



WINDOW *Views*

Holiday Edition 2009

Mission Statement

WINDOW will provide advocacy services for crime victims, strive to provide a safe community through education and work to change attitudes and values that tolerate and accept abuse.

Director's Notes

As 2009 draws to a close, WINDOW marks 23 years of providing services to our community. It has been my privilege to serve as the Executive Director for the past nine of these years. I am fortunate to have the knowledge and wisdom of a dedicated Board of Directors, the talent and fortitude of a remarkable staff and the generosity of volunteers who so willingly share their time and skills with us. I am also grateful to community members and organizations who support us through financial and in-kind donations. You all make a difference in improving the lives of so many.

Later in this edition is a breakdown of the number of services we have provided to crime and abuse victims this past year. The numbers never cease to amaze me and unfortunately, the need becomes greater each year. Just to give you an idea of the nature of the need for our services, last year we responded to 873 crisis calls and gave information and referrals 2,330 times. While we can't always serve individuals directly, many in the community have come to rely on us to help find who can. With the continuing economic crisis, foreclosures and evictions, rising unemployment and increased heating & transportation costs, we anticipate that we will be helping many more of our neighbors find that assistance in 2010.

Sadly, we are also witnessing many people who, out of financial necessity, either choose to remain or return to their abuser. While WINDOW does have some financial assistance available, the needs far outweigh our resources. Already this year, we have expended 60% of the amount we receive from the State for these purposes and we still have 7 months to go. With the uncertainty of the budget forecast for the coming biennium, we are not hopeful that emergency funds will even be available in coming years.

Even though the financial forecast looks bleak, you can be assured that the WINDOW Board of Directors, staff and volunteers are committed to keeping the organization strong, healthy and viable. Now more than ever, could really use your help. Detailed later in this issue are specific ways you and/or your organization can help us to better serve the direct needs of victims of crime and abuse right here in our own community.

During this season of giving, we hope you will remember WINDOW and help us give others hope and healing for a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you for your continued support.

Lisa Lilja, Executive Director

2008 Funding Highlights

In 2008, WINDOW received its final round of funding through the Minnesota Women's Foundation girlsBEST initiative. Through this initiative, we have been able to provide programming to girls ages 10-18 who reside in Pine County. The purpose of this program is to improve girls' economic, education and employment opportunities; foster leadership; and avoid entering abusive relationships in their life times. This year, we have three groups meeting once each week. If you know of a girl who could benefit from this support, please contact Shelly or Carey at 320-384-7113.

WINDOW was again granted funding through the Minnesota State Bar Foundation to provide additional support for our legal advocacy efforts in assisting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Pine and Kanabec Counties.

In November, we held our third annual holiday craft fair. All craft items, baked goods and quilts were donated for the fundraiser. Funds raised were supplemented by Kanabec-Pine Chapter #31306 Thrivent for Lutherans.

We continue to receive annual funding through the Child Safety & Permanency Division of the MN Dept. of Human Services which funds many of our child abuse prevention activities as well as parent education.

WINDOW is planning a Basket Bingo fundraising event for March 2010. If you would like to receive email alerts about this or other WINDOW activities, please join our list-serve by sending an email to director@windowhinckley.com with "List-serve" in the subject line.

Many churches throughout the area regularly donate cozy quilts, afghans and personal care items for our families. We appreciate their continued support.

Volunteer Corner

WINDOW relies not only on financial support but also the volunteer support of the community. Last year, 33 volunteers gave 1,528 hours of their time answering the crisis line after office hours, helping with our annual Family Fun Nite in April, and completing clerical work in our office.

Our volunteer opportunities include:

- Crisis Line
- Advocacy
- Court Watch
- Clerical Support
- Legislative Letter Writing
- Special Events Planning and Support
- Serve on the Child Abuse Prevention Council

Many people have collection drives for used cell phones and turned them in to WINDOW for us to give to victims for 9-1-1 calls or recycle for cash. We are also in need of handmade crafts, quilts and afghans to sell at our annual craft fair. Collecting diapers, toilet paper, paper towels and children's snacks is also a way to help victims and their families. All of these donations are accepted year around.

We're open to new ideas for fundraising so if you have experience in this area and would be willing to conduct an event on our behalf, we'd love to hear from you!

Interested? Just call Kala at 320-384-7996 and she'll be happy to answer your questions and send you an application. In order to ensure confidence in our programs, all staff and volunteers are required to complete a background check. We offer free training and continuing education opportunities. Benefits include (but are not limited to!) learning new skills; uncovering hidden talents; increasing your self-confidence; YOU can truly making a difference!

By The Numbers

It was a very busy year here at WINDOW. Following is a breakdown of each of our programs and the number of persons served. Please note, these numbers are unduplicated. While we work with many families many times over the course of a year, each person is only counted one time.

- Sexual Assault* – 25 children, 13 adults
- Domestic Violence – 47 men, 230 women, 70 children
- General Crime* - 841
- Abused Children* - 84
- Safe Home – 10 women, 2 men, 18 children
- Supervised Visitation – 18 adults, 23 children for 242 hours
- Safe Exchange – 65 exchanges
- Secondary Victims (all programs) 248

*Numbers include both Pine and Kanabec Counties

In addition to providing direct services to victims, a big part of our mission is to conduct outreach and education to the general public.

- 18 presentations reaching 938 school aged children
- 7 presentations reaching 522 adult community members
- 8 presentations to other professionals & interdisciplinary groups reaching 63 people

If you are interested in having WINDOW speak to your group to better understand our services or learn more about recognizing and preventing abuse please call our office at 320-384-7996 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. to discuss your needs and schedule a time.

Want help us save money and receive newsletter electronically? Join our list serve at director@windowhinckley.com

Frequently Asked Questions

What services does WINDOW provide?

WINDOW offers a variety of services to the community confidentially and completely free of charge. Services include:

- 24/7/365 Crisis Line
- One-to-One Support
- Assistance in filing Orders for Protection or Harassment Restraining Orders
- Court Escort
- Safe Housing
- Information & Referrals
- Support for Family & Friends of victims/survivors
- Post-conviction Victim Services
- Systems Advocacy – help with medical, school, social services & other community agencies

WINDOW also offers Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange services. Fees for these services are paid by the families utilizing them. We currently have no Federal, State or local funding for these programs.

What exactly is an advocate?

Victim advocates take on many roles but most importantly, we listen. We listen actively and seek to help victims clarify their thoughts, consider their options and support them through transitions. Advocates also help to educate people about issues of abuse, power and control, and victimization. Often, we introduce people to resources that can better their situations. We are committed to remaining non-judgmental, maintaining strict confidentiality and allowing persons who seek our assistance to make decisions based on their own self-defined needs.

Does your employer participate in the United Way fund drive? Please consider designating your contribution to WINDOW.

How can I help?

WINDOW is a 501c(3) non-profit corporation. All contributions are completely tax deductible. Upon receipt of your gift, you will receive a receipt for tax purposes. Your money goes a long way when you contribute to WINDOW since we are able to purchase items for clients tax-exempt making your generosity go even further.

Consider sponsoring a family for the holidays. Many families and groups choose this option rather than giving gifts to one another. We know many families who are going through difficult transitions and really appreciate having one less thing to stress about. Give our office a call at 320-384-7996 to find out more about this option.

Have a car sitting around that is dependable, in good physical condition and has been well maintained that you just haven't gotten around to selling? Please consider donating it to WINDOW. We currently own one donated vehicle and it saves us an incredible amount of money on travel. We do reserve the right to inspect any vehicle prior to accepting the donation.

We can always use paper towels, toilet paper, larger size diapers, pull-ups & wipes, personal care items, snacks for kids, and coffee. We also accept used cell phones. Please call our office to see what other items we may be running low on. Gift cards are also helpful to the people we serve. Gas and phone cards as well as gift cards or certificates for stores in our area help victims fleeing abuse purchase basic necessities such as socks and underwear.

Donations may be mailed to:
WINDOW
P.O. Box 739
Hinckley, MN 55037
Or dropped off M-F 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at
204 Fire Monument Road, Hinckley

How Far Will My Dollars Go?

We're happy to accept monetary donations designated to a specific program. As mentioned earlier in this issue, we are desperately low on emergency funds for the remainder of the year. Items typically purchased with emergency funds include new locks, flood lights, replacing doors and windows destroyed during the crime, and moving vans. If you are interested in helping victims financially, please consider designating your gift toward this life saving fund.

WINDOW also offers an unfunded service to the community in Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange. Since we have been unable to secure any public funding for this expensive yet necessary service, contributions designated for these purposes will help families subsidize their use. With your donation, we will be able to provide a sliding fee for families and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that children are spending safe, conflict free time with their visiting parent.

Please know that all donations will be used wisely and will go a long way in improving the safety, security and well being of people who live right here in our community.

Check us out on the web at
www.windowhinckley.com

With our thanks,
The WINDOW Board of Directors
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