



Working Against Violence, Inc.

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Melanie Flatt

527 Quincy Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

(605) 341-3292
FAX (605) 718-7582
wavi@rushmore.com



January 9, 2007

Dear OVW Representative,

This letter confirms that Working Against Violence, Inc. (WAVI), on behalf of our program, Commonground Visitation and Exchange Services (Commonground) intends to collaborate with the City of Rapid City on the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program. The intent is to support and expand visitation and exchange services currently provided by Commonground (WAVI) for victims of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and stalking. There are eight visitation centers in South Dakota; Commonground is the *only* visitation center providing services to all of Western South Dakota and regional outlying areas. As a part of the planning process, WAVI intends to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the City of Rapid City to implement the program and proposed improvements and expansion of services for Commonground (WAVI).

WAVI is committed to supporting the City of Rapid City's efforts to expand local access to safe visitation and exchanges and will also have one or more designated members assigned to the advisory committee to assist in the development of the proposed projects. As the projects become more defined, partnering entities and an advisory committee consisting of various professional members and others with a specific interest in improving visitation services will be invited to be a part of the advisory committee. This committee will have the opportunity to give input and expertise to help research, shape, and form the proposed projects for implementation.

WAVI intends to fulfill any other appropriate roles determined by the outcome of the project development as it is carried out, according to a pre-developed timeline. WAVI is committed to the development and successful implementation of the proposed projects that will result in a more comprehensive and streamlined process for supervised visitation service delivery in Rapid City and outlying service areas.

Sincerely,

Melanie Flatt
Executive Director
Working Against Violence Inc. (WAVI)

Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

PO Box 230
Rapid City SD 57709-0230
(605) 394-2571

CIRCUIT JUDGES

Jeff W. Davis, Presiding Judge
John J. Delaney
A.P. Fuller
Janine M. Kern
Merton B. Tice Jr.
Thomas L. Trimble

MAGISTRATE JUDGES

Michael J. O'Connor
Shawn J. Pahlke
William L. Severns

COURT ADMINISTRATOR

J. L. Krattenmaker

January 9, 2007

RE: Commonground Application for Safe Havens Program

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written on behalf of the interests that Commonground has in improving the excellent services it is providing currently for visitation of children with their parents. I have always found their program to be very responsive to the interest and needs of children and recognizing the value of quality contact of children with their non-custodial parent. Commonground has substantially aided in children better accommodating a situation where their parents can no longer work positively together. Enlarging upon that exchange program as is provided for in the Safe Havens grant is a highly desirable direction on behalf of these children. Their proposal with the Safe Havens grant will broaden the services they are able to provide conflicting parents and provide a means for more comfortable environmental relationships between the parents and their children, is applauded by me and are urgently needed. I understand it is their wish to provide access to more direct services to these conflicting parents as well as alternatives to the institutional visitation that occurs at Commonground. There are a number of alternatives that I can appreciate might be available to enhance and encourage positive relationships between children and both parents. As the conflict between parents diminish, as parents become more and more acclimated to appropriate conduct in the presence of the children, the healthier these children will be. I believe Commonground provides an extraordinarily essential process to assist the accomplishment of these goals. I would strongly endorse and encourage consideration of providing greater breadth to the resources they offer.

Sincerely,



Merton B. Tice, Jr.
Circuit Court Judge

MBT/cjw

Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

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COURT ADMINISTRATOR

J L Krattenmaker

January 8, 2007

Dear Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) Representative,

This letter confirms that members the Seventh Circuit Court and Commonground, a program of Working Against Violence, Inc. (WAVI), intend to collaborate with the City of Rapid City on the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program. The intent is to support and develop visitation and exchange services currently provided by Commonground (WAVI) for victims of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and stalking. There are eight visitation centers in South Dakota; Commonground is the *only* visitation center providing services to all of Western South Dakota and regional outlying areas. As a part of the planning process, the City of Rapid City intends to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Commonground (WAVI) and the Seventh Circuit Court to implement the program and proposed improvements and expansion of services for Commonground (WAVI).

Commonground (WAVI) has identified gaps in the current visitation and exchange services. The outcome of this review has indicated a vital need for the existing visitation services to provide a parent education component, a systematic form of communication with the courts and other referring entities regarding the status of referred families in supervised visitation cases, and a systematic process for the practice of maintaining and obtaining referrals from all partnering entities.

The review also confirmed the need to develop an advisory committee to address the gaps in services mentioned above, as well as to assist in addressing the diversified needs of clients. Due to the rural nature of the state, many clients are at a disadvantage when it comes to accessing visitation services, some of the obstacles they face are: lack of transportation, low to poverty level income, and a lack in culturally sensitive programming to meet their needs.

As a result of this review, the City of Rapid City is committed to supporting and developing a system of communication and referral processing between Commonground (WAVI) and the Seventh Circuit Court to create a more comprehensive service for families utilizing Commonground services. At the forefront of the review is the safety of the

victims utilizing supervised access services, this will be taken into consideration at all times while developing and researching the best way to integrate the proposed programming support and development while meeting the needs of the clients and culturally diverse population Commonground (WAVI) serves.

As the project becomes more defined, partnering entities and an advisory committee will have the opportunity to give input and expertise to help research, shape, and form the proposed projects for implementation. The City of Rapid City intends to fulfill any other appropriate roles determined by the outcome of the project development as it is carried out, according to a pre-developed timeline. The City of Rapid City is committed to the development and successful implementation of the proposed projects that will result in a more comprehensive and streamlined process for supervised visitation service delivery in Rapid City and outlying service areas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'R.C.' followed by a stylized flourish.

Representative of Seventh Circuit Court

Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

PO Box 230
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J. L. Krattenmaker

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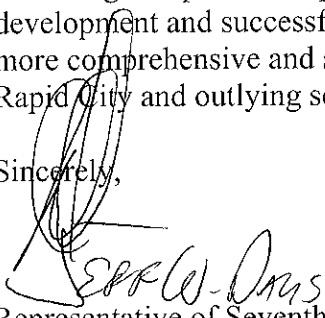
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Sincerely,


Erik W. Davis
Representative of Seventh Circuit Court

C 1126 v. 11 1061K

Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

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January 9, 2007

Office of Violence Against Women
(OVW Representative)

To Whom It May Concern:

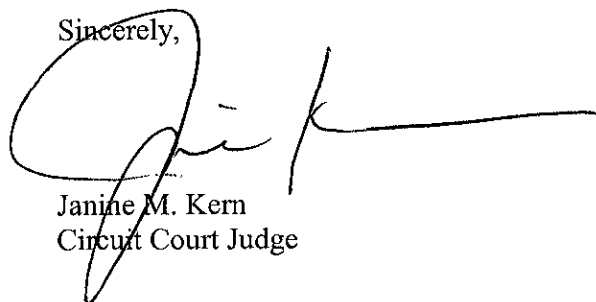
I am writing on behalf of the Commonground Visitation Center in Rapid City, which is a sub-program of Working Against Violence, Inc. (WAVI). Since its inception, the Commonground Visitation Program has provided an extremely valuable service to children and their families in our community. The visitation center is utilized in a number of ways, both by the Department of Social Services and by the court as a result of visitation orders in cases involving divorce, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and stalking. Commonground is the only visitation center providing services to all of western South Dakota and the outlying regional areas.

I have been informed by Shannon Wilde of the Commonground Visitation Center that a new collaboration has been proposed with the City of Rapid City on the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program. I am certainly in favor of this collaboration and believe that it will provide an important service in improving communication between the court and the visitation center regarding the status of referred families and supervised visitation cases and will help develop a systemic process for the practice of maintaining and obtaining referrals from all partnering entities.

Prior to the development of the Commonground Visitation Center and the important services it provides, visitation exchanges often occurred either on the steps of the Police Department or in the parking lot of the Courthouse. Certainly this created an insecure situation for parents who had been subjected to domestic violence or stalking and placed children in a vulnerable situation as they frequently observed abusive language and violence during the visitation exchanges occurring between their parents. We have come a long way in improving the delivery of services to families as a result of facilities like Commonground. It is necessary to continue to improve the provision of this service and it is very encouraging to see the City of Rapid City joining in this collaborative process.

I very much support the continuation and expansion of services for the Commonground Visitation Center and its new collaborative effort and partners.

Sincerely,



Janine M. Kern
Circuit Court Judge

JMK/cjw

Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

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J. L. Krattenmaker

January 10, 2007

Dear Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) Representative,

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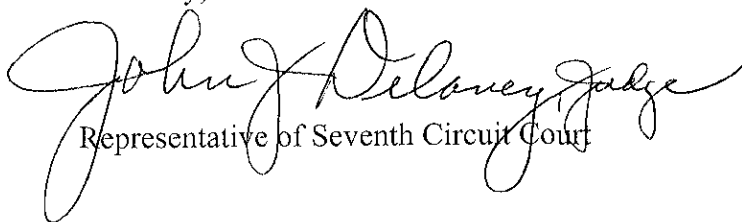
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As a result of this review, the City of Rapid City is committed to supporting and developing a system of communication and referral processing between Commonground (WAVI) and the Seventh Circuit Court to create a more comprehensive service for families

utilizing Commonground services. At the forefront of the review is the safety of the victims utilizing supervised access services, this will be taken into consideration at all times while developing and researching the best way to integrate the proposed programming support and development while meeting the needs of the clients and culturally diverse population Commonground (WAVI) serves.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Delaney, Judge". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Representative of Seventh Circuit Court