

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 2005 Annual Report
July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005

Introduction

Crisis Intervention Services (CIS) has been providing quality services to survivors of abuse in Mahaska County since 1997 and Keokuk County since 2001. Crisis Intervention Services exists and grows each year through the dedication and selflessness of quality staff members, board members, and volunteers. We strive to provide comprehensive services and resources for those who survive abuse and trauma, and we fulfill our role in ending violence for future generations as well.

In 1997, CIS started with a very small staff, fewer than four full-time equivalent (FTE), and a few very dedicated board members and volunteers. Our infrastructure consisted of a small outreach office from which we began providing outreach services such as a crisis line, individual crisis counseling, medical advocacy, and legal advocacy. We quickly realized, however, that housing and economic issues were major barriers for many of the people who we served and that our community did not offer all of the resources needed for these families. In September 2000, we opened our emergency shelter after only 11 months of fundraising. This step is an accomplishment that CIS will always be proud of. We again learned that additional resources were needed. While an emergency shelter is an essential service, it is a band-aid that does not address the social problems of generational poverty, barriers to receiving medical and mental health care, lack of living wages, and lack of safe and affordable housing. In 2002 we began to research the relatively new concept of transitional housing in the hopes that such a program would provide long-term services for the few families who need more intensive assistance in order to lift themselves out of poverty. We have pursued funding for this program with the goal of opening in July 2005. We missed the opening date goal by only three months. The majority of the funding is secured, construction is almost complete, and the program will be open in October 2005.

In November 2004, we learned that the Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD) of the Iowa Attorney General's Office had to re-evaluate their long-standing goal of funding any and all victim service programs throughout the state with the hopes of eventually having a victim service program in each of Iowa's 99 counties. Due to severe funding cutbacks over the past several years, CVAD came to the difficult decision that they could no longer adequately support the existing victim service programs. The CVAD provides the majority of funding for all victim service programs in the state of Iowa. Turning Point, the victim service program that had served Marion County for 15 years and Lucas County for three years, was one of the five programs impacted by this decision. After considerable thought and planning together, Turning Point merged their services into Crisis Intervention Services and closed their doors on June 30, 2005.

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.

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 for 514 survivors of abuse during this fiscal year (26% increase) and 358 survivors returned for services for two or more months (27% increase).

Sexual assault victims and survivors represented 13% of the survivors we served, which reflects a 5% increase from the previous year. These data do not include survivors of domestic abuse who have been sexually assaulted by their partner or in the past. We are pleased with the increase and continue to be committed to increasing services for sexual assault survivors by collaborating with schools, medical facilities, mental health programs, and law enforcement agencies. The majority of the crime victims served were victims of domestic violence (75%) and the remaining were victims of child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, assault, homelessness, and other crises.

We answered 737 crisis calls, which was slightly higher than last year. We provided 1,580 hours of crisis counseling/advocacy services and 168 hours of criminal/legal advocacy throughout the year. This direct service time indicates an average of three hours spent during each survivor contact. The numbers of survivors who attended support groups increased by 21% from last year. The number of victims receiving medical advocacy increased by 80% from the previous year. Both of these increases are a result of renewed focus on the services and increased collaborations with medical providers. Over 70 survivors used our economic advocacy services, an 80% increase from 14 in FY 2004.

Crisis Intervention Services staff and board members continue to be pleased with the comprehensive services that we provide as well as with the number of victims we serve each year.

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

Action: The Executive Director received financial counseling training through the Iowa State University Extension Office and provided money management training for CIS staff in FY2004. During this fiscal year, CIS staff continued to promote the new service. Over 70 people requested and received economic advocacy during the year in comparison to 15 last year, which reflects an 80% increase. Staff continue to receive continued 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: We maintained the support group (U Can 2 Sisterhood) started last year at our outreach office and increased the meetings to once weekly from twice monthly. There was a 21% increase in the number of victims who attended support groups this year.

In addition, we began researching and attending training on the Mom's Off Meth (MOM) Program, which was started in 1999 by the Ottumwa Crisis Center & Women's Shelter. The program provides services for women who are domestic abuse/sexual assault victims and survivors with co-existing substance abuse issues. We started this program in late June 2005. The program includes a weekly support group in Oskaloosa and in Sigourney in addition to intensive individual services.

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

Action: We provided services for 23 victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault in Keokuk County this year, which was a slight decrease from the previous year. Twenty of the 23 victims served returned for services across multiple months, which is a significant return rate at 87%. Our advocates have greatly increased collaborations with law enforcement and medical personnel during the year and the Keokuk County Medical Center is working towards implementation of screening protocols and a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program. We continue to have an active presence at the Keokuk County Resource Network (KCRN) meetings bi-monthly and the DECAT meetings monthly.

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 4,755 nights of shelter for 144 women and children, which indicates an average length of stay of 33 nights per person. The number of nights of shelter provided increased 27% from the previous year (3,470 nights). The majority of shelter residents (about 70%) were able to secure some type of permanent housing within their six-week stay at the emergency shelter.

Approximately 2% of residents were asked to leave the shelter because of policy violations (no violence, weapons, drugs/alcohol). We do everything we can to ensure that residents understand these rules and do not violate them to maintain a safe environment for everyone.

C. Other Services

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

Action: Staff have applied for and received a grant through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for operating and support-services expenses of the program. The funds for construction had already been obtained through the Iowa Finance Authority. A local cash match of approximately \$10,000 will be necessary to meet funding requirements of services annually. The Board of Directors purchased two lots for the duplexes, approved blueprints, and selected a contractor through a competitive bid process (all with significant assistance from Rod Curtis of Curtis Architecture & Design). During the bidding process, it became evident that we had not secured enough funds for construction, primarily because of rising lumber costs over the past three years. We raised an additional \$51,600 through local fundraising and a grant award from the George Daily Family Trust.

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, we trained 10 new volunteers while maintaining a volunteer base of approximately 25 volunteers. We have expanded our volunteer program to be more inclusive of diverse skills. We continue to rely upon local colleges for internship, practicum, and work study students. This year, volunteers gave 1,894 hours of service to Crisis Intervention Services, which is almost a full-time position (2,080 hours).

Action: In mid-November, the Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD) of the Iowa Attorney General's Office, our primary funding source, announced that they no longer had enough funds to sustain all of the existing victim service agencies. While this was not expected, we have been well aware of, and feeling, funding cuts for several years, as have all domestic abuse and sexual assault programs throughout the state. The CVAD felt that they had cut our funding so much that we were being "funded to fail" throughout the state. The results were increased staff burnout, high turnover, and fewer crime victims served over the past few years. The CVAD, Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence requested that programs meet regionally and discuss ways to potentially merge services or actual programs in an attempt to respond to this funding crisis.

In early December, the Executive Directors of Crisis Center & Women's Shelter (Ottumwa-serves six counties), Crisis Intervention Services (Oskaloosa-serves two counties), and Turning Point (Knoxville-serves two counties) met to discuss the issue with the CVAD and coalition staff in Oskaloosa. Our three victim service agencies were commended for our historical collaborative relationship and asked to investigate the possibility of a merger between two or all three of our programs because of our collaborative relationships and our close geographic proximity in a time of funding cuts. After analyzing the financial feasibility, it became clear that a merger of all three programs would not be fiscally responsible. The cuts in administrative costs were not significant enough to compensate for increased travel and other direct-service related expenses. In January, Crisis Intervention Services held a retreat attended by the Board of Directors and staff members. Dr. Ann Fields of William Penn University facilitated the retreat. Sandi Dahm, retired director of Mahaska Hospice, and Laurie Schipper, Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, also attended the retreat. Sandi shared her experiences with two mergers during her time at Mahaska Hospice. Laurie discussed the financial crisis that victim service agencies in Iowa were in and asked the CIS Board of Directors to merge with Turning Point or expand their service area to include Marion and Lucas Counties if Turning Point closes. There were a lot of questions and concerns, but in the anonymous vote, no one was opposed to a merger. The Board Chair was asked to start conversations with the Turning Point Board of Directors.

The first joint board meeting was held in February 2005, after some scheduling difficulties. The two boards discussed several concerns and questions related to a merger. It was evident that no one presumed to know what was best or what should happen, only that something had to happen – before grants were due in mid-March. The two boards developed an ad-hoc merger committee to further discuss the potential of a merger. Conversations and planning continued after the submission of CVAD grant applications in March. Turning Point merged their service area into Crisis Intervention Services and closed their doors on July 30, 2005. Significant planning went into the decision and planning for service delivery in a four-county service area.

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 Executive Director attended training on establishing an endowment fund. The board and staff were unable to proceed further due to the intensive time spent on merger planning.

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

Action: The Finance Committee, Executive Director, and Bookkeeper have attempted to ensure that a minimum of three-month operating reserves was available whenever possible. This was difficult, however, due to needed cash flow for the construction of transitional housing apartments this year.

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

Action: The Fundraising Committee continues to research new fundraising ideas and to increase the support of our three primary fundraisers, which include a charity ball in March, a golf tournament in June, and a mailing in November. Approximately \$26,000 was raised through fundraising and donations this year with most of these funds designated specifically for the transitional housing program construction and services.

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

Action: The Executive Director and the Grant Review Committee submitted a grant to the Office on Violence Against Women Transitional Housing Grant. Other small grants were submitted for economic advocacy services and prevention education in schools, but were not received.

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 held one working and one social event during the year that involved board members, staff members, and volunteers.

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 two new board members whose skills were needed on several committees.

- 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: Last year, staff worked collaboratively with the Ottumwa and Knoxville victim service programs to develop program outcome measures and recruited a computer programmer to develop a database. The database programming is in progress. Most data required for grant reports are collected in the database. Additional data for outcome measurement is in the process of being programmed. Grant staff from CVAD were able to see the database during their on-site visit and were pleased with the capabilities of the database.
- E. **Public Relations** – To evaluate and improve current public relations techniques.
- Objective #1:** To develop a public relations plan.
- Action: Staff members have contacted local colleges to recruit an intern to assist with this project. We have not actively pursued this goal this year, due to the intensive time spent on merger planning. However, a portion of the merger planning was devoted to public relations specific to raising awareness about our services in the new counties.
- F. **Infrastructure** – To maintain appropriate living conditions at the emergency shelter.
- Objective #1:** To designate funds for special projects at the shelter.
- Action: Funds have been awarded to CIS through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Special Grant Program through an appropriation submitted by Congressman Leonard Boswell. These funds (almost \$90,000) are now being expended on shelter rehabilitation priorities. So far, we have replaced our boiler and hot water heater. The remainder of the work will be completed next year including plumbing upgrades and repairs and porch and roof repairs.
- 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 training for Keokuk County Health Center, Mahaska Health Partnership, New Directions, Batterer's Education Program (BEP) facilitators, area clergy and human service providers, and conducted two Level I Advocacy Training sessions that were heavily advertised and open to the community.
- Objective #2:** To ensure that community members understand victimization issues and are aware of our services.
- Action: Staff provided educational programs for eight community and religious organizations, and businesses. They provided 18 prevention programs for junior high and high school students, religious youth groups, and teen parent youth groups. Advocates provided two workshops for parents of adolescents. We provided nine educational seminars for college students and assisted with the Finding Your Voice Week: Speaking Out Against Violence at William Penn University. In addition, staff held several awareness events during Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

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

Action: With the continued support of the Rural Health Outreach Grant (RHOG), CIS provided the necessary funding to implement a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program at the Keokuk County Health Center and to train addition SANE nurses for Mahaska Hospital. We purchased digital cameras and color printers for law enforcement vehicles, hospitals, and key human service agencies in Mahaska and Keokuk Counties to improve evidence collection techniques. We provided training for medical and mental health professionals on identification, assessment, and screening as well. Mahaska Hospital has implemented mandatory screening protocols and the Keokuk County Health Center is developing mandatory screening protocols.

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 continue 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.

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

Action: Staff members have maintained their active membership with Community Action Providers (CAP), Keokuk County Resource Network (KCRN), Mahaska Homelessness Coalition, and Keokuk County DECAT. CIS staff members continue to represent the interests of survivors of abuse locally by serving on the Board of Directors of New Directions and the Oskaloosa Municipal Housing Agency Advisory Board. A staff member also serves on the Oskaloosa Housing Trust Fund Committee. 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. The Executive Director of Crisis Intervention Services represents the interests of rural survivor service agencies through her service on the IowaCASA Board of Directors.

**Crisis Intervention Services
Service Statistics Report
Fiscal Year 2005**

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
New victims	79	55	51	46	37	27	29	22	38	38	50	42	514
<i>Keokuk Co.</i>	1	1	2	3	2	2	0	1	5	0	3	3	23
<i>Mahaska Co.</i>	75	51	41	39	30	24	27	17	27	30	38	32	431
<i>Other Iowa</i>	3	3	8	4	5	1	1	4	6	8	9	7	59
<i>Out of state</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Returning victims	0	17	37	39	31	31	31	32	31	44	24	41	358
New in shelter	30	10	19	9	6	8	10	6	11	8	16	10	144
Shelter nights	487	545	448	428	275	316	202	426	522	424	359	314	4,755
Crisis calls	50	62	65	76	47	33	71	60	60	67	46	100	737
Number contacts	180	197	285	277	179	134	205	312	224	252	224	280	2,749
Counseling hours	156	114	157	146	103	81	128	187	103	155	117	133	1,580
Criminal/legal advocacy hours	4	10	10	22	7	3	13	12	34	11	13	29	168