
MINCAVA Year In Review

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Introduction

Change, collaboration and consciousness-raising about violence and abuse marked MINCAVA's past year. Our activities reinforced our mission to support research, education and access to information about violence and violence prevention. Significant accomplishments include drafting and disseminating online resources that enhance a professional's ability to reduce and prevent violence, developing an assessment tool that measures a child's exposure to domestic violence, and helping to launch the Sheila Wellstone Institute.

High Demand and Praise For MINCAVA Websites

Website Usage

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse [<http://www.mincava.umn.edu>] provides quick access to over 3,500 resources about violence and abuse. The site averaged 905 user sessions per day and 11,989 hits per day last year.

Violence Against Women Online Resources (VAWOR)

Violence Against Women Online Resources [<http://www.vaw.umn.edu>] provides law, criminal justice, advocacy, and social service professionals with an online library of full-text documents about domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. VAWOR averaged 1,138 user sessions per day and 13,356 hits per day last year.

Sites users primarily came from the United States, but our usage stats revealed that visitors were also from Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Singapore, Germany, and many other countries.

Feedback from Site Users

Thank-you for such a prompt response. Your recommendation was perfectly suited to our shelter needs. Your agency is of course well known to us and we certainly appreciate the information that you so generously share. --In gratitude, Dawna Pritchard, Aurora House, The Pas, Manitoba, Canada

This is such a lovely site! The colors are soothing to the eye, yet readable. Thanks for the new layout gals and guys!

Just wanted to say that I really appreciate you taking the time to point me in the right direction! The info you provided was just what I was looking for. Again, a BIG thank you to you... --Amy Hamlet, Domestic Violence Program Coordinator, Chrysalis House, Inc.

I should tell you that the editor in chief at Temple [University] is very excited that the article will appear on the MINCAVA website. She felt that your website was very important to "front-line" workers, and would not just gather dust in some law library. --Karen Oehme, J.D., Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation Institute for Family Violence Studies

MINCAVA Is Ga-Ga for Google

Google recently launched Google Grants, a program that provides free Google AdWords advertising to selected non-profits that apply to the program. MINCAVA's websites were selected to participate in the program, and our text-based ads now appear alongside or above Google search results whenever someone enters a search into Google that matches the keywords selected for our campaign. Clicking on the ad takes the searcher to our websites where additional information can be found.

MINCAVA Embraces Change and Innovation

New Faces

MINCAVA welcomed back many familiar and a few new faces this fall. For the 2003-2004 academic year, three new graduate assistants joined our staff. In total, three full-time equivalent staff

members, seven part-time graduate assistants, and Jeffrey Edleson, MINCAVA's Director, carry out MINCAVA activities.

A New Space

On September 29, 2003, MINCAVA moved to a new location in Peters Hall, which houses the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota. We are now mainly in Room 170 (and a few nearby offices) instead of Room 140 but our address remains the same: MINCAVA, 105 Peters Hall, 1404 Peters Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse Redesign

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse underwent a complete reorganization and redesign in 2003. The site's redesign goals were to optimize navigational features and to categorically organize the website in an effort to accommodate a constantly growing library of documents, organizations and service providers related to research and education about violence prevention. Some of the site's new features include:

- Sorting according to format (i.e. article, training material, organization, etc.) Each format is then sorted according to type of violence
- Sorting each page four different ways depending on searching preference. Choices include: | Sort by Category | Sort by Title | Sort by Date | What's New
- A funding opportunities page
- A new internet safety page
- A revised web form and submission feature for email, links, documents, and feedback

More than 350 new items added to the MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse last year.

VAWOR Gets New Server and Format

Violence Against Women Online Resources (VAWOR) continued to disseminate information and online resources to professionals, advocates, and others working to end violence against women. The site received a face-lift this year when it transferred to a new server and all documents were converted to XML. Each document now offers a table of contents, links to references, and added navigational links within the document. This conversion enhanced the site's overall usability and improved access for people with disabilities, particularly people with sight impairments who use screen readers.

VAWOR's advisory board and staff expanded the site's library by reviewing and posting 30 new, full-text documents related to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. VAWOR is also in the process of commissioning authors to draft eight new documents addressing:

- Violence Against Women with Disabilities: Perpetrators as Caregivers
- Impact of Technology on Stalking Behavior
- Dual Arrest & Probation Implications for Women
- Co-Parenting with a Perpetrator of Domestic Violence
- Expert Witnesses in Sexual Assault Cases
- Domestic Violence & Police Officers: Officers as Victims & Perpetrators
- Battered Mothers' Experiences: Lessons Learned through a Class Action Lawsuit
- Informing the Criminal Justice Response to Violence Against Women: Introducing a Human Rights Perspective

VAWOR also supported practitioners' work by providing an information request service. Site users unable to easily locate information on VAWOR submitted requests for help via a new online form. VAWOR staff answered over 450 information requests from people in search of technical assistance, crisis support and advocacy, and other types of information.

Research and Evaluation Produce Results

New Child Assessment Tool: Child Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale

MINCAVA's Child Assessment Tool Development Team has been working to develop a new clinical and research measurement tool that assesses child exposure to domestic violence and related events. This two year, faculty-student collaboration reviewed literature on the key issues of child exposure to domestic violence and how well current assessment tools gauge a child's exposure to domestic violence. The team found this domain to be a fundamental, albeit often neglected, component in decisions concerning the well being of children in domestic violence situations. Based on the team's findings, they have drafted the Child Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale (CEDV), which specifically measures the extent to which a child has been exposed to domestic violence including degree, type of exposure, and the presence of other risk factors in the child's situation. The draft tool will be administered to approximately 200 children affiliated with domestic violence programs in the Minneapolis metropolitan area.

Rural Training Curriculum

MINCAVA recently completed a lengthy cross-training curriculum on the issue of children and domestic violence. The curriculum, designed for child welfare workers, domestic violence advocates, and others who work to intervene in cases where both children and women are at risk, will be available soon at www.mincava.umn.edu/rural [http://www.mincava.umn.edu/rural] which also holds a number of other excellent resources for this work.

Articles on the Overlap of Woman Abuse and Child Maltreatment

The Link Research staff continued to develop new analyses of a four-city survey of battered mothers about their children's involvement in domestic violence events. Several papers are published or in press. Another paper addressing system responses to these families is being developed. More information is available at www.mincava.umn.edu/link [<http://www.mincava.umn.edu/link>].

A Book About the Parenting of Men Who Batter

MINCAVA and the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community received a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to develop new thinking and information concerning the parenting of men who batter their female partners. Fifteen new papers are being developed that will culminate in a national meeting and a new book on the topic.

Research Summaries from VAWnet

The National Electronic Network on Violence Against Women (VAWnet) is an online resource for advocates working to end domestic violence, sexual assault and other violence in the lives of women and their children. MINCAVA facilitates the Applied Research Forum of VAWnet, a component of VAWnet designed to provide applied research information to state coalitions to aid in their work. The AR Forum provides users with concise analyses and interpretations of current research topics. This year, the VAWnet Applied Research Forum is commissioning authors to write general violence against women documents on the following topics:

- Factoids: Uncovering General Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Statistics
- Fathers and Domestic Violence
- Trafficking of Women for Sexual Exploitation
- Connection Between Pornography and Violence Against Women
- Girls Use of Violence
- Evaluating SARTs
- Are Men Victims of Domestic Violence? Reviewing the Data on Violence Against Men by Women
- Sexual Victimization in Indian Country: Barriers and Benefits for Native Women Seeking Help
- Sexual Assault of People with Disabilities: Addressing Environmental Factors Leading to Abuse
- Men's Role in Preventing Violence Against Women
- Teen Dating Violence

In addition to documents, MINCAVA staff are creating an interactive online case study designed to teach professionals and others about elder abuse. The case study will guide users through a situation of escalating violence toward an elder family member and incorporate current issues, policies and legal obligations. The project is based on a similar case completed in 2000 (www.globalvp.umn.edu [<http://www.globalvp.umn.edu>]). Based on this case study, MINCAVA discovered that many professionals are looking for new and creative ways to learn and teach about violence. An interactive case study provides a dynamic environment in which learners can explore their knowledge of a topic, challenge themselves to a series of questions related to a specific case, and immediately receive feedback and links to pertinent online research. The case is scheduled to be available at the Global Violence Prevention website in June 2004.

High Impact Community Collaborations

Sheila Wellstone Institute

Several MINCAVA staff volunteered time this past year to help launch the Sheila Wellstone Institute (SWI), a program of Wellstone Action. On November 13, 2003, an inaugural conference was held at the University of Minnesota's Coffman Memorial Union Great Hall. Over 500 people gathered to carry on the work of Sheila Wellstone, who tirelessly advocated for women and children affected by intimate violence.

The conference, dedicated to working toward solutions for battered women as they seek safety for themselves and their children, examined challenges mothers and children face in family court and child welfare systems. Conference presenters highlighted research of batterers' abusive parenting practices as well as models of effective collaboration between systems' professionals.

Conference attendees represented practitioners in the field of domestic violence, advocates, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, county human service professionals, social workers, psychologists, public officials and members from the general public. At the action-oriented wrap up session, attendees worked together to prioritize issues for further action and chart the future course of SWI. Conference priorities are posted on www.wellstone.org [<http://www.wellstone.org>].

Minnesota Department of Health

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse Coordinator, Jennifer Root, worked with a small collective of professionals from the Injury and Prevention Unit at the Minnesota Department of Health to collect and post online resources that increase the healthcare community's capacity to address issues of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Creating Change through Consciousness Raising

Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Violence Awareness Month, April 2003

In April 2003, MINCAVA displayed information about child abuse and sexual violence in the atrium of Peters Hall in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Violence Awareness Month. Staff also created and affixed a door hanger with relevant statistics about child abuse and sexual violence to each office door in the School of Social Work.

Get Carded, September 2003

On Sept 23, 2003, MINCAVA hosted Get Carded 2003 as a part of RAINN's (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) back-to-school national outreach effort to reach 500,000 college students on more than 300 college campuses across the United States. MINCAVA provided written information about sexual assault resources to students within the College of Human Ecology.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month, October 2003

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness month, MINCAVA hosted a variety of events for the public during October 2003:

- An interpretation of the Clothesline Project, a program started in Cape Cod, Massachusetts in 1990 to address issues of violence against women, was on display in the atrium of Peters Hall for the month of October. By decorating cardboard cutouts of shirts, participants recognized and honored women and children murdered in Minnesota as a result of domestic violence between 2002 and 2003.
- MINCAVA sponsored several panel discussions with community members working in the field of domestic and sexual violence. The panelists and audience members examined current intervention and prevention strategies in Minnesota communities.
- MINCAVA displayed the Silent Witness Project in various locations throughout the St. Paul Campus during the month of October. The project, launched in 1990 by a group of Minnesota women who felt an urgency to do something about escalating deaths due to domestic violence, consisted of twenty-six life-size red silhouettes bearing the name of a domestic violence victim.

Figure 1. Photos of Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activity



Figure 2. The Clothesline Exhibit



Figure 3. The Silent Witness Exhibit



"Just wanted to say thanks to MINCAVA staff for the Silent Witness and Clothesline exhibits. My students wrote some incredible reflection papers after viewing the exhibit two weeks ago. One even said she is going to change her focus and work on behalf of changing domestic violence. They were moved deeply, a few cried, some described how they carried a "weird" feeling with them the rest of the day - it was a powerful exhibit for them...Thanks again to everyone involved in making such a powerful exhibit." --Diane Knust, Social Work Instructor

Transgender Day of Remembrance, November 20, 2003

The Transgender Day of Remembrance was set aside to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice. The event was held in November to honor Rita Hester, who was murdered on November 28th, 1998. MINCAVA designed a memorial to honor those who died due to transgender violence. Photos and bios of over 300 victims were displayed. The memorial educated others about the violence transgender people face for simply having a different gender identity.

Women in Black Vigil, December 2003

MINCAVA and the Gender Violence in Global Perspectives class marked the 16th day of "The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence" with a Women In Black silent vigil on December 10, International Human Rights Day. Students, faculty and community members gathered at Peters Hall and walked in silent vigil to the St. Paul Student Center. Participants dressed in black as a sign of solidarity with the International Women in Black movement that works to end violence against women worldwide. The group walked holding signs and placards as a powerful display of protest against violence against women. Following the vigil, the group returned to Peters Hall, where MINCAVA provided warm drinks and a chance to debrief about the experience. Later that same day, MINCAVA sponsored a panel discussion focused on a human rights perspective of violence against women.

Figure 4. Photo of the Women In Black Silent Vigil



"This event helps to remind us that violence against women is not isolated to certain groups or areas but is a significant societal problem around the globe," said Ann Kranz, Director, Violence Against Women Online Resources at MINCAVA. "We all have the ability and responsibility to create social change by speaking out and addressing violence against women in our communities and in other parts of the world."