



FACT SHEET

Support City of Chicago Funding for Rape Crisis Services

What Rape Crisis Services Exist in Chicago?

The City of Chicago is home to four rape crisis centers that provide individual and group counseling, medical and legal advocacy, prevention education programs, and information/referral services. A fifth suburban center provides legal advocacy in Chicago courtrooms. These centers offer community-based services in neighborhoods, schools and hospitals throughout the city. In 2010, Chicago centers provided counseling to 1,443 survivors and made 1,414 prevention education presentations to Chicago Public School classrooms, reaching thousands of students. Chicago's rape crisis centers provide year round, 24 hour response to victims of sexual assault in 21 of Chicago's hospitals, and helped 879 victims in Chicago's emergency rooms. The Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline, a program of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, offers crisis intervention services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provides information and referral services to the community, including police, health care workers, school personnel, and others. The Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline served 3,676 callers in 2010.

How Are Rape Crisis Centers Funded?

The City of Chicago has never provided any financial support for these valuable services. Currently, rape crisis centers receive federal VAWA and VOCA funds and Illinois General Funds, administered by the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA). State funding has been cut and payments slowed, reducing staff time and service hours for survivors and their families. Centers on occasion receive grants from foundations or other state government agencies such as the Attorney General's Office. In 2010 and 2011, the Cook County Government provided \$275,000 to support rape crisis services countywide, with the goal to reach communities with limited or no access to rape crisis services. The size of Chicago's rape crisis centers varies greatly, and their budgets range from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000.

Why Should the City of Chicago Fund Rape Crisis Services?

- **Funding Rape Crisis Services Is Cost Effective for the City.** Rape crisis advocates in court houses and emergency rooms free up City staff time and resources to focus on other critical tasks. These advocates are highly trained, skilled workers who provide their services free of charge to survivors in underserved communities. Support for the rape crisis centers represents a strategic partnership for Chicago because it would be inefficient and costly for the City to provide these services directly.
- **Funding Rape Crisis Services Positively Impacts the Entire Community.** A modest investment from the City would make an enormous positive impact on the community: these services help trauma survivors continue to work, care for their families, stay in school, and be productive members of our community. City support would help the rape crisis centers keep their doors open in underserved communities, improving accessibility and reducing reliance on other City services.
- **Funds to Rape Crisis Services Are Transparent and Accountable.** Each center could be required to submit a report detailing the use of the funds. In addition, all rape crisis centers report their client demographics and service data to ICASA and the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Need More Information? Contact Lynne Johnson, policy & advocacy director, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, at lynne@caase.org or 773.244.2230 ext 5.