

Sexual Violence in South Carolina
Request for Partial Reinstatement of Funding for Rape Crisis Centers
South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic
Violence and Sexual Assault



***"You saved her life as well as mine... you gave her the will to live."
~ Mother speaking about her daughter, who received services from a Sexual Assault Advocacy
Program in South Carolina.***

It is estimated that 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men have been raped in their lifetime (CDC, 2011). In South Carolina, the sexual assault rate has exceeded the national rate since 1982 (SLED, 2008). This means that we all know someone who has been raped. Thankfully, every county in South Carolina is served by a rape crisis center that provides critical services to victims and their loved ones. But, these centers are struggling to meet the increasing need for their services. Funding for rape crisis centers was cut by 54% three years ago. But, since that time, these same centers have served 24% more victims of sexual violence.

Fiscal Year	Total Allocated	Year	Primary Sexual Assault Victims Served
2008/2009	\$1,200,000	2008	4,111
2008/2009 (mid-year cut)	\$849,606	2008	4,111
2009/2010	\$849,686	2009	4,961
2010/2011	\$648,114	2010	5,104
2011/2012	\$648,114	2011	Numbers have increased statewide. Final numbers will be available soon.

We are requesting a 35% reinstatement of funds, which would bring the total funding amount for rape crisis centers statewide to \$874,954. This amount would make a huge impact on the lives of children and adults in your communities. The following are examples of what could be accomplished with these funds:

- Hope Haven of the Lowcountry in Beaufort estimated that they could provide prevention education to an additional 1,500 children and teens;
- Programs across the state could visit teens in rural high schools, for supportive counseling as well as prevention education;
- Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands (STSM) would begin providing counseling services in Sumter and increase services in Newberry;
- STSM would be able to provide their six-week prevention curriculum to an additional ten schools, reaching 300 more students; and
- People Against Rape in Charleston estimates being able to reach an additional 8,000 students.

Prevention work is cost-saving work. A study conducted by Hope Haven and Darkness to Light revealed that the direct and immediate cost of child sexual abuse each year is \$2.7 million, in the Lowcountry alone. In 2010, rape crisis centers provided prevention education to 56,932 students in elementary, middle, high school, and college. With only a small increase in prevention efforts, we can dramatically decrease the impact of sexual violence on victims, communities, and taxpayers.

This partial reinstatement would allow rape crisis centers to continue to provide life-saving services to victims and their families, and critical prevention education to children and teens. We urge you to please consider our request for a 35% reinstatement of funds for rape crisis centers across our state. It will truly make an enormous impact on your communities. For more information, please contact Pamela Jacobs, Executive Director of the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, at (803) 256-2900 or pjacobs@sccadvsa.org.