

Subject: CornerHouse Newsletter Fall 2012

From: Rut Newman<rut.newman@childrensmn.org> (Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org)

To: rut.newman@childrensmn.org

Date: Tuesday, October 9, 2012 3:15 PM



ABOUT US



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:

We've been fortunate to add more members to our Family Services volunteer team! Please help us welcome: **Abdi, April, Brianna, Carly, Christine, Claire, Elizabeth, Jamie, Kim, & Sophia!**
And welcome back: **Dani!**

Volunteer Needs

Leadership Message



Happy Autumn!

I've noticed that with the weather cooling a bit, many people are very cheerful. There is something about the cyclical nature of the seasons which bring about both excitement and energy for that which is coming in the new season, and almost a melancholy for that which has past.

We feel this in a particular way at CornerHouse. School re-opening means that with access and relationship to school liaison officers, children sometimes disclose abuse at school. It's fortunate that there are compassionate and trained officers at schools who can help get children who need to be interviewed to CornerHouse.

There's another cyclical event happening at CornerHouse: our board of directors and staff and community partners are now engaged in a strategic planning process. It's very important that we are taking the time to plan for a course in the future so that our best practices can be sustained and new opportunities to change the lives of children can be developed. The board and staff will be gathering on September 21 to examine our work and our future. The work will then be guided by a strategic planning task force including Sara Peterson, Damon Noga, Tim Dolan, Judy Baker and Peter Levine from the CornerHouse board. Staff will be identified to join this group as well. Together, we will *map* out a course for the next three years which will assure the high quality of services as well as the "next thing" we will work toward. I'll keep you posted!

It seems appropriate that in the context of a new season, we will be doing this work. The mystery and excitement about how we can build on the incredible strength which is CornerHouse, directed by passionate people will assure an outstanding future.

Sincerely,

Patricia Harmon
Executive Director

SAVE THE DATE!



**Thank You to everyone that made our
Take me out to the ballgame
event a great success this year!**

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We need volunteers for the following positions:

- Family Service
- Administration

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

Rut.Newman@childrensmn.org

Volunteer Spotlight



Mary Swendsen has been volunteering at CornerHouse as a Family volunteer since August 2011. She heard about us at the Twins Event, and it seemed like the perfect match for her. Being an empty nester she wanted to invest her time in something other than herself, and wanted

- To volunteer in a program that supports children
- To have direct involvement with the kids, versus something like fundraising
- To work with a program that is driven by what is best for the children, instead of what is easiest for the adults

Her comments to us: *"The people at CornerHouse are wonderful. They are very warm and welcoming, and very patient about answering questions that have helped me better understand child abuse, the perpetrators, and the family dynamics. It is an amazing feeling to have a 16 year old girl share how much lighter she feels after the CornerHouse interview process. You realize what a huge burden it is that children carry around with them."*

Right now she is in job transition looking for a position in sales, marketing or customer support. Mary really enjoys Rotary, traveling, and boating/fishing. She also volunteers with Rotary's Camp Enterprise for high school students.

We are so grateful for all her dedication to CornerHouse, thank you Mary!!!

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

Examples:



"I ain't talking to no dude"

Said the young girl as I greeted her in CornerHouse's waiting area as she covered her head and face with her hoodie, ran to her mother and buried her face in her mother's shoulder. To honor the wishes of that child, she was interviewed by one of our female forensic interviewers. As I approach the 100 interview mark as CornerHouse's only male forensic interviewer that has been the only time that a child has refused to talk to me because of my gender.

On other occasions, caregivers have expressed concern about their children talking to a male. In all of those cases, after meeting with the caregivers they decided that I should interview their child and all went well. A few times our referents have expressed the same concern, but at CornerHouse the child's feelings come first. If a child says that they do not want to be interviewed by a particular interviewer, we try to honor that child's wishes.

Studies show that the skill of the interviewer seems to matter more than gender. As adults, we have our own pre-conceived notions and biases which are not always the same as the child's. As a police detective, I investigated a case of teenage boy who reported being sexually abused by an adult female. CornerHouse had recently hired a male interviewer so I requested that he interview the child. The female interviewer learned that the child had no male figures in his life and was more comfortable talking to women. My pre-conceived notion was wrong. I learned a valuable lesson about listening to each child and paying attention to their needs.

Bill Koncar
Forensic Interviewer

And another Thank You to everyone that supported the Eagles Club #3208 - Annual Charity - Golf Tournament



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

Or donate Gift cards:

- Cub Foods
- Target
- Sam's Club
- Ikea
- Amazon

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



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

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)

December 4-7, 2012

For registration, please contact Sandy Heitkamp at (612) 813-8310 or 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 if you have any feedback)

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