

WHAT WE DO AND WHO WE SERVE

NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

You do not have to stay in our shelter to get support.

Hotline Services

Many times this friendly voice is all a person needs to take the next step. In 2008, we helped **39,137** individuals affected by domestic violence find hope by talking with one of our advocates. For **2,921** individuals who survived or have been affected by sexual violence an advocate was there to help. We offer two 24-hour hotlines, operating 365 days a year. The hotlines also provide:

- Intake services for the shelter and counseling programs
- Emergency transportation for survivors of domestic and sexual violence
- Safe Harbour - our temporary hotel and motel emergency shelter for adults and children when shelters are full
- Domestic violence advocates (DVAAs) to accompany survivors to hospitals
- Sexual assault counselors (SAACs) to advocate for survivors at the hospital

Counseling & Advocacy Services

Supportive counseling helps survivors overcome trauma and understand the violence inflicted upon them. The support also offers a sense of safety, tools to cope and the knowledge that survivors do not have to feel ashamed. In 2008, **2,439** adult survivors and **1,157** child/youth witnesses or survivors of domestic violence accessed our help to realize the violence was not their fault and they were not alone. For **1,706** adult survivors and **262** children who were sexually assaulted, counseling and groups help them move forward after the trauma. The counseling staff also provides:

- Expert testimony in civil and criminal cases
- Thirty-five support groups for all survivors and those affected by domestic and sexual violence
- Individual and group counseling for children (ages 5-18) who are sexually abused
- Curriculum-based support group for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse
- Childcare during domestic violence support group for clients' children, ages 18 months to five years

Children's Court Services

A child should never be left alone to face the person who hurt them the most. Our court advocates ensure that every child has a friend in court. The advocate prepares and educates the family and child and provides accompaniment to court. In 2008, **320** children had a friend at their side and **1,133** of their caregivers were given the tools to seek justice and closure for their families.

Housing Services

Independence requires a decent and safe place to live, but obtaining housing is often a major barrier to survivors achieving independence. We assist with obtaining rental/utility aid and accessing permanent and affordable housing. To encourage success in our own scattered site transitional housing program, our client advocate provides case management and assists survivors with filing victims' compensation claims, accessing social services and legal advocacy. Housing was secured for **635** survivors who had accessed services through our shelter or at our Counseling & Education Building.

SHELTER & SUPPORT SERVICES

Shelter & Support Services

Individuals or families fleeing abuse or who have fled and now find themselves without a place to stay are welcomed at our shelter. In 2008, our doors were open for **1,138** women and children seeking refuge from violence. We provide short-term (up to 90 days) shelter in our 125-bed facility. Our commitment is to alleviate the current crisis; offer a supportive communal living environment; and provide case advocacy to all adults staying in our shelter. To remove the barriers of securing childcare, we offer daycare, educational services, and afterschool programs to our families. To promote economic stability and independence, the Career Development Program provides vocational and employment information, computer skills training course, GED and ESL tutorials, and résumé and job application assistance. Most are surprised to learn that our 125-bed shelter is the only one in the City of Houston and is full more than 90% of the time.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH SERVICES

Community Education - Over **30,000** individuals learned about our agency, our issues and how to help in 2008. Our education program focuses on creating partnerships with the community to develop community-based prevention strategies. We provide specific outreach to communities, including African Americans, Hispanics and Youth. Community specialists offer an array of targeted trainings with a primary focus on addressing the root causes of violence. All education and outreach work is free of charge.

Professional Education –**2,118** professionals attended one of our trainings in 2008. We train any and all first responders, including faith leaders, criminal justice, medical, human resources professionals, other service providers and parents. Training subjects focus on issues related to domestic and sexual violence and how to assess and resource the needs of survivors. We offer a college credit class at area universities to develop future leaders with a strong foundation and understanding of the issues. We developed our own experiential training tool for the community, “Walking the Walk” that has been purchased and used both nationally and internationally.

Volunteer Training

Direct Services Hotline & Advocacy Training and Child Care Training create opportunities for individuals to donate time and passion to our agency. It is offered throughout the year to train new staff, interns and volunteers to work on the hotline, supervise and support child clients, and provide individual support and group counseling. There is a small fee for the training manual, otherwise all additional training is free of charge.

Communication

Our communication efforts consist of general public awareness campaigns, updated and accurate educational materials, website and all media relations. We have brochures, fact sheets, and information/referral packets available free of charge to the community.

Outreach Counseling

Not everyone can come to our Counseling & Education building. Therefore, we provide community-based counseling services. We have targeted outreach efforts for the African American, Hispanic, disabled, and drug & alcohol dependent survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. Outreach efforts take place at health clinics, multi-service centers and social service agencies.

HOW YOU CAN HELP & WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Get on our mailing list to find out about our events.
- Go to www.hawc.org to learn about it, so you can talk about it with others and help us end it.
- Give your time, commit to monetary gifts or get your place of business involved.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Houston Area Women’s Center is a 501 (c)(3) organization and a United Way agency. Our annual funding is comprised of 13% United Way; 41% government grants; 26% contributions; 12% special events; and 1% other.