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FOCIS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017

FLED!

Submitted by Jennette Andrews

“We’re coming!” That’s all the warning I had time to give my friends. I hung up the phone, glanced at the clock and sprang into action. It has already been five minutes since he stormed out, looking for more booze. I only had about twenty minutes to get a few things, grab my sleeping son and get out before he came back and “really showed me how it was gonna be around here”.

We made it through the locked gate and out the one way road- all way sure, he would appear and block my path of escape. Ass I drove on into the night I passed the fire station, thinking of all the times I had nearly turned in and begged for refuge- too late now. I breathed a little easier as I reached town limits, and then we were there at our friend's home.

The door opened and warmth enveloped us. Strong arms relieved me of my burden of carrying my son, and up the stairs into a cozy bed he went. I tucked him in and he went back to sleep, this was a safe, familiar place. Then, and only then, could I slow down and begin to process it all. Fled really. I had evacuated my disaster of a marriage.

What's next?

As I sat with an ice pack in the giant knot on my forehead (“hematoma! You should have gone to the hospital” I can hear my best friend yelling in protest even now). As I sat there shaking and crying with shock and pain finally setting in, I thought of all the things he said he would do if I ever took his son. Kill me, kill himself, even kill our son. But he was working on a least the first two already if I had stayed.

I knew I had made the only choice left for me but what now? This was literally the first place he would look for me. It was the only place I had to go other than a shelter. We hid my van at the casino for the rest of the night and the next day they put us up in a hotel. The following day, I contacted Tribal Health and FOCIS and was swept into another hotel for the weekend.

My so loved all the hotel stays and didn't understand much. At four, he was innocent and luckily mostly untouched so far by the abuse. I told him we were on vacation and his dad was working away at first. Not unusual. But we went back to our friends' home, where we live still, two years later and I had to explain that his dad would not be joining us. But weren't we much happier?

STAFF

Erik Lyon
BHS
Director

BRITTANY
FOCIS
Program
Coordinator

**Mark
Kroll**
Editor
& Newsletter
Design

FRONT PAGE STORY cont.

I like to say no woman had ever had a softer place to land. That may or may not be true, and what I mean by that is that is I know how lucky I am that I had friends, family really, who were ready and willing to help me in such a terrible time of need. I didn't have to spend a single night in my car of drive across country to get a place we would be safe. I didn't even have to visit a shelter once and that is an option I considered and welcomed.

I urge anyone who is unhappy and frightened to tell someone about it. If someone is hurting you or forcing you to stay, or work or have sex against you will, get help. No one, not your spouse or parent or any other family member has that right. Tell you friends, your family, your doctor, your clergy, a fire-fighter, anyone. Go ahead call the police.

I thought no one would care. Believe me..we care.

The following is an example of a domestic violence safety plan:

If you are in an abusive relationship, think about...

Having important phone numbers nearby for you and your children. Numbers to have are the police, hotlines, friends and the local shelter.

Friends or neighbors you could tell about the abuse. Ask them to call the police if they hear angry or violent noises. If you have children, teach them how to dial 911. Make up a code word that you can use when you need help.

How to get out of your home safely. Practice ways to get out.

Safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is going to happen try to get your abuser to one of these safer places.

Any weapons in the house. Think about ways that you could get them out of the house.

Even if you do not plan to leave, think of where you could go. Think of how you might leave.

Try doing things that get you out of the house - taking out the trash, walking the pet or going to the store. Put together a bag of things you use everyday (see the checklist below). Hide it where it is easy for you to get.

Going over your safety plan often.

If you consider leaving your abuser, think about...

Four places you could go if you leave your home.

People who might help you if you left. Think about people who will keep a bag for you. Think about people who might lend you money. Make plans for your pets.

Keeping change for phone calls or getting a cell phone.

Opening a bank account or getting a credit card in your name.

How you might leave. Try doing things that get you out of the house - taking out the trash, walking the family pet, or going to the store. Practice how you would leave.

How you could take your children with you safely. There are times when taking your children with you may put all of your lives in danger. You need to protect yourself to be able to protect your children.

Putting together a bag of things you use everyday. Hide it where it is easy for you to get.

Safety Planning cont.

ITEMS TO TAKE, IF POSSIBLE

- Children (if it is safe)
- Money
- Keys to car, house, work
- Extra clothes
- Medicine
- Important papers for you and your children
- Birth certificates
- Social security cards
- School and medical records
- Bankbooks, credit cards
- Driver's license
- Car registration
- Welfare identification
- Passports, green cards, work permits
- Lease/rental agreement
- Mortgage payment book, unpaid bills
- Insurance papers
- Divorce papers, custody orders
- Address book
- Pictures, jewelry, things that mean a lot to you
- Items for your children (toys, blankets, etc.)

*Think about reviewing your safety plan often.

If you have left your abuser, think about...

Your safety - you still need to.

Getting a cell phone.

Getting a TRO from the court. Keep a copy with you all the time. Give a copy to the police, people who take care of your children, their schools and your boss.

Changing the locks. Consider putting in stronger doors, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, a security system and outside lights.

Telling friends and neighbors that your abuser no longer lives with you. Ask them to call the police if they see your abuser near your home or children.

Telling people who take care of your children the names of people who are allowed to pick them up. If you have a TRO protecting your children, give their teachers and/or babysitters a copy of it.

Telling someone at work about what has happened. Ask that person to screen your calls. If you have a TRO that includes where you work, consider giving your boss a copy of it and a picture of the abuser. Think about and practice a safety plan for your workplace. This should include going to and from work.

Not using the same stores or businesses that you did when you were with your abuser.

Someone that you can call if you feel down. Call that person if you are thinking about going to a support group or workshop.

Safe way to speak with your abuser if you must.

Going over your safety plan often.

Mel B Granted Restraining Order against Allegedly Abusive Estranged Husband

The Spice Girl claims Stephen Belafonte would “beat me down to let me know he was in charge.”

By Stephanie Marcus of The Huffington Post, www.huffingtonpost.com

Spice Girl Mel B, aka Melanie Brown, has been granted a restraining order against her estranged husband, Stephen Belafonte, who she says physically and emotionally abused her for years, according to TMZ.

The “America’s Got Talent” judge filed for divorce from Belafonte in March after 10 years of marriage. According to TMZ, a judge granted Brown her request for a restraining order requiring Belafonte to stay away from her, as well as their daughter, Madison, and Brown’s two other daughters from previous relationships.

Brown’s horrific allegations against Belafonte are numerous and date back to the beginning of their marriage. In her declaration, she claims that while getting ready at home for the “Dancing with the Stars” finale in November 2007, her husband began choking her and slammed her down onto the hardwood floor. She says she began to see a pattern emerge; whenever she achieved any kind of success he would “beat me down to let me know he was in charge.”

She also details two incidents in 2012, in which Belafonte allegedly beat her. The 41-year-old recalls that in July, her estranged husband, who is a producer and director, flew into a jealous rage when he thought she was flirting with Usher, and alleges that Belafonte punched her with a closed fist in the face and split her lip. A month later, she claims he punched her again and pushed her down on the carpet, which gave her “rug burn” on her face. Brown alleges that Belafonte forced her to tweet that she had injured herself running in heels.

Other allegations against Belafonte include impregnating their children’s nanny and then demanding she get an abortion. Brown also claims that Belafonte forced her to participate in threesomes with “random women,” which she says he secretly recorded and has often threatened to release.

Mel B Granted Restraining Order against Allegedly Abusive Estranged Husband, cont...

Additionally, the singer claims that Belafonte keeps a gun at home, which he is prohibited from possessing due to a 2003 domestic violence conviction with his then-girlfriend Nicole Contreras. According to TMZ, Belafonte's home was searched on Friday by the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives after his own brother claimed he had a gun, but ATF agents left empty handed.

For his part, Belafonte is denying the allegations and told The Mirror's cameraman he's "shocked."

"I think someone's trying to set me up to look like a bad guy," he said.

But this isn't the first time Belafonte denied these kind of allegations. In December 2014, Twitter lit up with concern from "X Factor" fans discussing the mysterious marks that appeared all over Brown's body. The marks coincided with Brown's three-day hospitalization for alleged stomach pains. At the time, Belafonte responded to the chatter on Twitter:

Weeks later, Brown did speak out about the rumors, writing on Instagram, "This is for my fans havin problems with my Twitter will be back soon! I'm very good was very polly [sic] but much better now and for the record my hubby never would lay a hand on me sorry took so long but any response fuels rumors."

Need help? In the U.S., call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) for the National Domestic Violence Hotline .

10 Self-care Ideas for Healthy Relationships

1. **Speak out your thoughts.** Don't be afraid to say what you really think. No one will understand you unless you speak out.
2. **Tell others your expectations.** People might fail you. But it's fine to let them know so that both of you can adjust.
3. **Say NO sometimes.** If saying yes makes you feel bad.
4. **Honor your emotions.** Admit them and never try to hide them. They are gifts.
5. **Minimize people-pleasing.** Unless that's what you really want to do. You have no responsibility to please anyone.
6. **Free from restrictions imposed by others.** Take them as advice instead of commands. You're the only one who is in control of your body and mind.
7. **Be open to new things.** Don't be afraid that changes will make you into a different person. Perhaps they lead to a better you.
8. **Share your past.** No matter it's wonderful or awful. It's your past which makes you who you are today.
9. **Be patient to others and yourself.** Everything takes time. It takes time to quit a habit or to change something. Don't rush.
10. **Leave some room for yourself.** No matter what kind of relationship you are in, the most important one is the relationship with yourself. Work on it.

HAPPENINGS

ANGER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Wednesdays, 6-7:30pm. Co-ed six week group, start date contingent upon sign-ups.
\$40 fee for non-native clients.
Contact Tom @ 532-6811, ex 270

POSITIVE PARENTING & POSITIVE PARENTING OF TEENS

is done on an individual basis as space and time allow.
\$30 fee for non-native clients. For info or sign up,
Contact Mark @ 532-6811 ex 249.

FOCIS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

Women's Support Group Tuesdays 3 p.m. to 5p.m.
For info, contact Brittany@ FOCIS
PROGRAM, 532-6811 ex 270.

BRAVE AT HEART CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

For anyone who has been touched by Cancer
Meetings every 2nd Thursday
5:00 to 6:00 pm
Call Ashley, 532-6811 ex.272

GIRLS TAKE CHARGE GROUP

Every other Wednesday, 4:30 to 5:30
Teen Girls are invited
Call Ashley @ 532-6811 ex 272

BOYS TAKE CHARGE GROUP

Thursday afternoons, 3:30 to 4:30
Teen young men are invited
For info or sign-up call
Ashley, 532-6811 ex 272

THURSDAY SUPPORT GROUP

Explore both Modern & Traditional forms of beadwork
and other Traditional crafts. Thursday afternoons
from 3:00pm to 5:00pm in the South Conference room,
Call Mark @ 532-6811 ex. 249. For info or sign up.

HISTORY KEEPERS

Elders group, 55 and older
Tuesdays 12:30pm to 1:15pm
For more information or to attend,
Call Ashley @ 532-6811 ex. 270

RED ROAD TO WELLBRIETY MEETING

For those that have suffered alcoholism and
drug addiction and other forms of
self-defeating behaviors, you can walk the 12
steps of the Red Road to recovery.
WEEKLY MEETINGS ON WEDNESDAY @ 6.00 PM
@ FEATHER RIVER TRIBAL HEALTH
530-534-5394
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

LOCAL DV SERVICES

FOCIS PROGRAM SERVICES

Serving Native American Women over 18

Advocacy Services, Restraining Order assistance, court accompaniment,
Community education and in-service training, Crisis intervention services,
Women's Talking Circles, Resource information & referral service.
Feather River Tribal Health 530-534-5394 ext. 270

Catalyst DV Services

24-hour hotline for DV intervention & referrals, Emergency Shelter, Children's
Program at HAVEN, Transitional Housing & Household establishment
Drop-in centers, Individual counseling, Support groups, Restraining Order
assistance & Court Accompaniment, Community Outreach.
24-Hour Hotline 800-895-8476 Oroville Drop-in Center 530-532-6427

SHARP (Self Help and Referral Program)

Self Help center that provides general assistance to people who do not have
attorneys. Assistance is provided in the areas of family law, guardianships,
evictions, small claims, name changes, and restraining orders.
1675 Montgomery Street Oroville, 530-532-7015



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