



THE ADVOCATE

News from WIRC-CAA Victim Services

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (309) 837-5555

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In This Issue:

Display Raises Awareness of Violence in Western Illinois	1
Silvie's Ride Raises Over \$9,000 for Abuse Survivors	2
Child Abuse Prevention Month Raises Awareness, Starts Conversations	3
Victim Services Adds Satellite Office in Fulton County	3
Community Members Pledge to Start by Believing	4
Provoking Documentary Shown in Canton	4
Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Raises Over \$5,000	6
Members of the Beauty Community Complete Domestic Violence Training	7
Phone Directory	8

Display Raises Awareness of Violence in Western Illinois



T-shirts decorated by survivors of sexual and domestic violence or their loved ones are on display as part of The Clothesline Project.

Sexual and domestic violence can happen to anyone of any ability, age, sexual orientation, income, education level, religion, gender identity, or ethnic background. The Clothesline Project is a traveling display that aims to raise awareness of this terrible crime. WIRC-CAA Victim Services oversees the display for their region, and presents it at multiple locations during April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

The Clothesline Project is an exhibition of t-shirts decorated by survivors or the loved ones of survivors. As the name implies, the t-shirts are hung on a clothesline. All of the t-shirts displayed by Victim Services are decorated by survivors or their loved ones from western Illinois.

As stated on The Clothesline Project's website, the color of each t-shirt is symbolic of the crime committed against the survivor:

white represents individuals who died due to violence; yellow and beige represent survivors of domestic violence; orange, pink, and red represent survivors of sexual assault/abuse; blue and green represent survivors of incest or childhood sexual abuse; purple represents survivors who were attacked due to their perceived sexual orientation; brown and gray represent survivors of emotional, spiritual, or verbal abuse; and black represents survivors who were assaulted due to their disability or became disabled as the result of an attack. Survivors are given full control to write or draw whatever they choose on their t-shirt.

For more information about The Clothesline Project or Victim Services' free programs, call (309) 836-2148, visit wirpc.org, or find WIRC-CAA Victim Services on Facebook.✿

Silvie's Ride Raises Over \$9,000 for Abuse Survivors



Silven "Silvie" Iris Yocum was excited to go to her first day of kindergarten. Silvie became a fatal victim of child abuse on September 16, 2006 at the age of 5. Silvie's Ride is held in her memory and in memory of all children who have experienced and witnessed child abuse.

At the age of five and just having started kindergarten, Silven "Silvie" Iris Yocum became a fatal victim of child abuse on September 16, 2006. Silvie's Ride is held in her honor and in remembrance of all children who have died because of child abuse or are living with abuse in their lives. In honor of Silvie, her family selected WIRC-CAA Victim Services as the recipient of all proceeds from the event. The amount raised this year is ongoing due to donations continuing to be received after the event. As of July 2019, the ongoing total is \$9,219.

Silvie's Ride 2019 was held on Saturday, June 15 at the Elks Lodge in Macomb. Before the start of the ride, attendees enjoyed a breakfast buffet while they browsed silent auction items. A Blessing of the Bikes



While motorcycles are a favorite of participants, all vehicles are welcome at Silvie's Ride.

was held at 10:00 a.m., followed by the start of the ride at 10:30 a.m. The Macomb Police Department and McDonough County Sheriff's Office provided a police escort in Macomb. Riders traveled to several locations throughout western Illinois, including: Twisted Sisters Bar & Grill in St. Augustine; Quigley's Saloon in Roseville; The Feedlot Bar & Grill in Stronghurst; Wye Knot

Tavern in Niota; The Double Deuce in Carthage; and the Elks Lodge in Macomb. After the ride, dinner was available for riders at the Elks Lodge, followed by a silent auction and \$100 raffle. Silvie's family would like to thank the Knights Motorcycle Riding Club for donating their time and energy to promote this special cause.

For more information about Silvie's Ride, contact Jon Yocum at (309) 255-6927 or find "Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse" on Facebook. For more information about Victim Services, call (309) 837-6622, visit wirpc.org, or find "WIRC-CAA Victim Services" on Facebook. If you or someone you know are being abused, call Victim Services' 24-hour free and confidential crisis hotline at (309) 837-5555.✿



The Macomb Police Department and McDonough County Sheriff's Office provided a police escort for in Macomb.



Attendees viewed silent auction items before the ride.



After the ride, attendees enjoyed dinner, a silent auction, and a raffle.

Child Abuse Prevention Month Raises Awareness, Starts Conversations

According to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, over 38,000 children were reported abused or neglected in 2018 in Central Illinois. WIRC-CAA Victim Services reports they assisted 330 households with children who were affected by domestic violence during that same year. With tragic statistics like that in mind, Victim Services emphasizes their child abuse awareness campaign during the month of April for Child Abuse Prevention Month. This year's campaign was two-fold, with one focusing on encouraging supporters to wear blue and the other on disseminating information to families.

Local organizations and businesses were invited by Victim Services staff members to wear blue clothes or a blue ribbon to show their support. Participants had the option to have a promotional photo taken and posted on Victim Services' Facebook page. Blue ribbons were also available for a suggested donation of \$1 each from Victim Services staff members. All donations were used to benefit survivors of Victim Services. The hashtag #WearBlue was used to promote the campaign online and in flyers. Victim Services wants to thank the following organizations and businesses for their support this year: Spoon River College's Student Government Association; Western Illinois University's President Dr. Jack Thomas and the WIU Leadership Team; the YMCA of McDonough County; the YMCA Child Care Center; Kunes Country Auto Group; Nelson's Clothing; Grand Prairie Assisted



Victim Services staffers display a banner that reads, "It Shouldn't Hurt to Be a Child."

Living; Center for Youth and Family Services; Fortress Bank in Macomb and LaHarpe; GameStop, Macomb; Bushnell Prairie City Schools; Carthage Primary School; Lincoln Elementary; Eagleview Community Health System, Oquawka; Oquawka Community Park; Macomb Public Library; Warren County Public Library, Monmouth; UnityPoint Health Memorial Hospital, Carthage; Macomb Park District; and Monmouth Park District.

In order to connect with families, Victim Services displayed informational flyers at several local parks, including Chandler Park in Macomb; Monmouth Park in Monmouth; and the park in Oquawka. The flyers listed brief statistics about child abuse on one side, and contact information for Victim Services on the other. Large blue ribbons were also attached to the flyers in honor of victims/survivors of child abuse.

Victim Services provides free and confidential services in a safe environment to anyone of any ability, age, sexual orientation, income, education level, religion, gender identity, or ethnic background. For more information, visit wirpc.org, find them on Facebook, or call (309) 837-6622.✿

Victim Services Adds Satellite Office in Fulton County

WIRC-CAA Victim Services, based in Macomb, is pleased to announce that they have opened a satellite office in Fulton County in order to assist survivors of sexual assault/abuse. Victim Services' Sexual Assault Program provides assistance to adult and child survivors of sexual abuse and/or assault, adult survivors of childhood abuse or harassment, and significant others of survivors, including partners, children, family members, and friends in Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren County. In addition, staff members are available for education programs, public trainings, and professional trainings. All services are provided free-of-charge.

For more information about Victim Services' programs in Fulton County, contact their Fulton County Sexual Assault Program Office at (309) 333-1934, visit their website at wirpc.org, or find WIRC-CAA Victim Services on Facebook.

If you are in crisis and need to speak with someone immediately, call their 24-hour free and confidential crisis hotline at (309) 837-5555.✿

Thank You!

With your continued support,
you are making a difference
in the lives of individuals and
families in need.

Community Members Pledge to Start by Believing



Individuals and organizations like the McDonough County Sheriff's Office held a sign pledging to "Start by Believing" when someone discloses sexual violence.

Too often, individuals who disclose sexual abuse/assault are not believed, or even blamed, by those they confide in. This leads to survivors not being able to access the resources they need in order to mentally heal from the trauma

of abuse. In addition, their abuser remains free to commit additional crimes. Each year, Victim Services aims to change the way we respond to disclosures by participating in the "Start by Believing" campaign. "Start by Believing" is a national campaign of End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI). Its primary goal is to transform the way friends, family members, and professionals react to sexual abuse/assault disclosures by inviting them to pledge that they will start by believing.

During the month of April, which is designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Victim Services invited local community

members to pledge that they will start by believing when someone discloses sexual abuse/assault to them. Participants were invited to be photographed holding a sign affirming their support. Those photos were published on Victim Services' Facebook page using the hashtag #StartbyBelieving.

For more information about the "Start by Believing" campaign and Victim Services' programs, call their Sexual Assault Services Office at (309) 836-2148, visit wirpc.org, or find WIRC-CAA Victim Services on Facebook. ❁

#IASK for CONSENT. Yes Means Yes and No Means No!

Provoking Documentary Shown in Canton



The flyer for "Audrie & Daisy" reads, "I don't remember anything...can you please tell me what happened?"

"Audrie & Daisy" is a thought-provoking documentary about two teenage girls who were sexually assaulted by their friends, and the fallout they endured from their classmates and their community for speaking out. Victim Services, in conjunction with the Canton Park District and Lance Moring, CPRP, CPO Superintendent of Recreation, invited the public to watch the documentary together at a free film showing and panel discussion. Due to the sometimes intense nature of the subject matter, the documentary was recommended for those 13 years of age and up.

The documentary was shown one night only at the Gary G. Baker Recreation Center in Canton, Illinois starting at 5:30 p.m. on

Tuesday, July 16. No admission was charged. Concessions were available for purchase during the showing.

Trained staff members from Victim Services and Fulton-Mason Crisis Service were available for counsel during the event. Information regarding the free advocacy and counseling services of both agencies was also available.

For more information, call Victim Services' Fulton County Office at (309) 333-1934. ❁

**You are valued.
Your life matters.
You are not alone.**



START BY believing



Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Raises Over \$5,000



Over 60 runners, walkers, and rollers were excited to start the race at the 2019 Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Walk/Run/Roll.

The Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Walk/Run/Roll was held on Saturday, May 4 in Macomb. Ms. Simmons was a compassionate nurse at McDonough District Hospital, a resident of Hancock County, and mother of three children. On March 26, 2003, she became a fatal victim of domestic violence by the hands of her husband of 25 years. This annual event is held in memory of Kathy Simmons and in support of victims/survivors of domestic violence in western Illinois. All donations and proceeds benefitted Victim Services.

Kiryn Evans, Kathy Simmons' daughter and an advocate for domestic violence awareness, spoke in her mother's honor before the race. "Unfortunately there are many, many women and children who do not survive violence, and my mother was one of those people," Evans said. Evans emphasized that all funds raised for the event stay local and that her family sees none of the proceeds. Victim Services Director Naomi Taylor discussed Victim Services' free programs and thanked everyone who contributed to this year's race. In particular, Taylor wants to thank Medi-Weightloss (Peoria, IL) for their

generous \$2,000 donation.

This year, \$5,630 was raised for survivors served by Victim Services.

An informational display was available for the 61 attendees to learn about the history of the event and Victim Services' free programs. After the race, a raffle was held with prizes donated from local businesses. Awards were presented to the top male and female runners in each age category by Victim Services' Domestic Violence Legal Advocate/5K Program Coordinator Becky Cox-Medina and Kiryn Evans. A Serena Williams bag, valued at \$300, was awarded to a lucky contestant courtesy of Stacy Foxall of All-State Insurance in Macomb.



Kiryn Evans, left, presents a ribbon to Maya Stovall, right, the Overall Winner of the 2019 Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Walk/Run/Roll.



A family nears the purple finish line at the 2019 Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Walk/Run/Roll.

Victim Services provides free and confidential services in a safe environment with knowledgeable staff members who are ready to provide emergency services, advocacy, counseling, professional training, and public education. For more information about their programs, visit wirpc.org, find WIRC-CAA Victim Services on Facebook, or call (309) 837-6622.

If you or someone you know are being abused, call their 24-hour free and confidential crisis hotline at (309) 837-5555. ☀

**Crisis Hotline
Volunteers Needed!**

If you would like to volunteer for the crisis hotline, call (309) 837-6622.



Members of the Beauty Community Complete Domestic Abuse Awareness Training

CUT IT OUT
THE BEAUTY COMMUNITY COMBATS DOMESTIC ABUSE

**COSMETOLOGISTS, ESTHETICIANS,
HAIR BRAIDERS, NAIL TECHNICIANS,
and THEIR INSTRUCTORS:**

Effective January 2019, you are required by Illinois law to complete a one-hour, one-time Domestic Violence Continuing Education (CE) course.

WIRC-CAA Victim Services will offer multiple one-hour sessions of the course, CUT IT OUT, in Spring 2019 for residents of Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties. Additional classes may be scheduled, depending on demand.

<p>McDonough County Classes Dates: April 1 • April 8 • April 15 • April 29 Times: 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., or 2:30 p.m. Locations: Innovations Design Academy, 214 E. Washington St., Macomb</p> <p>Hancock County Classes Dates: May 20 • June 3 Times: 9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. Locations: UnityPoint Health Memorial Hospital - Memorial Clinic Conference Center, 1454 N. Co. Rd. 2050, Carthage</p>	<p>Warren County Classes Dates: May 6 • May 13 Times: 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., or 1:00 p.m. Locations: Warren County Public Library, 62 Public Square, Monmouth</p> <p>Henderson County Class Dates: June 10 Times: 9:00 a.m. Location: Biggsville Library, 110 Hillcrest Drive, Biggsville</p>
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Registration Fee: \$15 per person; payable online, by check, or by cash.
Register Online: <http://wirc.org/victim-services>
Register by Phone: (309) 837-6622

Class size will be limited to 30 students per class. Register EARLY to save your seat!

WIRC-CAA Victim Services provides free and confidential services in a safe environment with knowledgeable staff members who are ready to provide emergency services, advocacy, counseling, professional training, and public education. For more information, call (309) 837-6622. If you are in crisis, call our free and confidential crisis hotline at (309) 837-9555.

Victim Services hosted several sessions of the CUT IT OUT program for salon professionals in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties.

Effective January 2019, Illinois law requires all cosmetologists, estheticians, hair braiders, nail technicians, and their instructors to complete a Domestic Violence Continuing Education (CE) course. Victim Services offered multiple one-hour sessions of the course, called CUT IT OUT, in spring 2019 for residents of Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties.

Salons are often one of the few safe places for survivors, as their abusers typically do not accompany them to their appointment. While survivors may not openly disclose abuse to others in their lives, it is not uncommon for them to view salon professionals as trusted confidants. CUT IT OUT is a national program

that aims to train salon professionals to recognize the signs of domestic abuse and refer those individuals to resources that may be able to help them. Victim Services staff members are pleased to report that 149 individuals completed the required training during the spring 2019 course. Victim Services would like to thank the following organizations for their support and the use of their facilities to host classes: Innovations Design Academy, Macomb; Warren County Public Library, Monmouth; UnityPoint Health Memorial Hospital, Carthage; and Biggsville Library, Biggsville.

For more information about the CUT IT OUT program or Victim Services' free domestic violence services, call (309) 837-6622.



WIRC-CAA Victim Services Phone Directory



Domestic Violence Services:

*Hancock, Henderson,
McDonough, and Warren
counties*

Main Office:
(309) 837-6622



Sexual Assault Services:

*Fulton, Hancock, Henderson,
Knox, McDonough, and Warren
counties*

Fulton County Office:
(309) 333-1934

Hancock, Henderson,
McDonough, and Warren
County Office:
(309) 836-2148

Knox County Office:
(309) 331-4716
or (309) 343-3337

**24-Hour Free and Confidential Crisis
Hotline for All Counties:**
(309) 837-5555

**YOU ARE NOT
ALONE.**

**WE BELIEVE
YOU.**

**YOUR STORY
MATTERS.**

**WE ARE READY
TO LISTEN.**

**IT IS NOT YOUR
FAULT.**

Domestic and sexual violence can happen to anyone of any age, ability, sexual orientation, income, education level, religion, gender identity, or ethnic background.

If you need to speak with someone now, call our free and confidential 24-hour crisis hotline at (309) 837-5555. Otherwise, please contact us at any of the phone numbers listed in our phone directory.

All services are free to survivors and significant others of survivors, including partners, children, family members, and friends.