



COURTESY PHOTO

Tina Martellacci-Haworth

SALONS

From page 1

Southwest Florida agencies like Abuse Counseling & Treatment in Fort Myers and the Shelter for Abused Women & Children in Naples hope to fashion the bond between stylist and client as a first step toward getting that help. But they know they must tread carefully.

"You don't want to tell them 'Hey, your partner's a jerk, I'd knock him out.' The victims can't do that," said Colleen Henderson, community education coordinator for ACT. So ACT sends counselors out to salons to make presentations about what hairstylists and other operators should do when a client exhibits signs of abuse. "You can't be judgmental of that victim and why they don't leave," Ms. Henderson said.

The local initiatives are part of a Chicago-based program called Cut It Out, which started in 2002. With oversight by the National Cosmetology Association and funding from Southern Living magazine, Cut It Out has given cosmetology schools in all 50 states the resources to train students on spotting signs of abuse and what to do about it. Cut It Out also distributes posters, brochures and other promotional materials, such as nail files with abuse hotline numbers, to salons for placement in their restrooms and waiting areas.

"Our goal is to expand to every salon and cosmetology school in the country in order to raise awareness of domestic violence," said Cut It Out founder Dianne Mooney.

"It is a wonderful curriculum for the salon professional," said Jim Cox, director of the American Association of Cosmetology Schools. "People in this particular profession are in a unique situation to observe and help direct potential victims of abuse to the proper resources," Mr. Cox added. "The key part of this is to tell the hairdressers: You're not a psychiatrist, you're not a nurse, but you can at least give phone numbers and resources."

At Chameleon Hair Studio & Spa in south Fort Myers, owner Jennifer Gray directs clients to the ACT hotline if she sees signs of domestic violence. Like most stylists, she has her stories of clients who were abused.

"Years ago, I had a client who was very chipper," Ms. Gray said. "But when she got married and came back from her honeymoon, she was very depressed... She'd become withdrawn, childlike. It took her a long time to admit anything. But I could see the signs — her husband would call here just raging, 'When did she leave?'"

If she suspected one of her clients was being abused now, Ms. Gray said, she might try to head off the problem more quickly. "I would probably try to ask more questions — tactfully... maybe ask about dating or their personal life and put my opinion in if I thought it was needed, and share stories about the women I've known who have been abused."

One in three women will be physically assaulted in an adult relationship, according to the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Paramount salon owner Ms. Haworth said, "Every year, I have one that sticks in my mind." She has held annual fundraisers for the Cut It Out program and ACT at her salon since 2005, when her sister was beaten to death by her husband.

"We raise money to teach beauticians to listen and see the signs," she said.

One of Ms. Haworth's longtime clients, who is in her late 50s, has two stories of her own about domestic abuse. One story took place more than 30 years ago, in a relationship that lasted almost two decades. "I knew I had to get out or he was going to kill me," the client said.

More recently, she left another relationship at the first signs of violence. Having her hairdresser as a friend to discuss it with helped. "Sometimes you can help other people just by talking to them and telling them they're not alone," she said.

The client of Ms. Haworth's said there is a pattern to all the stories of domestic violence.

"It starts very subtly, with pushing and shoving, and then it accelerates," she said. "And when you're young, you don't know any better and you don't tell anybody. And it's hard to get out of because you lose your self esteem. Basically, it's always the same story. They feel controlled, helpless."

But maybe not quite so helpless when their hairdresser lends an attentive ear. ■

Looking FOR Results?

- Come in today for an exciting free test drive
- Hearing Aids w/only the best in prices and service



For the Best Sounds of your Life

5995 Southpointe Blvd. (Next to Publix) • Fort Myers

7050 Winkler Rd. • Fort Myers

We carry: Oticon • Rexton • Starkey • Widex & more



For more information call **239-337-9588**

Laurie B. Firestone, L.H.I.S.
Licensed Hearing Instrument Specialist



Area Rug Sale

RE-DECORATE YOUR HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
WITH A NEW AREA RUG. LARGE SELECTION OF SIZES, COLORS AND STYLES TO SUIT ANY HOME AT A PRICE YOU CAN AFFORD!



Colonial Plaza Shopping Center
4429-G Cleveland Avenue, Fort Myers, FL
239-332-5498

Need A Loan?

The Florida Shores Bank in Fort Myers - a community bank, operated by experienced local bankers, wants to give you a personal or business loan.

WE ARE FORTUNATE AND YOU BENEFIT!

Being a new bank means **we don't have:**
Credit Crunch - Bad Loans - Sub Prime Loans.

We do have:
• Home Equity Loans • Home Equity Lines of Credit
• Auto Loans • Commercial and Commercial Real Estate Loans.

All loan decisions are made right here, on-site at the Fort Myers office, by people who know our community. **COME VISIT. TELL US WHAT YOU NEED!**



LOCAL FOLKS PROVIDING WORLD CLASS BANKING

12995 S. Cleveland Rd., Ste. 145 Fort Myers, FL 33907 (south of College at Pinebrook Park) (239) 265-9100
www.FloridaShoresBank.com

