

MOVEMENT

SUMMER 2001

Newsletter of Men Overcoming Violence

CELEBRATING TWO DECADES OF ACTIVISM FOR GENDER JUSTICE

An article of faith from the beginning was that men's violence was learned. Abusive behavior didn't come with the plumbing. That's what made it possible to even think about doing the work. If it was learned, it could be unlearned. So there's hope. —MOVE co-founder Michael Radetsky in *For the Record*, by Rich Yurman.

In 1981 MOVE was established by a small volunteer collective intent on ending men's violence against women. Twenty years later MOVE is stronger than ever and celebrating two decades of groundbreaking work. Since its inception MOVE has been rooted in a sense of community, both supported by the many people who have sustained the organizations' vitality and also accountable to the many communities we work with. As our community of friends and fellow activists, our supporters and allies, former staff and program participants, we invite you to join us in our celebration. It is after all a celebration of our shared commitment to building a world where together men and women create healthy relationships founded on principles of equity and compassion that both can truly enjoy.

MOVE has always exuded optimism and a sense of possibil-



Ras Mo Moses celebrating Father's Day with Community Action Team members

ity. The accompanying interview with MOVE graduates and our experiences with thousands of other men have shown us over and over again that men can both take responsibility for their violence and be mobilized to take action for gender justice. Rooted in a commitment to social justice and a belief in men's ability to change, MOVE has pioneered many innovative efforts over the

last twenty years. In addition to being one of the first men's violence prevention programs, we were also amongst the first programs in the nation to develop batterer intervention programs for straight and gay men and have established one of the most comprehensive youth programs in the nation. All our work is distinguished by an integration of intervention and prevention such

that each approach serves to hold men accountable for their violence, assess individual, family and community needs and, at the same time, prepare young and adult men to act as gender justice activists in their diverse communities (see accompanying youth program article for examples of this integration).

At the turn of the new millennium, MOVE is well positioned to build upon our accomplishments over the last twenty years. As part of an exciting transition period over the last year, our staff, leadership council, team of consultants and board of directors has developed a new mission statement and a strategic plan, both of which emphasize our commitment to social justice and formalize our status as a national non-profit working with both young and adult men. Our new mission statement reads "MOVE is dedicated to ending male violence by organizing for social change and educating men of diverse ages, ethnicities and sexual orientations for personal transformation". We're excited to continue to build on our successes and hope you'll join us in meeting our newly established goals while celebrating twenty years of activism for gender justice. ■

THE MOVE YOUTH PROGRAM: INTEGRATING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION, PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Although domestic violence is often viewed as an issue primarily affecting adults, it has devastating consequences for children and youth, who experience it at alarmingly high levels as child witnesses and, later in life, as victims and perpetrators of teen dating violence. Studies suggest that between three and ten million children witness domestic violence each year, while one in five female students report being physically or sexually assaulted by a dating partner (Gallup, 1995; Straus, Murray A. 1992 and Silverman in JAMA, August 2001). These experiences closely correlate with a series of childhood problems that include aggressive and antisocial behavior, depression and anxiety, decreased academic performance and elevated rates of substance abuse, eating disorders and suicidality.

Since its inception in 1994, when few resources were available for youth-focused programs, and when prevention and early intervention were just emerging as new disciplines, the MOVE Youth Program has played an important role in calling attention to the urgent needs of chil-

dren and youth dealing with the aftermath of domestic violence. Now, seven years after it was founded, the program continues to pioneer initiatives that make clear the connection between men's violence and other forms of oppression. MOVE promotes social justice and strives to gener-

ate a groundswell of young men and women equally committed to creating healthy relationships that both can truly enjoy. In recent years, the MOVE Youth Program has worked hard to integrate intervention and prevention. Departing from a more traditional model that sees each of these approaches as separate, MOVE staff now utilizes each classroom presentation or support group as a screening and referral opportunity. It is also an opportunity to promote systemic change throughout, for instance, the school district, the mayors office or the juvenile justice system. In the same way, each young

man referred by the courts is recognized for his new opportunity to reach the many people and organizations in his life with prevention and intervention activities. As such, MOVE staff are able to respond to previously unmet needs of both family and victim and are also able to involve

about profound systemic and institutional change both locally and nationally.

Dean: I know you have recently spent a lot of time thinking about the connection between male violence and other forms of social oppression. It seems to me that

"...the youth program continues to pioneer initiatives that make clear the connection between men's violence and other forms of oppression."

neighbors, friends, extended family and other community members in supporting both individual and community change.

MOVE is attempting to distinguish itself by having a social analysis and a social justice approach to the work.

Ras Mo: The Youth Program has revived the social change program at MOVE by empowering young people to have a voice and letting them express their perspectives on the issues that we deal with, validating their idioms, their language and their popular culture. We've placed the issue of domestic and dating violence among young people in a broader context, looking at the roots of violence and looking at

neighbors, friends, extended family and other community members in supporting both individual and community change.

Movement Editor and Youth Program founder Dean Peacock recently spoke with current acting executive director and former youth program director Allan Silva, Community Education Coordinator Ras Mo Moses, and incoming Youth Program Director Mary McDermott, about new developments and recent accomplishments. Their comments illustrate their considerable successes in integrating prevention and intervention and in bringing

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MOVE is dedicated to ending male violence by organizing for social change and educating men of diverse ages, ethnicities and sexual orientations for personal transformation.

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TRANSITIONS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, NEW DIRECTIONS

MOVE AT TWENTY

The last year has been an exciting one in many regards, full of changes and opportunities. It has also been a year of transitions, departures and beginnings. Always busy, we at MOVE have taken on new work in a number of different arenas while continuing to offer the many programs that we have built over the last twenty years.

Our staff has seen a number of changes. We have hired two new Adult Program staff - Luis Perez as coordinator of the Gay-Bisexual Program and Rene Muslin as a group counselor. Both bring a wealth of information. Having lived in Cuba, Rus-

including one from the Hewlett Foundation. It will allow us to enhance our support of men working to be loving, involved fathers. The Youth Program has seen a number of changes as well. Mary McDermott has been hired as youth program director, a position she is well qualified for as a result of years working at MOVE as well as with survivors of domestic violence. BJ Garcia also joins the Youth Program as youth peer educator, and brings with him an intimate familiarity of San Francisco schools as a graduate of Washington High.

Last year also saw the resignation of John Beem and Dean Peacock, both of whom contributed



Early days at MOVE's annual retreat.



John Beem and Dean Peacock: Seventeen years of combined commitment.

sia and Mexico and advocated on sexual minority related issues, Luis brings expertise and personal experience in understanding and working in diverse communities. Rene has many years of experience working alongside homeless youth in San Francisco, especially advocating for the needs of queer homeless youth. Aspen Baker recently joined MOVE as development coordinator and has already secured a number of grants,

tremendously to MOVE during a combined tenure of nearly 17 years. With John as executive director and Dean as Youth Program founder, and later director of program development, MOVE experienced sustained growth and vitality. The all male – and mostly white – staff changed to one that is now mostly people of color and almost evenly balanced between men and women. As director, John provided staff with an important balance of support

and autonomy that promoted creativity and made possible the development of a number of initiatives including the Youth and Violence Prevention programs. Like John, Dean initially came to MOVE as an activist and a volunteer, and quickly translated his commitment to social justice into the development of the MOVE Youth Program. MOVE thanks both for many years of tireless and impassioned work in the service of gender justice. We take comfort in the fact that each remains in close contact with

try. These have included the Black Infant Parent Conference, the Family Violence Prevention Fund's International Health Care Conference, the Judicial Council of California's Beyond the Bench Conference, The International Conference On Children Exposed to Family Violence, and a number of regional forums for the Safe from the Start Initiative. In addition, MOVE staff have continued to provide training to local, state and federal agencies and to organizations that have included the Violence Against



MOVE stalwarts Shauna Fujimoto, Herman Lee and Carole McKindley-Alvarez.

MOVE, working as consultants on a number of projects. We wish them both luck in their new endeavors, John at Health Initiatives for Youth and Dean in his

Women Office of the Department of Justice, the California Department of Health and Human Services, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, La Clinica de La Raza, local battered women's shelters the Riley Center and WOMAN INC and to Liz Claiborne in the development of their What You Need To Know About Teen Dating Violence handbook.

In collaboration with the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA), MOVE has also begun to provide training and technical assistance to college campuses across the country, supporting college-based efforts to educate and engage men to take an active stand against men's violence. As may be clear from this overview, our accomplishments over the last year reflect the activist sensibility inherent in our new mission statement. We're eager to emphasize this commitment to social justice. As always, we'll be on the MOVE! – mobilizing men for gender justice and building a more just world for all. ■



Move's Gay and Bisexual Program in 1988: One of the first of its kind in the country.

graduate studies. Allan Silva, formerly the youth program director, has agreed to serve as the acting executive director, bringing with him all the innovation and flair that has characterized his work in the Youth Program.

MOVE staff have presented at conferences all across the coun-

TRYING TO LIVE LIFE TO ELEGANCE: A MOVE YOUTH PROGRAM PARTICIPANT BREAKS THE CYCLE

Sangh Sullivan was arrested for hitting his former girlfriend. He was given the option of staying behind bars or enrolling in MOVE. He chose the latter, and has been pleased with the changes his decision brought to his life. MOVE helped Sangh to accept responsibility for his actions. "It helped me take some important steps toward adulthood, such as learning self-control. MOVE changed the way I handled situations; they gave me solutions for how to control situations. I haven't gotten involved in [violence] since."

As a young parent, Sangh was encouraged by MOVE to join a young fathers group that got him on track to support his three-year-old daughter. Now 18-years old, Sangh supports Deja Monet, although he is no longer with her mother. Understanding how hard it is to be a young parent, Sangh now shares his wisdom about adulthood, parenting and relationships with other teens, especially other young men. Sangh is the program coordinator for the Teen Pregnancy Coalition of San Mateo County and

talks to high school and middle school students about teen pregnancy.

"Kids should learn what happens with domestic violence – its consequences and all its details. I (also) try to teach them about adulthood, and how it really is. If I had it to do over again, I'd still have my daughter, but I'd wait until I was more prepared financially, emotionally and mentally." Sangh said he also shares his vision of a nonviolent world through his music and poetry, promoting positive messages that reflect the changes in his life, as well as the aspirations he has for his daughter. An excerpt from his poem, "Deja'vu" serves as an example:

Deja'vu
I'm tryin' to live life to elegance
And avoid all belligerence
Escaped from triumph through traffic
I only relate with my equivalent
I'm not tryin' to keep stressin'
Or delete my presence
Cuz my life's significant

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION IS POSSIBLE: AN INTERVIEW WITH MOVE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

For many years domestic violence has been shrouded in secrecy. Often it is men who are especially silent – silent about their own use of violence and silent in the face of other men’s violence. In an effort to break that silence, MOVE Youth Program Director Mary McDermott and Movement Editor Dean Peacock interviewed a group of adult program graduates. Their words convey the pain and

move back to her family. She didn’t want to deal with me. It meant separation from my daughter. From that time on, I was supposed to be happy, I guess, because I had hooked up with the love of my life. But the dynamics of our relationship were kind of like always on the edge. And drugs were involved. And I think there was a lot of insecurity on both parts. I wasn’t having any respect for myself or

full of pain, and that certainly was my experience at that time. And then that caused frustration and that frustration came out as really livid anger. There were times when I was so angry I felt like I could go rip the fenders off a car. I was that angry.

Dean: *How are your relationships with your children affected by your violence?*

I first walked in. But, six months or nine months into it, I found that I really was connected to the people in the group. I discovered that that was the first time in my life where people actually cared about who I was as a human being, like the people in the room valued me for who I am and not for their own expectations. It’s totally unique from my home and work life.

a fight with our partners we were trying to diminish whatever he or she was trying to say. In a way that brought us back to why we were coming here. That was a very, very intense thing. And then after that he got emotional and everybody gave him support. We said, “Hey, that’s real, this is our battlefield practice.”

Dean: *Larry, you talked about “giving back” as part of your motivation for staying involved with MOVE. What might that look like to you?*

Larry: I’ll tell you what; over the year process I heard some absolutely brilliant stuff. Every once in a while, some guy would just come up with this incredible pearl of wisdom and your jaw would just drop. The group I was in really did come down on the guys that weren’t participating. Just flat out, we told them to cut it out. We gave feedback directly to the people who weren’t really participating.

Larry: The concept was that there’s a message that should get out to the community about domestic violence. To me, having already been through a year of this program and being interested in helping this process, I was willing to give back in any way I could.

Fernando: I remember something from Phase One that was quite remarkable. One day this guy started to make fun of one of the facilitators. He started to try to mimic the way the facilitator talks, but what I remember is that everybody was asked how that made us feel. What we were seeing was how when we would have

Bruce: One of the components that I like to get across is that personal transformation is possible. It’s not the case that there are “bad people” and “good people.” That message of personal transformation and taking charge of your life is what I want to get out to the community. ■



Peer educators: Promoting relationships that both young men and young women can truly enjoy.

anguish caused by their violence, while their honesty offers hope that men can take responsibility for their violence and become agents of change promoting a more just world characterized by peace and gender equity.

Larry: Well, my name is Larry. I had a period from 1991 to 1998 of absolutely unchecked domestic violence. It was really a bad period in my life. There wasn’t any excuse for it. A bad scene all around. I mean, everything you can think of. I never felt any guilt or remorse at all. I was just happy as hell to get her to shut up. So I never felt ... well I did feel guilty ... one time I thought I killed her and I really felt guilty about that. She was in the hospital one time and I felt really guilty and bad. I apologized a couple of times, but unfortunately the thing was just cycling, you know? She never reported anything. Finally the family doctor did. You know, he called the cops and so they come over for a welfare check on the family and I got hauled off and that was the end of that.

Fernando: I was married and I had a daughter. I was almost ten years with my wife. Things in the marriage were not really going anywhere and I was feeling like there was something missing in my life. I met this (other) woman and she symbolized everything that I was really looking for. I left everything. It was a very bad time. My ex-wife decided to

for her. I was feeling helpless, terrified by the fear that your (partner) is going to leave soon or that she’s going to go with somebody else. The only way I chose to get mad at her was with violence. She was afraid, you know? I guess in the back of my mind I had her under control, “you don’t do this because, no, I can’t trust you”. And to a certain degree, it worked because she was very quiet. So one of those nights, we went to a party, she went into a back room. I didn’t say anything until we got home. That’s when I started to really punch her. I thought, “My God!” and she started screaming like crazy. And then the police arrived. It’s tough, I guess, for the rest of my life, every time I talk about it, I look at it and I see myself and I see some part of myself that (I feel ashamed of). It makes me feel sad for myself and for her because I felt that I definitely made her life full of pain, full of fear.

Bruce: My story is ... my wife accused me of raping her and I was so shocked at that accusation. But then, at the same time, I realized that she was telling the truth about her experience. And then I realized that if her experience of me was that, then there clearly is something completely wrong with the way I’m relating to her, and if it’s true when I tell myself that I love her then I’m going to find out what that is. Fernando mentioned life (being)

Bruce: Up until the time that we separated my son and I spent every day together for a couple of years. He is still living in the house with his mom and her boyfriend. And it’s almost impossible for me to communicate with him at all. It’s just, “Hi. How are you doing?” And nothing comes back on the other end of the conversation. He never calls me and it’s really clear that when I’m talking to him it’s like dragging him through hot coals to keep up the conversation.

Larry: Well, I know for a fact that my son has picked up some of my violence. He’s abusive. Picked it up directly. It’s horrible. It’s the worst thing I could have done. He hits his mother. Tells her to shut up. Calls her a drunk. You know, all the stuff I’ve done.

Mary: *We haven’t talked a whole lot about what the experience of being in MOVE is like. I want to get a sense of what it’s been like for you.*

Bruce: Being in the group was...like guilt and shame when

“Every once in a while, some guy would just come up with this incredible pearl of wisdom and your jaw would just drop.”

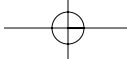
HELP MOVE CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF MOBILIZING MEN FOR GENDER JUSTICE

Attend MOVE’s annual event, **Mission Possible: Join the MOVEMENT!**

When: October 12, 2001 6-9 p.m.

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Music, spoken word, art, community, activism, friends and food!



DONATE TO MOVE

While all adult clients pay fees for the services they receive at MOVE, we actively solicit funds to support services to youth and very low-income men and for community education efforts. Donations from people like you are a vital part of our annual budget.

You can donate to MOVE in several ways:

Directly: Send a check to our offices: 1385 Mission St., Suite 300 San Francisco, CA 94103.

At work: We are a member of Local Independent Charities. MOVE is once again listed as "Domestic Violence Prevention Begins with the Man." Look for us! Tell your friends!

Indirectly: Donate used goods to Community Thrift, a resale shop: 625 Valencia Street, San Francisco (415) 861-4910

They accept donations of clothing, furniture and small appliances. MOVE can be designated as the beneficiary of those donations.

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WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT IN HELPING US STOP THE VIOLENCE.

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THE MOVE YOUTH PROGRAM

issues of sexism and racism, stretching it beyond individual needs or individual problems.

Mary: What we've done is help them to understand the different types of oppression that they have experienced themselves, and then out of that can grow an empathy for their peers, family members, women or just others in general. They can't make that leap unless you validate their experiences as a victim first. We help them to understand what they lose and how they miss a piece of their own humanity (when they use violence). We help them understand that there's a choice, that there are a

arises, well, what can be done to address those issues? We try to get young people to express what they see as solutions. And they know themselves and they know their peers, so we train youth workers, adults who work with youth and some of the youth leaders themselves to use the popular idioms, popular culture, popular youth idioms, you know, like rap and poetry to deepen the understanding of the issue, explore their perceptions, give them new information and give them the tools to be able to get the community in discussion and develop strategies for addressing the issue.

ence curriculum, so it's going to be ongoing year after year.

Allan: Briefly, the family violence court - we have the Judge at the Unified Family Court really taking this on, creating a family court with protocols, with not only one judge, but also one probation officer, one district attorney, one public defender. It's really using the intervention as a point of access instead of just working with the batterer, which is what we did previously. We're now working collaboratively. We'll have this point of access even further back into the whole family and to siblings or the children of the victim or the batterer, who are at risk and can be identified.

Mary: We'll have victim advocates and family mediators there, and we'll also have nonviolent parenting classes in conjunction with the court. We're also looking at services for parents, siblings, everyone who's involved in the family, so it's also a venue to do an assessment and make referrals. All the service providers are going to have a presence so there's going to be instant access to a lot of services. One young man had eight court-mandated counseling requirements. And what we did was timeline them, figured out as a group a priority

And out of that do a community action project, like create a video, or some music or poetry. So then these two groups of young people will come together, do a community action project, and then we're hosting a festival at the Boys and Girls Club, where they'll present it to the rest of the community.

Mary: We're also working with Youth Treatment Education Court which is a drug court that refers young men to a day treatment school. We were noticing that some young men would come to MOVE with a drug issue and a domestic violence issue and actually be pulled (from MOVE) to drug court. So we collaborated with YTEC to put a MOVE group onsite with them, and in that process have been able to combine the community action team with the batterer intervention program in the drug treatment center. And that's really been a powerful experience because we can make the links for the young men in understanding how violence sometimes is really similar to the use of substances.

Allan: You'll notice that what's common in all these programs is that the youth program has shifted its focus. Even though we still provide direct services, by



Long time Youth Program staff Ras Mo Moses, Allan Silva, and Jim Nelson.

whole variety of different ways to be a man, and help them figure out what way they want to be, and the things that they lose by not having that choice, and how they're being sold one definition of being a man, and what that does to them. In terms of how we put this into application, I was thinking about the way in which we use the film "Once Were Warriors." We look at that film, and first we look at imperialism, then we look at economic violence, community violence, gang violence, family violence, interpersonal violence, violence to the self. And all along the way you can see how each one affects the other, and then we work with the young men through the film asking, "Where does this person have choice? Where does this person have a voice to do something different? How can people come together to make something different in the context of all these oppressions?"

Ras Mo: We've been using popular education theory and doing popular theatre. We begin with the young people's perception of the issue, adding new information, demystifying some of the beliefs, and looking at the root causes of domestic and dating violence, and its impact on individuals, on families, on the wider community, on men and women, and on kids who witness. The question

"We try to get young people to express what they see as solutions"

Allan: Ras Mo summed up the popular education model. It goes from awareness to packaging the information back to their community. In essence, that's been the evolution here at MOVE in our prevention work. We've worked on our own awareness, we've come up with an analysis, and we've learned how to package it and work with communities to give this back.

Mary: The work at Everett Middle School came out of a situation of dating violence there, and the school approached San Francisco Women Against Rape and MOVE and said, "Come in and do an intervention," and we stood together and said, "No, you need to take responsibility (for the violence)." And the school has risen to the occasion, and is taking responsibility by incorporating this as important curriculum and implementing it. Now we're working with the school to incorporate domestic violence, dating violence, sexual harassment prevention education for the students. This will all culminate in a Peace Day celebration looking at dating violence, domestic violence and sexual assault. We're building this into the seventh-grade sci-

for the individual's safety and others' safety, and said they complete this objective first; when they're finished, they complete this one. So that it became a manageable thing, and the young man didn't become overwhelmed and go back into the system. We're also working with young men to figure out who in the community and/or family would be of support, and have those people come in. A young man brought in three of his friends because he was having an attendance problem. So the friends come in, talk to him, say, "OK, we commit not to hang out with you when you're supposed to be in group." And in that way they've supported him in coming to the program.

Dean: Could you talk about other projects you're involved in?

Mary: The Boys and Girls Club approached MOVE and Horizons Unlimited and said, "Would you come in and design this Date Smart program for us?" And what we've come up with is we had to do a eight-week support group for young women, an eight-week support group for young men, then bring the two groups together.

and large we have shifted our focus to systems change. The family violence court represents systems change. What has happened at Everett represents broader systems change than just presentations, and hopefully that gets modeled out to other schools district-wide.

Dean: *It seems like the systems change doesn't come from a policy-work perspective; it comes very much from a reality that's grounded in daily experience. There's a synthesis between direct service, systems change and policy work that seems unusual. Back in '94 when we started doing youth and domestic violence work, no one in the city was really working with young people around this issue. That has changed in really significant ways. I think that's at least in part because of the persistence of MOVE and the organizations that it's been allied with over the years. It seems to me that that change is mirrored internally as well. Whereas the prevention work was a small kind of afterthought, that's no longer the case. In the organization as a whole it seems like the prevention work has become infused in all the work that you do, which seems really significant. ■*

