

adp 12/27

C12-27

AN EVALUATION
OF THE
NASHUA AREA RAPE AND ASSAULT COMMITTEE, INC.
"Sexual Assault, Treatment, and Prevention Project"

GRANT NUMBER

78-I-A2283 B01

NC

JAN 8

ACQUISITIONS

PROJECT PERIOD

August 4, 1978 - February 28, 1979

VIRGINIA GARRELL-MICHAUD
EVALUATION SPECIALIST

NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

December 22, 1978

53407

BACKGROUND

At the November 4, 1977 meeting of the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency, the Nashua Area Rape and Assault Committee, Inc. requested funds for the establishment of the "Sexual Assault, Treatment, and Prevention Project." That request was denied and subsequently appealed. In December, this Commission approved fifty percent of the requested funds with the provision that: "...the applicant be given the option of running a six month project at the level planned, or extending the program at a reduced rate for a full twelve months." The Nashua Committee opted to run the project at the originally proposed level for a six month period.

In May, 1978, a GCCD evaluation was conducted which concluded that the project was well organized and had successfully addressed each of its proposed objectives. Due to the initial success of this project, it was recommended that an additional six months of funding be approved on a 90/5/5 basis.

On August 4, 1978, the Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency approved renewal funding in the amount of \$6,195. Funds were apportioned as follows:

	<u>Federal</u>	<u>Commission</u>	<u>Total</u>
78-I-A2283 B01	\$5,869	\$326	\$6,195

The project period was established as August 4, 1978 through February 28, 1979.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Nashua Area Sexual Assault, Treatment, and Prevention Project is located at 10 Prospect Street, Nashua, in a building adjacent to the Memorial Hospital.

The project is designed to provide services for victims of sexual assault in the Nashua area. The service area includes the following cities and towns: Nashua, Amherst, Hollis, Hudson, Pelham, Litchfield, Brookline, Merrimack, Milford, Windham, Derry, Londonderry and Salem. The project is also designed to produce, coordinate, and distribute educational materials, on the subject of sexual assault, to the community action groups, hospitals, schools, and social service agencies.

The foremost goal of the project is the improvement of the climate for the reporting and prosecution of the crime of sexual assault, and the treatment of its victims.

The Sexual Assault, Treatment and Prevention Project plans to attain this goal through the accomplishment of the following objectives:

1. Educate the community in order to increase awareness concerning the rights, needs, proper care, and treatment of sexual assault victims.
2. Maintain a working relationship and on-going liaison with police and medical personnel, and other agencies having direct contact with sexual assault victims.
3. Provide crisis intervention to sexual assault victims through a group of trained volunteers who will respond to crisis calls, meet with victims, and provide a positive support and information service.
4. Provide support to the families and friends of victims who have no prior knowledge of the affects of this crime, and thus have difficulty in helping the victim through the ordeal.
5. Effect legislation through close communication with several area legislators who are researching remedial legislation pertaining to sexual assault and domestic violence problems.

One staff position, that of Project Director, is supported through this grant. It was proposed that the Project Director would be responsible for the overall operation and coordination of the program. In that capacity, the Director was to be responsible for the further development

and implementation of all sexual assault, treatment, and prevention programs for the Nashua area. In addition, the Director was to serve as community liaison, responsible for maintaining a working relationship for scheduling training programs for new volunteers.

In addition to the Project Director, it was proposed that a volunteer staff would assist in the operation and administration of the project in the following capacities:

- Assistant Coordinator
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Corresponding Secretary
- Chairperson, Educational Subcommittee
- Crisis Intervention Work

It was also proposed that volunteer workers would serve on various project subcommittees created to address the following areas of concern:

- Services Education
- Finance
- Community Education
- Publicity
- Crisis Intervention

PROJECT OPERATION

In October, 1976, the Nashua Area Rape and Assault Committee was formed by a small group of women concerned for victims of rape. In order to explore the need and feasibility of a rape crisis service for the Nashua area, a needs-assessment telephone survey was conducted in December, 1976. Victims of sexual assault were invited to call and talk about their experience including any medical treatment received and any involvement with the police or court system resulting from the crime. Respondents to the survey were also asked what services they could have used during their crisis period had they been available. Their responses formed the basis of a comprehensive list of referral services which has been in use ever since.

In January, 1977, a public organizational meeting was conducted to develop the present subcommittee structure. That subcommittee structure consists of: Services Education, Finance, Community Education, Publicity, and Crisis Intervention. Each will be discussed later in this report.

In June, 1977, a twenty-four hour crisis and support service became operational under the direction of Ms. Sylvia Gale. Ms. Gale has served as the Coordinator of the Nashua Rape and Assault Committee since its inception, and is currently funded through this grant as the Project Director.

Ms. Gale possesses a Bachelor's Degree in Social Service from the University of New Hampshire. Her prior experience includes employment as a Social Service Worker for the Nashua Head Start Program and as a counselor for the Women's Information Services, Inc. (WISE). Ms. Gale has also served in a volunteer capacity for the Hudson-Nashua Hotline, The Youth Centered Action Network, and the Nashua District Court Probation Department.

Currently, the project has twenty active volunteers who assist the Director in accomplishing all phases of the program.

Organization of training of new volunteers is the responsibility of Ms. Gale. The last training program was conducted in May, 1978 for four new volunteers. The volunteer training program consists of four three-hour sessions plus a separate orientation session. The program includes an introduction to policy and procedure of the program, telephone interview techniques, and an introduction to referral sources and referral procedures.

As proposed in the grant application, the Sexual Assault, Treatment and Prevention Project was to consist of five subcommittees. Each subcommittee and its function will be described as follows:

SERVICES EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Services Education Subcommittee focuses on the establishment and maintenance of on-going liaison with police and medical personnel, as well as other agencies having direct contact with sexual assault victims. Another responsibility of this committee concerns the development and presentation of in-service training programs for police officers and hospital personnel. These in-service training programs have recently been completed by the subcommittee and are presented by Ms. Gale, members of the Services Education Subcommittee, a criminal lawyer, medical doctor, and Training Coordinator for the Nashua-Hudson Hotline, all of whom are Advisory Board Members.

In-service training to medical personnel includes a study of psychological, emotional, and physical needs of sexual assault victims, and medical procedures necessary following a sexual assault. One such program was recently presented to the emergency room staff of the Memorial Hospital. Successive programs are being prepared for emergency staff at the Memorial Hospital and a similar program is planned for the emergency room staff of St. Joseph's Hospital.

In-service training for the police concentrates on preventative techniques available to the community, legal and police procedures necessary for prosecution and conviction of the assailant, and the psychological, emotional and physical needs of sexual assault victims. The Litchfield and Hollis Police Departments are tentatively scheduled for in-service training programs.

Training of new volunteers is conducted bi-annually by local and regional consultants, as well as existing committee members. Some of the consultants who have participated to date are: Attorney Joseph Call, Jr.;

Attorney Thomas Coluntuono; Dr. Alan Green; Attorney Peter McDonough (Assistant County Attorney, Hillsborough); Det.-Sgt. Kosta, Nashua Police Department; Sgt. Fred Robinson, Crime Prevention Specialist, Nashua Police Department; Ms. Roslyn Hagan, Salem Youth Service Bureau; Ms. Shaun Marquis, Information and Referral Specialist, Greater Nashua Human Services Council; Ms. Sheila Levenseler, Coordinator of Victim Counseling Services, Boston City Hospital; Ms. Maureen McCausland, Director of Psychiatric Nursing, Boston City Hospital; Ms. Marilyn Russell, Community Council of Nashua; and volunteer staff members of the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center. The majority of these consultants offered their time and services on a voluntary basis.

The Services Education Subcommittee has also developed and distributed educational material concerning sexual assault to numerous community agencies within the project's service area. The educational material distributed consisted of pamphlets and films dealing with the myths, prevention, medical, emotional, legal aspects and statutes pertaining to sexual assault.

Members of the Services Education Subcommittee, upon request of the victim, police, or hospital are prepared to meet the sexually assaulted victim at a hospital or a police station. The primary goal is to provide sensitivity, supportive services to victims of sexual assault to lessen their trauma and to ensure that they receive appropriate treatment. A second goal of the subcommittee is to improve the climate for the reporting and prosecution of the crime of sexual assault.

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

The Finance Subcommittee is responsible for securing funding for the project's operation. For fiscal year 1978, this subcommittee has written and submitted funding proposals to the Ella Anderson Trust--(\$1,000 received);

the N. H. Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency--(\$5,869 awarded); and the United Way of Greater Nashua--(pending). In addition this subcommittee conducts an annual yard sale in the spring. This year's efforts earned \$300. This subcommittee also conducted on-going sales of fund-raising items and requested donations, through written and personal contacts, from over fifty organizations and businesses in the Greater Nashua area.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Community Education Subcommittee is made up of a four member speaker's bureau who give public speaking engagements to local high schools, church groups, library clubs, and civic clubs.

Presentations are made with the following objectives in mind:

- (1) to make potential victims aware of the crime of sexual assault and ways to prevent it.
- (2) to educate people, as potential jurors, with the intent of increasing their effectiveness in that role.
- (3) to make all people aware of the violent nature of sexual assault, dispelling the many myths about this crime, and to help them to better deal with it, should they, or someone close to them, ever become a victim.

During the period, June 1, 1978 through November 30, 1978, the following speaking engagements have been conducted.

9th Annual Medi-Fair
Heart of Nashua Sidewalk Sales
Keene Jaycees "Rape Awareness Symposium"
Heart of Nashua Sidewalk Sales
Presentation of Hesser College Sociology Class
Radio WOTW Potpourri Show
Merrimack Newcomer's Club
Six-hour workshop for the statewide Junior Women's Club
Three classes at Aliverne High School
Radio WVNH program presentation
Cheshire Health Fair
Salem Jr. Women's Club, "Rape Symposium"
Radio WOTW "For Your Information" with Capt. Barry -
Nashua Police Department
Rivier College Sociology class
Two Human Relation classes - Salem High School
Merrimack Jaycees Women's Club

In addition to serving as an educational tool, the community presentations assist the Project Director in the recruitment of volunteers. Press releases, radio spots and mailings are other means used to acquire volunteers.

PUBLICITY

The Publicity Subcommittee is responsible for issuing press releases and public announcements of all project activities. At least two press releases are issued every month, each distributed to more than ten area newspapers. Public announcements can be heard on eight local radio stations. Also conducted during the past six months were three, hour-long radio broadcasts and several special feature newspaper articles. Special publicity coverage also resulted from participation in the Medi-Fair, and the Heart of Nashua Foundation's Sidewalk Sales.

CRISIS INTERVENTION SUBCOMMITTEE

Crisis intervention is accomplished by a group of trained volunteers who respond to crisis calls, meet with victims to provide support and information services, and make appropriate referrals as needed. A rape crisis line is maintained twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Eleven volunteer crisis intervention workers are available on a rotating basis to answer calls and provide supportive services.

The twenty-four hour crisis and support service became officially operational in June, 1977. Prior to that date, individual members of the Nashua Rape and Assault Committee received several crisis calls in their private homes. The following data reflects program activity during the funding period (Dec. 1, 1977 through Sept. 20, 1978):

Crisis Calls

Aggravated Felonious Sexual Assault.....20
Felonious Sexual Assault..... 3
Sexual Assault..... 1

Support Calls

Past Rape Victim..... 5
Domestic Violence.....13

Information and Referral.....35

Business.....83
Other..... 6

Of the twenty crisis calls received from aggravated sexual assault victims, sixteen (80%) of the cases were reported to the police by the victim. The assailant was apprehended in twelve (75%) of the cases reported to the police. To date, six cases have been dropped, five cases have been bound over to Superior Court and one case is awaiting a probable cause hearing.

All three of the felonious sexual assault cases were reported to the police by the victim. One case was dropped due to the death of the assailant. The remaining two cases are currently bound over to the Superior Court.

In one of the sexual assault cases the assailant was apprehended, prosecuted, and convicted.

The following information reflects the agencies involved in both providing and receiving referrals for the program during the period December 1, 1977 through September 30, 1978:

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>REFERRED FROM</u>	<u>REFERRED TO</u>
Hospital	1	1
Family Planning	2	2
Private Physician	6	0
Public Health	1	0
NH Feminist Health Center	0	1
Al-Anon	0	1
<u>LEGAL</u>		
Police	7	2
NH Legal Assistance	0	6
NH Pro Bono Referral	0	6
Private Attorney	0	1
County Attorney	5	0
<u>COUNSELING</u>		
Community Council	0	5
Nashua Youth Council	2	7
Womankind	0	2
Private Therapist	0	1
Marathon House	1	0
Alcoholics Anonymous	0	1
Salem Mental Health	0	1
<u>SUPPORT SERVICES</u>		
School	7	0
Church	2	0
Hudson-Nashua Hotline	0	2
Milford Interact	0	2
Nashua Human Services		
Information and Referral	1	
Info-line	1	
Operation H.E.L.P.	1	
Concentrated Employment	1	1
Nashua Area Committee on		
Child Abuse and Neglect	1	1
Out-of-State Shelters	0	3
P.L.U.S. Company	1	0
PADA	0	1
Committee on Thursday Child	0	1
Division of Employment Security	0	2
YWCA Residence (Nashua)	1	4
Battered Women's Support	0	6
Protective Services (Div. of Wel.)	2	7
Financial Assistance (Div. of Wel.)	0	3

(These figures are not mutually exclusive.)

The above information clearly indicates that the Sexual Assault, Treatment and Prevention Project is receiving referrals from a variety of sources and that it has been identified as a viable community service. Additionally, the information demonstrates the program's willingness to fully utilize the criminal justice system and the human services network for the benefit of the program clients. Each client is referred according to the particular needs identified, and in many cases, numerous referral agencies are contacted for an individual client. In each case, follow-up is conducted on a timely basis by program staff and continued support services are made available as required.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of the Sexual Assault, Treatment and Prevention Project has now been employed for one year under the terms of this grant project. She served as Director in a volunteer capacity for five months prior to this grant, extending her total directorship to seventeen months. During that time, Ms. Gale has done an admirable job of establishing a working relationship with police, medical personnel and related human service agencies. In addition, she has successfully organized community education, volunteer recruitment, and crisis intervention. In-service training programs for police and medical personnel have been developed under the direction of Ms. Gale and presentations of the training programs are underway. A solid core of twenty volunteers, eleven of whom serve as crisis intervention workers, has been established.

Since December, 1977, the project has received a total of twenty-four crisis calls; twenty from aggravated felonious sexual assault victims, three from felonious sexual assault victims and one from sexual assault victims; Twenty (83%) of these cases were reported to the police and one case to date,

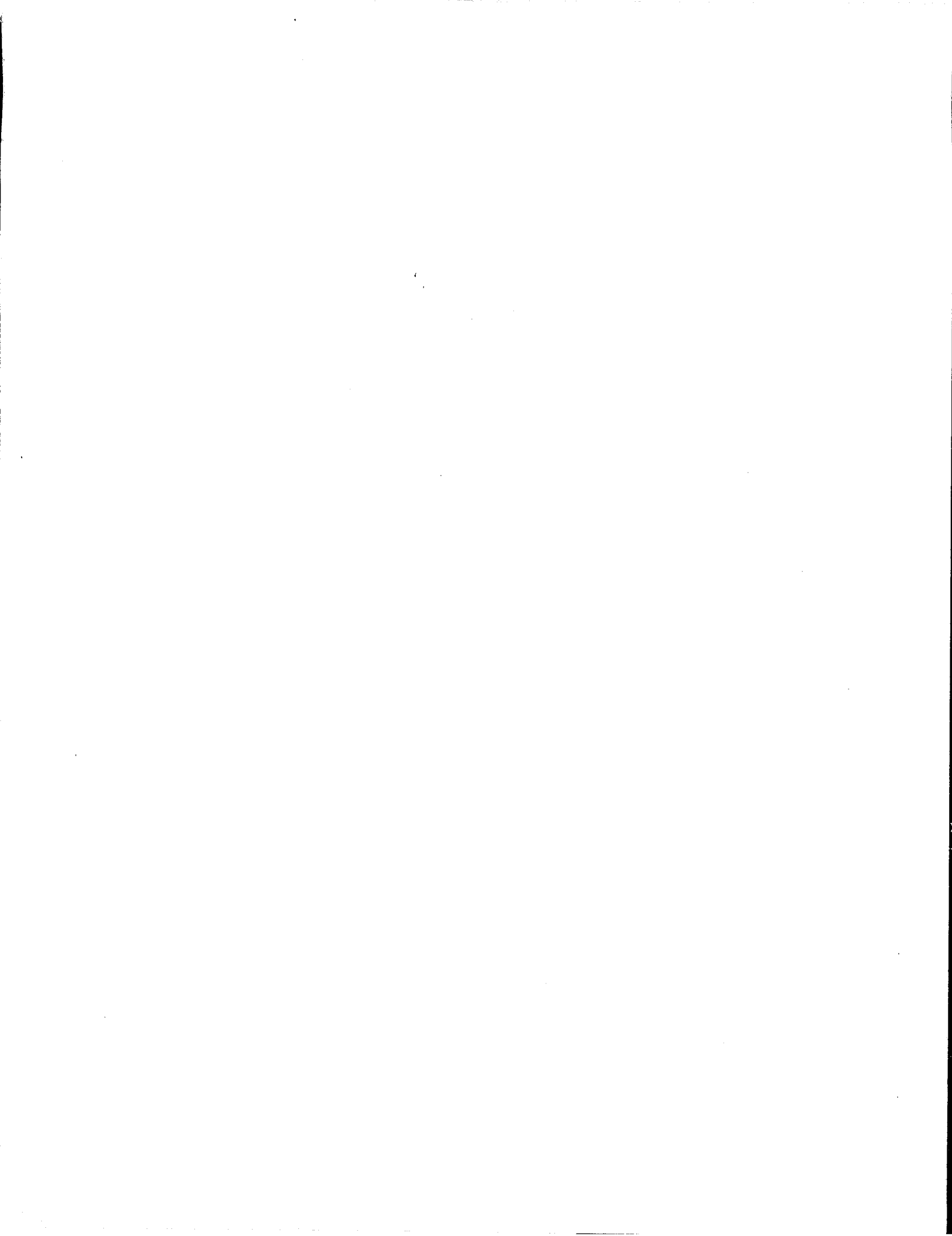
has resulted in a conviction. In addition, the twenty-four hour support service has received five phone calls from past rape victims and thirteen calls from domestic violence victims.

The most immediate benefits of this project are directed towards the sexual assault victim through the provision of crisis intervention, support, and referral services. However, the project is providing numerous other benefits to the community, the criminal justice system and the human services network as indicated in the following:

- 1) Education of police and medical personnel concerning the proper handling of rape cases in order that arrest and conviction rates will increase.
- 2) Coordination of services to the rape victim to include all community agencies.
- 3) An increase in the reporting of rape cases through increased community awareness and education.

There were no administrative or programmatic difficulties identified in respect to this project.

Due to the initial demonstrated success of this project, second year funding on 50/50 basis as consistent with Commission policy, is recommended.



END