From the COMPASS Director: Looking back at 2018

We are so grateful for the ongoing support from the communities we serve. This past year, your response to our mission was wonderful. It is because of this outpouring of support that we are able to continue to provide comprehensive services to those victimized by sexual violence.

Please take a few minutes and read about all the accomplishments we have seen over the past twelve months. We are glad that so many of you take the time to read our newsletters.

If you have not yet checked us out on social media, you can find us on Facebook and Instagram. Make sure to follow us as we share great topics with all of our followers.

Finally….If you have NOT made a year-end donation, it’s not too late! We need the generous support of our communities to continue to support survivors as well as provide prevention education to our children and teens. You can mail your tax-deductible donation to: PO Box 481 New Philadelphia, OH 44663

Thank you from all of us at COMPASS. We wish you and your loved ones a wonderful new year!

Molly MacMath, COMPASS Director
**Game Plan introduced on area campuses**

Although we have had many achievements on each of our three campuses so far this year, there is one that stands out over the rest.

Our new presentation, Game Plan, started off as a small goal but quickly snowballed into something much bigger and better. COMPASS had the vision of being able to get in front of an athletic program to not only make our services more well-known on campus but to also educate coaches in their roles as someone who a student-athlete may disclose to. Malone University gave us that opportunity. It started with a presentation with at least one coach from each athletic program.

This presentation was given to about 25 coaches and COMPASS was able to explain to them our services, how to appropriately handle disclosures, what their Title IX requirements are as coaches, and what our discussions would look like with their specific players. At the end of the presentation, COMPASS gave each coach a book that we named, “Game Plan” full of resources, fact sheets, and more. As we left the presentation, we felt encouraged and received positive reactions from the coaches. We were hopeful that the participants would utilize the knowledge and skills learned in the program, but they did more than that. They asked for more trainings for more athletic programs. Since then, COMPASS has been fortunate enough to speak to three specific Malone teams – softball, girl’s golf, and the volleyball team. We are hopeful the momentum and conversations will continue on campus.

What people have said about Game Plan:

“"I've gone through 3 years of these presentations and this one was the best and most educational."

“Great, CURRENT, info. Interaction was easy and good to help facilitate conversation/ideas. I wish everyone could get this presentation (campus, works, the city).”

“I thought this was a great way to learn more about sexual assault and consent! I learned a lot in a short amount of time and I had fun!”

Game Plan can be adapted for any athletic program. If you are interested in learning more about this presentation, please call our office.

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**Counseling program saw strength, growth in survivors**

As we reflect back over the last year within the counseling program, it brings smiles to our faces.

We have had the honor to walk alongside so many survivors in their journey of healing. It is never forgotten by staff the courage that survivors show when making the decision to walk into our office.

The growth that we have witnessed by people willing to work through their trauma is hard to even put into words. People have improved their self-esteem and self-worth, made strides in letting go of shame and blame and shifting that blame onto the perpetrator, where it belongs! We have witnessed people decrease their symptoms of PTSD and take part in things that have been lost to them for some time.

Another barrier for a lot of people who have experienced sexual violence is with touch from others. This causes difficulty for them to be in relationships. Working with survivors on healthy intimacy and healthy sexuality has been one of the highlights this year. Human touch was made to be healing and hopeful and it is great to watch people believe in that again. Our hope for all survivors this holiday season is for them to know how much they are believed and loved!
Advocacy: Collaboration key to success, new law benefits survivors

Collaboration among service providers is an essential part of advocacy. We know that survivors benefit from agencies working together. In our hospital advocacy program, our victim advocate supervisor has been working with the medical advocacy coordinator from Domestic Violence Project, Inc. to coordinate a training with advocates from both agencies.

This training will cover the intersections of sexual assault and domestic violence, while also focusing on the referral process for each agency. This will help streamline services for our survivors. The advocates will also be able to have an open discussion with each other on the challenges and successes of providing hospital advocacy.

A new law to benefit survivors was passed in Ohio and took effect in July. This law allows victims of dating violence to seek protection orders even if they have not lived together.

By eliminating the cohabitation requirement, more victims will be able to seek protection from abuse. We have seen multiple other successes in our legal advocacy program.

We have seen survivors who have been fighting for protection for themselves and their children for over 5 years finally receive court ordered protection. We have also seen clients with an enormous amount of courage come forward to give testimony of their story in front of their abuser.

We believe it is an honor to be able to work with survivors on a daily basis. Your ongoing support of our mission allows us to continue to provide advocacy and support to these courageous survivors.
Prevention programming reaches thousands in 2018

The prevention team has worked hard throughout the school year maintaining our programming in K-12 schools in Tuscarawas, Carroll and Stark County schools.

The prevention team did increase saturation of sessions at Lake High School from two sessions once a year to five sessions twice a year and added programming at Dover Middle School that has not received our programming in over two years. The prevention team accomplished successfully serving entire schools, instead of a few classes in a grade. This is our second year serving the entire sixth, seventh and eighth graders at Claymont Middle School. It is great to see the impact on the kids after our sessions.

For example, one eighth grade at student wrote that our programming was helpful because “it would allow them to let others know about red flags in a relationship.”

Another eighth grade student wrote, “One example I would be willing to help prevent unhealthy behaviors in the future is by telling people what is wrong in a relationship and what is right in a relationship.”

The prevention team also has been keeping up with the agency’s social media successfully.

As a team, multiple posts were able to be promoted and gained a lot of likes and attention on both our Facebook and Instagram pages.

The Instagram post that received over four hundred likes discussed how consent can be an easy conversation between partners. Facebook also has been doing well and gaining followers throughout the school year.

Although the prevention team at COMPASS works hard to spread positivity and prevention education, it is always great to see schools already implementing this. For example, the picture is a kindness wall at GlenOak High School. Students can leave kind notes for others or take one if they need it.

Volunteers needed at Compass

As with many not-for-profit organizations, we rely on volunteers throughout the year. At COMPASS, we have a great team of volunteers that help with our community awareness activities.

Our volunteers represent COMPASS at our table display for health fairs and other events throughout the year. They also help by working in the office, helping with craft group, and other miscellaneous things. They must go through a specialized 40 hours of training before becoming a volunteer.

New staff members must also do the training. In 2018, our volunteer coordinator trained 10 individuals (5 volunteers and 5 staff). COMPASS currently has 25 volunteers between our two locations.

Are you looking for a way to donate your time to an organization? Are you someone who has a passion for our mission? If you would like to learn more about volunteering, give us a call and ask to speak with Ronda.

CALL 330-339-2504 or 330-437-3705 (Stark County) or EMAIL rphillips@compassrapecrisis.org