

History of Family Support Center

This year marks 40 years since Family Support Center (FSC) first opened, providing services to victims/survivors of domestic violence. Since then, FSC has grown to provide support and advocacy to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, child abuse, and human trafficking, along with teaching violence prevention education and supporting parents with young children. Social norms and laws have changed a lot over the past 40 years relating to interpersonal violence. Let's take a look at the anti-violence movement, and how Family Support Center has grown along with it.

Although for this article we are focusing on Family Support Center's history, roots of the anti-violence movement go back over 100 years. Sexual violence has long been recognized as a problem by Black women, and one that intersects inextricably with race. Well into the early 1900's, social norms of the time identified women as the property of their husbands, and legal precedent labelled slaves as the property of their white owners. Laws overlooked men's perpetration of sexual violence against their wives (and continued to do so until the 1990s), and hardly acknowledged white perpetration of sexual violence against female slaves.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, two movements helped to draw attention to the issue of interpersonal violence: the civil rights movement and the women's liberation movement. The first battered women's shelter in the United States opened in St. Paul in 1973, bringing the wave of change to the Midwest. In 1981 a group of concerned citizens came together in Chippewa County to try to address the needs of victims of domestic abuse.

1982 Family Support Center opened its doors to clients of domestic violence, operating out of offices in local churches for the first ten years. In 1993, violence against women was included as a human rights violation by the United Nations at its International Conference on Human rights in Vienna. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was first enacted in 1994. After that, federal laws and budgets began to organize around the anti-violence movement. People began to realize the long-term affects of family violence in communities.

Violence Prevention Education has always been a focus, as studies show that the key to stopping violence is prevention.

1987 Protective Behaviors Education began as a program to teach violence prevention education in local school

districts. We currently have programs that work with youth beginning in kindergarten, as well as middle and high school groups. We give youth the tools to build healthy relationships and regulate big emotions.

1997 Family Support Center opened River Source Family Center, a child abuse prevention program designed to educate and support families throughout Chippewa County. **River Source celebrated its 25th birthday this year**, and has grown to offer playgroups, group connections, and home-visiting to families in our community.

1999 Family Support Center received funding to begin a Sexual Assault program. Advocates had already been providing services to survivors of sexual violence, but now had funding for its own program. At this time, FSC had one office, located in Chippewa Falls. That would change a few years later.

2003 Family Support Center opened an outreach office on the campus of UW-EC to raise awareness of, and provide services to, survivors of sexual assault on campus. The office is **CASA (The Center for Awareness of Sexual Assault)**. A sexual assault outreach office opened a few years later, to support survivors of sexual violence throughout Eau Claire County. The Sexual Assault Program continues to grow.

2021 FSC received funding to add a Human Trafficking Case Manager position to its staff. FSC had already been providing services to survivors of human trafficking, but now had specific funding to focus on providing services to survivors and raise awareness of what human trafficking looks like in our community. Family Support Center is a member of the Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, joining Madison's Project Respect and UMOS (The United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc.) of the Fox Valley Region.

Understanding oppressions that lead to interpersonal violence is ultimately the key to unlocking long-term change. In 2020,

FSC's Executive Directors

Sallie Duval (1982-1984)
Nellie Knusta (interim)
Barbara Hemesman (1984-1986)
Barb Hebert (1986-1987)
Wynne Cook (interim)
Laurel Kieffer (1991-1998)
Geri Segal (1998-present)



EVENTS HAPPENING IN OCTOBER FOR DVAM

DVAM Book Club

We will be discussing **Grown** by Tiffany D. Jackson

Thursday, October 6th 2:00 p.m.
D.R. Memorial Library in Stanley

Monday, October 10th 6:00 p.m.
Family Support Center in Chippewa Falls

Tuesday, October 18th 5:00 p.m.
Cadott Public Library

Open House

October 27th 5:00-7:00 p.m.
Family Support Center in C.F.
Stop in to learn about our programs and tour our Domestic Violence Program.
Tours every 20 minutes, last tour at 6:40

Letters to Survivors

You are invited to write letters & words of encouragement to survivors. Templates are available at all FSC offices and on Facebook

Facebook Trivia

Participate every Tuesday to be entered to win a prize!

Wear Purple Picture

Take a picture of yourself wearing purple in support of survivors and send to dadirector@fscf.org by October 12th!

**Look for DVAM displays
around Chippewa County!**

Family Support Center staff enhanced their work to gain greater understanding of oppressions through pillar groups and an anti-racist book club. Through this vital work we have increased our outreach efforts, become better Advocates, and better humans.

The anti-violence movement has gained some ground in the past 40 years, but we still have a long way to go. In the first half of this year alone, our office received over 1,800 calls from folks seeking services. Almost half of these calls were from individuals reaching out to us for the first time. Family Support Center will continue to grow to match the need in our community, but only with your support!

~Lori

Resource Development Coordinator

We can not do the vital work we do without the support from individuals and businesses like **you**.

**Please, if you are able, donate to
Family Support Center!**

Chippewa Falls main office
715-723-1138 or 1-800-400-7020
familysupport@fscf.org

Administrative

Executive Director-Geri
Assistant Administrator-Sue
Office Manager-Glori
Resource Development
Coordinator-Lori

Domestic Violence Program

Domestic Violence Program
Director-Jeni
Domestic Violence Advocates-
Cara & Erica
Domestic Violence Youth Advocates-
Victoria & Krista

River Source Family Center

715.720.1841

Parent Services Program Director-
Becce

Parent Educator-Robin

Rural Family Connections Facilitator-
Amanda R.

CF Family Connections Facilitator-
Brenda

Chippewa Falls satellite office

Sexual Assault Program

C.F. Sexual Assault Advocates-
Ka & Morgan

Human Trafficking Case Manager-
Kenzie

Eau Claire offices

715-830-0188 or 1-888-407-7811

Sexual Assault Program

Sexual Assault Program Director-
Amanda S.

Sexual Assault Advocate-Annette

UWEC CASA Victim Services
Coordinator-Hannah

Offices within the Chippewa Falls School District

Violence Prevention Education Program

Prevention Educator-Brock

Family Support & Resource
Coordinator-Ellen

Family Crisis Support Specialist-
Kristin



You deserve to live a life
free from violence

Why Use "Participant"?

We are now using the word, "participant" in place of "client" when talking about those who use our services.

You might be wondering why we have chosen to make this change. It's because those who seek our services are active participants

in their own journey. We support them and advocate for them, but they are the ones taking steps to bravely change the course of their lives. The word, "client" is passive, and therefore is inaccurate to use when describing the courageous survivors of violence we have the privilege of working with.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month



October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)**, and Family Support Center's Domestic Violence Program staff have been working hard to have special events and activities throughout the month to raise awareness and show support for survivors of violence. Please look at our social media pages and/or call the office for additional information and updates as DVAM gets closer!

This year, we'll be holding an in-person **Open House** event for community members to come see our office and hear a little bit more about what we do here. This will be **October 27th from 5-7pm**. It includes a tour of our Domestic Violence Program happening every 20 minutes, as well as a few activities to learn more about our program and to show support for survivors of violence. You'll also have a chance to check out our new Peace Garden (more on this in our next newsletter).

We'll be holding our fourth **DVAM book club**, partnering with area libraries. This year, we'll be reading **Grown** by Tiffany D. Jackson. Discussions will be held on: Thursday October 6th at 2pm at the DR Moon Memorial Library in Stanley, October 10th at 6pm at Family Support Center in Chippewa Falls, and on October 18th at 5pm at the Cadott Community Library. For more information on this, check with your area library or email Jeni at dadirector@fscf.org.

New this year: we're partnering with **Dotters Books** in Eau Claire for a book giveaway! If you **donate** a minimum of \$5 towards our Domestic Violence Program's book fund for books to give to participants of our program, you can be eligible to win 2 books from Dotter's Books- **Grown** by Tiffany D. Jackson (the DVAM Book Club book) and **The Mermaid's Voice Returns in This One** by Amanda Lovelace, a self-identified survivor of violence. Check out both Family Support Center and Dotters Books on social media for more information on this giveaway.

"Wear Purple" pictures is back this

year, too. Snap a picture of you, your family, friends, coworkers, etc. wearing purple to show support for survivors of violence, and send this to Jeni at dadirector@fscf.org by October 12th. These pictures will be compiled and displayed on social media and at our Open House.

For more social media and the potential to win a prize, throughout the month check out Family Support Center's Facebook page for weekly **Tuesday Trivia!** Anyone who participates in the weekly trivia all month will be eligible to win a grand prize of cozy items, including the DVAM book club book, a seasonal candle, book lovers socks, a big mug and hot chocolate bombs, donated by Domestic Violence Program staff. *Check out our Facebook in October for a sneak peek!*

Around 400 area agencies will be displaying purple ribbon posters throughout October. Purple ribbons are the official symbol of DVAM and have historically been a symbol of hope, visibility, and sanctuary for those experiencing domestic violence. If you know of an area agency that would be interested in displaying this poster, please contact Erica at dadvocate@fscf.org.

Over 30 displays with information about domestic violence are visible at area agencies throughout the county. Stop by to learn a little more about dynamics of violence, pick up some information about services, and at some locations to take some ribbons and stickers to show support!

Also throughout the month, contribute to our **"Letters to Survivors"** project. Participants are invited to write words of encouragement and letters of support to survivors that are then available for clients at Family Support Center to read throughout the year. Our main Chippewa Falls office, our CASA office on the UWEC campus, and various locations with DVAM displays have letters and drop boxes available, or you can find the form on our Facebook page.

Area coffee shops, including **430 AM, Bridge Street Brew, Goldsmith Coffee Bar, Barnabas Coffee House** (all in Chippewa Falls) and **Xpeditions** (in Bloomer) are labeling their cups with information about DVAM and Family Support Center. Support these local spots and spread the word about FSC!

~Jeni,

Domestic Violence Program Director



Donate online at: www.FamilySupportCenterCF.com





Summer fun with River Source!



We played!



We danced!



We learned!



River Source Family Center staff connected with families this past summer by heading outdoors! Play & Learns, Movin' & Groovin', Park Tours, and Baby & Me were all held in beautiful parks and green spaces throughout Chippewa County. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful summer months in the sunshine, offering endless amounts of fun-filled parent-child activities and opportunities to connect with other families. Starting in September, River Source Family Center will be offering all programs back at our center (403 N High Street) and at our Rural playgroup sites in Bloomer, Cornell, and Stanley! Watch your child learn, grow, and make new friends at our **free** programming throughout Chippewa County! We hope to see you at the purple building this fall! **See our website for the full calendar.**

www.RiverSourceFamilyCenter.com



~Becca,
Parent Services Director



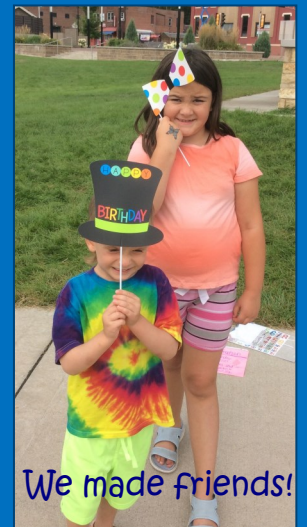
We went on adventures!!



We built things!



We made memories!



We made friends!

Teaching Children about Diversity

Around age 2, your child starts to notice differences in objects and starts to classify them: big dog, blue flowers, and red cars. Between 2 1/2-3 years of age, your child will start to notice differences between themselves and others. There will be questions asked by your child, "Why is Suzy's skin brown? Why is that person riding in a chair with wheels?" Your response will shape your child's views on diversity. You will want to be sensitive to the person they are asking questions about without making your child feel ashamed for their curiosity. Appreciating differences is a learned life lesson that must be intentionally taught. Family values such as respect, honesty, and acceptance, is a great way to model diversity and celebrate differences.

"We are all different, and that's beautiful" ~Karen Salmansohn

Check out these great ways to bring diversity into your child's life:

- Go to the library/bookstore and find books with children from different cultures/countries, religions, and all abilities. Reading is a great way to go on "adventures" and learn about families around the world
- Create art from different cultures: Chinese New Year Red Envelopes, Mexican Sun Huichol Yarn Painting, Diwali Rangoli Indian Art... Learn and create at the same time!
- Listen to different cultures' music and learn a new dance.
- Look up different holidays and learn about their traditions and celebrations.
- Learn about toys and games played in

other cultures. Enjoy family time with new games!

- Visit a local festival celebrating culture. (local ideas: Pablo Center, UWEC, International Festival...)

Don't forget to talk about the similarities you have with other cultures! Give your child experiences where they can learn about differences, relate to and interact with others, and don't forget to model the kinds of interactions you would like your child to have. Take advantage of those "teachable moments" to explain your family values. Let's continue to appreciate the diversity of our world by embracing our differences. Kindness and compassion is what every human needs.

(Information credited to *Parents As Teachers* curriculum and sesamestreetincommunities.org)

~Becca, Parent Services Director,
River Source Family Center

Interested in volunteering? Contact Glori at 715.723.1138/familysupport@fscf.org



Family Support Center
 P.O. Box 143
 Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
 715-723-1138 or 1-800-400-7020

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Family Support Center is an equal opportunity agency. Family Support Center celebrates the diversity of all people and does not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, ability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.

Family Support Center's programs are funded in part by United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley.



Thank you to the following individuals and businesses who have donated since our last newsletter.

- Eau Claire Marathon
- Leinenkugels – for hosting the TDS fundraiser
- TDS Telecommunications
- Titus Women of Central Lutheran Church – You are wonderful!
- All those who give from their paychecks at work
- Stanley Correctional Facility
- Chi-Hi Athena and FBLA students for River Source playground clean up
- Char Pagenkopf for her beautiful sewing gifts of aprons and potholders
- \$1000 donation to River Source Group Connections in memory of Nancy Estrem-Fuller
- Liz Fryseth for her donation of 20+ Children's Braille books
- Chippewa Falls Youth Librarians and Children's Museum – Chippewa Play Space for participating in our End of Summer Celebration

We are in need of the following items for client use.
 Please drop off items at **Family Support Center.**
With a little help you, too, can make a difference!

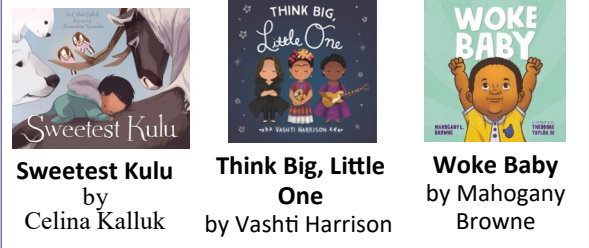
- **Gas cards (urgent need)**
- Diapers-all sizes
- Baby wipes
- Goodwill gift cards* (*from local Goodwill)
- Non-perishable microwave meals
- Full size: lotion, shampoo, conditioner & body wash
- Laundry detergent
- Toilet paper, paper towels
- Women's deodorant
- Products for natural/Black/textured hair
- Children's shampoo & body wash
- Cleaning products
- Snacks! Whole grain crackers, cereal, applesauce, fruit cups, granola bars
- Paper plates, plastic forks, napkins, dixie cups

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Have you ever read a story that changed your view of the world?

That opened your eyes in some way? That challenged your thinking? How amazing if you have! If you'd like to change the world, one mind at a time, please help us continue to expand the diversity in our waiting rooms by purchasing and donating one of these books.



To speak with an Advocate 24/7 call **715.723.1138** or **1.800.400.7020**.