

January Newsletter

Resolution for Response

Special Dates

- Jan 4 -Volunteer hours due
- Jan 7 -Volunteer mtg - 4 pm

Happy New Year to all! Even if you're not a fan of the cold, snowy weather that January brings, who can resist the idea of a fresh new start to the year?! Which brings us to the issue of New Year's resolutions. Did I hear a collective groan right there?? I know, I know, I'm not a fan of the pressure and guilt that come along with resolutions, especially when you're halfway through that yummy bowl of ice cream and suddenly realize that yet another resolution has bitten the dust.

So I'm asking you to consider something just a bit different for this New Year. Could you make a resolution to make the clients that Response serves more of a priority for you? If you're reading this newsletter, you likely have a connection to our organization, and care about the work we do. And many of you already give so much to our clients—thank you! We also realize that not everybody's lives revolve around Response and the issues of domestic and sexual violence, the way that ours do.

So now you might be wondering, "What else can I do? I'm not sure what they need!" You are in luck, because listed below are just a few ways that you can help us out! Pick one, (or two, or eight), items that you don't already do, and dive in!

- ♦ **Wish list** –Pick up an item or two once a month from our current wish list. Or share the list with an organization that you are associated with. The updated list can be found on our website. It is updated fairly often, so check back regularly.
- ♦ **Distribute materials** –Ask us for brochures, palm cards, flyers, etc. to display in the businesses/offices that you frequent.
- ♦ **Special project** –Gather some friends, church group, or other organization and do a project for the shelter. We can always use a good cleaning crew, inside and out, or use your talents for some other project.
- ♦ **Attend volunteer/board meetings** –We realize that things come up and life just keeps on getting busier, but there is a lot of benefit to gathering together to get things accomplished.
- ♦ **Social media** - Share, like, and comment on Facebook posts! The more action, the more people see them. Remember that we have Instagram and Twitter, too, so spread the word!
- ♦ **Training** –If you haven't had volunteer training, or would like additional training, (like for the hotline!), please consider it. Check out the website for more info.
- ♦ **Fundraising** –Put up flyers, volunteer to be on the fundraising committee, come to the event!
- ♦ **Attend events** –Come to shelter events, community events, any events that we invite you to.
- ♦ **Elevator speech** –Think about how you can advocate for our cause and TALK to people! The solution starts here in our community!

Thank you for making a resolution for Response!

Current Needs

- **Sponge mops!!**
- **Walmart and Sheetz gift cards**
- **Tall kitchen and ESPECIALLY 33 gal trash bags**
- **Plastic food storage containers**

Survivor Story

Christa Hayburn



Christa Hayburn is a survivor on so many fronts as well as being the epitome of resilience. After growing up in a home full of addiction and abuse, and surviving sexual assault by a supervisor in her workplace, she is now an advocate for sexual assault survivors as well as a women's leadership coach.

Growing up with a father who was addicted to heroin and a mother who was an alcoholic, in a home subject to domestic violence, Hayburn learned survival skills that helped her to remain strong and resilient in spite of the uncertainty of her everyday life. Being embarrassed to bring anyone to her home, she closed herself off from having close friends; she relied on an aunt to provide a safe haven and to give her the incentive to create a more loving, stable family life for herself as she grew up.

As a result of many negative interactions with police officers due to her father's addiction, Hayburn wanted to go into a profession where she could help people; she eventually ended up being a police officer in Philadelphia. It was there that she was sexually assaulted by a superior officer, Carl Holmes, who expected sexual favors in return for promoting her. She told very few people about the assault for two years, out of fear of losing her job.

After experiencing an on-the-job injury that would result in the loss of her ability to be a police officer, she finally felt free enough to report the assault to the Internal Affairs Department in 2008. As part of the investigation, she was brought to an interrogation room and grilled for 6-8 hours by two investigators, who attacked her credibility and expressed doubt about her claim. This re-traumatizing experience brings to light the lack of understanding of appropriate ways to handle sexual assault reports.

Her complaint was eventually dismissed by Internal Affairs. It is important to note that her case was overseen by a department chief who was later accused of sexual misconduct by a female employee. During the next four years, Hayburn fought for her case to be taken seriously in order to prevent similar abuses from happening to others.

At the time, the city also was interfering with her workman's compensation claim from her injury; Hayburn feels this interference was connected to the fact that she filed the sexual assault complaint. So she filed a federal retaliation suit against the city, which resulted in a years-long legal and financial battle, which eventually drained her to the point of dropping the suit.

After the suit was dropped Hayburn was contacted by a journalist and asked to tell her story. She says that this was the most freeing time of her life, that she finally got to share her experience in an effort to change things for other women.

Hayburn works at the rape crisis center, WOAR, and is an outspoken advocate for changing the way that institutions handle sexual assault accusations. She recently became a member of the Crime Victim's Advisory Committee in Philadelphia which will work toward empowering witnesses and eliminating the trauma felt by victims. Hayburn also testified on behalf of the VAWA reauthorization.

Hayburn continues to work tirelessly toward helping survivors find their voices and overcome the shame that they experience. As the founder of the "Empower Her Voice" movement, Hayburn encourages women to find healing and strength through sharing their stories. "Breaking the chains of silence and sharing our struggles...will release the Victim and instill the Survivor within."

Recap of events

Holiday Parades

We were so excited to participate in THREE local holiday parades this year! Friday, November 30th found us in the very long Woodstock parade, where thousands of spectators greeted and waved to us. Sat., Dec 1, was a cold and damp day in New Market, but the atmosphere was warm and welcoming. And we rounded off the parade circuit on Sun., Dec 2 in Toms Brook on a sunny, warm afternoon. As we were handing out candy, whistles and lip balm, many folks seemed pleased to see us in the parades, and thanked us for our work. Although it took a lot of manpower to accomplish, the outreach opportunity was so worthwhile! Please consider joining us next year, as we would love to have a strong showing for our organization!



Holiday Fun



Our annual Holiday Fun event was held at the shelter on the evening of Dec. 3, and it really was fun! Several exciting rounds of Winter Bingo and a snowman craft for the kids kicked off the evening; we then all pitched in to decorate the shelter to make it cozy for the clients and staff. Refreshments and a cookie exchange finished off the event. Check out some snapshots of our fun!



Upcoming Event

Fashion Show



We know that it might be hard to imagine spring right now, but plans are afoot for our annual Spring Fashion Show! So save the date now and plan to have a great time from 2-4 pm on April 7th in the banquet room at the VFW in Edinburg!