

4th Annual NCACDSS Best Practices Awards Nomination Form

Category: PCC#7 Tier 3
Profiles in Community Collaboration

Project Title: Safe on Seven (SOS)

- 1. Project/Program Summary:** Briefly summarize the project's history, purpose, timeline and budget. In 10/2005, the Forsyth County District Attorney's Office received a federal grant to create an integrated team for the prosecution of domestic violence cases and to improve victims' access to community services. Previously, victims had to seek services at multiple locations. A "one-stop" service center was formed that included Family Services, Clerk of Court, Sheriff's Office, Legal Aide, the Police Department, the NC Department of Corrections, the Center for Community Safety and DSS. DSS staff are on site one and a-half days each week offering economic assistance services. Work First, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Child Support applications are taken and information on other services is provided. Occasionally, emergency services for housing and food are also provided using a local foundation grant. Outreach materials have been created for SOS on DSS services and to support advocacy for domestic violence services. The budget for this project is the staff time of a lead worker assigned to the Division offering economic assistance services.
- 2. Innovation:** Why is the program unique? How does your project differ from similar projects? As far as we know, this is first project of its kind in the state offering services to victims of domestic violence in one location. With seven community partners on site, the SOS center provides an innovative array of services. It is the first time that DSS has been able to provide basic economic assistance services, not just information about services, on-site to domestic violence victims. SOS provides the ultimate in collaboration to improve services and outcomes for victims of domestic violence.
- 3. Project Success and Impact:** What were the objectives? How well were they met? How widespread is the impact of the project/program? What is the anticipated long-term impact? Did the project involve collaboration with other agencies, non-profits, businesses, etc.? Describe the outcome of the collaboration. The objectives of the project were to improve access to community services for victims of domestic violence. To date, almost 700 individuals have been served and about 25% have worked with DSS. Collaboration is the central feature of the SOS center and has resulted in safe, convenient services for victims of domestic violence. The long-term impact will be more and better services for victims of domestic abuse.
- 4. Project Effort and Difficulty:** How well did the program use limited resources? What obstacles or challenges did you overcome? How was this done? DSS used a lead worker assigned to the Division that houses economic assistance programs to work on community outreach and this was a natural role for this worker to be assigned to the SOS center. The worker currently has connectivity to state information but does not have a printer. One major obstacle is that referrals to DSS stack up when the worker is not on site. The Department will be providing a printer and is considering additional on-site time for DSS staff.
- 5. Ability to Replicate Project:** Can this project be duplicated in other counties? What could counties do to minimize obstacles and problems? This project can be duplicated but not without some hard work. One-stop projects require funds for space and connectivity for partner agencies. To replicate in other counties, staff can start with

co-location of partner agencies. Office space can be contributed as it was in Forsyth County. Agencies can contribute computers, and supplies. Grant funds may be needed for connectivity and other common needs.
