

# The Freeman Flash

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ELIZABETH FREEMAN CENTER'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 51

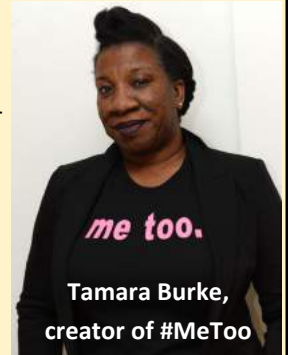


## Confronting Systemic Sexual Violence

Every 98 seconds, someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.

With so many survivors sharing their experiences of sexual assault and harassment through the #MeToo movement, we are at a watershed moment. It is the moment to acknowledge that sexual violence is not about a few "bad apples." It is about a culture in which sexual harassment and assault are glorified and considered part of normal "boys being boys" behavior. These behaviors are not OK— they are dangerous; they are demeaning and oppressive; *they are learned and they can be stopped.*

**What you can do:** Believe survivors. Have hard conversations with people in your life who weren't aware sexual violence was a pervasive problem. Advocate for services for survivors and prevention education for our children. Speak out when you can (and trust yourself when you feel you can't). Don't give up. Get involved (see Actions below!). Remember you are not alone.



Tamara Burke,  
creator of #MeToo



## Actions of the Month



### Support MA Campus Sexual Assault Bills

This is not a time to be rolling back sexual assault protections. The Department of Education has released a troubling FAQ that weakens federal requirements for schools to respond to assault allegations in trauma-informed ways. But state efforts are fighting back.

The MA Senate passed a campus sexual violence response bill (S.2191) that strengthens protections for survivors. Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier of Pittsfield has been instrumental in promoting the MA House version of the bill (H.632), which has yet to be voted on. Please call on your state representatives to advance the MA House bill.

1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men are sexually assaulted while in college, and we know that more than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault. We must do better.

### Lift the Cap on Kids

The Cap on Kids, also called the Family Cap, denies welfare benefits to children conceived while or soon after the family received benefits.

The cap negatively impacts the most vulnerable children and families in our state, especially survivors of domestic violence. It currently deprives about 8,900 children of essentials like diapers and warm winter clothes.

In exciting news, bills to Lift the Cap on Kids (H. 85 and S. 34) have advanced to the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees. [Please call your state senators and representatives to ask them to urge Leadership to advance these bills.](#)

Learn more at [masslegalservices.org/content/lift-cap-kids](http://masslegalservices.org/content/lift-cap-kids) or call us for more information.



**Pittsfield**  
43 Francis Ave.  
(413) 499-2425

*New address!*  
**Great Barrington**  
168 Main St., Ste. 4  
(413) 429-8190

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

24 hour hotline 1-866-401-2425

[www.elizabethfreemancenter.org](http://www.elizabethfreemancenter.org)

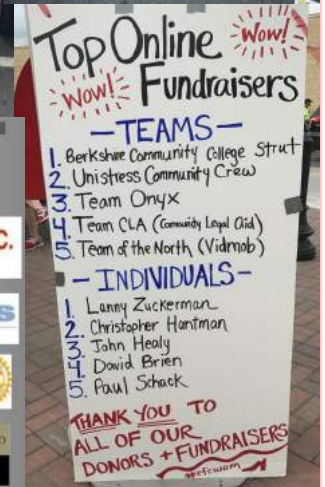


## Walk a Mile– United against violence

**Oh, what a night!** In our 7<sup>th</sup> (and biggest ever) annual Walk a Mile in her Shoes: March to End Rape, Sexual Assault and Gender Violence, 700 people of all ages, races, gender identities, faiths and backgrounds stepped out with style and determination, as a community, taking a stand against violence.

We raised over \$76,000 for life-saving services for survivors of violence and for prevention programs for children.

**Thank you** for making this such an incredibly powerful and successful event.



With special thanks to our underwriters:

## Holiday Project

This can be a hard time of year for those of our clients and their children who are in shelter or new homes, or are without friends or family right now, or have few resources to spare for presents.

Through our Holiday Project, clients create a small wish list of items they and their children are hoping for, and we match these lists with sponsors from the community, who gather the items and help make it a happy holiday for all.

Help spread the holiday cheer. Call Linda S. at (413) 499-2425 to sign up.



## A Better Community

A big thank-you to A Better Community (ABC) for donating proceeds from their annual clothing sale to EFC! The donation will help provide help, hope, and healing to survivors of domestic and sexual violence throughout northern Berkshire County.

And psst... the ABC clothing sale is the best clothing sale in town! Stop by the First Congregational Church in Williamstown on the 3rd Saturday in September.

