

Believe Survivors . . .

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Join us!

Visit
ShepherdsTherapy.org
to find all you'll need to:

- ♥ Wear an awareness ribbon pin.
- ♥ Follow and share our April Facebook posts.
- ♥ Change your Facebook profile picture to an awareness image.
- ♥ Show the colors of your support—wear your hair blue!
- ♥ Read and share our April blog post.
- ♥ Know that your voice can truly help change the culture.

Thank you!

Executive Director's Message

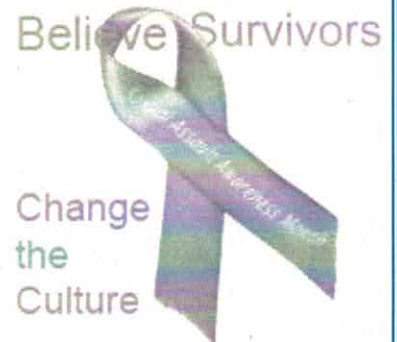
When was the last time you set out to change the culture? Does this seem like a rather lofty goal? What you may not realize is that right now, as you read this newsletter, you are doing exactly that! By acknowledging the reality of the prevalence and effects of child sexual abuse, you are shining the light of awareness on this shadowy reality that in turn leads to cultural awareness and ultimately change.

It may surprise you to know that, for the most part, the prevalence and the on-going life effects of childhood sexual abuse continue to be an unrealized truth across personal and professional lines. It would seem impossible to deny the impact of a devastating and painful childhood trauma that has happened to 1 in 5 adults!

Yet, the impulse to turn away, to remain in denial is strong. Yes, indeed, the scars of being sexual abused in childhood are deep and lasting. And yes, as painful and uncomfortable as it is to believe that this is the lived experience of so many survivors in our families, our workplaces, and in our community, we must gather the strength to step out from the shadows of denial.

To change the culture we must first, with courage, accept the hard truth that there is a painful reality in our midst. Willful denial allows the culture of sexual abuse to continue. Believing survivors helps to bring an end to the silence and stigma that envelops the topic of the sexual abuse of children. Believing survivors who dare to tell of their painful secret is the beginning.

To believe a survivor is to open one's heart to bear witness to the life-long pain and shame of hiding the terrible secret. Every time a survivor's story is believed as truth, our cultural stigma surrounding this all too frequent reality begins to crumble. Every time we acknowledge both the validity and the critical necessity of ensuring that survivors have access to healing opportunities, the shadows begin to fade.



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"No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world."

~ Robin Williams



... Change the Culture

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Shepherd's Counseling Services exists because over 30 years ago, one courageous and persistent woman believed



the stories she was hearing from young women who sought refuge from abusive homes on the streets of Seattle. Sr. Vera Gallagher, our founder, believed a reality that was largely unrecognized at the time and also believed in the need to provide a place for healing for adult survivors. Did she change the culture? Without a doubt!

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month and a wonderful opportunity to join with others across our nation in bringing the light of awareness to the veiled truth of the prevalence and effects of sexual assault.

the power and possibility healing for survivors makes a difference! Margaret Mead's well-known quote hangs prominently in our office as a guiding light; *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.* Together, we will continue to change the world for survivors and to create lasting and meaningful change in our culture.

Please know that your voice matters, your willingness to become aware, and your belief in

- Janice Palm, MA, LMHC

May 10th, online campaign to raise \$20,000 for scholarship fund!

To serve survivors relying on need-based scholarships in the year ahead, we estimate the demand will be \$40,000.

Our goal on May 10th for giveBIG, a 24-hour online campaign, is to raise at least half of this need.

Please join us to raise \$20,000 on May 10th and PCVA Law will make an additional donation of \$2,500 to the Hope In Healing Scholarship Fund!

Follow our eNews or Facebook for the latest updates. Thank you!



"Awareness is like the sun. When it shines on things, they are transformed."
- Thich Nhat Hanh

Save-the-Date!

Join us for our 2nd Annual Fall Luncheon to celebrate and support healing!

Wed, October 4th

11:30am doors open

12-1pm luncheon program

At the

Pacific Tower Panorama Room

Take a leadership role as **Table Captain!**

Become a **Corporate Sponsor!**



Visit us online at "Get Involved" to learn more or contact Jill at jill@shepherdstherapy.org.

Registration information will be announced in our eNews and on our Get Involved web page.

Why do survivors come to Shepherd's?

From time to time, clients tell us what they find when they come to Shepherd's —

I know the people at Shepherd's understand what I've been through.

This is the safest place I've ever found.

I know that I'll have the time I need to heal.

I've been to many other therapists and there's just no other place like Shepherd's.

There just are no other groups for male survivors out there.

I'm believed.

Thank you for creating a safe harbor for men and women who were sexually abused in childhood to find healing.

Building Community

Applications are currently open for 3 membership positions on our Board of Directors.

- ◆ Do you feel strongly about supporting the mission of Shepherd's Counseling Services?
- ◆ Can you offer strategic perspective in a collaborative, collegial environment?
- ◆ Do you have networking, planning, or leadership skills?

Contact Janice Palm at janice@shepherdstherapy.org to learn more.



2601 Broadway East
Seattle, WA 98102-3906

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month!

5 Ways You Can Change the Culture

- Believe.** Acknowledge the reality and prevalence of child sexual abuse.
- Speak up.** Silence allows sexual abuse to remain in the shadows. Use your voice to change the culture.
- Support.** Support for survivors who dare to tell their painful truth is invaluable.
- Zero-Tolerance.** Demand zero tolerance policies for sexual assault.
- Engage.** Join with other voices in your community to speak out about sexual abuse.

Join us to build awareness (see inside...)

www.shepherdstherapy.org