

NOTES ON WOMEN'S FORUM:

November 3, 2001

A. The Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (Linda Livingston; Sue Becker, Prog. Dir.; 983-6014; www.thecoalition.org)

1. Mission Statement: The Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence values all human beings and the diversity of all cultures and is committed to the prevention of sexual assault and inter-relational violence by providing direct services to those impacted by violence and by educating all Ventura County communities regarding violence against women, children and men. The mission will be accomplished through the collaborative efforts of our staff volunteers, other agencies and the community.
2. Brief Overview & Needs*/**: 24-hr. hotline; up to 1 mo. shelter for victims; two teams: SARC (Sexual Assault Rape Crisis) and Domestic Violence & Response; Latino services provider; various support groups (i.e. anger mgmt.) listed in handout; community outreach; assist with legal status; child care*; affordable, safe, adequate housing esp. transitional**; prostitutes; drug rehab (only drug free can enter shelter); multi-lingual translators for non-Spanish, non-English speaking clients*; educational outreach**, esp. in middle school re dating violence/sexual assault; SART needs new underwear and clean sweat sets**; volunteers.**
3. Coming Events: Vagina Monologues (2/13/02); 2nd Annual Women's Voices (Mar.); annual Take Back the Night march (Apr.)
4. Facts: (a) Only crisis team in county responding to victims of sexual violence. (b) Children better off living away from batterer (breeding ground for violence).

B. Planned Parenthood (Xochitl Gomez; 658-3232 x105)

1. Mission Statement: Our mission is to actively promote family planning and healthy, responsible reproductive and sexual behavior through the provision of high quality, comprehensive educational, counseling, medical, and referral services. We support availability of these services, particularly to individuals whose access to other sources of help is limited. We promote public understanding acceptance and support for reproductive choice and family planning services. We also promote public understanding of global problems that stem from population pressures and encourage support of programs working toward solutions to these problems.
2. Brief Overview: Full, reproductive health care clinics in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Ventura and San Luis Obispo, patients (men and women) from age 13 to 60+. Four areas: clinic, public affairs, development and education.

3. Critical Unmet Needs: (a) Access to affordable medical care (people slip thru Cracks; red tape). (b) Issue of domestic violence and healthy relationships: increased education of community needed—positive public awareness of programs provided. Sexual education in high schools is limited due to lack of time, red tape, parental resistance. (c) Volunteers.

C. Ventura County Area Agency on Aging: (Katharine Raly; 477-7310)

1. Mission Statement: It is the responsibility of the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging to serve all of Ventura County's 60 plus population, including those with Different social and cultural needs; support self-determination and independence among the older population; and provide leadership in the development of a community based system of care. This mission is accomplished through a network of education, advocacy, problem solving, program planning, and funding.
2. Brief Overview of HCAP Program: (Health Counseling Advocacy) Seniors, medically disabled 50+. Major problems: Insurance, housing too costly. Medical care non-existent. Prescription coverage (only 3 HMO's in county – only one providing brand prescriptions). Need prescription plan not just discount card. Need to learn to use existing resources (school enrollment provides health center coverage, food, showers, etc.), but not prescription. Program through pharmaceutical companies confusing. Have 20, need more volunteers to help enroll, work with legislature, start pharmacy bank. Transportation non-existent (to east county esp. valley (East Kaiser). Need volunteers to drive. Women hardest hit. 109,000 seniors in county. Need bilingual volunteers.
3. Medi-cal: 50-65 yr. old don't qualify. Some seniors won't apply – too proud.

D. El Concilio del Condado de Ventura (Avie Guerra, 486-9777) *left Message*

1. Mission Statement (not received to date).
2. Brief Overview: Latino advocacy non-profit agency. 26 years old. Citizenship, immigration, youth, community, alcohol prevention programs. Collaborative with police, health, school districts, the Coalition, Planned Parenthood, Probation Dept., D.A.'s office.
3. Young Women's Symposium: 150 7th/8th grade girls; on Sat. with 8 workshops to provide early intervention (alcohol/drug abuse; domestic violence (dramatized); anger management; "girl power.") Parental permission. Girls advised of agencies that can assist them. Next scheduled for Mar. 9. at RDV. Role models (police). All ethnic groups welcome. Need to add Mentoring; hold at lg. no-cost facility.

E. Rainbow Recovery Center (Dolores Adams, 487-4663)

1. Mission Statement (not received to date).
2. Brief Overview: 1981. Most funds thru United Way. Locations: Simi Valley/Oxnard. Also transitional living in both areas. Women over 18 with alcohol/drug problems/dual diagnosed. Many there as result of violence/sex assault. Homeless, unemployable, legal, medical problems, hopeless—hit bottom. To apply must be alcohol-free for 24 hours/drug free 72 hours and phone in themselves. Min. 90-day program to year. Very structured. On site services. Individual personal recovery plan, regain control of life, accept responsibility, transition to community, become self-supporting, get children back. Problem: dual diagnosed clients increasing (require medication).
3. Needs: housing and jobs.

F. CAUSE [Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy] (Maricela Morales, 658-0810)

1. Mission Statement: CAUSE is a nonprofit public policy and social research center for the study and promotion of sustainable economic development policy and activities in the California Central Coast. CAUSE defines sustainable economic development policies and activities as those that contribute to the development of a prosperous, just, and environmentally sound regional economy.
2. Problem: Women are devalued and fall through the cracks.
3. Two important issues which require public input/assistance: Living wage and health coverage. (Ventura County Living Wage Organization is the membership organization.) Support LWO at city council meetings. (IHSS workers—care for seriously disabled/elderly in homes. Earn \$6.58/hr.) Advisory committee established by Board of Supervisors to set up employer of record—first step to improve wages, benefits, training. Submit letter in support of establishing public authority to serve as employer of record. Need more endorsees of LWO.
(b) Ventura County Health Coverage Task Force: Look at how to address uninsured (children/working poor). Would like representation from VCCW. Sta. Clara County used Prop 10 funds to provide health coverage for their children. Can be done here. Engage small/mid sized employers in task.

G. Maternal Child Adolescent Health Program (VC Public Health) (Diane Visencio, 677-5203)

1. Mission Statement: It is the mission of the Ventura County Public Health Department to optimize the health of the community by promoting healthy lifestyles, and preventing and controlling disease, injury and disability.

2. Brief Overview: Assess needs/health standards of moms/kids in county. 5 year plan. Stats: 2000: 11,770 births in county. Moms less than 20: 1134 births. One-third under 18. Meeting 2010 objective for low-birth weight births. More multiple births impact birth weight. Six priority areas-- work with county partners: 1) reduce family violence—collaborative of 200+ agencies; violence is a public health issue 2) reduce peri-natal substance abuse—Task force estab. Screen for substance abuse/alcohol; child study institute; Prop 10 support 3) access to care—oral health coalition; care to parents coverage 4) childcare – health consultant funded; quality care a necessity 5) adolescent health care—new focus for Prop 10. 6) environmental health—exposure to pesticides, tobacco, lead. Educate medical advisors. Mental health underlies all priorities.
3. New 211 system for Ventura County: Information and referral service. Trained counselors assess needs of clients and link with sources. Operated through Interface.
4. Need: Help non-Spanish, non-English speaking population. Mixteco immigrant community needs food/clothing, diapers, etc., Sandy Young, 385-8662 or Elvia Guizar, 677-5236. Adopt a family for the holidays. Drop off contributions at Las Islas Clinic 7 days a week, 325 W. Channel Islands, Oxnard.
5. Service: Bilingual support available for other organizations thru Peri-Natal project.

H. Cal Works (Human Services Agency) (Lauri Flack, Deputy Director, Business Services Dept., 652-7565)

1. Mission Statement (not received to date).
2. Brief Overview: 1998. Six job and career centers. “One Stop” Workforce Investment Act Centers. Serve all job seekers. 5000 currently on welfare. Currently, 2,300 active job seekers—75% women—1742—of which, 1400 single heads of households. Woman’s issue. 58%--20-39. Eligibility process “Byzantine.” As of 2002, will take place in Centers. On-site partners: Coalition, Public Health, Mental Health, Nutrition, D.A. rep., Probation Dept., EDD, Child Development Resources, Children Family Services. Parenting classes. Re-parenting process req’d. Problems: lack of self-esteem, education, undiagnosed learning disabilities – staff must be culturally sensitive. Childcare funding is being threatened. Can’t become self-sufficient without it. Public transportation dismal. Learn good working habits. Job training at Oxnard/Ventura colleges. Housing, transportation, food, clothing are needs. Youth specialists available. Need job retention support. Workers need to progress and increase skills. Career resource centers open to public.

3. We can: Offer hope and understanding. Offer employment opportunities.
(Community service counts). PR campaign after the first of the year to advertise services
4. We need: Human Services Commission in Ventura County.

Common Needs: Housing; transportation; child care; bilingual/multi-lingual volunteers; money; support for and publicity regarding events, programs, and resources available for specific needs; ombudsmen; Web Sites; and collaboration/coordination between all groups (Human Services Commission).