



# WWEN Connection

Wisconsin Women's Education Network

on Addiction, Recovery & Prevention

Fall 2007



*A woman is  
the full circle.  
Within her is  
the power to  
create, nurture  
and transform.*

—Diane Mariechild

## Putting a Face to Recovery . . .

Hello, my name is Roxanne Rosado and I am a strong woman in recovery. When I first learned about the Benedict Center, I was living in the Milwaukee County Huber Correctional facility. Another woman at the correctional facility was involved in the Benedict Center, and she told me that I should try to go there. I started the program in October 2006. Looking back, I believe that this was the best choice I could have made.

I've come a long way since I first stepped into the program. *I am drug and alcohol free.* I completed my AODA program in May 2007 and have stayed involved in their aftercare program. The Women's Harm Reduction Program offers help in every area of a woman's life. From that program, I developed an understanding about why I used and learned a wide variety of strategies to help me stay away from my old behaviors. For example, whenever I begin to think about the old days, I focus on pictures of my children. I don't want to do anything to jeopardize being with my children; thinking about them keeps me on track. The management classes helped me learn positive ways such as yoga, breathing, and regular exercise to help me deal with daily stresses.

One of the best classes was Moving On; a cognitive behavioral class designed specifically for women who've been in trouble with the law. I loved it. In this class, I learned to deal with strong emotions, and the lessons helped me really find out who I am and what I want out of life. Working in that group taught me how to make good choices. Now, before major decision, I sit down and make a list of the pros and cons of each choice.

My daughters and I also participated in the Parent and Family Nurturing group classes at the Benedict Center. These groups have given us a chance to learn how to talk openly and honestly with each other and to have fun together. Those programs have helped me become a much better mother. I have two daughters and one son. It's hard being a single mom, but I now believe that I can do it. My kids are proud of me, and we recently moved into a home of our own.

I am currently involved in GED classes at the Benedict Center, and I'm aiming to finish my GED by January 2008. My goal is to continue my education at Mount Mary College (Milwaukee) in fashion design. I would love to have my own fashion line some day. I am determined and hungry to improve myself for me and for my kids. I am not going to settle for less anymore—I will continue to aim high.

I've come a long way from when I first started at the Benedict Center. I am happy that I found this place because it not only offered me treatment and education, but it also introduced me to a group of people who genuinely care about me, support me, and consistently encourage me to move forward. I am Roxanne Rosado and I am a strong woman in recovery. I know I can succeed.



Roxanne with her daughter

### WWEN Staff

#### Flo Hilliard

Project Manager  
WWEN Project  
608•265•2679  
fhilliar@facstaff.wisc.edu

#### Chris Dunleavy

Program Assistant  
WWEN Project  
608•265•4267  
cdunleavy@dcs.wisc.edu



# Females at Greater Risk of Alcohol-Related Brain Damage

## Research Summary

July 25, 2007

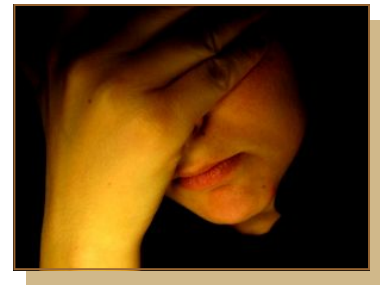
Animal studies indicate that females are more susceptible to the neurotoxic effects of alcohol withdrawal than men, thus raising their risk of brain damage caused by excessive drinking, [Science Daily](#) reported July 24.

Researcher Kristine Wiren, Ph.D., and colleagues at Oregon Health & Science University said that females appear to have more brain cells die during severe withdrawal. The researchers said that gender played a role in alcohol-related brain damage whether or not the mice were genetically predisposed to having severe withdrawal symptoms.

"We designed the experiment to be able to identify gene expression differences between lines of mice that are genetically selected for severe alcohol withdrawal compared with mice that are resistant to alcohol withdrawal," Wiren said. "I thought there would be a difference between the genders, but I didn't think it would be the most important thing."

Tracking cell death 10 days after alcohol withdrawal, "we clearly see females are showing enhanced brain damage compared to the males," said Wiren. "So, if you're female, the cells are dying; if you're a male, the cells are not. We don't know the behavioral consequences of that, though."

The authors held out the possibility that male mice might lose brain cells at a different point in time, or that cells in males may have died earlier and been repaired.



The study appears in the online edition of the journal [Neuropsychopharmacology](#).

### Reference:

Hashimoto, J.G., Wiren, K.M. (2007) Neurotoxic Consequences of Chronic Alcohol Withdrawal: Expression Profiling Reveals Importance of Gender Over Withdrawal Severity. *Neuropsychopharmacology*, advance online publication 27 June 2007; doi: 10.1038/sj.npp.1301494.



<http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/summaries/2007/females-at-greater-risk-of.html?print=t>



## Women's Harm Reduction Program *by Donna Hietpas*

The Women's Harm Reduction Program at the Benedict Center offers real opportunities for change to women in conflict with the law through a holistic, gender-specific day program in downtown Milwaukee.

In a safe, supportive environment, women develop skills and abilities to create safer and healthier lives for themselves and their children.

Using a Stages of Change/Harm Reduction approach, women are able to change unhealthy behaviors gradually and progressively. All movement in the direction of reduced harm is seen as positive and encouraged.

Referred by the court, probation, or self, women who come through the doors of the Benedict Center structure their path to success by participating in:

- ☞ A gender-specific Outpatient Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment Program
- ☞ Adult Basic Education classes
- ☞ High School Equivalency Degree Program
- ☞ Parenting and Family Nurturing specific to families in recovery
- ☞ Anger and Stress Management groups
- ☞ HIV awareness workshops
- ☞ Women's Sexuality Groups, designed specifically for women who have traded sex for drugs, shelter or other commodities
- ☞ Seeking Safety, a group working with women who, as a result of trauma, experience both PTSD and substance abuse
- ☞ Healing Groups, facilitated by staff from The Healing Center, these groups support women who have been sexually abused and/or assaulted
- ☞ Moving On, an intensive cognitive-behavioral component designed specifically for women to help them move permanently out of the criminal justice system and into safer and productive lives
- ☞ Computer Learning Lab
- ☞ Justice Circles
- ☞ Job Readiness and Job Placement



This year, Benedict Center was awarded a grant from the Wisconsin Division of Community Corrections to open the first women-only day report center as an alternative to revocation. Thirty-four women currently work in this component.

Staff of the Women's Program are also currently partnered with staff from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Helen Bader School for Social Welfare in a research project working with women in the Milwaukee County jail and the House of Correction.

Focus on Treatment



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135 W. Wells Street, Suite 700  
Milwaukee, WI 53203  
414•347•1774 [www.benedictcenter.org](http://www.benedictcenter.org)

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or [www.uwsp.edu/conted/conferences/](http://www.uwsp.edu/conted/conferences/)  
Click on "3rd Annual Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Conference."

## Finding Her Here

I am becoming the woman I've wanted,  
grey at the temples,  
soft body, delighted,  
cracked up by life  
with a laugh that's known bitter  
but, past it, got better,  
knows she's a survivor-  
that whatever comes,  
she can outlast it.  
I am becoming a deep  
weathered basket.

I am becoming the woman I've longed for,  
the motherly lover  
with arms strong and tender,  
the growing daughter  
who blushes surprises.  
I am becoming full moons  
and sunrises.



I find her becoming,  
this woman I've wanted,  
who knows she'll encompass,  
who knows she's sufficient,  
knows where she is going  
and travels with passion.  
Who remembers she's precious,  
but knows she's not scarce-  
who knows she is plenty,  
plenty to share.

—Jayne Relaford Brown



**Wisconsin Women's Education Network**  
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Professional Development and Applied Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
610 Langdon Street, Room 516, Madison, WI 53703  
608●265●4267