



Issue Number 02-1

Winter 2002

*Upcoming Events at  
The Listening Ear*

- New Volunteer Training March 14-24, 2002
- Take Back the Night April 19, 2002
- Bob's 5K Run & Walk June 23, 2002

Call 337-1728 for more information about any of the above events!



# I'm All Ears

## Rape and Race

Like many rape counseling programs, The Listening Ear's Sexual Assault Counseling program works hard to publicize rape statistics and information. Our brochures and our websites teach that rape is a common crime, occurring more than once every two minutes and affecting one in three women. In order to balance the stereotype of stranger rape, we teach people that most survivors were raped by a person they knew.

The problem in talking about "survivors" is that it promotes the idea of a unified group who face identical experiences. Rape survivors are individuals, and while their reactions concerning rape may share certain factors, such as guilt, shame, or rage, everyone's experience is ultimately individual and unique. Cultural and ethnic differences in particular are often ignored when talking about rape.

Though we may not like to admit it, stereotypes and prejudice still exist. For instance, many people still believe that the rape of white women by black men is common; when in reality over 90% of rapes are intra-racial.

For survivors, it is never easy to report a rape to the police, but for minorities it can be even harder. Minority women are often portrayed as promiscuous or animalistic; as a result, our culture tends to take rape less seriously when the victims are African, Asian, Latin, or other people of color. Perhaps this is why African-American women report fewer rapes and attempted rapes to the police. Likewise, one study found that African-American women received less support than white women when they did report.

While white women are more likely to report rape, the 1996 National Crime Victimization Survey found that African-Americans are 38% more likely to be sexually assaulted than whites. Perhaps this is because the rape of black women is thought to be more "acceptable", since racial myths have exotified and objectified women of color.

Project Survive, a peer education group in San Francisco, explains that members of other minority groups may also be reluctant to report due to cultural norms and expectations. "In many Asian American communities the topic of sex is not part of public discussion, which makes it harder for a victim of sexual violence to come forward."

What should we do with this information? The answer is twofold.

First and foremost, we must continue to learn. Rape is probably the least-discussed violent crime in our country, yet it is one of the most commonly committed.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*Volunteer  
Crisis  
Counselors  
answered  
nearly  
10,000 calls  
in 2001*

## 2-1-1 and The Ear

What is 2-1-1?

2-1-1 is the national abbreviated dialing code for free access to health and human services information and referral (I&R). 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember and universally recognizable number that makes a critical connection between individuals and families in need and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies. 2-1-1 makes it possible for people in need to navigate the complex and ever-growing maze of human services' agencies and programs. By making services easier to access, 2-1-1 encourages prevention and fosters self-sufficiency.

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## Tell 'em the Ear Sent You!

In addition to your direct financial support there are many other ways to help The Listening Ear. Currently The Listening Ear participates in the Affinity Phone service program and the iGive.com shopping service.

The Affinity phone service offers an opportunity to help support The Listening Ear by doing something most people do on a daily basis—talking on the phone. When you switch your long-distance service to Affinity and designate The Listening Ear as your affiliate charity, The Listening Ear receives 5% percent of your monthly phone bill. Plus, you save money—Affinity Long Distance rates are very competitive. The Listening Ear uses Affinity Long Distance and has been very happy with

their service and rates. This is one way you can help us listen to thousands of people in crisis each year.

Signing up for Affinity is simple. Call 1-800-964-3863 to sign up and remember to tell them you want 5% of your bill to go to The Listening Ear.

Another way you can effortlessly support The Listening Ear is by doing your on-line shopping through iGive.com. The next time you buy something on-line go to iGive.com's website at [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com) register yourself, select The Listening Ear as your charity of choice, and shop away. Depending on which merchant you decide to shop from The Listening Ear will get a percentage of your purchase price.

Spread the word

about these easy and helpful ways to help support The Listening Ear! Of course, you can always send us a donation in the mail, check out the Coupon for Caring below—or wait until you receive our April Fundraising letter in the mail.

**Affinity Long  
Distance:  
(800)964-3863  
iGive.com  
Shopping:  
[www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com)**

## Coupon for Caring

*Please return to: The Listening Ear, 1017 E Grand River Ave, East Lansing MI 48823*

It is only through the financial support of people like you that the Listening Ear is able to provide help to thousands of people each year.

I would like to support The Listening Ear with a gift in the amount of :

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  \$25  \$50  \$75

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  \$100  Other

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Check

Credit Card

(One time charge  or

Charge me monthly )

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ VISA/MC

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you  
for your  
support!**

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The more we read about rape, the more we talk about rape, the better our chance of stopping rape. The websites listed at the bottom of this article would be a good place to start.

Second, we must be aware of stereotypes and how they affect us all. How many times have we seen movies where Asian women are portrayed as exotic prostitutes? African-American women may be shown as animalistic. One study found that Latino women are perceived as either overly passive or hyper-aggressive.

These kinds of racial stereotypes dehumanize members of ethnic groups, reducing them to objects. This is similar to the way that rapists objectify their victims, seeing them as *things* rather than people. If we permit our society to objectify people based on the color of their skin, how can we be surprised that women of color are at greater risk of being raped?

One last thing to keep in mind: survivors of sexual assault do tend to experience some of the same things, including a sense of violation, helplessness, shame, and rage. However, nobody's experience is identical. The statistics and information in this article try to show how sexual assault impacts different groups in different ways. That should not be taken to mean that all members of a group have the same experiences.

Statistics and information for this article came in part from the following websites:

Albuquerque Rape Crisis Center - <http://www.rape-crisis.org/factmyth.htm>  
Michigan 2000 Crime Index Report - <http://www.state.mi.us/msp/cjic/PDF/ucr00/RAPE.pdf>  
National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center - <http://www.nvaw.org/>  
Project Survive - [http://www.ccsf.org/Departments/Women\\_Studies/Project\\_SURVIVE/](http://www.ccsf.org/Departments/Women_Studies/Project_SURVIVE/)  
Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) - <http://www.rainn.org/>  
SAC - <http://www.thelisteningear.net/SAC>

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What does 2-1-1 do?

2-1-1 provides callers in need with information about and referrals to human services such as:

- Basic Human Needs Resources: food banks, clothing closets, shelters, rent assistance, utility assistance.
- Physical and Mental Health Resources: health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health, Children's Health Insurance Program, medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation.
- Work Supports: financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance, education programs.
- Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities: adult day care, congregate meals, Meals on Wheels, respite care, home health care, transportation, homemaker services.
- Children, Youth and Family Supports: child care, after school programs, Head Start, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring, protective services.
- Volunteer opportunities and donations.

What is I&R?

Information and referral services (I&R) are the link between people in need of health and human services assistance and the appropriate providers of such services. I&R services across the United States answer more than 50 million calls annually.

I&R specialists assess callers' needs and determine the service provider best equipped to handle their problems or crises. Additionally, I&R specialists are trained to determine whether a caller may be eligible for other programs. I&R providers maintain comprehensive databases of resources, including federal, state and local government agencies, community-based organizations and private non-profits.

Where is 2-1-1?

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**Interested in supporting "I'm All Ears"?**

Your small advertisement could do just that! Contact the Listening Ear's business office at (517)337-1728 for information regarding sponsorship and advertising. You can reach out to the community, over 1, 500 Listening Ear supporters and enable the Ear to continue reaching out as well.

*"69% of all people who are raped know their assailant, vs. 54% for victims of all violent crimes"*  
*1999 National Crime Victimization Survey*

*The Listening Ear has provided crisis intervention services to Mid-Michigan since July 15, 1969.*

## 5th Annual Bob's 5K Run & Walk

*Over 30000 people committed suicide in the United States in 1998. Over 900 of those suicides happened here in Michigan.*

*Source: 2000 National Vital Statistics Report*

*The Listening Ear would like to thank the thousands of volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to our cause over the past 32 years.*

Last year, on a misty Sunday morning in June, more than 400 people spent the morning honoring the memory of Bob Forsythe and raising funds for The Listening Ear. For the past four years, runners, walkers, and volunteers have gathered together under the parking structure at the corner of Albert and Division streets in the heart of East Lansing. Their common purpose: A successful 5K Run.

This year marks the five-year anniversary of the annual 5K run, fondly known as Bob's Run. Louise Forsythe, a current community board member at the Listening Ear, has given a special dedication to the run, serving as the coordinator of the immense project. The run is held in memory of her late husband Bob Forsythe, a former Board member and crisis volunteer at the Listening Ear. The event brings friends and community members together annually to reconnect and enjoy time with each other, while paying tribute to the time, energy, and dedication that Bob gave to our organization.

In the spring of 1997, while Bob was being treated for cancer, he and Louise started talking about organizing a benefit run/walk to be held in the following year. Bob did not live to see this run materialize; however, Louise and many of their friends worked to make Bob's dream a reality. Now Bob's Run has become an annual event in the East Lansing community.

This year's run will be held on Sunday, June 23, starting at 8:00 a.m. Entry includes a

T-shirt, post-race refreshments, and a drawing for prizes donated by local businesses. More information and race forms will be available soon on our web page at <http://www.thelisteningear.net/Events.htm>.

On a more personal note, I unfortunately never had the opportunity to meet Bob. My connection with him comes through the stories and fond memories that others have shared with me and through the passion that Louise puts into coordinating the run each year. The run has offered me a space to learn more about a person who touched the lives of many in a very special way. I urge you to join us for this great opportunity. Bob's Run is a chance for us to come together each year to laugh and to get reacquainted – the essence of Bob's life.

Alyssa B-Volunteer Crisis Counselor

### **Thank You to the sponsors of Bob's Run 2001!**

Jackson National Life Insurance Company ■ Two Men and A Truck ■ Marilyn Viera, D.O. ■ Mary C. Fairgrieve, ACSW ■ APCaptial, Inc. ■ Forest Pharmaceuticals ■ MSU Credit Union ■ Law Offices of White, Schneider, Baird, Young & Chiodini ■ Kroger-Saginaw Highway ■ Prudential Securities ■ Ingham Regional Medical Center ■ The State News ■ Classic Wines ■ Employees of CEI Community Mental Health ■ Nena O. Bondarenko, Realtor ■ Rehmann Robson, CPA's & Consultants ■ City of East Lansing ■ Helen Schneiderman and Daniel Vivian ■ Evergreen Grill ■ Foods for Living ■ Dr. George Meluch, Chiropractor ■ Kilwin's Chocolates and Ice Cream ■ Chester's Nuts ■ Saper Galleries ■ Pacesetter Mortgage Company ■ Michigan Pain Management Specialists ■ Spotted Dog Café ■ Starbucks Coffee ■ MSU School of Social Work ■ Alliance Obstetrics & Gynecology ■ Meridian Screen Printing and Design ■ Okemos Osteopathic Center, PLC ■ Richard Coelho, Ph. D. ■ Old Kent Bank ■ Okemos Optometry, P.C. ■ Grove Street 7-11 ■ East Lansing Food Co-Op ■ Mary Ann Olson, Certified Financial Planner ■ Patient Resource Consultants, Inc. ■ Stamp Works ■ Grand River Counseling Center ■ Law Office of Julie H. Reincke

### Wish List for The Ear

- Office Supplies
- Volunteers
- Automatic Letter Folder
- Art—posters and pictures
- Couches
- Binding Machine
- Laminator
- Filing Cabinets
- Conference Tables
- Desks
- Laptop Computer

Items need to be in good condition. We are a 501(c)3 agency. Any and all donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Receipts are willingly provided. To make a donation, please contact our Office Manager, Sean, at 337-1728.

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The 2-1-1 abbreviated dialing code for human services information and referral is currently available in Atlanta, Ga., and the surrounding 13 counties; statewide in Connecticut; Knox County, Tenn.; and Lafayette, La., and the surrounding 6 parishes. Coalitions in Alabama, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, and Utah are implementing 2-1-1. Michigan recently enacted legislation designating 2-1-1 for human services I&R. South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin filed statewide 2-1-1 applications and Pennsylvania filed an application for the southeastern part of the state, while Florida and Virginia have developed statewide I&R models. Nearly every other state is pursuing or exploring 2-1-1 designation. Since Atlanta and Connecticut switched from 10-digit telephone numbers to 2-1-1, the volume of calls received at both has increased 40 percent, with each handling approximately 200,000 calls in 1999.

What does this mean for Michigan and the Lansing Area?

Unlike Atlanta and Connecticut, Michigan will be providing 2-1-1 services on a county by county basis. In Battle Creek the Volunteer Center and LifeCare Ambulance have received a grant from the WK Kellogg Foundation to provide 2-1-1 to Calhoun County. Since January 2001 a group of local I&R providers have been meeting to take a look at what 2-1-1 means to Ingham County. These I&R providers; the Capital Area United Way, Gateway Community Services, Salvation Army, Capital Area District Library, and the Listening Ear, have begun discussing what 2-1-1 would look like for Greater Lansing and the surrounding communities. These discussions are on-going. Watch for more information in the next "I'm All Ears."

*Most of the above information came from the United Way of Connecticut and their website [www.211.org](http://www.211.org).*

## Lansing Area AIDS Network and The Ear

The Listening Ear is now a community-testing site for the Lansing Area AIDS Network (LAAN). When LAAN moved out of their East Lansing office into an office in Lansing, they decided that it was important to keep a testing site in the East Lansing area. LAAN approached the Listening Ear, and starting in January 2002 we began hosting LAAN on Tuesday evenings to help keep a site open for HIV antibody testing in the East Lansing area.

The Lansing Area Aids Network was established in 1985 by a group of volunteers in order to meet the rising needs of the area with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Since that time, LAAN has been providing education, support and advocacy for those affected by HIV and AIDS. They have also been educating the community about HIV/AIDS prevention.

LAAN offers free and anonymous HIV antibody testing. All tests use the newer oral HIV antibody testing method instead of drawing blood. LAAN also provides clients with culturally competent and sensitive testers and counselors.

The Listening Ear hosts LAAN every Tuesday from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm for free HIV antibody testing and counseling by appointment only. If you are interested in receiving HIV antibody testing at the Ear or anywhere else through LAAN, please call LAAN for an appointment at (517) 394-3560.



The Listening Ear  
1017 East Grand River Ave  
East Lansing, MI 48823

Crisis Line: 517-337-1717  
Business Line: 517-337-1728  
E-mail: [theear@msu.edu](mailto:theear@msu.edu)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
East Lansing, MI  
Permit No. 106

We're on the Web!  
[www.thelisteningear.net](http://www.thelisteningear.net)



**“SOMETIMES THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS ARE THE HARDEST TO SAY. SOMETIMES IT HURTS TOO MUCH NOT TO TALK. THAT’S THE WORST, WHEN THE SECRET STAYS LOCKED UP FOR WANT OF AN UNDERSTANDING EAR.”**

**–LISTENING EAR STAFF**

**Board Members**

**Community Members**

- Amy Cairns (Chair)
- Louise Forsythe (Treasurer)
- Lou Hekhuis

**Staff Members**

- Alyssa Baumann
- Amy Burandt
- James Peterson

**Staff:**

- Sean Kennedy (Office Manager)
- Over 60 volunteer crisis counselors.

**If you are interested in joining The Listening Ear, Please call (517)337-1728!**

*The Listening Ear Crisis Intervention Center extends our thanks to the community, individuals, and businesses that allow us to continue to serve as a helpful, supportive presence to those in need.*