

## **Arkansas Crime Victim's Rights History**

The Sixth Judicial District's Victim Assistance Program was established in 1978 and is the oldest prosecutor-based victim assistance program in the state. VOCA grant funding in the early 90's enabled the program to expand from a staff of two persons to a staff of ten persons presently. VOCA funding allowed other prosecutor-based programs to be established around the state during the 80's and 90's, promoting victims rights. A major focus on the victims' rights movement in Arkansas is directly related to the passing of Act 1262 of 1997. Enclosed in your information is a copy of Arkansas Victim Rights Law, Act 1262 of 1997.

## **Arkansas Sexual Assault and Establishing of Coalition History**

The Violence Against Women's Act was first passed in 1995, reauthorized in 2000 and again in 2005. In this act, Congress authorized the Attorney General to award grants to state sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions. This funding "is intended to provide federal financial assistance to state coalitions to support the coordination of state victim services activities and collaboration and coordination with federal, state, and local entities engaged in violence against women activities.

The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault was awarded a grant through the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women's Resource Sharing Project, to investigate why some states did not have a coalition and to help those states establish one. The Illinois Coalition Brought Together a small group of service providers in Arkansas, Which had never met before, to discuss the possibility of creating a statewide coalition. In December 1998, with the help of the Illinois Coalition, the Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault was incorporated as a 501 ©(3), private nonprofit organization.

Since that time, ACASA's membership has increased but, most importantly, services for victims and families have improved as a result of training and certification provided by ACASA for victim advocates, and standards of service set by ACASA being adopted by agencies.

## **Arkansas Domestic Violence and Establishing of Coalition History**

The battered women's movement in the United States began as a natural development of the women's movement in the 1970's. The history of violence against women goes back much farther.

It was not until the twentieth century that the legal status of women required that domestic violence be addressed as a social issue.

- \* The first shelter in Minnesota started in an apartment office space and moved within a year to a 5-bedroom house - 1973.
- \* 1976 Nebraska was the first state to abolish the marital rape exemption.

- \* National Coalition Against Domestic Violence was formed out of the US Commission on Civil Rights Consultation on Battered Women: Issues of Public Policy - 1976.
- \* 1978 - The first shelters in Arkansas established in Little Rock and Fayetteville.
- \* 1979 - There are over 250 shelters in the US.
- \* 1981 - There are over 500 shelters in the US.
- \* 1981 - Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- \* 1983 - Shelters served 91,000 women and 131,000 children, with over 700 shelters in the US.
- \* 1984 - FVPA, is the first time federal funds are specifically designed for programs serving battered women and children.
- \* 1987 - First Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- \* 1989 - 1,200 programs sheltering 300,000 women and children
- \* 1990 - Clothesline Project established in Hyannis, MA
- \* 1991 - Established Silent Witness Project in St. Paul MN with 500,000 women marched on the State Capitol carrying 27 silhouettes.
- \* 1993 - North Carolina becomes the 50<sup>th</sup> state where marital /date/cohabitant rape is a crime
- \* 1994 - VAWA is passed as part of the federal Crime Bill.
- \* 1998 - The first victims' rights legislation in Arkansas
- \* 2003 - First continuous source of state funding from marriage license fees for domestic violence programs in Arkansas. The Domestic Peace Act was passed and Program and Fiscal Standards were created for the oversight of domestic violence shelters.
- \* 2005 - Dating violence became a domestic violence offense and those in a dating violence relationship are able to apply for an order of protection.