other moving arrangements.

In addition to the \$1,200, JOBS payments can be made to support a client's case plan. The JOBS payments usually cover child care and transportation costs for the time the survivor is participating in case plan activities such as court appearances, support groups, treatment for mental health or substance abuse, locating a house, children's groups, counseling and much more.

To be eligible for TA-DVS, the survivor must have a safety concern, meet income standards (income controlled by the abuser is not counted) and have a minor child (although the child does not have to be living with the survivor at the time of application) or be pregnant.

If you know someone who might be in need of this help, have them contact their local AFS office.



## A Positive Person

**Carol Krager**, AFS's tireless advocate and resource for survivors of abuse has received the "Positive People" award from the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence in recognition and appreciation of her commitment to service. All who know Carol will agree that this award is well-deserved. She is a caring, insightful person who truly makes a difference. Congratulations, Carol!!!



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## Thoughts from Survivors

Whichever statistics you use for the estimated number (the American Medical Association

estimates that nearly a quarter of the women in the United States - more than 12 million - will be abused by a current or former partner at some time during their lives), we know that in each of our workplaces we are likely to come in contact with a co-worker who is being abused by a spouse or intimate partner. Those who have survived domestic abuse recount in their own words how significant they felt the support of their co-workers was to them at that time:

*"I remember the first co-worker who asked me if my fat lip was caused by my ex-husband. By asking that question, it planted a seed in my mind that what was happening to me wasn't right."*

*"As time went by, I felt supported enough to tell my other co-workers, believing that the more people that knew my situation, the safer I was."*

*"I want to stress how terribly important was the role that my co-workers played. True, I got support from the counselors at the abused women's shelter, ... but it had even more impact on me when other people in my life gave me the same messages, that there is no excuse for my ex-husband's behavior...."*



*Note: In the spirit of Domestic Violence Month and of our partnership with the Division of Child Support, we're offering this quiz on safe collection of child support and resource information about the DCS Point Person Committee. If you miss any of the questions on the quiz, be sure to review the AFS Client Safety Packet on Good Cause or, if you don't have it, call us and ask for one!*



## QUIZ

1. The AFS "Client Safety Packet on Good Cause" consists of:

- a) a large blue folder with brochures about Good Cause given to AFS and DCS point persons;
- b) a large red folder with brochures about Good Cause given to all clients;
- c) a packet of forms consisting of AFS 8660, AFS 8660A, AFS 8660B and AFS 8660C;
- d) none of the above.

2. If a client believes that working with the Child Support Program would put her or her child at risk from an abuser, but wants to have child support collected, information about her can be protected by:

- a) Claim of Risk
- b) Claim of Good Cause
- c) Address of Record

3. An "address of record"

- a) is used by the Child Support Program to send the client legal mail when it is not safe to have the abuser know the survivor's home address
- b) can be updated at any time
- c) is good until the client tells the Child Support Program that it is no longer needed; d) all of the above are true

4. If AFS or OHP find "Good Cause", the Child Support Program will:

- a) take limited enforcement action and use an address of record
- b) take no action on paternity or child support
- c) take no action on child support but pursue action on paternity; d) none of the above

5. Based on information in the AFS "Client Safety Packet on Good Cause" Rank the following terms according to their level of safety (High, Medium, or Low) with the Oregon Child Support Program:

- a) Claim of Risk \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Address of Record \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Good Cause \_\_\_\_\_

*Answers:*

Highlight the box below to reveal the answers.



## Division of Child Support Domestic Violence Point Persons In Action

This information was submitted by Joie Ward Stover, Medford DCS

The DCS DV Point Person's mission is to raise awareness of domestic violence issues, and to assist

in the development of effective methods of delivering child support services while maintaining the safety and well-being of the families we serve. There are currently nineteen points around the state, serving on the Point Person Committee.

The DCS DV Point Person's responsibility is to raise awareness of domestic violence issues locally and regionally for DCS staff. We share information about what is happening in our agency around domestic violence with our partner agencies. We also develop and coordinate activities, training, and information sharing for DCS staff. Our commitment to this responsibility increases during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. DCS points act as resources for AFS staff in DV problem solving around safety and child support. We have worked hard to meet these responsibilities.

The Point Person Committee has formed a number of subcommittees:

**Training Subcommittee:**

This group has worked with Hardy Meyers and DOJ personnel to assist in the development of a proposal for training on violence in the workplace and domestic violence. This training will be for DOJ management and staff. The committee also assisted in the development of a domestic violence policy for DOJ.

**Safety Subcommittee:**

This group developed Domestic Violence Safety Principles for the Workplace. It is proposed that these principles be included in the statewide Customer Access and Employee Security Principles.

**Strategies Subcommittee:**

This group is developing a resource packet for domestic violence point people to assist them with strategies to increase domestic violence awareness in the workplace.

**Localization Subcommittee:**

This group is examining how to ensure that there will be domestic violence point person coverage locally in all DCS regions and branch offices.

**DV Resources Subcommittee:**

These points will be working with AFS and partner agencies to develop domestic violence resource packets for staff.

If you need to contact a DCS Domestic Violence Point Person, here is a current list:

DCS Domestic Violence Point Person List			
<b>Training Team</b>	503-372-7455	Patti Campbell	x22241
<b>Medford</b>	541-776-6043	Joie Stover	x252
<b>PendletoN</b>	541-276-6932	Nancy Craig	x224
<b>Albany</b>	541-967-2028	Donna McDonald	x226
<b>DCS Mgmt.</b>	503-373-7455	Carolyn Ross	x22308
<b>Portland</b>	503-229-5825	Kit Thomas	x340
<b>Clackamas</b>	503-731-3400	Cindi Lewis	x255
<b>Interstate</b>	503-986-5953	Michaelene Larson	
<b>CSEAS</b>	503-373-7455	Kim Braasch	x22300
<b>West Eugene</b>	541-686-7833	Chris Reafleng	x248
<b>Enforcement</b>	503-986-6067	Tesa Mann	
<b>Locate</b>	503-986-6042	Darlene Bushnell	
<b>Fatherhood Prog</b>	503-373-7455	Carrie Wheaton	x22244
<b>Tigard</b>	503-670-9775	Terry Betts	x304
<b>Central Svs. Reg</b>	503-986-0528	Darla Davis	
<b>West Salem</b>	503-986-6197	Becki Laudon	
<b>McKenzie Center</b>	541-686-7834	Roxanne Roberts	x330
<b>Constituent Desk</b>	503-378-6016	Kevin Furber	
<b>Bend</b>	541-388-6141	Traci Pankey	x329
<b>Roseburg</b>	541-440-3357	Tami Motiff	x239