

IMPORTANT DATES:

- 4th: Independence Day
- 7th: Bethany's Birthday
- 20th: R&R 1-2pm
3-4pm

ON-CAMPUS OFFICE

Our On-Campus Office in room 355 of the Psychology building at BGSU is not staffed by advocates during the summer, but the office is always open to pick up free materials. Check the August newsletter for our Fall 2014 schedule.

**A SAAFE
ADVOCATE
IS ALWAYS
AVAILABLE
24/7 BY
CONTACTING
THE LINK
AT
(419) 352-1545.**

Guest Column by Lauren

Too often does society listen intently to the perpetrator and his accounts of what happened that night. Society is more concerned with how the perpetrator's life will be changed, scarred for the worst. But I ask, what about the victim? Does she not have a voice, a say in what happened that night? She is the only one whose life was changed beyond her control that night. She is the one who has been betrayed. She is the one that has to relive each traumatic moment of that night every day of her life. She is the one who everyday is battling with friends and family, hoping that they will eventually see that this rape was not her fault. She is the one who is reminded by society day in and day out that the rape could have been avoided if only she wasn't wearing her favorite crop top, or if only she didn't have that drink. She is reminded all too often that if only she hadn't trusted her best friend of five years, none of this would have happened. Why doesn't the majority of society care about her voice? Her thoughts? Her account of what happened that night?

With the time that I have been at The SAAFE Center, I have repeatedly seen the dismissal of the victim's voice time and time again. Unfortunately, this dismissal comes from many places that we are taught to have faith in and to trust, such as family and friends, city law enforcement, university professors, university law enforcement, and county prosecutors, just to name a few. To us as advocates, the victim's voice is THE most important voice, and I believe that others should follow that same belief. Giving voice to victims and survivors of sexual assault is one of the most valuable things we can do for them; we are empowering them to feel, as well as heal over time. We are reassuring them that what they say and what has happened to them is significant and real, and that their feelings and thoughts are valid and of importance. By giving voice to victims and survivors, we are allowing them to release their words in whichever way they decide, when oftentimes they feel their decisions have been taken away. Whether the victim or survivor's voice is heard on social media, a testimony is given by the victim at a trial, or she is able to share her experience with a family member or an advocate, the voice that has been given is healing and therapeutic. In the words of Christine Macdonald, "There is a solace in breaking our silence. A strength of spirit when sharing our truth."

Advocate of the Month: Jessie

June's Advocate of the Month is Jessie, who has only been an advocate with SAAFE since Nov. 2013 but has really proven herself during that time at being adept in assisting clients. Jessie was assigned an on-going client almost as soon as she became an advocate and has demonstrated her conscientious, empathic and supportive nature every step of the way. Jessie became a part-time staff member the beginning of June and during her on-call hours (during the business day), she is consistently paged to offer assistance to clients and has always responded appropriately with care and compassion for whatever the situation might be. She was assigned a case recently which is requiring a great deal of personal advocacy work with her client and she is handling the demands of the case well and establishing a great working relationship with her client. For all of her untiring contributions to her clients, Jessie is being honored as Advocate of the Month.

-Julie

FALL ADVOCACY TRAINING

Staff members Heather and Dan are training to become SAAFE advocates this Summer!

Training of volunteer SAAFE advocates will resume in the fall.

Email victims@bc.wcnet.org for an application.

Look for more information in our August newsletter, as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages.

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Wellness Connection 5k: A Success!

On April 26, several staff from SAAFE—Bethany, Lauren and Julie—walked the BGSU Wellness Connection's 5K run course. Yep, they purposefully walked it—setting off at the back of the pack and enjoying the cool weather and chatting the whole way. They particularly enjoyed the course encouragers, extolling them to “keep going,” “you’re almost there,” “good job” as if they HAD been running at some point and then were walking to catch their breath. They beat a couple of other walkers, but it wasn't by design, they certainly weren't out to set any walk records! They all agreed it was a nice way to spend time with other staff and participate in a wonderfully organized event. In particular, they thank **Kirsten Lenthe** for coordinating the event this year, as well as the sponsors: **Curves, Family Video, Poochie's Pet Grooming, Wood County Humane Society, For Keeps, Beckett's, and Dave's Running**. Thanks also go out to **Sonya Quinn**, Development Administrator for Behavioral Connections, for coordinating a team to participate in the 5K walk. She put out emails encouraging the BC staff to participate and had the walk publicized on the BC Facebook page. She even ordered t-shirts which said 'Team Behavioral Connections' on the back. Sonya's enthusiasm for the event and her support of the SAAFE Center is immensely appreciated. The staff are so appreciative of the Wellness Connection providing SAAFE with one-half of the registration fees which came out to **\$690** this year! SAAFE hopes to see many new and returning participants next year at the 5K in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. - Julie

Protest to Remove Sexist Signs on E. Wooster: An Update

Plans continue to develop for the protest against the harmful and offensive signs displayed on E. Wooster street during BGSU move-in weekend. The protest will be held on **Friday, August 22nd** across the street from homes that show signs with sexist messages such as “Freshman Girl Training Center.” SAAFE Center staff member Lauren and others involved in developing the protest are continuing to meet with campus administration and other groups, including a Title IX rights group to discuss the process of filing a formal Title IX complaint. The SAAFE Center encourages attendance of the protest to all advocates and members of the community who wish to live and attend school in a community that condemns sexism, rather than embraces or defends it. Be sure to check out our August newsletter for further details, as well as our SAAFE Center Facebook and Twitter pages and an upcoming Facebook page devoted exclusively to the protest. We look forward to seeing you there!

New Staff!

The SAAFE Center is proud to announce the recent and upcoming addition of several new staff members this summer. Please welcome:

CATE

Cate started with the SAAFE Center on May 2nd as the internal communications specialist.

JESSIE

Jessie started with the SAAFE Center on June 2nd as the external communications specialist.

CRECIA

Crecia will start with the SAAFE Center on July 14th as the new full-time Program Coordinator. She served as a volunteer SAAFE advocate from April 1998 to May 2007 and during that time she trained many advocates while in her role as a Core Leader.

We look forward to her rejoining us!

Welcome Everyone!