

# ◆ Turning Points ◆ Network ◆

- ◆ *Preventing Violence*
- ◆ *Promoting Respect*
- ◆ *Strengthening Lives*

2008-2009  
Annual Report

# Agency Overview

Turning Points Network is the only crisis center in Sullivan County serving victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse and stalking.

We enhance the safety and well-being of families, women, men, teens and children through advocacy and empowerment. We teach our children, pre-school through high school, on safety issues and respect for self and others. We educate our community on social change, and the ways they can be responsive to the needs of victims and survivors.

Turning Points Network strives to provide services regardless of gender, age, health status, including HIV-positive, physical, mental or emotional ability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socio-economic status, race, national origin, immigration status, or religious or political affiliations.



**Turning Points has served Sullivan County for 33 years**

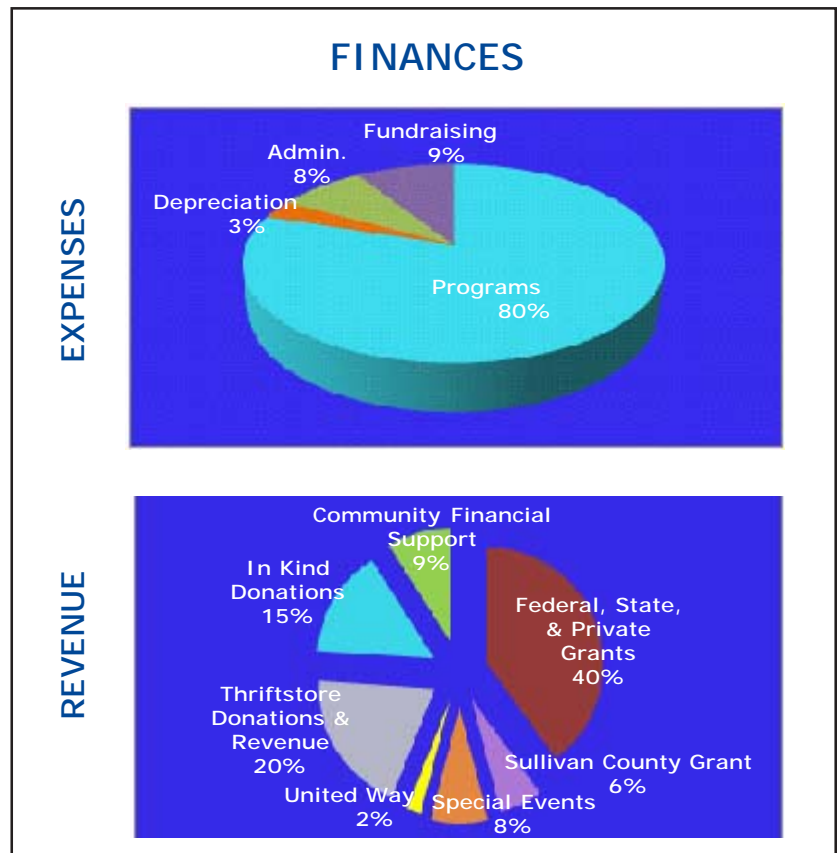
Services are survivor driven. Direct services goals, which stem from our mission *to enhance the safety and well-being of individuals and families through empowerment and advocacy* are measured by staff, board, volunteers and clients. Shelter families participate in an exit interview, support group participants fill out mid and final evaluations, clients are asked informally how we can better meet their needs and clients are asked to fill out anonymous surveys. This qualitative and anecdotal data is used to evaluate and enhance services. TPN is biennially monitored by the NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and the Department of Justice. Between them, they look at all facets of our agency: programs, services, evaluation, collaboration, policies and financials. They meet with staff, board members and volunteers.

Program beneficiaries are not required to provide services to TPN. However, program beneficiaries are solicited for feedback on programs and services; this feedback is invaluable in changing, adapting and enhancing agency services. Also, many former clients become volunteers.

Volunteers remain the backbone of this agency. Without them we would not provide our services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; we would not be providing the quality programs they help design and implement, nor would TPN be as cost effective as it is.

There is no fee for any intervention/direct service provided by TPN.

Programs are funded by federal, state, local and private grants, revenue from CHANGES Thrift Store, fundraising events and donations.



# Direct Services

TPN provided services to  
**1,007**  
survivors of abuse and  
families in transition

An additional **122** individuals were served indirectly by assisting clergy, attorneys, therapists and other community providers who called for help in supporting their clients.

Direct services are provided to female and male, adult and teen victims/survivors and those who care about them. They are also provided to children who are impacted by witnessing the abuse of a parent, when requested by the abused parent. They are provided through two offices, a 24 crisis and support line and a 24-hour shelter/safe home program.

TPN works to be accessible to every population— all facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities; we go to survivors who cannot get to us; we are building better services for victims with co-occurring issues of substance abuse, mental illness, a physical disability and child abuse; TPN advocates speak or have access to interpreters who sign and speak several languages.

TPN collaborates with area social services, medical, legal, law enforcement and housing agencies. We participate, and in some cases assume leadership roles, in Partners in Caring, the Sullivan County Domestic Violence Council, the Sexual Assault Response and Resource Team(SART), the Sullivan County Community Coalition, the Sullivan County Continuum of Care and Family School Connections, to name a few. We also participate in state-wide organizations that benefit TPN clients and Sullivan County including the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, the NH Homeless Coalition and the Governor's Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence.

## IMPACT AND SERVICES

365 days a year, 24 hours a day, Turning Points Network reduces violence in Sullivan County and enhances the safety of victims. Every day, TPN reduces the impact of trauma experienced by victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment and stalking. Response to a victim's disclosure of abuse correlates with that victim's depth of trauma symptoms. The amount of time between the victim's readiness to disclose the trauma and the actual disclosure, and if the victim feels believed and supported at the time of disclosure are the two strongest indicators of the long term effects of trauma on that survivor. By being available 24 hours a day, assuring the strictest of confidentiality and training our advocates based on former victims' feedback and current best practices, our response to victims is the best in the area of victim services. Enhancing this response even further is our ability to accept anonymous calls, not charge for services, provide accessible space, and provide access to interpreters, thereby eliminating final barriers to disclosing and healing.



As well, 24 hours a day, trained staff and volunteer advocates provide services to bring about an immediate cessation of abuse. These services include a 24 hour crisis and support line, a shelter and safe home network, advocacy in obtaining restraining orders or in pressing criminal charges, accompaniment for medical treatment, emergency child care, transportation, and any other advocacy needs identified by the victim.

From there, ongoing support services include peer support counseling and support groups. A victim/survivor determines how long s/he will continue to receive services.

Services are not prescribed at TPN. Survivors determine which services they want and how much assistance they need from our agency. This empowerment model respects each individual's autonomy, support system, fears, and power of choice creating the opportunity for each survivor to determine the services that are most meaningful and safe and the opportunity to gain back control.

TPN values diversity, thereby enhancing our ability to be accessible to all victims. TPN is a culturally competent agency. We are prepared and can adapt services to meet the needs of survivors from every culture along with survivors of any gender identity, faith, race, age, gender, who have any disability or illness and who speak any language.

Another significant community need in which TPN is making strides is that of children witnessing domestic violence. TPN is collaborating with the Division for Children, Youth and Families and the Courts to design a model of intervention that is protective and keeps together the child witness and the adult in the household who is being abused, but is a safe parent. Simultaneously, TPN has designed a new agency program that provides interventions to children who witness domestic violence and their safe parents. Interventions are provided to children residing in the shelter and children of adult survivors who receive services through a TPN office or the crisis line.



As previously mentioned services at TPN are survivor driven. Programs and services were initially created by survivors, staff and volunteers to meet the unmet, critical needs of survivors; services continue to be changed, enhanced and expanded to meet their changing and growing needs. Survivors fully participate in the policy and practice levels at TPN and many survivors return as volunteers, staff and board members.



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# Community Education

## School Based Education

Turning Points Network's Violence Prevention Education Program decreases the number of victims and perpetrators of dating violence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and other violent and non-violent crimes. Our community educators work with school administrators, teachers, staff and students on issues of bullying, sexual harassment, dating violence, personal safety, healthy relationships, self-esteem and gender stereotyping. Programs are designed to impact both individual behavior and the school environment. As individuals gain skills and knowledge they become empowered to behave in positive, respectful ways. In turn the school climate improves, creating a safe, healthy learning environment that promotes positive behavior.

Our Community Educators are committed to working with all Sullivan County schools by utilizing presentations, workshops, materials and alternative programming methods, in an effort to increase healthy decision-making and assertive behaviors for K-12th grade students. Through interactive instruction and practice, students have ongoing opportunities to gain real skills that will serve them throughout their lifetime.

School administrators are offered TPN's resources and experience as they strive to design and implement policies and procedures that address bullying and harassment. Training programs for faculty, administration and parent's groups about the issues of bullying, harassment, healthy relationships, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and gender equity are offered to each school. Schools that receive this training are then able to provide critical daily support for students and reinforce the messages given in TPN presentations.

The following is a brief description of school-based programming offered during the 2008-2009 academic year:

Pre-Kindergarten: *The Hands Are Not For Hitting Program* focuses on foundations of respect for others and social skills. Using a book and guided activity, the program is a fun, age appropriate way to teach and practice positive behavior.

Grades K-1: Curricula, resource materials and activities are available to teachers, administrators, guidance personnel and parents to assist them in talking with children about respectful and disrespectful behavior.

Grades 2-5: *The Connect With Respect Program* is anchored to the concepts of respect, kindness, caring and empathy. Students learn to identify and recognize the difference between respectful and disrespectful behaviors in themselves and others. Through guided discussion and activities, students are taught age appropriate ways to stand up for themselves, how to be bystanders that stands up for others and how to get help from adults when needed.

Grade 6-12: *The Respectful Relationships/ Sexual Harassment Program* is designed for students transitioning into adolescence and young adulthood. Continuing the concepts learned in *Connect With Respect*, students discuss bullying and harassing behavior, including covert behaviors (exclusion, gossip, rumors) and explore the wide range of behaviors that are considered bullying and sexual harassment. Students learn about the detrimental effects of bullying and sexual harassment on individuals and the school environment, then develop techniques to take positive action when they witness or experience bullying and harassment.

Grades 2-8: *The Personal Safety/Sexual Abuse Program* allows students to define personal safety and identify situations and individuals that may be unsafe. Guided discussions help students explore their own instincts, boundaries and beliefs regarding safety. The program also reviews risk reduction strategies, healthy decision-making and the importance of getting help from trusted adults.

Grades 8-12: *The Healthy Relationships/Dating Violence Program* helps students identify qualities present in a healthy relationship and warning signs in an unhealthy relationship. Guided discussion increases understanding of the dynamics of dating violence and examines many of the common myths about dating violence. Students are given crucial information about how to help a friend or seek help for themselves.

## School Programs

**Total number of students: 2,454**

- 132 Connect With Respect
- 63 Sexual Harassment/ Bullying
- 18 Healthy Dating Relationships
- 10 Personal Safety
- 9 Special Programs

### Number Of Students By School\*

Claremont**	835
Fall Mountain	460
Grantham	160
Newport***	640
Plainfield	145
Sunapee	126
Unity	88
TOTAL	2454

\*Charlestown includes Charlestown Primary,

North Charlestown Elementary, Sara Porter

School Charlestown Middle School and Fall

Mountain Regional High School.\*\*Claremont includes Bluff, Disnard,

Maple, Claremont Middle School and Stevens High School.

\*\*\*Newport includes Richards, Towle and Newport Middle High School.



Grades 9-12: *The Sexual Assault Awareness and Risk Reduction Program* increases students' understanding of the wide range of behaviors that may be classified as sexual assault. Students also learn about the effects sexual violence may have on a survivor, and they are given valuable resource information.

Special programs: Programs on gender and media literacy are available upon request. Also, programs from the list above may be tailored to meet the needs of a particular school or group.

Turning Points Network's mission is to serve victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking, and sexual harassment. A vital component of this mission is to decrease the number of potential victims and abusers through prevention education. Students who complete our classes can

- Identify risk reduction techniques;
- Identify risk behaviors that contribute to perpetration;
- Identify healthy relationships and identify warning signs of dating violence;
- Assist one another in stopping and reporting abuse;
- Play an important role in creating a safe, healthy learning environment; and
- Seek alternatives to violence to express their needs and emotions.

#### *Special programs and accomplishments*

- o Participated in the fifth annual SAU #6 Back To School Festival.
- o Served on the Claremont Teen Center Advisory Board.
- o Collaborated with Newport High School English teachers to provide a girl's drop-in group that focused on healthy relationships.
- o Participated in health fairs and back to school nights in the town of Sunapee as well as at Newport Middle High School, Grantham Village School and Towle School
- o Worked ongoing with students from Newport Middle High School and Stevens High School on *The Media Messaging Project*, developing an awareness campaign about sexual assault.
- o Guest lectured in a sociology course at River Valley Community College.

#### *Programs for teachers, administrators and parent groups*

- o Trained 500 SAU #6 staff and district employees on sexual harassment law, reporting protocols and investigation.
- o Met with administrators and guidance counselors new to Sullivan County to introduce TPN programming and philosophy.
- o Facilitated parent nights at Disnard Elementary School and Towle School to discuss relational aggression and bullying among fifth graders.
- o Facilitated staff trainings at Towle School, Grantham Village School, Bluff Elementary School and Cornish Elementary School.
- o Provided a workshop on Relational Aggression during an SAU #6 Professional Development Day.

## Community Based Education

TPN provides Educational workshops and speakers to community groups, businesses and social service agencies on a variety of issues. In 2008-2009, Educators worked with TPN worked with clergy, law enforcement, town leaders and educators in many communities. In particular, TPN partnered with **Charlestown, Grantham, Unity and Meriden** through the Compassionate Communities Project.

Trainings and workshops for professionals and community groups are an essential component of TPN's Community Education Program. Creating social change requires raising awareness, changing attitudes, building skills and increasing knowledge within the community. By building partnerships and working collaboratively, TPN engages the community in supporting survivors, holding perpetrators accountable and working toward an end to violence.