



**Working Against Violence, Inc.**

January 3, 2007

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City of Rapid City  
C/o Community Development Division  
Barbara Garcia, Comm. Dev. Specialist  
300 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Ms. Garcia,

Working Against Violence Inc. (WAVI) would like to request a partnership with the City of Rapid City in applying for a Safe Haven's Grant through the US Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women, on behalf of our program, Commonground Visitation and Exchange Services (Commonground). This grant would aide WAVI and Commonground by supporting our current programming and expanding services to the area families utilizing our facility.

Commonground is currently in need of funding to continue providing a safe, neutral and child-centered environment to facilitate visits and exchanges between children and their non-custodial parent or other significant adults. We also recognize that our current services may be expanded to include comprehensive parenting education, a collaborative and cooperative system of communication with the regional court system and referred families, and a professional system for community referrals for services from external agencies.

The 3-year Safe Havens Grant, of up to \$400,000, requires that the primary applicant be a unit of local government which has a cooperative agreement with a local non-profit domestic violence and sexual assault victim services organization. We are requesting that Rapid City be the unit of local government applying for the grant, and WAVI would be the local non-profit partner.

Under the grant guidelines, the City of Rapid City would administer the grant funds and WAVI would be the sub-recipient, assuming responsibility for the development and implementation of the project, including a proscribed planning period and implementation period. WAVI would also, as part of the planning period, develop a relationship with additional community entities, such as the local court systems, and coordinate an advisory/consulting committee, both requirements of the grant program.

I have attached a copy of the grant announcement, which outlines the requirements and deadlines for submission. Please note that a non-binding "Letter of Intent to Apply" is due on January 23, 2007, with the full grant application due by February 13, 2007. It is our intent that WAVI staff would be writing the entire grant with all necessary and/or required supervision of city representatives.

On behalf of myself and the WAVI board of directors, thank you for your prompt consideration of this request. Should you or any of your officials have questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact me directly, or Mark Rambow, Development Director for WAVI, at (605) 341-3292.

Sincerely,

*Melanie Flatt*  
Melanie Flatt  
Executive Director



To: City of Rapid City  
From: Working Against Violence Inc. (WAVI)  
Subject: Proposal for Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program

Commonground, a program of Working against Violence Inc. (WAVI), is western South Dakota's only supervised visitation and exchange center. Commonground provides Rapid City and the entire region safe, neutral, supervised access for families that have or are experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, drug/alcohol abuse, child neglect and other crisis situations.

Commonground seeks funding to continue to provide programs and services further and expand their services through funding from the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program from the Office of Violence Against Women. These improvements would be designed to address the particular needs of the rural, Native American and other special needs characteristics of families in divorce and custody disputes, including domestic violence and other crises situations throughout Western South Dakota. Specific goals would be:

- A coordinated, collaborative, and cooperative system of communication and information sharing between the regional court system, referred families, and the visitation center.
- Professionally developed promotional and informational materials to be used in increasing awareness and education.
- The development and implementation of a parent education component to already existing program services. The program would be specific to successful parent education models used at other visitation centers.
- Program enhancement and staff education and development designed to address the particular needs of the rural, Native American and other special needs characteristics of families in divorce and custody disputes, including domestic violence and other crisis situations throughout the area.

Objectives:

- Fund Case Manager position to coordinate activities with the courts, assist clients with community services, provide parent education program, develop family safety plans, etc.
- Fund portion of wages of visitation specialists, who work hourly as needed.
- Possible funding all or a portion of the position for the person administering the grant for the city of Rapid City. (Based on the City's requirements.)
- Form a grant advisory committee to develop and review activities of the grant.
- Identify transportation needs of families in rural areas of South Dakota utilizing Commonground services.
- Identify local resources for clients by compiling a resource list of agencies and organizations which might be beneficial to visitation families.
- Ongoing and expanded training for staff stressing cultural sensitivity, knowledge of legal issues and the judiciary, and crisis training.
- Develop a family resources manual to consist of community resources, information on communication and collaboration with the courts, and parent education.
- Website and information development for use by the courts, families, attorneys, therapists, and other identified professionals to increase the awareness of visitation issues, provide information on how to access services (including scheduling), and descriptions of programs provided.

- Develop Parent Education Model with aid from an advisory committee and acquired research on families in crises, and based on successful parent education models used at other visitation centers and professional programs catering to children and parents.
- Develop and distribute awareness, educational curriculum for parent education program.
- Develop curriculum components using research, resources, and advisory committee recommendations.
- Full implementation of parent education program (by the end of the first year of the grant.)
- Present finished implemented product to the courts, attorneys, therapists, CASA, and the Department of Social Services.
- Promotional materials developed, printed, and distributed.