



Child Abuse Resource Center

Fall 2010

## ANNOUNCING THE FIRST WITNESS SPLASH!

Mark your calendars! The First Witness Splash, formally known as the Spring Splash, will be taking place Thursday, October 7, 2010.

We look forward to sharing this evening with you. Proceeds from the event will provide services to children who have experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or witness violent crime.

Your support provides a safe place for children to talk about their experience with abuse, crisis counseling, community education and prevention programming in schools.

Thank you for protecting kids!



### Event Details

**Date:**

- Thursday, October 7th

**Time:**

- 5:30p 8:30pm

**Location:**

- DECC Harbor Side Ballroom

**To Attend:**

- \$40 per person
- Call First Witness to reserve your spot

**Join us for:**

- Silent and live auctions
- Delicious dessert auction
- Dazzling entertainment provided by the **Billy Barnard Jazz Trio!**

The Mission of First Witness Child Abuse Resource Center is to strengthen our community's response to child abuse.

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**CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK!**

## A Message from our Executive Director Susan Mack

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### Board of Directors

Joe Roby, *Board Chair*  
Kathryn Koch, *Past Chair*  
Jodi May, *Vice Chair*  
Karen Andresen, *Treasurer*  
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Sandra Lumen  
Chris Theis  
Terry Trogdon  
Howard Weinberg  
Laura Zahn

### Team Member Agencies

#### Case Review

Duluth Police  
Hermantown Police  
Proctor Police  
Floodwood Police  
St. Louis County Sheriff's Department  
FBI

#### MN BCA

St. Louis County  
Public Health and Human  
Services—*Initial Intervention Unit*  
Fond du Lac Social Services  
*Center for American Indian Resources*

St. Louis County  
Attorney's Office and  
Victim Services

Child Maltreatment Physicians  
Mental Health Professionals

#### Community Support

DAIP  
PAVSA  
6th Judicial District  
Public Defender's Office

### Staff

Susan Mack, *Executive Director*  
Lisa Salo, *Director of Resources*  
Michelle Kurtz, *Finance Manager*  
Caroline Shallman, *Training Coordinator*

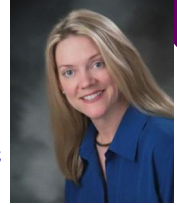
#### Trainers

Dr. Johanna Garrison, Scott Miller &  
Mike Schiltz

#### UMD Intern

Angie Heilman

Between January and June of 2010 we have interviewed 82 children who confided in an adult that they were being abused. This is up dramatically from a total of 88 children for all of 2009. Your support of First Witness is as critical now as it was on our first day.



Children who are abused suffer more than non-abused children from fears, posttraumatic stress disorder, behavior problems, sexualized behaviors, and poor self-esteem. Because of the strong responses from child protection and law enforcement here in southern St. Louis County, we at First Witness are able to work with these children and their families towards healing. Your commitment to First Witness shows that you understand that every child deserves a safe and healthy childhood.

Over 70% of the children we have interviewed this year were abused by a family member. In order to keep kids safe we need to remember that child abuse is usually committed by people who have frequent access to a child.

Thank you for caring about child abuse victims in our community. Please know we are working hard every day to ensure our community is a safe place for kids.

### A Word from St. Louis County Attorney Melanie Ford



A person I admire and who inspires me in my work is Marion Wright Edelman. She is president of the Children's Defense Fund and strives to dismantle the "cradle to prison pipeline". Her vision is to reweave the fabric of family and community. She cites the need to change and influence the systems that feed children into the pipeline: ensure children are born healthy, provide quality early childhood programs, fix the funding formula for schools and stop punitive environments in schools, reform the child welfare system and the juvenile justice system to encourage community and family involvement and alternatives to detention, and confront gun violence. To do so, she calls us to urgently work for a continuum of care and a profound culture change.

Edelman proposes that adults confront hypocrisy and neglect. We must work to recreate family rituals such as having meals together, being with extended families and community, and affirming and caring for the child. She believes that giving children hope is the best way to beat the cradle to prison pipeline. In recent remarks at Harvard Law School, she quoted Frederick Douglass, stating "It is easier to build strong children than it is to fix broken men".

Edelman urges us to action: build movement, mobilize our communities one neighborhood at a time, work together to build child safety into our fundamental belief system. She says, to do so will save our nation's future and our nation's values.

Our community is on the right track. Among many community initiatives, we have a Plan to End Homelessness, a Blueprint to End Poverty, a Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, a Coalition to End Racism. Many thanks to First Witness, who recognizes the need for community culture change, and is an important player in our community to build strong children.

## A Better Understanding

By: Lisa Salo, Director of Resources



Parents often sit on the couch in my office completely taken back by what they have learned. Their child has been sexually abused. They are confused as to how this could have happened and often say of the abuser “I never thought he/she would do such a thing to my child.” Here are some myths and facts about child sexual molesters that can help us help kids. While the below information may be uncomfortable to read and a bit shocking, it is important to know that you are not the only one to feel this way. Offenders depend on our feelings of discomfort in order to protect their secrecy. By being aware of the facts, you are

helping to protect children from potential predators.

*Myth: Anyone who would sexually molest or physically abuse a child is seedy-looking or looks suspicious. I would know them by looking at them.*

**Fact:** Handsome, successful men hurt children. Beautiful, talented women hurt children. Ordinary people you laugh with every day hurt children. You simply cannot identify a child sexual predator by looking at them.

*Myth: Child sexual molesters are unsociable and isolated. If I knew any, I am sure I would naturally not like them.*

**Fact:** Most child molesters are known and very well liked by others. They cultivate certain relationships in order to gain access to children, and many are personable individuals with whom others enjoy socializing.

*Myth: Men who are in committed relationships do not sexually abuse children– they have their partners.*

**Fact:** Being deprived of sex does not lead to child sexual abuse. Sexually molesting children is about preferring the power position and avoiding vulnerability. Sexually molesting a child is separate from a normal adult sex drive.

*Myth: He is a pastor, teacher, elder a PhD. He would never do that.*

**Fact:** Sexually molesting children is not a function of low income or low intelligence. A child molester may say contemptuous things like “Child molesters are the sickest people on the planet and deserve the death penalty.” The rest of us may also say things like this, so it is not an indicator by itself-just a warning that predators are smart enough to know the right line to say.

*Myth: He hugs and cuddles my child in healthy ways in front of me and my child does not resist or fuss. Obviously nothing is happening.*

**Fact:** Child sexual molesters themselves say that they deliberately do this so that your child, the victim, thinks you approve of the way the molester touches them. A child assumes his parents know what is going on, so when the molester hugs him in front of you and you are fine with that, the child thinks you are “okay” with what happens in private too.

<http://dreamcatchersforabusedchildren.webs.com/childsexoffenders.htm>

Please see the Page 6 Wish List for ways to help the Safe and Strong Child Program! Thanks!

## First Witness Presents:

# The Safe and Strong Child® Program

Proudly and enthusiastically, after a successful transition from The Program to Aid for Victims of Sexual Assault (PAVSA), First Witness has taken on the responsibility of providing the Safe and Strong Child Program to area children. The Safe and Strong Child Program is a body safety awareness and prevention curriculum that will be coordinated and delivered by our Resources Coordinator.

Originally designed for the classroom, Safe and Strong Child consists of cognitively appropriate lessons that are taught interactively through stories, group work, role play and song. On average the program has been presented to 2,000 local elementary school students each year. It is our hope that First Witness can expand the reach of the Safe and Strong Child Program to include all of the elementary schools in southern St. Louis County and other children's groups such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, houses of worship, and child care centers.

This program provides training and support to school staff in regards to child abuse. A key component of the Safe and Strong Child Program is a parent information session. This session, held prior to the classroom sessions, allows parents to voice concerns and ask questions regarding the curriculum. The parent sessions provide an opportunity to discuss healthy sexual development in children and for parents to learn how to address the issues of personal body safety and personal boundaries with their elementary aged children.

**The importance of this program is profound! By teaching children body safety we are lessening the chance of victimization and nurturing children who will not hurt others.**

Help your child to be Safe and Strong!

## Community Education Training from First Witness!

First Witness provides training opportunities for community and parent groups, professionals like childcare providers, teachers and child group leaders. Subjects include:



- It is never okay for someone to touch you on your private body parts unless they are helping you to stay clean or healthy!
- If you get a touch on your body that is confusing - tell a trusted adult. It is the adult's job to help you figure out if that touch was safe or unsafe.
- It is never a child's fault if they get an unsafe touch from an adult.
- All touches that are asked to be kept a secret are **unsafe!**

- Child abuse prevention
- Dynamics of child sexual abuse
- Healthy child sexual development
- Supporting a child who has been victimized
- Understanding the systems response to child abuse allegations

If you would like the Safe and Strong Child Program to be a part of your child's group or classroom or are interested in any other trainings, please contact First Witness at (218) 727-8353!

# 10th Annual Poster Contest!

First Witness is excited to announce that we will once again be sponsoring our annual poster contest! The deadline for the posters is February 1st, 2011. It's never too early to get the crayons and markers out and the imagination flowing! We ask that our artists are twelve years of age or younger. This year, there will be two winning posters selected. One poster will be featured on a billboard and the other will be made into placemats for local family restaurants. The purpose of the poster contest is to enhance community awareness about the issue of child abuse. Finished posters can be dropped off or mailed to 4 West 5th St, Duluth MN 55806 anytime between now and February 1st, 2011! Please call before stopping by! We appreciate your help and support in keeping kids safe!



*“I have had the honor of listening to over 800 children’s interviews since my work began here at First Witness. I have been amazed by their resiliency, felt saddened by their pain and most of all have learned a tremendous number of things from them. Most troubling has been what they, the children, have taught me about their offenders. I believe that the more we understand offenders the better able we are to prevent children from being victimized.”*  
 - Lisa Salo  
 Director of Resources

**The following was written by offenders in treatment at the Center for Behavioral Intervention in Beaverton, Oregon:**

- I am probably well-known and liked by you and your child.
  - I can be a man or woman, married or single.
  - I can be a child, adolescent or adult.
  - I can be of any race, hold any religious belief, and have any sexual preference.
  - I can be a parent, step-parent, relative, friend, teacher, clergyman, babysitter or anyone!
  - I am likely to be a stable, employed, respected member of the community.
  - My education and my intelligence do not prevent me from molesting your child.
  - I can be anybody, anywhere, anytime.
  - I convince your child they are responsible for my behavior.
  - I make your child think no one will believe them if they tell.
  - I tell your child you will be disappointed in them for what they have done with me.
  - I warn your child they will be punished if they tell.
  - I may threaten your child with physical violence against them, you, a pet or other loved one.
  - I may make your child feel sorry for me.
  - I may accidentally expose myself or walk in on children unexpectedly.
  - I may use situations like tucking kids in at night to touch them sexually.
  - I may have told my children this is normal/what all fathers do.
  - I may be so good at manipulating children that they may try to protect me.
- <http://dreamcatchersforabusedchildren.webs.com/childsexoffenders.htm>

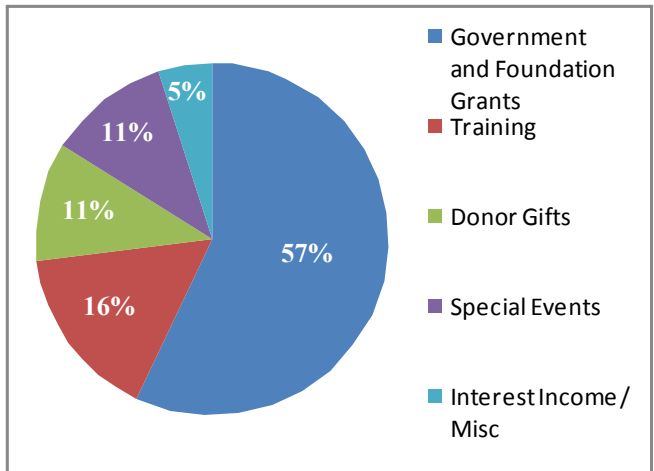
# First Witness Wish List

**If you, your family, organization, or club are looking to support a non-profit agency please consider First Witness! We are fortunate to receive a number of inquiries about our needs which has prompted us to publish this wish list. Thanks for thinking of the kids!**

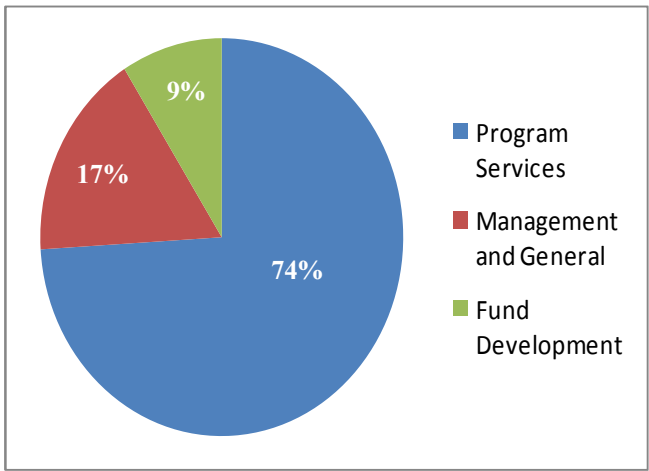
- Wish list items include:**
- NEC NP510 Portable Projector (LCD)
  - Laptop
  - Digital camera
  - DVD-R (DVD minus R) *inscriptible and recordable*
  - Gift certificates for office supplies and groceries
  - Coffee
  - Paper cups
  - Office paper
  - Child friendly art work for our playroom

First Witness is looking to do more electronic communications. Please email us your email if you would like to receive updates and possibly our newsletter electronically. Send your email to [info@firstwitness.org](mailto:info@firstwitness.org)

## First Witness Funding



## First Witness Expenses



### Financial Position as of December 31, 2009

- Cash and Cash Equivalents \$255,777
- Endowment Value \$104,368
- First Witness Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$644,464
- 2010 Annual Budget \$378,000

# Quiz yourself! Quiz your kids!



1. Who can you call if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable?

- A. A police officer
- B. An adult you trust
- C. A teacher
- D. A parent
- E. All of the above

2. What should you do if someone touches you in a way you don't like?

- A. Keep quiet
- B. Tell your favorite stuffed animal
- C. Tell an adult you trust

3. What should you do if you tell someone about unsafe touches and they do not believe you?

- A. Keep quiet
- B. Take a nap
- C. Keep telling until someone believes you!

4. What should you do if you see something online or on the computer that makes you feel uncomfortable or is inappropriate?

- A. Do nothing
- B. Tell a grown up you trust right away
- C. Keep playing on the computer and ignore it

5. When is it ok to give your personal information to a stranger online?

- A. When the someone asks for it
- B. Never
- C. When the someone seems really nice

6. Whose fault is it if a child gets an unsafe touch?

- A. The person who touched
- B. The child who got the touch
- C. The dog

7. Secret touches are never ok.

- A. True
- B. False

8. No one should touch my private body parts unless they are keeping me clean, safe, or healthy.

- A. True
- B. False

## Answers

1. **E** Help your child identify people they can talk to when they need help or feel unsafe.
2. **C** If someone touches you in a way you do not like, tell a grown up you trust!
3. **C** Sometimes grownups get scared and/or confused too! They may not believe you at first but if it is really true, keep telling until someone does believe you!
4. **B** Tell a grown up right away! Some kids think they will get in trouble. Kids should never get in trouble for telling a grown up about something uncomfortable on the computer!
5. **B** Grown ups pretending to be a kid your age will try to trick you into giving enough information for them to figure out who or where you are. **Never Ever** give your personal information to anyone on the computer. Things like your name, age, birthday, school, school mascot, friends name, address, phone number, pets name or parents name should never be given out!
6. **A** It is NEVER a child's fault for receiving an unsafe touch.
7. **A** If someone tells you to keep a secret about touching, it means it is not OK and you should tell an adult who can help you figure it out right away!
8. **A** True, the only time someone should ever touch your private body parts is if they are keeping you clean, safe, or healthy!

Here is a list of adults I trust who can help me if I am confused about a touch that I got.

(one should be a school related contact)

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_



# FIRST WITNESS ANNUAL BAKE SALE!

**Treat yourself, family and friends to  
delicious baked goods! Just in time for  
the Holiday Season!**



## Bake Sale Details

**Date:**

- Friday, November 19, 2010

**Time:**

- 8:00 am– 3:00 pm

**Location:**

- Holiday Center & Tech Village



**First Witness**  
4 W 5th Street  
Duluth, MN 55806  
(218) 727-8353  
firstwitness.org

**Fall 2010**



NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
ALLIANCE®

ACCREDITED  
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Non-Profit  
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Return Service Requested