

# Transforming Lives

The Shelter's Quarterly Program Update December, 2013



## 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, Marco Island, Bonita Springs and all points in-between.

For the second quarter of fiscal year 2013-2014, your support has helped The Shelter:

- Assist 928 unduplicated children, women and men
- Provide 5,053 shelter bed-nights in our Beau Venturi Home residential shelter
- Offer 626 nights of safety for 10 pets in our on-site kennel
- Provide 8,236 hours of counseling to children and adults
- Answer 512 calls to our confidential 24-hour crisis line (239.775.1101/TTY 239.775.4265)
- Develop 7,071 safety plans
- Offer 822 bed-nights in our 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:

### Emergency Shelter

Victims of family violence and their pets find safety in our progressive 60-bed residential shelter complete with on-site kennel. While residing in our highly-secure Beau Venturi Home, survivors work at establishing personal empowerment through an array of life-transforming programs and services, such as safety planning, service management, counseling and more. This quarter, 149 individuals were sheltered, including 75 adults and 74 children... and their 10 pets.

### Transitional Housing Program (THP)

The THP 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 2013 – 2014, four adults and six children were living in the four cottages and transitioning back into lives of freedom from abuse.

### Allstate Financial Literacy & Economic Justice



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.



This quarter, 8 women participated in the 2013 Allstate Financial Literacy classes, offered in English, Spanish and Creole. Participants attending the program started Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) for a dollar to dollar match up to \$187. A variety of community volunteers collaborated with The Shelter to ensure the success of the program.

Topics included financial abuse and safety planning; identity theft; budgeting and saving; creating abundance; banking options; credit basics; insurance; taxes; car maintenance; public library services; housing and job readiness.

An emergency shelter Advocate conducted financial abuse groups for adults and children residing in our safe-haven. Piggy banks were provided to the children in conjunction with presentations on how to establish financial goals. During this quarter, groups were held for 19 adults and 29 children.

Research reveals that economic dependency is the strongest predictor of a survivor's decision to remain, leave, or return to an abusive relationship. For this reason, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children is committed to providing economic empowerment services that aim to help survivors reach their financial goals.

Partners for the Allstate program include: Allstate; Brooks Insurance Services; Barnes and Noble Bookseller; CCSO Financial Crimes Bureau; Junior Achievement of SW Florida, Inc.; Legal Aid; Iberia Bank; Bank of America; Collier County Housing, Human and Veteran Services; Empowerment Parties/Purpose Journey, Inc.; FGCU Small Business Development Center; Empowerment Alliance of Southwest Florida; SunTrust Bank; South Regional Library; University of Florida; Fifth Third Bank.

## **C'MON**

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

This quarter, on December 17, C'MON opened its doors to The Shelter's participants and provided a pizza party for those who attended.

## **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 and how to stay safe with each child creating their own individualized safety plan and pledging to use his or her hands for helping.

This quarter, Shelter Advocates provided 74 "Hands" classes with 1,954 children pledging to use their hands for helping, not hitting.

### **L.E.G.I.T. (Love, Education to Guide and Inform Teens) – 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. 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.

Advocates presented 44 Teen Healthy Relationships classes to 2,057 attendees during the second quarter of the year.

### **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 quarter, Shelter Advocates offered 27 presentations to 310 students.

### **Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence (GADV)**

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

Our GADV Advocate facilitated 15 events this quarter, reaching 381 attendees with the message of what it means to be a true gentleman and how they can contribute to ending violence. The program continues to expand and Staff offers 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. For the second quarter, the YAC held one meeting.

## DV Taskforce

The work of the Domestic Violence Taskforce heightens awareness and brings about the social change necessary to make sure that no one is ever a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence. The Task Force includes The Aesthetic Surgery Center, Children's Advocacy Center, Collier County EMS, Collier County Family Law Attorneys, Collier County Housing, Human & Veteran Services, Collier County Men of Character, Collier County Probation, Collier County School District, Collier County Sheriff's Office, The David Lawrence Center, The Department of Children & Families, Florida Gulf Coast School of Criminal Justice, Haitian Leadership Network, Legal Aid, Marco Island Police Department, Mother Perry Foundation, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Naples Community Hospital, Naples Police Department, North Naples Fire Department, Office of the Attorney General, Physicians Regional Medical Center, State Attorney's Office, The Youth Advisory Council and The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.

During the past quarter, the DV Taskforce met in November to discuss medical response to domestic violence, FGCU domestic violence course and internships, speaker series training, and to continue to work toward ending domestic violence in Collier County.

## 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, Naples Police Department, Marco Island Police Department, Department of Children & Families (DCF), State Attorney's Office and The Shelter to work together to identify victims at high risk for domestic violence homicide and to enhance their possibility of receiving safety from further victimization. Together, we 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 527 police reports, referring the individuals most at-risk for domestic violence homicide (murder by a current or former partner/spouse) to the program.

## Legal Services

The objective of The Shelter's 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 support through Legal Aid Services of Collier County and Shelter Advocates. These services enable us to empower Shelter families, promote self-sufficiency and create a safer community by helping victims secure, modify and enforce protection orders; handle immigration issues; obtain a divorce or separation; obtain spousal and child support; and resolve custody and visitation issues.

For the second quarter of the fiscal year, The Shelter assisted with eight Injunctions for Protection (IFP or restraining orders/orders for protection) and our Advocates provided Court assistance to 44 individuals; assisted with 99 criminal justice issues; 79 immigration cases and 56 other legal issues.

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

An alliance with The Department of Children & Families, Family Preservation Services, 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. The ultimate goal is to keep the child safe and together with the non-offending parent.

The Shelter maintained a full-time, bi-lingual domestic violence Advocate co-located onsite at the local DCF office and staff met with DCF and RCMA to ease barriers to service for survivors of domestic violence.

*The 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/TTY 239.775.4265. For more information on supporting the life-transforming work of The Shelter, please call 239.775.3862, ext. 205.

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