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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month



Sexual Assault Response Team (SART): a new way of addressing the issue of sexual violence in our county

The Family Refuge Center is trying to change the way we respond to sexual assaults in our communities. Historically, sexual assaults are one of the most under-reported and under-prosecuted crimes.

The SART team, led by FRC's new SART Coordinator, is working to increase reporting and prosecution so offenders are held accountable for their horrendous acts of violence.

The goal of the SART is to carry out a coordinated community response to sexual assaults, which means having open communication between prosecutors, law enforcement, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, university campus representatives and advocates, to ensure quality service delivery. The SART team meets monthly to discuss protocol development, training opportunities, and best practices to achieve a coordinated response to sexual violence in Greenbrier County.



One of the first steps to accomplishing the goals of the SART is to encourage victims to report sexual violence crimes when they occur. Victims often feel insecure and embarrassed about being violated, which discourages them from telling anyone about the assault. What the SART would like to do is move toward removing the stigma surrounding sexual violence so victims can feel they are believed and so they can feel safe again. If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual violence, please call FRC and ask to speak to the sexual assault advocate at **304-645-6334**.

Help The Family Refuge Center Continue to Serve Our Community

Renew your friendship or become a friend of the FRC and help us end domestic and sexual violence in our community.

Enclosed is my contribution of: \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ Other _____

No donation is too large or too small.

Thank you for your contribution!

A receipt will be sent to you upon our receipt of your donation.

Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) Donation \$500 _____ Other _____

Name and Address: _____

Please return this form with your donation to:

The Family Refuge Center
P.O Box 249
Lewisburg, WV 24901

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.”

-Alice Walker

Upcoming Events:

Lewisburg Chocolate Festival Tasting Table: April 13

Former Old Hardware Gallery, Downtown Lewisburg: 11am to 4pm

Screening of *The Invisible War* at the Lewis Theater: April 27

113 N. Court St., Lewisburg: 7pm (call 304-645-6334 for ticket information)

3rd Annual Walk Against Domestic and Sexual Violence: May 11

891 Maplewood Ave, Fairlea (State Fairground): 11am to 3pm

Annual FRC Yard Sale: May 18

303 East Washington Street, Lewisburg: 8am to 1pm: Please, No Early Birds

FRC Welcomes New Staff



Lindsey Wolford: Lindsey Wolford has returned to the Family Refuge Center after a year and a half hiatus. Lindsey was previously a legal advocate for two and a half years and also assisted with several fundraisers. Since her return, Lindsey has taken initiative to spearhead the planning of this year's Walk Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. She has a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications with a Minor in Print Journalism from Shepherd University. About her return to FRC, Lindsey states, "I am so happy to be back at the Family Refuge Center for many reasons, but most importantly, to be assisting victims and their families and raising awareness that domestic violence and sexual assault in Greenbrier County is a significant issue."

Jessica Bailey: Jessica recently moved to Greenbrier County from Michigan after accepting a position with the Family Refuge Center as the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Coordinator and Victim Advocate. She was previously living and working in Ghana, West Africa as a teacher and advisor for a small non-profit high school. Jessica received her undergraduate degree from Grand Valley State University in 2011; her major being Liberal Studies with an emphasis on Youth, Culture and Social Issues. She comments, "I am very pleased to be working with such a dynamic group of people at FRC. I am learning so much, not only from my co-workers, but also from the victims we serve daily. I hope to continue growing the SART for Greenbrier County so victims of sexual violence can be heard, and so offenders can be held accountable for their actions."



FRC Donors: You Make Our Work Possible

-THANK YOU-
(for donations this fiscal year)

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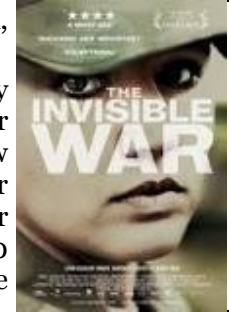
Sexual Assault in the Military

The issue of sexual assault in the military is a topic that has been inching its way into the media spotlight for the past several months now. In reality, this type of violence has been occurring within the military for a very long time, to both women and men. We are just beginning to hear about it because many of the victims are finally finding the courage to speak up about what has happened to them. Nearly half of sexual assault victims in the military say they are too afraid to report the crime. Of those reported, only about 10% of cases brought to military prosecutors result in charges being filed (Gregg Zoroya, USA Today).

As of now, commanding officers have the power and ability to dismiss charges of sexual assault at their discretion. When four victims went before Congress on March 13, they described how they were molested, raped or sexually assaulted, and that their commanding officers did little or nothing about it. It is no wonder that only about 2,500 are reported of the approximately 19,000 assaults each year, since women are getting this type of response from their commanding officers.

A small but growing number in Congress are calling for change in the law that would require sexual assaults to be prosecuted outside the military's chain of command. This is, of course, opposed by the service branches as it would shed some light on this topic and most likely bring about higher reporting numbers and higher prosecution rates (Zoroya).

Representative Jackie Speier made a valid argument when she stated in an e-mail statement, "There is no justice in a military system that allows a General to overturn the decision of a judge or jury in a court martial. Generals are not above the law."



FRC will show a film about this topic...
At the Lewis Theater, Lewisburg
On April 27, at 7pm
Please Attend!

Legislative Update: 2013

VAWA Reauthorization Passed by Congress and Signed by President Obama

The Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") is the single most important law addressing domestic violence and sexual assault. VAWA has significantly improved our nation's response to violence against women (men also are served, however the great majority of victims are women). A strong, bipartisan bill to reauthorize VAWA passed the U.S. Senate on February 12, 2013, and the House of Representatives on February 28, 2013. President Obama signed the bill into law on March 7, 2013.

The 2013 version of VAWA closes important gaps in services and justice. VAWA 2013 reauthorized and improved upon lifesaving services for all victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking - including Native American women, immigrants, LGBT victims, college students and youth, and public housing residents. VAWA 2013 also authorized appropriate funding to provide for VAWA's vitally important programs and protections, without imposing limitations that undermine effectiveness or victim safety.

You can learn more about VAWA by visiting the website of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, www.nnedv.org.

Join us on **May 11** for FRC's 3rd Annual Walk Against Domestic and Sexual Violence At the State Fairgrounds in Fairlea!

We will have activities for kids, as well as local vendors including Cinnasational Cinnamon Rolls, When Pigs Fly BBQ, and many other independent consultants and vendors

Come on out and walk to support our cause!
\$5 to walk only, or \$20 with a T-shirt
For More information, contact Lindsey at 304-645-6334

FRC activities are supported in part by the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), Division of Justice and Community Services (DJCS), Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO), Foundation for Rape Information Services (FRIS), West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV), West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals (WVSCA), Emergency Food Shelter Program (EFSP), United Way of The Greenbrier Valley, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM), Daywood Foundation, Hollowell Foundation, Pyles & Turner Foundation, Celia Trust, Pocahontas County Commission, Greenbrier County Commission and generous donations from our Friends.