



Dear Commission members,

I am writing to share some information with you as you move forward in making your decisions for how to disperse the additional \$100,000 for Community Services put into the 2010 budget by the Common Council. I know this is a difficult decision and that there are many worthy organizations in our city with needs for additional funds. Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS) is certainly one of them. Over the past year, we have seen the most dramatic increases in the numbers of people requesting and using our services than ever before in our 32 year history. Not only are we seeing an increase in the numbers of people reaching out to us for assistance, we are hearing from our clients that they are experiencing more severe violence than ever before – more death threats, strangulation, mutilation, and stalking, just to name a few.

Unfortunately, despite this increase in demand, our resources have stayed the same and will be diminishing in 2010 due to cuts from Dane County Human Services. In fact, DAIS will be losing a half time case manager in our shelter beginning in January due to the necessary re-allocation of funding from another funding source to cover pressing needs. This will leave us with 2 case managers to serve the 25 people we house in our on-site shelter, as well as the people we house in hotels when the shelter is full and when we have available funds (hotel vouchers are funded through CDBG). Therefore, we now have a smaller shelter staff serving more people than we ever have before. Instead of 3 case managers for 25 residents (as we had in 2006), we are now down to 2 case managers for 25 residents plus hotel clients. During one day this summer, that number was 70 people!

You may not be aware, but Dane County has the smallest domestic violence shelter per capita in the entire State of Wisconsin. In fact, the average ratio in the state is 7,500 people/domestic violence shelter bed. Here in Dane County it is 19,000 people/bed. When our 2009 hotel voucher money was expended by the end of August, we had to begin wait-listing people with high safety needs for our shelter at higher rates than in any other year. If we hadn't been fortunate enough to have hotel money from CDBG for almost 8 months, our waitlist numbers would have been astronomical.

Below is a comparison of service numbers for quarters 1 through 3 of 2008 and quarters 1 through 3 of 2009 as well as the percent increase. I have bolded some of the more striking statistics for you. (Please note that Community Services funds our shelter program and our children's program. As you will note, more than half of our shelter residents are children.)

**Domestic Abuse Intervention Services
Program Statistics
First through Third Quarter Comparisons**

SAFE HOUSE

Number of Persons Sheltered in DAIS Safe House	Quarters 1- 3 2008	Quarters 1- 3 2009	Percent Increase
Unduplicated Adults	189	213	13%
Unduplicated Children	201	249	24%
Total Persons*	390	462	18%
Number of nights people were waitlisted when the shelter was full and hotel money was unavailable**	56	964 (930 in quarter 3 alone)	1,621%
Percentage of adult residents completing exit surveys who reported securing safe transitional or permanent housing upon leaving shelter	38%	79%	41%

* Note: this includes individuals and families we have placed in hotels when our shelter is full using CDBG monies for all three quarters. There were a number of days in

July where the DAIS shelter was full and we had up to 19 families in the hotels, bringing our daily census for shelter and hotel clients on one particular day to

70 people (with the same staff support we usually have for the 25 bed capacity of our shelter).

** One night = one person on the waitlist each day. For example, if a mother and her five children were on the waitlist on Monday and Tuesday, this equals 12 nights.

CRISIS LINE

	Quarters 1-3 2008	Quarters 1-3 2009	Percent Increase
Unduplicated Callers	1077	1331	24%
Callers requesting information about shelter	144	352	144%
Percentage of callers who reported they received the support or information they were looking for	76%	86%	10%

LEGAL ADVOCACY

	Quarters 1-3 2008	Quarters 1-3 2009	Percent Increase
Unduplicated Clients	396	468	18%
Total Number of Contacts	1188	1786	50%
Percentage of clients reporting they have more information about legal issues than before	94%	96%	2%
Percentage of clients reporting they have an increased sense of safety and support	93%	96%	3%

CRISIS RESPONSE

	Quarters 1-3 2008	Quarters 1-3 2009	Percent Increase
Unduplicated Clients	197	293	49%
Percentage of clients reporting they know more ways to plan for their safety	80%	94%	14%
Percentage of clients reporting they know 2 other places to go for help	86%	96%	10%

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

	Quarters 1-3 2008	Quarters 1-3 2009	Percent Increase
Unduplicated Clients	234	287	23%

I am incredibly proud of the work DAIS staff and volunteers have done to meet this increase in demand. Their dedication to individuals and families experiencing domestic violence is evident every single day. They work tirelessly to insure that outstanding and effective services are available to our clients as evidenced by the success we have achieved on our stated outcomes. That being said, the DAIS staff have been under incredible strain and pressure as they have worked to keep up with the need. For some staff this has led to them leaving the organization due to burnout.

As we continue to face these challenging economic times, I hope you will consider additional support of basic services like the DAIS shelter that become even more important to our community in times like these. In my mind, nothing is more fundamental than safety. It is our hope that no one in our community ever has to make a life or death decision because of lack of domestic violence services. Additional support from the Community Services Commission, depending on the level, would enable DAIS to reinstate a case

manager position for shelter or would allow us to hire more part-time shelter advocates who can be available to help clients with basic needs so that the remaining case managers can focus more of their time and energy on working with clients on their case plans.

If you have any questions about this information, please don't hesitate to call me. I also invite you to come and tour the DAIS shelter. Please give me a call, and I would be happy to arrange it.

Thank you for your continued support as a vital partner in the work to end domestic violence in Dane County.

Best wishes,

Shannon Barry

Executive Director

(608) 251-1237, ext. 307