

HELP & SHELTER

PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE PROJECT

(BY AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION: EUROPEAID/130-666/L/ACT/GY,
EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS)

M&E REPORT- FEBRUARY 2012

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the project is to improve the lives of women, children and men who are experiencing domestic and sexual violence and child abuse.

The specific objectives are the provision of free services to victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse survivors to assist them to develop the necessary coping skills and build their confidence and self esteem, to support them through the judicial process, and to advise and assist them in accessing support services, so that they can rebuild their lives free from violence and the threat of violence.

ACTIVITIES

1. PROVISION OF FREE FACE-TO-FACE AND HOTLINE COUNSELLING TO 2,175 VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE

Expected Results/Outcomes

- Victims/survivors able to understand the nature and dynamics of the violence
- Victims/survivors develop necessary coping skills, self confidence/self esteem and access support services
- Family members including children affected will benefit directly and indirectly from counselling as the violence is reduced
- Counselling for family members will help to foster positive changes in their own lives while at the same time encouraging support and assistance to those relatives who have experienced domestic/sexual violence/child abuse

Achieved Results/Outcomes

Face-to-Face Counselling

Quantitative Data

- **New Adult Clients**
 - A total of 30 new adult clients, 19 females and 11 males received face to face counselling.
 - Spousal abuse was identified as the type of abuse experienced by 17/89% of all female clients, with physical abuse at 12/63% being the most predominant followed by non-physical at 4/21%; psychological at 1/5%.

- Intra-family abuse was also experienced by 2/10% of female clients with non-physical abuse at 1/5% and psychological at 1/5%.
 - Spousal abuse was also identified as the type of abuse experienced by all male clients 11/100% with non-physical abuse at 4/36%, psychological abuse at 4/67% and physical abuse at 3/16%
 - 4/21% of the female clients were between the ages of 19-25, 8/42% were between the ages of 26-40 and 7/36% were between the ages of 41-60.
 - For males- 5/45% of the client were between the ages of 26-40 and 6/54% were between the ages of 41-60.
 - A total of 9/47% of female clients and 4/36% of male clients identified themselves as Black, and a similar 2/10% of female clients and 6/32% of males identified themselves as East Indian. A further 7/36% of female clients identified themselves as Mixed. One 1/5% of female clients identified herself as Chinese and 1 male described his ethnicity as other.
 - In terms of employment status 3/26% of female clients described themselves as full time employed and 7/36% said they were self employed. A further 7/36% of female clients identified themselves as home makers and 2/10% described their employment status as 'other'
 - For male clients 3/27% said they were as full time employed, 2/18% said they were part time employed and 2/18% said they were self employed. A further 2/18% males indicated that they did contract work and 2/18% described their employment status as 'other'
 - A total of 4/13% of all cases for this month were alcohol related.
- **Returning Adult Clients**
 - A total of 58 returning adult clients, 57 females and 1 male received follow up face to face counselling.
 - **New Child Clients**
 - A total of 6 new child clients received face to face counselling.
 - Four (4) male children were sexually abused and 2 female children were psychologically abused
 - Two (2) of the children were under 6 years, 1 child was between 6-8 yrs 1 child was between 9-11 years and 2 children were between 12 -18 years
 - Four (4) of the children were of Black/African ethnicity, 1 child was of East Indian ethnicity and 1 was of Mixed ethnicity
 - One (1) of the children was attending Nursery School, 3 of the children were attending Primary School, 1 child was attending Secondary School and 1 was attending school at Tertiary/University level
 - Five (5) of the children were from Georgetown and 1 resided in the county of Demerara
 - **Returning Child Clients**
 - Five (5) returning male child clients were seen this month.

Qualitative Data

- A client brought in her teenage daughter for counseling. The girl is going through some difficulties due to emotional neglect by parents and witnessing constant arguments among her parents. Additionally the mother left the home leaving the teenage girl and her sibling in the care of their father. As a result of all of this the girl has become rebellious, and developed some destructive coping strategies. She was taken to 2 doctors for her mental health condition. Counsellor with the consent of the teenage girl met with her boyfriend and came to an agreement to do some counseling sessions on healthy and unhealthy relationships. This was needed as the pair was having problems relating to each other, resulting in the boyfriend threatening to break off the relationship. The teenage girl's whole life is presently centered around this relationship.
- A client whose husband was sent for via letter from the Crisis Center refused to come in to see the counsellor. Due to this, client went to the police station with the letter and made a report of

the abuse, this resulted in the police going to their home, arresting the offender, keeping him overnight, charging him and placing him before the Court. The Magistrate had made arrangements for the offender not to return home but to go to a relative's home until the client made a final decision about the situation. The client decided to ask the Magistrate not to go any further with the matter and showed her the letter from H&S. The Magistrate then explained about women getting killed and fined them \$25,000.00 each and recommended that the offender attend counselling sessions. They both came in for counseling and continue to attend sessions.

- A couple who were referred to AI Anon continues to attend sessions. The children are also involved in the group and the wife has reported that her husband has not taken alcohol since (approx. 1 year now). The wife keeps up with her counseling sessions at H&S but her husband has stopped attending the sessions. Client is working on developing coping skills and strategies to deal with her husband.
- A client who was sexually assaulted by a senior police officer continues to access counseling and support from H&S and is high in praise for Help & Shelter's counselling service.
- Another client was relieved to know that she could file a maintenance application via the court for her husband to support her and their minor child even though they live together.
- Client expressed her satisfaction with the way in which referrals and networking with appropriate support service agencies was done with and on behalf of her by H&S counsellors. As a result of this, client was able to find an apartment and move out of her previous residence and into her new apartment. This was necessary in order to avoid her partner's constant demand that she move out immediately regardless of the circumstances. Client was also told about relaxation techniques and alternative organic herbal remedies.

Hotline Counselling

Quantitative Data

• Adult Clients

- A total of 27 hotline calls from 26 female and 1 male were received this month through H&S 24 hr hot line service.
- Of the 17 female hotline callers, 1/3% was between the ages of 19-25, 12/46% were between 26-40 years, a further 11/42% were between the ages of 41-60, and 2/8% did not state their age.
- The 1 male caller was 60+.
- Ten 10/37% of the hotline callers were from the county of Demerara., 6/22% were from the county of Berbice, 8/29% were from Georgetown, 3/11% of calls were from Linden.
- In terms of employment, 5/18% of callers were full time employed, 1/3% were part time employed and 12/44% were home makers. Two 2/7% did not state their employment status.
- A total of 9/33% of callers were counselled, 10/37% were given advice and 8/29% received referrals.

• Child Clients

- A total of 3 hotline calls were received from male children.
- All 3 of the children were between 12-18 years
- One (1) caller was from the county of Demerara, 1 was from Georgetown and 1 caller was from a location not identified
- Two (2) of the children were attending Secondary School and 1 child did not identify where and if they were attending school
- One (1) child was counselled and 2 children were given advice

Qualitative Data

- Hotline counsellor indicated that by assuring clients of confidentiality, informing them about available support services and encouraging them to be pro active in accessing such services and other forms of assistance a positive impact has been made on clients.

2. DELIVERY OF FREE COURT SUPPORT SERVICES (COUNSELLING, PREPARING CLIENT FOR COURT PROCEDURES, ATTENDING COURT SESSIONS) TO 150 SURVIVORS/VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE

Expected Results/Outcomes

- Reduction in psychological trauma associated with domestic and sexual violence and child abuse suffered by victims/survivors and their families during the judicial process as a result of counselling
- In court support and information provided about relevant legislation and services available for prevention of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse and protection of and legal redress for victims/survivors.

Achieved Results/Outcomes

Court Support Counselling

Quantitative Data

• **New Adult Clients**

- A total of 1 new female adult client received court support assistance through court attendances and counselling.
- The 1/100% client was between the ages of 41-60.
- The (1) client was applying for a DVA –P.O.
- The 1 case was heard in Region 4: Mahaica, Magistrate Court
- Perpetrator in this case was the client’s son.
- The case is continuing.

• **New Child Clients**

- No new child clients were seen for this month.

• **Returning Adult Clients**

- A total of 5 returning female clients received court support assistance through court attendances and counselling.
- One (1) client was between the ages of 19-25, 1 was between the ages of 26-40 and 3 were between the ages of 41-60.
- Two (2) clients were pursuing assault charges; 1 client was pursuing a DVA P.O.; another client an attempted murder charge, 1 client a division of property matter.
- All (5) of the cases were heard in Region 4: Georgetown Magistrates Courts # 6(1); Georgetown Magistrates Courts # 5(1); Georgetown Magistrates Courts # 3(1); Providence Magistrate Court (1); Georgetown High Court (1).
- In the cases perpetrators were husbands (3), ex-boyfriend (1), child’s father (1).
- Outcomes – All 5 of these cases are continuing

• **Returning Child Clients**

- A total 8 returning female child clients received court support assistance through court attendances and counselling.
- Clients were survivors of the offences of incest (5), rape (1), carnal knowledge (1) buggery (1).

- Perpetrators were fathers (1), uncle (3), strangers (2), neighbour (1), stepfather (1)
- Clients ranged from 4- 16 years with: 1 child between 6-8 years; 3 between 9-11 years and 4 between 12-18 years.
- Court cases were all held in the Region 4 at Georgetown Magistrates Courts # 3 (1), Sparendam Magistrate Court (1), Providence Magistrate Court (6).
- Outcomes -7 of these cases are continuing
 - In 1 case charges were re-read to accused. One offender was denied bail. Paper committals under new SOA will commence in March 2012.

Qualitative Data

- Client said she felt pleased with the advice she received from her counsellor and followed-up on this advice. Client had confided in her counsellor that she felt that her lawyer was not working in her interest.
- A client of 55 years with the help of the counsellor was able to identify that she is being emotionally abused after 25 years of marriage. both husband and wife are now in the process of being counselled
- The Magistrate of a Region 4 Court ordered that representatives of CPA work in collaboration with H&S court support counsellors

3. PROVISION OF FREE ADVOCACY AND ADVISORY COUNSELLING AND REFERRAL SERVICES TO 450 VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE

Expected Results/Outcomes

Victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse

- informed of the legal, health, educational, housing, employment, financial and other services available to them, and
- supported in making informed choices through accessing a multi-agency network of services

Achieved Results/Outcomes

Advocacy & Advisory Counselling & Referral Services

Quantitative Data

- **New Adult Clients**
 - A total of 6 new adult female clients were given advisory counselling and referral services for this month.
 - A total of 2 new male clients were given advisory counselling and referral services for this month.
 - Two (2) female clients were between the ages of 19-25, 2 were between the ages of 26-40 and 2 were between the ages of 41-60.
 - One (1) male client was between the ages of 25-40 and 1 was between the ages of 41-60.
 - Five (5) new female clients were accompanied and or referred to GLAC, 1 client was referred to the Court, 1 was also referred for housing and shelter services and another one for public assistance.
 - The 2 new male clients received referrals to GLAC.

- Three (3) new female clients receiving advisory and referral services were Black, 2 were of Mixed heritage and 1 was East Indian.
 - The 2 new male clients receiving advisory and referral services were of East Indian heritage.
 - Four (4) female clients were full time employed, 1 was self employed and 1 client described herself as a homemaker. Five (5) of the female clients had children ranging from 1 child to 6 children.
 - The 2 male clients were both employed and each had 2 children each.
 - All of the 6 female clients resided in Region 4, while 1 male client resided in Region 4 and the other in Region 3.
- **New Child Clients**
 - No new female child client accessed advisory counselling and referral services this month
 - **Returning Adult Clients**
 - A total of 2 returning female adult clients were given advisory and counselling and referral services for this month.
 - One (1) client was between the ages 26-40 and 1 was between the ages of 41-60.
 - 1 client was referred to GLAC and accompanied to Court, 1 client was referred to the Ministry of Health, Chest Clinic DOTS programme Chest Clinic and Lifeline VCT site.
 - One (1) client was Black and 1 client was East Indian.
 - One (1) client was married and the other client was in common law relationships.
 - One client was from Region 4 and 1 client was from Region 3.
 - **Returning Child Clients**
 - No returning child clients were seen for this month.

Qualitative Data

- A client's husband recently returned to Guyana and commenced harassing her. The client was feeling overwhelmed by the situation. She was informed by the counsellor advocate about getting a Protection Order and accompanied to the GLAC. Knowing that she could take legal action against her husband made the client feel more hopeful and encouraged that she did not have to put up with her husband's abusive behaviour.
- The client was living in a small, one bedroom house, which is in a deplorable state. A letter to Food for the Poor (FFP), asking for assistance in constructing a home was sent. Subsequently FFP scheduled an appointment date for the client. However, counsellor advocate was unable to make contact with the client for that appointment so the appointment was re-scheduled for next month. This information, with the help of client's counsellor, will be forwarded to the client.
- The client's abusive husband has returned to the country and has been harassing her. She wants him to stop and contemplates getting a divorce. The client got legal advice about getting a protection order and is waiting to move forward with the application. Client also needs to apply for a new marriage certificate since her husband had destroyed the original and wants to make an application for maintenance.
- The client wants to get a divorce. Counsellor advocate explained to client the process of getting a divorce through GLAC. The client is awaiting her appointment with GLAC to get legal advice on petitioning for a divorce.
- Emotionally abused by her child's father, the client pointed out that her child's father will not take care of their four month old baby boy. He would tell persons that the baby is not his and "emotionally hurts her". He verbally abuses her also, by calling her names. The client wants legal advice regarding the custody of her child. She has a GLAC appointment in the beginning of next month

- Client is in an abusive relationship & wants to file for a DVA PO against her partner. Counselor advocate got client an appointment with GLAC. The lawyer advised the client to wait until her partner is in town before starting an application for the protection order. Her partner came back in town and this time there were no altercations between the two. The client did not report the previous and recent assault. The client's partner has since left town and the client has not heard from him since.
- The client has experienced domestic abuse for about fourteen years. Despite police intervention, no charges have been laid. At this juncture client feels she has had enough of living in this state and needs a divorce. The client is awaiting her appointment with GLAC to get legal advice on petitioning for a divorce.
- Another client is also awaiting her appointment with GLAC to get legal advice on petitioning for a divorce.
- The client has been separated from his wife. His wife is currently living in their home with her new partner. He wants the man to remove from the home and to have access to his house. The client has an appointment with GLAC for legal advice pertaining to evicting his wife's new partner from his house.
- Client's wife left their home in January 2011 and never returned. His wife has since moved on to a new partner and has recently moved to Mahaica. The children are unhappy in their new home & the client is concerned about their welfare and wants them to live with him. The client has an appointment with GLAC to get advice about the custody of his children
- Husband of a returning client called saying that he and client had an argument and wanted to know if his wife (client) had come into H&S. As counsellor advocate was speaking on the phone to the client's husband, came home and counsellor advocate was able to speak to her. Client said that she and her husband are arguing all the time and nothing has changed since she returned home. Counsellor advocate put client onto her counsellor. The client called back 2 days later and said that she is still having problems with her husband and on the evening of the first call, her husband attacked her. Client subsequently said that she had made a report to her area Police station. Since then her husband has changed the locks to the house and gone into hiding as he knows the police are looking for him. The client decided that she would like to reapply for a PO. Counsellor advocate went with the client to GLAC and they were informed that there was no need to reapply if the case was never called and further advised to check with the Court clerk for further information regarding the case. At the Court, client and counsellor advocate were informed that the PO was granted in November (the client was unaware of this) by the magistrate in the presence of the GLAC Lawyer. The client's husband has still not been arrested by the police (he is still in hiding). He has been making promises to the client, to give her, her documents and half of the savings in the bank, if she agrees to drop the matter and leave the property to him. The client has declined the offer and is thinking about going ahead with an application for a divorce.

4. ADVOCACY FOR ADVANCES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

Expected Results/Outcomes

Through its representation on the Domestic Violence Oversight Committee, H&S will advocate, support and participate in overseeing and implementation of all aspects of the National Domestic Violence Policy. including:

- Assessment of the Domestic Violence Act with a view to necessary amendments
- Development of inter-agency domestic violence protocols for frontline workers

- Training for health workers including the development of a standard curriculum on domestic violence intervention
- Collaboration with key decision makers in building the capacity of rural and hinterland communities to respond to domestic violence
- Encouragement and monitoring of a public awareness campaign targeting students and other members of the public on domestic violence prevention and gender and gender discrimination

Achieved Results/Outcomes

- No meetings of the Domestic Violence Oversight Committee were held in the month of February 2012.
- No word or notice was received from the Minister of Human Services or Director of Social Services concerning the convening of the DVOC.

5. COUNSELLING SUPERVISION

- The Supervisor met with all counsellors during the month of January,
- Through face to face, hotline and court support counselling, a total of 92 cases of new and repeat clients received services this month.
- A total of eleven (11) files were examined by counselling supervisor.
- Counsellors are consistently updating their records in a timely manner.
- All counselors feel that they have a realistic case load, although in rare cases the number of clients increases.

Counsellors' Intervention

- The counselling supervisor contacted the head of the CPA with regard to counselling for the abused children, subsequent to a newspaper article. Consequently, arrangements were made for two of the children who are in care at one home, to be counselled by H&S, commencing Tuesday 7th February, 2012. Counselor KG has accepted this task. The other boys who are at another home will be given similar support by Co-ordinator, MK who visits that home.

Training/Learning Needs

- One of the counsellors has withdrawn her attendance at the Mental Health training for reasons of other personal commitment. This counselor has consistently been browsing the internet for learning materials, which she shares with clients and when needed, other counselors.

Personnel Concerns

- The shelter counsellor expressed concern over the admission of clients, who do not meet the criteria, to the Ixora, since she has observed that they are the clients who are non cooperative and refuse to adhere to the shelter rules. She suggests that prospective residents be carefully assessed.
- One staff member expressed disappointment and frustration at the inappropriate manner in which some persons communicate with colleagues on the job. Recommendation is that this matter should be addressed at a staff meeting convened by the Coordinator.
- It is felt by some that their colleagues are in the habit of measuring the workload and studiously avoid attending to clients in waiting, while they claim to be completing clerical duties. One counsellor stated that as colleagues, there should be more camaraderie and support for each other

6. COUNSELLORS' PROFESSIONAL/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- One counsellor has been checking in on clients feelings be they male, female, adult or child
- Recently, after examining the death and situation leading to the demise of a popular singer and star, one counsellor has been conducting research so as to get a deeper understanding of the roots and effects of emotional pain and will be touching on these in her counselling sessions.
- After sessions with couples, one counsellor would have them hug, kiss and apologize to each other so they leave happy and in love.
- Sometimes clients are given the opportunity to choose a topic they would like the counsellor to discuss.
- Through reading and learning of the experiences of clients, one counsellor has been developing both professionally and personally.
- Through research and seeking out new information one counsellor has been enhancing her self knowledge and professional and personal development.
- One counsellor has found that by working across cultures to understand the client's cultural experiences he has been able to move the therapeutic process forward for the benefit of his clients e.g. family relationships and ties, and using religious affiliation as a liberating force for 'mental' cure.
- The counsellor/advocate has commenced sitting in on face-to-face counselling sessions with one counsellor. While she still has a lot more to learn, she feels that the experience has given her some practical insight into the counselling process. The counsellors have been supportive in answering her queries about face-to-face counselling, for example, time management, closing the counselling session and listening tips.

7. CHALLENGES

- Files for children who were referred to the CPA are not readily accessible. This is due to these files being stored in a counsellor's office which is locked when the counsellor is not in office. Also when the counsellor is in a counselling process, access to those files is not possible since the norm is not to disturb the counselling process.
- A challenge is clients deciding to stay in abusive relationships. To get around this situation clients are being counselled in the use of assertiveness skills.
- One counsellor reports that she is still having persons knocking at her door during counselling sessions.
- A male hotline caller in reporting a matter of child physical abuse wanted the hotline counsellor or someone from H&S to go to the house, intervene in the situation and make a report to the police station. The caller had to be informed by the hotline counsellor of the role of H&S and counsellors.
- One counsellor is grateful for the change in working hours.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Counsellors found the 6 month review meeting useful as it was able to clear up many issues. This meeting brought out the omitting of EU 2 return clients as new in the statistical reports. It is recommended that this and any other changes should be recorded/documentated and sent to all personnel involved.
- Court forms should include "# of telephone contacts with office", (this could be in the same space of, # of office visits"). This is necessary since some amount of contact by court clients is made via telephone, especially when clients cannot visit the office.
- Professional development through training in relevant concepts to enhance service delivery.