

To,

~~Health And Human Services, Fairfax County, VA~~
~~United Way of the Northern Capital Area~~
~~Civil Rights Office, Washington, DC~~
~~National Organization for Women~~
~~Feminist Majority Foundation~~
~~National Commission on the Status of Women~~
~~American Bar Association~~
~~Electronic rights Council~~
~~The Washington Post~~
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I have been a volunteer worker at Bethany House of Northern Virginia (5901 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VIRGINIA) a private non-profit so called battered women's shelter. I wish to remain anonymous for fear of personal and professional reprisals by my co-workers and the Bethany House staff. In my experience working at the shelter I am appalled and outraged by what is really going on at Bethany House of Northern Virginia (BHNV). To put it bluntly, it is for most part nothing more than a "one stop divorce shop for emotional and bored housewives who want a change of life". It is also largely used as a free hostel for women with emotional problems if they are willing to hate their husbands enough and are willing to take out protective orders against their husbands. Women who follow BHNV's agenda are guaranteed residency at the shelter for up to 7 months. All of this in the name of a Battered Women's shelter is sickening to disgust.

From my observations, the goal of Bethany House is to get bored and emotional housewives to leave their marital home after infuriating them with a heavy dose of, husband bashing, anti-male talk, patriarchy, and negative motivation. This is carefully planned and executed by the Bethany House staff and volunteers. Simple tasks as cooking, cleaning, laundry, taking care of children are explained to the housewives as abusive and demeaning tasks forced upon them by their spouses. Marital arguments are explained as serious verbal abuse, Occasional pushing and showing are explained as serious physical abuse, decision-making is shown as emotional abuse. The staff and volunteers through a network of sources identify emotional housewives. With a series of pep talks, tests and evaluations, BHNV staffs make the wives and husbands incompatible, infuriate the wife with propaganda and then exploit the wife's frustration and anger as retaliation against the husband. The wife is given verbal and written instructions on how to leave the house secretly for the BHNV shelter.

Bethany House system resources are geared to get the father charged with an offense and to make the mother look like the victim and the children ending up as helpless pawns in the abuse game manipulated by BHNV.

Women with almost no marital problems are declared abused and are coached by the staff to go to court and get a protective order against their husbands with the promise of long-term shelter, legal services, counseling at BHNV.

BHNV also uses scare tactics to get women to file a protective order. This is a gross abuse of a system that was designed for real battered women.

Most of the staff and volunteers at BHNV have a jaundiced view of marriage and men, and attach little importance to the role of fathers in children's lives.

A majority of these staff and volunteers are women who are themselves from broken marriages and failed relationships, enraged with a bottomless pit of anger at men.

Women, staff and volunteers at the shelter use foul language and spend a lot of time father-bashing, husband bashing and hold group sessions to initiate the same feelings to new residents.

Bethany House is a terrible place, not the environment where children should be. Not even women.

A lot of Bethany House activities are carefully doctored and monitored and have to remain behind a "veil of secrecy".

The BHNV network with their legal services, sociologists, psychiatrists practice a self-censorship. It's just a lot of radical feminists making biased judgments against fathers, husbands and families.

BHNV has repeatedly lied to charities that they are a church and religious organization. Indeed they are located within the Culmore United Methodist Church complex. But all they do is rent space and have no connection with the Church.

BHNV has mis-represented and repeatedly lied to the United Way of the National Capitol Area regarding BHNV's position for several years.

In their United Way of the National Capitol Area CVC Code 8046 Charity Application form 2002 which I was involved in, I and other volunteers were told to outright lie and make it as family oriented as possible. According to the wording in the charity form in Verbatim which I quote below.

a) "BHNV family assistance Program for battered spouses and their children provides multiple interventions blended into a comprehensive family development/family strengthening plan".

b) " Outreach staff work with each family to examine and alter behaviors, and to enhance each victim's capacity to exercise self-determination and autonomy".

c) "Outreach staff assesses issues presented by each family and confirm vital background data collected in the initial interview."

d) "Once stabilized, victims implement customized family strengthening strategies, accessing services and advocating for clients to ensure realization of each individual's "

(I can vouch for the fact that none of the above statements presented to United Way 2002 charity are anywhere near truth. Their so-called family assistance Program (a) excludes childrens, fathers, husbands and indeed family interests. And does exclude to a large part the self-determination and autonomy of the house-wife they supposedly

"rescue" it in fact represents BHNV's interest almost exclusively to the fullest extent possible.

b) Outreach staff never work with families, neither do they make any attempt to alter behavior as they claim. They secretly meet with the wife and encourage her to pack up and leave with the children for the shelter and file a protective order against the father. This is almost always the rule – even if there was no abuse within the family. c) Outreach staff never assesses issues presented by a family. The father or any male member is never consulted in this case. Indeed the father is by default the abuser of the mother. d) There is no family strengthening strategies for the victims as they claim. By this time the poor house-wife is converted into a victim by BHNV with no recourse but to depend on BHNV for her financial stability, the children are alienated from their father by the protective order BHNV helped the house wife achieve. The father is sued for child and spousal support with the legal help of BHNV. Not only does BHNV impoverish a family by breaking them apart, but legally and morally commits child abuse by removing children from their home and putting them in a shelter. Away from their school, friends, and other familiar activities.)

I have spoken with several wives at BHNV who have deeply regretted having contacted BHNV and acting on BHNV's advice. They have all been told to outright lie and fabricate half-truths to distort. They have all taken out protective orders against their husbands in "the heat of the moment" at BHNV's suggestions and deeply regret destroying their marriage, family, husband and their children's future and "burning their boat" at any reconciliation much to their dismay.

I implore and beg your office to investigate and do something soon to stop this senseless break up of families and needless trauma to children. Please do something. The children of Fairfax County do not deserve this kind of cruelty. This is happening right under our very noses. Please do something NOW!

Thank you for your time.

