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Coming Out About Lesbian Battering

by Carla
 October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month. National Coming Out Day is also in October, and the coincidence is appropriate. As Lesbians take the next step in coming out, one area deserving of consideration is battering.

Many people try to ignore or minimize the existence of battering in the lesbian community. Women want to believe that battering is solely a heterosexual phenomenon. It's not. Nearly everyone knows of lesbian couples in which one or both partners engage in abusive behaviors. It doesn't help anyone to turn away, pretend battering doesn't happen, or hope that abuse will go away. Let's support one another to increase awareness of and to educate ourselves about lesbian battering.

Battering occurs in all types of relationships, at all social and economic levels, and in all areas of Vermont.

Battering can be physical- Hitting, pushing, pulling hair, throwing things, raping.

Battering can be emotional- Distancing, making her think she's crazy, withholding attention or affection or information, threatening to leave or to disclose her lesbianism or to harm her physically.

If you are being abused or suspect you're being abused, you are not alone, and there is help available. Women Helping Battered Women is committed to providing services to battered lesbians in Vermont. There is currently shelter, advocacy, and 24-hour confidential hotline support available. A lesbian support group is forming later this fall in Burlington.

There's no excuse for abuse. This October, help bring lesbian battering out of the closet.

March for Housing Now!

Vermont Housing Now is organizing transportation for the national march in Washington, D.C. on October 7. If you're interested in joining people from all over the country who will be trying to change national policies on housing and to deal with the crisis of homelessness, come join us.

Transportation will cost approximately \$35 roundtrip. Scholarships possible. Barrier free buses available. Call 64-7402 immediately for reservations or for more information.

Call for Submissions

Submissions sought for a book on lesbians responding to AIDS, focusing on the experiences of lesbian carepartners and those who have lost close friends and/or family members.

Essays:

- 1) Should not exceed 5000 words
- 2) Will be edited for grammar
- 3) Should focus on emotional processes (love, anger, sadness, fear, survivor guilt, etc.), day-to-day concrete experiences, and interactions with others close to the PWA. For more information, or to submit a manuscript, please write:

Book Project, 1414 17th St, N.W., #802, Washington, D.C. 20036.

HRCF Needs Canvassers

The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF)-- the largest national lesbian and gay political organization-- is looking for assertive people to sign up individuals around the country for the HRCF Speak Out mailgram campaign.

Speak Out is an unprecedented program that is generating thousands of hard-hitting, timely Western Union mailgrams to the U.S. Congress on gay or AIDS-related legislation.

Canvassers visit community events, lesbian and gay gathering places and make calls to sign up people for the Speak Out program. Canvassers are paid, and can easily make \$10-20 an hour.

Interested individuals should contact: HRCF, Canvassing Unit, P.O. Box 1723, Washington, D.C. 20013, or call (202)628-4160.

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