



Domestic Violence
Resource Center
of South County

ANNUAL REPORT
FY2007/2008

30 Years:
A Legacy of Service

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lise Iwon, *President*
Susan Stone, *Vice-President*
David C. Ruppell, *Treasurer*
Martha P. Nailor, *Secretary*
Deirdre Millones, *Asst. Secretary*
Louise Anthony
Casey Conrad
Elizabeth Eckel
Leonard C. Edwards
Kathleen Ellis
Wm. Michael Johnson
Susan D. Mandel
Shannon L. Rand
Barbara Wild

Original founders Jeannette Gamache, Kathy Gibson, Marjorie Rekowski and Sue Cunningham attended our 30th Annual Meeting.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Kathleen Cassin, MD
Susan Cohen
Eliza Collins
Sally Dickson
Agnes Doody, , Ph.D.
Pamela Dresselhouse
Olga Goff
JoEllen Golberg
Susan Hazard
A. Bliss Hoffman
Martha Hough
Robert Indeglia, Jr.
Janet Innis
Margaret Goddard Leeson
Anne O'Neill
Geoffrey Peckham
Roberta Richman
Daisy Smythe
Sheila Tobie Swan
Vincent Vespia, Jr.

30 Years: A Legacy of Service



In 1978, a group of young mothers met around a kitchen table to explore women's issues in their community. With no paid staff and no equipment, these visionaries

opened the Battered Women's Project in the annex of the Hope Valley Baptist Church and incorporated as the Women's Resource Center of Wood River in April, 1978. Their first budget totaled \$183.79 with the bulk allocated for telephone service.

Since that optimistic time, DVRCSC has:

- evolved • moved • substantially increased fundraising •
- bought real estate • grown in paid staff and volunteers •
- changed our name • increased services offered to abuse victims •
- added proactive education to help prevent abuse

It is our hope that there will come a day when our services are no longer needed; but until then, we will continue to offer safety, support, advocacy, proactive community education, and a network of services to all persons who are victims of domestic violence. We envision a world in which all individuals are free from violence, grow to their full potential and have relationships based on trust, equality and mutual respect.

Surviving & Thriving

On this occasion of our 30th Anniversary, we at the DVRCSC would like to honor all those victims and survivors of domestic violence who come to our door. Many of their journeys are nothing short of heroic. Even though the stigma of being a victim of domestic violence has faded somewhat, the emotional, economic and social barriers are enormous and continue to increase. Yet, victims still reach out towards change for themselves and their children. They take courageous steps to establish safety and support.

Domestic violence knows no boundaries or borders. Women and men of all faiths, creeds and color face this punishing condition. Many times we don't know the outcome of their situations or see the end of their struggles; but, thankfully, we have seen many victims rise up against the violence and flourish. Many have gone on to establish new, healthy relationships. Many have gone on to further their education and many have gone on to volunteer or work for domestic violence agencies or other social service agencies.

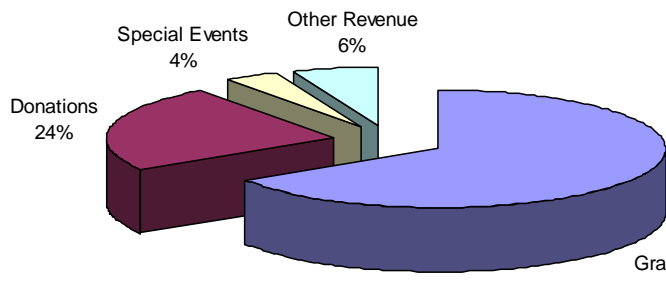
Specific examples: One mother in leaving was left with four children to raise and no money. She owns her own home today. One single mom who initially appeared exhausted, timid and felt that she had no voice found her voice in powerful writings. A Native American woman reached out beyond her community, which is not usually the case, to find safety for her and her family. An elderly gentleman with physical problems turned to oil painting and recently had a successful exhibit. A young man gained custody of his six-month old daughter as he was called home from Iraq and given a compassionate discharge to care for her. A very scared woman from a Third World Country arrived at our door with her three children seeking safety. She not only gained safety but her freedom as well by being granted asylum. Stories about victims go on and on and their plights are endless.

Many, many times their attempt to leave the violence is unsuccessful, but they keep trying. We are there for them. We hope to always be there for them until domestic violence is only something that we read about in history books. No matter where victims are in their journey, it is important to remember that we must admire them for their sheer ability to survive and commend them when they are able to thrive.

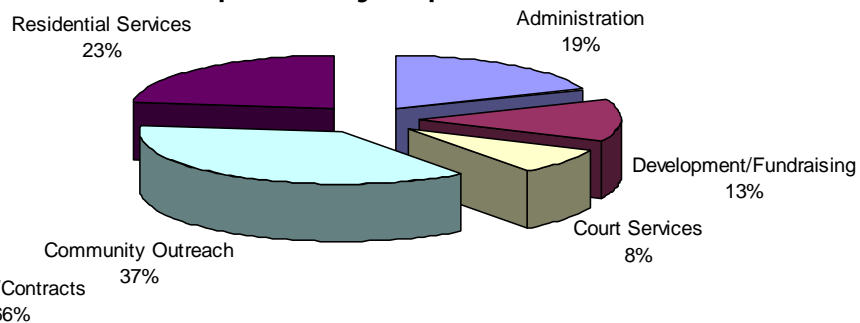
~ Judy Beatrice, Director of Client Services

DVRCSC Annual Report 07-08

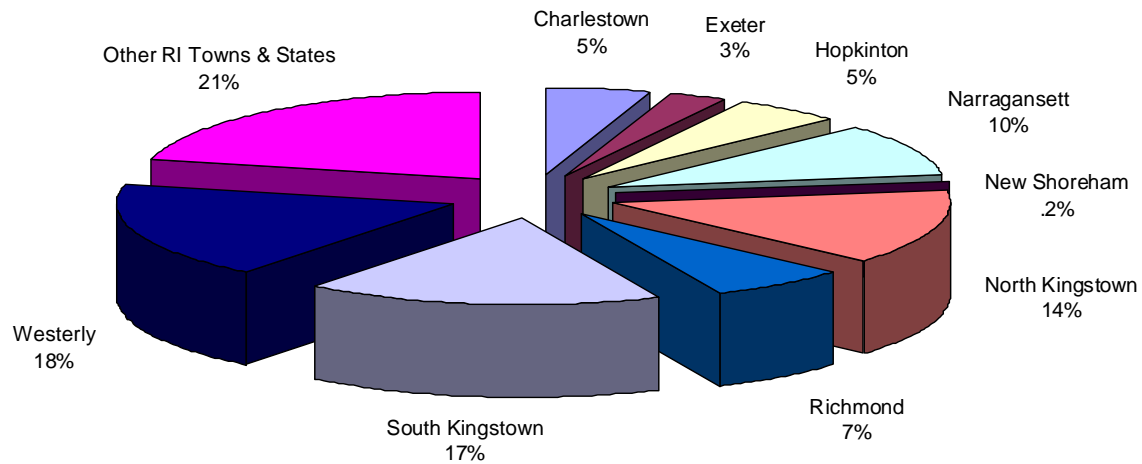
Funding Sources



Expenses by Department



Clients Served by Town



Service Statistics

July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

Support Groups:	103 clients
One-on-One Therapy:	40 clients
New Directions Psycho-Education	33 clients
Safe Home Program:	3,038 bed nights
Transitional Housing Program	1,280 bed nights
24-Hour Helpline Calls:	1,833
Drop-In Center Personal Advocacy:	1,088
Child Advocacy Program:	81 children received services
Court Cases:	550
Temporary Restraining Orders:	93
Court Office Drop-In Clients:	765
Education Outreach:	354 presentations reached over 6,437 students & adults
Ask A Lawyer (begun April, 2008)	19 clients

We know that victims of domestic violence can be men as well as women. However, World Bank data shows women aged 15-44 are "more at risk from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, motor accidents, war and malaria."

Violence against women is a cowardly act. Violence against women destroys the safety net of a family and compounds social issues within schools, communities and, ultimately, countries.

It is time for all men to speak out against violence against women. Set the standard by living by the following ~ A Pledge to Learn, Speak and Act.



Executive Director

- I acknowledge relationship violence is a problem that all men must work to end;
- I acknowledge that all people deserve to live in a safe and loving environment based on equality;
- I acknowledge that my lack of action and silence perpetuates the violence in my community;
- I commit that I am ready to be conscious of relationship violence as a serious social problem;
- I commit to end the silence about domestic violence and its effects on children, women and men;
- I commit to engage my friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers in ending domestic violence;
- I commit to make the changes required to stop the violence in my life and to end it elsewhere;
- I commit that ending domestic violence begins with my involvement.

DVRCSC Annual Report 07-08

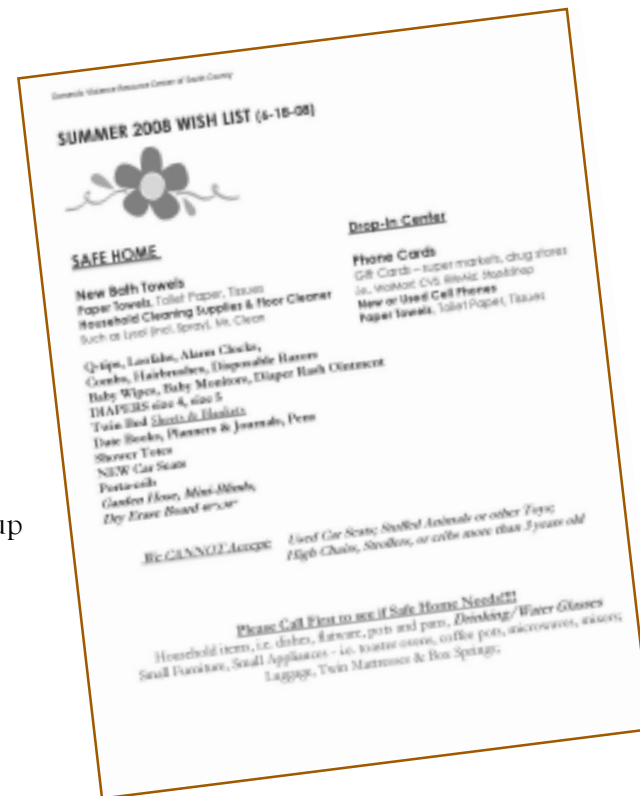
Safe Home & Transitional Housing

Women and their children who are fleeing domestic violence and facing homelessness may stay at our Safe Home for up to six months and our Transitional Housing for up to 18 months. We offer more than just shelter. During a week at our Safe Home, we may provide any or all of the following to help clients achieve a stable, responsible, independent life:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Individual Advocacy | Menu Planning/Healthy Meals |
| Early Intervention | Personal Finance Workshops |
| Support Groups | Journal/Writing Therapy |
| One-on-One Counseling | Job Search |
| Case Management | School Resources |
| DCYF Services | Court Advocates |
| Family Craft Hour | Pro Bono Legal Services |
| Women's Issues Group | New Directions Psycho-Educational Group |
| Children's Support Group | Substance Abuse Counseling |
| Crisis Intervention | South Shore Mental Health's
Children's Intensive Services |

Last year we housed women and children for a total of 3,038 bednights, 463 more nights than the year before.

DVRCSC Annual Report 07-08



Court Advocates

One of our busiest programs is Court Advocacy. We attempt to contact every victim involved in a domestic violence crime in Washington County. Our staff and volunteers help clients navigate an often overwhelming court system. We offer support for those seeking restraining orders in Family/District/Superior Court.



Last year our court advocates handled these astounding numbers:

- 894 Telephone Calls
- 765 Walk-In Clients
- 93 Temporary Restraining Orders
- 301 No Contact Order Terminations
- 1,205 Case Conferences
- 571 Disposed Cases
- 550 Court Cases

Of these clients, 376 were male contacts.

Volunteers

24-Hour Helpline

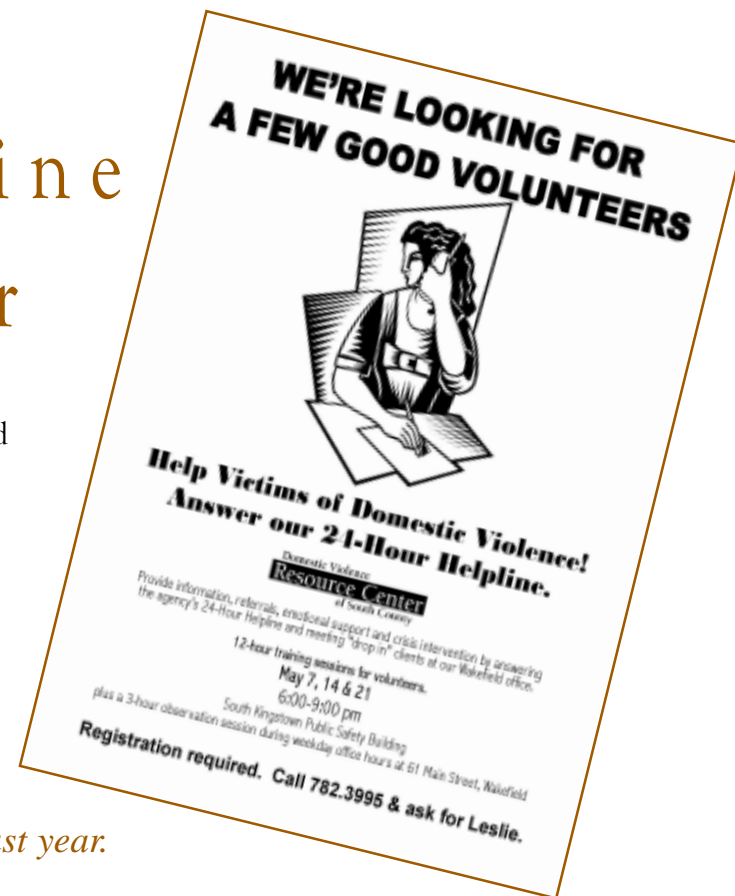
Drop-In Center

Trained helpline advocates provided numerous resources and referrals, developed safety plans and offered understanding and emotional support to callers. We offer a toll-free number and accept collect calls. We do not use caller ID, and all our calls are blocked to ensure safety and confidentiality.

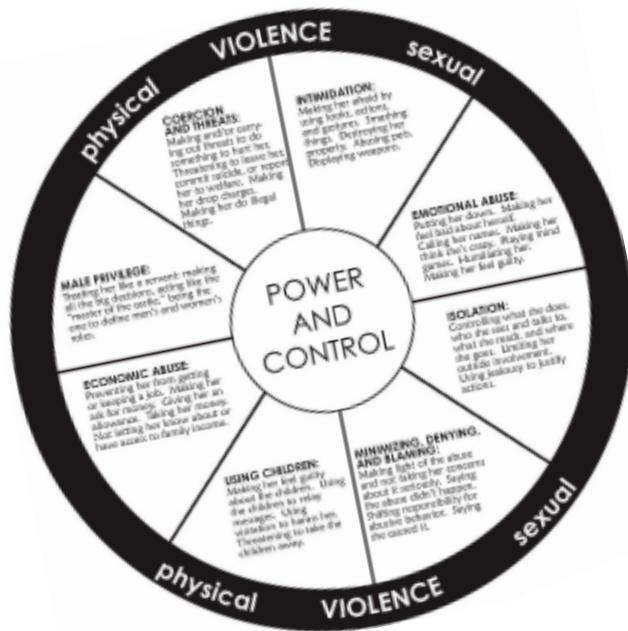
Drop-in clients may visit an advocate Monday - Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Often, a phone call or visit is a victim's first time to admit that there is a problem. It is crucial to offer them options for consideration to ensure their safety.

We distributed 18 emergency cell phones last year.

DVRCSC Annual Report 07-08



Support Groups & One-on-One Counseling



Support groups seek to help victims with emotional and psychological problems associated with domestic violence. Under the guidance of an experienced facilitator, clients share experiences, identify patterns of abuse in their lives and build a network of support. They are free, confidential and many provide child care.

One-on-one counseling creates a treatment plan with target dates to help a client achieve goals and also explore ways to break free from their abusive relationships if that is their wish. The program has a sliding scale fee based on a client's income.

New Directions is a more organized, closed group that discusses scheduled topics including:

- Identifying feelings
- Shame and guilt
- Self-esteem
- Communication skills
- Meeting needs
- Setting boundaries
- Making choices
- Grief and loss issues
- Healthy relationships
- Goal-setting

“We’re here to offer understanding and to empower victims to make the best decisions for their own personal situation.”

Education & OUTREACH

DVRCSC strongly believes in breaking the cycle of violence with proactive education and outreach. Our education staff gave presentations in elementary, middle and high schools on age-appropriate topics such as bullying, healthy relationships and dating violence. We also developed ways to empower students to act as mentors. For example, we worked with high school students who produced and acted in a play about teen violence and then helped their peers understand the information.

Our outreach staff gave 28 trainings to educate professionals on how to recognize, respond to and/or refer victims of domestic violence. We continued to work with Community Partnership Teams. CPT's encourage communities to address their specific strengths and needs to prevent and intervene with domestic violence issues. Current CPT's include Job Corps Academy in Exeter, Chariho Rotary Club, Block Island Community Safety and Education Network, Exeter/West Greenwich Task Force and Westerly & South Kingstown Basic Needs Committees.

DVRCSC Annual Report 07-08



We worked with the Chariho Rotary Club to provide six libraries with books about domestic violence and informational displays about what teens and parents could do to foster healthy relationships.

NEW Programs



“The purpose of the Ask A Lawyer program is not to get cases, but to provide a sounding board for people who don’t know where to go.” -- Attorney Bob Nocera

We are always modifying or adding programs to meet the needs of our clients and to raise awareness of domestic violence. Our agency involves clients and partners when we develop new programs.

Our Court Advocates gave us feedback that clients needed free legal advice, and we formed our Ask A Lawyer program to help meet their needs. Clients may make appointments to talk with a lawyer once a month. Attorneys offer their services pro bono. We provide screeners, office space and a receptionist.

About 18% of our clients are from the Westerly area, with limited public transportation from West Washington County to our office in Wakefield. We opened a Westerly satellite office and formed a Westerly support group, with the help of the Westerly Police Department and South County Community Action, to reach our largest target audience.

Building Business Together is a program we designed to enlist the support of local businesses to provide fundraising/outreach events that benefit both the merchants, our agency and victims of domestic violence. In the first year, we raised over \$19,000 and formed lasting relationships within the communities of South County.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
RESOURCE CENTER OF
SOUTH COUNTY
61 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

401.782.3990 24-HOUR HELPLINE
401.782.3995 ADMIN.
WWW.DVRCSC.ORG

STAFF

Mary Roda, *Executive Director*
Judy Beatrice, *Director of Client Services*
Robyn Borenstein, *Residential Services Case Manager*
Janice Carlson, *Legal Advocate*
Julie Del Deo, *Community Outreach Advocate*
Deborah Greene, *Residential Advocate*
Elaine Harrison, *Director of Human Resources & Administrative Services*
Anne Kernick, *Residential Overnight Advocate*
Garrie Leitner, *Director of Public Relations, Grants & Special Events*
Lisa Mabe, *Residential/Legal Advocate*
Rosemary Masterson, *Residential Advocate*
Leslie Nelson, *Development Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator*
Courtney Olbres, *Manager of Residential Services*
Ann Perlman, *Legal Advocate*
Carolyn Soares, *Administrative Assistant*
Linda Sposato, *Training Coordinator/Manager of Westerly Office*
Audrey Thayer, *Residential Advocate*
Regina Walsh, *Residential Overnight Advocate*
Megan Whelan, *Youth Education Advocate*