



Friends For Hope

March 2007

Victim Empowerment

The Best Approach to Bullying Prevention

Friends For Hope is sponsoring a seminar on March 1, 2007 at the Reagan County Community Building. The guest speaker is Izzy Kalman, he has been a school psychologist and psychotherapist for 25 years and does presentations on his techniques to help parents, teachers and anyone that works with youth to help the children in bullying situations. His techniques will be very helpful in the school situations as well as all relationships between children and adults.

While we think of bullying as something that goes on between kids in school, schools are the place it goes on the least. Izzy will teach why people are abusive to each other (not only kids to each other), and teach them how to get others to stop abusing them. He will also show through role playing how to handle a variety of different situations. The most important teaching is how to control anger and how adults can reduce aggression between kids, both in school and at home.

There will be 2 sessions held; the 1st session will be from 9 to 3 and the cost is \$80. A second session is being offered from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, this session is free. We encourage teachers, parents and anyone who has ever felt bullied to come and learn some great techniques on how to work with others.

How it all Began....

Friends For Hope began through a grassroots efforts of five local women in June of 1998. The organization has seen many changes over the years including the services being offered. As the organization's mission was carried out, it became obvious that there was much work to be done. We provide many different activities for all ages and feel we are helping make Big Lake a better place to live.

We do help victims and their families to cope during troubled times and we also provide many other services for the community of Big Lake. Our facility gets utilized by many people in Big Lake and we have become a resource center for many. We fax forms and we have D.H.S forms here in our office to help those whom need those services. Our office is used for the Alcoholic Anonymous which meet on Monday evenings at 7:30. We have a thrift store that is opened on Thursday afternoon and is available if there is a need for clothing or other household items.



STAR & Jr. STAR News

The STARS have been shining bright in 2007. In January, they received an invitation to be a part of America's Most Wanted live TV taping on Teen Dating Violence at John B Connally High School in Austin. This was very interesting and exciting to actually see and be a part of this show.

On February 5, 2007, Karina Rios was asked to come to Austin to speak at the press conference kicking off Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week. Karina spoke about using the tool kit that the Governor's office provided to 50 schools in Texas. Karina issued a challenge to all youth stating that this is "our problem and it should be up to us to help solve it, and that all youth should get involved." Karina did a great job representing the Big Lake STAR students.

The week of February 5-9 was busy here with the Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week. The STARS along with the JR. STARS were busy doing presentations at the middle school. Morning and radio announcements were made bringing awareness of this growing problem of teen dating violence.

On February 9, two TV stations came to interview some of the STAR students at the high school. KWEST 9 news from Midland with Jacqueline Sit reporting and KLSI from San Angelo with Jennifer Jackson reporting. They did an excellent job covering our STAR programs and their involvement in Teen Dating Violence.

Last but not least five of our STAR students went to Austin with Nina Hallmark and Debbie Goff for Capital Day 2007. There were state wide advocate groups that met and spoke to Representatives and State Legislators. Among those were Joe Heflin Representative of District 85 and staff members of the Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst. This was to bring awareness to the need for funding of Domestic Violence and crisis centers such as Friends For Hope. The Big Lake group was treated to lunch by Jim Shearer who owns Capital Consultants. Jim is the son in law of Dale & Vicky Fisher of Big Lake. Jim was very instrumental in setting up meetings with Rep. Joe Heflin and Lt. Governor Dewhurst's staff. After hearing Friends For Hope founding story and mission statement, Jim and his business partner Joe Bishop are very interested in the work of Friends For Hope. The day was very informative and we learned a lot about the political process. We also enjoyed a tour of the Capital. We are very proud of all of our STARS!



2007 STAR members: Karina Rios, Zach Gonzales, Marissa Contreras, Sarah Perez, Travis Zuberbuler, Adrian Bocanegra, Jameson Ash, Allison Vetter, Ashton Vetter, Stephanie Torres, Andrea Vaquera and Vanessa Vaquera. **Jr. STARS:** Destinee Aguero, Dena Fraire, Norma Sanchez, Itzayana Rameriz, Adrianna Avila, Genesis Carrasco, Noemi Sosax, and Treva Westbury.

Heroes Great and Small

Heroes Great and Small is back in full swing. They are meeting on Thursday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:00. All children in kindergarten to 5th grade are welcome to join in the fun. The theme is "I'm Me, I'm Special" and we have many fun activities planned for this year.

Please feel free to donate to the Capital Fund Campaign.

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Bank accounts have been set up at Big Lake Bank and Security State Bank to make it easy to make a contribution to the Capital Fund Campaign.

You can help make a difference!

We provide the following services to our community:

- **24 Hour Victim Assistance Hotline (325) 884-9804**
- **Accompaniment for Victims to Law Enforcement Center, Hospital, Court, Child Interviews, and other appointments**
- **Emergency Shelter**
- **Counseling Services**
- **Support Groups for Adults and Children**
- **Teen Programs - (STAR & Jr. STAR) Addressing sexual assault, violence, alcohol and drugs**
- **Children's Programs - (HEROES) Addressing self-esteem, safety, and life skills**
- **Public Awareness and Education**
- **Programs for Civic Organizations and Classrooms (Call to Schedule Programs)**
- **Referrals to Legal, Medical and Social Services**

If you have been a victim of crime, and your offender is currently incarcerated, you may be interested in [Texas VINE](#). For more information please log onto the Friends For Hope website

Friends For Hope Happenings

As I think about Friends For Hope, the mission of our organization and the services we provide in our community it is a really big picture. Almost weekly we have someone that says "I never really knew what all ya'll do" or "I had no idea that was available in Big Lake". There are still people that think you must be a recent victim to receive services. That is not true. For many people it takes years to reach a point in their lives to realize counseling or other services would be helpful. There are people who think we only help women and children. Far from the truth, we've helped many men. We are about helping families and giving them the resources they need for their particular situation. There are times we don't have the resources and need to refer people elsewhere. We don't make decisions for people, but we give them information and options so they can make their own decision. We welcome visitors to our facility, we want people to ask us questions, and most of all we want our community to know what resources are available. We are here because we care! Please check out our website for details about Friends For Hope.

I want to start this month highlighting my staff. Each of them will always welcome you and assist in any way they can. For the next few months, I am going to spotlight each one and briefly describe their duties. I will start with Evelyn Smith. Evelyn started working in January of 2004 in the capacity as our Volunteer Coordinator. She has a very important job of keeping up with all aspects of our volunteer program, which is the heart of our organization. We could not carry out our mission without the wonderful volunteers we have. In addition, Evelyn is responsible for data that goes into the state via our integrated tracking system. To give you an idea of what she had to keep up with in the last year, we served 603 clients, 115 were new clients. We provided 3577 services for those clients and there were 257 individual counseling sessions with our licensed counselor. Evelyn is responsible for numerous reports for our grants. Maybe one of the most important jobs she has is being our office "teddy bear". She always has a hug for anyone that needs one. This is only a small portion of her duties, but come by for a visit, get a hug and she will tell you more!

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors for 2007 are

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|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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(325) 884-2281 Office
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We're on the Web
www.friendsforhope.org

Our Mission Statement at Friends for Hope

1. Advocate for victims of family violence, sexual assault, and other crimes.
2. Provide training for Reagan County and surrounding area law enforcement, advocates, and others assisting survivors, so as to not re-victimize them.
3. Serve without judgment, but with compassion and knowledge, so victims may become survivors, free to live their lives without fear, and to soar as they were meant to soar.

Our Staff

Nina Hallmark—Executive Director
Jane Gay—Financial Manager
Evelyn Smith—Volunteer Coordinator
Paola Salgado—Office Assistant/Advocate
Coco Zapata—Education Coordinator
Debbie Goff—Child/ Youth Educator
Sarah Kalina—Case Manager/Advocate

Please contact Evelyn to volunteer. We can always use the volunteers in our thrift store, office activities, youth programs and support groups.

*Tell Me and I forget;
Show Me and I remember;
Involve me and I understand.*

We Need Your Help

We have applied for a hometown helper grant through Hamburger Helper. We are asking the community and anyone who would like to please comment on the Celebrate Our Children's Day that is held here in Big Lake in the spring. We have celebrated our children for the past 3 years and last year added a barbeque meal and softball tournament. The day is geared toward families coming together and spending a fun day at the park. It is a time when we can all have fun and educate on child abuse and offer prevention information. Please mark your calendars for April 21, 2007 and join us in the park and take part in this fun filled day.

Please help out by doing the following:
go to www.myhometownhelper.com

Then click on Find a project, enter in Texas and Friends For Hope then search. Then Click on the project and add your comments and support at the bottom of the page.

Thanks for taking the time to help us with this grant. It is about being a community that stands together and makes Big Lake a special place to live