

Voices Against Sexual Assault



MONTHLY UPDATE

JUNE 2011

New Report Issued on the Effects of Sexual Assault

In May, the results of a twenty-three year, longitudinal study examining the impact of sexual assault on females were released. The study was conducted by Penelope Trickett of the University of South California and Jeannie G. Noll and Frank W. Putnam, both of the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine.

The study, published in the Cambridge University Press Online Journal, *Development and Psychopathology* is entitled "The impact of sexual abuse on female development: Lessons from a multigenerational,

**Prevent
Sexual
Violence**

longitudinal research study."

Participants in the study were referred by Child Protective Services; the control group for the study was a demographically similar to the participants, but had never had contact with CPS.

Among the startling findings, the researchers found, for instance, that "difficulties within the academic environment can be observable within a few months after the disclosure of sexual abuse," which became more pronounced over time (*Id.*, p. 464). The study found that the delay in academic development caused by sexual assault led to a difference in academic achievement over the lifetime of the subjects; the control group reported some college education, while the participants in the study reported high school as their highest level of academic achievement.

The study was also examined the children of both groups. It concluded that the children of the sexually abused females (designated as "OA") "were significantly more likely to have been involved with CPS than were comparison offspring...[and] [t]he rate of CPS involvement for the OA group was more than twice the

national average reported in proximal years.... The majority of OA cases were neglect cases mostly due to the substance and/or alcohol dependence of the [mothers]" (*Id.*, p. 468).

What the researchers concluded, given this difference, is that "primary prevention/intervention efforts extending throughout development and focusing on the cumulative risk to offspring...will likely improve the victim outcomes and curtail intergenerational transmissions of violence and adversity" (*Id.*, p. 470).

What does this mean for organizations like VOICES? It means that the work we do in educating the public about sexual assault is one of the most effective methods we can take to prevent future generations of children from experience difficult, even impossible, childhoods.

Monthly Meeting Move

As the summer season begins, Voices Against Sexual Assault will be taking a brief break. The Planning Committee meeting scheduled for June 2011 has been canceled to give group members a rest before the group launches into some great new projects!

Beginning in July 2011, however, Planning Committee members, volunteers, supporters and interns should be advised that the day and time of the regular VOICES meeting has changed.

During the May 2011 meeting, members voted to move the regular meeting from the FIRST Thursday of the month at 2PM to the SECOND Thursday of the month at 4PM. The meetings will continue to be held at the YWCA Kalamazoo, which donates space to the group each month for the purposes of the Planning Committee Meetings.

The next VOICES Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 14th at 4PM at the YWCA of Kalamazoo. We hope to see you there!

Next Meeting

Thursday, July 14th @ 4PM
YWCA Kalamazoo

VOICES meets regularly at the YWCA of Kalamazoo on the SECOND Thursday of the month at 4PM. Please RSVP to info@voicesasa.org to join us!

