

The Advocate

Renewal House, Spring 2016

It's time ... to spread awareness.

You're out, and you think you saw something. You're not sure; maybe it was nothing. So, you do nothing and just keep walking. The next day you hear the news. Someone needed your help, but you didn't know what to do.

It's time ... to get involved. You, as an engaged bystander, have the opportunity to act and safely change the outcome — to prevent an assault by stepping in when you see something that doesn't look right. Maybe you heard someone say something sexist or degrading. Maybe you witnessed someone trying to take advantage of a friend. Studies have shown that the occurrence of rape is far more extensive than reported in official statistics, and the large majority of rapists are never apprehended.

In a society that promotes a 'mind your own business' message, speaking up might seem difficult, but it doesn't have to be. Try to approach the situation as if it involved one of your friends. If you see something that doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. If you think someone is in trouble, ask if they are OK. Be honest and direct in explaining your concerns and reasons for intervening. If you don't feel comfortable approaching a situation on your own, ask — a friend, a coworker, anyone — for help.

You aren't ruining someone's fun or being a jerk if you speak up. You are watching out for someone's brother, sister, child, neighbor, or friend. Next time, it could be your loved one who needs help.

It's time ... *to get involved and to do what is right!*

Renewal House Board of Directors,
Staff, Volunteers and Interns

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The 2016 Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) campaign focuses on the building blocks of

prevention by communicating how individuals, communities, and the private sector can take action to

promote safety, respect, and equality.

Prevention is Possible!

National Volunteer Week - April 10—16, 2016

Thank you to all the volunteers who give their time and talent to provide support to the organizations they choose to

serve. We could not begin to provide all of the services at Renewal House without the dedication and support of our

volunteers. For information about how you can volunteer at Renewal House, call 379-9845.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week - April 10—16, 2016

Taken from a letter from Marilyn McCoy Roberts, Acting Director, Office for Victims of Crime, Washington, D.D.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is April 10 – 16, 2016. This year's theme—**Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope.**—underscores the importance of establishing trust with victims. Trust is of particular concern in communities that feel isolated from or invisible to mainstream service providers and the criminal justice system, including boys and young men of color, victims of human trafficking, victims in American Indian and Alaskan Native communities, individuals who are geographically isolated or who live in economically deprived areas, older adults, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, and others. By meeting victims where they are,

and by listening to and understanding their specific needs, we can help restore victims' hope for healing and recovery.

The significant increase in the Fiscal Year 2015 Crime Victims Fund allocation provides a tremendous opportunity—and responsibility—to ensure that those who need support the most receive it. All victims must have the ability to access services when they need them. To provide this access, we must reach victims as early as possible to expedite those first steps toward help, empowerment, and recovery.

Our outreach and responses must evolve to ensure that services are

culturally relevant and that we collaborate across agencies and organizations to lessen the burden on victims. It is critical that we are flexible and open to new approaches to reach those most in need and to embrace new technologies and partnerships, understanding that the most vulnerable communicate, access, and receive information in a variety of ways.

If victims are to trust that the system will work for them, we must meet them where they are—physically, culturally, and emotionally. By serving victims, building trust, and restoring hope, the field can more effectively help victims as they rebuild their lives.

Denim Day is Wednesday, April 27th

Join us as we celebrate Denim Day and the fact that clothing is NEVER AN EXCUSE for sexual assault.

Why denim? Whether a person's jeans are baggy, tight, skinny, full of holes, short, long, bootcut, jeggings, or leggings, there is NEVER AN EXCUSE for sexual assault.

In 1992, an 18 year old girl was sexually assaulted by her driving instructor in Italy. The driver was convicted, but the case eventually made its way to the Italian parliament and the sexual

assault case was overturned because, according to the Italian Supreme Court, the jeans the survivor was wearing were "very, very tight jeans" and she "would have had to help him remove them, which would be considered consensual sex, not rape." Women in the Italian parliament wore jeans to protest; California's state senate did the same. Now Denim Day is nationally recognized, and it's our turn.

Denim Day is a symbolic gesture of how a community

can help change perceptions about violence against women, men and children.

We are asking community members, elected officials, business people and students to make a statement by wearing jeans on April 27th as a visible means of protest against misconceptions that surround sexual assault.

You may even consider charging your employees each \$5 to wear denim on Wednesday, April 27th as a donation to Renewal House to support victim services.

FREE Training for our Community—Friday, April 29th

Responding to Crimes Against Children, Friday, April 29th, 8:30am—4:30pm at SUNY Canton, Kingston Theater.

This training is for anyone who may work with children; school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, social workers, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, licensed mental health counselors, law enforcement, criminal justice professionals, child welfare workers, probation officers, child advocates, etc.

The agenda will include:

- * What you should know about sex offenders
- * Selection, engagement and seduction of children and adults by child molesters
- * Protecting your children: "Advice from Child Molesters" - a child safety and crime prevention program
- * What sex offenders can teach us about interviewing.

You must reserve your seat by April 22nd. Space is limited!

Protecting Your Children: Advice from Child Molesters, Friday, April 29th, 6:30—9pm, Potsdam High School, Auditorium.

This training is open to anyone wanting to learn more about child molesters, especially parents!

Topics covered:

- * Extent of the problem—who the offenders are and why they molest children
- * Common seduction or "grooming" tactics used by offenders
- * Problems associated with traditional prevention programs
- * Talking to children about abuse and people with "secret touching problems"
- * Practical child and family "rules" for safety
- * Responding to sex-abuse disclosures and reporting child abuse
- * Addressing the growing number of offenders living in our community

The presenter is **Cory Jewell Jensen**, M.S. She is the past

co-director of the Center for Behavioral Intervention in Beaverton, Oregon and a partner at CBI Consulting. She has worked with adult sex offenders and their families for 32 years and has provided training and/or consultation to The National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse, The National Child Advocacy Center, United States Navy, The National Crime Victims Association, The US Marshall's Office, NYPD Special Victims Unit, and a number of law enforcement, child advocacy and faith based organizations. She also chaired the Offender Management Committee attached to the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force, has been an instructor for Portland State University's Child Welfare Training Institute for the past 15 years and at Oregon's Police Academy. She has been the recipient of many awards and has published a number of articles related to sex offender treatment, risk management and child abuse prevention, testified as an expert witness in local and federal courts, and has been a featured guest on radio talk shows as well as the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Music and Arts Festival - June 18th

Our Music and Arts Festival was inspired by David Wells, a local musician and songwriter, to showcase great talent from the north country as well as to assist Renewal House in our fundraising efforts.

This year's Music and Arts Festival will be held from Noon—6pm on June 18th at Bella Brooke Vineyard, 2989 County Route 6, Hammond.

The cost is \$10 per person, 12 and under are free. This is a family event, rain or shine. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy food, entertainment and the arts and crafts available to purchase.

Music provided by:

- * Divided Roads - rock band
- * Andy Van Duyn - blues and classic rock

- * Wells and the Gathering - rock, folk, classic, and singer/songwriter

And more....

If you are interested in being a part of this event, please contact us at renewalhouse@verizon.net.

To learn more about Bella-Brooke Vineyard, visit their website at www.bella-brookevineyard.com.

Recognition Dinner - October 12th

Save the date! We invite the community to join us on Wednesday, October 12th, at the

Gran-View Restaurant in Ogdensburg for our annual recognition dinner.

This year's theme is:

Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope.

Services Offered at Renewal House

Renewal House provides a variety of services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in St. Lawrence County.

All services are free and confidential. Services include:

24-hour Crisis Hotline: Staff and volunteers are available 24 hours by calling **379-9845**.

Regular office hours are 8 am - 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If it is not an emergency and you would like **to leave a message**, call **379-9878**. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Individual Counseling/Emotional Support: Short-term individual counseling in a non-judgmental atmosphere that acknowledges a person's ability and right to make choices. Help is available to consider options and plan for safety. Home visits are provided if needed.

Support Group: A facilitated self-help group for victims and survivors of domestic violence providing mutual support and understanding from others who have been abused and who share something in common. It has helped many victims feel less isolated, get useful information, and develop a safety plan. Transportation is provided if needed.

Children's Program: Recreational/Support group to help children understand what abuse is and to give them a chance to talk about their feelings. Children are reassured that the abuse is not their fault. Individual counseling is also provided.

Safe Housing: 24-hour intake for emergency, temporary shelter for domestic violence victims.

Advocacy: Assistance in

obtaining orders of protection, pressing criminal charges, and working with law enforcement. We also help in obtaining emergency assistance from Department of Social Services, Office of Victim Services and other community programs.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners: Specially trained medical professionals providing compassionate, knowledgeable assistance to a victim of a sexual assault.

Community Education and Outreach: Presentations are available for any public or private group, school, business, or agency.

Renewal House prohibits the discrimination or harassment of any person based on race, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, religion and national origin.

What's NEW at Renewal House

As of November 1, 2015, Renewal House assists victims with Family Offense Petitions for Temporary Orders of Protection in Family Court.

In December 2015, Renewal House was notified that more money was being released in the upcoming months to St. Lawrence County for sexual assault services.

NYS DOH issued \$18,182 and NYS OVS \$16,622, which combined, supports another full-time advocate to provide sexual assault services to our community.

Renewal House also received \$13,784.21 from NYS OVS to establish a model office to foster the use of the Victim Services Portal.

Renewal House was awarded \$61,224 annually for 2 years by NYS DOH through the recently enacted State law, Enough is Enough. The funding will support our efforts in providing prevention, education and direct victim services on campuses in St. Lawrence County.

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Thank you for your support!

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Renewal House recognizes the businesses, organizations, and community members who generously support the adults and children who seek services at Renewal House by donating money, items or time. The names listed on this report are from donations received since our last newsletter.

Eve Ensler on Bill Cosby: Let the Mythical Daddy Die

July 16, 2015, Brigitte Lacombe

*Eve Ensler is a Tony-winning playwright activist and author of *The Vagina Monologues*. She founded both *V-Day*, a global movement dedicated to ending violence against women, and the *One Billion Rising* campaign.*

Are we finally willing to do what is necessary to make women safe?

No one believed my father was a battering sex abuser. He was handsome, a corporate president. He was successful, charming, a man's man. He wore tailored suits. He played golf. He drank martinis. He was celebrated at country clubs and knew the first names of head maitre d's at the fanciest exclusive restaurants. He was arrogant and smug the way Bill Cosby is arrogant and smug. He had an air of superiority and contempt for those who he perceived to be weak or incapable of rising the way he had risen. He set himself up as the chief moral arbiter of right and wrong in the same way that Cosby asserted himself as public moralist on issues of family values and crime. He was righteous, particularly about honesty. He was obsessed with honesty. There were many times when he would beat my head against a wall or whip me with belts for lies he imagined I had told or would one day possibly tell. I never understood why he was so angry. I think I do now. He was raging because he was caught between two competing, demanding personas, one public, one private. He was raging because his whole life was one big seething contaminating lie. A lie that was supported and nurtured by the power that men have over women, adoring and terrified colleagues, and my dependent mother. A lie that got him countless free passes, second chances, and cheeks turned.

Like my father, Bill Cosby was allegedly one thing in public, Dr. Huxtable, and another in the dark or behind closed doors. (Cosby, of course, denies all of the allegations of rape and sexual assault.)

I know something about having two fathers in one. I know something about this agonizing split between the man of moral fervor and the man who sexually and physically decimated my body, the man, who is a model of manners, integrity, and charm and the man of violence, control, and manipulation. I was raised in the center of this psychic chasm. My consciousness was formed in this traumatizing fracture. After years of listening to thousands of women, I know that I am not alone.

I cannot explain why these men did what they did. I've given way too many years analyzing their perverse psychology and I've exhausted every option. I no longer give a damn. Survivors weave our days making excuses and evolving theories for our perpetrators that steal our lives. In the end they did what they did because they could. They did what they did because their gender, status, wealth, talent, fame, power allowed them access and protection, their inflated sense of self gave them license, their overly enlarged egos endowed them with certain patriarchal rights. And they never feared the ramifications of their violent acts. Even now, after all that has been alleged, Bill Cosby continues to work and acts the victim. No one is taking away his Hollywood star, despite mounting evidence. The President says there is no precedent to revoke his Presidential honor.

I think of my own silence early on, and maybe it was disbelief that stopped my outrage. Or protection

of a daddy I desperately needed. Or fear of exclusion, exile, loss. Or the horror and heartbreak of experiencing the death of the hero. My hero. Or making a decision early on that the rare moment of love was worth the nightmares.

I think we have to ask ourselves what have we learned from this. This event with Cosby feels heart-breakingly familiar. Over these last years I've found myself compelled to write about the sexual machinations of prominent men. There is a maddening frequency with which the sexual abuse of powerful men is unraveled. How many others are out there? Will we wait another 20 years for countless victims to accumulate? There is something much larger here being revealed about our culture.

It is shocking that Bill Cosby has been able to carry on for so long with the allegations that have been made against him, that his wife and others, the media, the community close to him all felt comfortable standing behind a man who was systematically destroying the lives of women. Have we come to fully accept a world where the elites are untouchables? Are we saying to our young men that as long as you are a rich and famous and successful daddy icon, you too can rape?

Over the last few days I can't stop thinking about us, about the social structures that surround these men. The world — our world — that not only turns a blind eye to their behavior but in the end becomes complicit in supporting their abhorrent deeds. And there are the economic and social factors that coalesce to make our silence. How could my mother or I, both dependent on my father for money and resources, speak out

against his terror? More than forty women have now described their experiences with Bill Cosby, allegedly coaxed into his drug lair early in their careers. How could they speak out and smear and embarrass the moral cuddly king of television, be the slayers of our collective fantasy, and what would that have done to their fledgling careers and lives?

Are we finally willing to do what is necessary to make women safe? I think of the hundreds of brave and broken women I have met — who have come forward with stories of abuse at the hands of men, some powerful and famous. Do we celebrate them? Do we treat them with dignity and respect and kindness? Do we believe them and honor them? No these women are sacked, stigmatized, and exiled, their heads carried on sticks to ensure no woman ever passed that way again.

It is up to everyone to call out the behavior of perpetrators whether they be famous or not. We must, regardless of their status or fame or wealth or talent hold them to the same standards. We must, as a community, break through our own fear and need to sustain and protect our daddy heroes while we sacrifice our women. We must be willing to dispel illusions and look squarely at these perpetrators and denounce their crimes. It cannot be done alone.

We can decide this is the catalytic moment where we finally come out of our collective denial and break our attachment. Where we stand unequivocally together and say we believe the women who came forward to accuse Cosby of rape. Where we create a climate where all women are safe and protected socially and economically when they tell the truth. This can be the moment where we ensure a world where a father is defined by his wholeness, his tenderness, his

honoring, and his care — not by his domination, manipulation, and sexual violence. And where women are valued and believed. It's up to us.

Let the mythical daddy die.

IMPACT OF THE COSBY HEARING: 5 CRITICAL POINTS

1. SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS A WIDESPREAD PROBLEM

What we do and say about the issue of sexual violence matters: By increasing understanding of the issue, we can more effectively respond to survivors, enhance community safety, and ultimately prevent sexual violence. The way misinformed communities often respond to victims inflicts shame, fear, and silence.

Believe survivors when they disclose: Victims are never to blame. Delayed disclosures of sexual violence are normal, common, and should be expected. Many people who have been sexually violated wait months or years before discussing what was done to them with anyone, let alone making a formal report.

Rape is the most underreported crime: 63 percent of sexual assaults are never reported to police. People do not report sexual assault for a variety of reasons. Those who do come forward often face scrutiny and are met with disbelief — even more so when a person of influence has committed sexual violence.

People we know and trust commit sexual violence: the majority of sexual violence is committed by people survivors know and trust. People who commit acts of sexual violence sometimes abuse celebrity or authority status and the illusion of trust that comes with it.

2. INTOXICANTS ARE USED STRATEGICALLY

To increase vulnerability: People

who commit acts of sexual violence know that someone who is intoxicated will have less control of their body and surroundings. Victims may even lose consciousness, which makes consent impossible.

To decrease the likelihood of coming forward: A person who is intoxicated will likely have gaps in memory, which may increase doubts about their own memory and make it more difficult to accurately report what happened to them.

To lower their own inhibition: People who commit sexual violence sometimes use intoxicants to get up the nerve to carry out their actions. The saying “take another shot of courage” is rooted in truth.

As a social insurance policy to ensure others excuse their actions: People who commit sexual violence know that allegations of sexual assault are less likely to be taken seriously when drugs, including alcohol, are involved. People who have been sexually assaulted after voluntarily consuming intoxicants frequently have their behaviors scrutinized. The focus should be on the behavior of the person who caused the harm.

3. PREVENTION IS POSSIBLE

Prevention is everyone's responsibility: Everyone can create and promote safe environments. As individuals, we can intervene to stop concerning behavior; promote and model healthy attitudes and relationships; and believe survivors and assist them in finding resources.

Involvement of communities and organizations is key: Roles for organizations involve creating and strengthening policies to promote safety; assessing the risks in the

environment; and promoting respect for all. Communities must hold those who harm others accountable and ensure that they get appropriate help.

4. PROMOTING PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE

Statute of limitations reform promotes public safety: In many states, civil and criminal statutes of limitations in sexual assault cases are a barrier to public safety. Research indicates that adults who commit rape tend to commit multiple rapes, and many commit other sexual crimes as well.

There are multiple avenues to justice: Changes in technology may mean that evidence can be preserved, making prosecution or civil actions possible. By eliminating the statutes of limitations for sexual assault, we promote avenues to justice for victims and make our communities safer.

Survivors of sexual violence need time: Traumatic experiences often bring about neurobiological changes that impact memory — many survivors of sexual violence cannot remember or communicate all the details of a sexual assault initially. Survivors need to gather the strength, courage, and support needed to report the sexual assault and to participate fully in civil or criminal justice process.

5. RAPE CRISIS CENTERS ARE ESSENTIAL

Support is available for victims of sexual assault and loved ones: Community rape crisis centers have someone available to speak with 24/7, no matter when the sexual violence occurred. Staff and volunteers are trained to accompany victims to medical facilities, police stations, and legal proceedings and advocate for their needs.

Invest in prevention: Rape crisis

centers provide age-appropriate awareness and prevention programs to children and adults of all ages. These programs include teaching adults to recognize warning signs of abuse and how to report suspicions; working with student groups to promote prevention; and helping people of all ages learn how to speak up or intervene when they observe troubling behaviors.

How Brain Science Can Help Explain Discrepancies in a Sexual Assault Survivor's Story

Huffington Post, May 25, 2015

This article is by Kathryn Gigler, a doctoral candidate studying the cognitive neuroscience of learning and memory at Northwestern University. She also serves as director of the Women's Center at Elizabeth City State University.

"I believe that you believe something happened to you." The young woman repeated the detective's statement to me again. It had been the detective's response to her question of whether he believed her account of the brutal sexual assault she had experienced the past weekend.

As a counselor on the local rape crisis hotline, it was not the first time I had heard such a demoralizing story of an individual's attempt to report sexual violence to law enforcement. Because her story had been disjointed, and she had stumbled over several sections of it, the detective had thought that she was confabulating, creating a crime where none had occurred.

When I hear of this dynamic, my thoughts often turn to the neuroscience of trauma. The brain's response to trauma is complex, and human behavior in response to trauma, particularly sexual violence, is not well-understood but recent research does offer some important insights.

The rate of false report in sexual violence is actually low, estimated

by most studies to be around 7 percent (to compare, this is considerably lower than the rate of insurance fraud). Moreover, research shows that sexual violence is in fact underreported: Many more incidents of violence occur than are reported to law enforcement or other legal authorities. Studies show that there are many factors that may predict whether an individual will report, including level of acquaintance with the perpetrator and whether alcohol was consumed.

Taken together, research findings on the factually low rate of false report and on the underreporting of the crime itself demonstrate a clear contradiction in people's conceptions of sexual violence and that violence in reality. There is a mismatch between media portrayals of "ideal victims" — young, sober women attacked at knifepoint in parking lots at night — and research on real-world victims — nearly three-quarters of whom know the perpetrator (rising to nearly 90 percent on college campuses) and only 7 percent of whom were attacked with a firearm, knife or other weapon.

This kind of misunderstanding of an individual's experience of sexual assault is heartbreakingly common. A high school student's report of sexual assault was viewed skeptically by an elected lawmaker, who stated on the public record that "some girls, they rape so easy." More recently, a fan base made it clear that it did not believe a woman accusing a sports hero of rape, and that she was making the story up for attention.

Why are victims so often not believed? A large amount of this disbelief may be linked to the behavioral patterns of victims themselves, which can vary widely from case to case and often include behaviors of which the average police detective would be skeptical.

To understand these patterns, it is helpful to look at how the brain and body respond to stress and trauma, such as that experienced during sexual violence.

A relatively new area of the literature on human response to trauma, particularly the trauma experienced during sexual violence, is that of “tonic immobility.” Defined as self-paralysis, or as the inability to move even when not forcibly restrained, tonic immobility has long been studied in non-human animals as the “freeze” response to extreme stress. Recently, it has been observed in the laboratory as a stress response in humans, as well. This finding explains the reaction of many victims of sexual violence, who report that they felt like they could not escape, even when no weapon was present.

Additionally, due to an entire cascade of hormonal changes, which includes oxytocin and opiates, associated with pain management, adrenaline, commonly associated with “fight or flight,” and cortisol, functional connectivity between different areas of the brain is affected. In particular, this situation affects pathways important for memory formation, which means that an individual can fail to correctly encode and store memories experienced during trauma. While an individual generally will remember the traumatic event itself (unless alcohol or drugs are present in the system), these memories will feel fragmented, and may take time to piece together in a way that makes narrative sense.

Behavioral patterns in individuals who have experienced sexual violence mirror those seen in other traumatized populations, like combat veterans. This pattern of symptoms, known as post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, can include emotional

numbness, intrusive memories of the traumatic event, and hyper-arousal (increased awareness of one’s surroundings, or constantly being “on guard”).

Research shows that the majority of individuals who experience sexual assault demonstrate at least some of these symptoms of PTSD immediately after the assault and through the two weeks following the assault. Nine months after the assault, 30 percent of individuals still reported this pattern of symptoms. Overall, it is estimated that nearly one-third of all victims of sexual assault will develop PTSD at some point in their lives.

These findings are complicated by the fact that the response of any given person to trauma can look extremely different, based on previous life experiences and health factors. Research has found that cognitive variables, such as perceived negative responses of other people and poor coping strategies, were significantly linked both to development of PTSD and severity of PTSD. In another study, lower cortisol levels as measured in the emergency room have been related to increased risk for the development of PTSD. In other words, a maladaptive version of nature/nurture is involved in individuals’ responses to trauma.

As with many questions related to health, it is difficult to pinpoint the cause: existing neurobiological and psychosocial risk factors, such as mental illness, can contribute to the development of PTSD, and PTSD can lead to other health problems. There is no hard and fast rule of victimology: every individual who experiences sexual violence will respond differently.

Therefore, the detective who was unable to believe the story told to him by my crisis caller was likely misinterpreting the discrepancies

in her story as lies, rather than as her brain’s responses to extreme trauma. Best practices now suggest that officers wait at least two sleep cycles, generally 48 hours, before interviewing a victim of sexual violence. Additionally, the interview should be handled in a victim-centered manner, not as an interrogation. Research-informed practices have the potential for not only better outcomes for survivors of sexual violence, but also for reporting and prosecution rates for our legal system.

Monsters enabled by New York’s sex crime statutes of limitations

New York Daily News, March 29, 2016

The spotlight at the moment is on a Long Island foster care house of horrors where an accused predator took in dozens of boys over the course of two decades and allegedly subjected many of them to sexual abuse.

The spotlight has shone elsewhere before—many elsewheres.

More than 20 teachers at the prestigious Horace Mann School in the Bronx sexually abused more than 60 students.

The one-time football coach at Poly Prep Country Day School in Brooklyn abused at least a dozen boys, according to a suit that the school has settled.

Thirty-four former students at Yeshiva University High School for Boys have reported being abused by the school’s then-principal.

In 2015, the New York Special commissioner of Investigation fielded 570 complaints about sexual misconduct by teachers

and staff of the city's schools, opened 217 investigations and substantiated sexual misconduct findings in 20% of his cases.

In January, the Archdiocese of New York suspended a priest assigned to the St. Bamabas Church in the Bronx after a man in his 40s said the priest had abused him as a boy. In 2015, the archdiocese dismissed another priest who had admitted to sexually abusing 10 minors. The Brooklyn district attorney's office has struggled for years to prosecute members of the borough's ultra-Orthodox Jewish community for assaults on children.

Sexual abuse of minors is epidemic in New York, as it is in so many other elsewhere. The crime steals innocence and leaves life-destroying scars on the most vulnerable victims.

Yet it may well be the least prosecuted of all sex crimes.

Its perpetrators may well be the most likely of all sex criminals to get away with their offenses.

And New York is America's most predator-friendly state.

New York's penal law reads as tough as nails on sex crimes. From groping on the subway to violent rape, the statute minutely describes every possible crime and imposes stiff sentences on convicted offenders. But another lawbook mandates that prosecutors must bring criminal charges within unrealistic, if not impossibly short, periods of time. Victims of childhood sexual assaults must similarly rush into court in order to file lawsuits.

Common across the country, statutes of limitations on prosecutions and private suits are designed to prevent people from having to answer legal accusations years, if not decades, after the events in question—when

witnesses and evidence may be long gone.

New York does make exceptions for crimes that are deemed especially heinous. Famously, for example, there is no statute of limitations on murder. In the area of sex crimes, some offenses have no limit (rape, for one), while others do (sex abuse, for another). Those distinctions make the state's criminal procedure law a how-to-get-away-with-it handbook for sex predators.

Those who prey on children are often people, such as teachers and coaches, who have power over the kids and are trusted. They chose both their positions and their victims with diabolical calculation. Still more, predators rely on shame and fear to keep victims silent. Decades may pass before a victim gathers the strength to reveal hidden secrets that may have led to social problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse and difficulty maintaining relationships.

In 2006, New York recognized that requiring an adult sex crime victim to come forward within five years made sense but that requiring a child or teenage victim to contact a district attorney with five years was ludicrous.

The Legislature amended the law to allow prosecutions and civil suits covering some crimes for up to five years after a victim turns 18. But, as the Long Island house of horrors case shows, many young victims get far deeper into adulthood than the age of 23 before finding the bearings to invoke the legal system.

Meanwhile, predators need only to read the law to minimize the threat of punishment.

For example, because it has no statute of limitations, they might void committing a crime called "course of sexual conduct against a child in the first degree," which entails, among other grotesqueries,

anal, oral or vaginal intercourse with a child less than 11.

But they would be safer committing "course of sexual conduct against a child in the second degree," which can entail manual genital manipulation, because the victim would have to file charges by the age of 23.

Similarly, if they penetrate a child with an object and cause injury, there is no statute of limitation, but if they penetrate more carefully without causing injury, the statute of limitations applies.

New York's sex crime statutes of limitations are worse than inconsistent and illogical.

They are the enabling legislation of monsters.

Domestic Violence Counts New York Summary

On September 16, 2015, 99 out of 102 (97%) identified domestic violence programs in New York (including Renewal House) participated in the 2015 National Census of Domestic Violence Services. The following figures represent the information provided by 99 participating programs about services provided during the 24-hour survey period.

6,950 victims served in 1 day

1,360 hotline calls answered

1,619 educated in prevention and education trainings

956 unmet requests for services in 1 day, of which 61% were for housing

Cause of unmet requests for help:

39% of programs reported government funding cuts

18% of programs reported staffing cuts or reductions

9% of programs reported reductions in private funding

7% of programs reported fewer individual donations

Renewal House...Serving St. Lawrence County 2015 Stats

	Domestic Violence (DV)	Sexual Assault (SA)	Grand Total
Total individuals served	645	195	840
Adult Females	506	100	606
Adult Males	31	17	48
Children/Youth	108	78	186
Safe Housing	74	Average length of stay was 17 days	
Safe Housing Denials	15	Safe dwelling was full, family size too large for bed space available, etc. Other placement options are offered as an alternative to the safe dwelling.	
Hotline Calls	3,770	3,277 during office hours, 493 after office hours.	
Type of Service	Individuals Served	# of times service was provided	
Emotional Support/Counseling	531	3,032	
Phone Counseling	537	3,277	
Group—Women (3 groups)	28	32	
Children	20	24	
Personal Advocacy	304	1,554	
Criminal Justice Support	233	1,067	
Follow Up	326	1,653	
Transportation	115	1,030	
Information	440	709	
Referral	281	715	
Home Visits (off-site visits)	195	486	
Child Care/Child Recreation	83	299	
Forensic Sexual Assault Exams provided by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner	25		
Presentations (school-based & community)	4,832	140	
Volunteers	Hours 3,177	Number of Volunteers 15	
Individuals Served by Area (per intake)			
Brasher Falls	22	Nicholville	4
Brier Hill	3	Norfolk	29
Canton	65	North Lawrence	7
Chase Mills	3	Norwood	20
Colton	9	Ogdensburg	144
DeKalb Junction	5	Oswegatchie	1
Depeyster	2	Parishville	10
Edwards	11	Potsdam	73
Fine	2	Raymondville	3
Gouverneur	56	Rensselear Falls	6
Hammond	5	Richville	11
Hannawa Falls	2	Russell	12
Harrisville	3	South Colton	1
Hermon	16	Star Lake	2
Heuvelton	16	Waddington	13
Lisbon	13	West Stockholm	1
Madrid	24	Winthrop	16
Massena	126	Out of County	42
Morristown	10	Out of State	6
Newton Falls	1	Unknown	45

Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope.

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Canton, NY 13617
315-379-9845

renewalhouse@verizon.net
www.slvrenewalhouse.org

Address service requested

Renewal House funding sources:

NYS Office of Victim Services

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

St. Lawrence County Department of
Social Services

NYS Department of Criminal Justice
Services

NYSCASA

Legal Aid Society of Northeastern
New York

United Way of Northern New York

FEMA

Stewart's Holiday Match

Donations and Fundraising

Spring 2016 Newsletter

I have enclosed my tax-deductible donation in support of the programs
and services offered at RENEWAL HOUSE.

\$250 _____ \$100 _____

\$75 _____ \$50 _____ Other Amount _____

I give permission for my name to be listed on the donor
appreciation report in the next newsletter.

I do **NOT** want my donation to be recognized.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Please make checks payable to RENEWAL HOUSE and mail to:

3 Chapel Street, Canton, NY 13617.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

Visit our website at www.slvrenewalhouse.org to donate by Credit Card.