

CONNECTED



CONNECT Mission – CONNECT is dedicated to the prevention and elimination of family and gender violence and to the creation of safe families and peaceful communities.

CONNECT transforms the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that perpetuate family and gender violence and addresses these complex issues through prevention, early intervention services, and community empowerment.



Network for Gender Rights Takes Tough Topics to the Park



Community Empowerment Program Coordinator Patricia Martinez engages young people from the Bronx in a conversation about healthy relationships and community strength at Planting the Seed. This event was sponsored by CONNECT, GMHC, Latino Commission on AIDS, Levantate Mujer Ministry, Mercy Center, San Juan Bautista, Sanctuary for Families, and Voices of Women Organizing Project.

When it comes to addressing social problems, one of the biggest stumbling blocks is silence around the issue. From combating terminal disease to facing addiction, taboos can delay crucial conversations that may help reduce harm.

Last year a group of community-based organizations formed the **Network for Gender Rights** (NGR), a collaboration of agencies working to mobilize communities and organize public events to raise awareness around gender rights in the Bronx. The missions of member groups vary greatly- from the education and prevention work of *Latino Commission on AIDS* to *Levantate Mujer Ministry's* domestic violence advocacy through a spiritual lens. However, by recognizing the relationship of gender-based violence to their own work, all groups unite towards its elimination.

"Domestic violence is not really talked about," says Geoveva Aceudo of Levantate Mujer Ministry. "We joined Network for Gender Rights to get it out on the table." Co-worker Luz Pizarro commented, "We work with churches, and sometimes victims are frustrated because the pastor just tells them to keep praying [for the violence to stop] and the batterer keeps coming to church!"

In NGR, member organizations support a holistic approach to their work. "We do support groups, and cold calling; getting issues out there and using media to engage people to talk about DV," said Aceudo. "But since [direct service] is not our specialty [we] can refer them to CONNECT's Legal Advocacy Helpline."

In order to address these issues on personal terms, NGR events are always held in highly visible spaces. This past summer members held *Planting the Seed- A Family Day in the Park*, a hands-on education event for families to learn more about domestic violence and HIV while participating in activities like gardening, face painting, and capoeira.

Ani Patel of Sanctuary for Families spoke on the importance of opening dialogue around AIDS and DV. "We realize how important it is to occupy public space. It's creating a safe environment, a friendly environment that makes everyone part of the solution."

Breaking the silence around a cloaked issue can be difficult, but inroads are likely to be found when you look at the common ground between various struggles. According to the NGR, AIDS and DV are the two biggest epidemics affecting women's lives today, yet both still tend to be brought to light only after occasional sensationalized tragedy. Network for Gender Rights' important work gives hope to keeping these issues at the fore of our community dialogue.

Rose Moffatt

LECTED

COMMUNITY

DV Pioneers





Letter from Co-Execs



*Co-Executive Directors
Alisa Del Tufo & Mary Haviland*

Dear Friends:

As we approach the season recognized as one of peace, we are mindful that it is a time of year when domestic violence incidents increase. But we continue to take comfort in the number of people who are committed to bringing this issue out from behind closed doors and to changing the attitudes and beliefs that permit the violence to continue.

In New York City we are often reminded that the City's overall crime rate has gone down dramatically over the last several years. However, as was true last year, this fall was marked by daily media reports documenting horrific domestic violence assaults and murders. To draw more attention to this issue, CONNECT sponsored its second annual press conference at City Hall. We called on the City to invest in the education and prevention of domestic violence as well as to continue its support for emergency shelters and law enforcement intervention. There will not be a significant drop in domestic violence until we transform the perspective and actions of government, institutions, communities and individuals in response to violence in the family.

In 2006 CONNECT will continue to provide its core prevention and early intervention services. We look forward to working with our community partners, friends and donors to advocate a comprehensive, preventive and inclusive approach to stopping domestic violence.

Wishing you a safe and peaceful season,

Alisa & Mary

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CONNECT

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Back cover:

Danielline Martinez, Deacon of San Juan Bautista Ministry, paints

Planting the Seed - A Family Day in the Park.

Karlene Gordon, member of Voices of Women Organizing Project, speaks at CONNECT's press conference *Denouncing our culture of Violence*

Donate

CONNECT currently receives funding from government and private sources. Your individual support is necessary in order for us to accomplish our mission of ensuring "safe families, peaceful communities" for all.

Donations can be made online via credit card at www.connectnyc.org, by calling 212.683.0015 x223, or by sending a check/money order to:

CONNECT
P.O. Box 20217
Greeley Square Station
New York, NY 10001

**Your support will
make a difference.**

Contact Us

Main: 212.683.0015
Fax: 212.683.0016
connect@connectnyc.org

Legal Advocacy Helpline:
212.683.0605
Monday - Friday, 9 am - 5 pm
(For 24 Hour Assistance,
Please Call 1-800-621-HOPE)





Spotlight from our Programs: Family Violence Prevention Program



FVPP's October Seminar - Screening and Discussion of Broken Vows: Domestic Violence in Religious Perspective

The FVPP team at CONNECT is deeply experienced and committed to the work of understanding and educating preventive programs about the interplay between child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence. The lessons we have learned have shaped CONNECT's philosophy in significant ways, making it clear that to do effective work with families, domestic violence and child welfare must be understood holistically.

For over a decade, CONNECT's Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP) has been providing education, technical assistance and support throughout the five boroughs of New York City to over 50 neighborhood preventive programs, all of which are committed to preventing the removal of children from their homes. FVPP has helped these preventive programs to develop policies and practices that enable them to offer safe and effective services to families struggling with domestic violence.

FVPP conducts monthly seminars to which each preventive program sends a Domestic Violence Program Liaison and back up. The FVPP seminar provides a forum to discuss the complex issues of policy and practice resulting from the child welfare implications of domestic violence. Past seminars have included such topics as relationships between DV and substance abuse, immigration, and vicarious trauma. FVPP seminars also cover how oppressions such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism impact families; child sexual abuse, working with men, self-care, and how domestic violence affects children.

In conjunction with Columbia University School of Social Work and staff of the first 4 FVPP partners, we developed the **Domestic Violence Questionnaire (DVQ)** that all of our partner preventive programs continue to use with every new female client. The DVQ assists workers with identifying signs of domestic violence early on, and in educating clients about domestic violence as a personal, social and political problem. Refined collaboratively over the years, the DVQ continues to be one of the cornerstones of FVPP.

Another cornerstone of FVPP is the **ongoing training and support we provide to our FVPP partners**. FVPP conducts regular onsite training and education, case-based workshops, and clinic and case consultation with partners in order to strengthen skills, increase knowledge, and provide support for the very demanding work of child abuse prevention. Programs are encouraged to run support/empowerment groups for women, and groups for children who witness domestic violence.

Many FVPP preventive programs send staff to CONNECT's Training Institute (CTI) for in-depth training around group facilitation. CONNECT/FVPP staff are available to assist programs with curriculum development, as well as trouble shooting when difficult dynamics or safety situations arise in the groups.

Many thanks to all the programs and individuals we have worked with over the years! We look forward to expanding our collaboration and welcoming new partners and friends to the FVPP family. PEACE.

Sally N. MacNichol

CONNECT wants to know what's on your mind. Write us or email newsletter@connectnyc.org with questions, comments, or ideas. CONNECT also publishes and responds to select submissions on family violence. Please include your name and contact information on any correspondence. We love to hear from you!



Meet Our Partners

Garden of Hope

Each newsletter features an interview with a CONNECT Community Empowerment Program Partner. In this issue, CONNECT spoke with **Garden of Hope**, a Queens-based DV organization serving the Chinese community.

Garden of Hope (GOH) is a privately funded non-profit organization that began operating in May of 2004. However, GOH was originally founded by an American missionary, Angie Golmon, in Taiwan in 1988. The organization began its work by rescuing and counseling teenage prostitutes, but its operation gradually evolved to include assisting young girls and women who were the victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence.

What kinds of work do you do?

GOH focuses its work in three areas: 1) Conducting outreach education on prevention of domestic violence in the Chinese immigrant community. 2) Providing case management and individual counseling to people dealing with domestic violence. 3) Providing crisis counseling, domestic violence consultation, and community resources for clients.

How does Garden of Hope work with CONNECT?

Garden of Hope is one of the partners of CONNECT through the Community Empowerment Program. During this year-long partnership CONNECT has provided GOH "with technical assistance, including strategies to reach out to the community.

What does technical assistance really mean?

For us, technical assistance means networking, ongoing professional training for staff, resource development, case reviews, and development of organizational protocol.

How is your organization unique?

Fighting against domestic violence is the ultimate goal of Garden Of Hope. Our mission is to create safety for families shattered by domestic violence, and not necessarily break them up. People often have misconceptions about the mission of GOH, but our biggest joy and accomplishment is when we see victims become survivors. Often they can support other victims through similar hardship, and to live the full lives they are entitled to.

What are the biggest obstacles in Garden of Hope's work?

In the Chinese community, domestic violence is considered to be a family affair that does not permit outside involvement. In addition, domestic violence has a negative impact not only on spousal relationships, but also on intra-generational relationships like those with in-laws and children.

Any final words?

Fighting against DV is a big task and will not be succeeded without community collaboration. Garden Of Hope wishes for the Chinese community to work together to face this issue and to help stop existing domestic violence. Otherwise, it will continue to be not only a family issue but a severe social problem.

Jane Li

**The opinions on this page reflect those of our community partners.*



Garden of Hope conducts outreach in a community forum at Flushing Public Library

DEC 15 / JAN 19 / FEB 16

Theological Roundtable: This discussion occurs the 3rd Thursday of every month. Open discussion about DV from the faith perspective. All people of faith welcome. 6:00pm—8:00pm
For information and RSVP, please call Sally MacNichol at 212-683-0015 ext. 216

JANUARY 5

DV Support/Empowerment Group for Survivors

FVPP is providing support and technical assistance for DV group facilitators. This meeting will be ongoing the 1st Thursday of every month. RSVP appreciated; please call Sharene Roig at 212-683-0015 ext. 238. 9:30am—12:30pm

JANUARY 9

Working with Men Discussion designed to assist those interested in better understanding the impact and importance of working with men/fathers in child welfare. Please RSVP with Marlon Walker at 212-683-0015 ext 220. 9:30am—1:00pm

JANUARY 18

FVPP Seminar Please join us for a discussion of DV in Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Transexual/Queer communities. RSVP appreciated; please call Sharene Roig at 212-683-0015 ext. 238. 9:30am—12:30pm

FEBRUARY 15

75 and still CONNECTing Please join us for a CONNECT fundraiser in honor of our board chair Ronnie Eldridge's 75th birthday. Call Lorna Malcolm at 212 683 0015 X223 for more information. Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse at Lincoln Center, 6:30- 8:30pm

For more information please call 212-683-0015 X222

CALENDAR



**CONNECT
Board Members**
clockwise from left:
*Ronnie Eldridge,
Lilliam Barrios-Paoli,
Vicki Gomez,
Marion Kaplan,
Alisa Del Tufo,
and Mary Haviland*
Not pictured:
*Derrick Gordon,
Verona Middleton-Jeter,
and Alyson Spindell*

The CONNECT Board of Directors

From its time of inception, the diverse women and men that make up CONNECT's Board of Directors have been dedicated to the mission of preventing and eliminating family and gender violence and to the creation of safe families and peaceful communities. They are all pioneers in the field—with our board chair, former Councilmember Ronnie Eldridge, in the work for over 25 years.

Our Board originated as a founder's Board, but continues to grow alongside CONNECT. We are saddened that Vicki Gomez, one of our founding members and Associate Director of Voices of Women (VOW), will be rotating off to pursue other interests. However, we are pleased to have Derrick Gordon, Ph.D., Director of the Consultation Center and Assistant Clinical Professor at Yale University School of Medicine as our newest member.

Other Board members include:

- Lilliam Barrios-Paoli, Executive Director, Safe Space NYC
- Alisa Del Tufo, Co-Executive Director
- Mary Haviland, Co-Executive Director
- Marion Kaplan, retired attorney and board member for New York Women's Foundation and Jewish Fund for Justice
- Verona Middleton-Jeter, Executive Director of Henry Street Settlement
- Alyson Spindell, Consultant, Friends of State Senator Eric Schneiderman

Lorna Malcolm

75 and still CONNECTing!

This year our board chair Ronnie Eldridge has generously decided to celebrate her 75th birthday by helping to raise money for CONNECT.

Please join us on February 15th at the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse at Lincoln Center, as we acknowledge Ronnie's longstanding commitment to improving women's lives and recognize her enormous contribution to New York City.

For more information, please contact Lorna Malcolm at 212-683-0015 X223

Know Your Rights

Are you an immigrant domestic violence survivor?

Under the Violence Against Women Act you may be eligible to independently adjust your status.

In order to qualify all of the following must be true. You must:

- Be married to a legal permanent resident or US citizen; and
- Have entered the marriage in good faith; and
- Reside/Have resided with your spouse; and
- Have been abused during the marriage; and
- Be of good moral character.

For more information regarding eligibility please call
The Legal Advocacy Helpline at (212) 683-0605.