

Weave A Pattern of Success

July 26, 2010 -- For many, the past two years have been some of the toughest times ever experienced. Unemployment is at record levels, and even those with jobs have seen their incomes stagnate or decline in response to the economy. During normal times, the problems of domestic violence and sexual assault are all too frequent; however, with the added pressures of a weak economy problems such as these are on the rise.

In the Sacramento area, WEAVE, Inc. has provided a rising number of victims of domestic violence with much needed support since 1978. And, in 1988 they added services to assist survivors of sexual assault. WEAVE has been honored for its efforts by many organizations, including the Nonprofit Resource Center, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Governor, the Human Rights Fair Housing Commission, the Attorney General and the President of the United States.

Domestic violence is defined as abuse between intimate partners, where one partner uses physical and/or emotional abuse to gain power and control over his or her partner. Sexual assault is any unwanted sexual act a person is forced to perform or receive. This includes, but is not limited to, rape. The victims of these acts often include women, children and entire families.

WEAVE is committed to breaking the cycle of violence by educating the community to better understand the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. In addition to intervention and counseling services which directly benefit survivors, prevention and education are critical in improving how our community responds to violence. WEAVE also spearheads campaigns, events, and activities in Sacramento County for Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April and Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. These campaigns include activities like Jeans for Justice Day and Women Take Back the Night.

With help from the community, over the past 32 years WEAVE has provided a 24/7 crisis support and information line as well as safe and confidential shelter to more than 17,500 women and children experiencing domestic violence. To meet this need, WEAVE opened a new Safehouse a year ago more than doubling the capacity of its previous Safehouse. Also in development is a new Childrens' Learning Center with areas for arts, crafts, computer, and nutritional training. And, in August the dedication of a new Healing Garden will be held.

With the economy slowly struggling to a modest recovery, organizations such as WEAVE have seen a perfect storm of rising service demand and falling financial support. The loss of \$700,000 in public funding over the past year has resulted in a 40% reduction in paid staff at WEAVE without eliminating any of its life saving services. The organization now seeks more of its funding from private sources and individuals. Continued community support is critical to the ongoing success of WEAVE and the survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

WEAVE volunteer meetings are held several times each year and individuals are sought to provide assistance at many educational and fund-raising events as well as direct service volunteers who are required to take peer counseling training in order to be part of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Advocate Response Teams. To learn more about how you can help, visit weaveinc.org.