



The Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
Helpline (617) 354-8807 • Business (617) 354-6394
www.cambridgewomenscenter.org

December 12, 2008

Dear Friend of the Women's Center,

As 2008 comes to a close, the challenging economic times mean we all have hard choices to make about giving. Such times also mean more women than ever will be counting on our free programs and services. The good news is that we know of no other organization where the dollar goes as far as it does at the Women's Center. With over 100 committed volunteers working in a cooperative spirit of women helping women, so much becomes possible!

As volunteers for 35 and 28 years, respectively, it has been so gratifying to be part of a community that helps thousands of women annually. Between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, 5,409 visits, 2,032 helpline calls, and 1,791 attendees at groups, workshops, and trainings were tallied at the Women's Center. We can assure you that your donation, of any amount, will be put to good use.

On less than \$100,000 and with only one paid staff person, the Women's Center provides:

- * A 55-hour per week information and crisis helpline staffed by volunteer peer counselors
- * A computer lab providing Internet access, with support and assistance as needed
- * Over 125 support groups, skill-building workshops, and educational trainings each year
- * Onsite childcare for women attending groups, workshops, trainings, and events at the Center
- * A financial literacy program empowering women to successfully manage money
- * Programs and services for women who have been physically, emotionally, and sexually abused
- * A warm, welcoming daytime and evening drop-in space in a comfortable, homelike environment
- * A kitchen where homeless women and others cook and eat individual or communal meals
- * An extensive resource and referral network addressing the complex needs of women
- * A library promoting women's education, mutual self-help, recovery, and political activism

All free of charge! And we are open six days a week. In addition, counseling is offered for a token fee by licensed volunteer therapists to women with little or no income and inadequate health insurance.

In 2007, in response to the major financial crisis we were in, individual contributions by this time of year totaled \$30,366. So far in 2008, we have received \$12,543. While we recognize that money is tight, and that we are no longer in as critical a situation as we were, everything that could be cut from the budget already has been. We continue to struggle to cover operating expenses, maintain the house, and overcome the inherited debt.

The Women's Center is a remarkable and invaluable community resource offering women throughout Greater Boston, and well beyond, support and opportunities to improve their lives. We ask you to join us in keeping the Center alive and well. Together we can look to the future, knowing we have the capacity to make a real difference. **Please send the most generous contribution you can today!**

You can donate online by going to www.cambridgewomenscenter.org and selecting "SUPPORT US" or by sending your donation, payable to "The Women's Center" to: The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139 (see page 3 form). Your gift is fully tax-deductible and may be earmarked, if you wish (see next page). Our heartfelt thanks for your kind support and wishing you all the best in the New Year!

Judy Norris and Elaine Westerlund, Volunteers

EARMARK YOUR DONATION

Would you like your donation to be used for one of the following, or in some other specific way? Let us know and we will gladly follow your wishes.

Building Improvements

There are some big projects needing attention SOON! The house needs an exterior paint job, after lots of prep work including carpentry; gutter and downspout work is needed so water drains away from the foundation; a huge tree is growing into the garage, breaking through a wall and making big cracks in the concrete floor: electrical upgrades are needed; and several storm window units need replacement for warmth and energy conservation. Great work is being done by our volunteers, and at community and student workdays, but we need to hire professionals for the larger projects.

Help the Center get out of Debt!

In the spring and summer of 2006, \$80,000 was borrowed from Boston Community Capital (BCC) to cover operating costs. In September 2006, new Board leadership drastically lowered the budget, and since that time income has covered expenses, including \$900 monthly payments to BCC for interest and to repay the loan (now at \$74,527). You can reduce the debt by sending a donation, noting that it is to go toward paying off the principal.

Support for Survivors of Abuse

Contribute to the Women's Center's wide array of specialized services for battered women and survivors of child sexual abuse, clergy abuse, ritualistic and sadistic abuse, and human trafficking.

Computer/Internet Access & Learning Lab

The ease of access, extensive hours, and relaxed, supportive learning environment are hard to find elsewhere. The computer lab is especially helpful to women who do not have the skills to compete in today's job market, and women can stay on the computers for much longer than at a library. Our lab offers informal assistance and skills training from knowledgeable volunteers. By January 2009, our second lab will be up and running and we will be able to offer formal training sessions.

WISH LIST

Please call Ming, 617-354-6394 to arrange donations.

Children's Room: Children's size wooden chairs in good condition, sturdy floor lamps with heavy bases

Kitchen: Napkins, coffee, tea, sugar, cream, honey, dishwashing liquid, tall kitchen size trash bags

Supplies: Kleenex, toilet paper, multi-fold paper towels, fragrance-free soap, mop, broom, paper-cutter, heavy-duty stapler, postage stamps, paint brushes, roller covers, a good snow shovel, ice melt.

DON'T MISS OUR INCEST SURVIVOR QUILT EXHIBIT!

The opening of this powerful and moving exhibit on November 20th was an amazing event! You can still view the exhibit until December 24th on weekdays from 10am-6pm at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center, 41 Second Street, Cambridge (near Lechmere station).

A SAMPLE OF UPCOMING GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Creative Arts Group. Mondays, 2-3:30pm. Creative exploration: collage, painting, poetry, and more. Meet others, share resources, and enhance self-awareness. In partnership with North Charles Inc. Education and Outreach Services. Info: Rivkah 617-661-0405 x22

My Money Life Support Group. Mondays, 6:30-8pm. Come with your financial questions and learn to turn your money life around. Info: Jameel: 617-461-5025 or jameel@StartMoneySmart.com

New Mother's Baby Wearing Workshop. Tuesday, 12/16, 2:30-3:30pm. Learn about baby wearing and how to wear your baby with various carriers, and African style on your back. Info/Sign-up: 617-354-8807

Women's Healing Circle. Tuesday, 12/16, 7:30-8:30pm. A meditation group. Info: spark.envision@gmail.com

Black Women Poets and Memoirists Writing Workshops. Tuesday, 12/23. 6-7:30pm. Meet and write with other serious writers who are committed to writing for publication and interested in a community building atmosphere. Info: mapsoneditor@gmail.com

Battered Women's Support Group. Wednesdays, 7-9pm (except 3rd Wed. of the month). Will not meet the last 3 Weds. in December. Info: 617-354-8807.

Women & Media. Thursday, 12/11, 6:30-8pm. Film Screening: "Media and the Date Rape Backlash." This documentary by the Media Education Foundation and FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) examines the popular media's role in discrediting rape survivors, particularly the early 1990's campaign to squelch awareness of date rape on college campuses.

Lesbian Rap. Fridays, 12/19 & 26, 6:30-8pm. An informal social/discussion group. Good times and great talks, with dancing after! Please bring food or drink to share. Info: Valerie, deinde23@hotmail.com

Incest Resources' Drop-In Group for Female Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse. 3rd Fridays of the month, 6-7:30pm. Next topics: 12/19 Conflict; 1/16 Fears about Ourselves.

Healing Through Birth-A workshop for expectant survivors of sexual abuse and rape. Saturday, 12/13, 11am-3pm. Come share your experiences and learn a wide range of techniques for navigating the changes and sensations of late pregnancy, delivery, and the post-partum period. Taught by a homebirth midwife and childbirth educator. Info: rebeccarudner@yahoo.com

TO EVERYONE

WHO HAS GIVEN A KIND WORD OR HELPFUL HAND,
SUPPLIES, MONEY, TIME, AND EXPERTISE
YOU MAKE THE WOMEN'S CENTER WORK!

THANK YOU!

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

Count on me! I/We want to contribute:

\$2,000 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 other \$ _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to **The Women's Center**

This gift is in honor of _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____

My gift will be matched by my employer: _____ -

Name _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Email address _____

Please **email** me: Newsletter Monthly calendar Everything Please send me a volunteer application.

Please **mail** me the newsletter Please remove me from the Women's Center's mailing list.

December 2008



Our house provides comfort and a sense of belonging to women facing all kinds of challenges including depression, anxiety, disability, abuse, discrimination, poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and more.