

**Rut Newman - CornerHouse Newsletter**

**From:** "CornerHouse" <patricia.harmon@childrensmn.org>  
**To:** <rut.newman@childrensmn.org>  
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**ABOUT US**



**Leadership Message**



Virtually everyone here at CornerHouse (board staff and volunteers) were affected by the Sandusky tragedy. The wanton exploitation of children, the refusal to consider the words of children when they are contrary to an institutional myth, the unwillingness of individuals to ask key questions in spite of those myths all served to give us pause and make us question how this can happen.

The hope must be that we will learn from this case and that we will continue the dialogue of prevention and awareness. Children must be listened to. To do otherwise will violate the

### ***Vision***

Children grow up free from abuse

### ***Mission***

Ensure that the voices of children are heard and understood in cases of alleged abuse

### ***Child First Philosophy***

*The child is our first priority*

Not the needs of the family  
Not the child's "story"  
Not the evidence  
Not the needs of the courts  
Not the needs of the police, child protection or attorneys

*The child is our first priority*

### **From the Back of the House**

There are many people who work diligently in the background to serve the children and teens that come to CornerHouse to be helped, supported, and heard. This series will keep you posted on the transitions in the "back of the house" as they occur:

### **Volunteers:**

survivors once again, and will open the possibility for another affront to the innocence of children to happen again. This cannot be allowed.

Sincerely,

Patricia Harmon  
Executive Director

### **Transitions**



CornerHouse experienced the sweet sadness of the retirement of **Fred Stephens**, one of Hennepin County's attorneys assigned to us for the past few years. The sweet part was Fred's enthusiasm for this life transition; the sad part is that the staff here will miss Fred's willingness to do anything for the comfort and safety of the children, teens and vulnerable adults we serve. Thanks, Fred! We'll miss you!

We are also excited to welcome **Jennifer Johnson** from the Hennepin County Attorney's Office to our multi-disciplinary team! She will be part of a three-person rotating team of attorneys, serving regular shifts at CornerHouse.

We've been fortunate to add more members to our Family Services volunteer team! Please help us welcome: **Maren, Ely & Ashly.**

### Volunteer Needs

We need volunteers for the following positions:

- Family Service
- Administration
- Library

Please contact Rut if you or someone you know is interested in volunteering!

[Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org](mailto:Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org)

### Volunteer Spotlight

Did you know that CornerHouse has an internship program? We have been very fortunate to be able to integrate students into our team by teaching them and by learning from them!



Maren Ott is one of those interns. Maren started in April of this year and will be with us throughout the summer. Working



**Thanks to the Southern Regional Children's Advocacy Center for their support of CornerHouse's technical upgrade!**



### The Culture of the Forensic Interview

A forensic interview is likely to be a completely unique experience for most children. Unlike most interactions a child might have with adults, like caregivers or teachers, the child is the "expert" in the interview room about their own life and experiences. It is the interviewer's charge to gather this information from the child allowing for their development and competence.

This very purposeful and detailed process is different from the traditional learning environment or play activities the child might be accustomed to, in which a child might be encouraged to guess, where there is a right or wrong answer, or where the child might be allowed to play pretend. For the purposes of the investigative process, the interviewer wants to hear everything the child is able to share about their experiences. This level of detail and focus is achieved

within our organization is giving her the practical experience she need to complement her Masters in Forensic Psychology, and it is the final requirement to obtaining her degree. Maren enjoys how supportive the staff is, and how relevant the experience is to her desired career field. CornerHouse helps her get connected, with advice from all sides. In her free time she enjoys gardening, reading and going to the beach.

We are so grateful for all her dedication to CornerHouse!!!

through prompting the child to provide narratives, but unlike school or home, there are no shortcuts and there is no teacher or parent there to give hints or clues about the information being sought.

Adding to the unique culture of the interview process is the expectation that the child will be able to share this information to the level of detail needed with an interviewer who is someone previously unknown to the child and not part of that child's family or community. Having a conversation regarding intimate aspects of life (family, daily routines and distinctive experiences) with a stranger can be difficult even for an adult. This difficulty may be magnified for a child who has been counseled about talking with strangers or who may have a natural and healthy discomfort with new people. It is incumbent upon the interviewer to create an atmosphere that allows the child to feel comfortable and to do and be their best.

From the outset and as the situation presents itself throughout the process, the interviewer can show the child through their actions and statements the unique expectations of this process. We can show the child they are important, their words are worth waiting for and we are here to just listen.

**CornerHouse  
Wish List:**  
[find our wish list at Amazon.com!](#)

**Examples:**

- Coloring books
- Stencils, stamps, stickers
- Toy train set
- Children's books
- Floor lamp
- Dishwasher

**Or donate Gift cards:**

- Cub Foods

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|  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Twins</u></b></p> <p>Ticket purchasing deadline is fast approaching! Make sure NOT to miss out on the most exciting picnic of the summer! Buy your tickets today!</p> <p><a href="http://www.cornerhousemn.org/twinsevent.html">http://www.cornerhousemn.org/twinsevent.html</a></p> <p>Some of our auction items are:</p> |
|--|---|

- Target
- Sam's Club
- Ikea
- Amazon

*Please call  
Sharon McLaughlin at  
612-813-8334 if you wish to  
make a donation.*



- Tickets to the Ordway, Children's Museum and Science Museum!
- Gift Certificates to numerous restaurants!
- Bass Fishing trips, stays at local hotels, a segway tour and other fun experiences!

3 very exciting auction items are only available BEFORE the event: 2 chances to have your kids observe batting practice and 1 chance to raise the Twins Territory flag, both on July 17!  
More info right here:

[http://www.cornerhousemn.org/buy\\_it\\_now\\_twins.html](http://www.cornerhousemn.org/buy_it_now_twins.html)

Want to **volunteer** at the event? We still have a couple of slots open! Have an **auction** item you'd like to donate?  
Contact Rut at 612-813-5937!

## Upcoming CornerHouse Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training Schedules

CornerHouse Interagency Child Abuse Evaluation and Training Center would like to announce the following availability in its 2012 training schedule.

### **Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview training at CornerHouse in Minneapolis, MN**

This training teaches a credible, reliable and non-traumatic forensic interview process for children and vulnerable adults who allege sexual abuse. Training methods consist of lecture and discussion, review of CornerHouse videotaped interviews, skill-building exercises and an interview practicum. The course is designed for teams of law enforcement investigators, child protection investigators, prosecutors and forensic interviewers. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend as a multi-disciplinary team. Courses are outcome based and include an exam upon completion. Course Fee: \$950

*July 9-13, 2012*

*August 13-17, 2012*

*October 1-5, 2012*

*November 5-9, 2012*

### **CornerHouse Advanced Forensic Interview Training**

This training course is for forensic interviewers, child protection workers, tribal social service investigators, law enforcement officers and prosecuting attorneys who have completed the required prerequisites. The course teaches advanced forensic interviewing skills including; modifications to the CornerHouse Forensic Interview Protocol: RATAAC® for physical abuse and other violent crimes, physical evidence in the forensic interview, autism spectrum disorders, multi-session forensic interviews, a mock cross examination demonstration and active participation in peer review using a variety of written assessment tools. Advanced training course at CornerHouse in Minneapolis, MN: Course Fee: \$850

### ***Prerequisites***

**1)** Completion of one of the following basic interviewing courses:

- CornerHouse Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training or On-Site Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training
- ChildFirst™
- Finding Words™
- First Witness™

**2)** Completion of a minimum of fifteen (15) interviews using RATAAC® (requirement waived for prosecutors)

*July 31-August 3, 2012  
December 4-7, 2012*

For registration, please contact Sandy Heitkamp at (612) 813-8310 or [sandra.heitkamp@childrensmn.org](mailto:sandra.heitkamp@childrensmn.org)

Visit our website: <http://www.cornerhousemn.org>



Follow us on Facebook and Twitter too!



Managing Editor: Rut Newman (please email her at [Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org](mailto:Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org) if you have any feedback)

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CornerHouse | 2502 10th Ave. So | Minneapolis | MN | 55404