

Women's Center &
Shelter of Greater
Pittsburgh

Rosewood

It will never rain roses; when we want more roses,
we will have to plant more trees.

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Letter from the President/CEO



In September of 2014, video footage surfaced that shocked the nation and started a much-needed conversation in the media and in society about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). This video captured former NFL player, Ray Rice, assaulting his then fiancé in an Atlantic City elevator--knocking her unconscious and dragging her out into a lobby. The nation-wide reaction to this video was unlike anything I have seen in my 30 plus years of working in the domestic violence field. People were appalled at the video, and rightfully so. The video captured IPV in a real-life, raw, way and exposed the nation to the problem that often is only kept behind closed doors. The public demanded accountability and so much of the social change that we have been working for throughout all of these years was finally starting to show.

This public demand for accountability forced the NFL to thoroughly review its domestic violence policy and other American sport leagues felt the pressure to respond efficiently to domestic abuse as well. The MLB announced that the players would be mandated to attend a domestic violence education program during spring training. The NBA vowed to review its domestic violence policy and the NHL suspended a player indefinitely after a domestic violence charge. Recently, NASCAR Chairman Brian France, pledged to be tougher on drivers involved in domestic assaults. All of this proved that public opinion does matter and social change can happen.

Continuing in this theme, the 2015 Grammys maintained the IPV awareness momentum during the February broadcast. President Obama called on artists to remind their fans that sexual assault and domestic violence are never acceptable. Additionally, a domestic violence survivor spoke powerfully about her personal experience with abuse and encouraged victims to reach out for help.

However, most recently, former Carolina Panthers defensive end signed a one-year incentive-laden deal with the Cowboys that reportedly could be worth more than \$13 million. This news comes as a shock and a disappointment because just last summer, this same player was found guilty on misdemeanor charges of assaulting a female acquaintance. I now wonder, are we truly moving forward like we thought we were? Have we just taken a few moments to put domestic violence in the spotlight, only for society to return to its old ways? Now is when we need to take action and keep the conversation going. It's up to us to make sure domestic violence awareness remains in our minds and the minds of those around us. I'm asking you to reach out to your legislators and tell them that you support the 10% increase to combat Domestic Violence in the Governor's budget. To find out who your legislator is, visit this link: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/>. As always, thank you for your continued support of our mission and services.

Gratefully,

Shirl Regan
President/CEO

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24-Hour Hotline
412-687-8005

P.O. Box 9024
Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Administration Ph 412-687-8017
Fax: 412-687-3315

Email info@wcspittsburgh.org
www.wcspittsburgh.org



Highmark Walk & MEN/S Program

Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

Join us this year and walk for WC&S!

The 2015 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community will take place on Saturday, May 16, at Stage AE in the North Shore. The event will be benefitting 78 local nonprofit organizations, including Women's Center & Shelter! If you register to walk for Women's Center, all proceeds raised on our behalf will come directly to us!

Registration for the walk begins at 7:45 a.m. with the 5K Walk starting at 9:00 a.m. and the One-Mile Fun Walk at 9:15 a.m.

Register to walk for Women's Center & Shelter at walkforahealthycommunity.org. Choose to walk "In Honor" or "In Memory" of someone special to you! Call Morgan at 412-687-8017 ext. 338 if you are interested in doing so. All walkers will receive a Women's Center T-shirt. If you walk "In Honor" or "In Memory" of someone special to you, you will receive a 8.5 x 5.5 T-shirt label with their name on it.

WC&S will also have prizes for top fundraising individuals! We hope you will join us this year for the Highmark Walk! Stay tuned for more details to come!



MEN/S Program Expansion

Batterer's Intervention Programs are getting some long overdue attention...

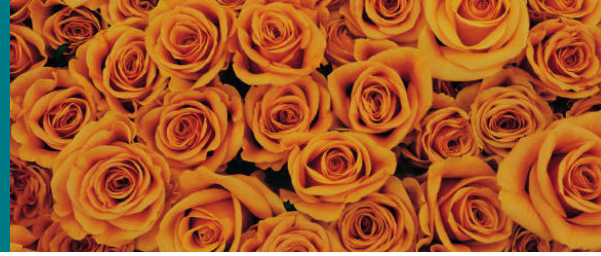
Women's Center & Shelter gives kudos to the Allegheny County courts and the Department of Human Services (DHS) for diligently researching national batterer's programs and then initiating a Request for Proposals throughout the county to implement these services. For the second consecutive year, MEN/S (Men Embracing Non-Violence & Safety) of WC&S has been certified to carry out batterer's programs throughout the county.

Since the program's inception in 2007, we have served 336 men plus the 63 men that we currently have enrolled in group—for a total of 399 men. The expected growth and expansion includes reaching more than 300 men annually. With advocates in 20 courtrooms throughout the county, and weekly groups in the North Eastern area, MEN/S is focused on helping to eliminate domestic violence one family at a time. The philosophy of MEN/S is based on the theory that domestic violence is a learned behavior and therefore can be unlearned. The program uses a combination of the Emerge and Duluth models; both nationally recognized as best practice models for batterer's intervention. Although the majority of the men are court referred, other referral sources include Allegheny County Adult Probation; Children, Youth and Family Services; and private referrals, also known as 'self-referrals'. In addition to funding from the DHS to support the program, men are accountable for paying weekly fees for the 24-week sessions based on a sliding scale fee. For more information please visit

www.WCSCanHelp.org

“Change is possible.
Help is available.”





Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is an empirically-supported treatment for young children with emotional and behavioral disorders that places emphasis on improving the quality of the parent-child relationship and changing parent-child interaction patterns. PCIT International was created to promote fidelity in the practice of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy through well-conducted research, training, and continuing education of therapists and trainers. PCIT International promotes healthy family functioning and is offered at Women's Center & Shelter through a collaboration with Family Resources.

Positive changes to expect from PCIT: Better child behavior, improved ability to follow directions, increased attention and completion of tasks, and improved communication.

Most importantly, PCIT helps children to reach their full potential and allows caregivers the opportunity to enjoy parenting! In PCIT, the therapists respect that caregivers are the most important people in a child's life.

Who can benefit from PCIT? If you are a parent with a 2.5 to 7 year-old child with any or all of these behaviors, PCIT could be the treatment for you...

If your child:

- Doesn't listen to adults
- Has temper tantrums
- Takes or breaks things
- Starts fights or hurts others
- Can't sit still
- Can't play alone
- Has difficulty taking turns
- Purposely annoys others

How do I learn PCIT skills? You will learn the skills of PCIT from in-session, direct coaching by your therapist. As you and your child play, your therapist will give suggestions to you through an earpiece. Out of session, you will be asked to complete homework to test the skills at home.

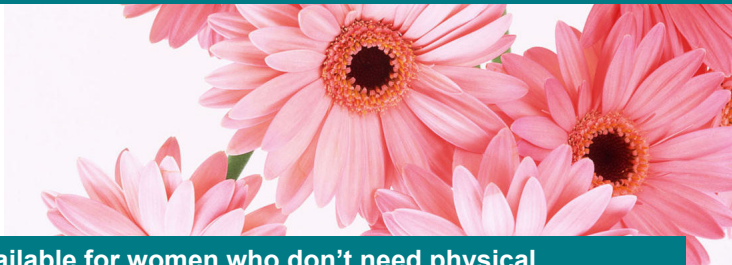
Why the Coaching? Part of PCIT's success in helping parents and children is the learn-by-doing approach that drives the program. Coaching helps parents learn what they are doing well and provide in-time support with skills they may have more difficulty mastering.

How do I get PCIT services at Women's Center & Shelter?
Contact Janet Scott-Mace at 412-687-8017, ext. 332.





Non-Resident Support Groups Aim To Help Heal...



The Non-Residential program of Women's Center & Shelter is available for women who don't need physical shelter, or for women who want to continue to use our support groups after leaving shelter. The Non-Residential program is also known as the Empowerment Center and exists to break isolation and promote connections among women, facilitate understanding and healing, plan for safety, and explore options and resources. The groups we provide are facilitated from the S.E.L.F. model of healing from domestic violence & trauma. The "S.E.L.F. Groups", as they are called, are psycho-educational support groups that encourage clients to explore:

SAFETY – physical, emotional, & moral

EMOTIONS – how feelings such as fear, sadness and anger teach us about ourselves, as well as how to manage feelings in a healthy way

LOSS – understanding and feeling grief as it relates to domestic violence and trauma

FUTURE – exploring what life might look like after a personal history of abuse and trauma

In addition to discussion and education, experiential methods of group activities are utilized to assist in furthering a client's personal insight. Examples of experiential therapy include practicing grounding techniques, art therapy, mindfulness, breathing, journaling and writing, movement, music, and bibliotherapy. In addition to our weekly support groups as mentioned above, we also hold our Trauma Information Series on the last Monday of each month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for all WC&S clients, friends, staff, volunteers, and professionals from partnering organizations. The goal of the Trauma Information Series is to provide information and education about intimate partner violence and trauma. If you are interested in having your name placed on our mailing list to be notified of the topic for that month, please contact Paula Kelly-Keller, Mental Health Coordinator, 412-687-8017 ext. 318 or kellyp@wcspittsburgh.org

We know, of course, that domestic violence is not a mental health problem; however, trauma can cause issues such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. For non-resident counseling services and support groups, or to discuss any of the above options, please call Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 412-687-8005. We would be happy to answer any of your questions.

Distribution Center Update!

With a building renovation project quickly approaching, WC&S is making changes to our storage space known as the Distribution Center, as well as changes to the way we accept donations. Our donation space is shrinking so we can expand our shelter space resulting in more room for clients. With limited storage space in the near future, we need to make sure our donation space is empty by June 1, which means we will not be accepting In-Kind donations after May 1. However, do not worry! There will still be ways to contribute to client need.

WC&S has partnerships with the local thrift stores mentioned to the right. If you bring your In-Kind donations there, our clients receive vouchers to shop for free! **Additionally, gift cards donated directly to WC&S always get put to good use. They allow our clients to go out and purchase exactly what they need.** Please see our list of thrift store partners:

• Wear After Shop

4752 Liberty Avenue (Bloomfield) – 412-687-2600

Please do not bring clothing in garbage bags.

Have clothing neatly folded or on hangers.

Seasonal clothing only accepted.

• East End Community Thrift Shop

5123 Penn Avenue (Garfield) – 412-361-6010

At times, furniture and household items are accepted.

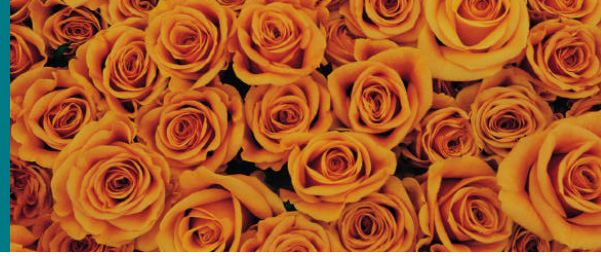
Please call before donating.

Please donate seasonal clothing.

• Thriftique

7400 ½ Church Street (Swissvale) – 412-271-0544

Furniture, household items and clothing accepted.



Community-Sourced Mixtape Releases First Podcast

The Community-Sourced Mixtape Project of WC&S has seen some exciting progress since we last shared information with you. To refresh your memory, the project is a recording studio and media production workshop at WC&S that empowers tweens and teens through connected learning with creative writing and music. Youth at WC&S have an opportunity to conceptualize, create and produce podcasts, chapbooks and digital mixtapes using professional recording equipment during monthly workshops. We are excited to announce that WC&S now has two podcasts online for everyone to listen to! Visit the link below and hear some of the amazing and creative work done by WC&S' tweens and teens. <http://wcmixtape.tumblr.com/>



A Survivor's Story...

A woman called WC&S' 24-Hour Hotline one day and was connected to a WC&S Advocate. She explained her situation and expressed her fear, yet she was not quite ready to leave. The Hotline Advocate helped her safety plan and let her know about the option of shelter.

The next day, the same woman entered our shelter after her partner threatened her, physically abused her and physically withheld their child from her. She explained that her abuser treated her like an object and didn't allow her to do anything that wasn't approved first. She came into shelter seeking safety for herself and her children, and also support to help her escape this abusive relationship.

The WC&S resident was able to fully use WC&S' Legal Department, which helped her get a Protection From Abuse order (PFA) against her partner. The emergency PFA allowed for her daughter to be taken from her partner and returned to her at our shelter.

During their stay here, the WC&S resident attended our resident support groups including Health and Wellness, Healthy Relationships and Life Skills. Her child was enrolled in our Children's Program and loved the fun activities and nurturing staff.

While participating in the shelter groups, the WC&S resident was able to seek help from our Housing Advocates and is now getting ready to move into her own home! With her focus and determination, and with the help of Women's Center & Shelter, she will be able to move on to a new life where she can be safe with her children.





Supercuts, Therapeutic Garden & LAP

Supercuts Gives Back

"The communities that we serve have been wonderful to us and it means a lot to all of my employees to give back."
~ Supercuts President Laurel Slaughter Odelein.

Supercuts has been giving back in a big way and serves as a shining example of a strong corporate partner. Beginning with a tour of the shelter, Laurel knew that they could help further by donating Supercuts gift cards for use by WC&S clients. Since then, Supercuts has grown their support from in-kind donations to significant financial contributions serving as a Domestic Violence Awareness Partner in 2014.

In addition, Supercuts' community-centered focus on giving brought Laurel and her team of volunteers to WC&S for a special evening of activities with WC&S residents complete with a catered dinner, snacks, games and prizes.

"It's just not all about the business...we want to help people."
~ Supercuts Director of Education Mimi Todaro



Therapeutic Gardening Training



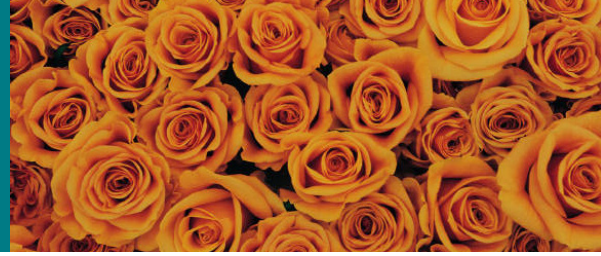
Since the launch of WC&S' garden in the Children's Program in the summer of 2013, the garden has expanded and now grows many fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs. With the success of WC&S' garden so far, Homeless Children's Education Fund (HCEF) thought it would be a great opportunity to host a training at WC&S in February to show other interested agencies an example of a therapeutic gardening project. At the training, HCEF shared best practices and strategies for how to implement a successful therapeutic garden. It was a wonderful training and we are grateful that WC&S was able to host it.

Lethality Assessment Program

WC&S' collaborative work with the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police on the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) completed its first full year in December 2014 and has been praised as highly successful. In a letter to Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence described our program as "exemplary" and stated that the "results far exceed state and national expectations for the percentage of high-danger victims who speak to a domestic violence advocate on the phone and subsequently access services through the program."

In 2014, a total of 1,682 lethality assessment screens were officially administered to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) victims by Pittsburgh Police first responders. Of those 1,682 victims screened, 1,214 (72%) were determined to be in "high-danger" of homicide. For those victims, the police immediately called the WC&S Hotline for safety planning information and to try to connect the victims with the Hotline. Of the 1,214 high-danger victims, 816 (67%) spoke to the WC&S Hotline immediately while at the scene with the police--and, of the 816 who spoke to the WC&S Hotline immediately, 593 (73%) later used additional services at WC&S. LAP is life-saving work -- in 2014, in the City of Pittsburgh, there was more than a 50% decrease in IPV victim homicides from the previous year.

Kudos to: Sgt. Eric Kroll (Training Academy) who has worked tirelessly to develop policy/forms and provide on-going training on LAP and DV; Lt. Charles Rodriguez, who has assisted in implementation with critical computer and technical support; and Domestic Violence Detectives, Tamara Hawthorne and Vincent Pachecko, who provide review/follow-up on all LAP screens and general domestic violence response.



"I Miss My Shoes..."

A client in a Community Meeting in WC&S' shelter looked over at an employee in the meeting noticing the shiny gem on her sandals. Her gaze continued to catch the reflection of light off the gem and her eyes kept moving from the sandal to the eyes of the employee. After the meeting had concluded, the client went over to the employee, looked her in the eye and said, "I miss my shoes." This statement is truly profound in that she does probably miss her shoes, but for this woman, the statement is so much deeper. She misses her home -- she misses peace for herself and her children -- she misses her life before the violence. As the employee looked back, she noticed the bruise on the woman's right cheek. Could this act of violence that caused the bruise have been avoided if the woman had come into the shelter earlier by a week, or even a day?



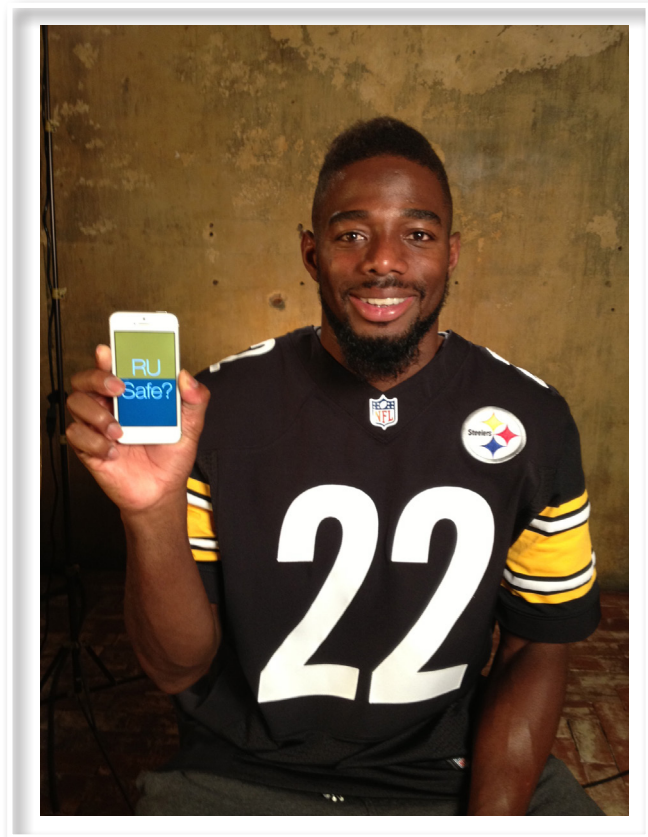
There are multiple avenues for a woman to enter shelter; she may have come in after calling our Hotline and creating a safety plan, or she may have come in escorted by the police after a violent situation with her significant other. Women are also coming into shelter through our app for iPhone or Android smartphones called RUSafe. The app, which was developed by WC&S and Newton Consulting, began as a local app and has expanded to the national level allowing users across the country to access this life-saving tool. RUSafe is a free "dangerous relationship assessment" app that invites the user to answer a series of questions about her/his relationship. The app evaluates the answers then calculates the responses and, if there is reason for concern, the app will enable the user to call the closest Women's Shelter based on the GPS of the user's phone. If the user is in immediate danger it will direct the user to 911. RUSafe is based on the 'Danger Assessment' developed by Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD, RN, FAAN of John Hopkins School of Nursing. Additionally, Pittsburgh Steeler and WC&S supporter, Will Gay, is the national spokesman for RUSafe.

Currently, RUSafe has been downloaded 918 times since it was made available just 4 months ago and in February alone, 114 women have opened the app, 87 women have watched the inspirational videos located on the shelters' website and 222 women have navigated around the shelters' websites. There have been 41 women since our national launch of RUSafe who have called 911 through the RUSafe App. This app very well may have saved a life, if not many lives. It may have changed the path of a woman who otherwise would have not received potentially life-saving help.

The RUSafe App has the potential to change women's lives and/or to save women's lives. Spread the word and help Women's Center & Shelter get RUSafe on as many phones as possible. Download it yourself and encourage friends and family to do the same. Together, we are no longer bystanders. With this app, we have the ability to help ourselves and to help those around us.



A Dangerous Relationship Assessment App
by Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh





Women's Center & Shelter
of Greater Pittsburgh

P.O. Box 9024
Pittsburgh, PA 15224


Women's Center & Shelter
of Greater Pittsburgh

celebrating
SURVIVORS

SPONSORED BY UPMC HEALTH PLAN

Friday, May 1, 2015 | 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
J. Verno Studios
3030 Jane Street Pittsburgh, PA 15203
Valet Parking | \$150 per individual event registration | Cocktail Attire

Honorary Co-Chairs - Charlie & Latasha Batch
Hors d'Oeuvres, Strolling Dinner and Dessert by Rania's Catering
Wine, Beer and Specialty Cocktails by Dreadnought Wines/Soiree Partners
Entertainment by The Kevin Howard Band
Wine Grab | Silent Auction | Photo Booth
A brief program will take place at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Learn more at:
www.WCSCanHelp.org/CelebratingSurvivors

United Way #110 CFC #81018 SECA #4601-0042