



# The Advocate

A NEWSLETTER OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SCHOHARIE COUNTY

Fall 2010

## Poverty

As midterm elections draw near, I am amazed at what I am not hearing. Candidates are discussing issues such as jobs, health care, home foreclosures, and government spending. They are understandably concerned about the middle class and the mountain of problems so many American families face today. Yet, I have not heard any candidates even mention the plight of the poorest Americans and the growing number who now call themselves poor. Today, the number of families who are facing homelessness, hunger and illness associated with poverty is skyrocketing. The most recent statistics show that 43.6 million Americans today are living in poverty and nearly 15 million of them are children. This means one out of seven people in the United States of America is living in dire circumstances.



If these numbers are not alarming enough, consider how many people who are living at the edge of poverty but not included in this statistic. In 2010, a family of four with a family income of \$23,000 exceeds the poverty limit! Can a family of four really live on \$23,000 per year and provide for the most basic needs?

In 1986, the American Catholic Bishops published a pastoral letter called "Economic Justice for All." In this letter, the bishops posed these questions about the economy. What does the economy do *for* people? What does the economy do *to* people? These are the questions that we must be asking ourselves. Will we have the political will to make poverty a national priority?

Catholic Charities USA has embarked on a campaign to reduce poverty in half by 2020. Among first steps in this process is a bill before Congress inviting 10 pilot communities across the country to use existing resources in

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## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

*One out of every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime!*

*Almost 1/3 of all female homicides occur at the hand of an intimate partner!*

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month across the United States. In New York State, the Empire State Building, Niagara Falls, skyscrapers, shopping malls, museums, storefronts, and bridges will be bathed in the glow of purple lights. Here in Schoharie County, you will again see purple lights at Howe Caverns, ribbon magnets on county vehicles and purple flags, posters and domestic violence materials in prominent locations throughout the county.



Domestic Violence Awareness draws our attention to an urgent problem that devastates so many families. Domestic violence is physical, psychological, emotional or other kinds of violence at the hand of an abuser. Victims of violence do not always know that help is available. Catholic Charities offers residential and non residential domestic violence services that aim to empower victims to become survivors who choose to live a safe violence-free life. Here are some things you can do:

- **Wear purple every Thursday in October!** Let's turn Schoharie County purple!
- **National Shelter Alliance cell phone drop-off box!** Place a box in your place of business and collect used cell phones. The phones will be reprogrammed and issued to women who need an emergency resource.
- **Learn something new about domestic violence.** Check out the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) website at [www.opdv.state.ny.us/whatsdv/index.html](http://www.opdv.state.ny.us/whatsdv/index.html) to learn more.



*An agency of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany*

2010

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# Big Mac for Domestic Violence

## McDonalds

Main Street, Cobleskill

October 13

5pm to 7 pm

**20% of McDonald's sales will benefit  
domestic violence services.**



## Schoharie County proclaims October Domestic Violence Awareness Month

WHEREAS, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month was established in October 1987 to create a community dialogue about domestic violence, to advocate for legislation and law enforcement to protect victims, and to encourage public awareness and action against abuse; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence affects more than one out of four women, and this seriously impacts their lives; and

WHEREAS, the dangers presented by domestic violence are reflected by the facts that in New York State in 2009 there were 89 intimate homicides; 26,251 assaults committed by intimate partners [80% of the victims were female]; Integrated Domestic Violence [IDV] Courts handled 17,101 cases; NYS Court issued 262,327 Orders of Protection in regard to domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, for 23 years, Domestic Violence Awareness Month has marked a time to mourn those who died because of domestic violence, to celebrate those who have survived, to connect those who work to end violence, and to educate lawmakers, community leaders, and police officers about the real dangers of domestic violence and the need to protect survivors; now therefore, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the Schoharie County Board of Supervisors does hereby proclaim October as DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH in Schoharie County and congratulates the efforts of women and men who work tirelessly to end domestic violence in our community as well as the brave women and men who are survivors and had the courage to get help.

Dated: September 16, 2010

Connect with  
us 24/7 on our  
new website!



## Catholic Charities is launching a new web site

Visit us at [www.catholiccharitiessc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiessc.org)

### PASTA Training (without the noodles)

During the month of September Renee Benson and Jodi Rosa from Catholic Charities Caregivers Support Services conducted a four day PASTA training in Schoharie County for caregivers and Catholic Charities staff.

PASTA is an acronym for Parenting a Second Time Around. The course curriculum included engaging topics such as Child Development, Rebuilding a family, Teenagers and Legal Issues. Caregivers and staff alike learned about the challenges and struggles that kinship families have to manage.

One subject that families find confusing is how to discipline children. In kinship families, it is complicated by the fact that children have biological parents who may be involved in the child's daily life. Caregivers discussed the importance of maintaining rules while also being sensitive to the fact that children come into their homes full of anger, distrust, confusion and trepidation.

Caregivers expressed tremendous gratitude for the four day training and wish to put their training into action in their homes. Catholic Charities will continue to offer this training as new caregivers enter the program.



## Poverty

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innovative ways to combat poverty and offer a "hand up" rather than a "hand out" to struggling families. Catholic Charities hopes that this legislation will spur new coordinated approaches to helping families say farewell to poverty and hello to opportunity.

### Kinship Caregivers

In December of 2009, Catholic Charities of Schoharie County partnered with Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties to launch the Kinship Caregivers program in the three counties. Who are Kinship Caregivers? Kinship Caregivers are grandparents and relatives who become primary caretakers for children. In New York alone, there are 141,000 grandparents raising children! The program offers services and support to caregivers and the children, services that include support groups, educational activities, parenting support, activities for kids, workshops, social activities and referrals to financial support. In our first year, we are working with 50 caregivers and more than 70 children. The Kinship Caregivers caseworkers are a lifeline for so many caregivers. Caregivers are no longer isolated but help each other to create happy flourishing households where kids succeed!

### Facts about Kinship Caregivers

- In New York State, 400,000 children live with grandparents or other relatives. These families are not part of the "formal" foster care system. They are "informal" kinship caregivers. But for their caregiving, many more children would be part of the "formal" foster care system.
- In New York State, less than 25,000 children are in foster care.
- According to the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the average cost of a child in non specialized foster care is \$22,000 per year. If 136 children move from "informal" kinship care to "formal" kinship foster care system, the cost to the State and to local departments would equal the current \$2.99 million in funding for the entire OCFS Kinship Program.
- Children in "informal" kinship care have better outcomes than children in foster care.
- Children in "informal" kinship care and their caregivers need access to information and specialized services, because laws often do not support their needs and kinship children face special challenges similar to children in foster care. The OCFS Kinship Program enables kin to become caregivers and sustains kin as caregivers.



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**services@catholiccharitiesofschoharieco.org**



**New**

## **Clothing Collection At Catholic Charities!**

Catholic Charities of Schoharie County is collecting clothing!  
Beginning in October, we will be partnering with St. Pauly Textile Inc. of Rochester, NY to provide a clothing drop off shed in the parking lot of Catholic Charities.

Friends and benefactors can drop off clothing at **any time** and know that the clothes are going to people who need them. Some clothing sheds shred clothing for rags, but St. Pauly guarantees that every item collected will find a home with a person in the United States or in one of 44 countries around the world.

