

# Transforming Lives

## The Shelter's Quarterly Program Update 12/2010



### Did You Know?

The Shelter serves all of Collier County, FL, the second largest county in the State, providing services to children, women, men and their pets from Naples, Immokalee, Bonita Springs and all points in-between.

From **October 1 through December 31, 2010**, your support has helped The Shelter to:

- Shelter 58 adults, 70 children and 13 pets
- Provide 3,797 hours of counseling to children and adults
- Answer 758 calls to our confidential 24-hour crisis line (239.775.1101)
- Develop 10,296 safety plans
- Offer 840 bed-night through the four Transitional Housing cottages

In an effort **to prevent** abuse before it begins, **to protect** victims of domestic violence and **to prevail** over violence in our homes, neighborhoods and community, The Shelter offers an array of life-transforming programs including:

### Transitional Living Program (TLP)

The TLP features four cottages that opened in 2008. The program was designed to provide a more thorough evolutionary experience from victim to survivor for adults and children who meet the requirements for participating in this innovative program. By helping program participants develop real world skills (paying bills, driving the kids to school and taking care of a house) while having The Shelter's support close at hand, we help reduce the risk of victims returning to their abusers.

During the second quarter of fiscal year 2010, six children and three adults were living in the four cottages and transitioning back into lives of freedom from abuse.

### Allstate Financial Literacy & Economic Justice



The classes offered in this innovative program include: Introduction & Purpose, Financial Abuse, Budgeting & Saving, Finance Management, Banking Options, Credit Basics, Building Financial Foundations, Investment and Insurance Options, Computer Education, Education Opportunities, Job Readiness, Getting the Job,

and a final exam to practice the topics covered during the classes. Each individual came to class dressed for an interview and practiced their skills. The program ended with a Graduation Ceremony for participants and volunteers.

This quarter featured the addition of a microloan program to the financial literacy, job readiness and Individual Development Accounts (IDA) components currently in place. Microloans help empower survivors by assisting them with business start-up costs with low monthly payments that are interest free.

Three micro loans up to \$1,500 each will be disseminated to Immokalee Allstate participants who submit the most feasible and creative business plans and based on the individual's business needs. Individuals will have up to two years to repay the loan, based on their income level.

This program allows survivors in Immokalee to gain further independence by becoming self employed in a community where it can be difficult to find work, especially when language barriers and immigration issues may exist.

Feedback provided by previous Allstate class participants depicts that most survivors already work in some way "under the table". Although they are doing this type of work their income is a bare minimum that makes survival

challenging. Those that are documented hardly make enough to provide for their children. Many families reside in trailers with other families because they cannot afford to live on their own due to income barriers. One participant relayed that if she were to start up her own small business, she would be able to better provide for herself and her family and in turn become more independent. This would also allow her to relocate away from the abuse. Her emotional well being would also be positively affected.

Partners for the Allstate program include: Allstate, Barnes & Noble, Collier County Sheriff's Office, Iberia Bank, Legal Aid, McDonalds, Naples Sailing & Yacht Club, Pelican Bay Country Club, WIN Group of Florida and Zonta Club of Bonita Springs.

## **C'MON**

Through a partnership with the Children's Museum of Naples (C'MON), children from both our emergency shelter and our Outreach programs enjoy interactive, educational programs hosted at The Shelter by C'MON staff.

During this quarter C'MON provided an educational and fun activity about weather. The children learned about the four seasons and the water cycle. They also read "Oh Say Can You Say What's the Weather Today?" by Dr. Seuss. They discussed being cooler when wet and did an experiment to test this theory with peppermint patties. They wrapped one patty in a dry paper towel and one in a wet paper towel. Both patties were put under a lamp with thermometers. They discovered that after some time passed; the patty wrapped in the wet paper towel was almost 15 degrees cooler, supporting the theory.

C'MON also provided an entertaining activity about culture. The children were shown maps and globes and learned that they represent Earth. They read "There's a Map on My Lap" by Dr. Seuss and discussed how people living in different areas have different traditions. Games from various countries were played to show the children that some games are very similar, despite originating from different areas of the world. They then made "tea dolls" which were carried by Innu children in Canada while they traveled.

## **Primary Prevention Hands Are for Helping**

This program, delivered to elementary school children in Collier County, teaches non-violence and conflict-resolution skills to youngsters through interactive 'play' with a Shelter Advocate (blowing bubbles, playing instruments, etc.).

The "Hands" program curriculum focuses on the positive things children can do with their hands, how to stay safe, makes their own individualized safety plan and each pledges to only use his or her hands for helping.

From October through December 2010, Shelter Advocates provided 74 "Hands" classes with 1,321 children pledging to use their hands for helping, not hitting.

## **Teen Dating Healthy Relationships**

Designed to help teens identify the characteristics of healthy relationships in an effort to prevent dating violence, this program reaches out to middle and high school students in Collier County.

Advocates presented 18 Teen Healthy Relationships classes to 210 attendees the second quarter of this fiscal year.

Additionally, our Youth Advocates offered 11 TAPP (Teenage Parenting Program) Groups serving 15 unduplicated girls in Immokalee, providing 61 hours of support.

A similar Healthy Relationships educational series, available through our Speaker's Bureau, is offered to adults of all ages. For more information, please call 239.775.3862.

## Expect Respect

Based out of our Immokalee Outreach Office, this interactive program helps middle and high school students to change social norms about dating relationships to help create a respectful environment.

This program was on hiatus during the second quarter of the fiscal year.

## Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence (GADV)

This primary prevention initiative helps stop violence before it begins by offering boys and young men alternatives to their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors about what it means to be a 'man' in today's society.

Our GADV Advocate facilitated 17 events this quarter, reaching 204 attendees with the message of what it means to be a true 'gentle'man and how they can contribute to ending violence. The program continues to expand and offer services in new venues.

## YAC

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of Collier County youth between the ages of 12-20 focused on targeting and engaging their peers in social change to end dating violence. The group's mission is: To inspire social change by providing education, empowerment, advocacy and support to the community; to broaden and increase prevention of unhealthy relationships and break the cycle of violence.

The team has participated in 3 meetings this quarter, participated in The Shelter's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month Campaign in October by hosting a Youth Symposium and began work on a Public Service Announcement (PSA) which will be aired in Collier County when completed.

Moreover, the 10 teens helped staff complete The Shelter's new Healthy Relationships Curriculum – Love is L.E.G.I.T. (Love Education to Guide and Inform Teens) which has been selected by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence as the statewide curriculum to educate children in the public school system across Florida about dating violence and healthy relationships.

## DV Taskforce

The Task Force is comprised of thirteen collaborating entities: Collier County Civil Domestic Violence Court Judges, Collier County Family Law Attorney's, David Lawrence Center, Naples Community Hospital, The Collier County School District, Children's Advocacy Center, Department of Children & Families, Legal Aid, Kirby & Cavanaugh Law Firm, Collier County Sheriff's Office, the State's Attorney's Office, Office of the Attorney General and our Youth Advisory Council.

This Task Force is creating a comprehensive community-wide plan to heighten awareness about domestic violence in an innovative way that changes attitudes, beliefs and behaviors to stop domestic violence before it starts. The focus for the community wide plan is education with youth in the schools and the community-at-large. YAC plays a critical role in the implementation of the plan. The team met twice during the quarter.

## Enhanced Service Programs

### Intimate Violence Enhanced Services Team (InVEST)



Launched in the summer of 2009, The Intimate Violence Enhanced Services Team (InVEST) is a unique program designed to provide intensive service management and assistance to individuals identified to be in potentially lethal situations.

InVEST's unique model allows CCSO, Department of Children & Families (DCF) and The Shelter to work together to identify victims at high risk for homicide and to enhance their possibility of receiving safety from further victimization. CCSO works to maintain batterer accountability through injunctions, monitoring and follow up while DCF and The Shelter work with the survivor to share information, provide safety planning and possible aid in relocation.

InVEST participants receive services and advocacy throughout civil and/or criminal processes until their situations become safe or they choose to exit the program. These services are provided free of charge.

For the second quarter of the fiscal year, the InVEST Team reviewed more than 449 police reports, referring the 304 individuals most at-risk for domestic violence homicide (murder by a partner or spouse) to the program.

### Legal Services

The objective of Shelter legal services is to support or provide direct legal services on behalf of victims of domestic violence in civil matters directly related to domestic violence. This program provides onsite attorneys, legal support staff and an emergency shelter legal advocate. These services enable us to empower Shelter families, promote self-sufficiency and create a safer community. We are able to better serve low to moderate income level victims of domestic violence who need our help in securing, modifying and enforcing protection orders; handling immigration issues; obtaining a divorce or separation; obtaining spousal and child support; and resolving custody and visitation issues.

For the first quarter of the fiscal year, the Legal Services team served 73 new participants, followed up with 32 individuals and notarized 22 documents.

Attorney's Kirby and Cavanaugh provided a total of 90 hours of service to program participants from across Collier County during this same timeframe.

### STOP Victim Services Advocate in Immokalee

As a result of this program, we now have a full-time Legal Advocate in the State's Attorney's Office three days a week and in Immokalee two days a week.

This quarter, 337 victims received counseling, advocacy and services at the State Attorney's Office while another 23 individuals were assisted by the STOP Advocate at our Immokalee Outreach Office.

### Violence Against Women Linguistically and Culturally Specific Victim Services



**FCADV**  
Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence

An alliance with The Department of Children & Families, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, The Shelter's Immokalee Outreach Office and other community partners, this initiative is designed to reduce the number of children being removed from the homes of migrant farm workers who are survivors of domestic violence and involved in child abuse investigations based on the family history of domestic abuse.



This quarter, staff provided 26 Technical Assistance sessions; 33 survivors were referred from the Department of Children and Families (DCF); 113 total survivors were served by this project; 35 referrals were made to survivors in the project; 1,650 brochures, palm cards and posters were distributed as well as 36 educational videos.

Additionally, staff developed a draft fotonovela – a small photo-book showing a farm worker woman transversing the path from victim to survivor utilizing The Shelter's services. Featuring staff as actors, the photos were taken in various scenes throughout Immokalee. The final piece will be used to raise awareness about The Shelter's life-transforming programs and services.

**T**he Shelter for Abused Women & Children is *leading the community to prevent, protect and prevail over domestic violence through advocacy, empowerment and social change.*

To learn more about these pioneering programs and services, please call The Shelter at 239.775.3862. For more information on supporting the life-transforming work of The Shelter, please call 239.775.3862, ext. 205.

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