

March, film raise awareness of abuse problem

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

The cold weather did little to deter those out to support a cause in late February.

Members of the Madras High School Youth Development Team partnered with community members from Warm Springs and Madras in order to conduct a march against child sexual abuse.

The march and accompanying rally were only a small fraction of the work the team has completed in attempt to combat the issue.

Michael Kaiser from the National Center for Victims of Crime traveled from Washington D.C. to serve as guest speaker at the event.

He praised the group, and said that teenagers are typically viewed as a problem in the community.

But, Kaiser said, "The fact is in Madras the young people are the solution to a problem in your community."

The march expanded on progress made by the group after they filmed and premiered the film, "Silent Message."

Duke White and his son founded Hudson Productions, the company that created the movie with Youth Development Team members.

He said that throughout the experience, he has seen many people stand up in front of crowds and admit that they suffered from child sexual abuse.

"They feel that great lift in weight off their shoulders," White said.

White said the experience of



Leslie Mitts photos

Community members listened to speakers at the rally on Feb. 19 (above).

Alyssia Meanus spoke to the media about the team's efforts to bring awareness to the issue of sex abuse (right).



working with the high school students will remain unparalleled as he works on future projects—especially in terms of impact.

"It's been an honor for me to work with the Madras Youth Development Team," he said.

According to Youth Development Team member Isaac Zacharias, "We are determined to raise awareness of things that are happening in every minute

of every day." Savenia Falquist, advisor to the Youth Development Team, spoke during the rally of her experience working with the

high school students.

"I'm just so proud of these kids today," she said.

Alyssia Meanus co-leads the Youth Development Team with fellow tribal member Nicholas Katchia.

She spoke out to victims of sexual abuse during the rally, saying, "I want all of you to know that it is okay, and it is not your fault."

Katchia spoke of his realization that child sexual abuse is a drastic problem—and at a variety of age levels.

Though the turnout wasn't as big as they had expected, the crowd of people yelled and marched with enthusiasm.

"It turned out pretty good for what it was," Meanus said.

According to Meanus, grouping together is something that is key for combating the problem of child sexual abuse.

She said, "If we just work together to break the silence we can put the abusers behind bars."

Overall, Katchia said, they have hoped to obliterate that silence throughout the year.

"I think we hoped that people aren't afraid to come out and speak and talk about their abuse," he said.

According to fellow team member Marissa Biggs, the team's work has had a positive impact throughout all the work they have done.

"The team has actually brought a lot to my life," she said. "It's a serious thing to more people than you would think."

In Meanus' opinion, a lot of the problem comes from adults who are unwilling to admit past

problems or occurrences.

"The adults need to just stop being stubborn and holding it back," she said.

With the help of elders and parents, Meanus said, the problem of sexual abuse can be reduced—and it's something that many people face in their past.

Meanus added, "They don't like to believe it either because it happened to them."

The Youth Development Team is an anti-drug and anti-violence team made up of students who volunteer their time during lunch one day per week.

Following the march and rally, the students showed "Silent Message" at the Jefferson County Library Annex.

The 30-minute film tackles the subject of child sexual abuse in a series of three stories and is available on DVD from Hudson Productions at www.hudsonpro.com.

The march was sponsored by Madras High School, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the National Crime Prevention Council, Jefferson County E.M.S., Jefferson County Commission on Children and Families, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Kids Center, and Jefferson County Victims Assistance.

Warm Springs, please support the businesses you see in the Spilyay – They give back to the community!

Toys-Tools-Housewares-Clothing-Crafts-Gifts-

The Outpost

Your Bargain Connection

Open Monday-Sat 9:00-6:00

All New All The Time!

717 S.W. 5th St. Madras Or.

Large Selection

C.B. Radios And Accessories

Just in! Novelty Cigarette Items

<http://www.theoutpoststore.com/>

Toys-Tools-Housewares-Clothing-Crafts-Gifts-

CELILO LEGACY

MARCH 10-11 2007

Commemorating 50 Years Since the Loss of Celilo Falls
Celilo Village and Celilo Park

Open to the public 10:00 am to dusk both days

Saturday, March 10
Honoring ceremony
Traditional salmon dinner
Celilo Falls history exhibit
Informational exhibits
Canoe ceremony
Powwow
Stick games

Sunday, March 11
Washat service
Traditional salmon dinner
Celilo Falls history exhibit
Informational exhibits

for more information visit www.celilowyam.org
call toll-free for recorded information 1 (888) 289-1855

Illustration by Paul Lanquist