



City  
of

Milwaukee

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**Health Department** Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

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**MILWAUKEE COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT  
REPORT TO PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
First and Second Quarter 2010**

**I. The Commission's Purpose, Responsibilities and Duties**

City of Milwaukee Ordinance Number 320-22(2) defines the purpose of the Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (the Commission) as:

**PURPOSE.** The purpose of the Milwaukee commission on domestic violence and sexual assault is to increase the safety for victims of domestic violence and their children and for victims of sexual assault, and to hold abusers accountable for their violent behavior.

The responsibilities and duties of the Commission are set forth in City of Milwaukee Ordinance Number 320-22(5)(a) - Responsibilities and Duties:

The commission is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the community's response to domestic violence and sexual assault by promoting communication and collaboration among members of law enforcement, victim's advocates, court staff, school personnel, health care providers, abuser programs, corrections officials, policy makers, children's service providers and prosecutors.

## **II. Activities in Support of Responsibilities and Duties for Third/Fourth Quarter 2009**

### **A. General Duties/Responsibilities –**

- 1. Regularly scheduled meetings** - The Commission meets both at City Hall and in a variety of community facilities in order to connect community partners to the Commission members and to better acquaint the Commissioners with the community partners and resources. During this reporting period the Commission met at City Hall.
- 2. Strategic Plan Development/Implementation** – The Commission developed an overall strategic plan in March 2008 and a Sexual Assault Services Strategic Plan in January of 2009. The Commission has made progress on the majority of strategic plan goals for 2010, most especially on media related issues.

**B. 320-23(5) b-1 – Training for current officers/recruits of MPD** - The Commission coordinator provides ongoing domestic violence training to the recruit class at the Milwaukee Police Department Safety Academy. In addition, the Commission coordinator is planning to participate in a training for all MPD personnel on sexual assault issues as a result of the release of a Milwaukee Sexual Assault Needs Assessment and as a result of the Gregory Below serial sexual assault case. The in-service will be during November and December. Plans are underway for additional training sessions with the Sensitive Crimes Division as well as the Command Staff in 2011.

### **C. 320-23(5) b-2 – Policy review to improve response to victims –**

- 1. MMDI** - Grant which is dedicated to improving policies and procedures to ensure accessible services for victims with disabilities. Commission staff is part of the grant funded planning committee partnering with the Task Force on Family Violence, Independence *First* and Milwaukee County's Disability Services to develop a needs assessment and eventually a strategic plan on how agencies can best serve disabled victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. Commission coordinator provided free, direct training open to all Milwaukee government personnel and non-profit advocates on navigating the justice system, including an explanation of criminal and civil court processes, the structure of the Milwaukee Police Department, and how to connect to the District Attorney's office as well as judicial and Department of Corrections representatives. The training was held on March 24<sup>th</sup>.
- 2. IPV Consortium**- This partnership between health care providers and local domestic violence agencies focuses on developing domestic violence screening policies to be used by local health care providers (including emergency rooms and primary care physicians in the Milwaukee area.) Met regularly with 5 area hospitals in partnership. Provided training to :
  - Aurora Safe at Home Project nurses, physician's assistants and social workers on February 22<sup>nd</sup>

- Columbia/St. Mary's Hospital System Social Workers on May 11<sup>th</sup>
- Wheaton Franciscan's St. Joseph's Hospital Physical Therapy Department on May 12<sup>th</sup>
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin nurses, physician's assistants and social workers on May 5<sup>th</sup>

**C. 320-23(5) b-3 – Monitor and promote legislation** - The Commission closely monitored the State legislation focused on the restraining order process and processing of so-called “rape kits.”

**D. 320-23(5) b-4 – Community awareness aimed at intervention and prevention –**

**1. Literature Distribution / Responding to Citizen and Community Calls–**

The Commission distributed approximately three thousand pieces of literature to victim's advocates, health care providers and non-profit organizations. The most popular publication is the “You Are Not Alone” brochure which features a comprehensive listing of resources (medical, legal, shelter, counseling etc.) for those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

The Commission responded to many calls from community members and community-based agencies seeking resources on matters of domestic violence and sexual assault. Callers seeking support or resources included: private citizens seeking connection to sexual assault resources; citizens seeking shelter; questions from area nurses on sexual assault reporting and police follow-up; legal system partners at the Milwaukee County District Attorney's office; Department of Corrections probation agents; at least seven non-profit providers; several health care systems requesting training and You Are Not Alone literature.

**2. Resource Tables** – The Commission staffed a resource table/distributed literature at Project Respect Conference held at MATC on March 4<sup>th</sup>.

**3. IndependenceFirst Youth Leadership Conference** – Coordinator gave interactive presentation on teen dating violence and domestic violence prevention for Milwaukee disabled teen leaders on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**4. Celebration of Women at Marquette – Sarah Buell Lecture and Round Table Discussion** – attended by coordinator who participated.

**5. Violence Prevention Panel at MATC** – Coordinator participated on panel assembled for MATC student body on violence prevention on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Also handed out resource brochures.

**6. Fulfilling the Promise of Juvenile Justice Conference-** Coordinator attended conference in Madison on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **III. Continuing Efforts**

- A. IPV Consortium** – Commission is now coordinating consortium that partners health care providers in Milwaukee with local domestic violence agencies and the Commission to develop and implement comprehensive domestic violence screening tools to be used by health care providers throughout the various systems. This includes developing recommended policies for screening and documentation as well as developing training techniques to present domestic violence information as well as screening techniques to health care providers throughout the city.
  
- B. DELTA Project**– Commission staff co-wrote 5 year progress report on Delta project’s work. Also prepared and participated in two site-visits. Co-developing informational pamphlet for area providers who serve Hmong clients based on Delta findings to date. Arranged for Delta project to update Commission members at Commission meeting.
  
- C. Homicide Review Commission (Adult and Pediatric)** – The Commission participated in monthly reviews of the homicides in Milwaukee that are a result of domestic violence, one session is for the adult victims and another session is for reviewing the pediatric deaths. The goal is to examine each individual case to try to identify opportunities for intervention that may have been missed, areas for improvement in service delivery, and also common factors that can be identified in different cases to help us develop prevention strategies.
  
- D. Office of Justice Assistance Statewide VAWA Planning Committee** – Commission coordinator continues to serve on the Committee and has met regularly with them to discuss domestic violence and sexual assault issues as they affect Milwaukee, to identify grant funding sources for Milwaukee agencies and partners and to contribute to discussions on statewide domestic violence/sexual assault issues of concern.