

## Success Stories

### Jane

Jane, age 45, came into shelter at the Community Crisis Center in June 2009. She had been evicted from her apartment, as she did not have enough money to pay for it. She shared that she had been living paycheck to paycheck and had some financial crises that happened where she got behind with her rent. Jane revealed that her adult son had some financial problems and she needed to help him out.

Jane continued working while she was in shelter and found an affordable apartment. She applied for the apartment and consequently, she signed a lease. She was eligible for rent assistance with our EFSP funds and received help with her 1<sup>st</sup> month's rent. Upon moving out of the Community Crisis Center in July, Jane was given a Good Will voucher to help with move in items and some emergency food to start her off at her new apartment. Jane came in recently and got some items from the community shelves and stated that she is still in the apartment, in permanent housing.

### Anna

Anna first came to the Community Crisis Center in January 2009. She related her story of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. She also began to share her experiences of sexual abuse from childhood. Anna said she had been married to her husband for seven years, the last 5 of which have been filled with controlling and abusive behaviors toward her. The most recent, she said, was three nights prior when her husband came into her bedroom at 3:00 am yelling and screaming and ripping her clothes out of the closet onto the floor. She said she was scared and angry!

According to Anna, her husband was mentally ill and addicted to drugs as well as abusive, and that there is no honeymoon stage but only abuse and violence.

One of Anna's unique challenges is that she is not a US citizen and her husband is her sponsor. At that first session Anna said she was considering a legal separation and had contacted a lawyer.

Anna has received 13 counseling sessions from a counselor at the crisis center. During this time she has shared more about her childhood abuse and how it still affects her – her body image, and her relationship, also the cultural implications of her abuse. She also expanded her understanding of many of her husband's behaviors that could be named abusive. She reported trying to talk to her pastor about her concerns and experiences but he did not listen. She has done extensive safety planning with her counselor.

Throughout her sessions she moved from concern about her husband to finding her own strengths. She has developed some healthy coping mechanisms such as journaling. She has filed for a divorce, is beginning a process of obtaining a legal status on her own under the Violence Against Women Act and, with the help of legal advocates, has obtained a two year Order of Protection.

Anna is well on her way to a life free of violence and full of those things that make her feel strong and capable.