

## Design students fight abuse

JILLIAN DALEY Statesman Journal

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Stephens Middle School students are helping change the world — one T-shirt at a time.

Break the Chain Apparel: Clothing with a Voice chief executive officer Tammi Burns and Stephens industrial arts technology teacher Kimberly Garlock joined forces recently on Project Change Reaction, a new T-shirt designing contest with a strong message.

Sixty Stephens seventh- and eighth-graders in Garlock's graphics design class were assigned to create T-shirts with a domestic violence awareness theme for the Break the Chain line.

The domestic violence theme chosen by students for the T-shirts was verbal abuse. The slogan, "Sticks and Stones may Break my Bones, but Sometimes Words are Worse" is a key element.

The plan is to present the T-shirts Jan. 16 at an assembly to which the governor and Salem mayor have been invited.

The winner of the T-shirt contest has been chosen and will be officially announced when school reconvenes Jan. 5. Alexis Blomgren already has been informed that hers was the winning design.

"Her design was like a rag doll, and the rag doll had been pulled apart and stitched back up, and it had a broken heart," Garlock said.

Family trouble and a breakup with a boyfriend inspired the art, Alexis said.

"You've been put together after being torn apart on the inside basically is what it means," she said.

In addition to raising awareness about domestic violence, the T-shirts will be sold as a fundraiser for an area charity or nonprofit group, one of those that Burns' clothing line already supports, Garlock said. Students haven't selected a group yet.

T-shirts likely will be priced at \$18, maybe less, and students will sell the 200 shirts to relatives and friends, Garlock said.

Garlock and Burns came up with the idea for Project Change Reaction one day when they were talking.

"It was one of those 'Oh my gosh' moments when you're just thinking about something, and it



### Statesman Journal file

Lyons resident Tammi Burns launched a new line of clothing that is now available on the Internet. Break the Chain Apparel features T-shirts and sweatshirts that decry violence and meth. Area middle school students have joined her effort, designing shirts against verbal abuse.

### Learn more

For more information on Break the Chain Apparel or Project Change Reaction, go to [www.breakthechainapparel.com](http://www.breakthechainapparel.com) or call (503) 859-5555.

### Domestic violence resource

If you know someone who could be suffering from domestic violence or are suffering yourself, call the Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service's 24-hour hot line at 1 (866) 399-7722, e-mail them at [info@mvwcs.com](mailto:info@mvwcs.com), or go to [www.mvwcs.com](http://www.mvwcs.com).

just pops in your head, and you think 'How could we do this?'" Burns said.

Regis High School in Stayton also is doing its own Project Change Reaction, and other schools are welcome to copy the idea, Burns said.

"Our youth are our future and we need to teach them that they have a voice and what they say is important," Burns said.

Burns, a domestic violence survivor, founded her clothing line in 2006 to raise awareness about domestic violence, drug abuse and other issues. The clothes are sold on the Internet and at stores such as Retreat Salon in southeast Salem.

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