

Healing Abuse Working for Change
Proposal to Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving Course
March 2018

Agency Overview: Healing Abuse Working for Change (HAWC) provides education and advocacy that informs, supports and empowers individuals who have survived domestic violence and promotes their understanding of options to increase safety and foster healing in their lives. HAWC's mission is to create social change by taking action against personal and societal patterns of violence and oppression, including but not limited to intimate partner abuse, gender-based violence and toxic notions of masculinity. HAWC advocates work at community-based offices, the courts, hospitals, local medical centers, and other agency partners in the community. Clients become engaged with HAWC when they are in crisis, seeking support and information. The agency is also committed to raising awareness through community education. HAWC promotes healthy relationships among children, teens, adults, LGBTQ people, recent immigrants or undocumented immigrants, and other underserved populations at schools, community events, and by working with agency partners throughout the region.

Initial points of contact for most clients include:

- **24-hour Hotline:** HAWC's hotline provides information, advice, referral, and assistance securing shelter for victims and their children made homeless due to abuse.
- **Legal Advocacy:** Advocates are available five days a week in Essex Probate, Lynn, Salem, Peabody, and Gloucester District Courts to assist individuals seeking abuse and harassment prevention orders.
- **Emergency Services:** HAWC has staff stationed at North Shore Medical Center for on-call urgent response to hospital ER visits as well as requests for support from doctors and nurses throughout the hospital and other regional hospitals. Clients coming to the police stations in our service area following a domestic violence incident will be connected to HAWC's on-call Advocates at any time of the day or night.
- **Emergency Shelter:** HAWC provides emergency shelter for up to 8 adults and up to 18 children who have become homeless due to domestic violence. While in the shelter, clients have access to the full menu of HAWC services.
- **Safety Planning:** In person and by phone, a dedicated Advocate empowers the victim to find safety for themselves, their children and other dependents. Empowering the victim to obtain safety is critical to our approach.

Once engaged with HAWC, clients have access to a menu of comprehensive services including:

- **One-on-One Counseling and Support Groups:** Counseling and support groups are a proven modality to assist victims of domestic violence with their recovery in a safe and confidential environment.
- **Parent Child Trauma Recovery Program:** This program was developed to safely and effectively serve victims of domestic violence and their children (ages 0-12) who were suffering from trauma symptoms after leaving an abusive home.
- **Legal Representation:** HAWC provides free legal representation to clients in high-risk situations. The Legal Services program also offers free ongoing legal clinics for all clients.

A detailed breakdown of how the funding will be used: A grant of \$5,000 from the Framingham State University Nonprofit Student Group would contribute to the cost of HAWC's Support Groups. If awarded, HAWC will support two 10-week groups at an approximate cost of \$2,500 per 10-week group.

HAWC Support Groups are a trauma-informed group therapy model that provides individuals recovering from trauma with support, information, and access to resources; empowering victims to make decisions that support safety for themselves and their family. Often, domestic violence victims have been prevented from making personal decisions by their abuser for so long, that they are paralyzed by fear and isolated from a supportive network. Support Groups, one part of an overall safety and recovery service plan, provide a safe space for victims to learn they are not alone and to learn from others going through similar situations.

Groups are structured to meet the needs of HAWC clients and include language (English, Spanish, Portuguese), LGBTQ, groups for long-term survivors, elders, parents, and/or groups for emerging survivors. Groups follow a curriculum that addresses oppressions, risk factors, choices, and behaviors. Groups include resources and information for participants. Participants are assured that the group is a safe space, and over the course of the ten weeks, the group develops a strong bond with the ability for each member to have their voice heard.

In addition to community-based groups, HAWC holds groups in our shelter for shelter guests, for families who are mandated to attend by the Department of Children and Families at our Lynn and Salem offices, and will host and plan other groups based on client and community demand.

The target population for support groups specifically is victims of domestic violence who are guests in HAWC's Emergency Shelter, parents and families seeking assistance in the community, those mandated to attend by the Department of Children and Families, and elders who are recovering from abuse by children, caregivers, or a spouse. Elders are provided group services at North Shore Elder Services, an elder services agency that they already visit for day programs. Groups are also offered at area hospitals and medical centers. This community-based approach eliminates barriers to services such as relying on an abuser for transportation assistance or needing to identify where they are going.

Your organization's short-term and long-term goals: The goal of Support Groups is to empower the victim so that they can regain the control over their life in order to decide their next steps. Once they are on a path of safety, HAWC's support groups are part of the overall service mix designed to support their recovery and future health.

HAWC proposes to offer five groups at each of three community-based sites; a total of 15 groups, serving an average of 8-10 participants per 10-week group. Another 10 groups will be offered out of the Emergency Shelter with an emphasis on parenting support. Shelter group attendance is based on shelter occupancy. While the shelter is typically always at 100% capacity, guests do move in and out and as a result, attendance in groups varies from week to week.

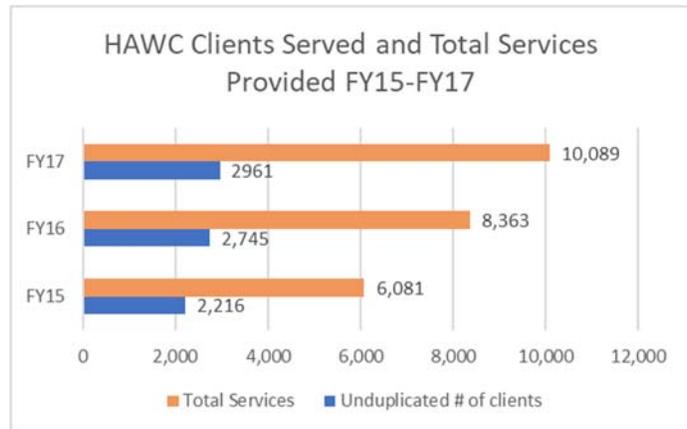
Outcome indicators will include:

- Number enrolled in groups

- Number completing the program
- % who report increased access to resources
- % who report decreased isolation
- % who report increased ability to attain and maintain safety
- % who report increased understanding about domestic violence

Indicators of success – statistics and personal stories: Agency-wide we saw 21% increase in services provided in 2017 as compared to 2016 as a result of leveraged resources. Of the more than 10,000 in total services provided, the breakdown is as follows:

- Hotline Calls: 3,740
- One on One Advocacy: 2,409
- Support groups: 456
- Hospital Based Services at North Shore Medical Center: 176
- Direct Legal Representation: 6
- Legal Clinic: 349
- Safeplan - Lynn and Salem Court Advocacy: 1,979
- VOCA - Lynn and Salem Court Advocacy: 625
- High Risk Team: 186
- Children supported through the Parent Child Trauma Recovery Program: 87
- Shelter clients: 52



HAWC piloted a new online survey to a portion of **Support Group** participants in 2017. This was administered to Salem and Lynn support group participants. 72.7% of women who responded attended a full 10-week session; 9% attended only 3-4 sessions, and 9% attended only 1-2 sessions.

Responses included:

- The group facilitator offered information about community resources I need now or in the future: 77% very much, 18% somewhat, 5% a little.
- I feel emotionally supported by the group facilitators: 95% very much, 5% somewhat
- I found your counseling services to be helpful to my healing process: 77% very much, 18% somewhat, 5% a little
- I have a better understanding of common reactions to DV: 81% very much, 18% somewhat

Case Story: Sarah, 35 years old, suffered from abuse as a child and came to HAWC as a recovering alcoholic (5 years sober). Sarah’s mother was abused by her father. As an adult, Sarah experienced physical, mental, and financial abuse at the hands of her boyfriend, even during pregnancy, and she disassociated during the abuse as she had seen her mother do when she was a child.

Sarah learned that her abusive partner was operating a methadone clinic at a local hotel when a SWAT team showed up at her home. Her two children, ages 6 and 4 at the time, were in the home when the SWAT team arrived with weapons and masks, yelling at the family and destroying their property. This incident motivated Sarah to seek help while her abusive partner was arrested and in prison.

Once Sarah had a HAWC Advocate, she was able to address the concerns she had for her young children and all they had witnessed. Sarah engaged her young children, both demonstrating trauma-symptoms, in HAWC's Parent Child Trauma Recovery program. Sarah also had HAWC's Legal Services program support her to file a restraining order on her abuser. Sarah and the HAWC Advocate were able to safety plan for how the family would deal with the father's release from prison and subsequently obtained full legal custody of her children with HAWC's Legal assistance. Sarah attended a DV 101 support group at HAWC and benefitted from HAWC's assistance with social services, the schools, therapists for her children, and related services. Sarah's efforts to find safety for herself and her children will likely stop the cycle of domestic violence that has impacted her family through multiple generations.

Evidence of your organization's sustainability: Founded in 1978, 2018 is HAWC's 40th Anniversary. HAWC receives 60% of our funding from government sources which are mostly longer-term, the largest part coming from Department of Public Health (DPH) through a procurement process that happens every decade. In addition to this, 10% is from individuals and 10% is from two events. Approximately 20% of our budget comes from foundation grants. While there are some foundations that support HAWC year after year, like most non-profits, we seek new grant funding every year to enable us to continue to meet the needs of our clients. We have been strengthening our finances and sustainability by focusing on diversifying our income streams so that we have less reliance on the government contracts. Our goal is to increase non-government sources by 5–10% annually.

HAWC strives to raise funds for our budget each year and seeks to build upon partnerships such as one with the Framingham State University Nonprofit Class to meet service demands. Staffing and programming are impacted when funds are not raised, and this can have a detrimental impact on survivors of domestic violence.

The demographics of your recipients, staff, and board: Clients: At HAWC, we know from experience that individuals face barriers to services due to language, cultural, economic, or other factors and that there is a limited regional capacity to assist these populations. We have a strong understanding that many forms of oppression (i.e. economic, physical, racial, etc.) are intertwined within the relationship and must be overcome in order for a victim to seek safety.

HAWC serves 23 cities and towns North of Boston—an area of 431,000 people with the largest population centers being Lynn, Salem, Beverly, Gloucester, and Peabody. HAWC maintains a community-based office, an office at North Shore Medical Center, and the emergency shelter in Salem where combined, HAWC provided 47% of the total agency services last year. In Lynn, we have a community-based office which provided 32% of total services and our Gloucester community-based office provided 20% of total services in FY17. Through our community-based approach, we can target services to underserved populations that are unique to each region within

Essex County. In FY17 90% of clients were female. 373 clients spoke languages other than English, including Khmer, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean Creole, Russian, Arabic, Lao, and Polish. 84 clients were living with a disability; 112 clients were over age 62. Of the program participants that reported household income in FY17, 35% were low income and 52% were very low income.

Staff: HAWC's staff is reflective of all races, ethnicities, and demographics groups served by the agency. In our hiring and recruitment efforts this focus is paramount. All HAWC staff and volunteers attend a 33-hour Domestic Violence training prior to direct service. Training includes: types of abuse, privilege and oppression, trauma and recovery, advocacy, crisis intervention skills, intimate partners screening tool for domestic violence survivors (DVS), understanding immigration issues for DVS, safety planning with DVS, as well as understanding how DV impacts people with disabilities, children, the LGBTQ community, and undocumented individuals. The training also includes information on participant confidentiality, community resources, and important community collaborations.

HAWC staff have been trained by the National Women of Color Network, and the agency participates in regular meetings of the National Women of Color Network at North Shore Community College. The immigrant community is one of the largest groups HAWC serves with clients of all races, ethnicities, backgrounds, and languages. HAWC ensures that staff and volunteers are informed of the challenges different immigrant communities are facing based on current trends. For example, when Immigrations Control Enforcement (ICE) officers are at our Courts preparing our staff to support a client at risk. HAWC is a safe space for LGBTQ survivors with members of this community in leadership positions at the staff and board levels. HAWC engages partners such as nAGLY (North Shore Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth) where HAWC Advocates attend monthly meetings to support youth in the group. HAWC Advocates regularly participate in trainings with Network La Red.

Board: HAWC is led by an 11-member board of directors that is comprised of community leaders, business people, domestic violence survivors, and other representatives of our service area. Nine members are female, three women of color, two members of the LGBTQ community. Board members represent the fields of banking, business, financial management, non-profit management, a clinician (MSW), university administration. One board member's is an attorney with a primary professional area of focus on diversity and inclusion consulting. HAWC is actively seeking to add new members to the board, but we balance this with a need to maintain diversity.

Attachments:

- Organization's 2018 operating budget
- 501(c)(3) documentation