

The Freeman Flash

NOVEMBER 2015

ELIZABETH FREEMAN CENTER'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE XXXX

Lieutenant Governor visits EFC

On October 15th, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito and Tammy Mello (head of the MA Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence) visited Elizabeth Freeman Center to learn about our work and to celebrate the news that BMC is becoming a SANE hospital.

Our little conference room was packed with community leaders! Lt. Gov. Polito noted, "You come with a tremendous amount of dedication and experience and professionalism. And this collaboration... is so important to keeping people safe and helping them get well."

We are grateful to have the support of a community that cares so strongly about responding to and ending domestic and sexual violence, and want to thank District Attorney David Capeless, MA Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier, Pittsfield Police Chief Mike Wynn, Mayor Daniel Bianchi, and representatives from Berkshire Medical Center for joining us that day.



Lt. Gov Polito (center), Tammy Mello (far right), and EFC and SANE staff members all sporting EFC t-shirts

Berkshire Medical Center now a "SANE hospital"! Ensures sexual assault patients will receive compassionate care

We are thrilled to announce that Berkshire Medical Center has become the county's first "SANE hospital." Now, people who seek medical care for a recent sexual assault at Berkshire Medical Center will receive that care from specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE nurses).

SANE nurses provide trauma-informed care that is guided by what feels comfortable to the patient.

They are also able to collect medical evidence that can help the patient access victim compensation funds and – if the patient chooses – can be used to help prosecute the perpetrator(s) of the assault.

Significantly, an Elizabeth Freeman Center counselor will now automatically be called when a sexual assault victim comes to the hospital. The EFC counselor will respond to the hospital immediately (24/7) and be available to stay with the patient throughout the exam, advocate for the patient's needs, offer support to the patient and any friends or family there, and connect the patient to all of EFC's free and confidential services.

"It's been shown that if you can have a rape crisis counselor there right at the moment, it makes a big difference," EFC Executive Director Janis Broderick notes. "We can offer immediate support."

Victims of sexual assault who go to the North Adams campus of BMC will be transported to the Pittsfield hospital for care. Sexual assault victims throughout the county can call Elizabeth Freeman Center's 24/7 Hotline at (866) 401-2425 to learn more about their options.



24 hour hotline 1-866-401-2425

Pittsfield
43 Francis Ave.
(413) 499-2425

Gt. Barrington
401 Stockbridge Rd., Ste. 3
(413) 429-8190

North Adams
61 Main St., Ste. 202
(413) 663-7459

Supported locally by: Berkshire United Way • Northern Berkshire United Way • Williamstown Community Chest • City of Pittsfield • Verizon Foundation • The Mary Kay Foundation • The Green Foundation • Berkshire Bank Foundation • Town of Great Barrington • Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation • Coolidge Hill Foundation • Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation Funds including the William and Margery Barrett Fund and the James and Robert Hardman Fund • Guardian Life Insurance Company • Many community members, groups, businesses, and towns •





Action of the Month: SANE comes to Berkshire County - How you can help

Now that Berkshire County has a SANE site (see previous page), Elizabeth Freeman Center's physical response team is preparing to help more sexual assault survivors than ever before.

That's where you come in. When one of our physical response team members responds to the hospital, they bring a bag with spare clothing (and resources) for the survivor. EFC is collecting donations of the following items to ensure these bags have everything a survivor might need.

- **New (never worn) underwear—all sizes**
- **tee shirts—all sizes**
- **sweat pants and shorts—all sizes**

To arrange a donation, please call (413) 499-2425 and ask for Linda S., our donations coordinator. All clothes should be in new or like-new condition. Both women's and men's clothes are welcome.

EFC Facebook page: 1,000 likes and counting!



Last week, our Facebook page received its 1,000th "like." We count us ourselves lucky to have such incredible community support. Thanks, everyone!

Want to join our growing community? Visit www.facebook.com/ElizabethFreemanCenter and like us today.

A surefire way to spread holiday cheer

Want to spread a little extra cheer this holiday season? We have just the thing!



The holidays can be a difficult time for survivors, who often flee violence with few possessions, may be far from home or support, and are often trying to piece their lives together financially.

EFC's Holiday Project passes a client's wish list to a sponsor, who scours the stores for good deals on items like bed sheets and children's toys to provide to the client and client's children.

Please consider sponsoring a family this season. Call Linda S. at (413) 499-2425 to become a Holiday Project sponsor.

EFC is hiring a Shelter Children's Advocate

Come join our team! Elizabeth Freeman Center is hiring a Shelter Children's Advocate.



The children's advocate works as part of the shelter team to provide comprehensive services to families living in our emergency shelter due to domestic violence. Excellent communication and organizational skills required. Spanish-speaking and experience with children and survivors of domestic or sexual violence preferred. Requires Saturday and evening availability. Visit www.elizabethfreemancenter.org/get-involved/jobs to learn more.

And a fond farewell to Pamela, who is leaving the Children's Advocate position to pursue work in another field. We will miss you, Pamela!

Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Elizabeth Freeman Center marked October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month with our annual "Stop the Violence" clothesline project and forum at Berkshire Community College (BCC). Thanks to everyone who helped make the project such a success again this year!

The clothesline project is a national event in which t-shirts are displayed to help spread awareness about domestic violence. Every t-shirt tells us a story and reminds us how much domestic violence affects us all.

Please don't hesitate to call Elizabeth Freeman Center at **(866) 401-2425** for yourself or for information for a friend or loved one. You are not alone.