

SHALVA



Luncheon Sparks Disbelief and Gratitude

Gratitude filled the Standard Club on June 29th as 370 guests commemorated SHALVA's 30 years of service to Jewish families dealing with domestic abuse. This year's luncheon featured a private screening of the award-winning documentary *No Way Out But One* that tells the remarkable story of a woman who kidnapped her own children to save them from the abuse of their father. Producer and writer, Garland Waller reflected on the project's inception and her frustration with the lack of media coverage about the frequent disservice to children during divorce cases where domestic violence is a factor. Additionally, Jennifer Collins recounted her

story of survival and triumph, offering a glimpse into the realities of an unjust legal system.

At the VIP Reception, The Honorable Grace Dickler, and the Honorable Sebastian Patti, both presiding judges in the Cook County, Illinois Domestic Relations and Domestic Violence divisions, shared recent changes in the law and their experiences working to improve the system.

This year's luncheon featured tributes to Clinical Director, Barbara Siegel, for twenty years of impassioned work to empower women and nurture their capacity to heal and thrive. The Founding Mothers of SHALVA who, in 1986, shaped a mission to confront domestic abuse within the Jewish community also received recognition.

Throughout the afternoon, SHALVA expressed gratitude to its generous donors and sponsors whose support enables ongoing services, the expansion and innovation of new programs created to assist families in need as well as educational programs for young Jewish men and women about the nature of healthy relationships.

No Way Out But One left guests in "total disbelief" according to several women reviewing the event on their way out. If you were not able to attend the screening, copies of the film may be obtained for purchase or rental at: nowayoutbutone.com. If you are interested in hosting a screening of the film in your home, office or synagogue with a SHALVA educator, please contact the [SHALVA](#) office.

Thank you to the 2016 Luncheon Sponsors:

Benefactors: Joseph and Bessie Feinberg Foundation; Viki and Tom Rivkin and Beermann Pritikin Mirabelli Swerdlove LLP

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Under 40 Event

SHALVA's Under 40 Program, an unprecedented initiative to inform Jewish men and women under 40 about the dangers of abusive relationships in dating and marriage had its first event at Anshe Emet Synagogue on July 19th.

Young congregants came together for dinner and to view Harvard Professor Leslie Morgan Steiner's Ted Talk on her experiences surviving domestic violence. Morgan Steiner's lecture demonstrated to the audience that no group, however well educated, affluent, or religious, is immune to the effects of abuse. Following dinner, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Samantha Spolter facilitated activities that encouraged attendees to explore ways in which they would handle difficult situations, sparking much debate on the differences between healthy, unhealthy and abusive behavior in a relationship.

The vision of the Under 40 Program includes a series of social and educational events in the city and the suburbs that cover a range of topics relevant to the contemporary needs of younger Jewish men and women, whether they are dating, involved in intimate partner relationships or marriage. Talks such as "Red Flags When Dating" address the misconceptions many young adults have about what constitutes abuse.

Save the date for the September 18th Under 40 Program featuring yoga and brunch at The Gallery @ RL in Chicago's West Loop. If you are interested in learning more about a newly forming Under 40 task force, contact [Samantha Spolter](#).

Photo: Rabbi David Russo kicks off the program for Anshe Emet's Youn Adult Division.



Under 40 Outreach and Education is supported by the Breakthrough Fund: An innovation of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago.



A Questionable Bruise

A donor recently wrote, "Something happened to me last month that I wanted to share with you. My story has a happy ending, but it got me thinking what if my bruises weren't from a freak accident..."

My daughter was having friends over so I decided to make homemade cookies. As I was reaching high in the closet to pull down the hand mixer, the whole wooden shelf, full of glass bowls and small appliances that I rarely use, came unhinged and crashed down on my arm.

I was lucky that my arm wasn't broken, but in the following days I developed very dark bruises and my skin got discolored. Since I work from home, not too many people saw me until we went to a friend's birthday party the next weekend. When I took off my sweater due to the heat, I cannot begin to tell you how many people came up to me and made jokes about my husband beating me up. Over several hours, I saw many people and heard many jokes. I just smiled and made a joke back. As we were driving home I realized people made the jokes before hearing my story. They just assumed that my husband would never hurt me.

When I shared this with a friend, she shared a story about frequently seeing a particular woman in her affluent suburb with bruises. Whenever she asked this woman about the bruises the woman would laugh and say how clumsy she was. Unfortunately, several weeks later, my friend learned that this woman had been beaten and killed by her husband.

While I assume that most abused married women would do their best to hide their bruises and keep covered up, both of our stories got me thinking how people really don't know what to say or do in these situations..."

People's often poor attempts at humor are ways for them to hide their own discomfort with a potentially painful and personal situation. It might feel awkward to ask a woman you suspect is being abused, "I noticed your arm - how did it happen," but that simple question is all you need to say to start a dialogue. You could follow with a statement like, "I am worried about you. If there is something going on at home, I have a number you can call for help. You can make that call from here right now. I'll stay with you or leave you alone - whatever you prefer."

Showing concern to a stranger or someone close to you may be a risk, but it may also save a life. While it might be embarrassing if you are wrong, what if you are right? **If an individual has frequent, visible bruises or injuries, it should be addressed. When a woman confides in you...**

- Listen without judgment and believe her
- Be supportive, not directive
- Respect her choices; she is the expert in her life
- Know your limitations; you cannot fix her situation
- Offer her resources like SHALVA where she can seek help, or call if you need support - 773-583-HOPE (4673)



Attorneys Praise Legal Program

This summer, SHALVA presented a Continuing Legal Education Program for Chicago attorneys and mediators on "Child Custody Decisions and Domestic Abuse."

Organized by Viki Rivkin, SHALVA's Outreach and Education Legal Liaison, the program included a screening and discussion of the award-winning documentary *No Way Out But One*, which tells the remarkable story of an American woman who kidnapped her own children to save them from abuse at their father's hands. Holly Collins became an international fugitive, pursued by the FBI and the first American woman to ever be granted asylum by the government of the Netherlands, due to domestic violence.

"The attorneys and mediators were deeply stunned by the film," said Rivkin. One evaluator wrote on her feedback form, "This was the best seminar I ever attended. It touched me to the core."

Attendees learned how to better work with survivors and investigate all sides of a case. Featured speakers included Stacey Platt, Associate Director for the Civitas ChildLaw Clinic at Loyola University School of Law, Debra Pogrund Stark, Director of the John Marshall Law School Domestic Violence Legal Clinic and Rosemary McKillip, SHALVA In-House Legal Liaison.

SHALVA will present another Continuing Legal Education Program on Wednesday, August 3 for mediators. Please contact [Viki Rivkin](#) for more information.



JEWISH
WOMEN'S
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of Metropolitan Chicago

This Program is supported by the Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, Jewish United Fund and the Adrienne Reiner Hochstadt Memorial Fund.

SHALVA addresses domestic abuse in Jewish homes and relationships through counseling and education.

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