

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

# YWCA of Genesee County

## Weekly Update

OCTOBER 31, 2016

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **YWCA Board Meeting**  
5:15 p.m.  
Tuesday, Nov. 15
- **Thanksgiving**  
Thursday, Nov. 24

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Domestic Violence & Healthy Relationships** 1
- Care+Crisis Helpline** 2
- Domestic Violence & Children My Sister's Closet Boutique** 3
- Executive Director's Message** 4

## That Was Me

October was an especially busy month, and there were definitely moments that boosted our spirits to keep on with the message.

While selling candy bars at Le Roy Jr-Sr High School, Rena McCumiskey and Joanne Beck had one of those moments when approached by a teacher. Her daughter had been in a difficult relationship that ended some time ago, and the daughter was in a recent Healthy Relationships school assembly presented by Ashley Hill and Amanda Bow. Part of the assembly was about what's not healthy in a relationship, such as someone trying to control a partner. It was a lesson well received.

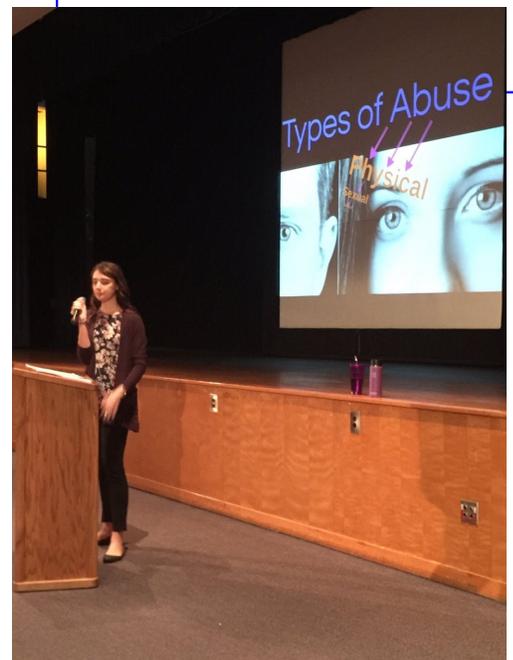
"She said 'mom, that was me,'" the teacher said. "She wouldn't listen to me, but ... now she won't accept that behavior from anyone."

Ashley and Amanda presented assemblies to schools in Le Roy, Batavia, Alexander and Oakfield. As Prevention Education Coordinator, Ashley (at right) also teaches a Healthy Relationships class to districts throughout Genesee County.

"The video that we show truly depicts what domestic violence may look like in the students' relationships, or possibly in their dating relationship. It reinforces what we're speaking about in a visual way," Ashley said. "The reaction that they have is normally them realizing and getting the wheels turning in their head that they've seen this before-whether it is their relationship or their friends' relationships."



- 150 .....participants in the 5K
- 1,990 .....students at assemblies
- 91 purple pinkies (OK, this is not scientific!)
- 35 .....Guests at Partner Agency Breakfast
- 150.....Harvest Supper diners
- 2,500.....spectators at athletic events
- 4,916 .....Total number of people reached by YWCA programs and events in October
- 608.....new DV clients to date
- 192.....children in Adventure Program
- 11,150.....calls taken at Care+Crisis Helpline





"I'm afraid to go home."

## One at a Time

Hey, did you hear the one about the woman who called for help while fleeing her abusive spouse on foot? Unfortunately, there is no punchline. And this is no joke. Our Main Office fielded such a call from someone who was too terrified to go home. She had no transportation and didn't know what to do. Another woman in very similar circumstances sought refuge at our safe house. Domestic violence is not a fun or

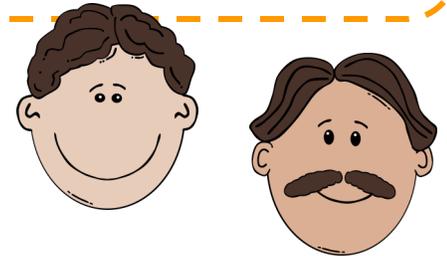
funny topic, and it is occurring all too often. Victims are primarily women, but the number of male victims is on the rise, with 12 men seeking assistance so far this year. To date, the DV staff has taken care of 608 new victims since January 1. It has kept our staff hopping, from meeting with clients, helping them ease into shelter living and shopping for their emergency needs to taking them to court and other necessary appointments.

Of course, there are the children that get swept into the mix,



watching a volatile relationship unfold and escalate before their innocent eyes. Our shelter housed 23 victims and 46 children last year. Nationally, one in 15 kids is exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 70% of the offenders in treatment for domestic violence witnessed similar abuse as a child.

## Who Are You Today?



Ann, a Care+Crisis Helpline specialist, feels pretty comfortable in her seat. She is well versed to take new calls as well as those repeat callers who have found a special place in her heart.

Take William for example. He has two very distinct personalities that are present with either William or Bill. Over the past two years, since the Helpline began, Ann has gotten to know each person and his own set of qualities, characteristics and issues. William has been struggling with severe mental illness the past 40 years. Ann treats him with respect and understanding. She knows how important it is to respond with compassion, which makes it a safe place for William. For Bill. For anyone in crisis. It doesn't matter who is on the other end of the line, because Ann and the other Helpline staff will be ready.

"There are a lot of hurting people out there who just need someone to take the time to listen, share a laugh, offer encouragement and to help ease the loneliness by letting them know help is only a phone call away," Ann said. "It's hanging up the phone knowing that they were in a much better place than when the call started."

Hopefully that attitude will change the latest Centers for Disease Control stats: Only 25% of adults with mental health symptoms believed that people are caring and sympathetic to persons with mental illness.

**Help is only a phone call away: (844) 345-4400 or (585) 344-4400**

## Secondary Victims?

“Domestic violence is a devastating social problem that affects every segment of the population. Children are considered secondary victims of domestic violence and this is not the case,” says YWCA’s Support Services Coordinator Sherry Crumity. “Children often hear and see violence at home, and through that exposure they have emotional, mental and social damage that can affect their developmental growth.”

That was the message during YWCA’s annual Partner Agency Breakfast Wednesday at the nonprofit’s North Street site. The event is a way to recognize those people that work in law enforcement, legal and justice systems, government, business and human service fields to help reduce domestic violence in the community.

Why the focus on children? Since 2015, two dozen victims and 46 children have sought safe housing at YWCA’s shelter. That means 46 little lives

have all been touched by domestic violence right here in Genesee County this past year alone.

This type of violence does not happen in a vacuum, said Dr. Alisa Hathaway of Project Stronger at Mount Hope Family Center. She explained it simply after a video showed one young girl’s sadness due to the abuse in her home.

“She feels invisible,” Hathaway said to the audience of about 50 people. “There’s not something *wrong* with her but what has *happened* to her.”

## Halloween Humor



**Q:** What do you get when you cross a Cocker Spaniel, a Poodle and a ghost?

**A:** A Cocker Poodle Boo.

Still looking for a Halloween costume? Check out the specials at

My Sister’s Closet

BOO-tique! Some word experts say that the word Boo may have been used as early as the 18th Century to scare children in Scotland. No need to be

scared of our deals! 50% off all suits, pants, dresses, gowns and medical scrubs! BOGO all footwear!

10-5 M,T,W,F

10-7 Thursday

10-1 Saturday



## Word on the Street

Amanda Bow and Ashley Hill, left, play a video for students during a Healthy Relationships presentation at Batavia High School. Both said they find the students’ reaction quite interesting.

“They clap after our first video, and when I scan their faces during the video they are actually intrigued and focused on what is happening,” Amanda said. “You can hear gasps and whispers that validate that this is an issue in the schools.”

Ashley agrees. “Seeing those reactions makes me happy as a prevention education coordinator because it’s showing the students that domestic violence is real and does happen to people around them!

Board members and guests will be able to see a condensed presentation during YW’s annual meeting on Tuesday, December 6.

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

## YWCA of Genesee County

301 North St.  
Batavia, NY 14020  
(585) 343-5808

YWCA's mission is to eliminate racism and empower women and the vision is to implement sustainable programs that foster healthy, balanced living for women and families.

Our three primary programs are:



## A word from Executive Director Jeanne Walton

YW staff presented the Healthy Relationships assemblies this year to nearly 2,000 students throughout Genesee County. Presenters Ashley Hill and Amanda Bow have seen the positive results of students acknowledging that domestic violence can happen to them and having tools to avoid it. Alexander teacher Dawn Fisher believes the presentation is “always interactive, up-to-date, and holds students' attention.”

“ It is presented in a manner in which students can relate in regards to peer relationships. Students may hear information

about domestic violence, but may not understand that it can happen in a dating relationship,” she said. “They are provided information about the cycle of dating violence, and the signs to be aware of. The healthy relationships presentation gives our students a positive message about self-advocacy, as well as the skills needed to seek out community resources.”

Dawn is one of many school leaders who support this lesson.

And that's something to smile about!

