

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT EDUCATION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

H.R. 7927 and H.R. 8948

TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION,
AND WELFARE TO ESTABLISH A GRANT PROGRAM TO DE-
VELOP METHODS OF PREVENTION AND TREATMENT RELAT-
ING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HEARINGS HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.,
ON MARCH 16 AND 17, 1978

Use of the Committee on Education and Labor
CARL D. PERKINS, *Chairman*



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TESTIMONY ON THE
ABUSED PERSONS PROGRAM
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

For:

Subcommittee on Select Education

House of Representatives

March 17, 1978

Prepared by:

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:Introduction:

I am speaking for the Abused Persons Program of Montgomery County Department of Social Services, Montgomery County, Maryland. This crisis intervention program for victims of spousal abuse is funded solely with county funds.

The program has been operational 1 year and has developed 3 levels of service: 1) crisis-intervention service, 2) short-term counseling, and 3) preventative out-reach service.

Characteristics:

Our county represents a largely affluent urban population, neighbor to the Nation's Capital in suburban Maryland, and home to many well-paid government officials and industry executives. We also represent a declining rural area where fast-growing urbanization is replacing traditional small communities. Ours is a highly transient and mobile population. Though the availability of human services in our county are exceptionally high compared to many areas, the coordination of the needs of battered women and their children is often complex, very time-consuming, and basic needs such as alternate housing is frequently unavailable to women without good earning capacity.

Program:

History: Our program developed from a grass-roots effort several years ago when local women's groups and those working with families of the alcoholic recognized the oftentimes hopeless

plight of family violence victims. These concerned citizens along with the local media and local officials established community interest that led to a task-force study of the problem and eventual commitment of a program and operating monies from the county budget. The program started with two paid staff persons and a small operating budget to purchase shelter and other support services.

Staff: We now have 4 paid staff - two social workers, an office assistant, and a social work supervisor, and in addition 4 CETA positions serving as Community Aides and a corp of trained volunteers. We have 2 contract social workers who cover weekends alternately. (See attached budget).

Program Purpose and Components:

The purpose of the program is to provide victims of spousal abuse the opportunity to explore and choose alternatives to continual abuse.

The following represents a range of cases that we have dealt with:

Case A:

Mrs. S., a mid-thirties Filipino woman with her 8 year old child came to our program for aid after her husband located her in our county where she had fled some months early following years of abuse. He badly injured her, requiring Police and medical intervention. She was sheltered by our program, provided immediate financial aid, day care service, and legal intervention while she was applying for State assistance programs. She is now resuming her training as a nurse, caring for her daughter, and

divorce proceedings are pending. She is self-sufficient and free of fear. This woman required many practical services from our program as well as counseling to move-through her ordeal.

Case B:

Mrs. J., a woman in her mid-thirties, with 3 school age children had been abused 14 years by her husband. She had been trying to "get out" of this cycle for years, but had been unable to separate until she could have the practical support of our program. She came with her decisions already made, needing only a legal referral, counseling, and a local emergency shelter grant to set-up her own living arrangement. She was a working woman who with a brief period of intervention was able to break the 14 year cycle of marital abuse in a satisfactory way.

Case C:

Mr. & Mrs. J., a couple in their mid-fifties, experienced sporadic periods of abuse that was stress-related to the wife's medical condition and which threatened the husband's role in the home. This couple wanted counseling to work-through their problems and quickly identified the marital stress as their major problem. It was, however, the physical assault on the wife that led to crisis-intervention services and on-going counseling. A male volunteer with our program worked with the family therapist to provide corrective role-models and the additional support needed by the husband during this difficult time. Intervention has been successful in terminating the abuse, and focusing both husband and wife on the precipitating cause of crisis (medical condition) and its significance to both their expectations of themselves and each other.

In 1977, we worked with 268 such families, of these 1/3 (90) required emergency shelter to escape a violent or abusive home situation. The women came with their children representing a statistical average of 2.3 children per adult (207). In addition to shelter, most women needed legal and financial assistance, re-location in secondary housing from shelter, child-care, and training for those with no marketable jobs skills. To support the purpose of program and meet these needs, the following components were established;

(a) Emergency Shelter through a contractual motel arrangement throughout the county.

(b) A 24-hour emergency phone number to respond to crisis at all times.

(c) Immediate financial aid for food, medical, transportation and child-care services.

(d) Support and educational groups for the women still living at home or having left. These groups are operated in a self-help atmosphere in which women can relate and work-through their individual problems in a supportive, but action-oriented environment. Their goal is to make decisions about their situation.

(e) Short-term individual and family counseling for those who need and request a more therapeutic level of intervention.

(f) Volunteers trained to support and give direct assistance to clients as an adjunct to paid staff. The volunteers work at each level of the program - crisis, on-going and preventive. This component substantially adds to the programs capacity to support clients on a 24-hour basis and brings a community-involvement dimension to the program.

Eligibility:

There are no income eligibility limits to our program. Any Montgomery County resident who has experienced physical abuse or recurrent threatening behavior by their mate is eligible to use our services. We do assess the client's capacity to reimburse the program for shelter costs based on 25% of her monthly income pro-rated to the daily use of shelter. It is often difficult to collect these fees as the women need this money to "start over" in their new lives. Though our county's population is well-known as affluent, we find women from moderate to high-incomes often with no ready access to cash money to sustain herself during the initial crisis and may not have any control at all over these resources until legal intervention can be arranged. Therefore, these women are often as needy for emergency help as low-income victims.

Case Illustration:

Mrs. B., a 49 year old woman with a 12 year old daughter, lived in a \$120,000 home in our county. Her husband was a high government official earning approximately \$50,000 per year. When she left home, she and the daughter were almost in rags because the husband refused to buy them clothing. She had saved from the small amount of household money he gave her, a total of \$8.00 over a 3 month period. This is what she had when she came to us for assistance. With legal intervention, she was later able to live moderately and to reimburse us for some expenses.

NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Abused Persons Program is one community's recognition and commitment to provide basic emergency services to victims of spousal abuse. From one year's operating experience, we have identified the following areas that require further development:

1. On-going Funding for Emergency Crisis-Services:

Our program, along with others represented at these hearings, have sufficiently demonstrated the need for emergency-level services to the victims of family violence.

Recommendations:

Continued demonstration-grant monies in this area seems to ignore the work already accomplished and delays the establishment of these services throughout the country.

As protective services to children and adults are now funded by Title XX monies without eligibility requirements, the victims of family abuse should be included. Basic shelter, crisis-intervention services should be provided throughout each state under their Title XX plan. This would, however, require raising the Title XX ceiling so as not to decrease other needed services already provided under Title XX plans.

2. Services to the Abuser:

The shelter crisis-services to the victims of abuse does not deal with the basic family and social issues responsible for violent, aggressive behavior. In our experience, the criminal justice system neither punishes or attempts to rehabilitate this offender, who, is therefore, free to repeat his abusive behavior

in other relationships and perpetuate continuing generations of violent behavior by establishing this model for his children.

Recommendation:

We favor the demonstration-grant approach for a systematic review and implementation of laws that recognize and treat physical assault to a family member as a felony and to develop alternate programs for the abuser. Such alternate programs might be based on the model presently used by highway officials for repeated DWI (driving while intoxicated) offenders. Mandatory attendance to programs designed to heighten the abuser's consciousness of his behavior along with providing alternative models for the expression of anger, development of better control mechanisms, and providing direct psychiatric services for those individuals seriously disturbed.

3. Shelter Services:

From our experience, not all women can emotionally tolerate the same kind of shelter services. Some women need the structured, 24 hour support of a traditional shelter. However, others need a quiet, anonymous space for a period of time where they can pull on their own inner strengths and mobilize their own energy to regain control over their problems. Others need only cash money or a loan to purchase their own shelter.

Recommendation:

We favor the demonstration-grant project approach to study the value of different shelter models, length of time per stay, and maximizing the benefits of shelter programs for victims of abuse and their children.

4. Services to Children of Abusing Parents:

Children suffer emotional stress when in violent homes. We have observed many who have begun repeating aggressive behavior based on models established by an abusing parent. Some cases reveal children who have acquired adult roles within their homes, trying to resolve problems between their parents.

Prevention means developing a capacity for early detection and reaching-out to vulnerable families and individuals. Rigid eligibility requirements and traditional mental health models based on traditional 50-minute weekly office visits will not work.

Recommendation:

We support the provision of H.R. 7927 for projects aimed at prevention of family violence. We feel services to children of these families is essential if this cycle of family violence is to be broken. Programs should be aimed at identifying aggressive, violent behavior in young people through school systems and developing educational programs that provide alternative methods to this type of behavior.

At all childhood stages, parenting methods need examination as strong physical punishment is often a major method for disciplining which leads to the acceptability of strong physical force as the solution to misconduct and problem-solving.

5. Crisis-Management:

We question whether police officers, usually the first on the scene of domestic disturbances should become crisis-managers, dealing with the legal and physical aspects of the violent home as well as providing the emotional and social support needed by the

victims. In cases of child abuse, a team approach is used, whereby social workers and police officers assess together the family situation and need for corrective action.

Recommendation:

We would support demonstration-grant projects using the "team model" for investigating and responding to family disturbances. This would address the problem both at the crisis-level, and preventative level for those cases where the disturbance occurs at a minimal, infrequent level, but still as evidence of family stress and potential violence.

In Summary:

We feel there has been sufficient demonstration of the needs for crisis-intervention level services for the victims of family abuse to warrant an extension to Title XX monies to include these families and provide, nation-wide, minimal shelter and Hotline services.

We would favor, however, demonstration-grant monies for shelter services, if expansion of Title XX monies are not readily forthcoming. Federal monies for this basic service are needed now.

We favor the demonstration-grant methods, under the directorship of National Institute of Mental Health, to develop better methods of intervention at the crisis-level, the on-going treatment level and preventive levels.

We favor projects that will bring together the criminal justice system's active involvement in abuse cases in partnership

with local community alternative programs. Assault against one's mate must be seen as the crime it is. The abuser must not be allowed to continue committing his crime without corrective measures in the form of uniform jail terms for chronic offenders or alternate programs for first offenders.

Attachment: 1978 Budget of Abused Persons Program

ABUSED PERSONS PROGRAM

PROPOSED BUDGET

FY 1978

BUDGET NARRATIVE

DEPARTMENT	DIVISION	ACTIVITY	CODE
SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY & ADULT SERVICE	ABUSED PERSON PROGRAM	5931-02
<u>SUMMARY:</u>			
<p>The Abused Persons Program provides an integrated system of services to families where physical abuse between spouse/mates has resulted in crisis. The program is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offers temporary shelter to the abuser and children, immediate crisis intervention and appropriate supportive services including but not limited to counseling, medical care, legal assistance, day care, transportation, etc. Services are available to all abused spouses/mates in the County in an effort to help the total family towards a resolution of the problem.</p>			
<u>DETAIL:</u>			
<p>The Abused Persons Program (APP) became operational in January, 1977, under the auspices of the Montgomery County Department of Social Services. In September, 1977, the County Executive made the decision to incorporate the APP in a Crisis Center administered by the Health Department. It is anticipated that the program will be transferred some time in FY 78 and therefore, be totally operational under the Health Department in FY 79. The exact date of transfer is unknown and in order to assure the continuum of services to abused persons in the County, the department is requesting refunding of the APP in FY 79 at the same level of services as FY 78.</p>			
<p>It should be recognized that if the APP continues to operate as a separate entity from the Crisis Center, undoubtedly additional funds would be required in FY 79 for both staff and operating expenses.</p>			

BUDGET SUMMARY						
DEPARTMENT	DIVISION			ACTIVITY		CODE
SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY & ADULT SERVICES			ABUSED PERSONS		5931-02
	ACTUAL FY 76	ACTUAL FY 77	BUDGET FY 78	ESTIMATED FY 78	REQUESTED FY 79	RECOMMENDED FY 79
FULL-TIME (POSITIONS) MANYEARS	(2)	1.0	(4)	4.0	(3)	3.0
PART-TIME (POSITIONS) MANYEARS						
SALARIES AND WAGES						
CURRENT AUTHORIZED						
FULL-TIME		\$ 8,159			\$64,190	
PART-TIME/SEASONAL			\$55,184	\$55,184		
OVERTIME						
TOTAL CURRENT		\$ 8,159	\$55,184	\$55,184	\$64,190	
ADDITIONAL						
FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME/SEASONAL						
OVERTIME						
TOTAL ADDITIONAL						
SALARIES AND WAGES		\$ 8,159	\$55,184	\$55,184	\$64,190	
OPERATING EXPENSE		9,420	29,960	29,660	29,960	
CAPITAL OUTLAY		-	-0-	-0-	-	
SUBTOTAL		17,579	85,144	85,144	94,150	
RETIREMENT & INSURANCE			13,134	13,134	11,490	
TOTAL		\$17,579	\$98,278	98,278	105,640	
BUDGET DISTRIBUTION						

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PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT SUMMARY								
DEPARTMENT	DIVISION			ACTIVITY		PROGRAM		CODE
SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY & ADULT SERVICES			ABUSED PERSONS		PROGRAM		5931-02
	FY 78			EST. AT YR END		FY 79		
GRADE	POSITION TITLE	MY	\$	MY	\$	MY	\$	RECOMMENDED
	<u>Current Authorized</u>							
	Full-Time							
24	Social Worker III	1.0	\$17,912	1.0	\$16,320	1.0	\$16,710	
21	Social Worker II	1.0	15,734	1.0	20,610	1.0	20,610	
16	Social Worker Assistant	1.0	12,681	1.0	13,570	1.0	14,260	
9	Office Assistant I	1.0	9,351	1.0	9,360	1.0	9,550	
	Subtotal	4.0	55,184	4.0	59,860	4.0	61,130	
	Less Lapse	-	-	.8	11,980	-	-	
	Total Full-Time	4.0	55,184	3.2	47,880	4.0	61,130	
	Overtime	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Total Current	4.0	\$55,184	3.2	\$47,880	4.0	61,130	
	Plus 5% COL						3,060	
	Net Contribution						\$64,190	
	<u>Fringe Benefits</u>							
	Social Security	4.0	\$13,734	3.2		4.0		
	Retirement	(4)	Break out	(4)	\$ 2,900	(4)	\$ 3,890	
	Group Insurance		not		2,230		3,000	
	Net Contribution		available		4,600		4,600	
			\$13,734		\$ 9,730		\$11,490	
	100% County funds							

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SALARIES AND WAGES JUSTIFICATION			
DEPARTMENT	DIVISION	ACTIVITY	CODE
SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY & ADULT SERVICE	ABUSED PERSONS PROGRAM	5931-02
<p>The Abused Persons Program's staff allocation for FY 78 consists of one SW III, one SW II, one SWA II and one Office Assistant I. There are four CETA positions assigned to this program who will terminate as of June, 1978.</p> <p>If the Abused Persons Program is not transferred to the Health Department prior to July 1, 1978 and the CETA workers terminate, additional staff will be required for FY 79.</p>			

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OPERATING BUDGET DETAIL							
DEPARTMENT	DIVISION	ACTIVITY			CODE		
SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY & ADULT SERVICE	ABUSED PERSON PROGRAM			5931-02		
OBJ CODE	ACCOUNT TITLE	ACTUAL FY 76	ACTUAL FY 77 *	BUDGET FY 78	ESTIMATED FY 78 *	REQUESTED FY 79	RECOMMENDED FY 79
	Weekend Contract Personnel	N.A.	\$ 345	\$6240	\$6240	\$6240	
	Travel for Contract Personnel			630	630	630	
	Bell boys Staff/weekend coverage			560	560	560	
	Shelter for Abused Persons		8526	11,280	11,280	11,280	
	Food for Abused Persons		453	4,000	4,000	4,000	
	Medical			5,000	5,000	5,000	
	Day Care			1,500	1,500	1,500	
	Transportation		94	750	750	750	
	TOTAL All-County Funds		\$9418	\$29,960	\$29,960	\$29,960	
<p>** The re-estimate is shown at the same level as the budget because the exigencies of the transfer and changes in program as a result of the transfer make it impossible to calculate a meaningful re-estimate at this time.</p> <p>*Program operational from January 1, 1977 through June 30, 1977.</p>							

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OPERATING EXPENSE JUSTIFICATION

DEPARTMENT SOCIAL SERVICES	DIVISION FAMILY & ADULT SERVICE	ACTIVITY ABUSED PERSONS PROGRAM	CODE 5931-02
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The Abused Persons Program should be operational in the Health Department in FY 78. The budget request, in order to assure the continuation of the program in FY 79, is based on actual allocations in FY 78. It is recognized, however, if this program is not incorporated in the Crisis Center, there will be a need for additional funding in FY 79.

END