

INSPIRING HOPE AND CHANGING LIVES

Agency: Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

Program: Behavioral Counseling

Service: LSS provides mental health services to individuals and families.

Need: In 2009, LSS provided counseling services to 201 unduplicated clients in greater Mankato. Without treatment, the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, suicide and wasted lives.

Impact: Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan.

This is one woman's personal story, taken from a speech she presented of her experience as an LSS behavioral counseling recipient:

Today I stand proudly in front of you as a surviving victim of abuse.

I am taking you through the short journey of my life. I cannot forget the day of August 15th, 2007, when I came knocking at the door of Lutheran Social Service. I was extremely scared, weak and struggling to speak after five and a half years of extreme abuse. I met with one of the counselors. With a couple of counseling sessions and numerous answers to my questions, I had gathered some courage.

That same month I filed a case of abuse against my now ex-husband and started my divorce proceedings. During this time I had only few dollars to survive and with no family around for help. This was a period of extreme stress because [of fear of losing my child who was 2 ½ years at that time].

I continued with my counseling for over a year and a half as I needed constant advice and help. Every time I would attend counseling, I would feel re-assured and clearer in my mind. The counselors were very professional, caring and they helped me in all possible ways at every step and even beyond. I still remember those days when I would just come and cry. When I started with counseling, I never thought that the outcome would be so rewarding. I not only fought bravely but won the case of abuse and also got full physical custody and joint legal custody of my daughter.

I am so happy today and I want to spread this message to all. If I could fight with a couple of dollars in my pocket, then anyone else can do it. Help is out there but only one step and determination can change your life. Lutheran Social Service has given me a new life. It is hard to put in words but I want to spread this message. Stand up against abusers and do not let your precious life get wasted.

Funding of this program from Greater Mankato Area United Way is used primarily to provide access to mental health services for people who are uninsured or under-insured and have low income. A sliding fee scale helps to make the sessions affordable.

Greater Mankato Area
United Way

