

**Crisis Center Impact Stories  
FY2012**

*The Year of the Story*

This year the Crisis Center has many stories; stories of women who came to the Crisis Center with sadness, hopelessness, loss, grief, betrayal, aloneness; stories of women who began to regain their self-esteem, self-confidence, hope, a smile, a sense of belonging; stories of women who left with a sense of power and confidence in their ability to face the future and survive!

Here are some of those stories:

Most clients use the computer lab to research job opportunities. They are able to review the job requirements, submit resumes, fill out online applications, and follow-up for any response.

J\_\_\_\_\_ was able to schedule four interviews from the online applications. She used the computer to apply to Job Corps and she was accepted into the program in another state. This program provides her with housing, GED classes, as well as job training. This client's mother died when she was young, and she has suffered much abuse at the hands of her father and step-mother. She is diabetic, she was forced to eat food that was unhealthy for her, and she gained a lot of weight. While at the shelter, she was able to eat healthy and dropped over 50 pounds!

While here, she was able to get on Facebook and contact her mother's family. Her cousins came to the shelter to pick her up, took her to their home, and she was reunited with many kind family members after years of being separated. She will be able to maintain contact with them through Facebook.

She moved out of the shelter at the end of October. She was so excited to be able to take her first plane ride! Even though she is moving to a new place with people she does not know, she is looking forward to starting a new life where she will not be experiencing any more abuse.

When she left, this is what she wrote:

*Thank you for everything. Without this place I would not be who I am today. I have learned and grown so much since the first day I came here. I will always remember you. You do not know how much the Crisis Center for South Suburbia has helped me. Than again maybe you do.*

*These months have been the hardest months of my life, but because of the Crisis Center for South Suburbia I got through them. I used to think I was a disgrace. Now I think I am a great person and I will be a very successful person.*

*The Crisis Center for South Suburbia would be just a place if it was not for the people who work there. You have helped me in so many ways. Thank you.*

One client had been here previously, before the lab renovation, and she noticed a big improvement in the quality and capability of the new computers. She is very grateful for your donation. She has recently had a baby – while she was living in the shelter – and has used the computer lab to apply for a college program to study criminal justice. She will be taking her classes online.

Another resident has used the computer to continue her online college courses.

One lady J\_\_\_\_\_ found a job opportunity online and was able to schedule a job interview in the community where she wants to move. She also found an apartment online that meets her needs in that same community. This lady came to the shelter to escape abuse at the hands of her boyfriend. She had to leave much of her belongings, but at the Crisis Center she was able to go to Neat Repeats Resale Store and “shop” for clothes.

Another lady D\_\_\_\_ has collected stories from the clients, information about generous donors, and information about the Crisis Center to include in a newsletter she is creating. She will be printing that out sometime this month.

So as you can see, the computer lab is a way for clients to explore options for independence. This is really important as they move forward from the emergency services they receive here.

Another lady was driving to work when her car broke down. She didn't know what she would do. A church provided a car for her. She needs \$170 for insurance and \$255 for title transfer.

C\_\_\_\_ stopped in to see me.

She had been with her abuser for 24 years – 4 years before they were married.

He is about 20 years older than she is. She has 3 children – one son who is not her husband's son. She had him when she was 19 and gave him up for adoption. He recently got back in touch with her. Her other children, 15 and 19, are still living with the father who has convinced them with lies that the mother is going to take all the money from them. They blame her.

She left him 7 times before she finally left for good. She went to her mother's house and then to an agency for counseling. They gave her referrals and she came here. She wanted to stay at her mother's but the husband would not leave her alone, and her mother wanted her to be safe. The police brought her to the shelter. She came about supper time in May. The staff was very warm to her and she felt welcome. She was not scared. She felt safe here and could sleep and didn't have to cry all the time.

She is living with her brother now and going through divorce proceedings.

She stayed at the shelter for a couple of months. She now comes back for counseling with Donna. She loves the Crisis Center and some day wants to give back. All the staff have been very helpful to her. She also appreciated being able to talk with the other residents at the shelter since they were all "in the same boat" and understood each other.

Her friends all tell her how good she looks and what a difference they see in her since she left her husband. She had contemplated suicide. Her 19 year-old-son had begun to treat her like her husband. She pushed him away one time and he said he'd call the police if she ever laid her hands on him. She has told her kids she will not be able to take all the money, and that she will be there for them when they need her.

She left all her stuff at her house. She has clothes from Neat Repeats. The sheriff's office is going to accompany her to her house so she can get her items.

She is part Irish, Scottish, and Polish. We talked about our shared heritage.