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Lesbian Battering Working Group memo

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Lesbian Battering Working Group

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December 11, 1987

To: MCFCS Programs

From: Lesbian Battering Working Group

Background

At the end of the Coalition-sponsored homophobia training for lesbians led by Suzanne Pharr last July, twelve women indicated an interest in being part of a Lesbian Battering Discussion/Action Group. A meeting date for beginning discussion was set.

On August 22 the group met for the first time with six lesbians in attendance. We met again on October 2 with six attending and on November 14 with eight attending. Most of the women attending so far have some connection with one of the nine domestic violence programs. Several have been the victims of lesbian battering.

Some of the work/proposals/decisions that have occurred so far

- Listening to the stories/experiences of lesbians who have been battered.
- Commitment to involve as broad a segment of the lesbian community in Maine as possible.
- Decision to ask that the group be affiliated with MCFCS.
- Request seed money from MCFCS.
- Publish an article in **Our Paper**, December issue.
- Send letters announcing our formation and requesting more participants from the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance and the Bangor Area Gay/Lesbian/Straight Coalition.
- Each woman attending so far encouraged to spread the word and try to get more participation in meetings.
- Discussion of the possibility of sponsoring some kind of statewide forum on lesbian battering.
- Desire to help start support groups for battered lesbians.
- Commitment to distribute some kind of informational flyer.
- Recognition of the need to provide safe space for battered lesbians and to hold lesbian batterers accountable for their behavior.

Request

We are now asking two things from MCFCS:

- 1) That our group become officially affiliated with MCFCS. This affiliation would mean that MCFCS acknowledges the issues of lesbian battering and some responsibility for leading this effort in Maine. We request authorization to make the following statement. "A Lesbian Battering Task Force has organized in Maine. The Task Force is affiliated with MCFCS, in partnership with the lesbian community."

- 2) That the Coalition set aside \$200 for 1988 as seed money for the work of this group. The money would be used for postage, copying/brochures/ other publicity, and mileage to allow a lesbian with no funds to get to a meeting of the Task Force.

Two members of the Lesbian Battering Working Group will be present at the December 17 MCFCS meeting to respond to questions and clarify anything about our request that is unclear.