

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION,
AND WELFARE TO ESTABLISH A GRANT PROGRAM TO DE-
VELOP METHODS OF PREVENTION AND TREATMENT RELAT-
ING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HEARINGS HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.,
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use of the Committee on Education and Labor
CARL D. PERKINS, *Chairman*



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WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH:

A MODEL FOR A SHELTERING COMMUNITY

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTIONWOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH: THE BEGINNING

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH (formerly known as Women's Center South) was founded by a small group of suburban women in 1974 as a non-profit organization to provide a supportive community in which women could find the opportunity for developing their potential as individuals and as women, where they could find shelter from stress and violence, and which could be used to educate the metropolitan community about the needs of women and the problems of domestic violence. As a grassroots organization, WOMEN'S CENTER was initially supported entirely by the money pledges and donations of time, energy, materials, know-how, and dedication of its members. It was an egalitarian community of women who recognized that growth is an on-going process which requires nurturing and a supportive environment.

As a "growth center", WOMEN'S CENTER provided a free space in which women could meet, rest, share, learn, plan and be themselves. Women have traditionally had few places where they could go to cool off, sort their feelings and ideas, be with friends, or to be alone (outside their homes) with no questions asked. WOMEN'S CENTER created a place where women are encouraged to have their needs set, where they didn't have to place the needs of family members ahead of their own needs. It is a stimulating environment in which a woman can learn practical skills like auto mechanics and medical self-help skills, and to explore new ways of responding to aggression, conflict, and decision-making. It is also a place for celebrating all of the triumphs and good things in life.

Recognizing that women sometimes need more than a few hours of respite from the demands on their time and energy, WOMEN'S CENTER also provided temporary overnight shelter to women in crisis. Because the center was first situated in the basement of a storefront social action organization (which accepted volunteer labor in lieu of rent), sheltering was provided in the members' homes. After eight months, WOMEN'S CENTER was given a \$3,000. grant from the Pittsburgh Presbytery's Committee for the Self-Development of People which allowed the center to move into a house which would be suitable for combining the center and shelter components.

One need for sheltering which the founders of WOMEN'S CENTER had not identified or anticipated was to have a safe place where women who were being brutalized in their own homes--by the persons who were supposed to love them--could find sanctuary. In that nice suburban community where WOMEN'S CENTER was founded, women were being beaten, threatened with deadly weapons, sexually abused, and deliberately deprived of the necessities of life. As women in the Pittsburgh area discovered that WOMEN'S CENTER was a safe place where they would be taken in, where they would not be shamed or blamed for being battered, and where their children could thrive instead of withering or growing out of control, they came--and have never stopped coming.

Thus in responding to the needs of each other, the vision acted upon by a small group of women evolved into the sixth women's shelter in the United States which was developed at the grassroots level--by women for women. It is professionally staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, handles a crisis hotline, and accepts women and their children into shelter at any time of the day or night. In its

first year of sheltering (with a sleeping capacity of 9 women and children), WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH provided 1,109 nights of shelter to 138 women and 62 children. On requests for shelter, the center applied for and received funding from the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Public Health Trust.

The Sheltering Community: An Overview

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER functions as an egalitarian community in which each woman makes her own contributions to the on-going life of the center, and derives strength and revitalization from the sharing process. While women may have different roles within the organizational structure, the concept of "peer" applies to staff members, program participants, board members, women in shelter, and all others who come to WOMEN'S CENTER. The inter-relatedness of the shelter and center activities reveal a philosophy of using personal growth and self-potential as a means of taking control of one's life and making responsible, informed decisions. The women who seek sheltering at WOMEN'S CENTER are not segregated in any way from the women who come for classes, or to staff the telephone hotline, or for having a cup of coffee with friends. It is not a therapy or treatment center--it believes that abused women are not inherently defective, mentally ill, or willing victims, and it adheres to the principles of peer counseling and resource sharing as the most effective means of helping a woman and her children deal with the battering experience. From the moment a woman arrives at the shelter, she is assured that she will be making her own decisions.

The healing process begins as the battered woman has the opportunity to talk with other women (many of whom have also gone through the experience of being abused) who will listen without giving advice, who will reflect back on the woman's inner strengths, who will provide information on community resources and possible courses of action, and who will draw the woman (and her children) into the center's activities as a full participant. Support groups, skill classes, advocacy assistance, celebrations, and even the sharing of the work at WOMEN'S CENTER gives a woman renewed confidence, self-esteem, and new ways of problem-solving which will move her back into the mainstream of ordinary life. It is quite common, in fact, to find a woman who has been in shelter for several days reach out to give reassurance to a woman who has just arrived.

Typically, a woman will stay at WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER for 6 to 10 days, during which time she recuperates from the battering, begins to confront the meaning of the battering experience, and takes a careful look at the problems she will face in either returning home or establishing a new household. The WOMEN'S CENTER staff help a woman to create a plan of action, and spend time with her each day reviewing its implementation and how the center's resources may be used to facilitate it. In the support groups and in legal services, the public housing authority and realtors, etc., so that other women can be spared the inconvenience and/or rejection which so often occur in dealing with institutions and agencies. As a woman prepares

to leave the shelter, she is reassured that she may return to the shelter if her plans don't work out well, and that she will be welcome as a participant in all of the CENTER'S activities. It is made very clear, however, that leaving the shelter is in itself an affirmation of her wholeness and autonomy, and that her future well-being is not dependent upon a continuing relationship with WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH.

Since its beginning in 1974, WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH has expanded in size and changed its location, thereby changing some of its needs and some of the organizational framework. Originally, WOMEN'S CENTER had only two employees--a Director whose small stipend provided her with a modicum of independence, and an Overnight Shelter Workers who worked in exchange for her living quarters. In 1976, when the Center moved from suburbia into the inner city, many of the women who had given hundreds of hours of volunteer services to WOMEN'S CENTER were unable to make the transition to the new location. Losing volunteers at a time when WOMEN'S CENTER was expanding created the need to find the money for more salaries. At present, there are seven full-time paid staff members and a core group of more than fifty members actively contributing time and money to WOMEN'S CENTER.

Thus, as the operating budget escalated from \$11,904. in 1975 to 1978-79's projected \$127,342., much more energy has been required to search out funding sources. In addition to the grants mentioned earlier, WOMEN'S CENTER and SHELTER has received support from the Program to Aid Citizen Enterprise (an arm of the local UNITED FUND),

several private foundations; and has been given authorization to seek corporate funding under Pennsylvania's tax-credit Neighborhood Assistance Act. Membership pledges and the donations received from women who have been sheltered continue, however, to provide the money necessary for a flexible program budget which is often necessary for the celebrations and serendipitous events which make WOMEN'S CENTER a warm and exciting place to be.

SECTION TWO: PRINCIPLES AND PRECEPTS FOR A SHELTERING COMMUNITY

In the three years of 1975-1977, WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH has provided shelter to 528 women and 311 children--more than half of whom were victims of a battering situation. While WOMEN'S CENTER hasn't made a scientific study of the battering syndrome or of therapeutic modalities, it has listened, cared, and responded to the challenge of creating a community which facilitates healing. Thus, over the years, WOMEN'S CENTER has arrived at certain beliefs about what is a helping role for a women's center that is responsive to the needs of battered women. WOMEN'S CENTER wishes to share their operative beliefs in order to allow other women's shelters to benefit from its accrued experience.

When WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER began, it had no special terms to define "battering", and it had no special vocabulary denoting organizational status or role--and it continues to use a minimum of special words. Let it suffice to say that WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER uses the words "peer" and "participant" interchangeably to refer to all of the women--staff, volunteers, women in shelter, skill-sharers, etc.--who

become involved in some facet of the organization's life. In speaking of "battering", all forms of physical, emotional, sexual, and mental abuses are included; we do not attempt to evaluate the severity of a woman's experience and then say that she is or isn't battered.

Operative Beliefs About Battered Women

- (1) A battered woman is neither more deficient or irrational or helpless than any other woman might be, nor more insensitive to pain and humiliation.
- (2) A woman does not CAUSE battering, although she may trigger it. The batterer is acting upon his own volition, making the choice to violently express his rage, and he has within himself the power to not batter the woman.

"When asked to tell why a particular battering situation had happened in their own lives, the majority of women felt it was because they had failed to do something their husbands wanted them to do. Fifty per cent of the battered women saw this as the cause. Their specific failure included not fixing something her husband wanted for dinner, making him look foolish in front of his friends, teasing him and saying something he didn't like. The second most frequent causal explanation was that their husband was drinking (10%). Also, 23% said they had no idea why their husband had been violent toward them. Thus, the women generally blame themselves for their husbands' violence toward them."

"Along with seeking outside help for problems, battered women sought to avoid further battering by attempting to do what their husbands wanted them to do. This reaction was mentioned by 40% of the battered women. Another 43% of these women felt there was nothing they could do to avoid further future violence. This response was specifically common for those who attributed their husband's violence to his drinking, and those who felt that they had no causal explanation for the violence." (Frieze, 1978)

(3) A woman does not remain in battering situations because she enjoys being abused or because she is inherently a helpless victim. A woman has many reasons for staying in an abusing relationship, including:

- she has no place to go; friends and relatives don't want to be involved
- she has no money and no transportation to get away
- she is reluctant to leave the children with a violent man
- she is reluctant to deprive the children of living with their father
- she has been told by the police, magistrate, or her attorney that she should "kiss and make up" rather than press criminal charges
- she really loves the batterer - except when he is violent
- she is financially and emotionally dependent on the man, and is afraid that she could not take care of herself and her children without him

-- she is sure that if she loves him enough and patiently forgives him, he won't want to abuse her again.

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER subscribes to the conceptualizations of Gelles (1976) and Pagelow (1977) in explaining the factors at work in a woman's decision to stay or leave. According to Gelles' study of forty-one (41) families,

"Three major factors influence the actions of abused wives. The less severe and the less frequent the violence, the more a wife remains with her husband. Secondly, the more a wife was struck as a child by her parents, the more likely she is to remain with her abusive husband. Lastly, the fewer resources a wife has and the less power she has, the more likely she is to stay with her violent husband. In addition, external constraint influences the actions of abused wives." (1976: p.659)

- (4) Traditional values and sexist role models encourage men to "tam" their women, while concurrently discouraging women from protesting their lot in life.

Pagelow, in her study of battered women sheltered at Women's Transitional Living Center (California), found that Gelles' theoretical construct failed to specify and give proper weight to "external constraint".

"Traditional ideology involves a complex set of rules of behavior appropriate for females that directs a woman to be subservient to her spouse yet gives her major responsibility for making the home a happy place were a man is "king of his castle". Traditional ideology may become weaker or stronger over time, and therefore some women are able to overcome early conditioning and reject being dominated, but it is a re-learning process that usually takes time. In the meantime, the image of the pampered, protected, childlike creature is being increasingly promoted today, while at the same time, the independent woman is lampooned as a neurotic, bitterly unhappy, castrating bitch." (1977)

- (5) A battered woman commonly finds opposition from traditional institutions when she decides to leave the batterer permanently; therefore she will need a strong support system to cope. A woman must expect to encounter criticism from her friends, relatives, clergy, attorney, physician, marriage counselor ---and especially, the police and judiciaries.

"Women are told to "run and hide" rather than use legal mechanisms for justice. If an arrest is made, the prosecutor wants to make sure that the victim will follow through the long, arduous (and to the uninitiated, confusing), and ultimately humiliating court process, so he "puts the screws" to the victim to see if she will back down. Or the slim possibility that the case eventually does get to court, judges are extremely reluctant to give maximum penalties ... and the usual result is a scolding, a fine, or a suspended sentence."

(Pagelow, 1977)

- (6) Once a battered woman has sufficient information on community resources and her rights as a whole human being, she becomes autonomous and free to take control over her own life.
- (7) A battered woman has the right to try to make the relationship with the batterer work by returning home. A shelter ^{NOT} must try to coerce the woman into giving up what has in the past been precious to her.
- (8) A battered woman has the right to decide that she has made a mistake in returning to the battering relationship -- and may return to the shelter again. The shelter must not make judgments or inflict punishments for decisions and actions which it believes are not in the woman's best interests. Neither should the shelter conclude that a woman's failure to make the relationship "work" reflect a weakness in her problem-solving abilities or her character. Daring to try must always remain a tenet of growth and self-potential.

Criteria for Being Accepted Into Shelter

A woman in crisis should not be required to pass a series of tests or talk with a succession of interviewers in order to be accepted into a women's shelter. WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH has made every effort to provide shelter for all types of emergencies and all types of women. This can be very difficult position to maintain insofar as there are more women needing shelter than there are beds at WOMEN'S CENTER; nonetheless the precepts of a feminist, egalitarian community would be considerably compromised if it automatically excluded non-battered women or women with children or handicapped women. The needs of all women must be kept in the forefront of a shelter's purview. Moreover, the shelter must somehow maintain its integrity recognizing that in times of crisis--when the techniques of triage might be a tempting tool for dealing with the scarcity of beds--women in acute crisis might have to be turned away at the same time that there are women in shelter whose needs seem less immediate.

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH's criteria for sheltering are:

- (1) The woman must be an adult or an emancipated minor. There should be no other considerations of her age.
- (2) The woman may be of any race, religion, socio-economic background, or sexual preference.
- (3) The woman must do her own negotiating with WOMEN'S CENTER. An agency may make a referral telephone contact, but the woman's status as an autonomous adult makes it inappropriate for someone else to make these arrangements.

- (4) The woman cannot be chronically helpless; she must be able to take care of her practical needs (hygiene, cooking, communicating, traveling, making and keeping appointments, etc.) and to attend to the needs of her children if they are in shelter, too.
- (5) The woman must understand that the shelter is a temporary refuge and that she will be expected to develop and carry out a plan of action for her future.
- (6) The woman must agree to adhere to the rules of: no violence (physical or verbal); no alcohol or drugs; no men visitors in any other area than the living room; sharing the housekeeping responsibilities with the other women.
- (7) No woman will be turned away or discriminated against if she is unable to contribute to the expenses of the shelter. Women are requested to make a token donation (\$2.00 a night for herself; \$.50 for each child a night) if it is financially possible, but WOMEN'S CENTER also points out that the woman will be making a contribution of her time and energy as she shares in community life. Therefore, no woman need feel that she is accepting charity or an unequal participant in the on-going life of WOMEN'S CENTER.

Precepts of Community

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH is not an agency or a facility. It is a community. As a community, it represents the commonly held beliefs about women and women's needs, and it operates with the shared energy and gifts of the women who have chosen to identify with its vision. Shared activities and shared

work reflect the interactive relationships and solidarity of elements which characterize a community.

WOMEN'S CENTER is, in fact, a community of pioneers -- a group that "originates or helps to open up a new line of thought or activity ... (who) have challenged the very root basis of the patriarchal system." (Rux, 1978) In developing an alternative therapeutic model for women who are breaking away from traditional models, Rux contends:

"The major survival skill which pioneers need is community. The therapist should encourage and facilitate the creation of a community of pioneers. Eradicating isolation, and moving from one-to-one therapy to group will serve the growth of the pioneer spirit more than any other factor. Women have never had a community apart from the patriarchal community. Blacks and other ethnic groups have historically been able to develop identities unrelated to their oppressors, and have developed a humor about the oppressor through the existence of a separate community. Women have never been able to develop that solidarity ...

"The precise techniques and tools which are used to achieve the impartation of skills for survival within a community are not important. The important issue is that we underscore the creative abilities and survival capabilities each woman has." (Rux, 1978)

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER was founded on the shared beliefs that:

- (1) It is an on-going community which exists independent of any one woman's needs or contributions or presence. At a time when a woman is confronted with the possibility that her relationship with her mate -- and his family and friends -- may be disintegrating, it is very reassuring for her to be welcomed into a community which is ours. WOMEN'S CENTER is more than a way-station, and it

will be in existence as long as there are women who share in its life. The battered women will only be in shelter for a few days or weeks, but she will belong to the community and be a part of the on-going life of the community as long as she chooses.

- (2) It is an egalitarian community: while there are differences in roles within the organizational structure, each participant's status as an autonomous, valued person makes her individual needs and efforts of equal relevance to the well-being of the community itself.

- No distinctions are made between women in shelter and other participants (including staff) in the WOMEN'S CENTER community.
- No distinctions are made between battered women and non-battered women in terms of need, expectations, or human worth.
- Each woman is considered to be able to make her own decisions in accordance with her own values and priorities.
- Resource sharing is two-way.
- Women who are or who have been in shelter have always been part of the community process; working in the labor pool, developing resources, dealing with funding, making policies, participating in support groups, role modeling, celebrating.

- (3) It is a peer community, not a treatment center.

- Every woman needs shelter and nurturing at many points in life.
- A woman needing shelter (whether from battering or not) is not inherently mentally ill, defective, or irresponsible; thus she may not-need any "treatment for the presenting problem".

- A woman in shelter has the right to choose or to refuse counseling or participation in support groups -- provided she is taking care of the business of solving her problems.
- The experience of having been sheltered and nurtured is intensely personal and sustaining; sharing that experience with a woman in crisis offers testimony affirming the transitory nature of pain and helplessness, and promising that she will feel whole again too.
- Peer-sharing reducing isolation and a sense of being "different".
- A woman's community is an affirmative action role model in which each woman (regardless of current role or status) may discover the presence of qualities, strengths, and potential which she may not have thought she as a woman could possess.
- A woman's community and a sharing of resources among peers negates many of the authoritarian messages of a male-dominated society which fosters passivity and dependency on the protection and expertise of men and their educational, legal, medical, and welfare institutions.

"The beginning of a breakthrough means a realization that there is an existential conflict between the self and the structures that have given such crippling security. This requires confronting the shock of nonbeing (in the old world) with the courage to be. It means facing the nameless anxieties of fate, which become concretized in loss of jobs, friends, social approval, health, and even life itself. Also involved is anxiety of guilt over refusing to do what society demands, a guilt which can hold one in its grip long after it has been recognized as false. Finally, there is the anxiety of meaninglessness, which can be overwhelming at times when the old simple meanings, role definitions, and life expectations have been rooted out and rejected openly and one merges into a world without models."

(Daly, 1973)

- A peer-oriented support system allows a woman to contribute to the healing of other women, both while she is in shelter and if she chooses to return in a supportive role; this knowledge reaffirms the intrinsic richness of her own resources and life experience.

- The healing of the emotional wounds of being battered is not dependent upon the structure or sequence of a "treatment plan"; restoration can take place in the kitchen, living room, office, hall, or any other location while sharing in work, celebrations, support groups, the care of children, or simply in sharing space with someone who respects her right to be there as she is.
 - A woman in shelter does not require someone to decide when she is ready to leave or to judge the efficacy of her choice; peer support systems counter-act the "we-they" construct in which we make no mistakes, while they must be saved from their mistakes.
 - A peer support system is replicable in outreach education and in any setting; once experiencing the potency of "lay people" and "women just like me", a woman can create her own neighborhood support group.
 - A peer-oriented support system does not make non-battered women afraid of battered women, or make it difficult for a battered woman to seek information about her rights without identifying herself as a battered woman; a woman is allowed the space and privacy to decide for herself if she has a problem and if she can find a solution to the problem.
- (4) It is a feminist community in which a woman may deal with her relationships to family members within the context of her own internal integrity; she will not be shunned for questioning her investment in being a wife, mother, or daughter.
- She has the option of bringing her children into shelter with her or to seek shelter from her children, too.
 - She has the choice of revealing her whereabouts or of staying incommunicado; telephone calls and inquiries about her will be screened in accordance with her wishes.
 - She is free to have visits at the shelter from her spouse as long as they abide by the policy of having no men outside the living room area; she is also free to refuse visits.

- She will not be advised to return to her battering mate or leave him; she will, however, be encouraged to examine the relationship and the practical consequences of her choice.
- While she is in shelter with her children, she will be given support in dealing with the affects of the family crisis on her children; she will also be given relief from caring for them at times when she is too overwhelmed or working on taking care of their needs after they leave the shelter. As much as possible, however, her children's needs will not be allowed to pre-empt her own.

THE RESOURCES WHICH WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH MAKES AVAILABLE

Physical shelter for herself and for her children.

An atmosphere of calm so that decisions are not made when she is upset, on an impulse, or under external pressures.

The process of creative listening rather than advice-giving is the fundamental tool in restoring a woman's access to her own inner resources.

In the Creative Listening process, the listener suspends all judgment about the speaker, lets her message sink in, and reflects back verbatim what she believes she has heard and understood. The Speaker has the experience of hearing herself think and feel without criticism or advice. She feels encouraged to explore further the dimensions of her situation. In being listened to in an accepting way, she also feels valued and cared for. Her self awareness grows, and along with that, her self-esteem. The listener continues to reflect and paraphrase what the speaker is saying. As trust builds, the listener feels she can risk expressing hunches she may have. She reads between the lines, as it were, noting body-language,

facial expressions, where they fit with the words spoken, where they are somehow dissonant. Increasingly, a woman in crisis begins to believe she has been listened to with respect and that she can therefore be in charge of her own life, make decisions, stand on her own feet. This is the remarkable result of empathy.

Advocacy and intervention with agencies who will not deal with individuals.

Information about community services and resources:

- Welfare assistance can make it possible for a woman to afford freedom from abuse; many battered women have little or no knowledge of welfare eligibility or benefits -- especially special grants.
- Legal assistance in getting protection from abuse under Act 218; divorce and separation issues such as custody, support, property, etc.
- Medical assistance, immediate and for future references
- Housing authority requirements, special housing programs, home-hunting
- Job training and educational opportunities
- Child care.

The experience and wisdom of many other women who have already found a way to assert their right not to be beaten, to lead a life free of constant terror, and to see their children thrive instead of wither or grow out of control.

Support Groups and Self-Development Classes:

- Peer support groups are held three evenings a week in which a woman may choose to participate; during these sessions, women may discuss with each other their plans, their concerns, their hopes, and may grieve for the loss of the old life.
- Classes in assertiveness training, parent effectiveness training, medical self-care, money matters, etc., give a woman more self-confidence as she acquires skills which will enhance her ability to handle her own affairs and make informed decisions.
- Isolation and shame are means by which a woman is entrapped in a battering situation; a battered woman who participates in peer activities with other battered and non-battered women will discover that the battering experience is not permanently incapacitating, a sign of incompetency (on her part), or written on her face in neon lights.
- Often, a woman must learn how to choose friends and relate to women in a trusting, cherishing way -- sharing activities allows the women to meet and interact in a non-competitive, caring setting.

INSTITUTIONAL PREREQUISITES AND POLICIES

Insofar as a shelter for women is a "non-profit organization which was incorporated for the purpose of ..." it is not only a community, but also an institution and a building. WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH has moved three times in order to expand its services and sheltering capacity, and has discovered that each location has revealed new aspects of the institutional impact on the community. The neighborhood, the size of the building, the structuring of activities, and the image it acquires through community relations and activities have significant parts to play in the effectiveness of the shelter's operations.

- (1) Battered women need a place to go -- a shelter and every shelter should have a crisis hotline operating 24 hours a day.
- (2) The shelter must be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and always be staffed by someone who has the authority to accept a woman (and her children) into shelter at any time of the day or night. A crisis situation must be responded to immediately; to ask a woman to wait until regular business hours for the supervisor's approval is unconscionable.
- (3) The shelter must be geographically accessible to the majority of women in the community it serves. Women must be able to get to the shelter conveniently, and be able to buy groceries, go to the welfare department, attend to medical needs, etc., without the expenditure of unduly large expenditures of time, energy, and money.
- (4) The shelter must have enough visibility in the community so that women know that there is a place to go and how to get there; however, the shelter should also be discreet enough in its visibility to allow the women in shelter protection from unwanted visitors.
- (5) The shelter must not discriminate between battered or non-battered women, young or old women, or women with or without children.

(6) The shelter must have enough space and enough beds to shelter the battered women's children:

- When a woman is fleeing a battering situation, she should not be required to leave her children with the batterer or split the family up by farming the children out to other care-takers.
- Children are affected by the battering home situation and need the support of their peers (other children) and from adults who are sensitive to the feelings of children who have witnessed or been victims of family violence, and the feelings about seeing their family fall apart.
- The shelter can provide children with alternatives to violence and examples of non-sexist behavior and attitudes -- both of which will help end the cycle of battered families producing new generations of batterers.
- Because so many of the reasons why a woman might remain in a battering situation relate to her responsibilities as a mother, having the children with her will provide the opportunity to involve the children in the consideration of future plans.

(7) The shelter should be recognized as a legitimate place of residence by all community resources and referral agencies so that women may continue receiving welfare benefits, or eligibility for public housing, etc.

(8) The shelter should work in cooperation with community agencies and resources but must maintain a degree of distance in order that it may provide advocacy and facilitate services to the women in shelter who are not being well served by these community agencies.

(9) The shelter must not be a mental health facility because:

- Battered women are not inherently mentally ill
- It would inhibit many women from seeking shelter because of the real and imagined problems in being labelled as a mental patient.
- Mental health facilities have always been bastions of sexist beliefs which tend to reinforce the notions of male dominance of women.
- Mental health facilities are not suitable for establishing a community of peers which carries on a full range of activities open to all the women in the community; they are treatment centers, not social centers.
- Mental patients do not share in the policy-making, work, and development of mental health facilities, and are therefore relegated to the status of passive consumers rather than participants in a community. Battered women should not be institutionally encouraged to be dependent and uncertain of their capacity for taking full control over their lives as full-fledged, competent adults.

(10) The shelter should be one component of a larger women's center or community:

- It would counteract the "institution" image which makes many people uncomfortable and wary of.
- Women need a place to go, and some place to belong; women in crisis will have special needs for identifying with an on-going community.
- A women's center sounds less radical than a women's shelter; as a result, battering men will be less antagonized by the idea of his mate participating in a center.
- Women need to develop new parts of themselves in order to strengthen their ability to see new options. A women's center offers skill-oriented programming, interest groups, classes in self-awareness, and therefore helps in putting a woman in touch with her potential as a person and as a woman.
- A center and shelter provides many opportunities for battered women to discover that she really is not different from other women; in the same fashion, it provides non-battered women with the opportunity to see that battered women are not any different from them.

11) The shelter must have the staff and financial means to contribute to the metropolitan community's awareness of the existence of women-battering so that the community can begin to address the societal factors involved in domestic violence.

- The public must recognize that violence occurs in families of every economic class, of every race and religion, and in all areas of the country.
- In 1977, a survey taken by Psychology Today of 28,000 men and women revealed that 40% of the men had occasionally hit a woman with whom he had an on-going relationship.
- "The high frequency with which physical violence is used by married couples and especially the disproportionate frequency with which wives are the victims, reflects the structure of contemporary Euro-American societies in the form of cultural norms which implicitly make the marriage license a hitting license in the sexist organization of both society and the family system."
(Strauss, 1976)
- Federal, state, and local government agencies and policy-makers must be confronted with the need to establish the legitimacy of a woman's need NOT to be beaten or abused by facilitating in every possible way the work in bringing about relief from and solutions to the problems of woman-battering.

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WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH:

A MODEL FOR A SHELTERING COMMUNITY

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

1975 STATISTICS

	WCS Visitors	Total Incoming Calls	Violence Related Calls or Visits	Sheltered		Total Nights of Shelter	Sheltered Victims of Violence			Refused [No Space]		Refused- Inappropriate		Repeats for Shelter	Women Returning to same Situation
				Women	Child		Women	Child	Percentage*	Women	Child	Women	Child		
January	31	148	8	4	7	140	2	45%					—		
February	73	165	12	4	1	95	3	80%					—		
March	97	195	6	9	2	51	1	10%					—		
April	69	240	4	8	4	112	6	83%					1		
May	70	253	10	4	—	26	3	75%					1		
June	79	282	8	12	—	57	3	25%					3		
July	52	394	17	21	11	149	11	62%					4		
August	95	418	16	17	6	69	4	26%					3		
September	89	418	13	16	13	143	7	45%					1		
October	80	412	17	11	10	112	8	86%					3		
November	75	419	13	11	—	53	1	9%					—		
December	44	416	16	21	8	102	6	31%					8		
TOTALS	854	3760	140	138	62	1109	55	48%					24		

* ... based upon Total Women and Children Sheltered Victims of Violence

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

1976 STATISTICS

	WCS Visitors	Total Incoming Calls	Violence Related Calls or Visits	Sheltered		Total Nights of Shelter	Sheltered Victims of Violence			Refused [No Space]		Refused- Inappropriate	Repeats for Shelter	Women Returning to same Situation
				Women	Child		Women	Child	Percentage*	Women	Child			
January	53	557	21	19	10	183	10	69%					5	
February	67	514	13	10	5	76	7	80%					1	
March	66	638	17	17	6	100	5	30%					1	
April	79	516	20	9	7	183	5	75%					2	
May	73	429	44	10	11	218	7	86%					1	
June	23	410	41	5	1	23	5	100%					2	
July	69	377	54	9	9	72	6	67%	80	7			—	2
August	106	418	86	19	9	169	8	53%	7	5			4	2
September	40	400	66	14	8	172	10	82%	9	7			6	3
October	46	336	42	9	3	72	9	92%	10	8			4	2
November	56	388	46	14	10	130	9	75%	7	6			7	1
December	47	440	45	14	10	127	12	92%	2	5			6	3
TOTALS	725	5423	495	149	89	1525	93	75%	45	38			39	13

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* ...based upon Total Women and Children Sheltered Victims of Violence

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

1977 STATISTICS

	WCS Visitors	Total Incoming Calls	Violence Related Calls or Visits	Sheltered		Total Nights of Shelter	Sheltered Victims of Violence			Refused (No Space)		Refused- Inappropriate		Repeats for Shelter	Women Returning to same Situation
				Women	Child		Women	Child	Percentage	Women	Child	Women	Child		
January	15	333	42	7	6	140	6	6	86%/100%	16		2		1	2
February	53	399	52	14	4	376	10	4	71%/100%	2		3		1	3
March	52	533	34	15	6	78	11	3	73%/50%	6		3		1	4
April	27	455	41	12	6	203	5	6	42%/100%	17		8		3	2
May	25	360	49	15	11	223	10	10	67%/90%	7	17	13	5	2	3
June	48	465	63	24	11	105	16	8	67%/73%	3	2	4		5	6
July	28	501	82	20	13	287	15	13	75%/100%	21	11	1		1	4
August	48	539	49	19	16	222	10	12	53%/75%	4	—	21		3	7
September	131	831	72	26	18	236	16	16	62%/89%	5	7	5	6	4	8
October	125	1199	77	30	24	287	17	15	57%/63%	8	8	6	2	4	3
November	78	946	112	28	19	185	19	18	68%/95%	5	—	5	4	2	5
December	110	955	113	31	26	494	17	24	55%/92%	9	11	10	5	7	12
TOTALS	740	7516	786	241	160	2836	152	135	63%/84%	103	56	81	22	34	49

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