

VENTURA COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
AND FIVE YEAR PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(Excerpts from Issues and Recommendations Section)

- HOUSING -

Housing is a primary concern of many women in the County because of its costs and restrictions placed on women, especially those with children.

There also appears to be little coordination of housing information by HUD and waiting periods for HUD approved housing are excessive.

The plight of homeless people is even worse and they are a growing problem in our society. The children within these homeless families probably suffer the most as they do not have a stable family life, do not attend school, and suffer from other problems related to their mobile lifestyle.

Elderly women in our society are another group who are disproportionately affected by the lack of low-cost housing. Some of them are forced to compromise on food and medical care in order to ensure themselves a place to live. These people are often on fixed incomes which do not rise as much as whatever "the market will bear" in housing costs.

One suggestion brought out during the public hearings was the need for cities to be more sensitive to the housing problems in our County. One person suggested cities should ease zoning restrictions to allow, for example, smaller lot sizes, or for unrelated families to live together. Another idea was to build more "granny flats". All these ideas were expressed so that cities and other public agencies will begin to look for new options to solve the housing problems in our County.

Recommendations

Based on the survey data and public hearings testimony, the Commission for Women designated the housing problem as the number one priority.

Their recommendations to resolve some of these problems were:

- 1) To provide information about the severity of the housing problem and what resources are available through press releases and other public forums. They will coordinate this effort with other agencies interested in housing in the County.
- 2) To appoint a member of the CFW to the Coalition for the Homeless to represent the needs of women.
- 3) To cooperate with other groups having the same goals of providing more affordable housing.

- 4) To jointly with the Commission on Human Concerns, make a presentation to each City Council in Ventura County on the need for more affordable housing (especially as it pertains to women's needs) within each city's General Plan. The CFW will also monitor when each city begins the process of updating its General Plan.
- 5) To jointly investigate with the CHC the possibility of a bonding or insurance program for renters to cover last month's rent and a security deposit. This program would make it easier for women to gain entrance to more housing.

- EDUCATION AND PAY EQUITY -

Pay equity or comparable worth is a fundamental economic issue which will affect most working women in their careers. For too long, women's labor has been undervalued primarily because it was assumed their pay did not support the family. That is no longer true today and if women are to become economically self-sufficient, they must have the same opportunities as men to earn a decent wage.

Tied to the pay equity issue is a need by women to better job counseling. They have to be directed and trained for jobs which will enable them to support themselves and their families. Otherwise the predictions made in the report, "The Feminization of Poverty", will become more of a reality and a whole generation of women and their children will be impoverished.

Better and more coordinated information is also needed about existing services and this information has to be available to women executives as well as those women on welfare. Better publicity about the existing service hotline in the County will help any additional publicity generated by the Commission.

Reaching women in Ventura County is a particularly difficult task because there is no one metropolitan center and the population is spread out among so many different cities. This requires that any publicity effort use as many sources of public information as possible including newspapers, cable tv, group newsletters, bulletin boards, and so on. Only in this way, will women needing services find out about them.

Recommendations

The primary emphasis in this need area was to publicize what services currently exist, to advocate in areas where appropriate, and to direct other actions which pertain to education and income equity. The recommendations of the Commission for Women in these areas were:

- 1) To study jointly with the Commission on Human Concerns the state of job re-training and re-entry programs for women in the County and available funding for same.
- 2) To provide more publicity about what current services are available to women. This will be done through press releases, development of a brochure, and establishment of a speaker's bureau to be jointly operated with the Commission on Human Concerns.
- 3) To conduct public workshops in those areas identified by the needs assessment as high priority areas. Topics to include: workshop on the issue of pay equity; seminar for High School Counselors on preparing young women for the work world; a presentation on what services are available to women, to be coordinated with the Women's Day programs at the Community Colleges; programs in other areas including the value and benefit of counseling, divorce and child support, and the victim restitution program.

- 4) To cooperate with the Library System in promoting the literacy program and the library information proposal.
- 5) To expand the existing Women's History Task Force.
- 6) To expand the annual recognition dinner for women in the County.
- 7) To examine the possibility of funding for a program similar to Breakthrough which provided low-cost workshops for women in the County. This will be a joint project with the Commission on Human Concerns.

-CRISIS/COUNSELING SERVICES-

The shortage of information about services in the County and the lack of a meeting place for women has created a large gap between those needing services and those providing them. There are a few support groups for women but they tend to be very localized and specialized.

Domestic violence continues to be a problem and it is complicated by a potential shortage of shelters in the County. In addition, women often face many legal problems when they try to end the abuse. Working through the legal bottlenecks will take the cooperation of the judicial and legal system to resolve.

Recommendations

Based on the survey and the public hearing testimony, the Commission for Women voted to focus on a few key areas under this topic. Their recommendations are:

- 1) To study jointly what services are currently available at the County Free Clinics and what additional services are needed (particularly in the area of legal assistance). Other areas mentioned were: counseling - legal, personal, financial, crisis, job and family; family planning information; information about child abuse; domestic violence; and alcohol/drug abuse programs.
- 2) To continue monitoring domestic violence programs. To investigate the need for second stage housing. And to study the need for another shelter.

-CHILD CARE-

The lack of child care continues to be a major impediment in improving lives of women and their children in Ventura County. The need for this service is growing, not diminishing. The report, "The Feminization of Poverty" estimates that in 1984, 60.5 percent of all mothers with children under the age of 18 were in labor force. The report went on to state that 1.6 million women in California were unable to work last year because they couldn't afford the cost of child care which averages \$2,500 a year.

It is the lack of affordable child care which often is the largest obstacle for women trying to improve their economic status either through education/training programs or by taking a job. They and their families then become trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Child care can no longer be considered a luxury for women who want to work. It is a necessity for those who must work. A recent article in Newsweek magazine (July 15, 1985) states that nationally, one-fourth of all families with children under 18 are headed by single parents and over 90 percent of those are headed by women. The article went on to state that the number of single parent households is expected to double by 1990.

Ventura County has only a limited number of employer supported child care facilities and many of the major employers provide none for their employees. Government restrictions and lack of support for women who want to work or go to school only aggravates the problem.

It would appear that as long as child care is primarily a female function, private and public agencies may be largely unmindful of the role it plays in hindering women's efforts to be economically self-sufficient.

Recommendations

The Commission for Women has already taken steps to work towards the problem of child care in Ventura County. Activities to be taken in the future include:

- 1) To continue the cooperative arrangement with United Way to link child care needs with available funding sources.
- 2) To continue educating private industry and local government on the feasibility of their providing child care services for their employees. This will be done cooperatively with the Commission on Human Concerns.
- 3) To continue efforts to convince local government and private industry to establish child care programs for their employees.

-DIVORCED WOMEN/FEMALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS-

Women and children are largely becoming the new disadvantaged class of our society. This is the result of several factors: the high rate of divorce where many women are stripped of their economic security; the lack of adequate child support by absent fathers; inequities in pay and job opportunities for women; and inadequate government subsidies to help women through the transition period.

Better enforcement of child support awards is beginning to happen, but the awards themselves are woefully inadequate and barely cover the cost of child care for a working mother. In addition, the lack of any support for illegitimate children almost guarantees that most of them will live in poverty during the formative period of their lives.

Many women also complained of the legal problems they encountered in divorce proceedings. Some said they had incompetent legal help while others railed against the injustices of the legal system and the insensitivity of judges toward women. Women need to be educated to approach hiring an attorney in the same way they would go about hiring any other professional. They also must be more active in pursuing a divorce settlement which is fair to all parties involved rather than leaving it up to others to make that decision.

Recommendations

- 1) For the Commission for Women to cooperate with the District Attorney's Office to improve services offered through their child support division. This will be a cooperative effort with the Commission on Human Concerns. A liaison person will be appointed who will report back to the CFW on a regular basis.
- 2) To develop a referral list of effective divorce attorneys in cooperation with the Commission on Human Concerns. They will also develop a checklist of basic legal rights separated women have and those rights they might want to obtain as a result of a divorce settlement.
- 3) To investigate existing legislation which enforces spousal support and to develop a court monitoring system.

INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of a six month needs assessment process conducted by the Ventura County Commission for Women in cooperation with the Ventura County Commission on Human Concerns. Its purpose was to develop a five year planning document for the Commission for Women to use in improving the status of women in Ventura County. It is also an advisory document to the Board of Supervisors.

Outline

This document is divided into four sections. The first section is the methodology used to generate this report. Section two contains the data used in the findings. Data sources were written communications with agencies, public hearing testimony, a telephone survey, and pertinent statistics on Ventura County.

Section three is entitled ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS. The Commission for Women identified five primary need areas and made recommendations in each. These sub-sections contain all the pertinent public testimony, survey data, and other information as well the recommended actions to be taken by the Commission for Women. There is also a sixth sub-section called OTHER which includes other testimony and information gleaned from the needs assessment process.

Section four is the appendix. It includes the work plan for implementing the recommendations, a survey instrument, and other information.

Findings

American society has been through a series of turbulent changes in the last twenty to thirty years. One of the most significant of those changes has been a re-definition of the role of women both within and outside the home.

Women have entered the workforce and society at large in greater numbers and they have extended their influence accordingly. At the same time, however, their progress has been hindered by misperceptions of sexual roles versus human roles. These perceptions are slowly changing and with them are coming new opportunities for women to fully participate in all aspects of our society.

This needs assessment found that many of the same trends evidenced on a state and national level operate here in our County as well. While women have made gains, they are still concentrated in the lowest paying

jobs. That fact, coupled with child support and child care issues, is creating a potential situation whereby large numbers of female-headed families will live at or below the poverty line. If we are to prevent this "feminization of poverty", positive steps must be taken to improve the status of women in society.

The Ventura County Commission for Women has identified a number of priority areas to achieve that goal including more affordable housing for women, addressing education and pay equity issues, child care, crisis and counseling services, and special programs for divorced women and female heads-of-households.

In some cases the Commission will take the lead in addressing these needs and in other cases they will coordinate with existing agencies. Through their efforts over the next five years, it is the Commission's goal to use this document to create many positive changes in the lives of the women of Ventura County.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The Commission for Women undertook their first needs assessment and development of a five year plan in conjunction with the Ventura County Commission on Human Concerns (CHC).

This was done to maximize the use of available funds and because it was felt that both groups serve many of the same people, specifically low-income women.

Both the Commission for Women (CFW) and the CHC joined with the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in sharing the cost of the study which included:

- . An inventory of existing resources and service organizations in the County in an effort to gather demographic data on their client groups.
- . Four public hearings held in different parts of Ventura County.
- . A telephone survey of randomly selected women in the County.
- . A series of workshops to analyze the data, identify priorities, and develop action plans for the next five years.

The approach taken to develop the information in the study is described in more detail below.

Inventory of Existing Resources and Service Organizations

To determine where the gaps exist for services for low-income people and women, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to nearly 500 public and private service providers. The providers were identified through the use of three county directories - those of Interface Community, the United Way, and the Ventura County Professional Women's Network Directory.

Despite extensive follow-up, only sixty-six responses were received. Of these, approximately one-fourth provided hard data on who receives their services. Some organizations estimated the percentages but did not provide a total number of people served. (See appendix for questionnaire.)

The data from this questionnaire is found in the section, DATA AND SUMMARY.

Public Hearings

To gain personal testimony on the needs of women and low-income individuals, four public hearings were held in the cities of Ventura, Simi Valley, Oxnard, and Santa Paula over a three week period.

Other community groups helped co-sponsor these hearings including: The Ventura County Council on Aging, the Women's Resource Center at California Lutheran College, Care and Share, Clinicas del Camino Real, Community Service Organization, and the Candelaria American Indian Council.

Extensive publicity was used for each hearing including flyers, display advertising in four local newspapers, press releases, and personal invitations to interested parties.

Commissioners from both the CFW and the CHC served as panel members at these hearings which were tape recorded. The testimony given is incorporated in the section titled, ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Telephone Survey

The survey instrument developed for the women's needs assessment was similar to the one used by the CHC for their assessment (see copy in Appendix). However, the women's survey included questions not asked on the CHC survey instrument, questions geared to better assessing women's needs.

The survey instrument was developed with the participation of the Steering Committee made up of members of both Commissions and two technical advisors who served as professional consultants.

For the purpose of the telephone survey, women were randomly selected from throughout the County. All ages, income groups, and ethnic groups were represented among the 228 women questioned.

The responses to the survey are found in the section, DATA AND SUMMARY. In general, the telephone survey identified the following need priorities: low-cost housing (noted by 15.8% of the women as a need); child care (13.6%), medical services (9.6%), recreation (8.8%), education (8.3%), financial assistance (7.9%), and job counseling (7.9%).

The survey for the CHC, which consisted of interviews with 193 low-income individuals, identified many of the same priorities: medical services (24.4%), low-cost housing (19.7%), education (14%), job counseling (13.5%), and financial assistance (12%).

The survey conducted for the CFW was conducted primarily during the evenings and weekends with as many as three call backs to those phone numbers with busy signals, no answers or requests to call later. The results from the survey were combined with the public testimony, the service organization questionnaire data, and other information in recommending the priorities to be addressed by the Commission for Women.

Workshops for Prioritizing and Planning

Following the data collection phase of the process, the CFW met to organize and prioritize the information into a five year plan.

After listing all the issues and needs which were identified during the telephone surveys and the public hearings, the CFW board organized the needs into five categories and developed objectives for each need category. Those five categories were:

1. The need for more affordable housing in Ventura County.
2. The need for more educational programs for women.
3. The need for more counseling and crisis services for women.

4. The need for more child care and recreation programs for children.
5. The need for special services for divorced and separated women.

Following this workshop, the CFW and the CHC met to identify joint and separate responsibilities. The CFW subsequently met again to more clearly spell out a five year plan with objectives, time lines, and responsibilities of individual Commission members.

See the DATA AND SUMMARY section for more detailed information on the workshops.

DATA AND SUMMARY

TELEPHONE SURVEY DATA

The needs assessment survey included 228 women randomly selected from all areas of the County. The responses from the survey were as follows:
(Note: actual numbers are in parentheses, then that number as a percent of all the responses).

FAMILY SIZE

1 (19)	8.3%	3 (42)	18.4%	5 (37)	16.2%
2 (58)	25.4%	4 (48)	21.1%	More than 5 (22)	9.6%
				No answer (2)	.9%

HOW MANY OF FAMILY UNDER 18

0 (90)	39.5%	2 (55)	24.1%	4 (8)	3.5%
1 (46)	20.2%	3 (26)	11.4%	5 (3)	1.3%
				More than 5	0

NUMBER OF ADULT FULL-TIME WAGE EARNERS IN FAMILY

0 (36)	15.8%	2 (88)	38.6%	More than 3 (4)	1.8%
1 (88)	38.6%	3 (12)	5.3%		

NUMBER OF ADULT PART-TIME WAGE EARNERS IN FAMILY

0 (175)	76.8%	2 (6)	2.6%	More than 3	0
1 (46)	20.2%	3 (1)	.4%		

ARE YOU THE PRIMARY WAGE EARNER IN THE FAMILY

Yes (62)	27.2%	No (157)	68.9%	Equal (9)	3.9%
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AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS

Under 20 (8)	3.5%	30 - 39 (71)	31.1%	50 - 59 (30)	13.2%
20 - 29 (48)	21.1%	40 - 49 (41)	18.0%	60 - 69 (21)	9.2%
				70 and over (9)	3.9%

YEARS OF SCHOOLING COMPLETED

6 years or less (2)	.8%	10 to 11 (21)	9.2%	13 to 16 (100)	43.9%
7 to 9 (15)	6.6%	12 years (82)	35.9%	17 or more (8)	3.5%

PRESENT JOB

Unemployed (47)	20.7%	Manager-Supervisor (7)	3.1%
Clerk (27)	11.9%	Cashier (6)	2.6%
Homemaker (25)	11.0%	Sales (6)	2.6%
Other* (21)	9.3%	Teacher's Aide (6)	2.6%
Retired (20)	8.8%	Government worker (4)	1.8%
Secretary (14)	6.2%	Personal Service (4)	1.8%
Med-Dental Profes. (12)	5.3%	Computer/operator/analyst (3)	1.3%
Teacher (11)	4.8%	Field worker (3)	1.3%
Factory worker (8)	3.5%	Technician (3)	1.3%

(Note: Other* is made up of many different job categories where one or two people are listed in an occupation such as bank teller, writer, etc.)

HAVE YOU EVER FELT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN THE WORK PLACE

yes (18) 7.9% no (209) 91.7% no answer (1) .4%

IF YES TO THE ABOVE QUESTION, HOW HAVE YOU BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

Promotion inhibition	(6)	2.6%	Chauvenism	(3)	1.3%
Ethnic discrimination	(4)	1.8%	Language restrictions	(1)	.4%
Wage discrimination	(3)	1.3%			

MARITAL STATUS

Never married	(32)	14%	Married -separated	(3)	1.3%
Married	(153)	67.1%	Divorced	(28)	12.3%
			Widowed	(12)	5.3%

DO YOU OWN OR RENT WHERE YOU LIVE

Own (148) 64.9% Rent (80) 35.1%

WHAT KIND OF PLACE DO YOU OWN OR RENT

Home	(176)	77.2%	Mobile Home	(2)	.9%	Room	(1)	.4%
Condo	(14)	6.1%	Apartment	(35)	15.4%			

HOW HAPPY ARE YOU WITH YOUR LIFE - 7 is most happy, 1 is least happy

Number 1	(3)	1.3%	Number 3	(5)	2.2%	Number 5	(55)	24.1%
Number 2	(1)	.4%	Number 4	(12)	5.3%	Number 6	(50)	21.9%
						Number 7	(102)	44.7%

HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE YOU IN WORKING TOWARD YOUR GOALS - 7 is highly successful, 1 is least successful

Number 1	(4)	1.8%	Number 3	(6)	2.6%	Number 5	(49)	21.5%
Number 2	(3)	1.3%	Number 4	(26)	11.4%	Number 6	(55)	24.1%
						Number 7	(85)	37.1%

HOW WELL CAN YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE - 7 would be able to solve all problems, 1 would be unable to solve any problems

Number 1	(1)	.4%	Number 3	(9)	3.9%	Number 5	(43)	18.9%
Number 2	(1)	.4%	Number 4	(11)	4.8%	Number 6	(55)	24.1%
						Number 7	(108)	47.4%

WHY CAN'T YOU SOLVE THE PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE

Not enough money (6)
 Husband too lazy to work (1)
 Too old to do anything I want (1)
 Have a small baby and no future (1)
 Had a nervous breakdown (1)

WOMEN WHO ANSWERED YES TO THE QUESTION, ARE YOU CURRENTLY RECEIVING

Unemployment	(8)	3.5%	Social security	(24)	10.5%
AFDC	(12)	5.3%	SSI	(3)	1.3%
Food Stamps	(18)	7.9%	Job placement/training	(3)	1.3%
			Other	(6)	2.6%

WOMEN WHO ANSWERED YES TO THE QUESTION, HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED

Unemployment	(69)	30.3%	Social security	(12)	5.3%
AFDC	(25)	11.0%	SSI	(5)	2.2%
Food Stamps	(30)	13.2%	Job placement/training	(7)	3.1%
			Other	(1)	.4%

COULD YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY USE HELP NOW IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS (the numbers in parentheses are for yes responses only).

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Medical services	(22)	9.6%	90.4%
Financial/counseling services	(13)	5.7%	94.3%
Financial assistance	(18)	7.9%	92.1%
Lower cost legal counseling/services	(12)	5.3%	94.7%
Family counseling	(14)	6.1%	93.9%
Personal counseling	(16)	7.0%	93.0%
Child care	(31)	13.6%	86.4%
Establishing credit	(17)	7.5%	92.5%
Job counseling	(18)	7.9%	92.1%
Lower cost housing	(36)	15.8%	84.2%
Repairs to your home	(17)	7.5%	92.5%
Food	(9)	3.9%	96.1%
Transportation	(10)	4.4%	95.6%
Recreational opportunities for self or children	(20)	8.8%	91.2%
Educational needs	(19)	8.3%	91.7%
Family planning	(5)	2.2%	97.8%
Domestic violence	(3)	1.3%	98.7%
Alcohol/drug abuse	(5)	2.2%	97.8%
Child abuse	(1)	.4%	99.6%
Other	(2)	.9%	99.1%

IN THOSE AREAS WHERE YOU NEED HELP, DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO (the numbers in parentheses are for yes responses only)

		Yes	No
Medical services	(12)	5.3%	94.7%
Financial counseling/services	(7)	3.1%	96.4%
Financial assistance	(8)	3.5%	96.5%
Lower cost legal counseling/services	(4)	1.8%	98.2%
Personal counseling	(7)	3.1%	96.9%
Child care	(10)	4.4%	95.6%
Establishing credit	(4)	1.8%	98.2%
Job counseling	(8)	3.5%	96.5%
Lower cost housing	(12)	5.3%	94.7%
Repairs to your home	(9)	3.9%	96.1%
Food	(3)	1.3%	98.7%
Transportation	(2)	.9%	99.1%
Recreational opportunities for self or children	(7)	3.1%	96.9%
Educational needs	(33)	1.3%	98.7%
Family planning	(2)	.9%	99.1%
Domestic violence	(0)	0	100.0%
Alcohol/drug abuse	(4)	1.8%	98.2%
Child abuse	(0)	0	100.0%
Other	(0)	0	100.0%

IN WHAT AREAS DO YOU THINK MORE WOMEN'S SERVICES SHOULD BE PROVIDED

(Note: some respondents indicated several services while some indicated none.)

Job Related Needs (94 listed)

Need for low cost quality child care	(41)
Job counseling	(15)
Educational opportunities	(12)
Job placement	(9)
Job training	(7)
Equal wages for women	(6)
Job opportunities for women	(4)

Psychological-Medical (94)

Domestic violence assistance	(23)
Counseling (personal, financial, family)	(22)
Child abuse	(20)
Medical services	(9)
Alcohol/drug abuse	(8)
Rape protection/education/assistance	(6)
Family planning	(6)

Basic Needs (49)

Low cost housing	(23)
Financial assistance	(20)
Transportation	(6)
Food	(3)

Financial Needs (10)

Low cost legal services	(6)
establishing credit	(4)

Other (18)

Recreational activities	(7)
Other *	(11)

* Includes a variety of items mentioned once or twice.

ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

White	(143)	62.7%	Asian-Pacific	(8)	3.5%
Black	(15)	6.6%	Native American	(6)	2.6%
Hispanic	(51)	22.4%	Other	(5)	2.2%

TOTAL FAMILY INCOME

Less than \$5,000	(8)	3.5%	\$25,000 to \$30,000	(37)	16.2%
\$ 5,000 to \$10,000	(16)	7.0%	\$30,000 to \$40,000	(31)	13.6%
\$10,000 to \$15,000	(28)	12.3%	\$40,000 to \$50,000	(29)	12.7%
\$15,000 to \$20,000	(37)	16.2%	over \$50,000	(16)	7.0%
\$20,000 to \$25,000	(25)	11.0%	no response	(1)	.4%

ADDITIONAL NEEDS OF VENTURA COUNTY WOMEN (Note: some women listed several needs while others listed none)

Child care people can trust	(11)
Personal counseling/support groups	(9)
Equal opportunity for women	(8)
Job counseling/training	(7)
Domestic violence	(6)
Comparable worth/better pay for women	(6)
Problems with the welfare system	(6)
Recreational programs	(5)
More job opportunities for women	(4)
Job placement	(4)
Help for single mothers	(3)
Help for pregnant girls	(3)
Legal counseling	(3)
Financial assistance	(2)
Low cost housing	(2)
Other*	(8)

* Other is made of many different needs mentioned only once.

THOSE WILLING TO BE VOLUNTEERS AND IN WHAT AREAS

No specific area	(16)
Child care	(6)
Child abuse	(3)
Women or child abuse programs	(2)
Domestic violence	(1)
Typist	(1)
Personal counseling/financial assistance	(1)
Arts and crafts	(1)
The elderly or children	(1)
The state hospital or the blind	(1)
Financial services	(1)
Health care	(1)
Counseling	(1)
Goal setting with women	(1)
Alcohol/drug abuse	(1)
Teenagers on drugs	(1)

SUMMARY OF
AREAS OF CONCERN
VIA PUBLIC HEARINGS AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

LEGAL

Need for free legal assistance for upper middle class - for divorce proceedings, tenant disputes.

Need for consistency in legal advice. Perhaps central location for legal help.

Unable to provide ethical evidence against husband in court.

Incredible stress during legal proceedings underway.

Attorney (hired by one woman in divorce proceedings) not a "fighter."

Judges not aware of the stress and responsibilities in raising family and trying to support them after having to go back to work.

Husband reduced his income for child support payment: 3 children, at \$200 each.

Often, after receiving settlement after divorce, women required to hire attorney again for child support payments.

Battered women from Shelter find it difficult to even get in to see attorney - most require money up front.

Free legal assistance is available in Simi Valley twice a month; therefore no quick legal advice available.

(Possible project: roster of good attorneys for women in divorce proceeding. Perhaps could be update semi-annually. Discussion on possibility of women attorneys being more sympathetic to women's plight; however, do women attorneys have as much power as men in the courtroom?)

LABOR - WORK FORCE

After 20 plus years out of work force, one nurse had difficulty in even getting an application to complete for employment.

(A representative spoke for) one young mother who was concerned with having to leave home to work. Encourages businesses to consider work out of home, i.e. computers. She believed that to keep the family as a stable unit, mother should be able to stay at home. Encouraged tax incentives for businesses; felt they are lacking for women working at home.

In Santa Paula, employment opportunities for women limited, mostly because of lack of industry. Women used to work in packing houses. Also, limited public transportation.

(cont.)

LABOR - WORK FORCE, cont.

Inconsistency in pay in health care field: Pay to attendant is minimal, yet charge is very high to consumers. Exploitation of labor? Example: Person staying with elderly overnight (11 p.m. to 7 a.m.) costs \$105. What is actually paid in wages?

Need for job training to help women get off of welfare.

Wage gap - women earn 30% less than men and 59¢ on their dollar.

After divorce, if court holds jurisdiction, woman needs to go through court again for sharing husband's pension.

Stress - high level among clerical, resulting from: low pay, lack of recognition or accomplishment, lack of control of environment.

Lack of labor laws enforce, i.e. no overtime pay, yet often is required of the job. Demand for payment often results in on the job harassment.

HOMEMAKER RECOGNITION

Homemaker contributions are not recognized as skill development of value.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Food Stamps can be embarrassing. Older children don't want to be seen with them; younger children think it's play money, so they don't have any problem with it.

Food Stamps can be a humiliating experience at some stores, especially in Thousand Oaks, since so few take Food Stamps and because of the general socio-economic population characteristics. One woman suffered poor treatment at one particular Thousand Oaks store; only later did she discover that she could have filed a complaint and possibly, had the store's license revoked.

Welfare discourages savings because you're punished; encourages lying, not saving.

Loss of medical benefits greatest deterrent to getting off of welfare.

To receive welfare personal assets cannot exceed \$1,000. How realistic is this?

Food stamps don't provide minimum average daily requirements for healthy bodies.

Many parents are not eating properly in order to provide food for their children.

Difficult to raise children properly while on welfare. If husband is head of household, check is sent to him. If he's not taking care of the family, sometimes check doesn't get to children's needs. Welfare will send husband to training for work, but not wife. If wife goes to school to learn a trade, welfare cuts the check. If wife leaves husband, can go on welfare, but she wants to keep the family together.

Concern with proposed cuts in federal nutrition programs and revenue sharing.

HOUSING

More affordable housing needed.

HOUSING, cont.

Waiting list for HUD Section 8 housing is long; and placement is slow - sometimes up to 3 years. Problem with structure of program - when you're certified, you must find exactly the kind of housing you're certified for, within the price range you're authorized. If you cannot find the proper type of housing within 60 days, your certificate is recaptured and you are moved to the bottom of the list again.

Rent control is needed, particularly in Simi Valley and Oxnard.

Relaxation of zoning regulations to allow more than one family to share a dwelling.

Impossibility for many persons, particularly women with children, to get a first, last and deposit usually required for a move-in.

Greater difficulty in finding housing if more than one child is present.

Seniors need more low-cost housing.

CHILD CARE

Child care major barrier to many women trying to get off of welfare.

Lack of child care for pre-school and latchkey children, particularly in Santa Paula. Pre-school seen as "babysitter," therefore generally pay minimum wage, so two groups of workers result: older women doing it out of dedication, and young girls inexperienced with children. Need good, loving child care facility.

Child care is expensive.

Difficult to find adequate child care. Grandparents are working longer or continuing to work, are not retiring as early and therefore not participating in care of grandchildren to the degree that they used to.

Day care centers now required to obtain insurance, requiring either an increase in rates or a total close-down of service. Current pending bills (two) to require fee to obtain license for day care.

Day care providers are allowed only six children, including their own. Children should be "pro-rated" so that age is a consideration in the amount of care and supervision required for the child; also, a provider's own children should not be included as part of that 6, or whatever the maximum might be.

Day care centers need to be willing to take care of a sick child; it damages a woman's professional standing when she has to leave work for a sick child. Perhaps this could be a function of the school system.

Possible addition of day care at elementary schools, before and after school (i.e. kindergarten). Payment on sliding fee scale.

CHILDREN

Need to continue to change the expectations of children.

Need counseling at high school level re: what to expect in the real world - what is really needed to live (\$\$ and skills).

Children suffer from the shuffling back and forth while waiting for Section 8 housing to become available.

CHILDREN, cont.

A child taking ill at night often can't be taken to a doctor because of (1) lack of transportation, (2) who to babysit other children, (3) how to pay. Result: parent often is reported to Protective Services for not getting medical help for child.

Head Start program has lots of red tape and long waiting list. In Colonia (Oxnard), the child care center closes at 5:00 p.m. -- when most parents/mothers get off work -- if child is picked up after 5 p.m, a late fee applies.

Children also need shelter to escape to from an abusive father.

Many children are not in school because they lack a permanent address. (This pertains particularly to the homeless). When they are staying for 2 weeks or so at the Zoe Christian Center, they are registered in school.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters program - 95% of clients served are women, single parent heads of household.

BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER AND SUPPORT

Facility needed in Oxnard area.

Woman who has been living with certain man for years, wants out but fears abuse. Children sometimes abused physically and emotionally.

Woman bears responsibility of having spouse arrested for physical abuse, unless visible signs of violence.

More legislation needed to protect women in abuse situations.

Police need more power to arrest and deal in restraining order on site.

EDUCATION

\$50 semester increase (in fee) has been hardship to many women on campus, particularly Moorpark College.

More job skills training is needed.

OLDER WOMEN

Loneliness of older women often turns them to younger men for companionship; men often end up spending their money.

Need assistance in finding rentals that will participate in HUD Section 8 program.

More frequent bus service or, transportation service that will allow for not only medical visits, etc. but personal (shopping and other) businesses as well.

Difficult to cope with trying to arrange for health care, transportation, legal advice, and housing.

TEMPORARY SHELTER

Homeless need place to come to and receive shelter, food, and other assistance, on a temporary basis.

Homeless need temporary assistance including finding jobs.

DISABLED

Need for door to door service for disabled who cannot walk far, who need emergency transportation, and who are in wheelchairs. Perhaps a fund to pay for a van, cab service, and for drivers.

VENTURA COUNTY SERVICES SURVEY

1985

Surveys mailed out: approximately 500

Total responses to mail-out: 66

Services Provided in Areas of:

Medical Services	15
Financial counseling/svcs	-0-
Financial Assistance	4
Lower Cost Legal Counseling	1
Family Counseling	4
Personal Counseling	10
Child Care	5
Establishing credit	1
Job Counseling	7
Lower Cost Housing	2
Repairs to Home	-0-
Food	11
Transportation	5
Recreational opportunities	8
Education	15
Domestic Violence Assist.	3
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	1
Child Abuse	3
In Home Services	3
Shelter for homeless	2
Adult Protective Svcs.	1
Veterans Services	2
Youth programs	9
(cool homes, divorce counseling, crisis intervention)	
Gay/Lesbian support group	1
Rape & Sexual Abuse	1
Working women's support group	1
Women's support group	1
Mental/development Disorders	4
Adoption/Adoptees svcs.	3

Client Age Groups (16 organizations provided statistics)

<u>AGE GROUP</u>	<u>CLIENTS</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
0-5	2,374	5.96
6-12	7,095	17.79
13-19	15,086	37.83
20-30	6,606	16.57
31-50	4,693	11.77
51-61	1,886	4.53
62+	<u>2,217</u>	<u>5.55</u>
Total:	39,877	100.00

Client Ethnicity (13 organizations provided statistics)

<u>ETHNICITY</u>	<u>CLIENTS</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
Anglo	8,433	73.85
Mex/Am	2,802	24.53
Asian	177	1.55
Native American	<u>11</u>	<u>0.10</u>
Total:	11,423	100.00

Client Gender (15 organizations provided statistics)

<u>GENDER</u>	<u>CLIENTS</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
Male	11,483	35.81
Female	<u>20,581</u>	<u>64.19</u>
Total:	23,064	100.00

Geographic Origin of Clients

<u>AREA</u>	<u>CLIENTS</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
Camarillo	3,767	13.5
El Rio	7	0.2
Fillmore	380	1.4
Montalvo	7	0.2
Moorpark	519	1.9
Newbury Park	752	2.7
Oak View	345	1.2
Ojai	111	0.4
Oxnard	6,012	21.6
Piru	20	0.1
Port Hueneme	1,292	4.6
Point Mugu	71	0.3
Santa Paula	2,984	10.7
Saticoy	63	0.2
Simi Valley	1,879	6.7
Somis	59	0.2
Thousand Oaks	5,339	19.2
Ventura	3,136	11.3
Unincorporated area	<u>1,024</u>	<u>3.6</u>
Total:	27,767	100.0

CENSUS DATA - VENTURA COUNTY PROFILE

Data for this summary comes largely from the 1980 census with more current information only available for certain categories.

TOTAL POPULATION

Population estimates from the State of California place Ventura County's population at 589,499 in 1985. This is an increase of 11.4% over the 1980 population. By city, the population figures are as follows:

Camarillo	43,693
Fillmore	10,278
Ojai	7,589
Oxnard	121,303
Port Hueneme	20,368
Santa Paula	22,681
Simi Valley	86,112
Thousand Oaks	94,164
Ventura	84,830
Moorpark	13,921
Unincorporated	84,560

ETHNICITY AND SEX

The 1980 census showed Ventura County with a population almost equally divided between men (49.8%) and women (50.2%) with the largest ethnic group as Caucasian.

White	59.5%
Black	2.1%
Hispanic	20.9%
Asian-Pacific	3.0%
Native American	1.1%
Other	13.5%

AGE

The median age of the general population in 1980 was 28.6. The median age for females was slightly higher at 29.4. The age groupings in 1980 were as follows:

0 - 4 years	8.1%
5 - 19 years	26.9%
20 - 24 years	8.8%
25 - 54 years	39.9%
55 - 64 years	8.0%
65 plus	8.3%

For women in 1980, the age groupings were:

Under 20 years	34.0%
20 - 24 years	8.5%
25 - 34 years	17.0%
35 - 44 years	13.0%
45 - 54 years	9.7%

55 - 64 years	8.2%
65 plus	9.6%

EDUCATION

For people of both sexes 25 years and older in 1980, a large percentage had at least some high school education and many attended some college.

8 years or less of school	13%
1 to 4 years of high school	44%
1 to 3 years of college	24%
4 or more years of college	18%

MARITAL STATUS

In 1980, 59% of the women in the County were married; 21% were single; 2.6% were separated; 8.6% were widowed; and 8.5% were divorced.

FAMILIES

Of the 134,757 families in 1980, females headed 12% of them and within 69% of those female headed families were children under the age of 18. The average family had 2.7 persons per household.

OCCUPATIONS

In 1983, the Employment Development Department reported the total labor force in Ventura County as 269,500. Unemployment dropped to about 5.4% in 1984.

Unemployment rates differ, however, between sexes and races.

Unemployment Data - 1982

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Labor Force</u>	<u>Unemployed</u>
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Male	49.7	58.6	51.2
Female	50.3	41.4	48.8
White	73.0	74.4	62.0
Black	2.1	2.1	3.1
Native American	1.1	1.1	2.2
Asian	3.0	2.9	3.0
Hispanic	20.9	19.6	29.7

(Source: Commission on Human Concerns 1984-85 Annual Plan)

HOUSING

According to the 1980 census, there were 183,384 housing units in the County. Some 72% were single family units and 28% were multiple. Some 66% of the population owned their dwelling place and 34% rented. The median home value was \$93,200 in 1980 and the median rent was \$287.

INCOME

The median income in 1980 was \$21,236. Income levels for the total population were:

Less than \$5,000	7.6%
\$5,000 to \$10,000	12.1%
\$10,000 to \$15,000	13.6%
\$15,000 to \$20,000	13.1%
\$20,000 to \$25,000	13.2%
\$25,000 to \$35,000	20.3%
\$35,000 to \$50,000	13.3%
\$50,000 or more	6.7%

The median family income as of April 1983 is now estimated to be \$30,600.

In 1980, there were 34,941 households with social security income and 12,929 with public assistance income.

Females headed up 15,698 of the families in 1980 and 21% had annual incomes at the poverty level or lower. This represented close to 40% of all the families at or below the poverty level. Ninety-three percent of these female headed households at the poverty level had one or more children under the age of 18. In 1981, the number of female headed households increased to 18.8%.

Incomes were substantially different between female and married couple households. In 1980, the mean family income for a married couple with children under 18 was \$28,853. For those couples without children under 18, their mean income was \$27,481.

In female headed households, however, the mean income was \$12,118 when the woman had children under the age of 18 and was \$18,471 when she did not have children under 18.

Because of lower incomes, women are greater users of public assistance programs. In 1981, 76% of AFDC WIN program recipients 16 years and older were women. (WIN is a work incentive program for AFDC recipients.)

Elderly women constitute a large share of those who are poor in our society. While about 15% of all people age 65 and over live below the poverty threshold set by the Census Bureau (on a national basis) 32% of all single women have incomes below this level and 50% have incomes below the near poverty threshold. The reason for this situation is twofold. First women have traditionally been encouraged to live as economic dependents of working men and are thus unprepared to financially support themselves. That dependency is often terminated by death or divorce. Second, discrimination against women in opportunities for employment, in training for job advancement, in credit, and in salary, pension and benefit levels has increased the likelihood of poverty and financial insecurity for older women. (Taken from the 1984-85 Commission on Human Concerns annual report)

This same trend is found on a national basis. In 1980, 75% of the elderly below the poverty line were women. The poverty rate for older women is twice that for older men with the median income for women in 1980 being

\$4,957.

The poverty level is greater for Black and Hispanic older women. Some 66% of black older women were "Officially poor" and 82% were "near poverty" in 1980. (Information from report, "A Profile of Older Women in the 1980's").

COMPARISON OF TELEPHONE SURVEY
POPULATION TO SELECT
1980 CENSUS DATA

Telephone Survey Population

228 women surveyed

Ethnic Background

White	62.7%
Black	6.6%
Hispanic	22.4%
Asian-Pacific	3.5%
Native American	2.6%
Other	2.2%

Women Primary wage earners

27.2%

Age Group

Under 20	3.5%
20 - 29	21.1%
30 - 39	31.1%
40 - 49	18.0%
50 - 59	13.2%
60 - 69	9.2%
70 +	3.9%

Years of Schooling

6 years or less	.8%
7 to 9 years	6.6%
10 to 11 years	9.2%
12 years	35.9%
13 to 16 years	43.9%
17 or more	3.5%

Marital Status

Never married	14%
Married	67.1%
Married-separated	1.3%
Divorced	12.3%
Widowed	5.3%

1980 Census Data for County

Total population = 529,176
Women = 265,804

Ethnic Background (both sexes)

White	59.5%
Black	2.1%
Hispanic	20.9%
Asian Pacific	3.0%
Native American	1.1%
Other	13.5%

Female headed households

12%

Age group (all females in County)

Under 20	34.0%
20 - 24	8.5%
25 - 34	17.0%
35 - 44	13.0%
45 - 54	9.7%
55 - 64	8.2%
65 +	9.6%

Years of School (both sexes - people
25 years and older)

8 years or less	13%
1 to 4 of High school	44%
1 to 3 of college	24%
4 years of college or more	18%

Marital Status (females)

Single	21%
Married	59%
Separated	2.6%
Divorced	8.5%
Widowed	8.6%

Renters versus owners

Own	65%
Rent	35%

Income

Less than \$5,000	3.5%
5,000 to 10,000	7.0%
10,000 to 15,000	12.3%
15,000 to 20,000	16.2%
20,000 to 25,000	11.0%
25,000 to 30,000	16.2%
30,000 to 40,000	13.6%
40,000 to 50,000	12.7%
over 50,000	7.0%

Renters versus owners (men and women)

Own	66%
Rent	34%

Income (Men and Women)

Less than \$5,000	7.6%
5,000 to 10,000	12.1%
10,000 to 15,000	13.6%
15,000 to 20,000	13.1%
20,000 to 25,000	13.2%
25,000 to 35,000	20.3%
35,000 to 50,000	13.3%
50,000 and over	6.7%

9 to 5 VENTURA WORKING WOMEN'S SURVEY OF VENTURA COUNTY WORKING WOMEN

First sampling taken at Ventura Street Fair: 12/2/84 - total of 70 responses
 Second sampling taken from various sources: 1/1/85 - 4/1/85 - total of 186 responses
 Total number of responses: 256

POINTS:

1. Not every question was answered by each respondent. In most cases, percentages were based on number of actual responses to any given question.
2. The section of the survey ranking women's issues in order of importance was answered unevenly so results given are a "best effort".

RESPONDENTS PROFILE:

21% - minority women

20% - women over 40 years of age

46 respondents from the 2nd sampling identified as belonging to a union.

Specific Profile Info from the 186 2nd Sampling Respondents:

6 of the respondents were male.

29% - head of household

58% - have children

73% - earn under \$15,000/year

9.6% - earn over \$20,000/year. 18 people in this category; 6 of these were men.

33.8% - receive no overtime pay for overtime worked.

11.3% - receive only comp time for overtime worked. (note: comp time is inadequate compensation by law).

59% - do not know their legal rights as employees.

Question: How can public officials help? Rank issues in order of importance.
 (Note: This section of the survey was answered unevenly, so results are considered to be a "best effort" though felt to be fairly accurate.)

Number one issue - Promote equal pay and higher pay for undervalued women's jobs.

Number two issue - Support existing job rights/programs to overcome discrimination in hiring, promotion, and training.

Question: Overall do you think political officials are concerned enough with working women's issues & problems? (note: 99.2% responded to this survey question.)

83% - No 13% - Not Sure 4% - Yes

74% - feel their salaries do not keep up with the cost of living.

55% - are forbidden to discuss salary with co-workers (Note: Legislation has been passed in California making it illegal for employers to forbid such discussion.)

89% - feel women's jobs in general are underpaid.

Approximately 91% said employers do not provide assistance to working parents by way of child care, part-time work with benefits, flex-time, or job sharing.

91.4% - receive no retirement/pension counseling.

75% - receive no seniority salary reward.

88% - experience stress from job demands, frustrations, fatigue.

62% - use non-adjustable chairs and/or equipment.

83% - experience poor lighting.

OFFICE AUTOMATION SECTION OF SURVEY:

Total of 102 responses.

70% - experience inadequate rest breaks.

75% - state their work is monotonous and repetitive.

77% - state they have little control over pace of work.

76% - receive no raise in pay with raise in productivity.

SURVEY FOUND A FEW PLUSES:

Only 17% of workers using automated equipment experience work monitoring. (Note: 9to5 feels this ideally should be 0%).

56% said their employers offer accurate job descriptions.

76% said that their employers do offer job posting.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

"THE FEMINIZATION OF POVERTY"

An important document which contributes to an overall understanding of what is happening to many women on a state and national basis is the report called, "The Feminization of Poverty", which was released by the State of California in January of 1985.

The report was prepared by a task force called by Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy to investigate, "the relationship between social and economic factors and the increasing numbers of women in poverty, and to make recommendations to improve the economic status of women."

The report was designed to address six issues which were identified as major factors contributing to the feminization of poverty:

- . "Good quality, privately-provided child care is expensive and hard to find and child care allowances for poor women on AFDC are inadequate.
- . The vast majority of absent fathers do not pay child support, leaving mothers to bear alone the burden of the economic support of their children.
- . Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) does not adequately support female-headed households, nor raise them out of poverty.
- . Occupational segregation distances women from the better-paying jobs that men hold.
- . Wage discrimination leaves women with only 59 percent (current data puts it at 63.6%) of the male wage, which is inadequate to support families.
- . Older women and displaced homemakers are particularly economically disadvantaged after divorce or the deaths of husbands and are often ineligible for welfare, medical insurance, unemployment insurance or disability."

Additional issues covered by the "Feminization of Poverty" (FOP) report were: discrimination against minority women, lack of access to health care and health insurance for women, and sex discrimination in education.

The FOP task force found that more than half of all poverty households are headed by women although female headed households are only one-fifth of all households in the population. And the number of female headed households is growing.

In 1981, the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity noted that, "All other things being equal, if the proportion of the poor in female-householder families were to continue to increase at the same rate as it did from 1967 to 1978 the poverty population would be composed solely of women and children before the year 2000,"

Based on the study, the major recommendations of the report were:

Under Child Care

1. Work related policy changes including: paid maternity leave; job security policies guaranteeing a parent's job after parental leave has been taken; more employer assisted child care.
2. Indirect and direct subsidies for child care expenses and facilities.
3. Better licensing procedures for child care providers.
4. Restoration and expansion of Federal support for child care services and programs.

Under Child Support

1. A minimum AFDC grant which when combined with food stamps equals 100% or more of the poverty level.
2. Continued cost of living increases for AFDC recipients.
3. A re-structuring of the work incentive program of AFDC to lead to long term employment.
4. Extension of Medi-Cal eligibility.
5. Increased subsidized child care for AFDC recipients who are working, in training, or seeking employment.

Under Comparable Worth

1. Funding for a task force on comparable worth.
2. Passage of legislation to create an Advisory Commission on Pay Equity.
3. Require employers doing \$20,000 worth of business with the state to eliminate pay disparities between men and women in comparable jobs.
4. Stronger enforcement of equal opportunity laws.
5. More job opportunities for women in male dominated fields through more job re-training opportunities.
6. More information available to the public about the Wage Disclosure Act and stricter enforcement of the act.

Under Occupational and Pay Disparities

1. More women and minorities should participate in job training programs.
2. Child and dependent care should be increased for Job Training participants.
3. Studies of job training segregation should be conducted by the Employment Development Department.
4. Greater credit or incentives should be given to the job training providers who provide training to women in non-traditional occupations.
5. There should be adequate representation on Private Industry Councils of the special concerns of women such as displaced homemakers.
6. To reach more unemployed minority women, Job Training programs should offer English and Educational Remediation classes.

Under Income Security for Midlife and Older Women

1. Elimination of employment barriers for older women.
2. Increased funding to re-structure and expand those programs currently serving the displaced homemaker.
3. Increased financial support for displaced homemakers who are in training and educational programs.
4. Upgrading and expansion of programs which employ older women.
5. Reform and expansion of programs which currently inadequately serve the needs of midlife women.

6. Provide a guaranteed minimum income for people not covered by existing State and Federal programs.
7. Urge the Federal Government to reduce the inequities in Social Security programs.
8. Women should not be penalized in social security benefits for years spent at home taking care of dependents.
9. There should be protection of the Social Security minimum benefit.
10. Pension reform is needed at the State and Federal level to insure women are not denied benefits.
11. Increases are needed in the benefits under SSI and more assets should be allowed in determining benefits.

WORKSHOP RESULTS
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The Commission for Women (CFW) followed the same process used by the CHC in developing their goals and priorities. The facilitator first presented a summary of the data collected through a survey of County women including the comments obtained from the public hearings.

Each commissioner also received a composite picture of the typical respondent in the survey as well as a preliminary report on service agencies surveyed in the County.

In the area of needs identification, some 15.8% of the women surveyed said low cost housing was a priority. Other needs cited were: child care (13.6%); medical services (9.6%); recreation (8.8%); education (8.3%); financial assistance (7.9%); and job counseling (7.9%).

Most of the women surveyed said they did not know where to go for help.

In those areas where more services are needed for women, most of the respondents (41) mentioned child care. This was the highest priority item under work related problems. Other services needed were: job counseling (15); educational opportunities (12); job placement (9); job training (7); equal pay (6); and job opportunities (4).

Another category of service needs was mental-physical. Services were needed in the areas of domestic violence (23); counseling - personal, family, and financial (22); child abuse (20); medical services (9); alcohol/drug abuse (8); rape protection-education -help (6); and family planning (6).

Basic needs mentioned were low cost housing (23); financial assistance (20); transportation (6); and food (3).

Financial needs listed were for low cost legal assistance (6) and establishing credit (4).

Other needs were mentioned by 11 respondents and 7 mentioned recreation.

A last question asked of the respondents was for them to list additional needs of women. These needs were: Child care with people you can trust (11); personal counseling services and support groups (9); other (8); lack of equal opportunities (8); job counseling-training (7); domestic violence services (6); regulations in the welfare system which work against women (6); recreation services for children (5); job opportunities (4); job placement (4); comparable worth (3); better pay (3); help for single mothers (3); help for pregnant teens (3); legal counseling (2); financial assistance (2); low cost housing needed (2).

The CFW then was asked to list and prioritize the issues and needs which were identified in the surveys and public hearings. Each member then ranked, from 1 to 5, those issues according to their priority.

The number one priority was a lack of affordable housing in the County and the problem of dealing with homeless individuals.

The second priority was education which included a lack of awareness of available services, illiteracy, the need for job training, and related financial issues.

The third priority was counseling services - including those for legal, personal, financial, job and family needs. Also included under this category was family planning, domestic violence, crisis counseling, alcohol/drug abuse and child abuse needs.

The fourth priority was child care and recreation services for children.

The fifth priority was divorce issues for women and the difficulty women have in collecting child support once it has been awarded. Under this category were related issues of legal services, crisis counseling and the need for a legal referral service for women going through a divorce.

Additional issues which surfaced but which did not get assigned a priority number were: the need for additional domestic violence shelters; transportation is poor in the County; and the need for more medical and financial services.

Once the five high priority issues had been identified, the CFW as a group then developed specific objectives for each issue.

Under housing, the CFW recommended: Providing public information about the severity of the housing problem; advocating for low-cost housing; cooperating with other groups having the same goals of providing more affordable housing; and gathering information on available financial aid.

In the area of education, their recommendations were: to lobby the Board of Supervisors to fund the library information proposal (a guide to service availability in the County); to create a greater awareness of service availability (a major priority); to cooperate with the library in promoting literacy programs and the library information proposal; to investigate the feasibility of funds and programs for job training; to investigate vocational programs already in the County; to gather information on available funding for training re-entering women; and to expand the women's history event and recognition program for County women.

Under counseling, recommendations were: information needs to be disseminated to the public to convince them of the value and benefits of counseling; to study what services are available and what gaps exist in free clinic services; to provide more domestic violence services including information about existing programs and perhaps adding another shelter.

For child care, the recommendations were: to continue the cooperative arrangement with United Way to link needs with funding sources; to continue educating private industry and local government on the feasibility of providing child care services; to continue data gathering about child care needs and services in the County; and to recognize businesses and agencies which provide effective child care programs for their employees.

Under divorce and child care support, CFW recommended: regular workshops

on divorce issues; making the victim restitution program more generally known to the public; cooperating with the child support division of the DA's office to publicize their work and perhaps do this through a workshop; work with the DA to improve the services offered through their child support division; develop a referral list of effective divorce attorneys; encourage the feasibility and development of another low-cost support group similar to the one which formerly operated in the County called "Breakthrough".

The CFW also had additional concerns among which was a need to conduct public workshops on a variety of topics relevant to the needs of women. The public hearings and telephone survey revealed an information gap on subjects ranging from how to collect child support to how to select a good divorce attorney. Conducting workshops on these subjects will be part of the educational efforts of the Commission.

Another area which emerged as a priority was expanding the number of women actively involved with the Commission. The training and development of Commission members was also identified as being important to the long term growth of the organization.

A major priority which emerged from analyzing the workload of the CFW over the next five years is the need for a permanent paid staff person to help coordinate and carry out Commission activities. While Commission members have volunteered hundreds of hours to CFW activities, the number of long term projects which need work demands the presence of a staff person who can oversee their completion. In addition, this person could be a resource in terms of soliciting other financial assistance for the CFW and be a focal point for women needing information about services in Ventura County.

Like many organizations the CFW started out as a voluntary group. But if it is to grow and thrive and carry out its five year plan, it must have professional assistance. That can best come from a paid staff person who is accountable to the CFW directors.

As a final note, the CFW reminded itself of the need to reserve some time and energy for its annual women's banquet. It is a major event honoring Ventura County women and their accomplishments.

JOINT WORKSHOP RESULTS

(THE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN AND THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN CONCERNS)

The third workshop for the CFW and the CHC was a joint one designed to separate out responsibilities and to look at areas where cooperative efforts would be beneficial.

In the area of housing, the two groups agreed to work on advocating for more affordable housing in the County. Two specific areas they will work on in 1985-86 are investigating the idea of bonding or insurance for people moving into housing who cannot come up with a first and last month's rent plus deposit. The idea proposed was to allow people to buy insurance for the last month's rent and deposit. A second area of joint responsibility would be to advocate for more affordable housing within each city's General Plan.

As a separate item for the CFW, they will ask that a representative of their Commission serve on the coalition looking into the problem of homelessness in the County. Currently the CHC is already represented.

Under the area of public relations, separately and jointly the CFW and CHC will conduct workshops addressing need issues in the coming year. They set a goal of conducting one workshop per year.

The CHC will also take the lead in establishing a central volunteer bank for coordinating all volunteer recruitment and placement in the County.

In 1986-87, the groups plan a joint campaign of media exposure with each group developing their own materials. CHC will be the lead agency in developing a how-to manual on publicity. It would be available to service agencies, possibly as a fund raising tool.

The two groups also targeted developing a joint speaker's bureau in 1987-88.

In the area of education and re-training, the two groups will, on an on-going basis, investigate funding sources and available resources in the areas of job training and college re-entry. The CHC will focus on low-income individuals while the CFW will focus on women (with an emphasis on women in poverty).

A project needing immediate attention is a speaker's bureau or program for high school counselors on preparing young women for the "real world" and the need to prepare themselves for higher paying jobs.

Both Commissions also wanted to voice their support of tax breaks for businesses and industry who provide re-training for employees.

In the area of counseling and medical services, joint efforts were approved for 1985 and subsequent years in assessing the services currently provided by free clinics in the County. The groups also decided to look at the data to be generated by United Way's needs assessment.

Both groups stated their support of de-centralizing medical services to make them more available to the needy and alleviate some of the transportation problems the poor have in gaining access to medical care.

A final area identified was to work with the County Health Department to promote preventative medicine.

In the area of child care, a current and ongoing activity of the CFW and CHC is to inform industry of how on-site or industry supported child care services can help their businesses. CFW will also advocate for tax breaks for companies who provide on-site child care for employees. The CFW also pledged to make the CHC members more aware of how industry supported child care programs work and which companies are currently providing that service to their employees.

As a joint activity, both groups will explore and advocate for local tax incentives for cooperative child care efforts by business and industry and they suggested that perhaps the Private Industry Council could act as a coordinator in this effort.

Another suggestion was for child care centers to offer a "corporate rate" to employees of companies where large numbers of them are using a certain child care center.

The last area of discussion was divorce and child support. In 1986-87, a joint effort will be made to work with the DA's office to help women with their child support problems as well as provide them with a list of competent lawyers and support groups.

In 1987-88, the groups decided to look into funding for another program similar to "Breakthrough" which offered low-cost workshops to women and a support network.

At the end of the joint session, it was agreed that the consultants would prepare more specific objectives and a timeline which would be reviewed and adjusted by the respective groups.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: Based on the data collected during the needs assessment, the Commission for Women identified five priority areas. This section is divided into those high priority areas plus there is one additional sub-section called "Other". Each priority area includes the pertinent public testimony, telephone survey results, other data, as well as the recommendations made by the Commission. This section then became the basis for the CFW's five year plan and scheduling of activities. The actual work plan is contained in the Appendix.

HOUSING

The lack of affordable housing in Ventura County is a critical problem for many women and their families. And it is a concern shared by low and moderate income individuals because the cost of housing has escalated faster than their incomes.

Housing Shortfall for Women

It is not uncommon, for example, for women to spend forty to fifty percent of their income for rent and yet earn too much to qualify for city sponsored low-cost housing projects.

One woman in Ojai said she makes \$16,000 a year in salary but her rent prevents her from living a decent life. "I am in my late fifties," she stated, "and I am beginning to live like a bag lady. I feel it is greed with owners. Even I will not argue about inflation, but nothing has risen like housing."

Some of the women surveyed suggested rent control as an option. "We pay 43% of our income for rent and I don't know how a female head of household could possibly hope to support her family and pay rent on those kinds of wages most women make," said one Newbury Park resident.

Often those who are able to qualify for some kind of housing assistance from HUD face additional problems. Many women testified that the waiting list for HUD approved housing was from one and a half to three years. There is also a shortage of landlords who will accept HUD certificates. Because it is a seller's market, landlords can pick and choose who they want to rent to and they may not want the inconvenience of going through the Housing Authority for partial payment of rent.

There was an indication by some women that part of the shortage in HUD low-cost housing is because developers are not living up to their agreements. One Simi Valley resident said some of the housing projects in the city were built with the understanding that half of them would be HUD rentals. "One in particular got their permits that way," she said, "and now they refuse to rent to anybody on HUD."

Several women suggested the establishment of a referral agency which would keep a list of landlords who had units available for HUD rentals or people willing to share their homes. It would help alleviate some of the frustration of people who are looking for housing.

"There is absolutely nothing (out there)," stated one woman, "You practically have to know someone in order to beg and plead to let you in, to rent you a room for maybe \$300, \$400, or \$500 a month. Whereas, if a group of people would get together an agency to refer or to screen these people... there would be someone there helping these people to not fall to just anything."

Those women (and men) who are waiting for affordable housing meanwhile often

fall into what was called "the trap" by one person. They move into motels where they pay \$400 to \$600 a month which does not leave them any money to save toward move-in costs at a more permanent home,

"In addition," said one woman, "some of the motels are known for prostitution and drug activities making them a very poor environment for children in particular."

Move in costs are especially prohibitive for many women as most landlords require a first and last month's rent plus a deposit. This can be a substantial money for anyone to put down but is a special hardship for women, especially those who are out on their own for the first time.

One woman testified, "Consider the women separated, divorced, single, with one or more children and a limited income. In all likelihood, she has no job history, no rental history, no credit rating...she definitely has no savings to pay the initial sum of \$1,400 to \$1,500 to rent an apartment. She has less to negotiate with than those who have ready money, verification of credit, and less or no children."

Even women who have the income to qualify them for housing often are seen as less desirable tenants by landlords, especially if they have children. They may be seen as less stable or as being a disruptive or destructive element in a neighborhood or building complex. Women are still treated as second class citizens even when they have proven themselves to be financially responsible. And again, in a seller's market, women may be forced to either pay more for housing or to live in less desirable housing because they are given fewer options.

A related problem of housing is women who stay in abusive situations because they feel they have no where to go. This is a dependency issue but it is also related to housing.

One woman who works at the battered women's shelter in Simi Valley stated that many women go back to their spouses, "for various reasons but sometimes because it's so scary out there and there isn't anywhere to go."

Homelessness

A growing national problem and one which is found in Ventura County as well, is how to help the large number of people who are homeless in our society. While some of these people are transients, many more are those who are just too poor to afford housing and who have, for one reason or another, been dislocated.

In 1984, a group of agencies concerned about the plight of the homeless, formed a coalition and conducted a survey of homeless individuals in Ventura County.

They found that 75% (393 out of 488) of the homeless are families and that 162 of them are children under the age of 13. Most of those people in the survey are displaced local residents with 94% of them having lived in the County at least a year.

Some fifty-five percent of the homeless surveyed live in RV's, campers,

tents or cars because they lack the funds for permanent housing. Twenty percent of the homeless were employed, 42 percent were unemployed, and 14 percent were disabled.

So far attempts to solve the problem have not been successful because of the reluctance by citizens and city governments to establish any temporary shelters such as a campground.

Currently a limited number of social service organizations such as the Salvation Army and Catholic Social services will put people up in a motel for a few days but that is only a short term solution at best.

The Zoe Christian Center in Oxnard does provide shelter to the homeless for limited periods, usually one or two weeks. In 1983, they housed 700 people; in 1984 1,200 families; and in 1985 they expect to house 2,000.

In 1984, Zoe provided 20,000 nights of shelter with 40 percent of the people at the shelter being single with children. Even so, they had to turn away 15 families a week.

Besides being without a permanent home, however, these growing number of homeless people face other problems as well. Children of these families cannot attend school because they have no permanent address. The adults have trouble getting a job because they have no place to clean up for an interview and often have problems with transportation. And even when they do have a car, they may have to take their children with them during the day if they get a job because they have no one to care for them.

So often in our society, once you leave the workplace - especially if you have limited or no financial resources - it is very difficult to re-enter again. People are required to ante up a great deal of money to get back in the game - for housing, for jobs, and to re-enter the community.

Another group of women (and men) who are particularly beset by housing problems are the elderly. With the constant rise in rents everywhere, many of them are being forced out of the County or they may make sacrifices in other ways to pay their rent. One woman stated, "These people are eating less and less and less and therefore, they are really subjected to illness and disease that comes along and it's a terrible vicious cycle."

"And it's really difficult because so many of these people, most of these people, if not all of them, have worked hard all their lives, have cared for other people. A lot of them are alone."

Often seniors, because of health problems, may have their homes sold to pay for convalescent care. And once they move into a care center, they never have a home to go back to.

One speaker stated at a public hearing that he had run a survey 10 years ago and found 200 seniors eligible for subsidized housing but who couldn't find any. Recently the same person ran another survey and found 8,000 seniors who were eligible but couldn't find housing. "It's getting worse," he stated. "A few years from now it's going to be 12,000."

The lack of affordable housing in the County, however, is really only the tip of the iceberg. What it indicates is an increase in the number of poor in our country. A trend which is expected to continue under existing government policies.

One senior advocate noted, "I had two people come to see me today, One was an old man, very old. He has a wife 20 years younger than him but she's very sickly. They're living in a run-down RV on the beach. He was notified yesterday that he has to get off that beach by tomorrow, or they're going to impound it...Now that's all they have to live in. I said to him, 'Why don't you move it?' He said he has a tire that blew out as he came into the place...He has no gasoline and no money. He was collecting aluminum cans and scavaging to keep alive.

"Now I had a woman who came in who has a handicapped son. And she's living in an old car at the beach. She was told she has to move it tomorrow. And she has no gasoline. In fact, she walked a couple of miles to my office.

"Now I was able to give each of them enough money to get straightened out temporarily...but there are hundreds of people like this."

Summary

Housing is a primary concern of many women in the County because of its costs and the restrictions placed on women, especially those with children.

There also appears to be little coordination of housing information by HUD and waiting periods for HUD approved housing are excessive.

The plight of homeless people is even worse and they are a growing problem in our society. The children within these homeless families probably suffer the most as they do not have a stable family life, do not attend school, and suffer from other problems related to their mobile lifestyle.

Elderly women in our society are another group who are disproportionately affected by the lack of low-cost housing. Some of them are forced to compromise on food and medical care in order to ensure themselves a place to live. These people are often on fixed incomes which do not rise as much as whatever "the market will bear" in housing costs.

One suggestion brought out during the public hearings was the need for cities to be more sensitive to the housing problems in our County. One person suggested cities should ease zoning restrictions to allow, for example, smaller lot sizes, or for unrelated families to live together. Another idea was to build more "granny flats". All these ideas were expressed so that cities and other public agencies will begin to look for new options to solve the housing problems in our County.

Recommendations

Based on the survey data and the public hearings testimony, the Commission

for Women designated the housing problem as the number one priority.

Their recommendations to resolve some of these problems were:

- 1) To provide information about the severity of the housing problem and what resources are available through press releases and other public forums. They will coordinate this effort with other agencies interested in housing in the County.
- 2) To appoint a member of the CFW to the Coalition for the Homeless to represent the needs of women.
- 3) To cooperate with other groups having the same goals of providing more affordable housing.
- 4) To jointly with the Commission on Human Concerns, make a presentation to each City Council in Ventura County on the need for more affordable housing (especially as it pertains to women's needs) within each city's General Plan. The CFW will also monitor when each city begins the process of updating its General Plan.
- 5) To jointly investigate with the CHC the possibility of a bonding or insurance program for renters to cover last month's rent and a security deposit. This program would make it easier for women to gain entrance to more housing.

EDUCATION AND
PAY EQUITY

This priority area encompasses a great number of issues from job training to a lack of knowledge about what services are available in the County for women (also covered under Crisis/Counseling Services). But perhaps the overriding issue is the question of equal opportunity to compete for well paying jobs and equal pay for equal worth.

The basic inequality between what men earn and what women earn is at the very core of many of women's difficulties for without the opportunity to work at jobs which pay more than the minimum wage, many women and their families will be forced into poverty. And because women's labor has generally been undervalued, they have been underpaid in all occupations in which they constitute a large number.

Interestingly enough, in the telephone survey conducted for the Commission for Women, most of the respondents (92%) said they had never been the victim of discrimination. And of the thirteen people who said they had suffered discrimination, six said it was in the form of not receiving a promotion, four said it was because of their ethnic background, three reported wage discrimination, three said chauvenism, and one person said she was the victim of language discrimination.

What the telephone survey reveals is that most women are not even aware of the pervasive discrimination which exists in our society, especially as it pertains to wages.

A recent article in the News Chronicle (July 10, 1985), for example, discussed a possible comparable worth study to be undertaken by the County of Ventura. The County employs 5,000 people, 52.7 percent of which are female. Approximately 49% of them earn \$9 per hour but only 10% of the males earn that amount. Twenty-four percent of the female employees earn less than \$7 compared to 7 percent of the male workers. And only 14% of the women working for the County hold jobs which pay \$55,000 a year or more.

Barry Hammitt, Executive Director of the County's largest public employees union stated, "The problem is that wages were set on the fact that the male was the head of household. He had more responsibilities and needed more money. Women could and did work for less money."

Ventura County is only one example of what is happening on a much broader scale in private and public organizations. The idea of comparable worth goes back to 1981 when the US Supreme Court ruled that sex discrimination for comparable jobs was illegal under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Soon after, workers for the City of San Jose went on strike which

resulted in wage adjustments in underpaid jobs dominated by women. Another landmark decision came in 1983, when the State of Washington was ordered to pay more than 15,000 employees up to \$1 billion in back pay due to discriminatory pay practices. More recently, the City of Los Angeles agreed to a pay boost for women as a result of a complaint filed with the Federal Economic Employment Opportunity Commission four years ago. When fully implemented, the settlement will cost the city about \$12 million per year.

While these signs are heartening, the fact remains that women still earn only 63.6% of what men earn. Information from the Labor Department estimates that in 1983, the median income for full-time workers was \$21,881 for men and \$13,915 for women.

In the last decade, the number of women in the workplace has increased from 37 million to 50 million. However, most women remain employed in five main occupations - secretarial, cashiers, bookkeepers, registered nurses, and waitresses - the same five occupations they were in ten years ago.

Women, according to the Labor Bureau figures, have shown some slight gains in income over the 10 year period. In 1975, the median income for women was 58.8% of men's median income. More women have also entered "non-traditional" fields. A sample of jobs held last year by women included: doctors, 16%; registered nurses, 96%; lawyers, 16.1%; engineers, 6.2%; computer programmers, 35.4%; welders, 4.7%; economists, 39.6%; bartenders, 48.9%; airplane pilots and navigators, 2.1%; and education and job counselors, 54.2%.

A majority of women, 53.6% were working or looking for work last year, up 7.3% from 10 years ago. However, for women ages 25 to 54, 70 percent of them are working or seeking jobs. The Labor Bureau report also noted the tremendous increase in the number of working mothers with 59% in the workforce - up 14% from 10 years ago. Most American children under the age of 18 had mothers in the labor force last year. "The vast majority of these children were under 14 years - ages for which all-day care, after-school care or a combination of both is likely to be needed," said the report. "The trend indicates that nursery school attendance or day care in some form is increasingly necessary." (Taken from the Los Angeles Times, June 20, 1985)

In the random survey of Ventura County residents, many of the same trends were found as in the national statistics. Under occupations, 33.8% of the respondents were in clerical-secretarial positions; 20.7% were unemployed; 13.2% were in professional and semi-professional jobs; 11% were homemakers; 8.8% were retired; and 3.1% were managers or supervisors.

One of the issues which surfaced during both the public hearings and the telephone survey was the lack of job opportunities for women, discrimination against older women, and the need for better job training and counseling for women.

One person at the public hearings commented about the choice of careers young women are still making. She said she was at Ventura College and she noticed how many girls were in the secretarial/bookkeeping field where the pay is only \$800 to \$1,000 a month. "I'm a little concerned," she said,

"that the counselors aren't telling them that it's very difficult to support yourself and your children should anything ever go wrong in your life. I really think that they should be aware that it takes more money than \$800 a month to really live these days. And I don't think that that was ever brought, that is being brought, to the awareness of many young people in high school and college, especially in junior college."

Also heard at the public hearings, however, was the complaint by women who are secretaries that many people downgrade their positions and see them as less than professional. "There are some women who enjoy being secretaries. Who feel that they are making a very valuable contribution," said one person...(They don't like) "constantly hearing other women talking about that we have to pull ourselves out of the snakepit of secretarial."

Another woman commented on the same problem. "This is part of what the whole pay equity and comparable worth issue is about. I think if we had some secretaries describing the things they do, we could document and build a case for their work being at least as valuable as some other class of male dominated positions that are maybe earning \$6,000 to \$8,000 more a year just because it's a male dominated position..."

Clearly pay equity (or comparable worth) and equal job opportunities are two of the most important issues for women everywhere. These issues are even more important considering the growing number of single parent households which are primarily run by females. If women are to make any significant strides in creating a better life for themselves and their children, they must be given the tools to do so and economic self-sufficiency is fundamental in that effort.

Information and Referral

Another startling finding of the public hearings and the telephone survey was the lack of knowledge by most women of where to go for services. Some 95 to 100 percent of women questioned on the phone did not know where to find services ranging from child abuse programs to medical care.

Ideas which were discussed to solve the problem included a toll free line for information and referral. One woman brought up the example of Santa Barbara County where though one central number, people can be put in touch with a variety of service agencies. Ventura County does have an information and referral line which operates out of Interface Community but it may be that the line is not well known.

A second suggestion was to lend support to a project which proposes to put service information in the libraries in the same way books are accessed. Currently the Library System is looking into the idea but it will require funding from the Board of Supervisors.

While this idea was accepted as a positive step in informing part of the public, other women at the public hearings said the Library information proposal would not reach many of the neediest women. One Social Worker for the Public Social Service Agency (PSSA) reminded the Commission that many of the women they see won't use particular information and referral

sources. "Most of them do not have the educational know-how to get a job, much less look at a resource book as to what their options are. Options? They're surviving from a day to day situation. These are the women that the Zoe Center sees everyday. These are the women that Interface Domestic Violence sees constantly and has to turn away."

The worker went on to explain how they may refer these women to parenting classes or to get counseling. "To the average person, this is not asking for too much. But when you're facing a 17 year old, who has one baby...Is ostracized by her family. Her boyfriend is not to be counted on...Or even the 23 year old, who has five kids by that time, to go to parenting classes, to find a job, to go to therapy. You might as well ask them to go to the Planet Jupiter. She doesn't know where she's going to sleep tonight... And they end up with drugs, alcohol, or the law. It's a very terrible vicious circle. And the ones who pay the most are the children. And this Commission would do well to address itself to these particular women and their children because these children grow up and it becomes a multi-generation problem."

Summary

Pay equity or comparable worth is a fundamental economic issue which will affect most working women in their careers. For too long, women's labor has been undervalued primarily because it was assumed their pay did not support the family. That is no longer true today and if women are to become economically self-sufficient, they must have the same opportunities as men to earn a decent wage.

Tied to the pay equity issue is a need by women of better job counseling. They have to be directed and trained for jobs which will enable them to support themselves and their families. Otherwise the predictions made in the report, "The Feminization of Poverty", will become more of a reality and a whole generation of women and their children will be impoverished.

Better and more coordinated information is also needed about existing services and this information has to be available to women executives as well as those women on welfare. Better publicity about the existing service hotline in the County will help as will any additional publicity generated by the Commission.

Reaching women in Ventura County is a particularly difficult task because there is no one metropolitan center and the population is spread out among so many different cities. This requires that any publicity effort use as many sources of public information as possible including newspapers, cable tv, group newsletters, bulletin boards, and so on. Only in this way, will women needing services find out about them.

Recommendations

The primary emphasis in this need area was to publicize what services currently exist, to advocate in areas where appropriate, and to direct other actions which pertain to education and income equity. The recommendations of the Commission for Women in these areas were:

- 1) To study jointly with the Commission on Human Concerns the state of job re-training and re-entry programs for women in the County and available funding for same.
- 2) To provide more publicity about what current services are available to women. This will be done through press releases, development of a brochure, and establishment of a speaker's bureau to be jointly operated with the Commission on Human Concerns.
- 3) To conduct public workshops in those areas identified by the needs assessment as high priority areas. Topics to include: workshop on the issue of pay equity; seminar for High School Counselors on preparing young women for the work world; a presentation on what services are available to women, to be coordinated with the Women's Day programs at the Community Colleges; programs in other areas including the value and benefit of counseling, divorce and child support, and the victim restitution program.
- 4) To cooperate with the Library System in promoting the literacy program and the library information proposal.
- 5) To expand the existing Women's History Task Force.
- 6) To expand the annual recognition dinner for women in the County.
- 7) To examine the possibility of funding for a program similar to Breakthrough which provided low-cost workshops for women in the County. This will be a joint project with the Commission on Human Concerns.

CRISIS / COUNSELING SERVICES

The telephone survey and the public hearings revealed a need by many women for a support network in times of crisis and a resource bank for services.

Ventura County has no "women's center" per se. A place where women could come together and discuss problems, find out what resources are available, collaborate on projects, and serve as a focal point for women to improve their status in society. There are a number of different community based organizations, including those at the colleges, which address some of women's needs. But these tend to be narrow in focus and specific to a particular community. Examples would be women's clubs and re-entry centers at colleges. While these programs serve a definite need, they often do not offer broad based participation by women throughout the county.

Oxnard College, for example, has started a support group for welfare mothers who are attending school. The program helps them with tuition and related services such as child care, transportation costs, and personal counseling. Other colleges have re-entry programs for women who in middle age have decided to go to college after having worked for some time or for homemakers who have never entered college. These programs, however, are very specific in purpose. Many of the women at the public hearings expressed a need for support groups to help in other ways.

One woman asked for a support group who could help in accessing the welfare system. "I feel welfare is not exactly helpful," she said. "I happened to be turned down. I was very naive. They asked what do you own? I said, I own a car, that's it, a 1973. They asked what it was worth. I said I didn't know, a thousand dollars. She (the welfare worker) said I didn't qualify because a thousand dollars is all you're allowed to own. It's probably not worth a \$1,000 but nobody told me...so presently I'm living on no income."

The lack of support groups may also prevent women from seeking help from existing agencies.

One woman who helped start a support group at Oxnard College said she was going to bring one of the women to the public hearing but when she went to pick her up, she found her hiding in the laundry room because her boyfriend had been abusing her.

"One of the first issues I wrote on my list of things to talk about," she stated, "is that I feel support groups locally are needed. That women should be able to not just call Ventura and say I'm being abused to some stranger they do not know... this girl had left my phone number in the house. She did not have anybody to call and nobody to turn to, other than to hide in the laundry room and that's sad."

Another woman stated, "Some of them will not call a stranger regardless of how bad the situation is, but they'll call a friend."

Going hand in hand with a lack of support groups for women is a general lack of awareness by many women of what services are available. Depending upon the particular service you talk about, the telephone survey found that from 95 percent to 100 percent of the women questioned did not know where to go for a particular need. At the same time, however, many women did indicate they wanted information about services in the County from child care, to counseling, to child abuse programs, to domestic violence shelters. What appears to be needed in all these cases is a central information and referral center where women (and men) can receive information about services in their area. Interface Community does operate a hotline from Newbury Park, but residents in the northern half of the County may be unaware of it. This again brings up the problem discussed in other sections, namely the difficulty in coordinating services and information in a county divided into 10 different areas with no one regional center. This lack of a central coordinating place insures there will be gaps in some services, duplications in other services, and problems disseminating information about what is available.

Domestic Violence

The need for domestic violence assistance was one of the greatest needs brought out by the telephone survey and it was also brought up by many of the women at the public hearings. The issue of domestic violence included different aspects of the problem from the availability of services to attendant legal questions.

There are currently two battered women shelters in Ventura County. One is in Simi Valley and the other is in Ventura. Each is run by separate agencies. The question was raised about the need for a third shelter - this time in Oxnard. Another question was related to a need for what is called, "second stage" housing which is safe housing for women who are ready to move out of a shelter but who are not ready to be on their own.

There were also concerns shared about women being victimized by the legal system and needing good legal advice in the event they become involved in domestic violence cases.

Women who are in shelters often have trouble seeing an attorney without paying a retainer up front. There is some free legal assistance available in the county, primarily through the free clinics. However, that assistance is limited in nature and waiting lists to see a lawyer are long. (See the section on Divorced Women and Single Heads of Households for a more detailed discussion of women's legal problems)

Police protection in domestic violence cases is another issue women have to cope with under the most difficult circumstances. One woman commented, "If a woman calls the police in a domestic violence problem and she's being battered by her spouse or boyfriend that she's living with, in order for him to be arrested, unless there is very visible signs of violence, she has to take the burden of having him arrested. That's a citizen's arrest. This creates a problem of putting the burden on the woman to accept the responsibility of going through the court process. I would like to see

legislation for women in this county and all counties to take that burden off them as far as helping them get safety, protection from the police without having to assume the responsibility of having him arrested. Police need more power to arrest and also power to deal in a restraining order on sight. Legislation is needed to protect women who are in a violent situation. Free clinics are doing a wonderful job but I think that we need bigger and better services for the free clinics."

These comments point out that while there has been a great deal of progress in recognizing and dealing with the problem of domestic violence in the family, that it still exists. And it can be expected that as the population of Ventura County grows, the need for domestic violence programs in all its forms from education to shelters will also grow. Perhaps the most hopeful sign, however, is the realization by many women that domestic violence is no longer acceptable and there are alternatives.

Summary

The shortage of information about services in the County and the lack of a meeting place for women has created a large gap between those needing services and those providing them. There are a few support groups for women but they tend to be very localized and specialized.

Domestic violence continues to be a problem and it is complicated by a potential shortage of shelters in the County. In addition, women often face many legal problems when they try to end the abuse. Working through the legal bottlenecks will take the cooperation of the judicial and legal system to resolve.

Recommendations

Based on the survey and the public hearing testimony, the Commission for Women voted to focus on a few key areas under this topic. Their recommendations

- 1) To study jointly what services are currently available at the County Free Clinics and what additional services are needed (particularly in the area of legal assistance. Other areas mentioned were: counseling - legal, personal, financial, crisis, job and family; family planning information; information about child abuse; domestic violence; and alcohol/drug abuse programs.
- 2) To continue monitoring domestic violence programs. To investigate the need for second stage housing. And to study the need for another shelter.

CHILD CARE

"Changes in the labor force have made child care an essential service for the majority of American children ...Their mothers work for the same financial and nonfinancial reasons that their fathers work, because they are the sole support, the primary support, or the major provider for their children's economic needs, and because work constitutes an essential part of their personal identity. The issue no longer is whether we need such services, but rather how to assure access to good ones." (Feminization of Poverty, January, 1985, pg.17)

The lack of quality low-cost child care continues to be a major problem for the growing number of women who are partially or totally responsible for the support of their children. It has an impact on the woman and her opportunities for education and greater income producing activities. It has an impact on the workplace in terms of productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. And more importantly, it has an impact on the child who receives little or minimal care during the formative years.

One woman who got off welfare by going to school to receive her college degree said, "I had twins and took them to school because there was no day care for me to send them to and I couldn't afford it anyway... Sometimes I had to leave them in the car in the parking lot because they were too sick, they had the flu or something and I had to leave them in the car."

Many women commented during the public hearings about the shortage of child care services in the county and the restrictions which make it difficult for them to use those services.

One woman said there is only one child care center in Colonia, for example, to serve 17,000 residents. There is a long list of people waiting to enter their child in the center and the center closes at 5 pm with additional charges leveled against parents who are late.

Other women worry about the quality of child care centers. One single parent mother of six children stated, "It's really scary the things that are going on in the day care centers. Women are frightened of what to do with their children. You want to be able to go to work and not be frightened to death that your child will not be abused and properly taken care of. Also that you're not going to spend your whole pay check paying for that care."

Other mothers shared their concerns about the low pay given to child care workers as an indication of the low level of importance attached to the care of children in our society. "...traditionally, pre-school instructors

and directors have, for whatever reason, been looked upon as merely babysitters and as a result they are paid usually minimum wage or not much more," said one woman, "so you're getting either a very dedicated person who has some educational background in being able to handle children...or you have very young girls who have maybe never worked with a child before and have no idea what to do in order to promote a good atmosphere both socially and physically..."

"There aren't a lot of opportunities for a private individual to go into opening a pre-school and make big bucks. You're dealing mainly with church related schools or government sponsored schools...and I think that government needs to take more of a responsibility in providing adequate pre-school programs."

Work Impact

Once women do find a child care provider whom they can afford and trust, they often face new problems such as time conflicts with work and what to do with a sick child. Most child care centers will not accept a sick child and schools will send an ill child home.

One woman in Newbury Park testified she quit her job because she would have spent more on child care than she would have earned on the job.

"I can't believe we live in a culture that provides health insurance for pets and home delivered breakfast in bed and you can't find a place that would care for your child when it's sick," she stated. "I used to dread being called at work and told to come and get my child. Of course I would, but for someone who cares about their job and what they do, it also eliminates the possibility in many cases of promotion, because a woman that can't be depended on to stay at her post isn't necessarily going to be the one to get a promotion."

That concern was shared by many women. Employers may perceive a woman with children as being less serious about her career because she must split her attention between them and the job. She may also have more trouble working long hours, traveling, and moving to a new location.

Some 70 percent of the women who were surveyed by the CFW work either full or part time and 18 percent of them mentioned the need for low cost quality child care in their area. This is a large number when you consider less than one percent of the women in Ventura County were included in the survey.

The lack of child care only adds additional stress to the single parent family as the mother tries to work full-time, give quality time to their children and still have some personal time for herself. Add to that the extra financial strain women face when they try to raise their families on their limited income and it becomes more understandable why simple problems compound themselves in a single parent family.

Child care is also a barrier to women wanting to get off welfare and get either an education or a job. Adding to this problem are cuts in government assistance to child care programs or limited subsidies to women on AFDC who want to return to school.

Many women, in order to survive economically, have had to take the difficult choice of leaving their children unsupervised for at least part of the day, creating what is known as the latchkey child. A recent article in the Star Free Press estimated there were some 800,000 to one million of these latchkey children in California.

Many times these children are left alone either before or after school because their parents cannot afford child care. In other cases, however, the parent may have no option. There may be no after school or pre-school programs for their child. And often times, home care providers will not take a part-time child because of state regulations about the number of children they can care for in their homes.

Many women at the hearings asked why such programs could not be offered at elementary schools on a sliding fee basis. One mother stated, "I do not want my child to be a latchkey child. I am concerned about his safety and his need for supervised growth producing activities."

A woman from the Ventura County YMCA Children's Care Center noted, "When a parent needs to choose which one of his/her children will wear the key around the neck and go home to an empty house, our society has a problem. And we need to find a solution."

The impact on children of living in a single parent family home is only now being looked at seriously. Children in these homes are under more stress as they watch their parents struggle to cope with a whole new set of problems. Often children in these families must assume adult responsibilities at an early age. In many cases, they are robbed of their childhood.

One mother pleaded, "We have to, as a society, fix our priorities on providing something for these children to do, someplace for them to go where they are going to be safe...maybe some positive things can be given to them at the same time..."

"What is the answer? It all comes down to money. Everybody is out for their piece of the pie. Kids can't vote and kids can't come up here and talk so they need us to talk for them...We all have to realize that the little kids are going to maybe be future problems later and by the time they are 18 or 19 and robbing liquor stores or taking drugs, it's too late."

Child Care Resources

Many of the women attending the public hearings had a number of suggestions on how to alleviate the shortage of child care facilities through the cooperation of the private and public sectors.

Employer supported or work-site child care is, for many women, the ideal solution, especially when smaller children are involved. This idea is not

a new one. The government operated 24 hour child care centers during World War II when many women worked in factories to support the war effort. Once women returned in large numbers to the role of homemaker, those centers were closed.

With the return of women, once again, to the workplace an effort is needed by both the government and private employers to provide this basic service.

One mother said, "I would be happier, I would be less frustrated sometimes when I go to work if she (my daughter) were closer to me. If there was a situation where I could dash over and nurse her, when I was still doing that, or dash over and comfort her when she's sick. Not too sick to go to the daycare. But sick enough that I'm concerned about her. And I know that's a concern for all mothers. And I also know that it's probably pretty well documented by now that it would save employers a lot of money in the long run ... I would do whatever I could to...see a day care center on site at a place of employment. And I think that speaks, not only to the needs of women, but to the needs of children and ultimately, to the needs of the family."

A recent study by the CFW found there are some 500 companies across the nation which are actively involved in child care assistance and about one-fifth have on-site facilities. Other employers have started a vendor system whereby child care discounts are given to employees or child care is one of several benefits from which they can select.

Some of the earliest organizations to provide on-site child care have been hospitals. Simi Valley Adventist was the first employer in Ventura County to establish a child care center. Their child care service has an additional benefit in that it is open until midnight. St. Johns Hospital and Lost Arrow are other Ventura County businesses with on-site facilities.

This provision of child care for mothers is often a boost for productivity and also can have an impact on sick leave, workers taking time off, and employee morale as well.

Private employers, however, are not the only ones being asked to provide this service - government is also. Recently a Child Care Needs Assessment was given to the County Board of Supervisors based on a survey of County employees. There were three major recommendations of the report: one, that the Board recognize that there is a need for child care assistance among county employees; two, there is a need for a child care information/referral service for county employees; and three, that the Personnel Department should be directed to explore alternatives under employee benefit programs to offer child care as an option.

For many women, the lack of affordable and quality child care has a direct bearing on their future. For if they cannot find it, they may stay economically dependent on welfare or AFCD. Of if they find it, but it does not fit their work schedules, they may be penalized in terms of salary and promotions.

There has been government support of child care programs in the past, but programs have been cut or the level of funding has remained the same even though the need for the service has grown.

At the different community colleges in Ventura County, for example, all of them have day care facilities but in some cases they are too expensive for women on AFDC or those with limited incomes. And without additional grant assistance to these women for child care costs, they are doomed to a life of poverty, the lessons of which are passed on to their children.

Another stumbling block to child care providers may be put in place by the state. Recent revelations of abuse in a few child care centers has resulted in calls for stricter regulation of child care centers. Licensing fees and increased insurance costs may drive some providers out of the market or raise the cost of these services. Other restrictions on the number of children allowed in the homes of providers makes the cost higher and often means latchkey children have no place to go. Generally home care providers would prefer to have a single child all day rather than several part-time children.

Summary

The lack of child care continues to be a major impediment in improving the lives of women and their children in Ventura County. The need for this service is growing, not diminishing. The report, "The Feminization of Poverty" estimates that in 1984, 60.5 percent of all mothers with children under the age of 18 were in the labor force. The report went on to state that 1.6 million women in California were unable to work last year because they couldn't afford the cost of child care which averages \$2,500 a year.

It is the lack of affordable child care which often is the largest obstacle for women trying to improve their economic status either through education/training programs or by taking a job. They and their families then become trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Child care can no longer be considered a luxury for women who want to work. It is a necessity for those who must work. A recent article in Newsweek magazine (July 15, 1985) states that nationally, one-fourth of all families with children under 18 are headed by single parents and over 90 percent of those are headed by women. The article went on to state that the number of single parent households is expected to double by 1990.

Ventura County has only a limited number of employer supported child care facilities and many of the major employers provide none for their employees. Government restrictions and lack of support for women who want to work or go to school only aggravates the problem.

It would appear that as long as child care is primarily a female function, private and public agencies may be largely unmindful of the role it plays in hindering women's efforts to be economically self-sufficient.

Recommendations

The Commission for Women has already taken steps to work towards the problem of child care in Ventura County. Activities to be taken in the future include:

- 1) To continue the cooperative arrangement with the United Way to link child care needs with available funding sources.

- 2) To continue educating private industry and local government on the feasibility of their providing child care services for their employees. This will be done cooperatively with the Commission on Human Concerns.
- 3) To continue efforts to convince local government and private industry to establish child care programs for their employees.

DIVORCED WOMEN/
FEMALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD

Divorce is often a critical turning point for many women. It is a time when they are stripped of their financial security, their emotional security, and their status in society. It is a particularly devastating experience for older women who must literally re-make their lives half way through it.

Divorce rates in California hover around fifty percent but the impact of divorce is usually much greater on women than men. The report, "The Feminization of Poverty (FOP)" cited a study done in 1981 which showed that a year after a divorce, a woman's standard of living decreased by 73 percent while a man's increased by 42 percent.

This difference is frequently related to a lack of child support payments made by the father. But it is partially due to the historical economic dependency women have had on men. As a result of this dependency, when divorce occurs, women often become poorer as a result.

But divorce is more than just an economic breaking of bonds. One woman who testified at the public hearings said, "One month ago my husband came home and out of the clear blue sky he said, 'I want a separation.' And the next day he left. He left and the next three weeks he gave me \$600 short of paying my bills and one week ago he increased it so now I'm only \$200 short of paying my bills. And even though I'm from a middle to upper income bracket, I believe that the women of Ventura County who are in this bracket need some legal advice. Some free legal advice. Because even though they may have money someplace, in their mind they don't know it. Because they are in such shock."

This same woman went on to describe the problems she had with lawyers. How she received different advice from different attorneys and how she wanted to be able to go to one "true source" for some legal advice. Her complaints were voiced by many other women.

Another woman who was a former RN had spent the last 22 years as a housewife to her Physician husband. When she went through a divorce she tried to get a job as a nurse but hospitals would not hire her because she had not worked in such a long time. She stated her husband hid his income so he would not have to give her and the three children as much money to live on.

"So I went out and got jobs as a housekeeper," she said. "Whatever I could get. I rented out rooms in my house. The children don't particularly like living with roomers but it's the only way I can meet my bills."

A common complaint from divorcees was the lack of knowledge and sensitivity of judges toward women in divorce proceedings. Judges may often not understand that women need a transition period to get back on their feet and back in the labor market, especially if they have been out of it for a long time.

Said one woman, "Judges are not recognizing the fact that after you're divorced, you need time to retrain for a job, or to even find a job. You need some living expenses while you look for a job. You need to know that child support is going to be coming in. Because sometimes, that's your only income."

Many women complained of bad legal advice, the expense of hiring an attorney and the inequities in the legal system when it comes to women. Often women may feel they are being taken advantage of during a very vulnerable period in their lives or because of their lack of knowledge about the law.

Bad legal advice cost one woman \$12,000 in community property bills which she did not know she would have to pay according to the agreement her lawyer told her to sign. When she complained to her lawyer, he added additional fees to what she already owed him. She then went to the Bar Association to complain but they upheld his actions and she was told if she didn't pay the lawyers' fees her wages would be garnished. Her lawyer also advised her at one point to declare bankruptcy to avoid paying the \$12,000 in bills.

"There should be a situation where a judge sits down with you and works out something," the woman stated, "that is best for the children and best for all parties. It should not be whoever can hire the best attorney, gets to screw the other party. And it's usually the female that gets screwed."

One suggestion which came out of the public discussion of legal problems women have is for them to be more clear about what they want from a divorce and to think more like consumers when shopping for an attorney. That is, they should develop a list of rights they want from their settlement and make that very clear to the attorney they hire. Often women may walk into a divorce proceeding with very little preparation and put themselves at the mercy of the court, their husbands, and their own lawyer. In the end, the settlement may work against them and their children.

Another idea for resolving some of these problems was to establish a central place to go for legal information. Said one woman, "What we need are some legal services for women. Not low-income women but perhaps a center of women's services. Where a woman, regardless of her income level can go and get some very sound consistent legal advice without worrying about what complications she may or may not have."

Suggestions for such a center included a place with toll free lines from all parts of the County. The center would have such information as what are a woman's legal rights, what to expect in court, where to go for legal advice, etc.

Several women asked why a list of effective divorce attorneys could not be prepared and up-dated periodically. This list would be made available to women as well as a check list of settlement issues which could come up during a divorce.

Child Support

Tied in with divorce, although it is not always the case, is the issue of child support. Women and their children are rapidly becoming the new poor in our society because of the lack of child support by their fathers.

In California, the poverty rate is six times higher for female headed households than male headed households, according to the FOP report. And some 25 percent of all female headed households with the mother working full-time fall below the poverty line.

While this is due to an extent to women working in lower paying jobs than men, it is also directly tied to a lack of child support by delinquent fathers. The FOP report states, "A major contributing factor to women's lowered standard of living is the failure of absent fathers to support their children. As a result, the economic responsibility for children has been shifted solely or primarily onto women."

A recent article (July 12, 1985) in the Star Free Press discusses the seriousness of the problem on a national level. Some 76 percent of the women due child support in 1983 received it, but only half received the full payment which averaged less than \$200 a month. This is usually less than a parent would spend on child care each month.

According to the survey, there were 8.7 million mothers with children whose fathers were not present. About 58 percent of whom had been awarded some child support.

Both the awards and the actual payments depended on geographical location, ethnicity, and the education of the parties involved. Almost 67 percent of Caucasian women with children under the age of 21 received child support while the figure was only 34 percent for Black women and 41 percent for Hispanic women.

One factor cited for the differences in child support between ethnic groups is a 1982 study which said over 55 percent of all births to Black women were out of wedlock.

Child support payments also vary between states. The average child support payment actually received was \$2,475 for white women, \$1,465 for black women, and \$1,839 for hispanic women. Generally, voluntary child support agreements resulted in higher payments than court ordered child support payments. Payments were also higher to college educated women than to those with a high school education.

The FOP report states that in California, over half of the children on Welfare have fathers who earn over \$15,000 a year. In 1980, the average yearly child support award was \$2,000. But the average amount paid by men was \$1,120. The report went on to note that child support awards are often not modified as children get older and their needs change.

Besides a lack of support for children, the FOP report goes on to outline the other impacts of divorce on women and their children. Only about four percent of women receive alimony as the result of a divorce settlement, frequently because many judges assume a woman can immediately go out and get a job even if she has never worked outside the home before. Another loss is the provision of social security and pension benefits, the loss of which won't show up until a woman retires. Generally older women are poorer than older men because they may have worked for a shorter period of time, they often work for less money so their pension and social security benefits are lower, and they may not be eligible for a portion of their husband's benefits.

In addition, as a result of a divorce, both the wife and her children lose whatever health benefits the husband had. Taken together, all these direct and indirect benefits can have a devastating impact on the standard of living of the growing number of female headed households.

In California, there have been some improvements made in setting child support payments. Recently the State Legislature set the minimum child support payment which the courts must award. The minimum is tied to what welfare would grant under AFDC. Using the current welfare scales, the basic support would be at least \$288 a month for one child ranging up to \$1,261 for 10 children. These payments, however, can be scaled upward or downward depending upon the financial capability of the parents.

Enforcement of existing child support awards varies between jurisdictions. In Ventura County, the District Attorney's office has been more aggressive than most in pursuing delinquent fathers. However, even they will acknowledge that it can take from several weeks to a year to collect unpaid child support and the process can take even longer for out-of-state settlements.

A bill recently introduced in the State Legislature would allow suits to recover unpaid child support even after the child has turned 18. This may be the state's way of reducing their financial obligation to the growing number of female headed families as currently 64 percent of all families headed by women are dependent on AFDC. By making absent fathers pay their fair share of child support, the state can in fact reduce its own obligation.

Summary

Women and children are largely becoming the new disadvantaged class of our society. This is the result of several factors: the high rate of divorce where many women are stripped of their economic security; the lack of adequate child support by absent fathers; inequities in pay and job opportunities for women; and inadequate government subsidies to help women through the transition period.

Better enforcement of child support awards is beginning to happen, but the awards themselves are woefully inadequate and barely cover the cost of child care for a working mother. In addition, the lack of any support for illegitimate children almost guarantees that most of them will live in poverty during the formative period of their lives.

Many women also complained of the legal problems they encountered in divorce proceedings. Some said they had incompetent legal help while others railed against the injustices of the legal system and the insensitivity of judges toward women. Women need to be educated to approach hiring an attorney in the same way they would go about hiring any other professional. They also must be more active in pursuing a divorce settlement which is fair to all parties involved rather than leaving it up to others to make that decision.

Transportation, especially for senior citizens, was a need mentioned by many people. Existing programs do not give seniors enough mobility to such places as church, shopping, etc. The handicapped also need better transportation.

Recommendations

1) For the Commission for Women to cooperate with the District Attorney's Office to improve services offered through their child support division. This will be a cooperative effort with the Commission on Human Concerns. A liaison person will be appointed who will report back to the CFW on a regular basis.

2) To develop a referral list of effective divorce attorneys in cooperation with the Commission for Human Concerns. They will also develop a checklist of basic legal rights separated women have and those rights they might want to obtain as a result of a divorce settlement.

3) To investigate existing legislation which enforces spousal support and to develop a court monitoring system.

Women said the food stamp allowance given to them was not enough to support them and their families.

The 9 to 5 Ventura Working Women did their own survey of job stress among office workers. They found the greatest stresses were due to low pay, a lack of recognition of their accomplishments, and a lack of control over the work environment. The lack of pay for overtime was an added stress and women who complained about it were harassed. The group suggested employers should be educated about labor laws. They suggested also there be legislation to protect non-union office workers from harassment or wrongful termination and there be more public education provided on job stress. In addition, they recommended the government set the example regarding pay equity, creating a good work environment, and establishing good employee-employer relations.

OTHER

Besides the items covered within the previous five categories, other issues and problems were brought up during the public hearings and the telephone survey.

Transportation, especially for senior citizens, was a need mentioned by many people. Existing programs do not give seniors enough mobility to such places as church, shopping, etc. The handicapped also need better transportation.

The lack of volunteers was bemoaned by many. With more and more women in the workforce, the volunteer ranks have shrunk considerably. This has hit non-profit organizations particularly hard as they have always relied on volunteers to help carry out their programs.

Besides transportation, other services are needed for the elderly. Sometimes they are isolated and then can easily be taken advantage of. Others simply need someone to check up on them periodically to make sure they are alright. Home attendants complained about the cost of care for seniors and how much they were paid versus the cost.

The food stamp program was seen by many women as being inadequate and others were concerned about cuts in the Federal Nutrition Program. Women said the food stamp allowance given to them was not enough to support them and their families.

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APPENDIX

PRIORITY - (Number 1) The lack of affordable housing in Ventura County has caused hardship for many women and their families.

OBJECTIVE - To act as an advocate and catalyst to provide more affordable housing to women in Ventura County.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Responsibility	Others Involved
1) Provide information about the severity of the housing problem and what resources are available. Do this through press releases and other public forums. Coordinate this effort with other agencies interested in housing problems in the County.	Press release twice a year. (10 hours)	Ongoing	Report to Commission as needed.	Communications officer	League of Women Voters CHC Coalition for the Homeless Cabrillo Econ. Dev. Others
2) Appoint a member of the CFW to the Coalition for the Homeless to represent the needs of women. Representative will report back to the CFW on activities of the Coalition.	8 hours a month	Ongoing	Monthly report to Commission	D. Engel M. White	Coalition for Homeless
3) Cooperate with other groups having the same goals of providing more affordable housing.	10 hours a month	Ongoing	Monthly report to Commission	G. Connell	Cabrillo Economic Development
4) Jointly with the CHC make a presentation to each City Council in Ventura County on the need for more affordable housing (as it pertains to women's needs) within each city's General Plan. Monitor when cities are conducting an update of their General Plan.	20 hours	Complete by 1986. Tie presentation to city GP update.	Monthly report to Commission once program begins	M. White D. Engel	CHC
5) Jointly investigate with the CHC the possibility of a bonding or insurance program for renters to cover last month's rent and a security deposit.	10 hours a month	Complete by July 1986.	Monthly report to Commission	G. Connell	CHC

PRIORITY - (Number 2) Educational needs covered many problems including a lack of awareness of available services, illiteracy, the need for job training, and related financial issues.

OBJECTIVE - To advise on and advocate for more educational opportunities for women which enhance their income earnings.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Responsibility	Others Involved
1) Study jointly with the CHC the state of job re-training and re-entry programs for women in the County and available funding for same.	20 hours a month	6 months to a year	Monthly report to Commission	A. Brewer	CHC PIC Apprenticeship program for State of Calif.
2) Provide more publicity about what current services are available to women. This will be done through: a. Press releases to the news media b. Development of a brochure for CFW (cost item) c. Establishment of a speaker's bureau operated jointly with the CHC.	5 hours 20 hours 10 hours	1/per month By 1985 1986-87	Monthly report to Commission	Communication officer and staff	United Way Interface Women's Equity Coalition Friends of the Commission
3) Conduct public workshops in those areas identified by the needs assessment as high priority areas. Topics might include: a. Workshop on the issue of pay equity. b. Seminar for High School Counselors on preparing young women for the work world. c. Presentations on what services are available to women in the County. Coordinate with the Women's Day programs at the Community Colleges. d. Other areas include: the value and benefit of counseling; divorce and child support issues; the victim restitution program (in cooperation with the District Attorney's Office).	120 hours 120 hours 20 hours 120 hours each	Spring '86 Winter '87 Ongoing Target 1 per year	Monthly report to Commission	C. Matson and staff	United Way Interface Women's Equity Coalition Community Colleges

PRIORITY - (Number 2 continued)

OBJECTIVE -

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Respon- sibility	Others Involved
4) To cooperate with the Library System in promoting the literacy program and the library information proposal. Appoint liaison person to support both programs. Educate the Board of Supervisors about the need to fund the Library Information proposal. Bring back plan to advance project before next year's County budget process.	10 hours a month	Ongoing support	Monthly report to Commission	J. Bush	Library Services
5) Expand the existing Women's History Task Force.	15 hours a month	Yearly event	Monthly report to Commission	G. Connell	Women's Equity Coalition (task force)
6) Expand the annual recognition dinner for women in the County.	160 hours	Yearly event	Monthly report to Commission	C. Matson	Friends of the Commission
7) Examine the possibility of funding for a program similar to Breakthrough which provided low-cost workshops for women in the County. Do this jointly with the CHC.	10 hours a month	1987-88	Monthly report to Commission	C. Matson G. Connell J. Bush	CHC PSSA Interface

PRIORITY - (Number 3) Many women in the County have counseling needs in the areas of legal issues, personal, financial, crises, job, and family. Also included under this area are needs regarding family planning, information and services, domestic violence, alcohol/drug abuse services, and child abuse services.

OBJECTIVE - To inform women about existing services and advocate for additional programs where needed.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Responsibility	Others Involved
1) To study jointly what services are currently available at County Free Clinics and what services are needed.	40 hours	Ongoing 1st report July '86	Report to Commission	M.J. Johns	CHC United Way Health Planning Council
2) Continue monitoring domestic violence programs. Investigate the need for second stage housing. Study the need for another shelter in Oxnard.	10 hours 80 hours 20 hours	Ongoing 1987 1987	Monthly report to Commission	M.J. Johns L. Grethel	Coalition Against Household Violence Interface Commission's Housing Project Steering Committee So. Calif. Coalition on Domestic Violence

PRIORITY - (Number 4) There is a need for additional child care facilities for women who work,

OBJECTIVE - To continue efforts to provide high quality, low cost child care to women who need it.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Responsibility	Others Involved
1) Continue the cooperative arrangement with the United Way to link child care needs with funding sources. Liaison appointed. Another liaison needed to Child Care and Referral Program.	10 hours per month 10 hours per month	Ongoing Ongoing	Monthly Report to Commission Report to Commission	D. Engel B. Hubbell 	United Way
2) Continue educating private industry and local government on the feasibility of their providing child care services for their employees. This a joint effort with the CHC. Steps in this effort:				J. Statten S. Preston B. Hubbell staff	Kristy Schadt (Moorpark college)
a. Contact five employers per month and give them the information.	10 hours	Ongoing	Monthly Report to Commission		
b. Send information brochures out to 10 companies per month.	1 hour	Ongoing	-		
c. Speak to business groups on the subject.	1 per month	Ongoing	Report		
d. Give public recognition to employers who do offer child care for employees (e.g. press releases, certificates, award luncheons, etc.)	-	Ongoing	Report		
e. Advocate with elected officials for tax breaks for businesses providing child care for employees.	10 hours per month	Ongoing	Report to Commission		
f. Work jointly with CHC to educate them on which employers provide child care and how the service can be set up.	10 hours	Ongoing			CHC
g. Jointly with the CHC advocate for local tax incentives for cooperative child care efforts by businesses. Perhaps involve the Private Industry Council as the coordinator of this effort.	10 hours	Ongoing	Report to Commission		CHC PIC
h. Solicit a "Corporate Rate" for businesses who have large numbers of employees using a particular child care facility.	10 hours	Ongoing	Report		

PRIORITY - (Number 4 continued)

OBJECTIVE -

ACTIVITIES

- 3) To continue efforts to convince local government and private industry to establish child care programs for their employees.

Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Respon- sibility	Others Involved
	Ongoing			

PRIORITY - (Number 5) To address the special needs of divorced women and female heads of households,

OBJECTIVE - To provide educational and support services to divorced and separated women.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Respon- sibility	Others Involved
1) Cooperate with the District Attorney's office to improve services offered through their child support division. Conduct jointly with the CHC. Appoint liaison person to relay concerns and report back to CFW.	10 hours a month	1986-87	Report to Commission monthly	Sandy Ryder	DA's office CHC
2) Develop a referral list of effective divorce attorneys. Do in cooperation with the CHC. Develop a <u>checklist</u> of the basic legal rights separated women have and those rights they might want to obtain as a result of a divorce settlement.	10 hours a month	1986-87	Report to Commission monthly	J. Elliott R. Clayton	CHC Interface Ventura County Women's Attorney's Association
3) Investigate existing legislation which enforces spousal support. Develop court monitoring system.		December, 1985	Monthly report to Commission	R. Clayton	

PRIORITY -

OBJECTIVE - To organize a volunteer bureau to effectively use the skills of those women who have offered to volunteer their time on behalf of the CFW. Develop additional resources which CFW can use to implement its objectives.

ACTIVITIES	Time Required	Completion Date	Monitoring How - When	Respon- sibility	Others Involved
1) Identify those activities which volunteers could fill and draw up job descriptions.	40 hours	Ongoing	Report	Commission	
2) Develop a volunteer bank and match people to positions.	20 hours	Ongoing	Monthly	Friends of	the Commission
3) Screen and train volunteers	20 hours	Ongoing	report to	staff	Ventura County
4) Place volunteers and set up follow-up program	10 hours		Commission		Volunteers
5) Generate regular publicity to solicit additional volunteers.	2 hours/ per month				Coordinating
6) Set up a recognition program for volunteers which could include such things as certificates, annual recognition luncheons, etc.	30 hours				Council
					United Way
7) Develop resources to help support CFW activities such as grants, in-kind assistance, other.		Ongoing			

TELEPHONE SURVEY

CROSS-TABSEthnicity by Select Factors

Ethnicity vs whether woman is the primary wage earner in the family

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Equal</u>
White	26%	70%	4%
Black	27%	60%	13%
Hispanic	28%	73%	0
Asian-Pacific	50%	50%	0
Native American	0	83%	17%
Other	60%	40%	0

Ethnicity vs education of women

	<u>3-9th grade</u>	<u>10-12 grade</u>	<u>13 years and over</u>
White	3.5%	38%	59%
Black	0	73%	27%
Hispanic	20.0%	55%	26%
Asian-Pacific	0	75%	25%
Native American	33.0%	50%	17%
Other	0	20%	80%

Ethnicity vs have been discriminated against

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
White	7.7%	92.3%
Black	13.3%	86.7%
Hispanic	9.8%	88.2%
Asian-Pacific	0	100.0%
Native American	0	100.0%
Other	0	100.0%

Ethnicity vs own or rent where they live

	<u>Own</u>	<u>Rent</u>
White	73%	27%
Black	33%	67%
Hispanic	55%	45%
Asian-Pacific	50%	50%
Native American	83%	17%
Other	40%	60%

Ethnicity vs those saying they needed help in certain areas (10% and over)

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Asian Pacific</u>	<u>Native American</u>	<u>Other</u>
Medical			12%	38%	17%	
Financial Assistance		13%	16%			20%
Family Counseling		13%	12%			20%
Personal Counseling		20%	12%	13%		
Child Care	10%	20%	26%	13%		
Establishing Credit		13%	14%			
Job counseling			33%			20%
Lower cost housing		27%	33%	13%	17%	20%
Home repairs			10%	13%	17%	
Food			12%	13%		
Transportation			10%	13%	17%	
Recreation for self/child.		13%	14%	13%		
Educational needs			16%		17%	
Domestic violence						20%
Alcohol/drug abuse						20%

Ethnicity vs what additional services are needed (10% and over)

Medical		13%			33%	
Personal counseling		13%				
Family Planning		13%				
Child care	20%	27%	24%		17%	
Job counseling	19%	20%		13%		
Financial assist.		13%	18%			
Domestic violence	14%	13%		13%		20%
Educational needs			12%			
Lower cost housing	12%	27%	14%			

WOMEN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

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Hello, I'm () and I'm helping conduct a needs assessment survey on behalf of the Ventura County Commission for Women. I would really appreciate it if you could give me a few minutes of your time to answer some questions. Would that be alright? (If 'yes' proceed. If 'no' thank and hang up)

First, I need to ask if you're a female, 18 years or older. (If 'yes' proceed. If 'no':)

Our survey does require that the respondent be a female over the age of 18. So is there a female over 18 that I could speak with? (If 'yes,' proceed. If 'no,' thank and hang up.)

I am going to ask a series of questions now. Unless I say otherwise, please give only one response. The first question is....

1. How many people are in your family?

a. 1	c. 3	e. 5
b. 2	d. 4	f. more than 5
2. How many are under age 18?

a. 0	c. 2	e. 4
b. 1	d. 3	f. 5
		g. more than 5
3. How many adult full time wage earners are in your family?

a. 0	c. 2	e. more than 3
b. 1	d. 3	
4. How many adult part time wage earners are in your family?

a. 0	c. 2	e. more than 3
b. 1	d. 3	
5. Are you the primary wage earner of your family?

a. Yes	b. No	c. Equal
--------	-------	----------
6. Which age group are you in? And I'll list the groups:

a. under 20	c. 30 - 39	e. 50 - 59
b. 20 - 29	d. 40 - 49	f. 60 - 69
		g. 70 and over
7. How many years of school have you completed?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18+
8. What is your present job?
9. In your work place, do you feel you have ever been discriminated against in any way?

a. Yes	b. No
--------	-------
10. (If Q9 is Yes) How do you feel you've been discriminated against?
11. What is your marital status?

a. Never married	c. Married-separated	e. Widowed
b. Married	d. Divorced	
12. Do you rent or own where you live?

a. Own	b. Rent
--------	---------

13. What kind of place do you (own) (rent)

- | | | |
|----------|----------------|---------|
| a. home | c. mobile home | e. room |
| b. condo | d. apartment | |

Now I'm going to ask 3 questions for you to answer on a scale of 1 - 7.

14. How happy are you with your life?

On the scale 7 would be the most happy and 1 would be the least happy.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. Are you being successful in working toward your goals?

On the scale 7 would be highly successful, 1 would be least successful.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. Do you think you can solve problems in you life?

On the scale 7 would be solving all of your problems.

1 would be that you cannot solve any of your problems

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. (If Q16 is answered 1-3) Would you tell me briefly why you feel you cannot solve some or all of your problems? _____

18. Are you currently receiving:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Unemployment | c. Food stamps | e. SSI |
| b. AFDC | d. Social Security | f. Job training/placement |
| | | g. Other |

19. Have you ever received:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Unemployment | c. Food stamps | e. SSI |
| b. AFDC | d. Social Security | f. Job training/placement |
| | | g. Other |

20. Could you or anyone in your family use help now in any of the following areas?

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. Medical services | k. Repairs to your home |
| b. Financial counseling/services | l. Food |
| c. Financial assistance | m. Transportation |
| d. Lower cost legal counseling/services | n. Recreational opportunities for self or children |
| e. Family counseling | o. Educational needs |
| f. Personal counseling | p. Family planning |
| g. Child care | q. Domestic violence |
| h. Establishing credit | r. Alcohol/drug abuse |
| i. Job counseling | s. Child abuse |
| j. Lower cost housing | t. Other |

21. And of those areas in which you need help, do you know where you could get help? (Surveyors refer back to Q20 responses)

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. Medical services | k. Repairs to your home -- |
| b. Financial counseling/services | l. Food |
| c. Financial assistance | m. Transportation |
| d. Lower cost legal counseling/services | n. Recreational opportunities for self or children |
| e. Family counseling | o. Educational needs |
| f. Personal counseling | p. Family planning |
| g. Child care | q. Domestic violence |
| h. Establishing credit | r. Alcohol/drug abuse |
| i. Job counseling | s. Child abuse |
| j. Lower cost housing | t. Other |

22. In which areas do you think more women's services should be provided? If you'd like, I can read back that list of services I read off a moment ago, or you can give me your ideas.
- _____
- _____

23. What is your ethnic background?

a. White	c. Hispanic	e. Native American
b. Black	d. Asian/Pacific Islander	f. Other

24. In which category does your total family income fall? Please stop me at your category.

a. Less than \$5,000	d. \$15,000 - \$20,000	g. \$30,000 - \$40,000
b. \$5,000 - \$10,000	e. \$20,000 - \$25,000	h. \$40,000 - \$50,000
c. \$10,000 - \$15,000	f. \$25,000 - \$30,000	i. Over \$50,000

25. This is our next-to-the-last question:

Feel free to take a moment or two to think about it:

Would you like to make any comments or suggestions about the needs of women in Ventura County that we should include in our report? _____

26. This is my final question:

Would you be willing to be a volunteer in some area?

a. Yes	b. No
--------	-------

(If yes) What areas? _____

Great! Someone from the Commission will be in touch with you soon. And who should they ask for? _____.

Let me confirm your phone number _____.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance. Good-bye.

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
&
COMMISSION ON HUMAN CONCERNS

February 28, 1985

Dear Service Provider:

We are conducting a **Survey of Services** being provided in Ventura County and would appreciate your assistance on this effort. In order to determine if there are gaps in service, we need to identify groups which your organization is presently serving.

We would appreciate you filling out the following questionnaire and returning it to us by ~~March 18~~. If you should have any questions, please contact the project coordinator, Jo Ann Olivares-Bernard, at 485-3551.

A. AGENCY INFORMATION

1. Agency Name _____
2. Address _____
3. Contact Person _____

B. SERVICES OFFERED*

List all services that your agency provides:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

C. STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN BY INCOME GROUP

Please fill out a **FORM C** for each service you provide remembering to separate your count by income levels. If you need additional copies, please feel free to make copies or call my office and I will mail additional copies. If you do not keep records of your client group by income levels, please estimate as closely as possible.

*If you need more room please use the back of this sheet.

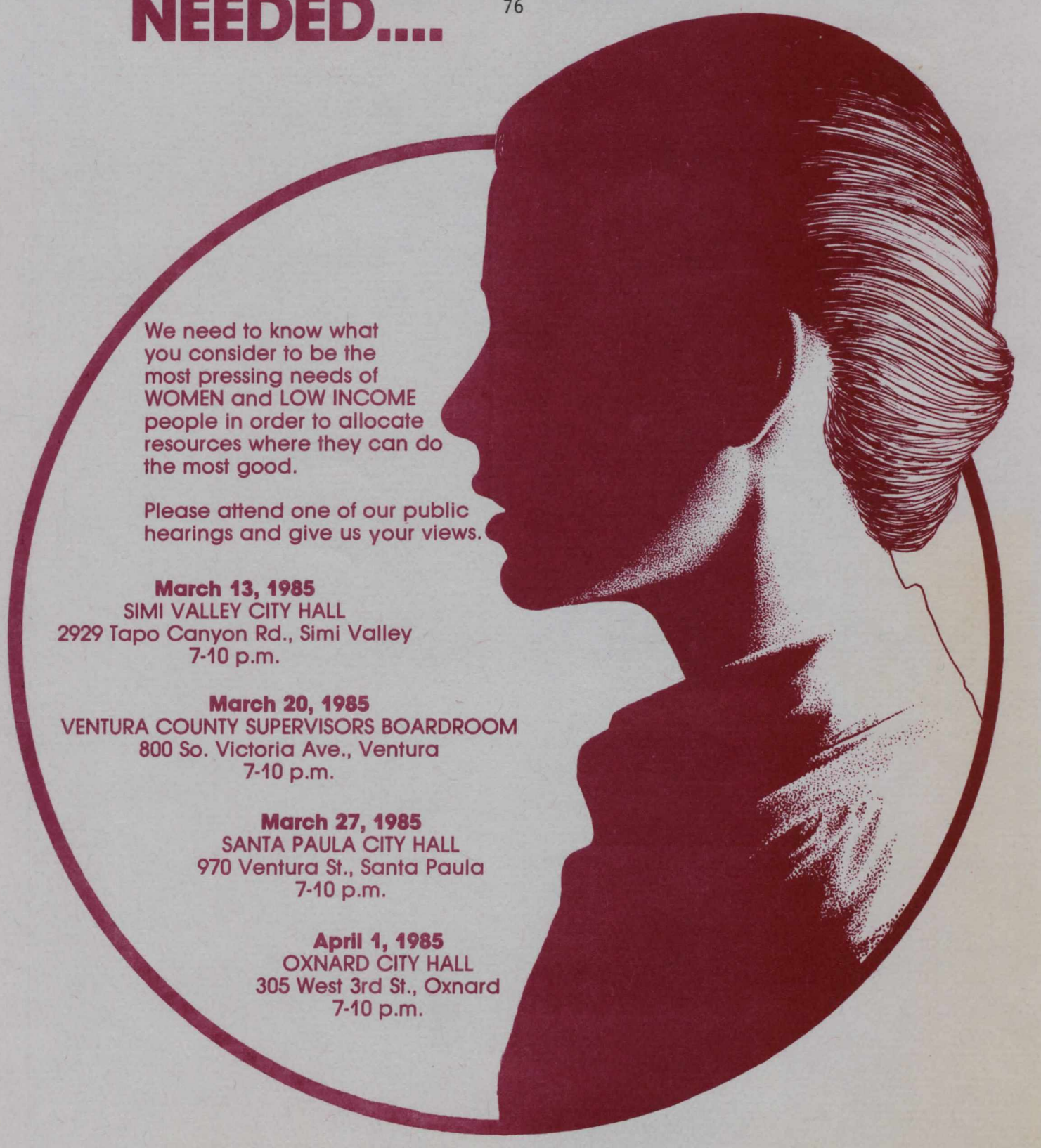
INCOME LEVEL															
	AGE GROUPS							ETHNICITY						SEX	
	0-5	6-12	13-19	20-30	31-50	51-61	62+	Anglo	Mex Amer	Blk Amer	Asian	Nat Amer	other	Male	Female
CAMARILLO															
EL RIO															
FILLMORE															
FOSTER PARK															
MONTALVO															
MOORPARK															
NEWBURY PARK															
OAK VIEW															
OJAI															
OXNARD															
PIRU															
PT. HUENEME															
PT. MUGU															
SANTA PAULA															
SATICOY															
SIMI VALLEY															
SOMIS															
THOUSAND OAKS															
VENTURA															
UNINCORPORATED															

INCOME LEVEL															
	AGE GROUPS							ETHNICITY						SEX	
	0-5	6-12	13-19	20-30	31-50	51-61	62+	Anglo	Mex Amer	Blk Amer	Asian	Nat Amer	other	Male	Female
CAMARILLO															
EL RIO															
FILLMORE															
FOSTER PARK															
MONTALVO															
MOORPARK															
NEWBURY PARK															
OAK VIEW															
OJAI															
OXNARD															
PIRU															
PT. HUENEME															
PT. MUGU															
SANTA PAULA															
SATICOY															
SIMI VALLEY															
SOMIS															
THOUSAND OAKS															
VENTURA															
UNINCORPORATED															

How does your organization define a low income person _____

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION NEEDED....

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We need to know what you consider to be the most pressing needs of **WOMEN** and **LOW INCOME** people in order to allocate resources where they can do the most good.

Please attend one of our public hearings and give us your views.

March 13, 1985

SIMI VALLEY CITY HALL
2929 Tapo Canyon Rd., Simi Valley
7-10 p.m.

March 20, 1985

VENTURA COUNTY SUPERVISORS BOARDROOM
800 So. Victoria Ave., Ventura
7-10 p.m.

March 27, 1985

SANTA PAULA CITY HALL
970 Ventura St., Santa Paula
7-10 p.m.

April 1, 1985

OXNARD CITY HALL
305 West 3rd St., Oxnard
7-10 p.m.

SPONSORS

Ventura County Commission for Women

Ventura County Commission on Human Concerns

CO-SPONSORS

Ventura County Council on Aging
Womens Resource Center - CLC
Care and Share

Clinicas del Camino Real
Community Service Organization
Candelaria American Indian Council

Press Thurs., Mar. 14, 1985 C-1

2 commissions begin research on county needs

By Kelleyanne Pearce
S-FP staff writer

What do women and the poor in Ventura County need? There are no "magic answers," yet a survey will be conducted to reach as many people as possible in an effort to find out.

The Ventura County Commission for Women and the Ventura County Commission on Human Concerns will combine to conduct the survey.

The commission heads and other interested members of the public met Tuesday night in the Oxnard Hilton to kick off the project and garner support. The dinner meeting, attended by 50 women and one man, was given by the Friends of the Commission for Women.

Ginny Connell of Thousand Oaks, a member of the Friends of the Commission, spoke about the past projects of VCCW and hopes for the future.

Four years ago, when the VCCW was formed, it initiated a countywide study on child care and working mothers. After the success of the study, which showed Ventura County to be a model in child care for the state, the commission had to reevaluate its priorities and determine the areas to be studied, Connell said.

"We decided to do a survey and get some information directly from the women in Ventura County on who they are, what they need and their everyday experiences," Connell said.

The two commissions will consider all aspects of women's lives, from older women needing assistance with medical bills, single-parent families and job training to discrimination in the work place and sexual harassment.

Whatever is lacking in support services for women in the county, the commissions want to know so that they can allocate resources to do the most good.

The commissions will conduct four public hearings to gather direct testimony, either written or oral, from women on their needs. The first meeting was in Simi Valley Wednesday. The next three, all from 7 to 10 p.m., are: Wednesday, March 20, in the Ventura County Supervisors board room, 800 S. Victoria Ave., Ventura; Wednesday, March 27, in Santa Paula City Hall, 970 Ventura St., Santa Paula; and Monday, April 1, in Oxnard City Hall, 305 W. Third St., Oxnard.

"It is very difficult to get people out to public hearings," said JoAnn Olivares-Bernard of Advance Marketing, a professional marketing consulting firm that will conduct the survey. "We need to find out the perceived needs of the poor and women in general."

Testimonies can be given in writing anonymously, said Connell, who hopes that "women are willing to tell us these answers."

The survey, which is on a contractual basis with Advance Marketing, will be funded from four sources: a \$10,000 grant from the Ventura County Board of Supervisors; a \$10,000 grant from the Commission on Human Concerns; \$4,000 from the Ventura County Commission on Women; and the remaining \$6,000 from private donations.

After the public hearings, the commissions will conduct a random telephone survey of 500 middle income women and 250 lower income women. The list of women will come from the human resource directory published by Interface, the United Way directory and the Ventura County Professional Women's Network directory.

A mail survey of local businesses will be conducted, followed by a telephone survey in April.

Next month, the commissions will hold workshops to set goals and improve planning, Olivares-Bernard said. In May, each commission will hold workshops to formulate five-year plans. If all goes well, the surveys and the five-year plans will be completed by June.

Then, the commissions can put together "clear, factually-based priorities for the next decade by connecting with private industry and other agencies," Connell said.

The survey is co-sponsored by the Ventura County Council on Aging, Women's Resource Center at California Lutheran College, Care and Share, Clinicas del Camino Real, Community Service Organization and Candelaria American Indian Council.

More on addressing women's needs

Editor, Star-Free Press:

I commend you for your strong support for the issue of "comparable worth" (Editorial, March 17).

All working women and all women who will join the work force in the future would benefit greatly from this fair and logical theory, which would eliminate many low-paying "job ghettos" for women. It is also true that attempts to put the theory into practice are meeting with very strong resistance at every level. Recently, the chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights called comparable worth "the looniest idea since Looney Tunes."

While strong efforts are being made to convince Americans and the politicians who represent them that this idea has great merit, it is *also* a good idea to spend a few months and a few thousand dollars finding out what the realities of life are for women in Ventura County. As you mentioned, not all women work for pay outside their home. Many are housewives and mothers, and we of the Commission for Women and the Commission on Human Concerns do not "disdain" them; rather, we want to know more about them.

We do not agree with you that "real needs tend to make themselves self-evident," except insofar as such needs are clear to the people who have them. It is very easy for politicians, journalists, social workers, volunteers, etc., to decide "What these people need is..." It can also be tempting to spend years studying problems, and do little or nothing to resolve them.

Our needs assessment is intended to avoid both of these options. We want the women and poor people of Ventura County to tell us as much as they are willing about the problems and struggles they face in their daily lives. And we are looking at the services and programs which are already available to help solve these problems. In June, when our study is complete, we will report on our findings and we will put our energies to doing whatever it is that we see needs to be done.

Let's work for pay equity *and* for programs that make a difference in people's lives right now, whether they are in the work force or not.

GINNY CONNELL,
Ventura

(The writer is a member of the Ventura County Commission on Women.)

ATSA 58/82/13 (17) 3/28/85 VS70

What do county women need?

Public hearings, survey to assess problems

In what areas do Ventura County women lag behind their male counterparts?

What are the needs of the county's women? Is it employment training? How about training that offers advancement opportunity?

That's what the Ventura County Commission on Women hopes to find out with a three-part assessment that starts this week.

Ginny Connell, a commissioner appointed by Supervisor Ed Jones of Thousand Oaks, said it is hoped the assessment will sharply focus on women's needs in the county.

Since it was formed in 1981, the commission has tried to determine the needs of local women, then recommend action to the Board of Supervisors.

Once the board is told of the problems, the commission hopes it will plan and fund programs designed to ease the situation.

The assessment will focus on women at all income levels throughout the county. It won't be limited just to economic needs, but will take in everything that touches a woman's life.

Hoping to get as broad a sampling as possible, the commission assessment will use a questionnaire, a telephone survey and four public hearings to gather information.

"We are always expecting to uncover certain needs," Connell said. "Although we are trying not to prejudge where the needs are, I would be surprised if we don't see a need for job training and educational support for women."

As soon as the commission members get a computer printout of the 1980 census listing

names, ages and incomes, it will be time to roll up their sleeves and get down to work.

The cost of the assessment is pegged at \$30,000. The commission has already raised \$4,000. Funding help came from the Board of Supervisors, which set aside \$10,000, and another \$10,000 came from the Commission on Human Concerns. Connell said the commission is trying to collect the remaining \$6,000 through private donations.

Besides getting information on where the needs are, she said, the assessment also will provide a greater awareness by reaching women who don't know about the commission and its purpose.

As far as how the county rates on attention to women's issues when compared with other areas in the state and nation, Connell said, there have been some "wonderful firsts, but it is my hunch there is a lot on the other side, too."

The first public hearing is set for Wednesday at Simi Valley City Hall, 2929 Tapo Canyon Road, for women from Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks and Moorpark.

Other hearings will be March 20 at the County Government Center, 800 S. Victoria Ave., Ventura; March 27 at the Santa Paula City Hall, 970 Ventura St.; and April 1 at the Oxnard City Hall, 305 W. Third St.

The telephone survey will not start until April. The Friends of the Commission for Women will hold a dinner Tuesday to explain the needs survey.

Community

Housing, child care major problems facing women

By ARLENE GARBER
Camarillo Daily News staff

In an attempt to discover just what the needs are of poor women in Ventura County and what can be done to meet these needs, the Commission for Women asked women in the county to talk about themselves in a series of public hearings held last spring.

A report on what was revealed at the hearings was discussed at a luncheon meeting held by the Ventura County Women's Equity Coalition at Mercury Savings and Loan in Camarillo.

Ginny Connell, coalition chairperson and member of the Ventura County Commission for Women, presented the report.

Conclusions for the report were primarily obtained from relevant 1980 census data on women in Ventura County, available through the University of California, Davis; a mailed questionnaire to public and private providers of services to women to determine both what is provided and the gaps in services of which they are aware; a series of public hearings at several locations around the county to collect oral testimony directly from women; and a random telephone survey of women with a predetermined set of questions.

With the information obtained, the commission is now projecting a five-year plan of action to solve some of the problems women under financial stress face in the county.

Connell stated that the report revealed that between 1978 and 1983 there has been a 52 percent increase in the number of children living at or below the poverty level.

Among other issues surfacing during the public hearings and the telephone survey, were that good quality child care is very expensive and hard to find, that a majority of fathers do not pay their court specified child support payments, many of the women are occupationally ineligible for jobs, wage discrimination against women, as compared to men, is still very high, and that there are a vast number of older women who are alone because of divorce or being widowed, who are often ineligible for welfare or insurance aid.

According to Connell, the most frequently mentioned problem at the public hearings was the difficulty in obtaining adequate housing.

Connell said, "Women of all ages and income levels talked about housing as the most serious problem they are struggling to solve. It is impossi-

ble for many of them to meet the requirements of that first and last month's rent.

"Next in urgency of their needs, is the need for affordable child care. They said usually there is a waiting list at child care facilities, or the travel arrangements necessary to get to the child care centers is more than they can cope with."

Failure of child support payments were cited time after time by women. Connell stated that the county continues to work on this situation to put pressure on fathers who refuse to live up to their responsibilities.

Many older women voiced their concern over inadequate public transportation accommodations in the county.

"Transportation is especially troublesome for women in transition," Connell said. "These are women who as homemakers paid little attention to ever having to obtaining a job outside the home. Then when they are faced with finding a job, they are also coping with how to travel to a place of employment."

The county report also emphasized that a third shelter for battered women is needed. The centers in Ventura and Simi Valley get very heavy use and often there are no vacancies available when an emergency arises. It was suggested that a shelter should be established in Oxnard or Port Hueneme.

It was also pointed out that cases of domestic violence are very severe in Ventura County. Testimonies verified that women and children who are forced to seek sanctuary at a shelter very often have no place to go after leaving the shelter.

Another hole in the rescue net occurs because only one member of a household is entitled to job welfare training, when in reality, both husband and wife need preparation for employment to support their household.

Beyond these calls for help were those in the areas of recreational centers for youngsters, medical needs, educational facilities for both children and adults, legal and job counseling and direct financial aid.

Adding to the specific problems brought on by lack of money, was the revelation that only a very low percentage of women interviewed had any idea of where to go to obtain the help they needed.

Connell said, "Part of the five-year plan will be devoted to telling women where to go to get help. And the Commission for Women is trying to act right now to see what can be done to get this information out to women in the county."

THU MAR 14 1985

Los Angeles Herald Examiner

The ranks of the homeless are bound to swell

By Chester Hartman

The plight of the homeless is a political issue that is attracting more and more attention. Even the basic question of how many Americans are homeless has been the subject of controversy. While most private and public agencies have used the estimate of two to three million, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1984 released a study that put the number at only 250,000 to 350,000 — a finding widely assailed as based more on political preference than on sound methodology.

Conservatives tend to insist that homelessness is primarily a problem of the mentally ill, and that the solution is a simple one: institutionalization. Charles Krauthammer of the *The Washington Post* recently wrote that there is a better alternative (to shelters), however, though no one dares speak its name. Asylum."

Krauthammer acknowledged the need to create better institutions than the snake pits that outraged the public in the 1950s and that led to the passage of the Community Mental Health Act of 1963. But he insisted that the homeless are essentially a deranged segment of the population, and that we must have the "political will" to isolate them from society "whether they like it or not."

Such arguments ignore mounting evidence that there are "normal" individuals — and families — among the homeless. To be sure, alcoholics and the psychiatrically or physically disabled are no small part of the homeless population. But even the Reagan administration's discredited HUD study acknowledged that more than 20 percent of the occupants of shelters

are in family groups, and that mentally ill individuals account for only 22 percent of those in shelters. The tragedy of the homeless is, in fact, linked to structural aspects of our economic system and to specific policies pursued by government:

■ As a result of 1981 changes in the regulations governing Aid to Families with Dependent Children, half the working families receiving such assistance lost their eligibility

in preference to hunger.

■ Most welfare grants include totally inadequate allotments for housing. In New York state, welfare rent ceilings remained unchanged for 1975 to 1984, despite enormous housing inflation during the period. In other states, the rent allotment in welfare allowances ranges from 20 percent to 60 percent of HUD's locally established "fair market rents."

■ The Reagan administration has ended most programs of low-rent

small increase can result in voluntary departure or forced eviction for nonpayment of rent.

■ Every year, some 2.5 million Americans are displaced from their homes. In New York City, half of the almost 500,000 eviction actions in 1983 were directed against public assistance recipients, whose next home may well have been a city shelter.

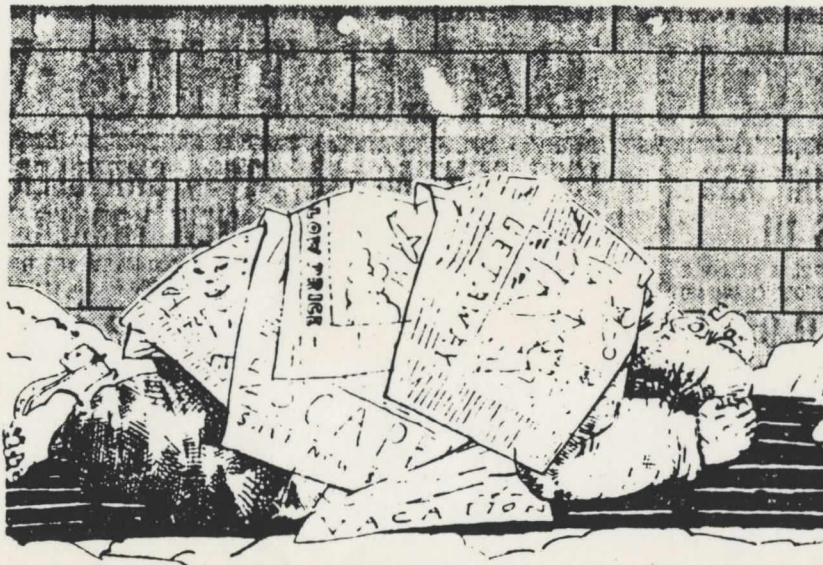
■ According to the Urban Institute, the poorest fifth of the nation saw its taxes increase an average of 24 percent from 1980 to 1984. The heavier tax burden means less disposable income for rent and other necessities.

At bottom, the problem of homelessness is caused by the loss of tens of thousands of low-rent housing units each year. Urban renewal has destroyed central-city SRO-hotels, apartments and rooming houses. Condominium conversions and gentrification — encouraged by tax policies that aid real-estate developers and those who own rather than rent — push out the poor.

Homelessness is, in sum, simply an extreme manifestation of poverty, and homelessness is on the rise because poverty is, too. Economic pressure on the poor and the near-poor are intensifying while housing costs continue to climb. The result is an ever-widening gap between the shelter people can afford and the shelter they need.

The homeless are just one step ahead of the pre-homeless: the 2.7 million renter households with incomes of less than \$3,000 a year, who must devote a median of 72 percent of income to their housing costs; the 6 per cent of all homeowners (almost 10 percent in states with high unemployment) who are more than 30 days behind in their mortgage payments; the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of "doubled up" households.

Unless the workings of the private market and of government are drastically revised, these will be the homeless of tomorrow. ■



and another 40 percent had their benefits reduced.

■ Millions of unemployed workers are receiving reduced assistance. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, only 33 percent of the 9.5 million officially counted as jobless in 1983 were collecting unemployment benefits of any kind — the lowest percentage on record since the introduction of unemployment compensation.

■ Cutbacks imposed in 1981 on food stamp and child nutrition programs — expected to total \$12 billion by this year — force many families to "choose" homelessness

housing construction or rehabilitation. Furthermore, HUD is systematically diminishing the existing and irreplaceable stock of 1.3 million public-housing units by subjecting it to demolition, abandonment, sale, and the conversion — a process helped along by the lack of adequate operating, maintenance, and modernization funds.

■ Rents paid by families in subsidized housing have been raised for 25 percent to 30 percent of income — an increase that will transfer \$6 billion from the pockets of the poor to the government in the years from 1981 to 1986. For many families on the margin, that seemingly

from Sara J. Riley

Child support amounts ^{add in} will be set by the state

McClatchy News Service

SACRAMENTO — California on Monday will become the first state in the nation to set minimum child-support payments that courts must award.

The minimum is tied to welfare grants under Aid to Families with Dependent Children and would vary with family size and income under legislation authored last year by Assemblyman Art Agnos, D-San Francisco, with a July 1 effective date.

Based on current welfare scales, the basic support payment under the new law would be at least \$288 a month for one child, ranging up to \$1,261 for 10 children. However, those payments will be scaled upward for high-income parents and could be

scaled downward in cases of extreme hardship.

Courts must award at least the same amount per month in child support payments from one or both parents as the state would pay in welfare, Agnos said. Judges could award more.

Assuming the money can be collected, he predicted a reduction in welfare caseload. The state Department of Social Services estimated that the state might save \$73.2 million during the fiscal year.

Low-income parents would be excused from excessively high payments and their children would have to continue receiving aid, he said.

Current child support awards often are low, and they differ from county to county.

ee Press Thurs., July 11, 1985 B-7

Governor's veto on child care stirs controversy

McClatchy News Service

SACRAMENTO — Senate President Pro Tem David Roberti, D-Los Angeles, surrounded by noisy children in a Capitol hearing room, Wednesday denounced Gov. George Deukmejian's \$66 million child-care veto, but said new legislation would be attempted before a veto-override attempt.

Roberti and Assemblyman Johan Klehs, D-San Leandro, joined children and advocates from the Children's Lobby in the first of a series of demonstrations around the state to focus attention on the veto.

"He left us with a \$2 million net cut in child-care funds," said Sue Brock of the Children's Lobby. And that was after overwhelming bipartisan support for a \$60 million augmentation to child-care programs plus a cost-of-living increase.

About half the cut depleted the money for Roberti's latch-key program to protect the children of working parents after school. The rest came out of a child-care proposal by Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, D-San Francisco.

Roberti complained that Deukmejian cut his proposal based on a Gallup Poll survey of 1,200 families last fall.

More fathers are paying up

But child support payments still lagging

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Seventy-six percent of the women due child support in 1983 received it — up slightly from 1981 — but only half the mothers got full payments, which averaged less than \$200 a month, the Census Bureau reported Thursday.

The Census survey, taken in April 1984, showed almost one-fourth of the women got no payments but that men who volunteered to pay were more likely to do so than those ordered to pay by the courts.

The survey showed white women and those with higher levels of education fared better in the amount of their awards and in what they actually received.

According to the survey, in April 1984 there were 8.7 million mothers with children whose fathers were not present, about 58 percent of whom had been awarded or had agreements to receive child support.

Of women due payments in 1983, the report said, 76 percent received them — up slightly from 72 percent in 1981 — but only 50.5 percent got the full amount. Twenty-four percent received none of what they were owed.

Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler said even though the number of fathers paying child support has improved, the figures “still document a widespread and shameful situation in our country — the non-support of children by their own parents.”

“In 1983, children were owed \$3 billion by their absent parents. This is a shocking level of non-support,” she said.

The survey showed the average payments received ranged from \$1,779 for women with one child to \$2,782 for two children, \$2,943 for three children and \$3,705 for women with four or more children.

According to the report, both awards and actual payment varied widely in a number of demographic areas.

In the Census survey, only 17.7 percent of never-married mothers were awarded child support payments and the actual payment received was \$1,132.

The average child support payment actually received was \$2,475 for white women, compared to \$1,465 for blacks and \$1,839 for Hispanics.

For women with court-ordered payments, the mean payment due was \$2,290 but the mean amount received was only \$1,330. In contrast, women with voluntary written agreements got 88 percent of the amount they were due, receiving \$2,590 of the \$2,960 they were due.

Among those with less than a high school education, only 42.4 percent of those eligible had

awards or agreements, compared to 71 percent of those with four years or more of college. The actual child support payment received was \$1,535 for those with less than a high school education and \$4,118 for college graduates.

About one-third of the women with children from an absent father — 2.9 million — had incomes below the poverty line, the report said. About 42 percent of these women had been awarded child support, compared to 58 percent of all women, and of those, only 62 percent received some amount of payment.

The mean child support payment of women below the poverty line was \$1,430, about 60 percent of the average payment received by all women.

For instance, the report showed that 66.9 percent of white women with children under 21 and no father present were awarded child support payments either through a voluntary written agreement or a court order. For black women, the figure was 33.7 percent and for Hispanics, 40.9 percent.

One factor in such statistics may be that in 1982, according to a study by the Children's Defense Fund, over 55 percent of all births to black women were out of wedlock.

County agency forces deadbeat dads to pay up

\$10 million collected last year

By R.W. Greene
S-FP staff writer

Envision a collection agent and you'd probably come up with the image of some Mafia-type heavy-weight with a grimy collar and a 5 o'clock shadow, his palms outstretched for the overdue payment on that cheesy bedroom set you wished you'd never seen.

Stan Trom bears not the slightest resemblance to that portrait, but the collection agency he runs pulled in more than \$10 million in the last fiscal year.

Obligations are obligations, of course, but the ones that Trom collects on are far more serious than a misspent afternoon in a furniture store. For if you are responsible for supporting a child who lives in Ventura County, it is Deputy District Attorney Trom and the Child Support Division who will be going after you.

Last year's \$10,396,388 collected was by far the best the CSD has done, and was far beyond the expectations of Trom or any other official. It was an increase of almost 15 percent over the \$9,053,618, collected in the previous fiscal year, and was a bit of good news welcomed in a department in which there was considerable confusion in 1984.

"To say we're pleased is an understatement," said Assistant District Attorney Colleen "Toy" White, who has responsibility for the division. "We're ecstatic with the job that they've done over there. And we think that it's going to get better and better."

The Child Support Division's duties are diverse; not only do they collect court-ordered child support money for non-working mothers on various forms of welfare, but they also collect money from deadbeat fathers (and a few mothers) who are not on any sort of state aid, but who are under court order to pay child support as the result of divorce proceed-

ings.

The CSD can play hardball indeed, if it wants to. Although the CSD's main interest is in collecting money for the benefit of children, it will press for jail terms for recalcitrant parents.

And if a father tries to deny responsibility for his role in a child's existence, the CSD has the power to compel those men to undergo expensive blood tests in order to prove paternity.

The Ventura division's substantial gleanings from non-welfare cases make it somewhat unique in the state. Child support divisions were originally created only with the idea that they could save taxpayer money by collecting money from the partners of welfare mothers. Only recently have they been given authority to collect in non-welfare cases.

"It used to be that you got no money for the non-welfare," said Trom. "And so your incentives — the money that you got paid on top of that 70 percent federal money — you didn't get the money for non-welfare, and so people did not pursue it."

Explaining the CSD's funding would tax the writing skills of an IRS bureaucrat. But it's fairly simple the way Trom explained it: The more money the division collects, the happier the state is. The state gives out frequent bonuses to make the county keep on making the state happy.

Trom said he thinks the CSD will start turning a profit for the county in a few years.

The situation last year was not nearly as bright. Parents complained to the division — and to the Grand Jury — of checks being late, of long delays and mixed-up billings.

At the time, the CSD operated in cramped quarters in a building near the Government Center, and the division was in the throes of installing its first computer system, a Hewlett-Packard model nicknamed STORC. All computer

systems have growing pains, and STORC's were such that it caused major snafus and headaches.

In October, Trom — who was district attorney from 1973 to 1978 — was asked by his old assistant, Michael Bradbury, to take over the department from Deputy District Attorney Steven Tucker, who remains on the staff of the CSD.

White denied that Tucker was demoted in any way because of departmental displeasure with the way he ran the CSD, and said the change was made simply because of a desire in the upper echelons of the District Attorney's Office to bring in fresh blood.

"Steve did an excellent job,"

White said. "We saw Stan's appointment as bringing some new approaches and enthusiasm to the job. One of the attitudes we have is that new changes and new outlooks are good for the job."

To facilitate STORC's labor pains, Trom got authority to spend thousands of dollars on overtime, and began a concerted effort to reduce the backlog of cases. He points to that as a major reason for the division's currently bright outlook.

There was one smaller cloud in that outlook earlier this year when the division did not receive an extra, icing-on-the-cake bonus from the state, because its collec-

tions going to Aid To Families With Dependent Children actually went down.

But Trom said that was because the state had picked a particularly good year as a base year for the bonus; the fact that collections went down slightly the next year meant no bonus at all.

Both Trom and White say CSD's major effort now will be to get its message across to the public:

Single parents who aren't getting the court-ordered support they should are welcomed with open arms, and so are the parents who owe money — especially when they come with open checkbooks.

7-19-85
Stan Free Press

Day care crisis

A-12 Sun., July 21, 1985 The Ventura County (Calif.) Star-Free Press

Number of providers may shrink as insurance costs grow

By Elena Jarvis
S-FP staff writer

This month, Ventura County is facing a layoff that could affect 1,878 small businesses, 17,500 children and their parents.

Most newspapers and television and radio stations haven't yet addressed the issue, but in coming weeks people will be hearing more about the crisis confronting family day care providers.

Providers have been operating in the county for more than 25 years. They are licensed individuals who watch over from six to 12 children in their home on a regular basis. (Those numbers include their own children under the age of 12.)

While they may be small businesses, these providers are the backbone of day care services in the county. The California Department of Social Services estimates that Ventura County has only 128 day care centers, which are capable of taking care of some 7,000 children. In comparison, the 1,750 providers in the county take care of another 10,500 more children than day care centers here.

In the next few months, many of the county's family day care providers are expected to quit the business because of a hefty hike in their insurance premiums and other assorted headaches. Providers will pay from 200 to 317 percent more for the new policies, an increase most can't pay or pass on to their clients.

To make matters worse, in March, the Ventura County chapter of the California Federation of Family Day Care — a membership composed of family day care providers — was informed that its group insurance had been dropped. It took until this week for the group to secure a new insurance company. Across the nation, similar organizations are getting the same treatment. In fact, large insurance companies are so leery of lawsuits that they are canceling the homeowners' insurance of day care providers, too.

Ruthann Burnell of Ventura said her Allstate homeowners' cancellation came with only a seven-day warning and despite the fact she carried a separate insurance policy for the business.

"It was very difficult to find another company; State Farm and all the major companies turned me down. They said they weren't giving any homeowners' insurance to people with day care in their homes," she said.

"I only found two companies that would. There might have been more, but I didn't find them and I had an insurance broker working for me."

Burnell is still offering day care, but she doesn't know for how much longer.

"This is really making me think about it. Right now I plan to continue because I have three children of my own... a first-grader and two who aren't in school. I want to be home with them," said Burnell, adding that getting a job would not be too difficult, since she has teaching credentials and a bachelor's degree and soon will obtain a master's.

"I'm doing this so I can be home with my children and at the same time can provide other working moms with quality day care. But this is making me wonder... it's scary."

On Thursday, Sen. John Seymour, R-Anaheim, called a press conference in Sacramento to express his concern about day care centers. Day care centers, as well as individual care providers, are experiencing an insurance crisis.

Money is the bottom line for insurance companies, providers and centers. Insurance companies are paying out more fighting lawsuits than they are taking in from customers. Providers and center operators say they can't run a business without making a profit, which is undermined by insurance costs.

Further complicating matters is a state law that went into effect Jan. 1. It says providers should have at least \$300,000 in insurance. The mandate, written by Assemblyman Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks, offers two insurance options: Get the parents to sign a statement, saying they know their provider does not have coverage; or secure a \$300,000 bond.

But the proverbial straw that breaks the family day care business may be a letter providers received on Monday. Written by BMF Marketing of California, the insurance broker for the California Federation of Family Day Care, the letter actually was a bill. Announcing the new policy costs, which range from \$505 to \$1,165, the letter made it clear the premium is due in full now. For family day care providers, who were paying \$115 to \$279 for the same coverage, "shock" is a mild word for what they felt when they read the letter.

"There's already a big stink about the rising cost of day care for parents, who are crying because

they can't afford the rates," said Eleanor Drury of Ventura, a nurse who recently closed down her day care business after six years.

"I've gone back to nursing," she said. "When I was informed that there was a possibility that insurance companies would no longer cover child care, I started getting nervous. We're insurance-conscious people. We believe people should carry insurance when they have a business that includes other people."

Drury and her husband, James, don't think the McMartin day care case involving child abuse in Manhattan Beach is entirely responsible for the hikes, but said it was the catalyst for change.

"It's kind of a Catch 22... In this day and age, there is always that attorney out there looking for the million-dollar lawsuit."

"They've all gone crazy," James Drury said. "If a child is injured on your property and he is hurt, disabled for life, a million dollars won't even cover it."

The couple pointed out that state law won't offset insurance payoffs in cases such as the McMartin center because companies immediately drop the policy of those charged with criminal offenses.

Joan Smith of Simi Valley is a past president of the county chapter of the California Federation of Family Day Care. At the present time, she is insurance chairwoman for the group and she is in favor of McClintock's bill.

"There are 32,000 providers doing family day care in California and not even 2,000 of them had insurance before the bill was passed," she said.

"All along, insurance companies were not charging an adequate premium... insurance companies have not kept up with the cost of doing business (with day care providers)."

"Because of the McMartin case there are a lot of scared people out there, even if insurance doesn't cover criminal acts," she said.

She said McClintock and others thought a bill requiring insurance would create more competition and, therefore, lower rates. Unfortunately, that theory seems to be working in reverse.

McClintock, however, is confident that eventually rates will be lower because of the bill. He said the bill is not responsible for the increase in insurance rates. Rather, he agrees with the Drurys: "Virtually anybody can be sued for anything and insurance companies are paying vastly inflated claims as a

result."

McClintock said one of his colleagues is proposing a new measure that would waive the requirements of the insurance mandate, as long as getting "adequate insurance at a reasonable price" is impossible for day care providers. McClintock said he would support such a move.

He said it should be clearly understood the state is not actually requiring providers to obtain insurance. "There's not even a waiver involved," he said. "It's just if you do not carry insurance you have to tell the parents and they have to sign an affidavit."

Most federation members feel they need extra insurance. And Smith said she understands why providers aren't willing to pass the costs on to their customers. "If you have a premium of \$550 and you keep six children, you will probably have to increase each child's weekly rate by \$5. That doesn't sound like a lot, but many of these people are already on the edge."

Although day care clearly is an ailing industry, providers such as the Drurys aren't sure about the cure. They believe major corporations or the state or federal government will have to subsidize day care. On the other hand, they are against federal or state-operated day care centers.

Eleanor Drury said, "Parents I talk to don't want someone telling them who to take their children to. There's always a high incidence of child abuse where you have a lot of children being controlled by a few adults. I think that's because of the frustration involved."

Jean Stiles of Ventura is one of thousands of parents who aren't sure what they will do if they lose their family care providers.

"I'd be willing to sign a waiver if she couldn't get insurance because I know her. If I had to go cold turkey looking for someone else, I wouldn't know what to do."

The Drurys are a little bitter about the battle between providers and insurance companies.

"My biggest argument is that the parents are still sitting back as if it were just the providers' problem. But it's the parents, not me, who are going to be affected by this the most. They should get busy and write their congressmen and representatives of the Health and Human Services committee (which oversees California day care concerns) in Sacramento."

Opinion

What women need on payday

"THE PERCEIVED NEEDS" of Ventura County women are the subject of a current, \$30,000 survey, and any editorial misgivings run the risk of being dismissed as sexist. Still, some questions are inevitable.

To start with, there's room to wonder if what county women really need is a \$30,000 survey. (Of that, \$24,000 is in public funds, \$6,000 in private donations.) Real needs tend to make themselves self-evident, without requiring a search by phone to find them.

There will be such a search, conducted by a private consulting firm, following four public hearings. (A spokesperson for that firm gave us the term "perceived needs.") There also will be a mail survey of local businesses. Finally, says another spokesperson, the result will be "clear-cut, factually-based priorities for the next decade."

The Ventura County Commission on Women and the Ventura County Commission on Human Concerns are the prime movers in the survey. We are assured that the women to be surveyed will be randomly chosen, and we trust that will prove true.

One of the continuing criticisms of such assessments of women's priorities is that they tend to be inspired, conducted and evaluated by organizations with a collective disdain for women whose only "clear-cut priorities" are in being housewives and mothers. The criticism may not be entirely fair, but any meaningful survey would have to include all the diverse "needs" that exist among the county's diverse women.

IT WILL BE SURPRISING if the survey doesn't find a need, or at least a desire, to end the sexual inequality in paychecks. For every dollar earned by men, women get 62 cents. The gap is narrowing, but slowly, and there's a long way to go to achieve equality.

This injustice is easy to see, but its resolution is not, largely because resolving it would be so expensive. Last year, the California Legislature approved a \$400 million plan to upgrade the pay in state jobs traditionally held by women. (Gov. Deukmejian vetoed it.) In Washington, a federal

judge has ordered the state to pay women \$860 million in raises and back pay.

Should a librarian or a secretary get paid \$200 a month less than a janitor or a groundskeeper, just because one job is traditionally held by women and the other by men? Of course not. But that has happened historically, and it continues to happen.

The theoretical resolution is called "comparable worth" — paying people for the degree of difficulty and responsibility involved, whatever the job and whoever holds it. It's a perfectly-logical theory, with no perfectly-practical application in sight.

Gov. Deukmejian wants it resolved via contract negotiations, which is something of an anachronism. Here's a governor who doesn't care much for labor unions, suggesting that an obvious social injustice should be resolved by collective bargaining.

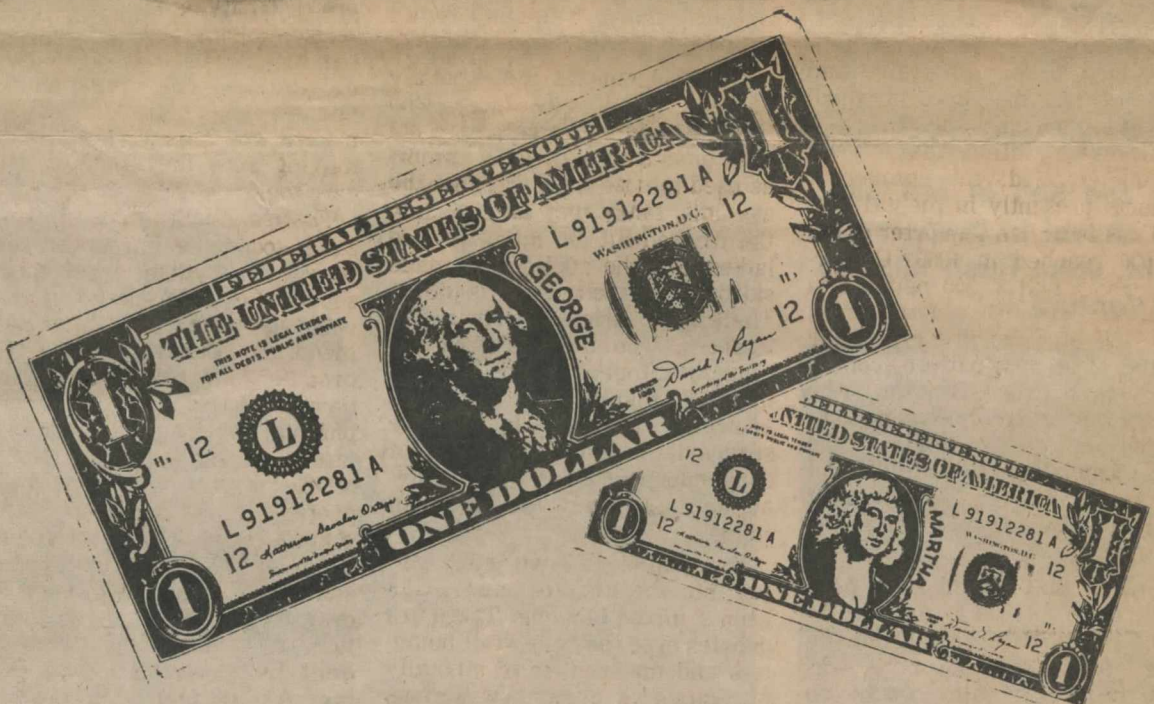
The attempts to resolve it that way have had predictably-unsatisfying results. Last year, when the clerical workers (primarily women) in the California State Employees Association gained a bigger raise than CSEA members in jobs dominated by men, there was a move for the men to quit CSEA and form their own union.

Meanwhile, a suit similar to the one in Washington has been filed by CSEA in California, charging sex discrimination in state pay. The Deukmejian administration is trying to get the suit dismissed.

IF COMPARABLE WORTH can't fly at the state level, where does all this leave Ventura County? So what, if we have a survey that says county women want comparable pay for comparable work?

Well, so far, at least, the only place comparable worth has been put into practice is at the local level: in the cities of San Jose and Pismo Beach, in the Los Angeles School District, in Contra Costa County.

Whatever the results of this county's current survey, you don't need a consulting firm to find out what women need on payday. It's simple equality. What we need is someone who can find the money to provide it.



The costs vs. the benefits of comparable worth

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Letters

Editor, Star-Free Press:

Re: Editorial March 17.

You are so right that "what women need on payday" is "simple equality" and I applaud the S-FP for acknowledging that. I was also glad to see your fairly even words about the comparable worth issue.

But, I do disagree with your judgment about the survey on women's needs being conducted by the Commission on Women and the Commission on Human Concerns. If nothing else, the announcement of the survey and, later, the announcement of its results will bring the needs of women to the public eye. Unfortunately, not everyone is as informed about women's issues as the S-FP apparently is, and solutions to the many problems will not be forthcoming until the public at large understands our concerns.

Regarding comparable worth, it is lamentable that whenever it is discussed the words "so expensive" are uttered in the same breath. The inequities corrected by the child labor laws and civil rights acts were undeniably worth any expense, and our country is a better place today because of those "expensive" solutions.

People who are treated fairly and paid equitably make better employees; better employees make for better business, etc. One immediate solution to the problem of low pay for women's jobs is for employers simply to recognize the disparity and to make an honest attempt to correct the situation.

"9 to 5, Ventura Working Women" is also in the process of conducting a survey, though because of limited funds, not on a grand scale. We, too, recognize that specifics are needed regarding women's concerns (in this case, working women). Anyone interested in participating should call 649-9400 or 642-1554.

By the way, I do not see any disdain for housewives and mothers within the different organizations I am acquainted with. We recognize that *all* women are *working* women.

RITA REGNIER-YVARRA,
Ventura

(The writer is director, "9 to 5,
Ventura Working Women.")

County job study to be expanded

Jones wants to know if women are underpaid

By Linda Fogerson
S-FP staff writer

Ventura County's personnel department is gearing up to launch a \$300,000 study of the county's job classifications. And, at the request of Supervisor Ed Jones of Thousand Oaks, it may include an analysis of the idea of "comparable worth."

Comparable worth is a concept that calls for paying men and women equal wages for jobs that may be different but that require the same level of skills, training and responsibility.

If comparable worth wages were implemented, women who hold jobs as secretaries and librarians, which are traditionally woman's occupations, would probably get a pay raise.

Jones said he would ask the board to support the proposed personnel study, which was form-

erly unrelated to an analysis of implementing comparable worth wages in the county.

The issue will probably come before the board when the supervisors begin reviewing next year's proposed budget in early June.

The planned personnel study has been budgeted for the 1985-86 fiscal year and is expected to take well over a year to complete. Personnel Director Ron Komers said that he proposed the study to help the county establish an organized job classification system.

Jones came up with the idea of investigating the comparable worth issue the day after the city of Los Angeles agreed to raise by from 10 to 15 percent the salaries of about 3,900 women holding traditionally low-paying jobs.

"I've got a feeling that those jobs historically dominated by women are underpaid," said

Jones.

"I'm particularly worried about the single parents who are being ground into poverty in our society today," said Jones.

The issue of comparable worth was discussed but dropped last fall in negotiations between the Public Employees Association of Ventura County (PEAVC) and the Personnel Department as they settled the librarians' contract last fall, said Barry Hammitt executive director of PEAVC.

However, Hammitt was cautious about supporting any kind of comparable worth program. He derided the city of Los Angeles plan because the wages for some men in well-paying jobs will be frozen, he said, while the wage for women in low-paying jobs raises over the next three years

— eventually making the two equal.

"Comparable worth is a good buzz word, but nobody is really comfortable with it," said Hammitt.

However, the difference in the pay between the jobs in which both men and women work that require the same level of skill needs to be addressed, Hammitt added.

Jones would like to see the issue addressed as soon as possible.

"As a student of American history, I know that a lot of the job categories dominated by women were cheap because they were seen to be a cheap source of labor.

"I'm just in favor of paying a fair wage for a fair day's work," said Jones.

County to launch comparable-worth study

Women could benefit from equal pay for equivalent work

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Star
File
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By Linda Fogerson
S-FP staff writer

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors Monday voted to launch a study into the idea of comparable worth — paying men and women equal wages for jobs that may be different, but require the same level of skill.

Supervisors voted Monday to fund the program, which will require the hiring of four new personnel employees, as they finalized the 1985-86 budget.

The \$300,000 study may be the first step toward giving workers who hold female-dominated jobs a big financial boost, if it shows that women are underpaid for the skills and responsibility required in their jobs.

If actually implemented, the results of the study could also cost the county millions of dollars in increased personnel costs.

"This is the first step in giving fair weight to those jobs that have not, in my view, been given the heavier weight they deserve," said

Supervisor Ed Jones of Thousand Oaks, who has been pushing for the study for several months.

The study will evaluate those positions typically dominated by females, such as secretaries, social workers and nurses, and assign a value to the job they perform. Those jobs then will be compared to jobs typically dominated by men, such as truck drivers, mechanics and doctors.

The goal of the study is to determine if jobs typically dominated by females are low-paying in comparison to jobs dominated by men that require the same level of skill and responsibility.

In some areas, such as in Los Angeles and Washington state, similar studies have determined that women are, in fact, underpaid for their work and, in turn, some men were being overpaid for their work.

The result was a reorganization of pay scales.

"The goal is to ensure that all county

employees are adequately paid. Without this study we cannot say that," Jones said.

Because employees must be hired to conduct the study, the evaluation won't begin until October, said Ron Komers, county personnel director.

The comparable-worth study eventually will reclassify all of the positions in county government to provide a more accurate job description.

The first few months of the program will be dedicated to evaluating county jobs dominated by women.

Once the jobs have been reclassified, Komers said, any changes in salaries will be negotiated through the collective bargaining process.

Komers said that he hopes to have the first phase of the study completed by April, in time to start implementing changes in wages scales for the next round of employee negotiations coming up.

"This is the first step in what will probably be a very long process," Komers said.

L.A. Times
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Still Earn Only 63.6% of Men's Income

Women Get Better-Paying Jobs, Narrowing the Gap

By ROBERT A. ROSENBLATT, *Times Staff Writer*

WASHINGTON—Women are moving into better-paying jobs, and the gender gap in wages has narrowed slightly, but women still earn only 63.6% of men's income, the Labor Department said Wednesday in a special report on the female work force.

The median income for full-time workers was \$21,881 for men and \$13,915 for women in 1983, the latest year for which figures are available, according to the report. The median measures a midpoint; half the workers earn more and half less.

Women made "modest but significant" progress in the last decade, the report found, noting that their numbers in the civilian work force rose from 37 million to 50 million.

Lower-Paying Jobs

However, working women are still concentrated in "the lower-paying industries and occupations," the report said. It found that the five occupations that employ the most women are secretaries, cashiers, bookkeepers, registered nurses and waitresses—nearly the same grouping as 10 years ago.

In 1975, the median income for full-time women workers was 58.8% of men's median earnings. The gap has narrowed and widened in an erratic fashion over the last 10 years. It was 61.7% in 1982, before improving to 63.6% the following year.

"As increasing numbers of women disperse into jobs that offer higher pay for higher levels of skills and responsibilities, the earnings differential is expected to shrink further," the report said. It was prepared by the Labor Department's Women's Bureau for a United Nations conference on "The Decade for Women."

Selected Jobs Listed

More women are moving into better-paid professional fields, but they constitute a relatively small share of the work force in these jobs. Among a list of selected jobs surveyed by the government, the share held by women last year varied considerably: doctors, 16%; registered nurses, 96%; lawyers, 16.1%; engineers, 6.2%; computer

programmers, 35.4%; welders, 4.7%; economists, 39.6%; bartenders, 43.9%; police and detectives, 10.8%; typesetters and compositors, 67.4%; airplane pilots and navigators, 2.1%, and education and job counselors, 54.2%.

A majority of women, 53.6%, were working or looking for work last year, up from 46.3% a decade ago, the report said. During the same period, male participation in the labor force declined slightly, to 76.4% last year from 77.9% a decade ago.

In the "prime working age group," persons between 25 and 54 years old, women's participation is even higher, with 70% working or seeking jobs, the Labor Department said.

More Working Mothers

Moreover, a dramatic rise in the number of working mothers is under way, reaching a record 19.5 million last year, the report noted. The increase "has been phenomenal," with 59% of mothers in the work force now, contrasted with 45% a decade ago, it said.

The trend indicates "that nursery school attendance or day care in some form is increasingly necessary," the study said.

Most American children under the age of 18 had mothers in the labor force last year. "The vast majority of these children were under 14 years—ages for which all-day care, after-school care, or a combination of both is likely to be needed," according to the report.

Comparable worth a hot item

'Crazy idea' finally getting serious attention

Seemingly out of the silences, the issue of "comparable worth" has been catapulted into the headlines and is now fueling a passionate national debate — plus real action.

"A truly crazy idea," said William A. Niskanen of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers last fall — reflecting how Reagan feels about the question. And Reagan has indeed declared he'll fight comparable worth in the courts.

"The looniest idea since Looney Tunes came on the screen," declared Clarence M. Pendleton, chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. A fair hearing from this source is not to be expected.

Yet, despite the attitude that this is "leftover babble from the '70s," comparable worth is gaining strength in many areas. Only a fortnight ago, the city of Los Angeles announced its plans to raise salaries of more than 3,000 workers, mostly women, to eliminate pay discrimination. More than 100 other cities have begun to study employee wage scales. A full 20 states have approved comparable worth legislation. In Congress, the House has ordered a survey of the 1923 federal job classification system. Across the board, contracts are being studied for evidence of job discrimination. The movement is taking on aspects of a crusade.

The reason is obvious: Women's salaries continue to lag behind men's, despite the surge of women into the work force and the passage of anti-discrimination legislation. The average woman worker earns 65 cents for every \$1 earned by the average man.



Sylvia Porter

That's about 5 cents more than 20 years ago, a far slower narrowing of the gap than expected.

Why? Sex discrimination cannot be denied. It is the decisive factor in the male/female wage gap.

Female-dominated occupations such as nursing and teaching pay poorly because women historically have been a cheap source of labor. While it may be true that women tend to choose low-paying occupations, it's also true that the higher-paying jobs have been generally hard for women to enter.

"Equal pay for comparable work" is the new goal of supporters of comparable worth. Under this doctrine — and/or legislation — equally qualified truck drivers and secretaries would receive the same salaries if their work was of equal value to their employer.

Although the concept of comparable worth goes back at least a decade, the current wave of activity began in 1981, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that sex discrimination for comparable jobs was illegal under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Soon after, a strike of government workers in San Jose resulted in the addition of comparable-worth language to their contract and \$1.4 million in wage adjustments

for underpaid jobs dominated by women.

The flood really broke in 1983, when a federal judge ordered Washington State to pay more than 15,000 employees up to \$1 billion in back pay. The judge said that the state had acted in bad faith, failing to follow through when it discovered discriminatory pay practices.

Comparable-worth advocates are now fighting hard while "employers are watching closely to see whether comparable worth continues to gain legal credibility," said William J. Smith, consultant in the Seattle office of The Wyatt Co., a leading employee benefit consulting firm. "So far the action has been confined to the public sector.

"But employers should re-examine their own pay strategies, scales and evaluation systems to make sure their salaries are competitive on the market or fair internally (or both)," said Smith.

The comparable-worth controversy will mount in coming months. Congress and state legislatures will be fighting over the latest job classification bills, and Washington State is appealing its own case.

If you have any stake in the debate, make your opinions known to your representatives and keep track of the developments now happening with increasing rapidity.

Do you think the concept of comparable worth should become the law of our land? Or should it be tossed into the dustbin? As a woman who has fought this battle throughout my entire working life, I'm sure you know where and how firmly I stand.

County workers leery of comparable worth study

The executive director of Ventura County's largest public employees' union has some serious doubts about the county conducting its own comparable worth study, which he said could be manipulated to come out any way the county wants.

Barry Hammitt, Ventura County Public Employees Association executive director, said the study should be contracted to a firm that would undertake it without preconceived notions.

Comparable worth dictates that men and women should be paid equally for different jobs that require equal levels of skill, training and responsibility.

In May, Supervisor Ed Jones of Thousand Oaks said he would ask for a review of the county's pay scale. That statement was sparked by a city of Los Angeles settlement that gave special pay raises mostly to women whose jobs paid less than men's.

On Monday, Jones said he would ask personnel director Ronald Komers to

include the study in the personnel department's budget.

According to the 1985-86 proposed budget, Komers is asking for \$142,000 to hire an analyst and an assistant for a major revision of the job specifications. The county last did a job reclassification in 1973.

The chief administrative office, has recommended that \$71,000 be appropriated for the study.

Komers said the \$71,000 doesn't include funding for a comparable worth study.

The idea of adding the study the 1985-86 budget has met with mixed reactions, Jones said, "not because of the value of the study but because of the dollars involved."

The negative comments, he said, were based on the federal government's intention to cut revenue sharing.

Supervisor Susan Lacey of Ventura said she agreed with the need for the study, but added that anything beyond

that should be negotiated.

In justifying the study, Komers stated in the budget that the lack of current classifications is "causing department organizational problems, employee relation problems, unnecessary dissatisfaction and turnover of employees."

Hammitt said he has a difficult time believing the Personnel Department could do an objective study because it comes under the chief administrative office, which has been known to "cry 'wolf,' that there is never enough money."

Of the 5,000 county employees, Hammitt said 52.7 percent are female. Women hold only 14 percent of the jobs that pay \$55,000 per year or more. Forty-nine percent of the female employees earn less than \$9 per hour and only 10 percent of the male employees do. Twenty-four percent of the female employees earn less than \$7 per hour compared to 7 percent of the male county workers.

Critics maintain it isn't possible to compare a secretary's job with a tree trimmer's. To that, Hammitt said jobs are broken into components — educational requirements, responsibility, effect on organization and consequences of decision-making. The studies also take into account stress and strain.

Numerical scores are assigned to the components. Once that is done, the study becomes relatively simple, he said.

To bring the pay of female-dominated jobs to the level of male-dominated jobs, historical stereotypes must be overcome, Hammitt said.

"The problem is that wages were set on the fact that the male was the head of household," he said. "He had more responsibilities and needed more money. Women could and did work for less money."

But the executive director of the union that has 3,700 county members said that is no longer the case; many

women have become the heads of the households to rear their families.

Hammitt said a number of agencies evaluate jobs, including the federal government with its "GS" ratings.

Los Angeles' settlement stemmed from a complaint filed with the federal Economic Employment Opportunity Commission four years ago.

When fully implemented, the settlement will cost the city about \$12 million per year.

Jones believes that upgrading the salary scale in Ventura County would differ considerably with Los Angeles' because Ventura County has considerably fewer employees.

Supervisor James Dougherty of Simi Valley agreed the county should undertake study.

"I don't want the county to do the study just to gain political points," he said. "I'd like the county to do a study that we could implement."