



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

from Step Up to Family Safety

December 2015

As Chairperson of the Board, I would like to welcome you to the **first newsletter of Step Up to Family Safety**, an innovative non-profit organization dedicated to ending the pandemic of domestic violence. Step Up has brought together experts in batterer intervention, social sciences, survivor services, research, and family dynamics to take a proactive approach to reducing interpersonal violence.

Step Up's philosophy is to work with perpetrators of domestic violence to instill alternative behaviors to physical and non-physical violence. Using the knowledge gleaned from this work, along with the latest research, Step Up is ready to go to the next level—reaching potential perpetrators before they begin to abuse. A compassionate society must always be ready and willing to support victims and rehabilitate perpetrators, but a healthy society must strive to change the culture that implicitly—and often explicitly—encourages and celebrates abuse.

It is a challenging mission, but one that Step Up accepts wholeheartedly. I invite you to read on about what Step Up has already done, our exciting plans for the future, and how you can be a part of it all!

Sincerely,

Christopher C. Bradford
Step Up to Family Safety

Our Partnership with IMPACT

Step Up is a non-profit agency. We partner with the IMPACT agency to help clients access and succeed in intervention programs, and to provide awareness and prevention services. In this newsletter, you can read news and updates about how IMPACT and Step Up are working together to make families safer.

IMPACT NEWS AND UPDATES



2015 Accomplishments

It has been quite an exciting year at IMPACT! We became an LLC and we continue to provide what is commonly known as a BIP—a batterer intervention program. The term "batterer" is becoming antiquated; at IMPACT we refer to this population as "abusers," or sometimes, because of our close association with the courts, "DV offenders." To us, though, they are our clients. **By serving our clients, we hope to increase the safety of their families.**

- We are happy to report that **72 men in our five counties completed IMPACT in the past year.** The majority of those will go on to be more respectful and non-abusive.
- IMPACT began using a **new curriculum** which was customized for us by Jeffrie Cape of the H.E.A.L. program in Michigan. We were fortunate to bring Ms. Cape to train our facilitators on this curriculum, which requires that clients work on their own outside of group to complete four phases before completing the program. A **mentorship process** is part of the IMPACT curriculum, with senior group members providing guidance and assistance to newer members.
- We **expanded our office space**, including adding a large meeting room—and we're very happy with our new space! The meeting room is available for rental by community partners for a small fee; the fee can be waived for certain groups such as support groups or certain non-profits.
- IMPACT began a **new partnership** with Candace Wilson, Mental Health America of Central Carolinas, Parent Voice program, to offer PPP (Positive Parenting Experience) to fathers in our program free of charge.

Presentations and Training

Kelly Williams and Bea Coté were fortunate to attend the **International BIP conference** in Grand Rapids, MI last spring. This was a huge opportunity to learn from the best researchers and practitioners in the field.

Bea has done a number of both paid and free **presentations to the community, locally and throughout the state.** Her goal is twofold: to get people to think about how DV impacts their lives and communities and strengthen their ability to make changes; and to educate others on the side of DV we rarely hear about—the abuser. How does he think? How might he appear to professionals?

Bea has **trained social workers, clinicians, law enforcement, probation officers as well as those working in the DV field**, among others. Her presentations are well informed and well received.

**Contact us about
scheduling a
presentation by
Bea Coté at your
next meeting,
training or event.**

Staff and Interns

IMPACT has **three new and one returning group facilitator** and are excited about the skills and dedication they bring to IMPACT. In addition, we have had **five interns**—and we love them! So much so, in fact, that three of them continue into part time court advocate positions. This allows us to **staff our courts in Mecklenburg, Lincoln and Cleveland counties on almost every day there is DV court.**

IMPACT Testimonials

- *"Impact changed my life. I didn't realize my issues for what they were but once I accepted them, things have been so much better."* (Marvin, IMPACT graduate)
- *"You probably don't remember me, but **you're one of the reasons I am here today**. I was facing my abuser in court and you were there. You said you believed me and that meant everything to me—just that one person believed me and understood the monster I was facing. I wanted to give up so many times. **You gave me the courage to stick with the charges and validate that it wasn't my fault**. I saved and re-read your email several times when I needed encouragement. I just wanted you to know how much your support meant to me—and thank you for everything you do."* (DV Survivor)
- *"I would like to **thank you for your caring and kindness to our family**. I am grateful to be a part of such an endeavor, to be able to teach others about this awful behavioral pattern of abuse DV."* (Volunteer and family member of murder victim)
- *"Impact is very good **information that everyone should know**. It should be shared in school from 1st to 12th grade. Let's save our women, America. One woman not hit every minute is the goal for real men. Thanks, Impact."* Thomas (former client)



Nov. 10, 2015—Safe Alliance
Partner Appreciation luncheon
Bea with Erica Bryant



Dec. 8, 2015—Domestic
Violence Advocacy Council
Christmas Tree Memorial



Nov. 9, 2015—Safe Alliance Board reception
(top) Bea with Leslie Steiner
(bottom) Safe Alliance Board



Dec. 2, 2015—North
Mecklenburg High School
Speaking to the 400-member
about Senior class about
Dating Violence



At the IMPACT offices:
The name of this sculpture is
Hope—made for Bea by a
student who teaches welding.
Note her broken heart.

STEP UP NEWS AND UPDATES

2015 Accomplishments

- **Step Up has had a terrific first year!** It started off with a *BANG* with a huge contribution by a foundation that wishes to remain anonymous. We had other significant donations, as well—not bad for our first year as a non-profit! Christopher Bradford is Step Up's Chairperson of the Board; Bea Coté was hired as Founder and Executive Director.
- **Step Up scholarships** make it possible for motivated low-income abusers to complete the Batterer Intervention Program provided by IMPACT. Because IMPACT receives no government funding, it relies completely on client fees. While IMPACT keeps these fees as low as possible, we realize that not all clients can afford the weekly fee and even fewer can afford the workbook that is required. Some men are unemployed or underemployed; if they have a felony they may have difficulty finding work.
- Step Up has **provided sliding scale "scholarships" to 15 clients** this year. Only current clients are eligible and they must meet two criteria: financial need and effort. It is our hope that by assisting them we make it possible for them to complete the program and make it less likely that the financial burden of paying for the program falls on their wives or girlfriends. We have made probation officers and social workers aware of the Scholarship program because their participation is crucial. Once a client is enrolled and appears determined to attend, participate and benefit from IMPACT, the facilitator contacts the PO or SW to verify income. Then, using a sliding scale formula, a client's fee is reduced anywhere from 25%-75%, and the difference is paid by Step Up.
- **Step Up pays for approximately half of the workbooks clients receive at their intake.** We are very happy to have this important program available to our clients and believe it will mean more men complete the program and, hopefully, discontinue their abusive behaviors toward their partners and children.
- In March, Bea Coté was honored to be chosen as **Discovery's Inspire a Difference Everyday Hero** for her work with The Be There Group.

In the Works

- Step Up is funding a **new program called Legacy**, which will use volunteers who have completed the IMPACT program to become peer facilitators, and later, mentors to other men in the program. This will serve to connect men, especially those ages 18-25, with role models for respectful behavior to women. It will also keep men involved in the movement so that they can continue to grow in their insight and understanding about the impact of their thinking and behavior on those around them.
- **A little old state line means nothing to us—it is not a barrier but an opportunity!** That's right, after a Pulitzer prize-winning series last year by the *Charleston Post and Courier*, our South Carolina neighbors are implementing new programs to try to reduce the number of DV fatalities. We hope to partner with the York County courts and DV community to provide new services, particularly to abusers who are fathers.

YEAR-END DONATIONS

Be a part of what Step Up is doing
to help make families safer—
click here to donate online.

<http://impactdv.org/stepuphome/#donate1>

Visit **IMPACT** online and subscribe to the
online newsletter: www.impactdv.org

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