

SAFE of Columbia County Offers Help for Vernonia Survivors of Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault

Did you know your relationship affects your health? According to a recent Center for Disease Control (CDC) study, our social support system is the most important indicator of our physical health. This is good news for those whose families and partners are kind and supportive. But for one in three women, and one in ten men, unhealthy relationships may be having severe effects on their health and well-being, and ultimately on the health and well-being of their community.

According to the CDC, expenses from intimate partner violence exceed \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of which is direct medical and mental health care costs. In addition to physical injuries sustained during violent episodes, abuse is also directly linked to a number of adverse physical health effects like depression, substance abuse, arthritis, chronic neck or back pain, migraines, stammering, vision problems, sexually transmitted infections, chronic pelvic pain, stomach ulcers, and more. Fortunately, people who talk to their doctor about their relationships are more likely to find help,

end unhealthy relationships, and report better physical health.

This is why SAFE of Columbia County, the local service provider for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, is partnering with Vernonia Health Center and The Public Health Foundation of Columbia County to introduce universal education about healthy relationships, and to provide a more direct link of support for those concerned about how their relationships might be affecting their health.

SAFE recently launched a pilot project at Vernonia Health Center, which provides regular clinic hours for a Healthy Relationship Specialist to meet with patients confidentially and discuss support, safety, and education about health and relationship issues. The specialist, provides a safe link to other resources such as shelter, legal aid, and Department of Human Services (DHS) programs. SAFE also provides prevention classes and intervention training to youth and community members.

The timing of this expansion is appropriate.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This October, in addition to starting its partnership at Vernonia Health Center, SAFE will train and certify new volunteer survivor advocates to help operate its 24 Hour Help Line. The Help Line is SAFE's go-to service and provides round-the-clock support for callers who may be experiencing abuse and in-person response and accompaniment for survivors of sexual assault. The volunteer advocates who operate the 24 Hour Help Line are often the first person a survivor may reach for help. SAFE actively recruits volunteers for this purpose, and offers certification classes several times throughout the year. If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming an advocate for survivors of domestic or sexual violence, please contact Allison Brady by email at allisonb@safeofcolumbiacounty.org or call (503) 397-7110.

To learn more about SAFE's services for survivors, call SAFE's 24 Hour Help Line (503) 397-6161. You can also visit and "like" SAFE of Columbia County on Facebook to find out more information about how to support survivors.

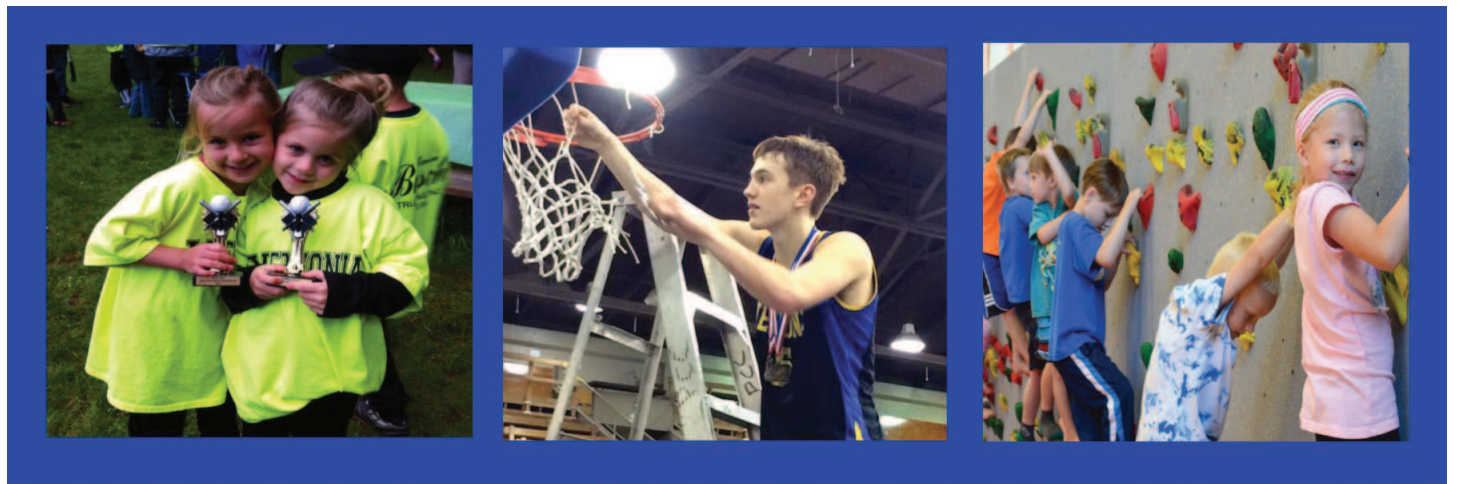
Local Photographer Offers Calendars for Sale

Garry Kinney, a local photographer, is selling Vernonia Calendars for 2017. All the photographs were shot in the Vernonia



area and showcase our local beauty. The calendars sell for \$14.00. If

you live in town, Garry will probably deliver them to you. For those living out of town shipping is \$2.00 for one calendar and \$2.50 for two. You can call or text Garry directly at (503) 475-8777.



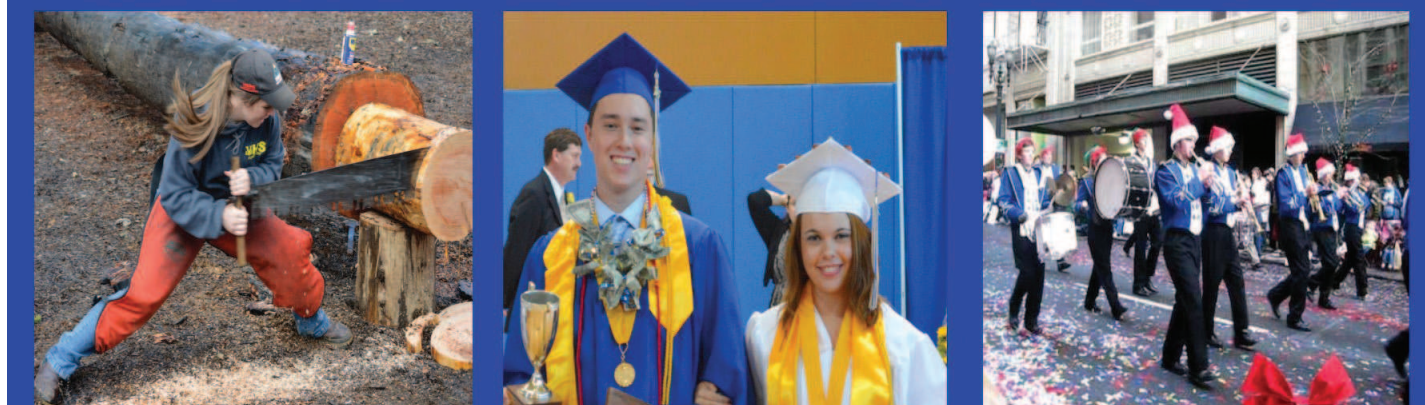
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