

"Steppin' Up for the first time last year opened my eyes to how many people are affected by this issue."



A TPN Staff Member shares her firsthand account of how Steppin' Up inspired her!

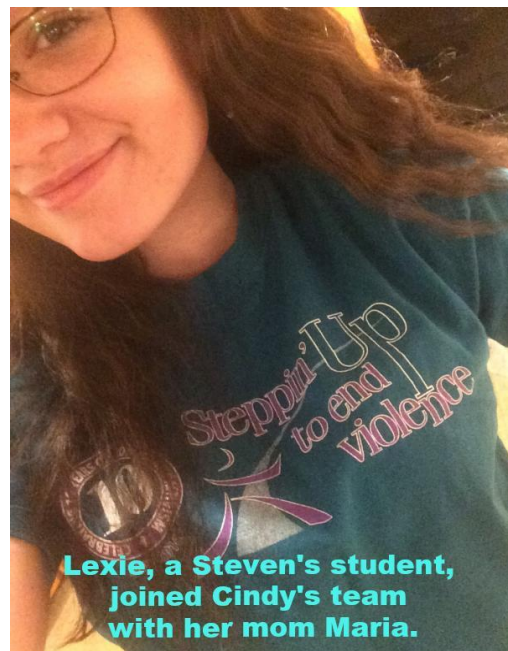
Small Contributions Can Make a Big Impact

By Cindy, Community Education Coordinator

When I was first asked to create a team for the Steppin' Up to End Violence 5K Walk and Fun Run, I was reluctant to sign on. Fundraising is not my cup of tea, with most of my kids' school fundraisers ending up with only one sale, usually to my husband. I felt awkward asking anyone to join my team because I had a hard time explaining what the walk was for in a genuine way, so, I pitched it to my best friend as an opportunity to walk together to lose weight, which we'd been wanting to do anyway, and my team became four: my best friend, her two teenaged children, and myself.

Leading up to the event, I periodically opened the Team Leader packet and would feel inspired to raise a bit of money for a "good cause." I created the online Firstgiving account and was amazed how quickly donations from family members who didn't even live in the area were coming in. It surprised me to learn about their experiences with domestic and sexual violence, and that I had never heard these stories before! It felt good to be raising money for a "good cause" that people around me could understand and support. Mostly though, my friend and I were excited about the opportunity to spend some time together.

The day of the event we were amazed at how many people were there and the energy in the crowd! We signed in and milled about chatting with each other and taking note of the various team names. What impressed me the most was that there were teams as small as two and as large as fifty. There were kids, dogs, women and even men. I hadn't thought much about us asking our



Lexie, a Steven's student, joined Cindy's team with her mom Maria.

husbands to join, because as I assume other's do, I thought it would be mostly women.

During the pre-event rally, the story shared by a survivor who had received services from TPN was an emotional one for me and very inspiring. I began to think about the times that people I loved were affected by domestic violence. If you added how many people I knew that had been affected to the number of people affected that the others walking that day knew, how many people was that? It was a hard concept to wrap my head around.

Our little team had a great time walking, eating the plentiful goodies available to us and getting free tee shirts so we could all match! In the back of my mind, however, I knew I wanted to do more, but I wasn't sure exactly what or how.

The experience planted a seed in me, so that when I was later approached about supporting Claremont Green Dot, I knew it would be the perfect opportunity for me to learn more about domestic violence, sexual abuse and stalking, as well as to help be part of the solution. It was in a Green Dot training that I learned of my current position at TPN and realized that my career could have a purpose in which I could make a difference and be a role model for my children to aspire to be like. Steppin' Up for the first-time last year opened my eyes to how many people are affected by this issue and how easy it is to have an impact in their lives. We raised a small amount of money and had a small team. Despite not truly understanding why we were all there, our contribution helped make a difference.

I saw this quote on the [Green Dot website](#), and I think it rings true for those who chose to Step Up to End Violence each of the last 10 years, and will Step Up again this year:

"A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history." ~Mahatma Gandhi

Click Here to Visit
Our Steppin' Up Website

Help Us Promote Steppin' Up on Social Media

Get updates, share "throw back" photos and tell others about your team's efforts by posting to our Steppin' Up **Facebook event page**. Click [here](#)

We're also on INSTAGRAM! Find and follow us @turningpointsnetwork to see what we're up to, to get important Steppin' Up to End Violence updates, and more!



Happenings

Respect Week February 13th through 17th


During NH's Respect Week, TPN's Community Educators supported students in local high schools as they learned about teen dating violence, warning signs of abuse, healthy relationships, and respect.

No More Week March 5th through 11th

Turning Points Network staff and others shared the reasons they are saying "No More" during this week of awareness in which women and men

around the world speak out and take action against sexual assault and domestic violence. Visit [the No More website](#) to learn more.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

During the month of April, TPN will be helping spread awareness on the prevalence of sexual assault and the impact it has on survivors in Sullivan County. Like us on Facebook  to stay in the loop on all that TPN is doing.



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