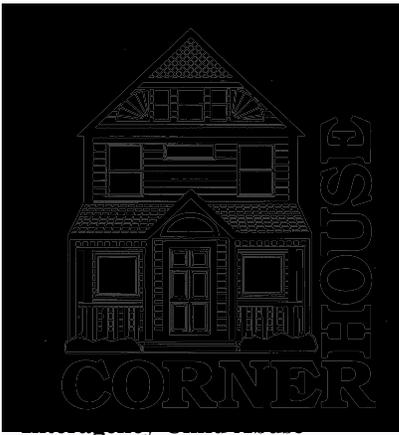


Around the Corner

A Quarterly Newsletter from CornerHouse

Volume 2, Number 2, 2003



Evaluation and Training Center

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Keeping In Touch:

No child is immune from abuse. In 2000, almost one million children did not know what it was like to be "safe and sound" in their homes. In the same year, 7,700 Minnesota children were confirmed victims of abuse and neglect. For the last decade, April has been dedicated as child abuse prevention month in the United States. CornerHouse, together with Josh Hartnett, the Riverview Theater and the Minnesota Film Arts International Film Festival, sponsored a fundraising event on April 11th to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect, and what each one of us can do to help keep children safe. The event was a success in raising both funds and awareness about CornerHouse and its services.

CornerHouse would like to recognize several community members and CornerHouse affiliates who have dedicated time throughout the year to promote safety and justice for children.

Lori Holmes Rice was selected as the recipient of the Hennepin County Bar Association's 2003 Advancement of Justice Award. This award is presented to a non-lawyer who has contributed toward public understanding of the American justice system and the role of the legal profession; achieving freedom through law; and/or improving the administration of justice. Ms. Holmes Rice was nominated by Judge Kathryn Quaintance of the Hennepin County District Court. She was honored at the Hennepin County Bar Association Luncheon on May 22, 2003. Ms. Holmes Rice has resigned her position as Lead Training Coordinator at CornerHouse, effective June 3, 2003, to take on the challenging position as Chief Home Officer, supervising a staff of three children (and one spouse). Best wishes to Ms. Holmes Rice.

Drs. Marjorie Hogan and Linda Thompson were awarded the Gold WATCH award on Thursday, May 15, 2003. "The Gold WATCH award is given each year to an individual who demonstrates leadership on behalf of women and children who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse. Honorees are chosen from both within and without the justice system. Drs. Hogan and Thompson are sought after in the medial community and beyond as experts in child abuse prevention, assessment and treatment." Both pediatricians have served as contractual staff providing essential forensic medical examinations for CornerHouse.

Thank you all for all that you do to serve the most vulnerable people in our communities. "Today's children are not just the people of tomorrow – they are the people of today."

Amy Russell, MEd, NCC
Executive Director

Child Life at CornerHouse

CornerHouse and Child Life, Defining Each Other

By Sandy Forseth, BS, CCLS

CornerHouse Training Assistant/Child Life Specialist

CornerHouse strongly adheres to the Child First Doctrine, where the needs of the child are our first priority. "Not the needs of the family. Not the child's 'story.' Not the evidence. Not the needs of the courts. Not the needs of police, child protection, attorneys, etc. The child is our first priority" (Ahlquist & Ryan, 1993). To advance this idea of the Child First Doctrine, CornerHouse has recently added a Child Life Specialist position. Many people are not familiar with the role of Child Life Specialists and their connection within child abuse evaluation centers.

What is a Child Life Specialist?

Traditionally Child Life Specialists have provided psychosocial care to children and families

Child Life – continued on page 2

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Child Life – continued from page 1

primarily in the hospital setting. Though a relatively new field, child life has expanded to non-traditional or alternative settings: outpatient clinics, laboratories, domestic violence shelters, dentist offices, court preparation for children, early intervention (Head Start), hospice home care, foster care and child advocacy centers. They are also more likely to be strategically placed to reduce potential trauma to children and increase coping in locations such as emergency rooms, shelter care or organizations that work with chronically ill children.

Wherever Child Life Specialists are employed their main objectives are to help children cope with the potential stress and anxiety of their environment and to promote their normal growth and development. This is accomplished through a variety of mediums, such as preparing children for medical procedures, lending emotional support to caregivers and siblings, advocating children's points of view and maintaining a receptive environment for children and families. Although the setting may differ, Child Life Specialists possess skills to create an environment to reach these objectives.

Child Life at CornerHouse

The role of child life in a child abuse evaluation center (child advocacy center) may differ depending on the organization's needs. Child Life Specialists are skilled at providing an environment that is safe and appropriate for children of all ages. The expertise of a Child Life Specialist can help from the front doors of an organization to each area utilized by children. They are integrating child development theories and practice to enhance their daily work with children.

At CornerHouse, a Child Life Specialist assists children, adolescents and vulnerable adults who may have been sexually abused through a non-acute forensic medical examination. She also is available to support non-offending caregivers through this process. What a child knows about why he or she is at CornerHouse that day is the starting point. Prior to the forensic medical examination, children are informed of what they can expect during the visit. A Child Life Specialist can help children cope with reactions and concerns relating to health care experiences through preparation, education and medical play.

Child Life Specialists also provide support throughout the forensic medical examination, including focused attention and coping strategies, if necessary. They create a "focused calm" atmosphere in the medical room. A focused calm atmosphere assures a child-centered focus, eliminates chaos and speaks into prolonged periods of silence. Silence in the medical setting may communicate danger and cause fear and anxiety (Thompson & Stanford, 1981). Each child is encouraged to play an active role, rather than passively receiving health care, through an interactive approach. This is accomplished by offering various choices, encouraging questions, using language that is positive and offering physical positions of comfort. Similar child life services may extend to the laboratory as well. The physician and the Child Life Specialist provide children with both: reassurance that their body is healthy and personal safety messages at the conclusion of the forensic medical examination. This reassurance from medical personnel is not only educational, but also provides closure as an important step for the child.

CornerHouse is still in the defining stages of what employing a Child Life Specialist means; however, we are well on the road to innovative solutions and integrated services to benefit the children we serve. Child life expertise has been utilized to enhance the child friendly feel of the family reception area. This has occurred by choosing appropriate toys, ensuring sanitation of the area and organizing the physical environment. The Child Life Specialist also provides feedback to others on how words and actions may affect children and caregivers at CornerHouse.

Child Life Specialists have a bachelor's degree in child development, human services or a related field, plus a 480-hour internship. The Child Life Council, a national organization, offers a certifying examination after graduation and internship. Visit www.childlife.org for more information about Child Life. CornerHouse is proud to be a part of the distinguished tradition that Child Life Council has established and developed over the past 21 years.



Support CornerHouse by attending the **Hollywood Homicide** movie premiere and benefit on June 4, 2003 at 8:15 p.m. Live appearance by actor Josh Hartnett. Premiere Tickets cost \$35 and should be purchased in advance at MegaStar Cinemas Southdale. For more information call CornerHouse.

Picture courtesy of Columbia Pictures

Calendar

May:

- 28 Medical Tour for Pediatric Residents 1:15-2:15 pm

June:

- 3 CornerHouse Orientation 8:30-11:30 am
- 4 Josh Hartnett Film Premiere Benefit
- 5 Medical Tour for Pediatric Residents 1:15-2:15 pm
- 13 Case Review 8:30 am

July:

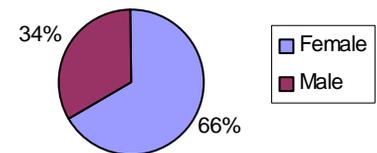
- 4 CornerHouse Closed for Independence Day
- 2 Medical Tour for Pediatric Residents 1:15-2:15 pm
- 11 Case Review
- 17 Twins Fundraiser
- 23 Equal Justice Conference – CornerHouse Presenting
- 23-25 APSAC Conference – CornerHouse Presenting
- 30 Medical Tour for Pediatric Residents 1:15-2:15 pm

Look for Barb Hiltz's and Grant Bauer's article Drawings in Forensic Interviews of Children in the upcoming issue of Update (v16, n3). Go to APRI's website: www.ndaa.org/apri for more information.

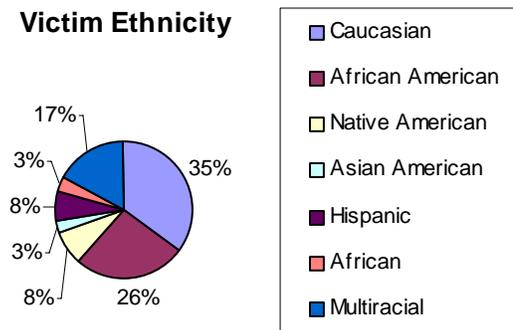
Statistics

CornerHouse interviewed 476 alleged victims in 2002. Here is the breakdown.

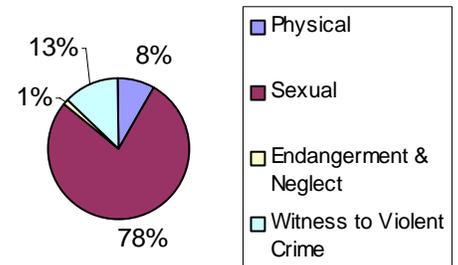
Victim Gender



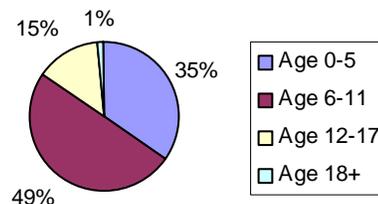
Victim Ethnicity



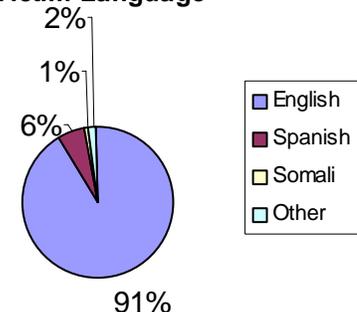
Abuse Allegation



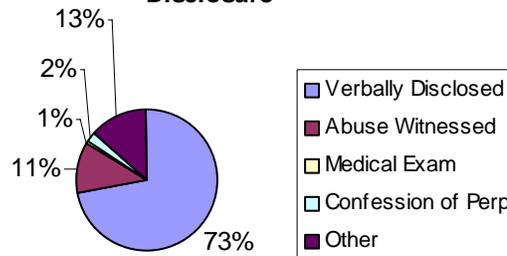
Victim Ages



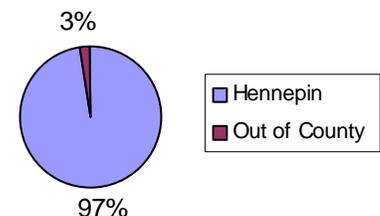
Victim Language



Disclosure



Referrals



Recognition:

CornerHouse wishes to recognize and express our sincere appreciation to all those who aided in the CornerHouse mission in the 1st Quarter of 2003.

Donors:

Berlin Family
Cogentrix, LSP-Cottage Grove, L.P.
CoreNet Global
E.M. Pearson Foundation
Fredrikson & Byron Foundation
Girl Scout Council of Greater Minnesota
National Children's Alliance

Jan Unstad (Just Give)
Vikings Children's Fund
Wayzata Community Church (Women's Group)

Team Member Volunteers

Kevin Ihrke
Mike Stephens, JD
Det. Randy Thompson

Interns:

Sarah Haberkorn
Greg Hrnccirik
Mary Wennen
Jennifer Fischer

Volunteers

Brian Perron

Training

Look for Lori Holmes' and Victor Veith's article, **Finding Words/Half a Nation** in the *APSAC Advisor* (v15, n1). Go to APSAC's website: www.apsac.org for more information.

CornerHouse Wish List:

Below is a list of ideas for donations to CornerHouse. Due to the nature of the work done at CornerHouse, some donations unfortunately cannot be accepted. CornerHouse staff is happy to work with you as you select items for donation. If you have any questions or wish to make a donation, please contact Barb Hiltz at (612) 813-8300.

Infant/Toddler

Shape sorters
Stacking cups

Preschool

Pop-up books
Wooden puzzles
Car map rug

School Age

View Master slides
Etch-A-Sketch
Magna-Doodle
Wall mounting magnetic board
Don't Break the Ice
Yahtzee
Match Box cars

Office Equipment

Office Desk
Office Chair
Laptop Computer

Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training for forensic interviewers and multidisciplinary teams (will receive priority registration) of law enforcement, social service and legal professionals. This course teaches an interview process to conduct credible, reliable, non-traumatic forensic interviews of children and vulnerable adults who allege sexual abuse. Openings are still available in the following sessions in 2003:

September 15-19

October 27-31

November 3-7

December 8-12

Five Days: Monday-Friday

Tuition: \$895

On-Site Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training is an intensive three-day training course. The course is designed for multidisciplinary teams of law enforcement, social service and legal professionals and teaches an interview process to conduct credible, reliable, non-traumatic forensic interviews of children and vulnerable adults who allege sexual abuse. This course, as compared to the five-day forensic interview course, is for teams of professionals who may have a hardship with traveling from their community to CornerHouse to obtain training and for those communities needing several professionals (up to 30 participants) trained. A CornerHouse trainer will travel to the host site community and utilize methods consisting of lecture and discussion; review of CornerHouse videotaped interviews and skill-building exercises.

Advanced Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training for professionals who have completed the CornerHouse Forensic Interview Training, First Witness training or the Finding Words course. Participants must have completed a minimum of 25 interviews utilizing the CornerHouse interview process. This course: teaches advanced forensic interviewing issues and research on memory and suggestibility; provides a mock trial demonstration of cross examination regarding an interview; and provides students with the opportunity to learn and utilize a tool to critique their own interviews. Openings are still available in the following sessions in 2003:

September 22-25

Four Days: Monday-Thursday

Tuition: \$770

Child Sexual Abuse Training for Mandated Reporters is a one day seminar designed for teachers, counselors, nurses, advocates, child care providers and other professionals who have responsibility for mandated reporting of suspected child maltreatment. It is also designed for patrol officers who may be the first responders to reports of child sexual abuse. A CornerHouse trainer teaches a process to talk with children or vulnerable adults who they suspect may be victims of maltreatment. Call us about bringing this seminar to your organization or group for inservice training.

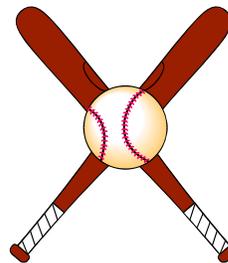
Orientation for interagency team members in Hennepin County is a three-hour session that includes: a tour of CornerHouse, the interview protocol, videotaped interview and a team meeting demonstration. There is no fee; pre-registration is required. Sessions in 2003:

June 3

September 30

For more information on training programs or to register, contact Sandy Forseth at (612) 813-8310.

Mark the Date!
12th Annual Twins
Fundraiser



July 17, 2003
Twins Vs Oakland A's
at the Metrodome

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Karen Larson at 952/885-0815 or klarson@rejournals.com