

HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1977 and confidentially located In Athens, Ohio, My Sister's Place (MSP) began as a grass roots effort to provide a safe respite for victims of interpersonal violence and their children. Initially the shelter, the first of its kind in Southeastern Ohio, was a succession of donated spaces operated entirely by volunteers. Today, The Board of Trustees directs a staff of 22 paid employees and the role of volunteers has moved from the shelter out into the community. MSP provides not only emergency shelter, but outreach programming and batterer intervention services as well.

A BRIEF RECAP OF MSP'S HISTORY INCLUDES:

- 1979** The agency hires its' first paid staff person--a part-time executive director who is paid minimum wage (\$1.65 per hour).
- 1980** MSP receives a \$1,000.00 stipend from the Community Mental Health Board. This enables the agency to become a Licensed Residential Care Facility through the Ohio Department of Mental Health in 1983. Today it remains a member of the Athens, Hocking, Vinton 317 Board Network of Care.
- 1986** a toll-free Crisis Hotline becomes a safe way to access shelter services. In Fiscal Year 2011, the shelter answered 3,498 calls from 2,101 individuals.
- 1987** MSP's Programming Project begins providing linkage with appropriate support agencies. Today it has served over 1,130 families since its inception. From July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, MSP staff completed 2,952 safety planning referrals to 28 local support agencies.
- 1988** MSP purchases a larger, more adequate facility that increases bed space from six to ten. Today, the Agency is mortgage free and owns the building.
- 1990** Rural outreach programming brings safety planning to victims at safe, anonymous locations in their home communities. A Court Advocate delivers crisis intervention, legal advocacy, and assistance in filing PRO SE protection orders. In Fiscal Year '11, 116 Athens County victims participated in the program.
- 1990** the agency begins The Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) with court-mandated services to the perpetrators of family violence. In FY '11, 36 perpetrators were court ordered into this group counseling program.
- 1991** My Sister's Place is recognized by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence for its outstanding rural programming.
- 1992** MSP is the first battered women's shelter and third agency in Ohio to be awarded certification from then Ohio Department of Mental Health.
- 2005** The shelter renovates two bathrooms with funding from the O'Bleness Foundation
- 2006** MSP and DVIP become Nationally Accredited through CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).
- 2009** Both MSP and DVIP are re-certified for three more years as a CARF-Accredited Behavioral Health Care agency.
- 2011** The shelter renovates the kitchen, including the leveling the floor, and the purchase of new counters, cabinets, sink, dishwasher, shelving, and stove with a grant from the Athens First Presbyterian Church.
- 2011** The agency's director, Kate McGuckin, resigns after 26 ½ years of service. She receives the Rita Gillick Award for mental health advocacy from the Athens-Hocking-Vinton 317 Board and the Foster Cornwell Award from the Athens Foundation. Kelly Cooke, MSW, LISW becomes the agency's new director.