



# AROUND THE CORNER



July 2010

## CornerHouse Newsletter Welcome Summer!

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### Wish List

- Dominos
- Play Dough
- Coloring Books
- Stress Balls
- Scented Markers

### Leadership Message

You will be hearing a lot in this newsletter about the 19th Annual Twins Event. Led by an awesome trio of committee chairs - Al Gerhardt, Damon Noga and Arlene Clapp - the committee of volunteers tended to a myriad of details to make this a fun event. 23 corporate sponsors stepped up to provide sponsorships, many people donated to our live and silent auctions and the 1,000 tickets we wanted to sell were gone long before the deadline. Thanks so much for all of **your** support - we needed you and you were there!

The Twins event will no doubt be a noisy, lively event - and we are glad! That's quite a contrast to the literal darkness and bleakness which the children and teens we serve experience. Our challenge as a caring community is to bring the behavior which harms children to light, to help children understand that they are not at fault and to help them heal by giving attention to their telling of their experience.

That's not always an easy thing to do - we'd all prefer not to discuss this, not to think about it and not to see the damage. But if we are to realize our vision of ending child abuse, the stories must be heard and told over and over. In that sense, we need to be loud and clear and committed to making sure that it is understood in our community that children should not be treated abusively. We will seek out adults who were abused as children to help us tell this important "story" from the survivor's perspective. Whenever appropriate, we will lend our voices to the "noise" of assuring that not one more youth is harmed.

Patricia Harmon, Executive Director

- Trouble
- Jenga
- View Master
- Refrigerator
- Coffee Maker

Please no fantasy type items (e.g. princesses, princes, action figures, etc)

Items are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off at CornerHouse Monday-Friday between 8 am and 4:30 p.m.

THANK YOU

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

## Twins Event



Volunteers at the Twins Event with examples of the amazing balloon art

On June 30, friends and supporters of CornerHouse gathered for the 19th Annual Twins Event. It was a huge success! Over 900 meals were served, over 50 silent auctions were mulled over, and 1,000 ticket holders enjoyed the first CornerHouse Twins Event in the new stadium. Kids (and quite a few adults!) enjoyed face painting and balloon creations and ate over 700 Dilly Bars! Thanks so much to all of you who donated your time, treasure and auction items. We will look forward to seeing you and all of those of you who couldn't come this year, at our 20th Annual Event!

## 20+ Years At CornerHouse: Reflections of a Forensic Interviewer/Trainer (Part 1)

By: Judy Weigman, Forensic Interviewer



"You are getting on my nervous!" People often ask how I could listen to the words of nearly 4,000 abused children for over 20 years. I tell them that although I hear disturbing and horrific things from the children I interview, one way I cope is to appreciate the many humorous words and ways that kids communicate. This little boy thought he had answered enough questions. Another child stated, "He works in a church too; God ain't gonna like that he did that nasty to me." Another asked, "Can I get my free toy and then I'll talk about it?"

On my first day at CornerHouse (April 30, 1990) I remember thinking, "What a relief! I can ring the doorbell and be let in...it will be safe here...no more dark corridors reeking of drugs, or angry clients with guns behind the door I am about to knock on." I wondered, "Can I really do this? Of course I can. I've taught 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders; I'm raising 3 sons; I am comfortable talking to kids. How hard can this be?" I found out it was harder than I thought.

Two weeks later, while preparing for an interview, I stood on the couch to get two anatomical dolls, which were stored in a cupboard attached to the interview room wall. As I reached for the dolls, I could feel the extremely heavy cupboard release from the wall and unto me, resulting in a lengthy emergency room visit and a black eye. My fiancé tried to reassure those who gave him an accusatory look, by saying, "Don't mess with Judy; she's a kick-boxing champion."

One of my most memorable interviews was with a 14-year-old with cerebral palsy, developmental delays, and who communicated with grunts and sounds as well as an electronic device programmed with pertinent names/words, etc. To our amazement and elation, she was able to provide enough information, which was later corroborated by the suspect, to make the case. Giving *all* children a voice makes it all worthwhile.

Please read our October newsletter to learn more about my time as a forensic interviewer at CornerHouse.

## Crisis Intervention

By: Nancy Van Thorre, Family Liaison

A crisis happens when a sudden, unexpected, and stressful life event overwhelms an individual's perceived ability to cope. [1]

Oftentimes, the clients being seen at CornerHouse will present in the midst of a crisis. One of the goals of the Family Liaison program is to facilitate crisis intervention. Crisis intervention is "the provision of emergency psychological care to victims as to assist those victims in returning to an adaptive level of functioning and to prevent the potential negative impact of psychological trauma." [2]

The Family Liaison is available to meet with caregivers while their child is being interviewed to provide support, identify strengths, discuss possible safety concerns, review the Caregiver Resource Packet, assist with identifying potential resources, and provide follow-up phone support after the forensic interview.

There are three possible outcomes of crisis intervention: 1) a return to the pre-crisis state, 2) the development of new skills and new resources to deal with crisis, or 3) the development of negative, self-destructive coping behaviors.[3] Since crises put people at high risk for negative/maladaptive strategies to cope, it is important for immediate intervention to occur.[4] Relying on maladaptive strategies can result in the third outcome of negative self-destructive coping behaviors. External interventions, or help from sources outside of themselves, will allow individuals in crisis to return to the pre-crisis state or develop new skills and resources.[5]

Crisis intervention is not therapy. Remember that crisis intervention is not the responsibility of only one agency, or one person. The more agencies and people involved in assisting individuals in crisis, the better their outcome in dealing with the crisis.[6] The Family Liaison program is designed to be one of those external supports, so caregivers can focus on being a support for their children.

[1] Flannery, Jr., R.B. & Everly, George. "Crisis Intervention: A Review". International Journal of Emergency Mental Health. 2000. 119-125.

[2] Flannery, Jr., R.B. & Everly, George. "Crisis Intervention: A Review". International Journal of Emergency Mental Health. 2000. 119-125.

[3] Orton, Jane. "Crisis Intervention and the Supportive Relationship". Family & Victim Advocacy 101, National Children's Advocacy Center. Huntsville, AL, 6/23/09.

[4] Flannery, Jr., R.B. & Everly, George. "Crisis Intervention: A Review". International Journal of Emergency Mental Health. 2000. 119-125.

[5] Orton, Jane. "Crisis Intervention and the Supportive Relationship". Family & Victim Advocacy 101, National Children's Advocacy Center. Huntsville, AL, 6/23/09.

[6] Darkness to Light. "Crisis Intervention". 6/24/2010.<  
[http://www.darkness2light.org/KnowAbout/articles\\_crisis\\_intervention.asp](http://www.darkness2light.org/KnowAbout/articles_crisis_intervention.asp)>

## "Let's Dance"

Joni Lorenz-Miller and Clint Miller, Event Co-chairs

When Clint and I were asked to co-chair the fall fundraiser, "Let's Dance," for CornerHouse, we were delighted to accept. Our commitment to CornerHouse began 20+ years ago when Clint volunteered along with a group of Commercial Real Estate professionals to build the yellow house on the corner, CornerHouse. Years later, Clint introduced me to the Director of CornerHouse and I knew I needed to get involved. I volunteer several days a week, spending my time with the children before and after their forensic interview.

Knowing first hand the impact child abuse had on my life, we will continue our

commitment to CornerHouse until their vision "That Children Grow Up Free From Abuse" is realized.

This is one event you will not want to miss. Mark your calendar - **November 13, 2010 @ 6:30pm** at the Saint Paul Hotel - for an evening designed to be star studded and full of surprises. Loosely based on the television show Dancing with the Stars, our stars will be "Dancing for Kids." Tickets may be purchased from committee members, Sharon McLaughlin at CornerHouse (612-813-8334), or on our website [www.cornerhousemn.org](http://www.cornerhousemn.org)

Every child deserves the right to have their voice heard and it takes a community to make it happen.

Make your voice heard, grab your dancing shoes and join us in November!

Editors Note: For a list of our celebrities and details on this event, please watch for more information here and on our website at [www.cornerhousemn.org](http://www.cornerhousemn.org)

## Eagles Club Fundraiser

Golf and help kids!

For the fifth year in a row, Eagles Club #3208 has chosen CornerHouse to be the recipient of funds raised at their annual golf tournament.



Sandy receiving donation at the 2009 Eagles Golf Event

Join us for the 2010 Eagles Club Fundraiser for CornerHouse on Saturday, July 24, 2010 at the Crystal Lake Golf Club in Lakeville, MN. The entry fee is \$110.

The entry fee includes:

- 18 Holes of Golf
- Golf Cart
- Lunch (Crystal Lake Golf Club in Lakeville)
- Dinner (Eagle's Club In Bloomington)
- Driving Range Balls
- Silent Auction
- Prizes & Fun
- Bonus: Each Golfer Will Receive A Free Round Of Golf To Be Used At A Later Date!!!

If you have questions or would like to register for the golf tournament, please contact Jim Crary at 612-316-3048, Jack Hanna at 952-890-7072, or call CornerHouse directly 612-813-8310 to contact Sandy Heitkamp. Checks can be mailed to Eagles Club #3208 9152 Old Cedar Ave. S. Bloomington, MN 55404

## March Over to Gasthof

Want to have fun German style? Join us on **Sunday, August 29** at Gasthof in NE Minneapolis for an evening of good food and music to benefit CornerHouse.



Bill Koncar playing the accordion

Entertainment will be provided by Bill Koncar , strolling accordionist and retired Police Officer. Bill has been very active with CornerHouse for many years and is sure to entertain you by having you sing along to all the accordion classics.

There will be two seatings for the event: 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM. Advance tickets are required, \$30 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. The meal includes a full German menu buffet and one beer/beverage. Gasthof is generously donating 50% of the ticket price to CornerHouse.

Tickets can be purchased at [www.cornerhousemn.org](http://www.cornerhousemn.org) or by contacting Sharon McLaughlin at [sharon.mclaughlin@childrensmn.org](mailto:sharon.mclaughlin@childrensmn.org) or 612-813-8334.

## Volunteer Spotlight

### Sue Nyberg, Family Services Volunteer



**Q: How long have you been volunteering for CornerHouse?**

15 years

**Q: What do you do in your volunteer role?**

I help make the families feel comfortable, preparing the kids for who they are going to talk with. I let the kids know that this is a safe place to talk and I'm very kid-focused. During the interview, I assure the parents that they are in the right place and give them some information about CornerHouse.

**Q: What prompted you to volunteer for CornerHouse?**

I heard about CornerHouse while I was the Director of Volunteer Services at Children's Hospital. It was during the time of the big Jordan, MN case and I just thought it was a fabulous concept. Working at Children's, I wasn't a doctor or nurse; I couldn't fix anything. I felt like [volunteering at CornerHouse] was a way to stop the cycle.

**Q: What does CornerHouse mean to you?**

I feel really proud to be a part of it. CornerHouse is an organization that makes a huge difference in the lives of the families affected. This is a groundbreaking, phenomenal place.

**Q: What keeps you coming in?**

Seeing the difference from when a family comes in to when they leave. It's night and day. When they come in, they are usually scared or angry and by the time they leave and they see that no harm has been done to their child, they seem relieved, on the right track, and they've been heard.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about your volunteer experience?**

Playing with the kids. I never know what age or gender, so I always enjoy it.

**Q: What have you learned from your volunteering experience?**

I've learned a lot about the cycle of child abuse. I'm amazed at the staff. I talked about what keeps me coming back and I think to myself, "What keeps the staff in staying?" I've learned about how dedicated the staff are here.

**Q: What hobbies or activities do you enjoy in your spare time?**

I love gardening, walking my dog and traveling when I can.

Kansas Mobile Children's Advocacy Center

By: Patricia Harmon, Executive Director



Mobile CAC visits  
CornerHouse

Throughout the country, there is a challenge in serving the needs of children and families who are located in remote, rural areas where it is not feasible to have a Children's Advocacy Center. Recently, the staff from the Western Kansas "Traveling" CAC stopped for a visit to Minnesota. CornerHouse staff and our Minnesota colleagues toured the mobile CAC and learned about how a mobile unit might work.

The mobile unit, a renovated RV, contains an interview area, playroom, and DVD equipment for recording the interviews - all very compactly arranged! The Western Kansas staff is able to cover 29 counties in Kansas, bringing services to children and families who would not be able to benefit from a forensic interview or supportive services if not for the mobile CAC.

As the Minnesota Chapter of the National Children's Alliance builds its programs, options such as the traveling version we visited might very well be considered as a model for the future.

## Training Dates

### 5 Day Training Dates

**August 23-27, 2010**  
**September 13-17, 2010**  
**November 1-5, 2010**  
**January 31-February 4, 2011**  
**March 28-April 1, 2011**  
**May 23-27, 2011**  
**June 20-24, 2011**  
**July 25-29, 2011**  
**August 22-26, 2011**  
**September 26-30, 2011**  
**October 24-28, 2011**

### Advanced Training Dates

**February 22-25, 2011**  
**April 26-29, 2011**  
**November 29-December 2, 2011**

- AVAILABILITY CHANGES QUICKLY -

To verify availability, please contact:  
Sandy Heitkamp, Program Assistant  
(612) 813-8310  
[sandra.heitkamp@childrensmn.org](mailto:sandra.heitkamp@childrensmn.org)

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