



APOC Newsletter

Abused Persons Outreach Center, Inc.
www.apocnd.org

160 2nd St NW, Valley City ND 58072
24-Hour Crisis Line: 701-845-0072

May 2026

Sharing Their Voices: Honoring Those Behind APOC's Impact

To mark our 40th Anniversary, APOC is highlighting four voices that have helped shape our mission through a series of videos featuring individuals who have contributed to our work over the years. The project brings together past staff members, volunteers, community partners, and supporters, each offering personal reflections on why the center's services matter.

In the videos, we hear directly from contributors about the impact APOC has had on survivors and the broader community, along with their own motivations for getting involved. Some recount meaningful moments of advocacy and support, while others emphasize the importance of education and prevention efforts.

We were grateful to collaborate with Ekow Ephrim, MFA, Assistant Professor of Art at Valley City State University, who helped bring this project to life. Together, we envisioned it as both a celebration of those who have sustained our Center and a way to raise awareness about the ongoing need for our services. By putting faces and stories to our mission, we hope to inspire continued community involvement and support.



40
Years

We'll be sharing videos from the series throughout the year on our Facebook page, giving our community ongoing opportunities to connect with these stories. This project also serves as a reminder that our success is built on a collective effort – and that meaningful change happens when people come together with a shared purpose.

We extend our sincere thanks to Ekow and to the four individuals who shared their voices: Robin Huseby, Michelle Grebel, Teather Sundstrom, and Jacob Olson.

From the Archives...



Valley City (ND) Times-Record Tuesday, February 19, 1985 Page 5

A FORUM TO DISCUSS RAPE AND ABUSE is set for this Thursday, Feb. 21 at the Barnes County Courthouse. Among the professionals who are slated to discuss the issues are (front l-r) Erma Overby, city- county health nurse; Carter VanBeek, South Central Human Services, Jamestown; and Linda Lange.

Mercy Hospital; (back l-r) Gini Stevens and Dorothy Zacharias, co-chairmen of the project; Terry Gray, deputy, Barnes County Sheriff's Department; and Dr. Ron Wilsanen, Mercy Hospital. (Photo by Kathy Wicks)

BPW-sponsored forum on rape, abuse set Feb. 21 at Courthouse

Professionals from the fields of health, law enforcement and social services will be among those scheduled to discuss issues concerning rape and abuse at a public forum set for Thursday, Feb. 21 in the basement of the Barnes County Courthouse. The forum will begin at 7:30 p.m. and is sponsored by the Valley City chapter of Business and Professional Women (BPW).

Persons scheduled to participate in the discussion include Erma Overby, City-County Health Department; Dr. Ron Wiisanen, Mercy Hospital; Terry Gray, Barnes County Sheriff's Department; Ross Dorothy, Barnes County Social Services; Carter VanBeek, South Central Human Services, Jamestown; Bernie Kracht, Valley City Police Department; Robin Huseby, attorney, Valley City; Rich Winning, Valley City High School counselor; Rev. Tom Hallstrom, Nebo Lutheran Church; and Linda Lange, nurse, Mercy Hospital. Sharon Schmalz, a member of BPW, will act as moderator for the forum.

Members of the panel will each, briefly discuss their particular area of expertise. This will be followed by the panel discussing several areas of concern, including the types of abuse; the kinds of services available; legal rights and procedures when law enforcement is needed (from emergency assistance to court matters); religious taboos (confusing 'honor and obey' with spouse and child abuse); behavioral characteristics of the abused individual and the abuser; and rape treatment (medical dos and don'ts).

A question and answer session will follow the presentation. Persons having a question who wish to remain anonymous may address their questions ahead of time by sending them to: P.O. Box 492, Valley City, ND 58072.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend the forum.



Valley City (ND) Times-Record Friday, May 6, 1994 Page 7

STATES ATTORNEY Robin Huseby, right, was presented with an award from Rainy Light, director of the APOC, for Huseby's efforts on behalf of sexual abuse victims. (Photo by Jean Schlegel)

Huseby earns APOC award

By JEAN SCHLEGEL T-R Staff Writer

States Attorney Robin Huseby was presented with another award this week for her work of helping victims of abuse.

Rainy Light, executive director of the local Abused Persons Outreach Center, presented Huseby with the award. It is called, "Women Holding Up the World". The certificate reads: "The fabric of the anti-sexual violence movement is composed of individual threads. The diversity of these threads make the fabric both unique and beautiful. Your thread has helped in the weaving of the fabric of a peaceful world." Presented by the APOC and National Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

"We are proud of our states attorney, Robin Huesby, for her efforts on behalf of sexual abuse victims. She makes every effort to combat sexual assault," says Light.

Huseby says that this part of her job is the "least fun." "But, I'd like to leave this legacy when I'm no longer states attorney to treat sex assault as a serious crime," says Huseby.



PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABUSED PERSONS OUTREACH CENTER

The Abused Persons Outreach Center is dedicated to the conviction that all people are entitled to live in safety, free from the fear of incidence of violence.

As guiding principles, we who comprise the Center believe:

- In respect for the dignity and equality of the individual.
- That each person has the right to self-determination.
- In fairness and good faith in dealings with individuals.
- That individuals should not be discriminated against in any respect.
- In respect for the confidential nature of personal information.
- That people should have access to resources and services they need.
- In provision of advocacy for people in need.
- In promotion of societal justice, particularly related to sexual assault and domestic violence.

To activities that enhance and further these beliefs, we dedicate ourselves.

2025 Abused Persons Outreach Center, Inc.



Direct Services Provided to Victims:

- 1344 advocacy services
- 289 counseling support / therapy hours
- 73 support groups held
- 273 crisis intervention / crisis response
- 455 service identification & assistance
- 227 protection / restraining order assistive services
- 191 emergency financial assistance
- 36 individuals provided relocation assistance
- 228 complementary therapy services
- 19 nights of emergency safe shelter
- 235 transportation services



APOC's crisis line operates 24 hours, every day of the week & provides crisis intervention & advocacy services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault & stalking.

Crisis Line: 701-845-0072

**EVERY1
KNOWS
SOME1**

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or Text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org hhs.nd.gov/988

Substance use - Suicidal thoughts - Depression - Relationship conflict - Stress - Mental health concerns - Concerns for loved ones - Isolation - Trauma



Need hope? We're here.

Suicide &
Crisis Lifeline

988

CALL, TEXT OR CHAT

Talking to Your Coworker thehotline.org

Abusive home situations carry over into the workplace. Employees who live in an abusive home atmosphere bring these troubles to work – by effects on their health, and by phone, email or physical harassment at the workplace. This can lead to changes in behavior at work. These changes can include declines in productivity, excessive lateness or absences, unexplained injuries or bruising, sensitivity to discussing home life, or changes in appearance. Talking to your coworker can help. Here are some ways to identify abuse signs if you suspect your coworker is in an abusive relationship.

Talking to a coworker

It can be very difficult to know a coworker in an abusive relationship. It is possible that you fear for their safety – and perhaps for the right reasons. Although you may want to rescue your coworker or insist they leave, it is their decision to make. It is important to remember that each situation is unique, as are the people involved. Talking with your coworker might help. The following tips may be helpful.

Techniques to consider when talking to your coworker

- **Follow your gut if you feel like talking to them** about what might be taking place on. After all, the worst that could happen is that they don't want to talk; but they'll know you care enough to raise the issue.
- **Approach them confidentially**, and at a time and place away from interruptions. First thing to remember is to be non-judgmental when talking to your coworkers about domestic violence. They may be embarrassed by the situation, and you might be the first person to ask them about it.
- **Start with observations** about their recent stress or distraction, and ask if they want to talk about it. Even so, give them space to share what they want but don't pressure them.
- **Listen to what they have to say.** Your role is not to fix the problem for them and all they want is someone who listens. Above all, if your coworker opens up to you about the abuse they're experiencing, consider passing along appropriate information or resources, including how to contact The Hotline. By identifying local service providers ahead of time, you can provide them with actionable options.
- **Ask if they'd like to create a safety plan** for their work environment. Include what they want you to do if their partner calls or stops by the office. Remember, advocates from The Hotline are available 24/7 to help you create a create a safety plan.



Domestic violence issues lead to nearly 8 million lost days of paid work each year, the equivalent of over 32,000 full-time jobs.

What do you mean, intervening isn't helpful?

thehotline.org

One of the most challenging things in life is watching someone you care about be abused by someone who's supposed to treat them with love and respect. If you find yourself in this role, it is natural to want to take initiative, involve law enforcement, present your loved one with ultimatums, or even forcibly remove them from the abusive situation. However, interventions such as these are typically not the best response for someone in an abusive relationship, as they are disempowering and may even put the survivor in greater danger.

Points to Consider

However inadvertently, interventions often communicate a few troubling things to a survivor: *Let me tell you what's good for you. I understand what you need better than you do. If you trusted me, you would listen and do what I say.* What's problematic about this is that these are similar to the kinds of things an abusive partner might be communicating, explicitly or implicitly, to the survivor. In other words, intervening communicates that you don't see the survivor as autonomous, which can be incredibly disempowering. We know that when survivors feel supported, they are more likely to feel strong enough take steps to keep themselves safer. It's also important to keep in mind that safety is not always black and white, and that interventions have a tendency to set up this false dichotomy for survivors, with no middle ground: they can either be safe outside the relationship, or in danger within it. This oversimplifies the process of leaving and overlooks major safety concerns:

- Leaving an abuser is the most dangerous time in a relationship, as the abuse tends to escalate as the abuser feels their power and control slipping away.
- Ending an abusive relationship does not usually mean the end of abuse. Emotionally abusive behaviors such as stalking and threats may even increase after a survivor leaves.
- Leaving safely requires careful preparation and planning. Simply leaving an abusive situation without considering both immediate and long-term safety and emotional support needs can actually put a survivor in more danger.
- Survivors know their situation best, and leaving may not be the safest or even most worthwhile choice for them. For example, abusers often threaten very real harm to family, friends, children, pets, property or even themselves if a survivor leaves. Many shelters cannot accommodate survivors' adult dependents, stepchildren, teenage male children or pets, and a survivor may not be willing to leave their loved ones behind. There are countless other reasons a survivor may decide to stay with an abuser.
- Unfortunately, CPS, counselors, law enforcement and the justice system don't always provide the protection or services necessary to meet a survivor's needs. Shelters often do not have enough space for all of the survivors who are seeking safety, and many survivors rely on their abusers for financial stability. Leaving may not be a sustainable long-term option for a survivor.
- Revisiting their situation again and again through criminal justice proceedings, custody hearings, employers, medical and mental health professionals, religious leaders, family, friends, or the media, can be incredibly traumatic for survivors.
- Asking for help can be fatiguing and time consuming, as it involves contacting many sources and retelling stories in order to meet just one of many needs that must be addressed. This can be even harder for survivors who don't have the technology, privacy, or transportation to safely seek support.
- Abusers seek to isolate their partners from their support systems. Excessive pressure or criticism from family and friends can make survivors feel like they can't turn to these loved ones when they do need support in the future, playing right into the abuser's narrative.

Monetary Donations – Thank you! **Thank you to the donors who chose to remain anonymous.** Thank you to those who donated household & material items.

Melody Peterson
Lyle & Marietta Behm
Norma Voldal
Trinity Lutheran WELCA, VC
Presbyterian Church members,
Cooperstown
Dennis Nathan
Joseph Scherr
Faye Graalum
Bethel Lutheran WELCA, Rogers
Sons of Norway Hjemdahl Lodge
John & Virginia Svenningsen

Catholic Daughters of the Americas
Court St Gerard #2518
Bill's Variety Eats & Catering
Karen Richman
Myron and Jenniece Sommerfeld
Barnes County Housing Authority
Nicole Johnson
Christine Marshall
First Community Credit Union
James & Sharon Buhr
Richard & Marsha Anderson
Tri-County Ministry, Binford
Kathleen Larson

Bethel WELCA, Rogers
Patricia Hansen
Mike Ferrel
Women of the ELCA First
Lutheran WELCA, Litchville

In Memory of Jake Riedman:

- *Connor Wright*
- *Anonymous*

In Memory of Audrey Wieland:

- *Peggy Wieland*

What your donations to APOC can provide:

- \$20 = 10 taxi rides to appointments, court hearings, work, etc
- \$50 = meals for a family in Emergency Shelter
- \$100 = 1 professional counseling session
- \$300 = 1 month CrisisLine operation
- \$500 = 3 nights emergency safe shelter for an abused family

DONATION FORM

Your donation will help us continue our work to end intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Your donation is tax deductible. **I wish to remain anonymous**

Donor Information: Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

If you would like this donation to be in memoriam of someone, please complete the form below. A card of recognition will be sent to the individual/s you list and provide addresses for below:

In Memory of (name): _____

From (your name): _____

Please send a card to (name): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to: APOC - 160 2nd St NW, Valley City, ND 58072

Or online through our website www.apocnd.org



Thank you for your support!