

CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of
Crisis Intervention Services
Is to provide support, resources, and
Hope for a better future
To persons affected by
Domestic abuse, sexual assault,
And other crises.



Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report
July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Introduction

This past fiscal year was filled with many challenges and opportunities. Dawn Stephens, Crisis Intervention Services (CIS) Executive Director resigned at the end of August 2007 to accept a new position in Des Moines and though she will be missed, we wish her the very best. Crystal Sodak the Housing Services Coordinator was appointed as the Interim Director while CIS's Board of Directors searched for the Executive Director. Martha Zylstra was hired as CIS's Executive Director on December 1, 2007. Even with the many challenges we faced this past fiscal year, Crisis Intervention Services was able to meet the needs of our rural communities through the dedication of quality staff members, board members, and volunteers. We continue to strive towards providing comprehensive services and resources for those who have survived violent crimes, especially domestic/sexual abuse. We continue to work towards ending violence for future generations. Crisis Intervention Services has been providing quality services to survivors of abuse in Mahaska County (July 1997), Keokuk County (July 2001), and Marion and Lucas Counties (July 2005) for eleven years. Our free and confidential services are available to victims of violent crimes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is our third fiscal year of serving Marion and Lucas counties and we continue to devote many of our resources to raising awareness of our services in these counties.

This Annual Report addresses progress on the goals that were accomplished within the parameters of our five-year strategic plan as well as the program goals that CIS staff members established throughout the year. This is the final year addressed in the first five-year strategic plan created by and for CIS. Although we have accomplished many of our goals over the past five years, there is still an area that is in need of attention. One of the most important is the financial security of the agency. We will continue our work towards establishing an endowment fund that will meet the needs of our agency. We have begun work on our strategic plan for the next five years and know that we will continue to be successful in our mission and goals.

During the past six months as the new director, I have been learning our different grants, and the dynamics of running an agency such as ours. Change is difficult on everyone and while we have not been without our challenges, the staff and I are working together towards the growth of this agency and our mission to help those victims of crime. In October 2007, we were presented with yet another unique challenge as we were awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Office on violence Against Women. The main purpose of this grant is to allow us to purchase equipment, time, and contracted services for our local law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and county attorney's offices in order to better serve victims of crime in rural areas. We are excited about this prospect and while the journey will be long and tedious, the outcome is expected to be worth it.

Thank you for your support of Crisis Intervention Services. Without you, our work would not be possible.

Sincerely,

Martha Zylstra
Executive Director

1. Program goals – To maintain a core base of excellent services as we strive for innovative programs.

A. Advocacy Services

Objective #1: To provide free and confidential services 24-hours every day for survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and other crises.

Action: Crisis Intervention Services provided free and confidential services to 683 survivors of violence and/or homelessness during this fiscal year. Our services were used significantly more during the months of July through October with more than 400 sessions per month during these months as compared to the trend of 350 per month. There were significantly fewer sessions of services provided during the months of May and June at 200 to just over 250 sessions per month. During the months that services are slower, our advocates focus on planning awareness and fundraising activities, building relationships in our communities, and other projects to improve our services.

We provided 2328 hours of crisis counseling and advocacy services and 385 hours of criminal/legal advocacy during 4441 sessions. Based on this information, we discovered that each victim we served was provided an average of four hours of services during an average of seven sessions. Emergency shelter was provided for 66 women and 64 children. Transitional housing was provided for 8 women and 9 children.

The majority of the crime victims we served were victims of domestic violence (83%), which is consistent with violent crime rates in our areas. Sexual assault victims and survivors represented 13% of the survivors we served. These data do not include survivors of domestic abuse who have been sexually assaulted by their partners or in the past. Other crime victims served were victims of child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, and assault. In addition, we served people (4%) who requested services due to poverty and/or homeless, depression, suicide, substance abuse, or other difficulties.

The services used most by victims included crisis counseling, with 72% of victims using this service, personal advocacy 36 %, information/referral 49%, criminal/civil advocacy 13% victims, emergency shelter 24%, economic advocacy 21%, and victim compensation advocacy 24%. Of the information and referrals provided by advocates, the majority were for basic needs (housing, food, and clothing) and local human services including mental health services.

Some patterns have emerged when examining services provided by CIS. Understandably, there is a significant influx of service delivery on Monday's from 8:00 through 11:00 a.m. Services provided are significantly higher on Thursdays than any other day with the exception of Monday mornings. This year we have also seen an increase in services rendered on Tuesdays. It is possible that this might be due to fears of protective order hearings scheduled on Tuesdays in Marion and Lucas counties as well as Fridays in all four counties Keokuk, Mahaska, Marion, and Lucas. The majority of our support group services are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which may also be a contributing factor.

We answered 935 crisis calls, which is an 1% decrease from 1060 crisis calls last year. Business calls and hang-ups are not counted as crisis calls. Crisis calls were significantly higher from Monday-Thursday with well over 680 calls made on these days of the week.

We averaged a little less than 130 calls on Friday's and just fewer than 70 on Saturdays and Sundays. Moreover, the majority of calls were made between the hours of 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 and 3:00 p.m.

As you can see in the attached table, the majority of victims served were residents of Mahaska County (N=333). This is expected as services have been available in Mahaska County significantly longer than the other counties we serve, though we are committed to increasing our outreach every year. In Marion County, we served 146 victims, which is a slight decrease from last year. In Keokuk County we served 36, which is an increase and in Lucas County we served 51, which is also an increase from last year's numbers. Seventy nine served were from other Iowa counties and most were relocating to our service area for safety reasons.

Objective #2: To obtain funding for and provide basic economic advocacy services.

Action: This service was first offered in Fiscal Year 2004. During this fiscal year (FY2008), CIS staff continued to promote economic advocacy. Almost 115 people requested and received economic advocacy during the year. CIS staff continues to receive continuing education on economic advocacy issues through the Housing and Economic Justice Taskforce (HEAT force) of the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Objective #3: To attempt to expand support groups in service area.

Action: Ninety one victims attended support groups this fiscal year, which is a slight decrease from the 109 that attended in the previous year. We continue to maintain the weekly support group (U Can 2 Sisterhood) started three years ago in Oskaloosa. This support group is open to anyone in the community, but primarily attended by women in transitional housing and shelter. We continued to provide weekly support groups in the shelter as well.

The Mom's Off Meth (MOM) Program was started two years ago with the technical assistance of the Ottumwa Crisis Center & Women's Shelter. We recently changed the name to Mom's: Strength through Recovery to more adequately reflect our work with women who have addictions to other substances, not just methamphetamines. The program is funded in part by the Decategorization (DECAT) Projects for Mahaska and Marion counties as well as Marion and Mahaska County United Ways. The goal of the program is to help create a support structure for families who have been affected by domestic and sexual abuse while battling addiction. A component of this would include assisting in the reunification of children with their mothers, teaching boundaries and healthy relationships. Weekly groups are held in Chariton, Knoxville, and Oskaloosa. Groups were offered in Pella, Sigourney, but were discontinued due to a lack of attendance and a need to divert resources to more successful outreach activities. People in Pella and Sigourney are provided transportation to the Oskaloosa groups. The Oskaloosa and Chariton groups have the most consistent attendance. In addition to weekly support groups in the evenings, these women receive intensive individual services including crisis counseling and systems advocacy.

Objective #4: To increase the number of survivors served in Keokuk County by at least 20%.

Action: We provided services for 36 victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault in Keokuk County this year, which was a 33% increase from the previous year. Almost 100% of the 36 victims served returned for services across multiple months, which is a significant

return rate, as discussed in Objective #1. Our advocates continue to develop our collaborations with law enforcement and medical personnel. We continue to have an active presence at the Keokuk County Resource Network (KCRN) meetings bi-monthly and the DECAT meetings monthly.

While our Strategic Plan has not been updated since the increase of our service area, this is the most pertinent place to discuss our work in Lucas and Marion counties. In Lucas County, we served 51 victims this year, which is a 41% increase from the previous year. We have been invited to several communities in the county to provide training for area service providers and presentations to civic groups. We hope to continue to see an increase in victims served in Lucas County.

We continued to maintain an outreach office in Pella .We served 146 victims in Marion County this year, which is a 1% decrease from the previous year.

B. Shelter Services

Objective #1: To provide emergency shelter for women and children who are survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault and homelessness.

Action: We provided 4,060 nights of shelter for 130 women and children, which indicate an average length of stay of 33 nights per person. We experienced a 5% increase in the number of residents this fiscal year and we experienced no change in the average number of nights a person was sheltered. These fluctuations are not significantly different than numbers served in previous years. The shortest amount of time a person spent in shelter was one night and the longest was 10 months. The majority of shelter residents (about 75%) were able to secure some type of permanent housing within their six-week stay at the emergency shelter. No one was asked to leave the shelter before the end of their six-week stay this year. We do everything we can to ensure that residents understand these rules and do not violate them to maintain a safe environment for everyone. We also provided referrals to other shelters in two situations wherein we were full.

| County of Residence | Number Victims Sheltered |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Keokuk | 11 |
| Lucas | 12 |
| Mahaska | 67 |
| Marion | 16 |
| Other Iowa County | 24 |
| TOTAL | 130 |

C. Other Services

Objective #1: To open a Transitional Housing Program in Mahaska County.

Action: ‘Pathway 2 Independence,’ our transitional housing program, opened in October 2005. This program provides long-term housing and intensive support services for abuse survivors. All four apartments remain full and there continues to be a waiting list. During this fiscal year, 8 women and 9 children were provided with residence in the transitional housing program for a total of 2599 nights. Three families were terminated from the program due to multiple policy violations; however all three of these families were able to secure permanent housing and continue to utilize other CIS services. Three new families

moved into transitional housing and we continue to help families grow towards self-sufficiency.

2. Management/Operations Goals

A. Staffing and benefits – To maintain or increase the current level of staffing while increasing the efficiency of work production.

Objective #1: To investigate ways to improve current level of service delivery with fewer resources.

Action: Crisis Intervention Services continues to rely heavily upon volunteerism in our communities. This year, volunteers gave 2,409 hours of service to Crisis Intervention Services, which is more than a full-time position (2,080 hours). Over 60% of our staff started as volunteers at CIS. This year, we trained 12 new volunteers for direct services, and had 34 volunteers. Volunteers assist in many ways including direct services volunteer advocates, indirect services support (information technology, general maintenance, office assistance, etc.), and the CIS board. We are continuing to expand our volunteer program to be more inclusive of diverse skills. We continue to work cooperatively with our local colleges to provide internship, practicum, and work study students opportunities to develop professional skills through our program. These students include undergraduate as well as graduate students. Many of the students continue to volunteer for CIS after their term of service is completed and often accept employment with us upon graduation. We also offer job shadowing opportunities for high school seniors.

Action: Investigated the feasibility of creating a new position for development to include public relations and fundraising activities. The Development Coordinator would be funded at the loss of an advocate position. However, the position would assume responsibility for many duties of outreach advocates and the Executive Director including organizing fundraising events to include a focus on our goal of creating an endowment fund; writing grants under \$10,000; providing presentations, awareness activities, and awareness booths in our communities; submitting press releases; and writing our bi-annual newsletter. The Board of Directors approved the position and we anticipate it being filled in FY2008. The Development Coordinator position was filled in August of 2007; however vacated in December of 2007. We are actively seeking a new person to fill this position, although finding someone who is willing and able to work in this capacity at below average pay for this type of work has proved rather tedious. There is also the issue of funding sustainability for this position since there are no direct services to clients, we are unable to utilize the majority of our grants.

B. Resource Development – To strive toward long-term financial security.

Objective #1: To establish an endowment fund and have a minimum balance of \$100,000.

Action: The Board of Directors had spent a lot of time investigating endowment fund options during fiscal year 2007. Steve Noah, Vice President for Advancement, for William Penn University provided an educational program for the board during that fiscal year, which was very helpful. The Board indicated interest in obtaining the services of MCCF for our endowment fund. A minimum of \$10,000 was needed to open the account, so the next step was to begin fundraising. However, with the resignation of the Executive Director in August 2007, the search for a replacement took priority. It still remains important for Crisis Intervention Services to strive toward long-term financial security and this will be reevaluated and addressed within the next fiscal year.

Objective #2: To maintain a minimum of three-month reserves in accessible funds.

Action: We successfully maintained a minimum of three-month reserves during this fiscal year.

Objective #3: To focus on continued growth of local fundraising efforts.

Action: The Fundraising Committee continues to increase the support of our three primary fundraisers including the Purple Ribbon Auction in early April, golf tournament in June, and a mailing in November. We raised almost \$ 11,409.22 through fundraising activities this year, as you can see below, which is a decrease from approximately \$17,000 raised the previous year. Donations are directly related to fundraising income because each fundraising activity that we hold spreads the word that we are in need of community support. This year, CIS received \$19,350.06 in monetary donations and this was also similar to the amount raised in the previous year.

**CIS Fundraising Report
Fiscal Year 2008**

| Fundraising Activity | Amount |
|--|------------------|
| Purple Ribbon Auction (March) | \$5,317.50 |
| Golf Tournament | 275.00 |
| Mailing (November) | \$5,260.00 |
| Miscellaneous (cell phone recycling, etc.) | 236.18 |
| Total Income | 11,088.68 |
| Fundraising Expenses | \$2018.70 |
| Net Proceeds | \$9069.98 |

Some of the activities funded by our community support included: crisis line costs, client transportation, survivor assistance (bus tickets, utility bills, and Christmas presents with designated donations), postage, consumable supplies, salaries for Shelter Advocates, training for volunteers and staff, membership dues (coalitions and local chambers of commerce), and rent for our Pella office.

Objective #4: To continue to pursue federal, state, and private grants.

Action: Crisis Intervention Services received a grant in October 2007 from the Office of Violence Against Women for 500,000. The main purpose of this grant is to allow us to purchase equipment, time, and contracted services for our local law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and county attorney's offices in order to better serve victims of crime in rural areas. We also continue to receive the Wal-Mart community grants and this year received a total of 2500 from the Oskaloosa, Pella, and Knoxville, Wal-Marts respectively.

C. **Board of Directors** – To continue to develop board diversity and enhance roles of committees.

Objective #1: To support positive board and staff interaction.

Action: The Board of Directors continues to sponsor the annual CIS Family Picnic for board members, staff members, and volunteers as well as our families at Edmundson Park.

Objective #2: To focus recruitment efforts on representation of segments of community, skills needed by the board, and adequate membership on committees.

Action: The Human Resources Committee successfully recruited 2 new board members whose skills were needed on various committees. We currently have 14 board member positions filled. Four board members are from Marion County (Three from Pella and one from Knoxville), and one from Keokuk County, and nine from Mahaska County. The board

has diverse representation by gender, ability, and abuse survivors. Board members also represent local businesses, human service providers (housing, medical, mental health), and education. Our goal is to increase representation of minority racial/ethnic groups, Lucas County residents, Central College employees, and religious leaders in our communities.

- D. **Planning and Evaluation** – To continue to examine and strengthen the organization.
Objective #1: To develop a database for tracking required data and program outcomes.
Action: Most data required for grant reports and administrative support is now collected in the database. The savings in staff resources is tremendous, and the data are much more reliable. Improvement is needed in data reliability (improve data collection and data entry of the staff) training on data entry with the staff will need to be an ongoing occurrence.
- E. **Public Relations** – To evaluate and improve current public relations techniques.
Objective #1: To develop a public relations plan.
Action: Crisis Intervention Services has created a new position, Development Coordinator, to be filled in FY 2008.
- F. **Infrastructure** – To maintain appropriate living conditions at the emergency shelter.
Objective #1: To designate funds for special projects at the shelter.
Action: Funds were awarded to CIS in 2003 through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Special Grant Program. These funds (almost \$90,000) have been spent on shelter rehabilitation priorities. We spent an additional \$21,642 to complete the project last fiscal year. In addition to activities completed in prior years, we completed the following this year:
- ✓ Replacements of bunk-beds–The previous bunk-beds were donated to the shelter and after years of use were in need of replacement.
 - ✓ Updated shelter security system-
- G. **Networking and Collaboration** – To maintain networking and collaborative relationships with existing service providers in our communities.
Objective #1: To ensure that local service providers understand victimization issues and ways to meet the needs of survivors.
Action: Staff provided 97 presentations and training opportunities for the religious community, college students, staff and faculty, businesses, dental providers, medical providers, law enforcement and new volunteer advocates throughout our service area. Over 1457 professionals attended the training events, which indicate an average of 15 people at each event. Some of the organizations requesting continuing education from CIS include: Century Women’s Club, Marion County Sheriff’s Department, Southern Iowa Economic Development Association (SIEDA), 2nd Christian Reform Church (Pella), United Methodist Church, (Oskaloosa), Oskaloosa Middle School, and William Penn University.
- Objective #2:** To ensure that community members understand victimization issues and are aware of our services.
Action: Staff provided awareness/educational programs for 63 community and religious organizations, and businesses. We provided 44 prevention programs for high school students, college students, religious youth groups, and teen parent youth groups. Advocates also assisted with violence prevention and awareness weeks at local colleges including *Finding Your Voice: Speaking Out Against Violence & Oppression* at William Penn University and *Reach Out and Speak Out* at Central College. Staff and volunteers sponsored several awareness events and displays during Domestic Violence Awareness

Month (October) and Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April). We also provided 18 booths at health fairs and other events throughout our service area.

Objective #3: To improve identification, assessment, and screening for victimization by community professionals.

Action: September 2007 CIS received the Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Child Abuse Enforcement Assistance Program grant from the Office on Violence Against Women. With this grant Keokuk County Health Center and Mahaska Hospital will be able to maintain their Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Programs. We provided training for medical and mental health professionals throughout our service area on domestic abuse and sexual assault issues. This training was provided at no cost to those in attendance. CIS will also be able to provide computers, camera equipment, crime scene investigation tools and training to the law enforcement agencies within our service area. The goal is to allow our law enforcement and county attorney's offices to be able to increase the number of arrests and prosecutions for perpetrators of abuse and assault.

Objective #4: To ensure that local community groups and professionals are aware of our services and the benefits of our services in the community.

Action: Staff members continue to mail our newsletter twice annually (January and July) and to ensure that our business cards and brochures are widely distributed in our communities.

Action: Staff continue to take advantage of the United Way fundraising campaign. We attend United Way presentations and other activities whenever possible to raise awareness of our services, and we include materials with United Way booths and displays whenever possible.

An analysis of referral sources (who encourages victims to contact CIS) gave us a diverse group, which is excellent. Victims were referred by family and friends, housing agencies, service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, law enforcement agencies, county attorneys, private attorneys, public school officials, colleges, hospice programs, corrections officers, religious leaders, state and national hotlines, internet searches, and even our fundraising letter or other mailings.

Objective #5: To continue to strengthen collaborative relationships with other local service providers.

Action: Staff members have maintained their active membership with human service provider networking groups in each of our four counties. In addition, we maintain active membership with the Mahaska Homelessness Coalition, 8th Judicial District Batterer's Education Program (BEP) Advisory Board, Keokuk County DECAT, and the Lucas County Substance Abuse Free Environment (SAFE) Coalition. CIS advocates continue to represent the interests of survivors of abuse by serving on the Salvation Army, New Directions and the Oskaloosa Municipal Housing Agency Advisory Boards. Crisis Intervention Services has maintained active membership with the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault (IowaCASA) and the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) and has continued to adhere to the standards and philosophies of both coalitions.