



haven·house

History & Mission Statement

Haven House Family Services Center was formed in 1978 in Wayne, Nebraska. The agency was an outcome of a joint seminar conducted by the Association of American University Women and Wayne State College staff which determined a need for services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

In 1979, Haven House was incorporated as a non-profit agency under the laws of the State of Nebraska. A volunteer Board of Directors was established, part-time coordinator, and secretary were hired. Original funding was from private donations and the Department of Public Welfare.

A 24-hour hot line was established, volunteers were trained, and temporary shelter was provided in local motels. Survivors of domestic violence were able to receive emergency financial aid, food, clothing, access to medical services, transportation, emergency legal counseling, emotional support and referrals to established shelters in other communities and other agencies.

In the 1980's, Haven House was awarded funding to provide a 24-hour crisis line, temporary shelter, which was provided through the use of safe homes, motels, and/or referrals to other domestic violence agencies, emergency transportation, emergency financial assistance, legal and medical advocacy, community education, and to extend services to victims and survivors of sexual assault and conduct sexual assault prevention activities. We were also able to expand our service area to five counties: Cedar, Dixon Dakota, Thurston, and Wayne counties. Funds were also received to provide services to the Omaha Nation and Winnebago Indian Reservations. These funds allowed us to increase client services and add the full-time position of Volunteer Coordinator to provide services on the reservations and to coordinate volunteers to assist staff with the growing demand for victim services experienced in our 5-county area.

In 1994, Haven House established an emergency shelter in Wayne County. With the addition of a shelter, came the position of Shelter Supervisor to oversee/supervise shelter operations and provide advocacy to clients utilizing shelter. At this time, we also expanded our volunteer program to assist with increased client needs.

In 1997, Haven House established a satellite office in South Sioux City, hired a part-time Project Coordinator to provide victim services, and established a Coordinated Community Response Team (CCR) in Dakota County. The CCR was established to address gaps in responding to crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault. A part-time Outreach Coordinator position was later added at the South Sioux City satellite office to provide advocacy and outreach services as well as community education to area churches, organizations, and schools.

In 1999, Haven House established a satellite office in Hartington and hired a part-time Project Coordinator to provide victim services and coordinate agency programs in Cedar County.

In 2002, the city of South Sioux City provided Haven House a house rent-free for the use of an emergency shelter in Dakota County.

In 2004, Haven House hired a part-time bilingual advocate, which has allowed the agency to provide services to Spanish speaking individuals. Haven House was awarded by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) through the Office of Violence Against Women's Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization grant (2 yr.); These awards have allowed Haven House to significantly enhance programs, services and populations served.

Community education and prevention were emphasized from the beginning of Haven House and continue to be important today.

Currently, we have 9 FTE's, 24 volunteers, and a volunteer Board of Directors (8), collectively providing an average of 11,817 hours of support annually (Haven House statistics 2008-2010). The volunteers and Board of Directors are invaluable to Haven House. Board members representation encompasses our entire 5-county service area. Haven House also receives support from individuals and organizations throughout our service area. This support is a vital part of services and enables us to provide families with more of their basic needs. Currently we have 1,768 donors in our database, who contribute materially and monetarily throughout the year.

Haven House staff and volunteers will continue in its mission to empower, shelter, and advocate for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.