

## DVRC Resource Cards Give Options and Hope

Sandra's Story

Have you ever considered how something very small and seemingly insignificant can change a life? Kind words, a gift to the homeless or a call to report a disturbance can be a lifesaver.

Imagine that you are injured and trying to find safety for yourself and your children. Time is of the essence and you need to find help right away. Just as a AAA card can help you out of the terrifying situation of being stranded in the middle of nowhere, DVRC resource cards can do the same for victims of domestic violence.

Sandra, a 30-year old woman with three young children, ages four, nine and eleven called the police to her home after her husband kicked her in the stomach and broke her nose giving her two black eyes. He justified his physical violence by saying that the house was not clean enough. He began threatening to take their children and disappear. Sandra was terrified and knew that she must get her family out of this dangerous situation.

In addition to abusing drugs and alcohol, Sandra's husband had been emotionally, verbally and physically abusive to the entire family for years. Previous to this nine-year relationship, she had also been severely abused by her mother and father.

The police took Sandra's husband to jail, but she knew he would not be there for long. She was fearful that he might follow through with his threats to kill her or to take her children away from her. She did not feel she could turn to her friends and family as they had been unsupportive in the past. Fortunately, she remembered that the police had given her a resource card provided to them by DVRC. It contained a variety of resources and numbers to call in addition to information for her next steps toward safety.

Sandra and her children found safety at Monika's House (DVRC's confidential shelter) and received counseling through the Family Violence In-

tervention Program (FVIP). Through her connection to both Monika's House and FVIP, she received information, advocacy and referrals that aided her in reaching her goals of improving her self esteem, obtaining legal aid and filing for divorce. Her children were referred to DVRC's Children's Intervention Program, where they also received much needed counseling.

Sandra was able to obtain aid from the Department of Human Services and Adult and Family Services. She later received a large award through the Crime Victim's Compensation Program. Since then, she has started a new job that she loves and has moved into her own apartment with her children. With individual counseling, Sandra has managed to improve her life and the lives of her children by setting healthier boundaries, improving her parenting skills and communicating more effectively to break the cycle of violence.

Over the holidays, the family received abundant gifts from the DVRC Decemberfest program. She and her children were amazed by the generosity of people in the community. The Oregon Food Bank of Washington County also provided the family with a holiday basket.

Sandra's family continues to thrive, free from violence, and is actively participating in counseling through FVIP and other community resources. Something small enough to fit inside of Sandra's shoe had a significant impact on her life. DVRC's resource card provided her by the police gave her options and hope.

Created for donors, area health care providers, police and other community partners to highlight DVRC programs and activities.

*Writer*



**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
RESOURCE  
CENTER  
NEWSLETTER**