

ADULTS SAVING KIDS
(FORMERLY A-STOP)
1901 PORTLAND AVENUE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404
612/872-0684

WEB:
www.adultssavingkids.org

E-MAIL:
aerickson@
adultssavingkids.org

STAFF:

Rev. Al Erickson
Executive Director

Ina Erickson
Prayer Coordinator

Phyllis Beatty
Director of Training

Amy Hartman
Project Manager

CONSULTANT:

Doris Pagelkopf
Fundraising/Planning

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Stuart Goldberg, Chair
Elaine Degelau, Secretary

Kari Christianson

Herb Smith

Sue Sorenson

Scott Swanson

The mission of
ADULTS SAVING KIDS:

To prevent commercial
sexual exploitation,
bringing honor and
accountability to all
relationships.

ADVENTURES

June 2003

ADULTS SAVING KIDS MEETS WITH ELCA LEADERS

On May 15, 2003 ADULTS SAVING KIDS was part of an historic event. Al Erickson and Amy Hartman met with ELCA churchwide staff as they explored how to implement the ELCA *Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation*. This was the first time there was an event such as this, focused on implementing an ELCA social statement.

The LaCrosse Area Synod core team – Karen Birkedal, Mary Molstad, and Pastor Steve Meyer – also participated and contributed greatly to the discussion. People of many divisions and departments showed interest, and there is much follow-up needed.

SPECIAL SPEAKING SHAKES THINGS LOOSE

Back in January, Al and Ina Erickson spoke at Salem Lutheran Church in Longville, MN. This congregation sponsored a community-wide event where people heard clearly the challenge of keeping their youth safe. Al and Ina also led a *Wise as Serpents* Introduction and a Prayer Project Lifesaver Training. Ginger Minske of Salem did much of the coordinating to make these events happen.

Out of this visit Salem Lutheran of became a pilot ADULTS SAVING KIDS congregation. They have since taught *Wise as Serpents* and initiated Prayer Project Lifesaver.

On that same trip, Al and Ina teamed up with Matt Wentz of the Minneapolis Police Department to

Al and Amy also met with the program staff of the Women of the ELCA. A search is on to find ways for the national Women of the ELCA and synodical groups to be involved.

Rev. Les Weber, the staff person who organized the events, wrote afterward:

“Your remarks were very motivational, owing to your great knowledge of the subject, your sensitivity to human need and understanding of human sinfulness, and to your commitment to Christ.”

“I was delighted by the contribution that the people of LaCrosse Area Synod made... What they were able to say about how they’ve tried to bring this message to life in their synod made very clear how ELCA messages and social statements can function if supported.”

present at a community meeting held at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa, MN. Many people expressed interest in following up in their own churches. A local newspaper ran a front-page story on how local girls were being taken into being used in the massive American sex industry.

In April the Listening Ear Crisis Center Project in Alexandria, MN sponsored a community meeting at which Al Erickson, Ann Quinn Robinson of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and Heidi Wright spoke about the problem of juvenile prostitution. People who volunteer at Listening Ear were particularly interested in seeing what they can do about commercial sexual exploitation in their own communities.

ADVENTURES

FIRST-EVER COHORT SPEAKER TRAINING TO BE HELD JUNE – NOVEMBER 2003

Up to eight ‘speakers-in-training’ will participate in the Cohort Speaker Training this summer and fall. A Cohort Training is a structure in which several people begin at the same time, follow the same general schedule of events, and complete at the same time. This Cohort will gather through phone conference calls every two weeks to support each other and learn from Guest Trainers.

Those who participate in this Cohort will be completing speaker training requirements such as community interviews, presentation evaluations, and review of Speaker Manual information and other ADULTS SAVING KIDS resources.

Amy Hartman and Phyllis Beatty are working together to provide support and training to the speakers who participate in this program. We acknowledge all those who are ‘in-training’ on behalf of the young people in their communities. Please keep the Cohort participants in your prayers during their time of training.

FIRST TWO ‘SPEAKERS’ CERTIFIED

Barb Gullickson and Leone Bolinske of Western North Dakota synod have completed all the requirements to become ADULTS SAVING KIDS Speakers. Barb is the FIRST Speaker fully certified by ADULTS SAVING KIDS, and she was given her certificate on March 8 while at the Conference Team training in Great Falls, MT. Leone is the SECOND Speaker to be certified, and she will be receiving her certificate soon.

CONGRATULATIONS BARB AND LEONE!

There are over 20 people who are currently ‘in training’ to become Speakers. Watch for updates on who the next Speaker is...

EVENT AT UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LAW SCHOOL SHOWS TOUGH REALITY

Two Twin Cities organizations – WATCH and The Minnesota Justice Foundation – sponsored a half-day conference called ‘An Overview of Juvenile Prostitution in Minnesota,’ which was held at the U of M Law School on April 11.

Police Officer Matt Wenthe demonstrated that it takes only 24 clicks of the mouse and 300 seconds of time to find a prostitute in Minnesota.

Matt and Ann Quinn Robinson, Special Agent for Juvenile Prostitution at the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, stated the problem clearly:

1. Society says juvenile prostitution is accepted and there is no resistance.
2. Two current DVD’s that video stores can’t keep in stock are: *Pimps Up and Hos Down* and *American Pimp*.
3. It is not a priority for law enforcement.
4. The workload to prosecute those involved is tremendous.
5. The Mall of America is the No. 1 spot for juvenile prostitution and pimps.
6. The Internet is the No. 1 enemy.
7. It’s worse than homicide
8. **Minnesota nice – Ugh!**

What will it take to solve the problem? Parents, churches, and citizens need to be made aware of the problem and be willing to speak out to change the systems that cover up juvenile prostitution. They must stop being Minnesota nice.

START PRAYING
for our young people.
STOP THE PREYING
on our young people.

TWIN CITIES *WISE AS SERPENTS* TRAINING SCHEDULED

On June 19 ADULTS SAVING KIDS will be hosting a training for pastors and educators to help them implement the *Wise as Serpents* program in their churches and schools. This training will be held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in south Minneapolis. We have several congregations in the Twin Cities that have expressed interest in *Wise as Serpents* training. We're excited about this opportunity to train a number of churches at one time in the use of this curriculum.

PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE TRAINED TO "BUILD THE WALL OF SAFETY" FOR YOUTH

The ADULTS SAVING KIDS core teams in the North Carolina, Montana, and Northern Great Lakes synods all sponsored trainings this spring. As a result, the youth in these synods now have **FORTY-ONE** more people involved in building the wall of safety for them.

ADULTS SAVING KIDS has changed the way we do our trainings, strengthening peoples' capacity to talk about and lead the *Wise as Serpents* curriculum, Prayer Project Life Saver, and become Speakers. It was especially valuable to have a mix of previously trained people at the trainings to learn more and new people open to discovery. Everyone contributed valuable insights and shared their stories. We all left with a renewed commitment to the children.

It took considerable individual and team effort on the part of the ADULTS SAVING KIDS core teams to produce each training – we acknowledge them for all their work. While the physical settings and weather were quite different in the three synods, the core teams all share the same passion for the work of prevention.

MEET BOARD MEMBER HERB SMITH

Herb Smith has been on the Board of ADULTS SAVING KIDS for about 10 years. For several years he was the Board Chair, and now he gives his time as a Board Member. He has his own business as a general contractor, HK Construction.

Herb joined the Board out of a commitment to kids. He wants to see kids "win" by growing up and making it safely to adulthood. He also has a loved one who was sexually abused and has seen the effects that has had on this person's life.

Herb is excited about the core teams in the synods taking on projects with ADULTS SAVING KIDS as their own, making things happen on behalf of their own kids in their own communities. He sees that they are "planting their own gardens" which will bring forth results for their kids.

Herb would like to see prevention become the norm in society. His dream is that all churches and homes would be safe havens for kids.

On a larger scale, Herb would like the ELCA to really live out the *Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation*. He thinks more commitment to prevention by the federal government would also help the effort to keep kids safe.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...

- Susan Krause for the new design of the ADULTS SAVING KIDS *Adventures* and artwork for "Building the Wall of Safety."
- Jeff Harrington and Nick Abdo for their work on the new video "No Bigger Lie Out There."
- Andrea Pomeroy and Lisa Hedden for their assistance with computer and office work.
- Ken Beenken for his bookkeeping assistance.
- Jon Watne for his website work.
- Robert Burich for his computer assistance.
- Louise Armitage, Joyce Spector, JoAnn and Jean Swenson for their help with mailings.

ADVENTURES

LUTHER SEMINARY STUDENTS ARE CHALLENGED BY ADULTS SAVING KIDS

On May 8, Rev. Al Erickson and Amy Hartman led a three-hour class as a part of an Addictions course being taught by Professor Bob Albers. Al shared a passage from Ezekiel, speaking to the need for shepherds to tend the flock. Students reviewed the ELCA *Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation* and learned how people are vulnerable to and recruited into getting involved with commercial sexual exploitation.

Bob Dykstra, a counselor who works with people who have sexual addictions, spoke about signs of sexual addiction, what factors contribute to sexual addiction, and what puts pastors at risk. Students were challenged to equip themselves and the people in their congregations to address these issues.

COMING EVENTS:

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| June 19 | <i>Wise as Serpents</i> Training
Bethlehem Lutheran Church |
| July 27, August 3 | Adult Forums at Central
Lutheran Church, Mpls |
| August 1-2 | Minneapolis Area Women
of the ELCA Convention
(LaCrosse Team presenting) |
| August 8-10 | Conference Team Training
in North Carolina |
| August 15-17 | Conference Team Training
in Western North Dakota |

**PLEASE KEEP THESE EVENTS
IN YOUR PRAYERS!**