



## **THE PROBLEM**

- Every four hours and 46 minutes someone is forcibly raped in South Carolina.
- Only 39% of violent sex crimes are ever reported. (Bureau of Justice, 2005)
- Sexual crimes are costly to the community – nearly 4.1 billion in the direct costs of medical and mental health care, and nearly 1.8 billion in the indirect costs of lost productivity. (CDC, 2003)
- A person is more likely to be raped or sexually abused by someone known to them than by a stranger; and this crime happens to children between the ages of 10 and 21 more than two times any other age group (SLED, 2006).

Sexual abuse is an issue that overlaps many other issues. Teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and alcohol and other drug problems are a few social impacts that have proven to arise in the devastating wake of sexual abuse- especially for survivors who have limited support.

- Young girls who report childhood rape are 3 times more likely to become pregnant before age 18.
- Estimated 60% teen's first pregnancies are preceded by experiences of sexual abuse.
- Sexually abused children exhibit long-term and more frequent behavioral problems, particularly sexual behaviors.
- 70-80% of child sexual abuse survivors report excessive alcohol and drug use.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are 3 times more likely to develop psychiatric disorders or alcohol and drug abuse in adulthood.
- Among male survivors, more than 70% seek psychological treatment for substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and attempts.
- 60-70% of runaways are girls, most of whom are escaping sexual or physical abuse
- Girls in gangs are not as violent as boys and typically join gangs to escape from victimization. They seek protection and friendship.
- 70-90% of girls in the juvenile justice system have been victims of sexual abuse.
- Child rape victims are more likely to be re-offended.

## **THE SOLUTION**

Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands (STSM), formerly Rape Crisis Network, is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3), United Way member agency, established in 1983 to serve Richland, Lexington and Newberry counties. STSM supports survivors in recovery from the trauma associated with sexual assault and abuse and educates the community to identify and prevent sexual violence. Our services are free and confidential.

Two of the most crucial services we offer to survivors of sexual assault are our 24-hour crisis response services: hospital accompaniment and the crisis hotline. We average one hospital call per day, responding to the hospitals in Richland, Lexington, and Newberry Counties. Our 24-hour hotline averages 25 crisis calls a month. We provide support, advocacy, and information follow-up services, including counseling by licensed professionals. STSM also offers risk-reduction education, including the Stewards of Children curriculum to teach adults how to recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.