

**HELP & SHELTER/UNICEF COOPERATION:
VIOLENCE PREVENTION & RESPONSE
REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 AUGUST – 31 OCTOBER 2010**

The following activities were carried during the reporting period

1. Face to face, court support and hotline counselling services
2. Development of new counselling forms
3. Review and testing of new counselling forms
5. Counselling supervision
6. Finalising of Help & Shelter's child protection policy

1. Counselling

New Cases

For the period August to October 2010 a total of 118 new clients received face to face and court support counselling services. 9% of these were children and 89% adults. Spousal abuse accounted for 75% of new clients accessing our services of which 45 % were physically abused and 19% emotionally or psychologically abused. A high percentage of clients (35%) also suffered abuse which was alcohol and/or drug-related. Intra/family non spousal abuse was experienced by 11 clients, with physical abuse being most prevalent. A further 12 clients also suffered abuse by non family members. Of these, 1 was suicidal and 10 experienced psychological trauma. Of the 5 rape cases counselled, 4 of the victims were children between the ages of 9 and 17.

Sex & Gender

The majority of clients (78%) accessing our services were women and girls. Men & boys comprised 20% of clients seen and 2% ticked the 'other' box. .

Age, Ethnicity & Employment

18 % of new clients were between the ages of 9 and 20; 53% between the ages of 21 and 40 and 27% between the ages of 41 and 60+.

Approximately 34% of the new clients were of African heritage, 34% of East Indian and 25% of Mixed Race heritage. 44%, were employed full time, part time or were self employed, 23% were homemakers and 9% students.

Repeat Clients/ Hotline Services/Court Support Services

For the period August – October 2010 a total of 105 repeat clients were counselled, 99 hotline calls were received and 64 court appearances were made on behalf of and with clients by our 2 court support counsellors.

Referrals

Referrals were written for 96 clients and 50 non-clients to the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic, MLHSSS, various police stations, the Childcare & Protection Agency (CPA), AA, GPHC, the recruitment agency, Night Shelter, magistrate courts etc.

Condom Distribution

A total of 8 boxes of male condoms and 346 female condoms were distributed during this

period, mostly for the prevention of STIs and HIV.

Tables

Total No. of Persons Reached

Counselling Service	Total
Face to Face & Court Support (new)	118
Face to Face & Court Support (repeat)	105
Hotline Calls	99
TOTAL	322

No. of Persons Referred

Referrals	Total
Clients	96
Non-Clients	50
TOTAL	145

New Clients- Selected Demographics

Sex		Ethnicity			Age		
F	M	Afro	Indo	Mixed	9-20	21-40	41-60
78%	20%	34%	34%	25%	18%	53%	27%

Employment Status –New Clients

Type	Total
Full Time, Part Time, Self Employed	44%
Homemaker	23%
Students	9%

2. Development of New Counselling Forms

Recognizing that adequate and informed documentation of client cases is an important aspect of the counselling process (identifying core problems, type, frequency and effects on client's physical and psychological health) a review was done of e counselling forms both in and out of use. By the end of the review it was agreed that 3 new counselling forms be introduced and tested:

- A comprehensive assessment form for adults
- An assessment form for children and young people
- A social care plan form

3. Review & Testing of New Counselling Forms

A one day workshop for counsellors was held to introduce and review the new counselling forms. The new forms were well received by counsellors. It was agreed that there be a one month testing period and a further review.

4. Counselling Supervision

A new system of counselling supervision was introduced during October with the appointment of a supervisor responsible for monitoring the ongoing development, practice, competence and ethics of counsellors, developing and expanding counselling skills, and assisting in the off loading of on and off the job stress

During October counselling supervision was conducted with four counselors, 3 at the crisis centre and one at the shelter. One of our part time counsellors who was on special leave was not available for supervision. Among the 75 cases under review, 55 were for case counselling, 13 for crisis counselling and 7 for court support services. These did not include non-client and follow up cases.

Counselors generally felt that they are able to meet their clients' needs and one counsellor expressed satisfaction with her success in rebuilding a mother/daughter relationship.

Records are seemingly kept updated, except for one counsellor who is trying to clear off a backlog of cases. All counselors have attempted to implement the use of the new comprehensive assessment form and expressed satisfaction that this form as well as the social care plan will enhance their efficiency.

Counselors were comfortable with their case load, which can be high considering the continuous follow up cases they also have to deal with. In addition one of the counsellors also takes referrals for substance addiction as she has the knowledge & skills for such interventions.

Counselors are observed to be using the ecological perspective and behaviour change therapy in their intervention with clients. This is quite appropriate for the category of clientele that visits the organization. However, for other issues which may spin off from the one presented, there may be need to use other approaches. These will be introduced to counsellors, through discussion and case conferencing with the counselling supervisor. Counsellors were able to assess their strengths and weaknesses through challenges posed by clients who are often traumatized, disoriented and hopeless.

Counsellors expressed interest in varying areas of knowledge and skills which they feel will enhance their efficiency for client service delivery. It proposed that the following topic areas will be addressed with counselors in a way that clients, counsellors and the organization will gain strength.

- Interviewing skills and management of time
- Communicating with children
- Working with traumatized children
- Couple and family counselling
- Communicating with perpetrators

Some of these areas may have to take the form of training seminars while others can be done during case conferencing sessions with counsellors.

Supervision sessions were generally well accepted and both counsellors and supervisor were comfortable with the process. The impression gained is that counsellors are open to learn and willing to implement any strategy which will improve their functioning and the service provided by the organization. The need for psycho-social support for counsellors was recognized, as some personal concerns were discussed. The counselling supervisor will continue to provide an avenue for de-stressing, considering the fact that some persons have also shared their strategies for dealing with stress and/or burn out.

5. Finalising of Help & Shelter's Child Protection Policy

With initial help from EveryChild, Help & Shelter has been engaged in the process of developing and implementing its own internal CPP for several months. We have now completed this process and will be training all Help & Shelter representatives in the implementation of the policy. Several Help & Shelter counsellors have been appointed

child protection officers (CPOs). A child protection form has been developed, which all CPO and community-based workers have and will be using to record, track and refer child protection cases to the CPA. This process has already started and we have referred a number of cases to and are actively following up on some of them with the CPA.

During the period 1 August to 31 October 2010, a total of 13 child protection incidents were reported and child protection forms filled out and submitted to CPA. The forms of child abuse reported included physical abuse which was present in 7 of the cases, exposure to domestic violence in 3 of the cases and sexual abuse in 2 of the cases. Additionally in 5 of the cases, neglect, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, risk of molestation and theft were also present. We plan to put in place a data base to track these cases more efficiently by the end of the next quarter.

We have also drafted and submitted to the director of the CPA an MOU dealing with the arrangements for the emergency placement of children at the shelter at the request of the CPA. We are currently awaiting approval of this by the CPA. We have in the meantime already accommodated 4 children at the shelter at the request of the CPA.