



Achieving Harmony

A Harmony House Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2013

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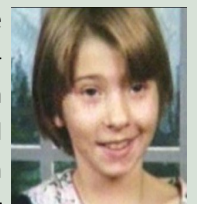


Dear Friends of Harmony House,

Harmony House has some exciting news to share with you. We are getting ready in April to celebrate our 10th anniversary as a children's advocacy center. During this time we have grown to become a community resource for the assessment, intervention, and prevention of child abuse for Ohio and Marshall Counties, West Virginia and Belmont County, Ohio.

Last year at Harmony House a record high of 933 children and non-offending family members received help; 359 specialized child forensic interviews were completed; 87 referrals were coordinated for medical evaluations; 169 children were referred to trauma-focused therapy; and over 7,500 people received child abuse education. Please keep in mind that these are all local children and families.

Harmony House invites you to attend "Ten Years of Hope" – a celebration of Harmony House's 10th anniversary and the resiliency of abused children. We are proud to announce the luncheon's keynote speaker will be Katie Beers. Katie has been in the national media lately talking about the 20th anniversary of her abduction by a family friend a few days before her tenth birthday in 1992. She was held captive in a Long Island underground cell for 17 days. During this time she was sexually abused. When



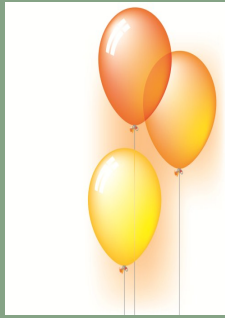
Katie was rescued she was able to not only detail this event but also years of neglect, physical abuse, and prior sexual abuse. Katie has co-authored her story of survival, memory, and recovery in Buried Memories: Katie Beers Story. Her book is now on the NY Times best seller's list.

The luncheon's date is April 26th at Undo's in Elm Grove, WV from 11:30 – 1:00. The price of the event is \$20 per person or a table for eight for \$120. If you would like to purchase a ticket the form is on the back on this newsletter or you can contact the office at 304.230.2205 or 740.695.0812. If you or your business would like to help sponsor this event please call the office. Donations to Harmony House are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

In addition, if possible, we are asking Harmony House supporters to contribute \$10 to the "Ten dollars for Ten Years of Service" campaign to raise funds to help with the continuation of Harmony House services. Community support is vital since Harmony House doesn't charge for its services. In ten years we have provided over 1,830 opportunities for a child to tell his or her story through the child forensic interview process. Over 45,000 participants have strengthened their knowledge regarding child abuse through our community education outreach services. Harmony House is asking you for \$1 per year for what has been accomplished by working together to give our children a voice so they can go from victim to survivor to thriver. The form is on the back of this newsletter.

Harmony House appreciates your support both financially and emotionally. Without you there would be no Harmony House. Thank you so much for caring about the children we so humbly serve.

NO CHILD SHOULD LIVE IN FEAR



* NEW *

Ohio Central Call Line for Child Abuse Reports In February Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services introduced a new central child abuse hotline

855-O-H-CHILD or 855-642-4453

If you know of, or suspect a child is being abused please be a child's voice and call to make a report.

WISH LIST

- * Tissues
* Juice boxes
* Snacks
* CDs for teenagers to listen to while waiting.
* Hand held (DS) computer games for older children.
* Coffee/creamer/sugar for team member meetings

Belmont County news

Harmony House has now completed it's first full year at the Belmont County site.

In October we held our first Monster Mash Bash at the Old Rec. Center in St. Clairsville. It was attended by a wonderful group of zombies, penguins, eggs and bacon and other ghouls who helped to raise money for our center. This years date is October 26th.



We were very sad last year to lose a champion of children when Bethesda Chief of Police Tim Zdanski died. He was instrumental in the formation of our center in Belmont County with his continuous support and encouragement. His knowledge of internet crimes against children was vital to this area and he will be greatly missed.

We are happy to announce the formation of the Belmont County auxiliary. Members are Diana & Bob Flanagan, Wendy Thompson, Amanda Bennett, Penny & Kayla Zdanski, Christina Williams and Monica Norris. If anyone else is interested in joining please call 740-695-0812. They will be organizing fund raising and awareness events for Harmony House in Belmont County.

A wonderful group of students from Shadyside High School home economics class made and donated fleece blankets and pillows for us to give to children attending Harmony House. This is the second time they have done this and it is always special to us when children are wanting to help and support other children who may be suffering from abuse. The students had initially wanted to donate the items to Sandy Hook Elementary but when they found out that the families in Newtown were asking for people to stop sending donations Harmony House was the lucky recipient.

The donation was made to Harmony House to honor the victims lost on that tragic day.

What is the focus of a Children's Advocacy Center?

The primary focus of every Children's Advocacy Center is child sexual abuse. Harmony House also provides services to children who allege physical abuse, drug endangerment, witnessing of violence, and severe neglect. In addition to children, services are available for adults with special needs who allege some kind of victimization. Services are also available for non-offending family members.

The targeted service area is Ohio and Marshall Counties, West Virginia and Belmont County, Ohio. Harmony House will try to accommodate referrals for assistance outside of it's service area on an individual basis. For more information call 304-230-2205 or 740-695-0812

Statistics January - December 2012

552 children were served (new + cases prior to 2012 still being investigated)

Number of new children referred to Harmony House for interview: 141 boys, 217 girls

Children's ages: 150 were 13-18yrs, 181 were 7-12yrs, 221 were 0-6yrs

Forensic Interviews: 353 children and 6 mentally impaired adults

Types of abuse disclosed: Sexual: 113 Physical: 71 Witness to violence: 46
Drug Endangered: 18 Neglect: 7 Exposure to pornography 2

Children requiring a medical examination: 87

Mental Health referrals: 169

Alleged offenders: 15 aged 12 yrs. or less, 32 aged 13-18, 241 aged 19+.

Prosecution: 26 convictions/pleas

Hear the cries. See the pain. End the abuse

Hope for
a world
without
child
abuse



SAVE THE DATE

Toast of the Vineyard

September 14th at Stratford
Springs - West Wing

Monster Mash Bash

October 26th at St. Clairsville
Rec. Center

Ohio & Marshall County news

The 5th annual "Hope for Spring" Fling will be on April 6th at Camp Russell in Oglebay Park. The event starts at 6pm with the Hope Soars balloon release at 6.30pm. Food will be served at 7pm followed by music and dancing until 11pm. Tables are available for reservation but can only be booked with the purchase of 10 tickets. This event does sell out quickly. The balloon release honors all the children served at Harmony House during 2012. For tickets (\$25pp) and 50/50 tickets please send in form from the back of this news-letter or for more information please call Joanna 304-230-2205.

ONE WITH COURAGE

"One with Courage" is the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network's statewide initiative centered around the courage it takes to talk about child abuse. This month there have been commercials on TV encouraging us all to be advocates for children and to learn the signs of abuse, share the information and be the "One with Courage" to make a difference.

SIGNS OF ABUSE Below are indicators of child abuse that can include but are not limited to these signs. Some signs that a child is experiencing violence or abuse are more obvious than others. Trust your instincts.

Suspected abuse is enough of a reason to contact the authorities.

You do not need proof.

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Unexplained injuries | Changes in sleeping |
| Changes in behavior | Changes in eating |
| Returning to earlier behavior | Lack of personal care or hygiene |
| Fear of going home | Risk taking behaviors |
| Inappropriate sexual behaviors | |
| Changes in school performance and attendance | |

If a child outcries:

DO

- Remain Calm
- Believe the child
- Allow the child to talk
- Show interest and concern
- Reassure and support the child
- Take action. It could save a child's life

DON'T

- Panic or overreact
- Press the child to talk
- Promise anything you can't control
- Confront the offender
- Blame or minimize child's feelings
- Overwhelm the child with questions

Data courtesy of WVCAN

BURIED MEMORIES

katie beers' story



KATIE BEERS
with carolyn gusoff

Children are often the silent victims of drug abuse and domestic violence.

To report abuse in Ohio County, WV , call (304) 232-4411

Marshall County, WV call (304) 843-4120

To report abuse in Brooke/Hancock County, call (304) 794-3062

Belmont County, Ohio call (740) 633-5627

Harmony House
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Wheeling, WV 26003
WV : 304-230-2205
Fax 304-234-8479

Ohio : 740-695-0812
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If you would like to be taken off our mailing list please email: harmonyhousecac@aol.com or call 304-230-2205

Invest in the lives of children by supporting Harmony House, Children's Advocacy Center

ORDER FORM FOR EVENT TICKETS

"Hope for Spring" Fling on April 6th - Camp Russell, Oglebay Park

I would like to purchase _____ ticket (s) @ \$25pp

I would like to purchase _____ 50/50 tickets @ \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00

"Ten Years of Hope" Lunch with Katie Beers on April 26th - Undo's in Elm Grove

I would like to purchase _____ ticket (s) @ \$20pp

I would like to purchase a table (8 tickets) for \$120

I would like to make a "\$10 for 10 years" donation

Name:

Address:

Check enclosed for: _____

Please mail check to: Harmony House, 2000 Eoff St, Wheeling, WV 26003