

Shafia Monroe and her daughter Nia attend a program to learn about lead safety.

Family Safety Issues Tackled

Addressing lead poisoning, domestic violence

Domestic violence and other family safety issues were the topics of a recent family strengthening program hosted by the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization.

IRCO's community room was filled with women, children and men for "Unmask the Silence," a program geared toward raising awareness of domestic violence, which crosses all ethnic and socio-economic lines.

Escaping domestic violence is always difficult, but it is especially so for immigrant and refugee victims who face significant barriers of language, immigrant status, lack of resources, no job skills and lack of legal representation.

Judge Keith Meisenheimer of the Multnomah County Family Law Court and Mary Li, Multnomah County School and Community Partnerships program manager, were keynote speakers, addressing how the community can support victims of sexual and family violence. Although, as the judge pointed out, prevention is better than intervention, and intervention is preferable to judicial action.

Another speaker was a survivor of domestic violence who spoke out about what she had experienced and the process that eventually took her to a place of relative safety, in the hope that her story would help others who need to make decisions to protect their safety.

The following day, Saturday, Oct. 25, the IRCO gym was again filled with families, this time for learn about lead poisoning. Free blood tests to determine exposure to lead were performed on pregnant women and children between 6 months and 6 years.

Workshops were presented and translated into several languages. In addition, each family who had a child tested received a free lead-safe toy for each child and a free dust kit to test for lead in their home. The Josiah Hill III Clinic also provided a free lunch to participants.

A total of 59 children and pregnant women were tested by the clinic for lead poisoning. Of those, only two returned with positive readings, both young children. The parents were then counseled on the next steps.

Dear Deanna!

One of my friends has the bad habit of talking about people. I don't have a problem until she starts being loud and the person she talks about can hear. We've had quite a few fights and embarrassing situations because of her mouth. Now that she has this reputation of being a trouble maker, people are thinking I'm the same way. My friends step away when I show up and they think I gossip and start trouble as well. I'm torn between two sets of friends and need help. --Anonymous; Ventura, Calif.

Dear Anonymous:

You know good and well that you've tossed your two cents into the game a few times and now you want to run and hide. The best thing you can do is tell your friend to grow up and have some discretion if she chooses to talk about people. If she can't take your advice, she's not a friend and you should only deal with her one-on-one or on the phone unless you want to borrow trouble. Also, if she can't say anything good about people, she should be quiet.

Dear Deanna!

My husband had gastric bypass surgery and he's a new man. The only problem with this is the fact he's a new man for everyone but me. He has become so confident, outspoken and charming that he seems like a different person. When I say something about his behavior he gets upset. He accuses me of keeping him fat all through the years and that I don't want him to be happy. Our marriage is headed for disaster and I don't know how to get through to him. --Frantic Wife; Baton Rouge, La.

Dear Frantic Wife:

There were problems in your marriage before your husband stopped being a fat boy. Now that the weight is no longer an issue, he's confident and coming out of your shadow, his insecurities are gone and he's doing things he enjoys. You should celebrate his weight loss and be proud to start on a new journey and new chapter in both your lives. Otherwise, you'll be in the corner with a silly look on your face and when he leaves you won't know what hit you.

Dear Deanna!

I was the other woman in a relationship and now that I have the man it's not all what I thought it would be. We are living together and I've learned that he's a slob, his finances

Ask Deanna!



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aren't right and I got fooled by what I thought was a fantasy. I see his wife all the time and she looks happy and I feel miserable because of what I did to her as well as the situation I'm in. I want to tell this man to go back to his wife but he thinks things are fine. How do I tell him my true feelings? --The Other

Woman; On-Line Reader

Dear Other Woman:

Boy oh boy, did you get fooled thinking somebody else's grass was greener on the other side. Actually you got what you bargained for because you had no business with someone else's husband. You should feel bad because you wrecked someone's home, messed up your life and he's probably on his way to cheat with someone else. As for the wife being happy, you did her a favor by making it easy to get rid of him. You made your bed hard now sleep in it!

Ask Deanna is written by Deanna M. Write Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Website: www.askdeanna.com

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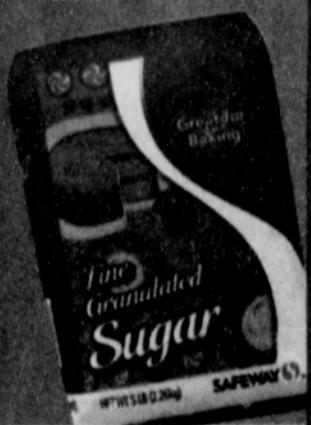
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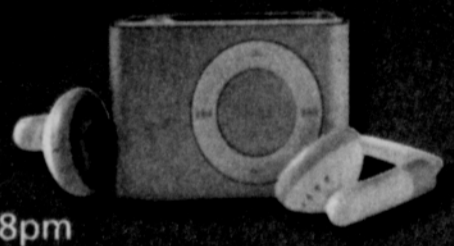


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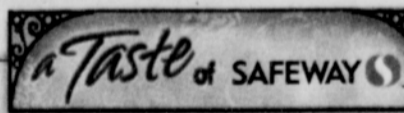
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