



# Niagara County FAMILY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROJECT Newsletter

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"A family is like a forest,  
when you are outside it is  
dense, when you are inside  
you see that each tree  
has its place"

-African Proverb

## Meet Linda Dynel

Author, Educator, Survivor; Linda Dynel is taking on the culture of domestic violence and abuse. From newspaper articles and novels, to presentations in the community, Linda has been able to reach an audience of survivors of domestic violence as well as students and educators.

Linda is open about her experiences as a survivor of domestic violence. Her must-read book *Leaving Dorian*, takes readers through Linda's personal journey of intimate partner violence and the psychological tension preceding physical abuse.

Since the release of her story, Linda continues to educate the public on an array of related topics. We are lucky to have the opportunity to hear her speak at our next **FVIP meeting**

on **June 16th**. Please find details below.

### FVIP Meeting Dates and Topics— a free opportunity for learning and networking

All meetings take place at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center Auditorium A or B at 9am.

June 16– Topic: Navigating the Criminal Justice System; a Survivor's Perspective, presented by Linda Dynel , Author

September 15– Topic: Intersection of Mental Health and Domestic Violence, presented by Carol Ross, NCMH Clinics Supervisor

December 15-Topic: Cyberstalking and Social Media

In the meantime, visit our website at <http://cacofniagara.org/services/family-violence-intervention-project/>

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Did you know...

- 1 in 5 adults in the US– 43.8 million, or 18.5%- experience mental illness in a given year.
- 1 in 5 youth aged 13-18, 21.4%- experiences a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. Children ages 13-18, the estimate is 13%.
- Mood Disorders, including major depression, dysthymic disorder, and bipolar disorder, are the third most common cause of hospitalization in the U.S. for both youth and adults aged 18-44.

It is important to know warning signs and where to seek help.

Learn more at [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Data provided by: <http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month Spotlight: Adolescent Suicide Prevention

Adolescence can be a turbulent time, with teens adjusting to many life changes. And while most teens adapt to these challenges, for some suicide becomes their chosen alternative. According to the CDC, suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for 10-24-year-olds.

Risk factors for adolescents attempting suicide include: history of abuse or neglect by family; substance abuse; impulsivity; recent or serious loss; lack of social support; family or peer suicide; having a physical or learning disability; having a mental health diagnosis; identifying as LGBT; being bullied or being the bully, and having a history of previous attempts.

By becoming aware of risk factors and warning signs, parents/guardians, school staff, mental health professionals and others working with youth can intervene. Warning signs can include, but are not limited to: making statements about death or wanting to die; isolation

or withdrawing from friends and social supports; changes in mood, hygiene, behaviors, weight, sleep, appetite; expressing worthlessness, shame, hopelessness; escalation of self-injury; and saying goodbye and/or giving away possessions. Concerned adults should also pay attention to a teen's social media posts, which may indicate problems and to their art/music/writing (i.e. seeing it turn morbid or aggressive).

If a teen has shown some of the warning signs, it is important for adults to intervene. A teen's risk of suicide can be increased if adults ignore or minimize the teen's statements of wanting to die, if adults minimize a teen's feelings or ignore the above behaviors, or if adults assume that someone else will help.

So what can we do? While it can be scary, be direct. Express to the teen that you are concerned about specific warning signs and ask directly if they are feeling suicidal. If they say yes, it is ok to ask for details: how often are they

having those thoughts, how intense are they, do they have a plan, timeframe, and access to what is needed to carry out the plan, and have they attempted in the past.

If the teen indicates an attempt in progress (they have taken pills to overdose for example), call 911! Otherwise, with the teen, reach out for help. Do not leave them alone! If the teen currently has a mental health counselor or therapist, call that person. Otherwise contact Niagara County Crisis Services, (716) 285 - 3515. Trained staff are available 24/7/365 to help individuals of all ages through a crisis situation or tough time. Depending on the circumstances, Crisis Services staff can provide referrals/linkage to appropriate supports and services, engage in safety planning with the youth, and/or have a Mobile Evaluation team provide an immediate on-site evaluation.

For more information or to request a presentation on Suicide Prevention, please contact Crisis Services at (716) 285-3515. Additional resources can be accessed through the CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/index.html>

**There is Help. There is Hope. Together we can make a difference.**



### Research Corner— We are happy to provide you with recent research related to family violence



#### Study abstract

“Intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization and reproductive coercion place young women at risk for poor health. However, very few studies have examined the associations between IPV victimization and reproductive coercion among young couples or investigated these associations longitudinally.

**Method:** Data were collected during 2007–2011 from 296 pregnant adolescent and young couples enrolled in a prospective study. Couples were recruited at obstetrics and gynecology, and ultrasound clinics.

**Results:** Using the actor partner interdependence model, results indicate significant actor and

partner effects for IPV victimization and reproductive coercion victimization. The actor's pre-birth IPV victimization and the actor's and partner's reproductive coercion victimization in a past relationship related to reproductive coercion victimization in the current pregnancy. The partner's reproductive coercion victimization in the current pregnancy related to psychological IPV victimization at the 6-month follow-up, but this relationship dissipated at the 12-month follow-up.

**Conclusions:** A complex, co-occurring relationship exists between IPV victimization and reproductive coercion among young pregnant and parenting

couples. Young couples transitioning from pregnancy to parenthood who experience reproductive coercion may be at risk for IPV. Pregnancy and parenting programs targeting young couples should be sensitive to the relationship between IPV and reproductive coercion victimization.”

Willie, T. C., Powell, A., Callands, T., Sipsma, H., Peasant, C., Magriples, U., Alexander, K., & Kershaw, T. (2017, April 27). Investigating Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Reproductive Coercion Victimization Among Young Pregnant and Parenting Couples: A Longitudinal Study. *Psychology of Violence*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/vio0000118>

If you would like a PDF copy of the article, please email Dana Radatz at [dradatz@niagara.edu](mailto:dradatz@niagara.edu).

## Happenings Around Town...

### Niagara County Family Violence Intervention Project

19th Annual Conference

Safe at Home

October 12, 2017, 8:00 am–4:00 pm, the Conference & Events  
Center of Niagara Falls, 101 Old Falls St, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

KEYNOTE—James Hopper, Ph.D.



Dr. Hopper is an independent consultant and Teaching Associate in Psychology at Harvard Medical School. For over 25 years Dr. Hopper's work has focused on the psychological and biological effects of child abuse, sexual assault and other traumatic experiences. As a clinician, he has worked with adults who have experienced assault or were abused as children. Dr. Hopper teaches nationally and internationally to military and civilian investigators, prosecutors, judges, victim, advocates and higher education administrators. Dr. Hopper's presentation "**Sexual Assault: Brain, Experience, Behavior and Memory**" will provide a critical foundation for learning and **applying trauma-informed responses** with people who have been sexually assaulted and to understand brain-based experiences, behaviors and memory characteristics, still commonly misunderstood.

PLENARY—Sheriff Timothy Whitcomb, Cattaraugus County

Sheriff Whitcomb has been in Law Enforcement for 28 years. He has a Masters in counseling psychology and is a certified police instructor in the areas of interview interrogation, basic and advanced juvenile officer training, investigation of sex crimes, and law enforcement response to school violence. Sheriff Whitcomb will give a powerful and thought provoking presentation on "**Trauma, PTSD & Suicide Prevention**" - the reality of the incidence rate of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder within the ranks of our law enforcement and recommendations for administrative training to prepare, insulate, protect and treat the expected exposure to trauma.



Workshop Presenter- Jennifer Shimer, MS, Rapid Response Facilitator for Love 146, an international human rights organization working to end child trafficking through survivor care, prevention education and professional training. She will present on youth empowerment, caregiver engagement and working with Survivors.

Have an agency announcement, group dates or events to share?

Email [lbachman@niagarafamily.org](mailto:lbachman@niagarafamily.org)

Here is what is happening:

**Tuesday, June 13th**

**Guide to Pro Se Divorce**

Neighborhood Legal Services

Niagara Falls Public Library

6:00 pm-7:30 pm

Clients can call 284-8831.

Space is limited

**Friday, June 23rd**

**Festival of Fathers**

Hyde Park Spray Pad

12:00 pm– 2:00 pm

For more information, call Joe Zach

(716)285-6984

**Wednesday, July 19th—In Her Shoes  
Domestic Violence Simulation**

Family & Children's Service of Niagara

1522 Main St. Niagara Falls

RSVP to [lbachman@niagarafamily.org](mailto:lbachman@niagarafamily.org)

or call Larissa at 285-6984

### If You Missed...

### Take Back The Night

On March 31st, Niagara University hosted its 2nd Annual Take Back the Night (TBTN) event. Since the early 1970s, organizations and universities around the world have been holding TBTN events as a way to empower survivors and promote education and awareness around rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence. The event co-organizers, Dr. Dana Radatz and Dr. Jennifer Beebe worked collaboratively with many Niagara University departments and student organizations, as well as community sponsors, such as Family & Children's Service of Niagara, the Child Advocacy Center of Niagara, the Niagara County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Unit, and the YWCA of the Niagara Frontier. The event featured resource tables, poster making, and a short formal program featuring Martha LaCorte from the New York State Police, who delivered a powerful message centered on the importance of bystander intervention. Following the program, participants engaged in a campus wide march, and ended the evening with a candlelight vigil in the Niagara University Chapel. The event had approximately 350 people in attendance, and raised \$400 for a donation to the YWCA of the Niagara Frontier. The Niagara County Sheriff's Office matched the fundraising efforts at TBTN, and graciously donated \$400 to the YWCA of the Niagara Frontier as well.





# WHAT IS FVIP?

**Domestic Violence  
Hotline #s:**  
Passage  
(716) 299-0909  
YWCA  
(716) 433-6716

The Niagara County Family Violence Intervention Project (FVIP) is a coalition of agencies and organizations committed to addressing interpersonal violence and child abuse through collaborative responses, community education and professional training. For nearly 20 years, FVIP has recognized the co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic violence and worked together to protect children and adults alike. Volunteer FVIP Steering Committee members set the FVIP's strategic agenda for training, collaboration, and networking for mutual support for a shared mission. We are so excited to share the FVIP Newsletter with the community. We will be sharing news, events, and program highlights on a quarterly basis!

**The FVIP is coordinated by the Child Advocacy Center of Niagara, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center.**

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT: "In Her Shoes" Domestic Violence Simulation

According to the National Network To End Domestic Violence, more than 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will be the victim of domestic violence at some point their lifetime. Looking at these statistics, it becomes clear that whether on a personal or professional level, we may all know someone who is a survivor.

"In Her Shoes" is free domestic violence training provided by Passage House Domestic Violence Services, a program of Family & Children's Service of Niagara. This simulation addresses the complex and dynamic nature of domestic violence and specific barriers that survivors face each day. This is a great training for service providers to learn more about how to

be more helpful to survivors of domestic violence.

Since first offering this training almost two years ago, over 45 service providers have participated in this simulation. We regularly provide these trainings at our main office in Niagara Falls; however, feel free to call us and we are happy to come out and provide the presentation on-site for your organization!

Some comments from past participants of "In Her Shoes":

- "A definite eye-opener!"
- "It helped to turn back on my empathy"
- "Every provider should take this; very impactful"

"An awesome way to get this information across"

Join us for this  
Our next FREE training:  
Wednesday, July 19th,  
10:00 pm – 12:00 pm  
Family & Children's Service of  
Niagara  
1522 Main St.  
Niagara Falls, NY

**Please RSVP to**  
Larissa at 285-6984 or email  
lbachman@niagarafamily.org  
Space is limited! This presentation is especially recommended for staff of community agencies and organizations.

## "HATS OFF!" to...Debbie Aloian !



Debbie Aloian began her time at Family & Children's Service of Niagara as a resident care worker at Passage House Domestic Violence Shelter in 1992. Debbie was promoted to the Residential Services Coordinator in 2001. Throughout her 25 years of service, Debbie has proven to be a true collaborator with community agencies, always putting clients' needs first. Debbie is a great resource for clients, staff and colleagues. Her uplifting and upbeat personality makes it evident that not only does she care about the work we do in this community, but she appreciates each person who walks through our doors. Thanks for everything you do for this community.



Hats off to you, Debbie!