



Spring 2012 Newsletter

Shelter for Abused Women and Children

McCormick, Edgefield, Greenwood Counties

P O Box 3410

Greenwood, SC 29648

(864) 227-1421 Fax. (864) 229-7663



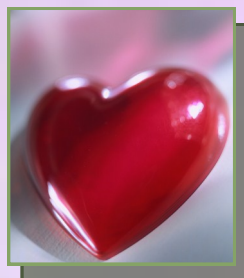
A Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on our past, present, and future at Meg's House, I realize that the work is changing. In order to provide adequate services we must change too. In the past, it seemed as if victims came into shelter for a brief period to get out of an abusive relationship. The victims often arrived at the shelter via a law enforcement escort and it seemed as if they were focused on escaping the violent relationship. As a volunteer and intern, this is what I observed. I was amazed with the story that each victims shared. In addition, I was surprised at their strength and courage.

Fast forward to 2012, the women come to Meg's House by means of self-referrals. They appear at the door, a friend calls, another agency refers them, and even The National Domestic Violence Hotline will call to refer a victim and children. Local law enforcement officers continue to escort a small number of victims to our shelter. The vast majority arrive in a car via a friend or a relative. The women today are focused on much more complex and crisis situations. Often, they are unemployed, have very low income such as child support, family independence or social security income, and their children have medical and basic needs that must be met. Again, these individuals amaze me with their strength and determination to survive living in domestic abuse and under situations that would break most of us.

In order to meet the complex needs of the victims we serve, we must constantly coordinate community resources. It is this process that helps us help those we serve move towards independence. As we move forward with our mission to provide emergency shelter and programs to victims of violence, I am grateful to have this opportunity to carry out this important work in our community. This type of work will humble you. You begin to realize that the real work is done by those who come to Meg's House to access services and programs to help them move towards self-reliance. I am constantly amazed by the resilience and strength of those we serve.

Sincerely,
Alice Hodges, PhD
Executive Director



Shelter for the Strong Hearted

Stacie Smith, DV Counselor/ Volunteer Coordinator

As the newest staff member at MEG's House, I was asked to write an article about my experiences since coming on board in September of last year. When I think back over the many faces of the women and children who have come and gone from MEG's since my coming aboard, the thing that stands out the most in my mind is the tremendous strength and courage of those women.

I have worked in social services all my life, and have had many experiences with social problems and the hardships people face. Never before though, have I been so inspired by the inner resiliency of the clients I am working with.

The women I am working with have stories of hardship that often predate an abusive relationship with a recent partner. Many have broken childhood histories, financial struggles, obstacles

that they have faced educationally, and a lifetime of difficult choices. Part of my role as their caseworker and counselor is to motivate and encourage them to make positive changes toward a brighter future. However, it is often I who end up being encouraged.

I have witnessed women with bruised bodies taking time to uplift a newcomer to the shelter and make them feel welcome. I have seen women with little or no family support become each other's family. I have watched as women come into the shelter with little to smile about gradually grow wide smiles with contagious laughter. Daily I am privileged to walk alongside some of these brave women on a piece of their road to new tomorrows, and it has been the highest honor.

If you too are interested in working with women who are recovering from an abusive relationship contact Stacie about volunteer opportunities and the many ways you can help at (864)229-8141.

Contributor Comments about MEG's Services

I am a client in one of the MEG's House Umbrella programs. They provide me a place that I can call home. I feel safe and secure. When you need food they lend their assistance. They are even here to give you a ride to doctors appointments. If you are fortunate enough to be a client in this great organization, you will come to know the women that work there as a family.

-Anonymous

2011 Meg's House Shelter Stats

As of December 31, 2011

	<u>In Shelter Clients</u>	<u>Out of Shelter Clients</u>
Clients Served by County		
Abbeville	2 Women	1 Woman
	2 Children	
Anderson	1 Woman	
Edgefield	4 Women	2 Men
	4 Children	
Greenwood	47 Women	87 Women
	47 Children	5 Children
Greenville	1 Woman	
	1 Child	
Laurens	2 Women	
McCormick	1 Woman	2 Women
	2 Children	2 Children
Saluda	1 Woman	1 Woman
Spartanburg	1 Woman	
Out-of-state Clients Served		
Charlotte, NC	1 Woman	
Lancaster, KY	1 Woman	
Transitional House		
	3 Women	1 Child
Adult Women Clients:	62	91
Children Served:	56	7
Men Served:		2
Total clients served:	118	100
Women - returned to abuser	8	
Women - did not return to abuser	51	
Clients Who Exited the Shelter	59	
United Center - Satellite Office		
Walk-ins	24	
Telephone Calls	162	
Crisis Calls	1096	
Community Outreach Presentations	43	
Number of Adult Community Presentations	40	
Number of Adults Attending Presentations	987	
Number of Teen Community Presentations	3	
Number of Teens Attending Presentations	40	