

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING***SAFETY CENTERS FOR CHILDREN COLLABORATIVE***

An OVW Safe Havens Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Project

Hennepin County, Minnesota

Hennepin County Human Services Public Health Department (HSPHD) will be the lead for the Safe Havens project hereinafter referred to as the **Safety Centers for Children**

Collaboration (Safety Center) and the applicant to the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program. HSPHD hereby enters into this Memorandum of Understanding with the partners identified in this Memorandum of Understanding.

Furthermore, the **Roles and Responsibilities** of each of the identified partners shall be as follows:

- **Genesis II for Families Inc. (Genesis II):** Genesis II, a community based nonprofit organization, will serve on the committee for the collaborative developing the safety centers protocols and approach and also will be the provider of the supervised visitation and safe exchange services outlined in the grant. Genesis II was started in 1976 and provides a continuum of services for high risk families including supervised visitation and safe exchange services. The organization is a recognized expert in working with high risk families who have been in multiple systems. In January of 2012, Genesis II also merged with the Children's Safety Centers of Saint Paul.

The new combined organization is now the largest provider of supervised visitation services in Minnesota with expertise in both domestic violence as well as child protection. Genesis II provides services in its buildings in southeast Minneapolis and Saint Paul as well as in three satellite locations including North Minneapolis, Cambridge and Lakeville.

For purposes of this agreement, Genesis II shall provide the following services:

- Serve as the provider of supervised visitation and safe exchange services for the services identified in this proposal;
 - Assist Hennepin County with forming and coordinating the collaborative;
 - Provide training about supervised visitation and safe exchange services for Fourth Judicial District Family Court Judges, Referees and county staff; and
 - In partnership with the collaborative, lead the development of a supervised visitation and safe exchange handbook for Fourth Judicial District Judges and Referees.
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- **Fourth Judicial District Family Courts Division:** The Fourth Judicial District will appoint at least one judicial officer to serve on the committee for the collaborative. In addition, the Fourth Judicial District will refer clients to the visitation and safe exchange services as well as assist with Orders for Protection where necessary. Finally, the Fourth Judicial District shall participate in the development of a manual for Judges and Referees regarding the importance of supervised visitation and safe exchange services and best practices for the delivery of these services.

- **Tubman:** Tubman will also serve on the committee for the collaborative. A recognized nation-wide leader in advocating for and serving victims of domestic violence, Tubman brings to this collaborative a wealth of experience and expertise working with victims of violence. Tubman will provide expert consultation of domestic violence and cultural competency issues to the committee and service staff. Tubman shall also have funding through this grant for a part-time staff position responsible for working with the collaborative, providing the trainings outlined below and assisting clients with orders for protection and access to other services when they have been victims of domestic violence.

Tubman shall provide trainings for the agencies participating in the collaborative including:

- The Dynamics of Domestic Violence and its Impact on Victims;
- Identifying and Addressing Barriers for Under-Served Populations;
- Cultural Awareness Working with Diverse Populations;
- The Role of Advocates for Victims and their Families;
- Methods of Building Trust with Victims of Violence
- Recognizing and Responding to Compassion Fatigue for Social Work Staff
- The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children and Methods for Intervention

- **HSPHD:** The HSPHD staff will be the identified coordinator for the collaborative overall. Responsibilities as the coordinator will include:
 - Identifying membership for the collaborative and convene meetings of the collaborative on at least a quarterly basis;
 - Maintaining records of the collaborative;
 - Coordinate communications between the members of the collaborative and appropriate Judges, Referees, staff and related professionals who regularly refer victims of domestic violence for visitation services, particularly regarding visitation services and training opportunities;
 - Participate in the development of an instructional manual for the bench of visitation services and they can best be utilized by the courts;
 - Playing an active role in the development of the standards and practices for the Safety Center collaborative;
 - Contract with Genesis II to parenting time plans and parenting time supervision/exchanges;
 - Provide and participate in ongoing trainings provided by the collaborative;
 - Attend trainings provided by Genesis II on the role of visitation centers, the services provided, availability and locations for services, the referral and orientation process and service fees; and
 - In partnership with other members of the collaborative, provide outreach to Fourth Judicial District Referees and Judges in order to insure they are aware of the collaborative, the services provided at Genesis II and the process for referring individuals for these services.

History of Relationship and Need:

Hennepin County and Genesis II have a long history working together to serve high risk families.

For more than 15 years, Hennepin County has relied on Genesis II as one of its primary providers of services for these families including in-home parenting, parenting assessments, intensive center based parenting education and supervised visitation and safe exchange.

Recognizing the expertise of Genesis II in the area of supervised visitation, Hennepin County approached Genesis II in 2009 and asked it to significantly expand its supervised visitation and safe exchange services including opening one or more satellite locations. As a result of this expansion, Genesis II is the only contracted provider of supervised visitation services for Hennepin County Child Protection. In addition to working with Hennepin County, Genesis II also has a long history of working with the Fourth Judicial District Family Court Division and domestic violence issues.

Tubman and Genesis II have a long history of working together to serve women, children, and families struggling with relationship violence. Genesis II and Tubman both serve struggling families in different capacities, and often serve the same individuals due to the various and complex needs of those struggling with domestic violence. An individual or family may for example, use Tubman's services in order to remove themselves from a domestic violence situation, and be provided temporary shelter, and later use Genesis II's visitation center to ensure that the safety needs of their children are met through the use of one of Genesis II's visitation centers.

HSPHD, Genesis II, Tubman and the Fourth Judicial District Family Courts Division have a long history of serving many of the same high risk families and individuals. These individuals and families have a complex variety of needs that are served best by the unique and specialized services of each entity. An individual, or struggling family may begin by seeking services at any one of the abovementioned entities and be referred to others to ensure that all of their complex needs are met. The need for high quality, coordinated supervised visitation services for families with a history of domestic violence is almost overwhelming:

- o Five percent of Minnesota adults responding to a 2010 survey reported experiencing domestic violence in 2010 (a total of 6,203 adults completed the 2010 survey, resulting in an overall response rate of 60 percent).¹
- o 45 percent of males, and 73 percent of females in Minneapolis or Saint Paul reported that in their lifetime, they had been physically harmed by a significant other, partner, boyfriend or girlfriend.²
- o Nearly 24 percent of the total 383 cases of child maltreatment investigated by Hennepin County indicated the presence of domestic violence in the family.³
- o Among 177 cases with a finding of child maltreatment investigated by Hennepin County, 65.1 percent also had an indication of domestic violence.⁴
- o 36.4 percent of the forms filled out by investigators in Hennepin County investigating child maltreatment indicated that the mother of the child (or children) on the report was a recent victim of domestic violence.⁵

¹ Danette Buskovich & Elizabeth Peterson, *Domestic violence: Results from the 2010 Minnesota Crime Victim Survey*, Greater Twin Cities United Way & Dept. of Public Safety, (March, 2012) at 1.

² *Id.* at 21.

³ Hennepin County CPS Investigators, *Domestic Violence Data Summary (1999)*, (March 1, 2012), www.mincava.umn.edu/link/documents/finrport/investigation.rtf.

⁴ *Id.*

Development of Application:

In addition to the above described responsibilities, all of the partners identified for the Safety Center Collaborative will attend technical assistance trainings provided by the Office of Violence Against Women, as delineated in the attached project budget.

Timeline for the Safety Center Collaborative:

The roles and responsibilities identified in this Memorandum of Understanding are contingent upon the receipt of funds requested for this project from the Office of Violence Against Women as indicated in the project budget. The beginning and ending dates for this effort shall coincide the with 36 (thirty-six) month grant period

² *Id.*



Approval:

We, the undersigned, have read and agree with terms and conditions outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding. Furthermore, we have read the *Safety Center* proposal and budget and approve the terms and conditions outlined in these documents.

Michelle Basham
Michelle Basham, Executive Director

Genesis II for Families Inc.

March 5, 2012
Date

Daniel Engstrom
Daniel Engstrom, Assistant Hennepin County

Administrator

3/19/12
Date

Jeanne M. Reding
Judge Reding, Presiding Judge
Fourth Judicial District, Family Court

March 19, 2012
Date

Beverly Dussa
Beverly Dussa, Executive Director/President
Tubman

03/06/12
Date