



Blackburn Center

AGAINST DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

CHANGES AHEAD FOR THE NFL

The NFL has a domestic and sexual violence problem. According to statistics from the San Diego Union Tribune, out of 32 NFL teams, 21 employed a player with a domestic or sexual violence charge on their record in 2013. But more than the numbers, the NFL has a serious problem with how it responds to such crimes. The case of Ray Rice is just the most recent example.

Let's review the facts: in February of this year, Baltimore Raven running back Ray Rice allegedly punched his fiancée (now wife) in the head during an argument at a hotel in Atlantic City. Surveillance video then showed Rice dragging her apparently unconscious body from an elevator. Although Rice was indicted for aggravated assault, the charges were later dropped when he agreed to undergo counseling. Fast forward to July, when the NFL handed down its punishment: a two game suspension, and a fine of \$58,000.

This may seem like an adequate punishment ... that is, until you consider the punishments handed down by the NFL for other infractions. Cleveland Brown Josh Gordon got a one-year suspension for smoking marijuana. Oakland Raider Terrelle Pryor was suspended for five games for receiving free tattoos as an undergrad at Ohio State. Baltimore Colts player Robert Mathis was suspended for four games for taking unapproved fertility drugs. When Rice's suspension is compared to those handed out for these infractions — all of which are clearly less severe in nature than punching a woman so hard that she was rendered unconscious — it is clear that his "punishment" is essentially a joke. It is also clear that the NFL simply does not care about domestic violence.

In 2012, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell promised to address the league's domestic violence problem. It's 2014, and things are just as bad — if not worse. But the Rice issue has



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

forced the NFL to make a change. In response to the outrage over Rice's inadequate punishment, the NFL has announced a new domestic violence policy; first time offenses will result in a six game suspension, and a second offense will result in an indefinite ban from the league, with the ability to apply for reinstatement after one year.

NOTE: This article was current at the time the newsletter went to print. Since that time, more facts have come to light that call the NFL's actions into serious question. For more on this subject, please visit our blog at <http://www.blackburncenter.org/#!/blog/c13k9>.

CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT BILL PROPOSED

As college students head to school this fall, a new bill that addresses the issue of campus sexual assault is working its way through Congress. The Campus Accountability and Safety Act is a bipartisan bill that would impose significant financial penalties on colleges for failing to comply with new federal laws that require them to release data about sexual violence on campus. This data would not come from college administrators but from the students themselves, through a survey. The survey, funded by the federal government, would be an annual questionnaire to ask all undergraduate students about their experiences with sexual violence. Under this bill, every college would be mandated to participate in the survey, and to publish the results online. Colleges would still be subjected to the financial penalties provided in current federal law, but these would increase from the current \$35,000 to \$150,000 per violation under this legislation. This legislation would go a long way in ensuring transparency, as college administrators could no longer hide or downplay incidents of sexual assault in order to maintain their public image.

In addition to the survey, the bill proposes an overhaul of the financial penalty system. Colleges are currently at risk of losing their federal funding for mishandling sexual assault cases under the Clery Act. But because that punishment is so extreme, and could shut down a college completely, it has never been imposed. This new legislation would change that equation, proposing a fine of up to 1% of a college's operating budget. This would result in a large fine for a university, but one that likely wouldn't impact students — especially

at larger universities. For example, a major violation at a University with an annual operating budget of \$1.5 billion dollars would result in a \$15 million dollar fine: a significant amount, but not one that would close the university. Of course, the impact would be greater at smaller colleges/universities.

The bill is not simply focused on penalties, however. It would also change the way that colleges handle complaints and provide services to victims. Colleges would be required to provide confidential advisers to victims and to train counselors. They would need to implement a uniform plan for handling sexual assault cases with local law enforcement, and athletic departments would not be permitted to take the lead in adjudicating sexual assault complaints, reversing a practice that is reportedly currently seen on 20% of college campuses. These changes — combined with a better penalty system and increased transparency — are important strategies in addressing the epidemic of campus sexual assaults.

Here in Westmoreland County, Blackburn Center has been in partnership since 2008 with Seton Hill University to develop university-wide primary prevention programming to address the issue of gender violence — including the incidence of sexual violence on campus. The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg launched a similar project with Blackburn Center earlier this year. This proactive approach, to address the root causes of gender violence while assessing the effectiveness of university policy in response to sexual assault, will serve as a model to other colleges and universities.

BLACKBURN'S E-NEWSLETTER OPTION

We are moving towards paperless communication with our newsletter. This has multiple benefits: (1) we will reduce costs for Blackburn Center (allowing more of our resources to be invested in services to clients and the community); (2) we will lessen our impact on the environment; and (3) you will get important information about Blackburn Center's services and projects faster.

Please consider taking advantage of this opportunity! To subscribe to our e-newsletter and other news and alerts from Blackburn Center, e-mail Laura at laura@blackburncenter.org. Include your regular mailing address so that we can remove you from the newsletter mailing list. You may still occasionally receive other paper mail from Blackburn Center, but our goal is to move towards entirely paperless communication. As always, your privacy is important to us; Blackburn Center will never sell your information to a third party.

CALLING ALL WRITERS!

One of our favorite features of our new and improved website is our blog — the perfect place for us to share information on important topics without the space limitations of social media. Of course, we realize that throughout our community, there are a wide variety of views on these subjects — and we want to hear them! If you are passionate about issues related to domestic and sexual violence (or gender equality, or how “media hurts”), we would love to host you as a guest blogger on our website.

If you are interested — or know anyone who might be — please submit all entries to ErinP@blackburncenter.org. Our guidelines for submissions are below:

- Topic can vary, but should in some way relate to Blackburn Center's mission.
- While we are interested in hearing a variety of views on these subjects, we will not post content that is fundamentally in opposition to our understanding of gender violence.
- Photos related to the content of the submission are welcome as well, but please only submit a photograph that you took personally and which you are willing to allow us to utilize without compensation.
- Please also feel free to use hyperlinks, particularly to provide references for any information you are sharing. We particularly ask that you provide links to credible citations for any particular figures or statistics that you cite in your submission.
- We ask that you please submit original content that has not been published elsewhere, and that you do not publish the content elsewhere after it is posted.
- Please include a two or three line biographical statement to run at the end of the piece.
- We reserve the right to edit guest posts for content and clarity.
- Please note that we will include the following disclaimer at the end of all guest posts: “Please note that the views expressed by guest bloggers represent their own personal views, and not necessarily those of Blackburn Center.”
- We will notify you in advance of whether we will be able to run the submission and, if so, when; we'd ask you to please help promote the post via FaceBook, Twitter, email, or whatever other means available to you
- Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any compensation for guest submissions at this time.



Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®

The International Men's March to Stop Rape,
Sexual Assault & Gender Violence

In Westmoreland County, presented by Blackburn Center

Westmoreland County's Fifth Annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event

- Mark your calendar NOW for this event next year: Saturday, April 18, 2015 at St. Clair Park in downtown Greensburg.
- Tell your friends, family, colleagues and neighbors about this important – and FUN – event.
- Gather a team to join the more than 30 teams and 1,000 individuals who walked this past year.

If you'd like information now about individual and team registration, and details about sponsorship opportunities, please call **724-837-9540, X115**.

Online registration information for the walk will be available via Blackburn Center's website in January 2015.

Follow Us Each Month as Our Walk Becomes a Journey

After our *Walk a Mile in Her Shoes* event on April 12, 2014, many men asked what they could do to support Blackburn Center once they took off their high heels. One way for the men of Westmoreland County to support our mission is to join us in a new initiative: **It's About the Journey**. In each monthly e-blast since April, we have been highlighting a point from the pledge to end gender violence (*Ten Things Men Can Do To End Gender Violence*, available on our website at blackburncenter.org). Sign up for our e-blast by e-mailing laura@blackburncenter.org so you can learn more about how you can get involved in our mission to end gender violence.



VISIT US ON FACEBOOK | <https://www.facebook.com/blackburncenterpa>



In 1853, Esther Howland brought young girls into her Massachusetts home to hand-color valentines. She provided them with shelter and an opportunity to earn a livelihood. In that tradition, this specially created collector's card was designed by a Blackburn Center client.

MANY THANKS to those who supported the Special Occasion Card: A Greeting with a Purpose

In Memory

Anonymous
 Louise Barton
 Ina Seibert
 Ella Beveridge
 Ina Seibert
 Mrs. Ginny Chedrick
 First Presbyterian Church
 Woman's Association, Irwin
 Doretha Dickey
 Rev. Linda Landers
 Barbara J. Dorundo
 Georgine Dorundo
 Stella Doyle
 Caryl and Rebecca Evans
 Jean Glastetter
 J. Anthony Glastetter
 Julia Hinger
 Barbara Nakles
 Lenore Huffer
 Ina Seibert
 Clara Hoffman
 James and Jacqueline Timko
 E. Jayne Marchand
 Joan M. Vernail
 Marie Lawrence
 James and Jacqueline Timko

Catherine Lekawa
 Nancy A. Smith
 Helen Michael
 Mr. and Mrs. Sam Lawson
 Andee Millstein
 George, Linda, Juliane and
 Kristine Austin
 Lucille Scurci
 Reno and Chris Vitale
 Viola Springer
 Holly J. D'Amico
 Mary Louise Truxal
 Dona DeFelice

In Honor

All Strong Women and Children
 Cheryl M. McCabe
 Raymond Dorundo, Sr.
 Georgine Dorundo
 Julie Ebersole
 Berny and Betsy Borza
 Carmella Neil
 Calli-Marie and Alessandra Neil
 Ann M. Schrems
 Bill and Cathy Reeves
 Carol Zornan
 Scott and Lynn Phillips

General

American Slovak Society, Bradenville
 Anonymous
 Ellen Arbuckle
 Jim and Kathleen Bendel
 Anthony J. Botti
 Gina Burkett
 Candace Cassidy
 Billy Clark
 Georgia Crawford
 Rich and Roz Douds
 Albert and Virginia Essey
 1st United Church of Christ
 Women's Fellowship
 John Goettlicher
 Richard Harrold
 Hempfield Hunt Club
 Margaret Hildebrand
 Tim and Diane Johnson
 JoAnne Kaylor
 Kiwanis Club of Greensburg
 Mary A. Korona
 Thomas and Patricia Maatta
 Ray and Beth Mauder
 Jean McKenna
 Donald and Dana Park
 Lori Raling
 Dona Marie Ray
 Rodger and Beth Searfoss
 Virginia M. Turner

THE AGENCY'S COMMITMENT

In April 2014, Blackburn Center's Board of Directors approved an updated Mission Statement and adopted Vision and Values Statements, to clearly articulate the agency's commitment to ending violence and to providing excellent client services.

Vision

Blackburn Center envisions a world free from domestic and sexual violence.

Mission Statement

Blackburn Center advocates for the rights of all individuals to live free from domestic and sexual violence in their homes and communities by eliminating the root causes of this violence and providing for the well-being and safety of survivors/victims.

Values

1. Commit to outstanding services.
(client-driven services; continuous improvement through evaluation; competency focus; commitment to diversity)
2. Maximize resources through ethical stewardship.
(funds, staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, community relationships, goodwill, courage of spirit, reputation, opportunities, knowledge base/expertise, survivors' experiences)
3. Challenge the social norms that perpetuate gender violence.
(purposeful view of all aspects of the agency's work through a social transformation perspective)

Reminders...

■ Are Taxes on Your Mind?

As the tax year draws to a close, here's something to remember: you can donate your car, motorcycle, truck or boat to Blackburn Center and receive a tax deduction. For more information, call us at **724-837-9540** and ask for someone on the Administrative Team.

■ United Way Campaign

All Westmoreland County United Way agencies need your help, now more than ever. The stronger they are, the stronger we are. Please consider directing your contribution to the Community Impact Fund or to Blackburn Center. Blackburn Center's donor designation number is 382.

■ 2014 Annual Report

To reduce costs and environmental impact, we will be posting Blackburn Center's Annual Report on our website: www.blackburncenter.org. Watch for the 2013/2014 report in December 2014. Please let us know if you'd like a hard copy sent to you; call **724-837-9540, x104**.

FOLLOW US ON



Pinterest

NEEDS LIST Your contributions have a direct impact for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

■ KITCHEN

- Baking pans
(9" x 13" - aluminum)
- Can openers (hand-held)
- Coffee (regular)
- Coffee creamer
- Cooking oil
- Dish drainers
- Dishpans
- Dishwasher detergent
- Drink boxes
- Food items:** any canned food, other non-perishables, etc.*
- Tall kitchen garbage bags
- Packaged snacks for lunches
- Paper products:
paper towels
- Paper towel holders
- Skilletts
- Small appliances: mixer, coffee maker, toaster, knife sharpener; can opener
- Spices and condiments
- Zip-lock bags (1 and 2 gallon sizes)**

*Food items we especially need include: all kinds of soups, condiments (mayonnaise, mustard and catsup), jelly, cake and brownie mixes, canned tuna, canned chicken and other meats, canned or bottled juices.

■ BATHROOM

- Bath mats
- Paper products:
toilet paper
- Plungers
- Shower curtains and rings
- Soap dispensers
- Toilet brushes
- Towels (durable), bath and hand towels and washcloths

■ BEDROOM

- Alarm clocks**
- Bed pillows
- Bed-in-a-bag sets

- Pajamas:** women's one-size-fits-most & extra-large sizes, sleep shorts & housecoats, infants sizes 6 to 24 months, boys and girls 2 to 8 and teen sizes – summer weight

- Sheet sets:**
twin & double

- Pillowcases:**
solid colors

■ PERSONAL CARE

- Hotel-size items are no longer needed.**

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body wash
- Hand lotion

■ MISCELLANEOUS

- Baby monitors**
- Bottled water
- Brooms
- Buckets
- Diapers: Sizes 3,4,5,6+**
- Extension cords
- Flashlights
- Gasoline cards: (GetGo & Sheetz)**
- Gift cards: (Giant Eagle or Walmart)**
- Hair dryers**
- Laundry detergent
- Laundry baskets
- Markers - washable
- Mops
- Nasal aspirators
- Outdoor garbage bags
- Pull-up diapers:**
larger sizes

- Sweat suits:**
all adult sizes

- Telephones
- Tool kits

■ UMBRELLAS

- Underpants:**
boys & girls all sizes; women's sizes 5,6,7,8,9

THE HOLIDAY GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING...



As the holiday season approaches, please keep our needs list (LEFT) in mind if you're looking for an alternative to traditional gift-giving. Making a gift of items from the needs list, or donating the financial resources to purchase those items, is a wonderful way to honor someone special in your life. We'll be happy to send a card acknowledging your gift. Donating items helps to sustain the shelter program, and maintain the support groups the agency provides for women and children. Some of these items are made available to women and their children who are establishing their own homes and need support with basic household items.

Please put the items in **bold** at the top of your shopping list, and help Blackburn Center manage donations by bringing new items. If you have used items to donate, the agency can provide a list of thrift shops in the area that make items available to Blackburn Center shelter residents at no cost to them.



PO Box 398
Greensburg, PA 15601-0398

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 648
Greensburg, PA

PLEASE NOTE: Deliver donations to Blackburn Center's administrative offices on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 AM to 4 PM. Please call if you cannot bring your donation during regular business hours. We can make other arrangements if necessary.

Blackburn Center Against Domestic & Sexual Violence is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides 24-hour hotline services, counseling, advocacy and support groups to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, incest, child sexual abuse, and sexual harassment; emergency shelter is available to survivors of domestic violence and their dependent children. Blackburn Center also provides community education, school student awareness programs, and in-service professional trainings throughout Westmoreland County.

Contact Information

Office 724-837-9540
Fax 724-837-3676
Hotline 724-836-1122
Toll Free Hotline 1-888-832-2272
Website www.blackburncenter.org

Blackburn Center is funded in part by United Way of Westmoreland County, PA Department of Public Welfare funds, including Title XX and Act 44 funds, foundations and local contributions.

A copy of official registration and financial information for Blackburn Center may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Board of Directors

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- Vice President Jerry Supko
- Secretary Autumn Stankay
- Treasurer Mara Bradford
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LIVE UNITED

United Way  **United Way of Westmoreland County**
Donor Designation 382