

Amani Center

Giving child victims in Columbia County a voice and helping them to heal...



WINTER 2006-2007

If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much.

Marian Wright Edelman

How many children are sexually abused?

Authorities tell us that one in three girls and one in five boys will be sexually abused by the time they are 18 years old. Do you have children or grandchildren? Think about the children you know. Do they total at least eight? Statistically, two of them will be abused. You may not know it. They may not tell you because children are excellent at keeping dark secrets. Who will you turn to if one of those eight children is abused?

What happens to a child who is abused? One survivor's story

Children believe they are the cause of all the bad things that happen to them, and they feel their emotions profoundly. So it was for me at age six. That was when a male family member began sexually abusing me. At first he told me it was a game, but when I tried to make him stop, he told me it was my fault. He threatened to kill me if I ever told anyone, so I never did. I was too afraid. The abuse continued, and because I remained silent, my emotional wounds seared deep into my psyche.

I took on a great sense of guilt and shame. It wasn't as if I had *done* something bad. It was more like I *was* something bad—inherently bad. As I got older, my feelings of self-loathing increased. I kept to myself and was very lonely. As I entered my teens, I fell into a deepening depression. My parents didn't understand my behavior, and by that time, I didn't understand it either.

In my 20s and 30s, I moved through life wearing a false mask, terrified that if the world saw my authentic self, it would be repulsed. In my desperation, I became chameleon-like, becoming whatever people wanted me to be so that they wouldn't reject me. I also became very sexual, equating sex with love. In truth, I was incapable of loving or being loved, because it takes trust in one's self and others to really love someone. How could I trust myself? Wasn't the real me evil and worthless? And how could I trust others not to leave me if they saw the real me? Therefore, I never had a healthy relationship.

In my 40s, the rage I had repressed as a child began to break through. I tried to silence it with alcohol and drugs. By the time I reached my 43rd birthday, I was a raging alcoholic and drug addict. When I quit the boozing and drugging in my 50s, those painful feelings began to break through once again, I stopped them with a different form of compulsive behavior—overeating. I was willing to do anything to avoid experiencing all the pain I had stuffed. I gained over 60 pounds during the first two years. It was then that I finally caved in and sought professional help.

Such is the experience of many who were sexually abused as children. However, with your help, the Amani Center can help the child victims in our community and give them back their potential to live healthy, happy, and productive lives.

***Please give generously to the Amani Center.
Make this help possible.***



From the Director...

Dear Amani Center Friends,

We desperately need your help in order to keep our offices open through next June. Will you help us?

Someone asked me recently if the Amani Center was really needed in this county. My answer was *"Absolutely! Our mission is to diagnose and treat child abuse. No other agency in this county provides these specific services, so who will save the children if we're not here?"*

The ugly truth is that child abuse is occurring in epidemic proportions—both here and across the nation. Yet, it is more difficult to approach than other epidemics, as there is no immunization, the abuser can be anyone, and a community effort is required in order to fully address this issue.

That's why the Amani Center is so important. We diagnosis, treat, and prevent child abuse in Columbia County. These are our children.

Last year approximately 400 children needed our abuse assessments, but we were only able to serve 74. Over 300 abused children needed therapy, but we were only able to serve 30. Over 500 individuals needed our family support services, but we were only able to serve 122. What blocked us from serving all those in need was lack of funds.

In total, the Amani Center provided 3,181 services to abused victims and/or their families. It is estimated that of the abused children in Columbia County, over 60% are not receiving services from the Amani Center. It is our goal to reach out to these children and families and to provide them the assessment, treatment, and support services they need. If we truly want our community to be healthy, then we have to take care of our children. Therefore, *we must have your help!*

Our greatest challenge in 2006 was to secure adequate funding for the entire year—never an easy task for a group of dedicated service providers who know nothing about fundraising. We met the challenge with great trepidation but did manage to have some success. It helped, but it wasn't enough.

***Now, as we move into 2007, we are faced
with the possibility of another shutdown. We must raise
an additional \$15,000 this year to remain fully operational.***

Our funds were so low by June that our Board of Directors was forced to shut down the Amani Center for the entire month. During that time, the specialized child abuse staff provided no services or support to Columbia County child abuse victims and their families. We ended our fiscal year (June 30, 2006) with a large deficit and no funding.

Following the month long closure, there remained a deficit so my position as the Director was cut in half. In fact, we cut back in all areas. Our only remaining staff was the providers of direct service to abused children and their families. Even with those extreme measures, the Amani Center remained under-funded.

Now, as we move into 2007, we are faced with the possibility of another shutdown. We must raise an additional \$15,000 this year to remain fully operational. We are appealing for your help in meeting this critical goal.

We are addressing 2007 with tenacity and optimism, as we develop new ways to engage this community. We need your unwavering support, so that together we can face child abuse with a loud voice that says, *"NO MORE!"* The time to make a difference is *NOW*. Let's give children a voice, one child at a time!

Lisa Galovich
Executive Director

Amani Center

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2006 Luau



This year's 4th Annual Luau fundraiser was held on September 9th at the Columbia County Fairgrounds. The event featured the *Kaleo & Co Polynesian Revue*, a live Hawaiian music and dance company, plus a Hawaiian dinner, dessert auction, silent auction, and service auction. This "adults only" event was attended by nearly 200 individuals, with many adding to the color by dressing in bold Hawaiian attire. By everyone's account, it was a huge success. We're looking forward to next year's Luau, which will be held on September 8, 2007. More information will be provided in upcoming newsletters. If you would like to be a sponsor of the 2007 Luau, please call Lisa Galovich at (503) 366-4005



The 4th Annual Amani Center Luau was held at the Columbia County Fairgrounds in September 2006.

*A special thanks to all who attended or sponsored this year's Luau.
Your generosity gave abused children a voice
and put them on the road to recovery.*

How your donations are used...

- ♥ \$1,500 will pay for one forensic/medical child abuse assessment for one child.
- ♥ \$1,000 will almost pay for one month's rent of the Amani Center's offices.
- ♥ \$250 will pay for one month of therapy for one child abuse victim.
- ♥ \$150 will pay for the Center's telephone bill for one month.
- ♥ \$100 will pay for one child intake and assessment preparation.
- ♥ \$75 will pay for critical office supplies for one month.
- ♥ \$50 will pay for one therapy session for a child abuse victim.
- ♥ \$25 will pay for one safety plan and support for a non-offending parent.
- ♥ \$15 will pay for one 8-pack of videotapes needed for recording the child's Forensic Interview.
- ♥ \$10 will pay for two rolls of colposcope film and their development.
- ♥ \$ 5 will contribute to the purchase of one of the above.

"Unfortunately Columbia County is still in the beginning stage in the effort to end child abuse. The Amani Center continues to struggle to keep their doors open to help the children in our community that are being abused by the ones that should be protecting them. Only with the continued financial support from individuals and businesses in the community can the Center continue to operate. The Amani Center, with the leadership of Lisa Galovich, has come a long way in establishing the trust of local criminal justice agencies, child welfare and community partners. We need to continue this effort to end child abuse in Columbia County."

Dawn Hunt, CC District Attorney Staff Member

"The Amani Center is a valuable resource to law enforcement professionals throughout Columbia County. A thorough and accurate child abuse assessment provided by the Amani Center could be the difference between a conviction and acquittal."

Lt. Terry Moss, St. Helens Police Department

Volunteer Opportunities

We need YOUR help!

Call Lisa @ (503) 366-4005

Family Support Services Specialist

Donation Program Support

Newsletter Writing

Statistics Tracking

Medical Billing

Grant Writing

Invoicing

Intake Specialist

Janitorial Services

Office Assistance-Clerical Support

Fundraising: Support with Small Events

Fundraising: Support with Large Auctions

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