

Turn your face to the sun,
and the shadows fall behind you.

—Maori proverb



Annual Report
April 1, 2007 - March 31, 2008

ALTERNATIVES
for **Battered Women**

SAVING LIVES AND RESTORING HOPE

OUR MESSAGE

...FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When you deal with an issue as serious as domestic violence, the positive stories are that more precious. And this year, we have a very good story to tell: finally, after over 20 years of lobbying, New York state finally became the final state in the entire nation to pass legislation allowing non-related partners (that is, not married or related by children in common) to use Family Court, not Criminal Court, to obtain an Order of Protection.



This step makes it far easier and less complicated for victims of domestic violence to get legal protection against their abusers. This much-needed change will save hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives across our state every year. Many people all across New York State were involved in this struggle, not just ABW, and we are grateful to all of them for never giving up in what at times seemed like an endless battle. Thanks to everyone who was instrumental in this very welcome change!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Mazzotta'.

Catherine Mazzotta, LCSW

...FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Every year brings with it new stories of successes and setbacks, and this past year was no different. It seems that every day, the news is filled with stories that shock and sadden us. What you hear about less often, though, are the tales of triumph—and we do see them here at ABW, all the time. *That* is what keeps us going every day, for we know that we do make a difference in our community and in the many lives we save. With your help and support, we can continue to help anyone who needs us, anywhere, at any time.



Thank you for all you do to help us, so that we can help others!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Anderson'.

Teresa Anderson, Board Chair

The background is a bright yellow color. On the left side, there are several white, stylized swirls of varying sizes, some resembling floral or scrollwork patterns. On the right side, there are white, curved lines that sweep across the bottom and right edges, creating a sense of movement and flow.

Program Highlights

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Shelter

ABW's shelter continues to run at or near capacity week after week, with an annual occupancy rate of 96%, 2% higher than last year. We are here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week—whenever help is needed.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ We housed 251 women and 184 children, for a total of 435 residents.
- ▶ The average length of stay was 15.96 days.
- ▶ As always, we maintained 100% safety and security for our residents from their batterers.
- ▶ Once again, we served over 64,000 meals and snacks to our residents, while still managing to keep our budget at the incredibly low cost of just over \$1 per meal, despite rising food and other costs.

"You are wonderful beyond mention! I don't know what I would have done or where I would have been if it weren't for ABW. You have helped SAVE MY LIFE...I will never forget you!"

-former client, Transitional Support Services

Hotline

For many people, the hotline is their introduction to ABW. It might be someone in crisis, or perhaps a concerned neighbor or family member who doesn't know where to turn or what to do. We are here to answer their questions, offer help, and listen to their concerns, whenever they call.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ Responded to 2,026 new and 5,034 repeat calls, for a total of 7,060 calls
- ▶ Provided counseling 4,094 times and information 3,145 times
- ▶ Gave crisis counseling 825 times; advocacy 2,465 times; and referrals 4,333 times

Children's Services

Just because they're our littlest clients, doesn't mean they don't get the lion's share of our support! We know that, for every dollar we invest in treating the youngest victims of abuse, we reap much more in the future—in fewer incidents of abuse, in healthier relationships, and in the reduced need for the types of intervention and support we provide.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ Playgroup attendance: 6,533 for children in residence and 376 for children in the community (total: 6,909)
- ▶ Offered 15 playgroups during the week, and four on weekends, for a total of almost 1,000 over the year

NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Most people are surprised when they find out that we help just as many, if not more, clients who are not living in our shelter, as those who do. Some might have stayed with us at some point, but many have not—still, their needs are just as important, and we are every bit as committed to serving them, as we are the residents in our shelter.

Transitional Support

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ Delivered individual and closed-group services to 213 victims of domestic violence
- ▶ 302 non-residential women attended community support groups
- ▶ 188 women participated in outreach groups off-site
- ▶ ABW staff member Janet Chaize was honored by the Sunshine Lady Foundation with their annual Sunshine Lady Peace Award, honoring her many years of work on behalf of victims of domestic violence

Court Advocacy

Our court advocates are permanently located right in the Hall of Justice, so that anyone needing our help and support while navigating the legal system can get it. Whether it's advice, information, or just a quiet place to sit and wait, away from the intimidating presence of their abuser, our office provides a sanctuary of support and respite.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ Served 1,467 clients
- ▶ Helped secure 379 permanent orders of protection and 5 five-year orders of protection
- ▶ Made 758 referrals to the Legal Aid Society
- ▶ Helped protect 3,498 children, an increase of almost 50% over last year
- ▶ Due to a generous grant from the Cornell/Weinstein Family Foundation, we were able to renovate our client waiting area, making it much more welcoming and family-friendly

"She began to cry and asked who I was...I told her my name and that I worked here in the court for ABW. She then began to cry harder and stated that she felt so alone and I must have been an angel sent to help save her life."

—staff member, ABW Court Advocacy program

Domestic Violence Education and Community Awareness

We don't just intervene when a situation reaches a crisis—we also work hard, every day, to change attitudes about violence and abuse.

Our Educators meet with middle, high school and college students, to talk about what a healthy relationship is, before the patterns and habits of prior generations—or the messages that pop culture often presents—translate into another generation reeling from the effects of abusive behavior.

And, through our **Speaker's Bureau**, we also reach out to community groups—Scout troops, service organizations, community groups, health care and other professionals—to teach them about the issue of domestic violence, and dispel the many myths about this difficult issue.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ Our educators gave 397 presentations to 8,513 students from 25 high schools, six middle schools, four alternative education programs, in a total of 11 different school districts, as well as 11 colleges and adult ed programs, and 43 youth programs
- ▶ We also provided 71 presentations to 1,256 adults
- ▶ Paula Sheinberg, one of our Educators, received the Business Partner in Education award, given by The Greece School District
- ▶ Worked with local filmmaker Angelo Mancuso to create a 3½ minute DVD to use in schools, about “electronic leashing,” a new form of dating violence and control common among teens and young adults, made possible by a grant from the TJX Foundation



Safety First

The Safety First Project is a collaboration between Alternatives For Battered Women (ABW) and Child Protective Services Investigations (CPSI). Together ABW and CPSI provide joint case management and domestic violence advocacy services in cases where co-existing domestic violence and child abuse may have occurred. The aim of the project is to reduce foster care placements, enhance safety and reduce violence.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ 190 families/ women and children received joint CPSI and DVA services
- ▶ Safety Plans were developed 146 times
- ▶ Safe Housing and/or shelter was accessed 65 times
- ▶ Orders of protection were applied for and/or obtained 52 times
- ▶ 62 women accessed ABW Transitional Support Services for either Community Support Group or Domestic Violence Education Group

Volunteer Services

ABW volunteers are always willing to lend a hand—and an ear, and a shoulder to cry on, and a voice to read stories to children. You name it, they do it for us, and with a cheerful, can-do attitude! We are able to do so much more, for so many more people, with their support and help.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ▶ 95 volunteers provided 8,346 hours of service, valued at approximately \$162,830!
- ▶ 46 volunteers are providing ongoing service, and 26 new volunteers were added to the corps of current volunteers
- ▶ Eight new members were voted onto our Board of Directors at our annual meeting in November 2007
- ▶ ABW awarded its Fourth Annual Annette Itkin Volunteer of the Year award, to board member **Amy Austin** (indirect service award) and volunteers **Julie Cammeron** and **Amy Stern** (direct service award). Special recognition was given to **Wesley Bauer**, our AmeriCorps Volunteer; and to the late **Janice Winterman**, who worked as a weekly volunteer in our children's playroom until her tragic and untimely death in Spring 2008.

Award Winners

Every year, ABW is proud to recognize members of our community who speak out against domestic violence, and work toward its eradication. We are thrilled to give the following individuals and groups the thanks they so richly deserve.

This award is presented to an individual, business or organization in our community for their commitment to restoring hope to victims of domestic violence. This year, it is our honor to present the *Restore the Hope Award* to **Nixon Peabody LLP**, whose attorneys have worked tirelessly and diligently on behalf of dozens of our clients and ABW over the years.

One of the toughest hurdles for victims to overcome is the expense of getting legal help, whether it's obtaining an Order of Protection, filing criminal charges, or getting a divorce/ fighting for custody. In concert with Legal Aid, the lawyers at Nixon Peabody have helped ABW clients for over 20 years, without pay. They also donate many of their services to the agency, providing legal and professional guidance and support. And, they also help us by underwriting and attending our fundraisers and special events. We are so lucky to have them and their expertise working for and with us!



This award recognizes individuals or organizations that work to educate and make our community aware of the issue of domestic violence. ABW is pleased to present this year's *Stop the Hurt Award* to **Sandy Waters, Scott Spezzano, Sarah Lanieu** and the staff of **98-WPXY**.

They have been good friends to us for many years—talking about the issue of domestic violence often, and in an informed but sympathetic manner, on their morning show; organizing fundraisers for us, including the first annual local “Walk a Mile In Her Shoes” event in 2007; to sponsoring billboard campaigns during National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. And Sandy has graciously volunteered to serve as the MC for our annual agency fundraiser for the past three years.

We are particularly grateful that they address this issue as it relates to and affects young people, their core audience. The only way to eradicate interpersonal violence is to address it as soon as possible, so that we can prevent the cycle of violence from repeating itself endlessly. Not only do Scott, Sandy and the rest of the staff at WPXY understand this, they make sure that their audience does, too. What a terrific, kind, caring bunch of folks!



Sharon Roberts Rivais serves on, and is past president and treasurer, of our Board of Directors; acted as treasurer once again, when the official treasurer had to take a brief leave of absence due to additional career demands; helps us get through our annual audit, with her skills and knowledge of financial matters; and attends, or arranges for other board members to attend, community-sponsored fundraisers as ABW's official ambassador. Is there anything she can't or won't do for us? We haven't seen anything yet—and it's not for lack of asking on our part! We are so very grateful for dedicated, loyal friends like Sharon. And we hope she is still around and part of our agency many years from now, when the new baby in her family is a grandchild!!!

2007-2008 Financials

OPERATING REVENUE

Reimbursement from government agencies (fee for services).....	1,000,540
Government and agency grants	622,467
United Way funding	158,604
Investment income	28,767
Gift income	332,120
Special events	63,319
Value of donated goods and services	18,735
Other	4,071

Total Operating Revenue 2,228,623

OPERATING EXPENSES

Services	1,698,338
Management and general	320,584
Fundraising expenses	129,180

Total Operating Expenses 2,148,102

SUMMARIZED BALANCE SHEET

(as of March 31, 2008)

Cash.....	356,796
Accounts receivable	606,878
Investments (unrestricted only) ..	251,996
Property	696,908
Others	22,873

Total Assets 1,935,451

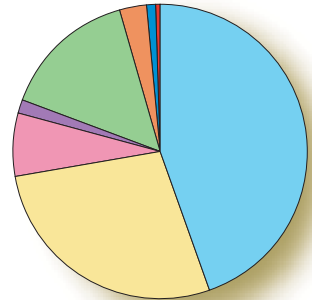
Liabilities.....	394,615
Net Assets.....	1,540,836

Total Liabilities and

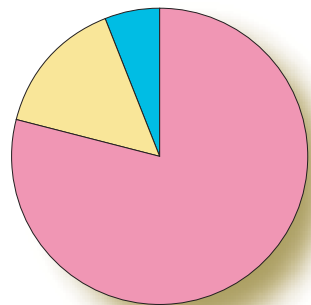
Net Assets..... 1,935,451

Total Agency Budget 2,051,507

REVENUE



EXPENSES



Our Mission

Alternatives for Battered Women exists to enhance the quality of life and empower individuals affected by, or at risk of, domestic violence. The agency provides a full continuum of services, including crisis counseling, support and prevention/education.

2007-2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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IN MEMORIAM - **Peter Hixson**

ABW lost a longtime friend, board member and supporter in Peter Hixson, who died in December 2007 after a courageous battle with cancer. Peter brought to every board meeting and event, a sense of class, charm and graciousness that is all too rare these days. We are so grateful for his belief in our work, and he will be deeply missed by ABW board, staff and volunteers. How honored we are that we got the chance to know and work with him.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM STAFF

Catherine Mazzotta, LCSW Executive Director

Janine Lucas Assistant Executive Director

Karen Ackerman Facilities Manager

Deb Howe Allen Director of Development

Marianette Bryan Residential Administrative Coordinator

Janet Chaize, MS, LMHC Transitional Support Services Coordinator

Valerie Edwards-Brown Finance Director

Ruth Kramer Volunteer Services Coordinator

P. J. Leccese Food Service Manager

Andrea Mills Court Advocacy Coordinator

Paula Sheinberg Domestic Violence Education Program Coordinator

Carolyn Washington Residential Program Coordinator

ALTERNATIVES for **Battered** *Women*

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Hotline (585) 232-7353 • TTY (585) 232-1741
Visit our website at www.abwrochester.org

Alternatives for Battered Women meets Better Business Bureau Charity Standards as of November 1, 2003 review in the following: annual reports, direct mail, fund raising and promotional items and brochures, news releases, newsletters, periodicals, print media, presentation materials, program brochures, radio and television advertising