NEEDS LIST

A donation of items from the needs list throughout the year helps Blackburn Center sustain the shelter program, and helps to maintain the support groups the agency provides for victims of crime. In addition, some of these items are made available to clients—and their children—who are establishing their own homes and need support with basic household items.

Please put the items that are in bold italics 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.

For more information about donation opportunities, contact: Blackburn Center (P.O. Box 398, Greensburg, PA 15601, 724.837.9540, www.blackburncenter.org)

Look at Our List, and Check It Twice …

As the holiday season approaches, please make our needs list part of your holiday gift giving. Making a gift of items from the needs list, or donating the financial resources to purchase those items, helps us provide for the basic needs of individuals and families staying at our shelter. It is also a unique and wonderful way to honor someone special on your holiday list.

Once you make your donation, we’ll be happy to send a card acknowledging your gift on their behalf.

Today, we stand with every victim who has been touched by violence. Every woman. Every child. Every man. If your life has been impacted by crime or violence in any way, we are here for you.

We understand the pain and the loss that victims of violence and crime experience. Whether it’s the result of domestic violence or sexual assault, child abuse or elder abuse, robbery or arson, homicide or kidnapping, DUI or hate crime, stalking or trafficking … we’re here for victims of all types of violence and crime. We will continue to be here until our work is done.

To reflect our expanded focus, we have updated our logo and identity as an organization. We hope that our new theme of “Standing Together to End Violence” will resonate in our community—and will reflect both the work that we do and the services that we provide in Westmoreland County. Blackburn Center will continue to serve women, children, and men who have been impacted by domestic and sexual violence. We will remain steadfast in our mission to end these types of violence. We will also provide services to victims of any type of violence or crime—and we will take a stand against ALL violence. As we go through this transition, we invite all in the community who share our vision of a world free from gender-based violence and other types of violence to join us and Stand Together to End Violence.

Blackburn Center 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, sexual harassment and all other crimes. Emergency shelter is available to survivors of intimate partner violence and their dependent children. Blackburn Center also provides community education, school student awareness programs, and in-service professional trainings throughout Westmoreland County.
The Privilege Project

Over the years, Blackburn Center has become increasingly devoted to social transformation. We strongly believe that changing our culture is necessary to truly and fully eliminate forms of gender violence. This year, we are examining the role of privilege in our society, particularly as it relates to domestic violence, sexual assault and other forms of gender violence.

Privilege is a complicated concept that can be confusing. What does it actually mean to have privilege? Is having privilege a bad thing? How does privilege relate to gender violence? We will be exploring these topics — and more — over the course of the next year as part of our Privilege Project. Our first post is already online, explaining the basic concept of privilege — and why it is so important to the work that we are doing. Privilege is most commonly used to describe a group of people whose day to day lives are made more “just” or safe, simply because they belong to a particular social group. These groups can include race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability and religion. Dominant groups in our society are those that control the value system and rewards, or that have more power than other groups.

Examples of privilege can be seen everywhere, including public spaces that do not accommodate people with disabilities, or the reality that more men than women are in positions of power in government. Having privilege does not make a person bad; it is simply a result of our social structure, and something that we should all acknowledge when talking about the problems that plague our society. When it comes to gender violence, recognizing male privilege can help us get to the root causes of this violence — and reach our ultimate goal of ending gender violence.

Social transformation takes time, and it requires a willingness to critically examine your own beliefs and choices. We ask you to join us on this journey as we explore the topic of privilege over the coming months. You can read along on our website, www.blackburncenter.org, and join the conversation online on Facebook or Twitter. We will be explaining different issues related to privilege, including the role of male privilege in gender violence, and will be featuring a number of guest posts on our blog. If you would like to write for our blog, contact us at ErinP@blackburncenter.org.

Future Advocates of Blackburn (FAB)

FAB is committed to working in the community now and in the future to end gender violence.

WHO? Anyone who is ready to stand up, use their voice and take action in our community to end gender violence.

WHAT? FAB is a young, evolving and member-driven group. FAB changes as we chat over coffee, brainstorm new ideas and respond to what’s happening in our community. We offer a little something for everyone — all are welcome to take part at their own pace and comfort level. Here’s what we’ve been up to lately:

- Stand Out Events — We attend community events together and share our message.
- FAB Facebook Group — Our message board for all things FAB. Members share articles and discuss timely topics related to gender violence.
- Action Items — Our weekly, micro-e-blast that delivers one quick note on how you can take action right now to help stop gender violence — like sharing a Tweet, commenting on Facebook or a reminder for our next event.

WHERE? Anywhere and everywhere. Attend our events — or rock your fuzzy slippers and join us on social media.

WHY? To end gender violence! A future without gender violence starts today.

Take the first step at blackburncenter.org/FAB. Or, contact pamelj@blackburncenter.org with questions.

Men as Allies

Blackburn Center is reaching out to men in the community who support our organization, with an invitation to join a new initiative, Men as Allies. Because gender violence is a complex problem, we need our allies to go beyond their current commitment — making donations, participating in the Walk — to bring our message into their everyday lives at home, at work, and in the community. We are confident that there are many men in Westmoreland County who have what it takes to make that commitment and thus work side-by-side with women to eliminate gender violence. If you’d like to learn more about this, or find out what you can do to be involved, contact Bill at 724.837.9540, x142, or BillM@blackburncenter.org.

What is Crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or cause by raising money from a large number of people, typically through the Internet.

Giving has never been so easy — and never been so needed! For your convenience, Blackburn Center is fortunate to have three venues to crowdfund this fall.

Day of Giving: A rescheduled online event for Wednesday, September 28, from 8 a.m. until midnight, provided by The Pittsburgh Foundation and The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County. On September 21, donors can visit www.westmorelandgives.org and select Blackburn Center to make a minimum $25 credit card donation online. The May 3 Day of Giving event was disrupted due to national technical problems.

Donor Drive: Blackburn Center’s annual campaign to raise funds needed to sustain services. Letters of appeal and reply envelopes will be mailed this fall. Your annual donation may be made via one of the online events mentioned here — or you can go directly to our website to make you contribution: http://www.blackburncenter.org/Donate/campaign/donor-drive.

Purse Parade: New to Blackburn Center is the Purple Purse Challenge. For the last five years, The Allstate Foundation has conducted its Purple Purse campaign to help more people understand domestic violence, the prevalence of financial abuse and the promise of financial empowerment services to help and aid. Blackburn Center is one of the 250 organizations selected to benefit from this challenge. Incentives will include a limited-edition leather purple purse designed by actor Kerry Washington. There will be challenges throughout the month to help us win the first prize of $100,000 from The Allstate Foundation. This giving event will happen online September 28 - October 25.

Whatever venue you choose to support our organization, we thank you! Watch our website for more information: www.blackburncenter.org.

May 11th is a day to celebrate the women in our lives and support the cause of ending gender violence. A day to remember those women who have been impacted. A day to act. A day to make your voice heard.

MAY 11TH IS A DAY TO CELEBRATE THE WOMEN IN OUR LIVES AND SUPPORT THE CAUSE OF ENDING GENDER VIOLENCE. A DAY TO REMEMBER THOSE WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN IMPACTED. A DAY TO ACT. A DAY TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.

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