



04
-05

Annual Report



Mecklenburg County Women's Commission

Main Office
700 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
704-336-3210

NOVA Office
3623 Latrobe Drive
Charlotte, NC 28211
704-336-4344

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 04-05

The mission of the Mecklenburg County Women's Commission is to seek to promote the growth, well-being, self-sufficiency, and productivity of women, children and families through individual and group guidance, counseling, intervention, and educational, informational, and vocational services.

The goals and objectives of the Women's Commission include assistance to individuals in their job search by identifying support networks and other resources for self-sufficiency, as well as to provide prevention and intervention programs and services to adult and teen victims, offenders and child witnesses of domestic violence. This is accomplished through individual and group counseling, parenting groups, case management, crisis intervention, advocacy, family law information, and community education.

Domestic Violence Umbrella

The Domestic Violence Umbrella Division serves domestic violence adult and teen victims, child witnesses, batterers as well as the general public of Mecklenburg County and is housed within the Women's Commission.

This organization helps improve the access and quality of services provided and creates a more user-friendly system.

The collaboration among domestic violence service providers reduces duplication and fragmentation of services and the overlapping of domestic violence services in Mecklenburg County.

Adult Services

The Adult Domestic Violence & Women In Crisis Program has expanded a strong partnership with the Domestic Violence Advocacy Council (DVAC) where in 2004 we continued the coordination of Public Awareness Marches for murdered victims of domestic violence and continued our leadership role with the monthly free Domestic Violence "Lunch & Learn" series. Our continued partnership with Department of Social Services provided domestic violence services to the WorkFirst Program.

The Adult Services program also established a partnership with the Sheriff's Office in providing a model for domestic violence training for all Sheriff's Office personnel. This partnership also includes our assisting Internal Affairs in developing a Domestic Violence Workplace Policy.

The Adult Services program formed a new partnership with Alliance Credit Counseling to provide financial education to adult victims of domestic violence in FY04-05. The domestic violence staff continues to provide information and education to departments and agencies in Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte, as well.

Domestic Violence Umbrella (cont)

Child Observers Program, Teen Dating Violence Services & Reach

The Domestic Violence Child Observers Program received national recognition. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the U.S. Department of Justice cited the Women's Commission "HERO" Program as a prime example of the strategies for intervention the OJJDP looks for from applicants. Multiple calls from throughout the United States were received requesting information on replication of the "HERO" Program.

The "HERO" and Teen Dating Violence Programs continued weekly Domestic Violence Group Services three nights per week (four groups per week). The Summer Day Groups continued with three groups in the summer of 2004.

The newly developed REACH program received statewide attention for its approach to deter future abusive behavior of adolescent witnesses of domestic violence who demonstrate at-risk behaviors.

Programa Confianza

Programa Confianza offers culturally sensitive community based services to battered Latinas by providing individual counseling and domestic violence educational services with crisis counseling and intervention, client advocacy, and information and referrals to other agencies in the community.

In FY04-05, Programa Confianza partnered with CMPD and the Latin American Council to create a Human Trafficking Workshop for the community. Other partnerships include Latin American Council, International House, Latin American Coalition, Mexican Consulate, Parks and Recreation, Latin American Women's Association, Radio Lider, plus others.

We are currently seeking additional funding for this rapidly expanding program.

NOVA

New Options For Violent Actions (NOVA) has enhanced its reputation as having cutting-edge, nationally recognized programming and services. NOVA has specialized groups catering to Spanish speaking, women's groups, and young adult groups. NOVA developed and implemented a new Batterer's Program specifically tailored to work with Child Protective Services involved clients, as well as, creating and implementing a new NOVA group curriculum to better meet the needs of the clients served by the program this past year.

In FY04-05, the NOVA Program received certification through the State of North Carolina as the only approved batterers' program in Mecklenburg County and continues to serve as a model for other programs.

Family Law Information Assistance

Women who need information and referral services regarding family law matters (separation, divorce, child custody, child support, equitable distribution, domestic violence, etc.) are eligible to attend our free Family Law clinic offered the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Two volunteers with Family Law training volunteer their time and services Monday through Thursday on-site each week offering referrals and Family Law information.

Employment & Training Unit

Displaced Homemakers

The New Choices program is a seminar series covering topics such as: self-esteem, goal setting/time management, career exploration, job search, resume writing, image, financial management, and introduction to the Internet. The program also provides individual employment counseling/coaching, case management, community referrals, and placement assistance. The primary goal of this program is the promotion of self-sufficiency.

This program served 325 Displaced Homemakers in FY04-05 equating to a 3% increase over FY03-04. The North Carolina Council for Women/Domestic Violence Commission funds the New Choices program. The Women's Commission's Displaced Homemaker Program placed 140 Displaced Homemakers into jobs or job training.

The Displaced Homemaker Program received \$39,315 in grants and \$17,000 in other monetary donations. The program utilized more than 75 volunteers who provided over 2,000 hours of service this past year, as well.

The Displaced Homemaker Program partnered with more than 40 community agencies including CREW Charlotte, Duke Business Women's Network, National Business Women's Network, Montreat College, CPCC, UNCC, Job Link, Charlotte Area Fund, YWCA, NC Women Work!, Women Work! and many other organizations to provide more services to displaced homemakers.

Clothing Closet

The Clothing Closet partners with many local businesses and organizations to provide new and used clothing to women seeking to enter the workplace for the first time and who have minimal resources for purchasing appropriate attire. Especially supportive have been CREW, Daughters of Penelope, AND Friendship Baptist Church. The Displaced Homemaker Program received \$41,500 worth of clothing and other in-kind donations.

This unit of the Women's Commission updates, develops, publishes and distributes the Blueprint Directory of local women's organizations, as well as, assists the Director of the Women's Commission with projects of the Women's Commission Advisory Board (WCAB).

In The Community

The Women's Commission Advisory Board (WCAB) and the Domestic Violence Advisory Board (DVAB) work with the Mecklenburg County Women's Commission department. The WCAB works toward identifying women's issues in the workplace and in the home, while the DVAB's focus helps to identify how domestic violence impacts Charlotte-Mecklenburg. We continue to participate and serve on the Domestic Violence Advocacy Council (DVAC), which is comprised of public and private agencies and interested individuals working issues of domestic violence.

The Women's Commission is involved in numerous community outreach projects throughout the year. Some of the projects that we are involved with are: Women's History month (March), The President's Network Luncheon (May), Women's Equality Day (August), and Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October).

The HERO Holiday Celebration, which has been held every December for the past nine years for child observers of domestic violence, continues its ongoing partnership with many local and area-wide companies.

In The Community (cont.)

Public Awareness

The Mecklenburg County Women's Commission is a domestic violence service provider with a strong ambition to help the community. County agencies, area domestic violence agencies and the local media worked with the Women's Commission again this year in providing our community with information and education on a wide range of domestic violence issues.

Women's Commission is instrumental in the coordination of the Domestic Violence Public Awareness Marches, in partnership with the Domestic Violence Advocacy Council (DVAC), as part of an ongoing effort to raise the public's awareness of domestic violence in our community.

The Charlotte Observer and all five local news stations (WBT, WSOC, WCNC, FOX 18 & NEWS14) have covered the marches on multiple newscasts. National Public Radio (WFAE) and Infinity Broadcasting (WBAV) have been consistent media participants, as well.

The Women's Commission continued its countywide cell phone donation program with a national domestic violence cell phone program (Shelter Alliance). We collected 2,283 phones, extended 97 phones to domestic violence victims, and collected \$6,778.50 for domestic violence safety items and Displaced Homemaker programs, which can be extended to Women's Commission's domestic violence clients and displaced homemakers.

The Women's Commission's Domestic Violence Unit partnered with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Domestic Violence Unit to form Operation Youth Awareness and provide awareness and education about violence to over 500 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools middle school students.

The DV Unit partnered with Avon on the Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign, which is an International Campaign for Avon.

The Women's Commission's Work First Family Violence Option Social Worker assisted in organizing domestic violence awareness events at DSS/ESD during the month of October 2004. The Women's Commission's Domestic Violence Child Observer "HERO" Program partnered with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Domestic Violence Unit to create an artwork display to increase awareness of how domestic violence impacts child witnesses and Programa Confianza partnered with the Health Dept resulting in a domestic violence television program featuring Confianza clients in order to raise awareness about domestic violence within the Latin American community.



Mecklenburg County Women's Commission

Main Office
700 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
704-336-3210

NOVA Office
3623 Latrobe Drive
Charlotte, NC 28211
704-336-4344