

Nov. 14, 2013

Sarasota County awarded \$400K Safe Haven grant *Grant supports increased collaboration to address domestic violence*

SARASOTA COUNTY — The Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) approved the Sarasota County Government application for funding for the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program in the amount of \$400,000 over a three-year period.

The Child Protection Center Inc., the 12th Judicial Circuit Court and the Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC) will join Sarasota County Government to form a community collaboration to keep children and adult victims safe through supervised visitations and exchanges with families who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, child abuse and stalking.

“This opportunity will allow us to view the problems through a diverse lens, address existing systems and improve responses while creating a partnership and coordination among community entities in order to ensure continuity of services to protect victims of domestic violence,” said Doug Staley, executive director for the Child Protection Center Inc.

Sarasota County Government will serve as the coordinator for fiscal and programmatic aspects of the project, ensuring compliance with statutory and mandatory requirements. Child Protection Center’s Children and Families Supervised Visitation Program will provide the direct supervised visitation service and day-to-day operations of the program.

The 12th Judicial Court will be involved in the process of critically reviewing, revising and establishing practices to protect the adult victim and children of domestic violence. SPARCC will provide training designed around domestic violence issues, sexual assault, child abuse, dating violence, and stalking. A victim advocate will give support to victims of domestic violence and provide referrals to other agencies.

“We are excited about the opportunity to utilize the Safe Havens model and formalize a clear community response to domestic violence. Sarasota County will have a collaborative force in fighting domestic violence instead of four individual agencies striving to address a complex, community issue,” said Sheila Miller, program director for the Child Protection Center Inc. Children and Family Supervised Visitation Program.

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SAFE HAVEN GRANT

SPARCC CEO and President Olivia Thomas said, “SPARCC is looking forward to working with our community partners to implement best practices in supervised visitation cases where the safety of primary and secondary victims of domestic violence is at the forefront.”

For more information, please contact Kim Wiles, Criminal Justice Policy Coordinator at 941-315-8390 or via e-mail at kwiles@scgov.net.

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