

TURNING POINTS NETWORK

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

**2009-2010
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.

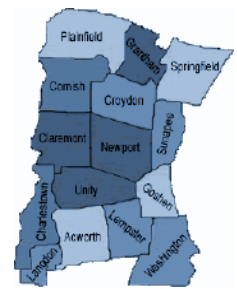
Services are survivor driven. Direct services goals, which stem from our mission *to enhance the safety and well-being of individuals and families through empowerment and advocacy* are measured by staff, board, volunteers and clients. Shelter families participate in an exit interview, support group participants 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.

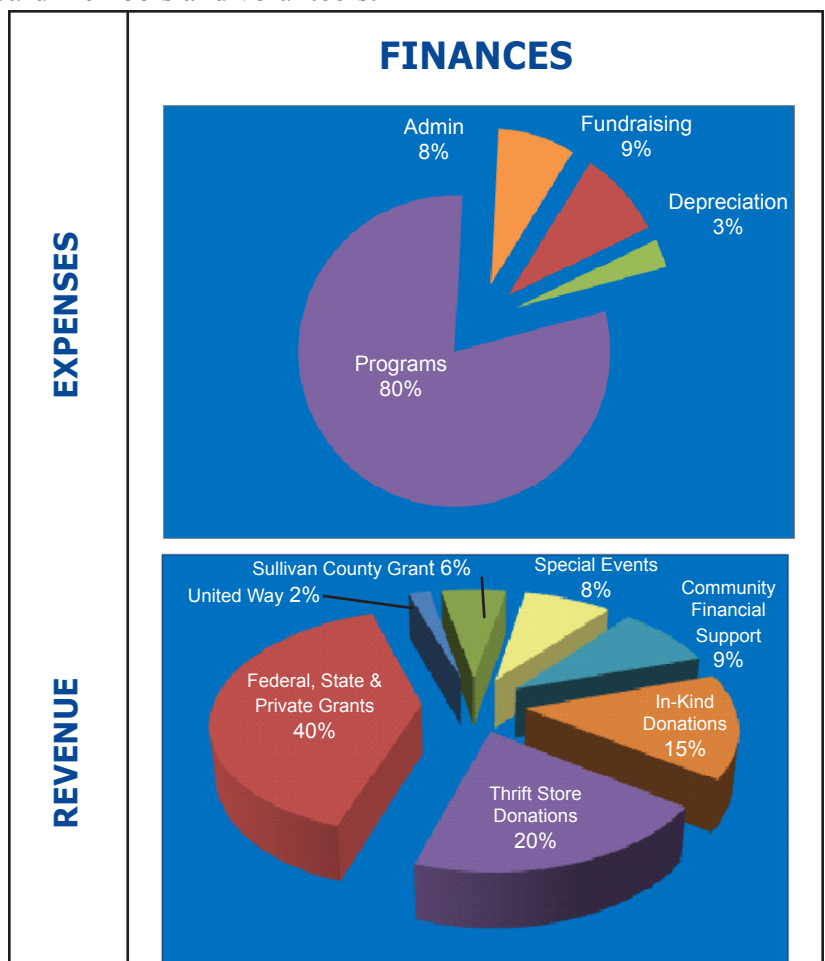
Volunteers remain the backbone of this agency. Without them we would not provide our services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; we would not be providing the quality programs they help design and implement, nor would TPN be as cost effective as it is.

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.



Turning Points has served Sullivan County for 34 years



Direct Services

Survivors and Services

TPN provided services to **829** survivors of abuse and families in transition over the last year.

Economic Independence

Peer Counseling

Support Groups

Shelter

Court Advocacy

Accompaniment

Information & Referrals

Child Advocacy

Crisis & Support Line

Direct services are provided to:

Female and male victims and survivors

Adults and teens

Children who have been impacted by domestic violence

Friends and family of survivors

Direct services are provided through:

Two offices, located in Claremont and Newport

A 24 crisis and support line

A 24-hour shelter/safe home program

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), Communities United For Substance Abuse Prevention, and the Sullivan County Continuum of Care, 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.

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.

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 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.

What does it mean to have
a safe place to stay?

"I am glad the shelter was here ...It is absolutely a safe place to be and a place I can get plans together for the future. I appreciate it.

The support is nice, and it is nice to be able to discuss issues without having to deal with somebody putting you down and judging you.

The support group has been awesome...to hear other people's stories has been very supportive and helps me feel like I am not alone in this."

-Shelter Guest

Domestic violence shelters save lives.

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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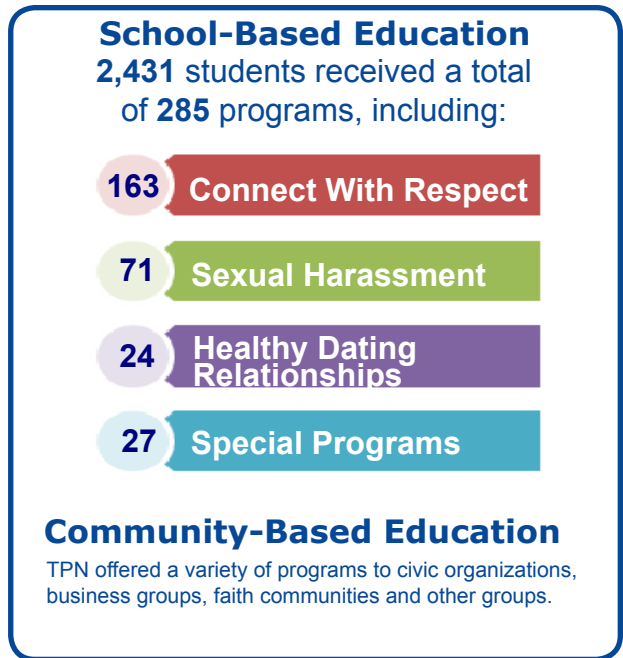
Community Education

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.

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 sixth annual SAU #6 Back To School Festival.
- o Served on the Claremont Youth Center Advisory Board.
- o Collaborated with Newport Out of School Time (NOST) to pilot a relational aggression group for third grade girls.
- o Participated in health fairs and back to school nights in the town various communities.
- o Collaborated with Disnard Elementary School to facilitate a schoolwide initiative on respect. All students received programming and created a quilt square based on a theme (empathy, kindness, positive power). The work culminated in a school assembly and presentation of each grade's quilt.
- o 6-week educational workshops were provided to women at the Sullivan County Community Corrections Center to develop self-esteem and skills for self-sufficiency when re-joining the community.

Programs for teachers, administrators and parent groups

- o Trained staff from the Claremont Youth Center on relational aggression.
- o Met with administrators and guidance counselors new to Sullivan County to introduce TPN programming and philosophy.
- o Served on the Claremont School District Equity Committee, which works to identify and resolve equity issues in schools.
- o Provided training to various schools around the issue of school climate.

Community Based Education

TPN provides Educational workshops and speakers to community groups, businesses and social service agencies on a variety of issues. 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.