



new
horizons
SHELTER & OUTREACH CENTERS

LET'S END ABUSE



**WHAT'S
INSIDE**



BLOG: A CHILD'S
SILENT CRY



SEXUAL ASSAULT
AWARENESS MONTH



DENIM DAY



CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION MONTH



Executive Heart to Heart

Dear friends of New Horizons,

As I read through the original draft of this newsletter, I was inspired by the natural theme of education and involvement that came forth. It made me recall a conversation with our Youth and Family Advocate many years ago...

After a presentation to elementary school children, she was approached by a child who asked for a brochure so she could take it home and show it to her mom, because she was sure they were being abused. A week later, this child, her siblings, and her mother entered our shelter.

As you read through the remainder of these pages, I encourage you to keep the African proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" in mind. We need your help to keep children in our community safe from abuse.



Ann Kappauf
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Get involved, learn the signs of abuse, and invite us to do a training. Be a part of the village!

In empowerment,

Ann Kappauf

Ann Kappauf
Executive Director
annk@nhagainstabuse.org

THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing generosity of our community, which enables us to provide a vital safety net of support for survivors. Your contributions make all the difference, and we couldn't continue our work without your steadfast support. Thank you for standing with us!

OUR TOP DONORS FROM QUARTER 1 2025

Below are just a few of the multitude of gifts from companies, churches, organizations, and individuals

Emplify Health by Gundersen

Barbara Frank

Esther Sykora

Franciscan Sisters Of Perpetual Adoration, Inc.

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*Carol & Michael Mader

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Ms. Julie Keitel

Ronald & Dea Oleson

*La Crosse Community Foundation Fund



Great Rivers United Way, ALM Charities, and the Women's Fun of Greater Lacrosse continue to support our programs with grants from funds through their annual campaigns

To make a donation, visit our website: nhagainstabuse.org or scan the QR code. You can also mail a check made out to New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Centers to: PO Box 2031, La Crosse, WI 54602.

If you recently made a contribution to New Horizons, THANK YOU! You are making a difference in the lives of victims of abuse in our community!



You are changing lives!

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@more_than_a_shelter



facebook.com/NewHorizonsShelterAndOutreachCentersInc



A CHILD'S SILENT CRY: FROM FEAR TO HEALING



The Story of Mia

Mia was only eight years old, but she carried a heavy burden on her small shoulders. She had always been told to be quiet, to stay in her room, and to never speak about the things that happened behind closed doors. It wasn't that she didn't want to talk; it was that she was too scared to. Scared of what would happen if she did. She didn't understand why things were the way they were, but she knew one thing for sure - whispering secrets was safer than speaking truths.

At school, Mia would sit in the back of the classroom, hoping no one would notice the bruises she tried to hide under long sleeves. Her friends often asked why she was so quiet, but she never knew how to answer. How could she explain to them that the loud arguments at home made her feel like the world was about to explode? How could she tell them that her father's hands sometimes left marks on her arms, or that her mother seemed lost in a cloud of sadness and fear? Mia didn't have the words, and even if she did, she was too afraid to speak them.

Mia loved her mother dearly. She could see how much pain her mother was in, even though her mom tried to keep up a smile for her sake. Mia's father had always been angry, and he would often take his anger out on her mother. Mia could hear the yelling, the harsh words, and sometimes, the sound of things breaking in the other room. It was confusing and terrifying. Mia wanted to help her mom, but there was nothing she could do. She felt powerless and scared - scared for herself, scared for her mom, and scared that the chaos in their home would never end.

Mia didn't have many friends. She was shy and quiet, always sitting alone during recess, avoiding the other kids' questions. She wasn't allowed to invite anyone over to her house, even though she longed for a friend to visit. Mia watched her classmates play and laugh together, feeling a pang of loneliness that she couldn't explain. She wished she could invite them to her home, to show them who she was beyond the bruises and silence, but she knew her father wouldn't allow it. Her parents never wanted anyone to know what was really happening behind the closed doors of their home. The thought of anyone seeing the truth was terrifying.

The Hesitation to Tell

Mia often wished she could tell someone about the things she was experiencing, but she didn't know who to trust. She feared that if she told her teacher, her friends, or even the school counselor, things would only get worse. What if her parents got angry with her? What if they told her that she was the reason everything was falling apart? She didn't want to make her parents hate her, but she also didn't want to keep secrets anymore.

And there was another feeling that gnawed at her heart: guilt. What if it was her fault? What if she hadn't been so bad, so annoying, or so "difficult," things wouldn't have gotten out of control? Mia didn't know how to stop blaming herself. The whispers inside her head made her question everything. Was it because of something she did or said? Maybe if she were quieter, things wouldn't be so bad. She also worried about her mom. What if telling meant getting her dad in trouble? Would it make everything worse for her mom?



**A Child's Silent Cry Continued on Page 4*

The Fear of The Process

One day, Mia's teacher noticed the bruises on her arms. She asked if everything was okay, but Mia didn't know how to answer. She was scared. What if her parent's found out? What would happen if they took her away? Mia had heard whispers about foster care, about kids being separated from their families, and the thought of being alone terrified her more than anything. She was afraid that if she told, her dad would hurt her even more, or that her mom would be even sadder and more afraid than she already was.

But Mia's teacher didn't give up. She reached out to a trusted adult, and the process of reporting began. Mia was interviewed by a social worker, a kind woman who spoke gently and promised Mia that she was there to help. But even then, Mia felt her heart race with fear. She didn't know if she could trust this stranger. Would this be the end of her family? Would it all fall apart? Mia didn't know that reporting abuse meant a chance for safety - not just for her, but for her mother too. She felt like she was betraying her family, even though she knew something needed to change.

The Road to Healing

Reporting abuse is never easy, especially for a child. It's a terrifying process, full of questions and uncertainty. Mia didn't understand what was happening at first, but she was slowly introduced to resources that would help her along her healing journey. She met with a counselor who specialized in helping children recover from trauma. The counselor explained that it wasn't Mia's fault, that she wasn't to blame for what had happened to her, or for the violence her mother had been enduring.

As Mia and her mother began their healing journey, they learned they were not alone. Support came from unexpected places. Mia was introduced to a children's advocacy center where she met other kids who had experienced similar pain and fear. Over time, Mia began to understand that healing was a process, but it was a process that was possible. Her mom also started attending support groups for domestic violence survivors, where she began to find her own voice and strength.

For Mia, it wasn't easy to accept that things had to change. But she learned about her rights, about safe spaces, and about the people who cared for her and wanted to help her rebuild her life. She started seeing her mother get stronger, and that gave her hope.

For Mia, and for many children like her, the first step is always the hardest: reaching out for help. But there are people who will listen, who will believe, and who will ensure that the child's voice is heard. Mia learned that she was not alone in her suffering. There was an entire network of support waiting to help her heal - and there was hope for her mother too.



While the story shared is fictional, the realities it reflects are ones we see far too often. Domestic violence affects many lives, and healing can seem like an overwhelming journey, especially through the eyes of a child. Our trained and compassionate advocates are here to offer support every step of the way. Remember, it is never your fault, and you don't have to face it alone.

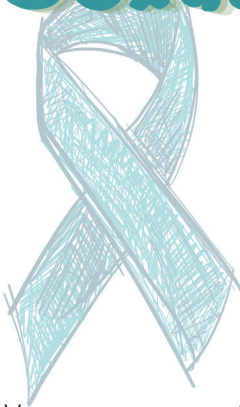
***Read and subscribe to our blog on our website nhagainstabuse.org**

ALL SERVICES ARE FREE & CONFIDENTIAL



La Crosse & Trempealeau Counties & Surrounding Area:
TOLL-FREE: (888)231-0066 | LOCAL: (608)791-2600
TEXT ONLY: (608)667-9944 | nhagainstabuse.org

Sexual Assault Awareness Month



April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a time to come together as a community to raise awareness, support survivors, and take action to end sexual violence. The 2025 theme, *"Together We Act, United We Change,"* reminds us that by working collectively, we can create lasting change.

Each year, nearly **1 in 5 women** and **1 in 7 men** in the U.S. experience sexual assault. These numbers represent not just statistics, but lives impacted by violence. At New Horizons, we are dedicated to helping those affected by violence find peace and healing while also educating our community about this crucial issue.

You can support our mission by making a donation to help provide resources and support for survivors. Additionally, you can participate in spreading awareness by sharing information about sexual assault prevention, attending local events, or volunteering your time to help raise awareness in your community. Together, we can make a difference and help create a future where sexual violence is no longer tolerated, and survivors receive the care and support they deserve.

Consent is key to healthy relationships and sexual activity. An easy way to understand consent is FRIES!



Freely given
Reversible
Informed
Enthusiastic
Specific

- **Consent is given without pressure, force, manipulation, or coercion**
- **Consent can be changed at any time, even if you've already started**
- **You're fully aware of what you're agreeing to**
- **You genuinely want to participate**
- **You've clearly stated boundaries and limitations**

APRIL 30, 2025

DENIM DAY



Denim Day happens annually on the last Wednesday of April during [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#).

The campaign started in 1999 after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court to overturn a rape conviction because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans, she must have helped remove them, thereby implying consent. In support of the enraged women of the Italian Parliament, women in the California State Assembly wore jeans to work to protest the decision, and [Denim Day](#) was born.

Today, [Denim Day](#) serves as a reminder that sexual violence is never the fault of the victim, no matter what they wear or how they behave. We encourage everyone to wear denim on [Denim Day](#) to help break the silence, support survivors, and raise awareness about the ongoing fight to end sexual violence. Together, we can create a world where survivors are believed and supported, and violence is no longer tolerated.

2025 NEW HORIZONS SHELTER & OUTREACH CENTERS DENIM DAY SCHOLARSHIP

Amount: First Place - \$1000 / Second Place - \$500

Eligibility: Senior High School students who have been accepted into a secondary education program

Length Requirement: 500-750 words OR 3-4 minute video

Deadline: June 1, 2025

SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Scholarship will be awarded to student contingent upon enrollment verification at a higher education institution. Check will be paid directly to that institution. The winner's name may be published on the New Horizons website and/or social media.

PROMPT

Reflect on an individual or group recognized historically as revolutionary activists in the movement to end sexual violence. (Es: Marsha P. Johnson and her role in the transgender equality movement.) How has the work done impacted policies and laws, and do we still see those impacts today?

SUBMISSION

Essay or video is due by 11:59pm on Sunday, June 1, 2025. Essays and videos can be written or recorded and submitted in English, Hmong, or Spanish via email to: youth@nhagainstabuse.org.

How YOU can get involved with Denim Day...

Local businesses, clubs, and organizations can make a meaningful impact this Denim Day by allowing employees to wear jeans on [April 30](#) in exchange for a \$1 donation to New Horizons. The funds raised will go directly toward sustaining our vital life-saving services for survivors.

Make a social statement by [WEARING JEANS ON THIS DAY](#) as a visible way to support survivors and oppose the misconceptions that surround sexual assault and victim blaming.

Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time for us to raise awareness and take action to protect children from abuse and neglect. As a community, we all play a vital role in safeguarding the well-being of the children around us.

Every year, millions of children in the United States are affected by abuse and neglect. Shockingly, **1 in 4** children will experience some form of abuse by the age of 18, highlighting the urgency of raising awareness and taking action to ensure that every child can grow up in a safe, supportive, and loving environment.

Throughout this month, we will focus on educating ourselves and others about the signs of abuse, offering support to those who need it, and reinforcing the importance of healthy, nurturing environments for children to grow and thrive. Every child deserves to feel safe, loved, and supported.



PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION



The Pinwheels for Prevention campaign is a nationwide initiative that uses the pinwheel as a symbol of hope, joy, and a bright future for all children.

Each pinwheel displayed represents a commitment to building strong families, supportive communities, and raising awareness about child abuse prevention.

Join us in spreading awareness by displaying a pinwheel and advocating for positive change.

KEY STATISTICS

- **1 in 7 children** in the U.S. are affected by child abuse or neglect each year.
- In 2021, there were **1,670 reported child abuse deaths** in the U.S. and more than **700,000 children** were confirmed as victims of abuse or neglect.
- Over **70%** of child abuse cases involve neglect, while **16%** are physical abuse and **9%** are sexual abuse.
- **90%** of child abuse victims are abused by someone they know. Often family members.
- **1 in 4 children** who are victims of abuse experience severe life-threatening injuries.
- Child abuse fatalities account for approximately **1,700 deaths annually** in the U.S. with the majority being children **under the age of 3**.

These statistics from the National Children's Alliance highlight the scope and impact of child abuse, emphasizing the need for prevention, intervention, and support.

How YOU Can Get Involved...

- **Learn the signs:** Familiarize yourself with the signs of abuse, both physical and emotional, so that you can spot potential issues early and take action.
- **Support Local Organizations:** New Horizons provides vital services to children and families in need. Consider donating to support our mission. Research shows that programs supporting at-risk families can reduce child abuse rates by 50%.
- **Engage in Conversations:** Talk to children, families, and friends about the importance of healthy relationships and safe environments. Early intervention and open communication can prevent abuse before it begins.
- **Wear Blue:** Show your support by wearing blue on April 9th, the official day of Child Abuse Prevention Month, to spread awareness.
- **Family Fun Day:** Join us at Myrick Park on April 19 from 11 am - 2pm for a day of family centered fun



Together, we can make a difference. Let's work together to create a community where children are empowered to live free from harm. By raising awareness and taking action, we can help break the cycle of abuse and build a brighter, safer future for all children.

STEWARDS OF CHILDREN TRAINING

At New Horizons, we are committed to keeping children safe. That's why we offer *Stewards of Children*, a nationally recognized training program developed by darkness to light. This program is designed to teach adults how to prevent, recognize, and respond to child sexual abuse. By focusing on practical steps and awareness, *Stewards of Children* empowers participants to create safer environments for children both at home and in the community.

We are proud to have licensed facilitators here at New Horizons who can lead this important training. We can help ensure you have the tools and knowledge to protect the children in your care.



For more information or to schedule your *Stewards of Children* training, please contact our Youth and Family Advocate, Jen, at 608-791-2610 ext. 1203 or youth@nhagainstabuse.org.

We are incredibly grateful to Emplify Health for their recent grant, which will help us close the \$337,000 gap left by the loss of VOCA funding. This vital support will directly strengthen our outreach advocacy programs, ensuring we can continue our essential work in the community.

Your commitment to sustaining these services means so much to us, and with your support, we're excited to keep making a positive impact. Thank you for standing by us as we work together to create meaningful change!



New Horizons – Current Needs

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of our community members who contribute in-kind donations from our needs list. Your support helps us meet our clients' immediate needs and sustain the daily operations of our shelter.

If you have furniture to donate, we encourage you to reach out to The Exchange at 608-301-5345. They accept gently used furniture, which is then donated back out to community members in need. Depending on your location, they may be able to arrange a pick-up for your items.

For questions about donations, scheduling a drop-off, or hosting a donation drive, please contact our Director of Community Engagement, Ashley, at 608-791-2610, ext. 1301 or dev@nhagainstabuse.org. Thank you for helping us make a difference!

We are currently not accepting clothing



IMMEDIATE NEEDS

- Laundry Detergent (no pods)
- Liquid Fabric Softener
- Dryer Sheets
- Bleach
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- Pillows
- Grocery Gift Cards
- Men's & Women's Underwear (all sizes)
- AA & AAA Batteries