

## **Board of Director's Report**

### **Introduction**

As the CornerHouse Board Chair, I am pleased to be able to provide a summary of the many significant accomplishments that have been achieved by CornerHouse in 2001 on behalf of children who have been traumatized by abuse or violence.

### **Interview and Medical Services**

During 2001, CornerHouse provided interview services to 454 children and medical services to 76 children. This service was outstanding as evidenced by the fact that in the last 12 years, 15 CornerHouse cases have been appealed to the appellate or supreme court level, and all have been upheld by the higher court. Also, in January and February of 2002, eleven child abuse cases went to trial in Hennepin County. In each case, the perpetrators were convicted.

Closer collaboration with the interagency team members was demonstrated in several ways this year. One was the initiation of monthly case review meetings, which were developed to improve the quality of services by reviewing identified cases as a multidisciplinary team. One suggestion that came out of these meetings was the development, printing and distribution of a Caregiver's Guide that would be given to parents of potential child victims of abuse in group settings (i.e. – day cares, school buses, etc.). Another example of strong interagency collaboration was the implementation of the use of video conferencing with the Hennepin County Attorney's Office - Adult Division in 2001 and the Juvenile Division in April 2002. This equipment allows the assigned prosecuting attorney to participate in the team and interview process by means of the video conferencing equipment.

CornerHouse staff members work to continuously improve the services that they provide to children and families. This past year they have worked to make the services more culturally sensitive by providing interpreters during the interviews and by translating the written parent forms and brochures into Somali, Spanish and Hmong. Overall service quality outcomes are also being measured by using a newly developed Caregiver Satisfaction Survey and an Interagency Team Member Survey.

### **Training Services**

In 2001, CornerHouse trained over 1,000 professionals nationally. In addition, the collaboration with the American Prosecutors Research institute was extended with the implementation of the first "Train the Trainer" course being offered for the first time in South Carolina. Newly developed training tapes also improved the quality of the training services.

## **Personnel**

The consistent high quality of the services provided by CornerHouse is a reflection of the outstanding staff members. Several significant changes or milestones were reached as follows:

- Barb Hiltz was promoted to Forensic Services Coordinator in September 2001.
- Amy Russell was oriented and trained as the new Program Director in 2001.
- Jennifer Anderson was recruited and hired as the new Training Coordinator/ Interview Specialist in April 2002.
- Judy Weigman celebrated her 12<sup>th</sup> year with CornerHouse on 4/30/02.
- Lori Holmes and Anne Nuernberg celebrated their 8<sup>th</sup> year of work at CornerHouse in 2001.
- Sharlene Shelton celebrated her fifth year as Executive Director of CornerHouse on 5/1/02.

## **Equipment**

New technology has been implemented at CornerHouse to both improve the quality of services to clients and to increase the efficiency of staff members. Some of the new equipment that was purchased this past year includes:

- A video colposcope or microscopic video camera for medical examinations.
- Full sets of anatomical dolls for the three interview rooms.
- A centralized computer calendar for scheduling interview and training services that can be accessed by all staff at any time from their office computer.
- A character generator that is used with the video equipment to print both the copyright and confidentiality statements as well as the child's name and other demographic information on the videotapes.
- A "switcher" that allows staff to copy videotapes from VHS to Hi-8 formats or the reverse with the touch of a button rather than needing to rewire the machines each time a copy of a videotape is needed.
- An LCD projector with a remote control feature that is used to provide training services.

## **Fund Development**

Maintaining and developing new funding sources is an ongoing need for all nonprofit organizations, especially after the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. CornerHouse has diligently worked toward this goal. In 2001, three special fundraising events were held, including the CornerHouse Twins, "Search for the Stars" Talent Competition and the Southdale Center's "Magical Evening of Giving" Fundraising Events. Josh Hartnett, film actor, supported the talent competition fundraising event. The Twins Cities Real Estate Professionals planned and implemented a very successful Twins Fundraiser for the 10<sup>th</sup> year.

A two-year grant totaling \$20,000 was received from the Otto Bremer Foundation. This funding will be used to provide staff and interagency team member training to enable the team members to address the needs of culturally diverse populations more effectively. It was also used to translate the parent materials.

CornerHouse submitted an application and was only one out of every ten programs that received a recommendation for renewed grant funding from the Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning. This annual grant of \$50,000 will begin on July 1, 2002. In addition to this grant funding, all funding contracts with interagency partners were renewed for 2002.

For the first time beginning in November 2001, an \$80,0000 annual contract grant from the American Prosecutor's Research Institute for four years was received to support the Train the Trainer Program.

## **Summary**

In summary, I would like to thank many individuals and corporation who support CornerHouse. You are making a difference in the lives of children who are abused and their families.

Jay Cook  
CornerHouse Board Chair

## **CORNERHOUSE PROGRAM REPORT**

### **Forensic Interview and Medical Services**

In year 2001, 454 forensic interviews were completed and videotaped. Of this total, 380 were priority, and 74 were emergency interviews. During the year, the multidisciplinary team reviewed 21 cases, but not interviewed because the team determined that an interview would not be appropriate or the child was not available. The multidisciplinary team includes the CornerHouse Interview Specialist, an assistant county attorney and law enforcement and child protection professionals.

Seventy-six medical examinations were completed in year 2001. Seven cases were reviewed with the multidisciplinary team, but no medical exam was conducted, because it was determined that a medical examination would not be appropriate or the child was not available.

Monthly case review team meetings were implemented in July 2001. The multidisciplinary case review is a formal process through which professionals share facts and observations that facilitate team discussion and assist participating professionals to make decisions about cases. Case review is the process CornerHouse uses to: (1) monitor cases; (2) bring the knowledge, experience and expertise of team

members together to maximize everyone's effectiveness in fulfilling his or her role in the case; (3) maintain collaboration among the agencies involved in the intervention system and (4) provide support for the professionals working with these difficult cases.

The CornerHouse physicians began utilizing a videocolposcope during medical examinations in July 2001. The medical examination room was also equipped with a new examination table and supply cart. The physicians report that this equipment has served to increase the quality of the medical examinations provided at CornerHouse.

In the September 2001, the video teleconferencing equipment, which connects CornerHouse to the juvenile and adult divisions of the county attorney's office, began to be used for one afternoon appointment with adult perpetrator cases. This equipment allows the attorney who will actually prosecute the case to be involved from the beginning of the investigation process.

### **Training Services**

In the year 2001, CornerHouse trained a total of 678 professionals across the country through its core training programs. These included the CornerHouse Child Sexual Abuse Forensic, On-Site and Advanced training programs, as well as Mandated Reporter and Orientation training sessions.

The Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Training is held at CornerHouse in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Eighty-two professionals were trained in 2001. Fifty-five percent of the training participants were law enforcement professionals, thirty-three percent were child protection professionals, five percent were county attorneys and ten percent were from other professions. Eighty-six percent of the professionals trained were from Minnesota. The additional professionals traveled from or represented the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana and Mississippi.

Advanced Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training was also held at CornerHouse, and trained 20 professionals to further their skills in forensic interviewing. Fourteen of the participants, or seventy percent, were from the state of Minnesota. Georgia and Oklahoma were two other states that were represented.

The CornerHouse On-Site Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Interview Training was specifically designed for training professionals from other states that could not easily travel to CornerHouse. CornerHouse trained a total of 305 professionals through ten On-Site training sessions. Only one of these training sessions was held in Minnesota. In addition, CornerHouse On-Site Training was provided in the following states: Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri (two sessions), New Jersey (two sessions) and Texas.

Mandated Reporter Training was primarily designed for those professionals who are required by law to report child abuse. Two hundred and nineteen professionals attended this one-day training. Eight Mandated Reporter training sessions were held

throughout the state. The following Minnesota counties hosted this training: Anoka, Blue Earth, Carver (two sessions), Crow Wing, Hennepin, LeSeur and Washington.

Fifty-two professionals from Hennepin County, Minnesota attended the quarterly Orientation training at CornerHouse. This total represents professionals from fourteen suburban jurisdictions, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, Hennepin County Child, Family and Adult Services, as well as CornerHouse staff and board members. This three-hour training session offers an overview of the CornerHouse mission and its services, and includes a tour, a historical review and a mock interview and team meeting.

Hundreds of other professionals (approximately 400) have also been trained *in addition* to the above mentioned statistics. This year, CornerHouse embarked on a joint venture with the American Prosecutor's Research Institute (APRI) to begin the *Half a Nation by 2010* Project. This program trains professionals at a center in selected states to provide training services to "train the trainers." The first state selected to participate was South Carolina, where CornerHouse trained forty-six professionals on how to train professionals in their own state. CornerHouse continued to collaborate with APRI to present "Finding Words" to 80 professionals. These training sessions were held in Pennsylvania and Florida. In addition, CornerHouse presented at an Equal Justice conference sponsored by APRI. CornerHouse also hosted several informational tours for thirty-two pediatric medical residents, and eleven international professionals from Russia through the Connect US – Russia Program.

In summary, CornerHouse training staff trained over 1,000 professionals throughout the state of Minnesota and across the country in the year 2001.

### **Management Changes**

In September 2001, Barb Hiltz was promoted from an Interview Specialist and Trainer to the Forensic Services Coordinator position.

Due to financial restrictions, the CornerHouse Board of Directors eliminated the Business Manager and Development Director positions effective as of December 31, 2001.

### **Strategic Planning**

The CornerHouse Board of Directors and staff participated in a strategic planning process during the fourth quarter of 2001. The final report is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2002.

Amy Russell

CornerHouse Program Director

Sharlene Shelton  
CornerHouse Executive Director