

Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Family Violence Prevention Council

Purpose:

The Family Violence Coordinating Councils, at both the state and local, circuit level, was created to establish a forum to improve the institutional, professional and community response to family violence including child abuse, domestic abuse, and elder abuse; to engage in education and prevention; to coordinate intervention and services for victims and perpetrators; and, to contribute to the improvement of the legal system and the administration of justice.

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Family Violence Prevention Council (Council) was established in 1996 to work with local service providers and community members to develop or expand needed services to address such forms of violence as child abuse, youth dating violence, adult partner abuse, elder abuse, and suicide. The Council is also recognized as a leading provider of workshops regarding topics related to interpersonal violence.

History:

In November 1995, the judiciary of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit sponsored two one-day symposia on family violence. Approximately 500 concerned citizens attended those symposia. Attendees included attorneys, clergy, court personnel, education, health care workers, law enforcement personnel, and social service personnel.

The Council was convened in March 1996, and is made up of many of those persons who attended the symposia or who otherwise expressed an interest in developing a coordinated response to family violence. Work of the Council is primarily accomplished through subcommittees.

Since March of 1996, members have actively worked toward the Council's goals. For example, members determined there was a need for supervised visitation and exchange services in our three county area. They worked together to develop a system to provide such services, and to seek funding to open centers (through the Safe Havens grant—more information is provided under "Committees" below) that will provide supervised visitation and exchange services in Bureau Grundy and LaSalle Counties. They also continue to give technical assistance for the implementation of such services.

Members of Council subcommittees have worked together to develop and implement public awareness events, local resource manuals, a speakers bureau, health care protocols and related documents, law enforcement protocols and related documents, social service screening tools, clergy manuals and resource guides, schools resource guides, and protocols for educators. In addition, the Council is looked to as a source for trainings for educators, faith community leaders, health care providers, law enforcement personnel, and social service personnel.

Since 2003, the Council has been pro-active in developing youth leadership by sponsoring the Supporting Players, troupes of high school students that train with professionals to create their own issue-related skits and present them to local schools and community forums.

Funding:

The Council receives funding from several sources. Its name and structure is provided by a grant by the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority as one of 23 Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils in the state. Funding for special projects such as Elder Abuse Training, Safe to Live, and Health Cares has been obtained through grants from the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women and other sources.

Structure:

The Chief Judge of the circuit chairs the Council, and appoints two judges as co-chairs. The Executive Committee consists of five persons chosen from across the circuit. It meets quarterly to advise Council activities, such as grants, protocols and other written documents, goals and direction of the Council, annual work plans, and Full Council meetings.

In addition to the Executive Committee, the three counties in the circuit, Bureau, Grundy and LaSalle, each has one main committee and several subcommittees meeting regularly to address local community issues. The supplemental activities of Safe Havens, Elder Abuse Training, and Illinois Health Cares augment the work of the Council. The committees work to identify specific issues, develop and implement appropriate coordinated responses, and provide information to the media and the public. The specific purpose of each committee is addressed below under “Committees.”

**Thirteenth Judicial Circuit
Family Violence Prevention Council
Committees**

Bureau County:

The Bureau County Committee exists to identify Bureau County concerns related to interpersonal violence, to evaluate possible solutions and make suggestions on how solutions can be integrated into a Circuit-wide strategy. The Committee works closely with local agencies, law enforcement, judiciary, city officials, educators and health care professionals to implement its strategies, and establishes subcommittees as needed for community awareness and community education in the county.

Grundy County:

The Grundy County Committee exists to identify Grundy County concerns related to interpersonal violence, to evaluate possible solutions and make suggestions on how solutions can be integrated into a Circuit-wide strategy. The Committee works closely with local agencies, law enforcement, judiciary, city officials, educators and health care professionals to implement its strategies, and establishes subcommittees as needed for community awareness and community education in the county.

The Grundy County Community Awareness Subcommittee is one such committee.

LaSalle County:

The LaSalle County Committee exists to identify LaSalle County concerns related to interpersonal violence, to evaluate possible solutions and make suggestions on how solutions can be integrated into a Circuit-wide strategy. The Committee works closely with local agencies, law enforcement, judiciary, city officials, educators and health care professionals to implement its strategies, and establishes subcommittees as needed for community awareness and community education in the county.

The LaSalle Community Awareness Subcommittee, the Faith Community Subcommittee, and the Batterer Services Subcommittee are examples of such committees.

Safe Havens:

In October 2003, Council (through the County of LaSalle and ADV & SAS) received funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women to develop a plan to begin supervised visitation and exchange services in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. In October 2006, the area began receiving funding to provide such services when visitation is between parents and there is a history of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking, or child abuse. Services are provided through Youth Service Bureau of the Illinois Valley. Council oversees the Consulting Committee.

Elder Abuse:

In October 2006, Council (through ADV & SAS) began receiving funding to develop a multi-disciplinary team to provide education on elder abuse and neglect to law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges. Funding is through the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women.

Health Cares

In 2009 the Council (through ADV & SAS) received funding from the Illinois Health Cares to host Continuing Medical Education trainings as part of a collaborative effort to bring together the medical community with domestic violence, elder abuse, and sexual violence specialists. The goal of cross training will be to improve the clinical response to family violence issues by establishing system-wide understanding of violence as a health concern.

Family Violence Prevention Council Resources

Publications

Brochures:

Family Violence Prevention Council
Helping End Domestic Violence – A Community Responds
Teen Dating Violence
Tips on Positive Discipline
Shaken Baby Syndrome

Faith Community Material:

Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Clergy
Resource Guide for the Faith Community
Faith Community Newsletter for Pastors

Health Care Material:

Health Care Newsletter
Family Violence Protocols

Protocols:

Law Enforcement
Probation
Attorney
Domestic Violence Advocate
Health Care
Schools Response

Resource Directories (available online at www.familyviolence13.org):

Resource Card (pocket-size)
Bureau County Resource Directory
Grundy County Resource Manual
LaSalle County Resource Manual

Schools Material:

Guidelines for Handling Disclosures; How to Report; What Will Happen
Identifying and Responding to Children Who Live With Violence: A
Teacher's Guide.

Resource Library

The Council has a resource lending library containing information on interpersonal violence including child abuse, teen dating violence, domestic violence; elder abuse; faith community; health care; and work place violence. The library includes books, literature, journals, manuals, videos, cassettes and CD's. For a complete list, contact the Council office at 815.431.0630.

Speakers Bureau

Volunteer participants in the Speakers Bureau make presentations to area groups on local family violence issues. All presentations are free of charge.

Website

www.familyviolence13.org