

## I. Research

According to their mission statement, Family Violence & Rape Crisis' goal is to “work aggressively to empower families and individuals to live free from violence and abuse through programs of education, prevention and intervention.” FVRC, though, tends to focus on the intervention aspect. Most education and prevention is done by their sister organization Coalition for Family Peace.

There are more than twenty paid employees. Two thirds of those work full time. At least three are bilingual. The employees are spread between a shelter, a thrift shop (all of its profits go towards funding FVRC and CFFP) and administrative and counseling staff at the actual center. In addition, the organization has about forty volunteers.

FVRC is a non profit organization with a 501 C3 tax status. It is funded primarily through private donations and government grants. In addition, it also holds two major fund raising events throughout the year. The fundraiser the organization has most recently hosted was a production of “The Vagina Monologues” by Eve Ensler..

In a recent survey supplied by the organization, 70% of those surveyed were familiar with FVRC or CFFP. But, being highly recognized often brings with it both friends and foes. Many extreme conservatives in the community regularly express their views that the organization is more destructive to families than helpful to them. For instance, many of these people voiced their concerns at the presence of alcohol at a previous fund raising event, citing that alcohol is a cause of family violence (which experts say is simply a myth) These citizens openly showed their distain for the production of “The Vagina Monologues” as well. However, there are a number of advocates in the community whose support, both in giving time and money, is invaluable. A great number of them come from the Ferrington Village area of Chatham County.

“As needed” is the term most associated with pr at FVRC as there is no one person who has the time or resources to devote to promoting the organization. As such, the public relations tools FVRC has used most often in the past and continue to use are simple and very inexpensive ones. Modest brochures and hand outs printed on their own copier are a mainstay for the organization. The staff works closely with the local media to get events and services publicized. Often workers are featured on regular radio talk shows and in the Chatham News.

FVRC has also been covered in a variety of other media in the last year including the Herald Sun and the Independent Weekly. Carrborro.com also has information on FVRC. Several emergency services and hotline websites list the organization as well. Recently, FVRC has begun to use a local community website which lists events in the Chatham County area.

The major strength of the organization the overwhelming need for its services in Chatham County and the monopoly FVRC has over family violence and rape crisis

resources in the community. Also, the high level of recognition of the organization can play in its favor.

But, the high recognition also brings with it critics in rural, conservative Chatham County. Many even post negative comments about FVRC on the community events website mentioned earlier. This site, because of its high visibility, is one the organization depends on heavily for promoting its events and services. Another struggle for FVRC is its minimal financial resources. Money is so scarce that there really is no public relations budget. PR is paid for out of the budgets of the individual events which need promoting. Also, there is always a dire need for more volunteers, especially men. Currently, there are few, if no, unpaid males who work with the organization.

The most glaring threat to FVRC, other than financial and manpower constraints, is its fierce critics. Many see the organization as one which promotes a radical feminist cause. It is also accused of influencing the contradiction of the traditional Christian concept of marriage by encouraging victims of abuse to leave their spouses.

One of the biggest opportunities FVRC has currently is the development of its rape crisis division. This part of the organization remains relatively under developed while the needs of its services seem to be growing.

Another major opportunity is one on which our group has chosen to work. Neither FVRC nor its sister agency CFFP has ever had a published website. We are in the process of working to change that in ways which include building a site and publicizing it to the publics of FVRC and CFFP.

Our implementation of a website campaign is long range and primarily proactive but contains some reactive elements. The site will be a complete online resource of objective information for victims of family violence and rape. It will also contain some passively reactive information in the form of a section called "myths." We hope facts presented in that section can help to clear up some of the misconception which much of the community currently believe.

As a group we have identified the following as our goals:

- \*To develop and publish a fully functional website that will be easily maintained and provide accurate information and crucial resources while being aesthetically pleasing to FVRC's primary publics.

- \*To develop a publicity campaign for the website targeting those in need and those who wish to contribute to the organization.

Because the FVRC serves only Chatham county, the location of its publics is easy to identify, but the publics who need its services are much harder to name. That is until they actually become clients. This is mainly because the problems of family violence and rape are often kept so private. But when looking at past and current clients, according to

FVRC workers, there is a trend in the use of services by women age 25 to 35. Also of note, an estimated 30 percent of those are of Hispanic origin.

The publics who donate both time and money seem to be mainly older, retired residents. FVRC workers believe the reason they have such different (positive) views of the organization from many other Chatham County residents is that they are mostly “transplants” from northern states who have lived in areas that long ago began identifying family violence and rape as crucial issues in a community. Also, many have a surplus of time and money to donate.

The government is the third primary public because FVRC is always looking for grants to help stay in operation or develop new projects. Recently it received a grant from the Governor's Crime Commission to help fund the sexual crisis division.

FVRC is lacking in in-depth research relating to audiences. For this campaign we would need research data such as a co-orientation study to gain vital demographic information and examine the views held by publics in comparison to the organization. Ratings information could hold the media habits of our publics such as the Neilson for television or Arbitron for radio. Most importantly, we would like information on the publics who have access to the internet and their habits as the development of a website is the focus of our campaign. Research on clients has been based primarily on feedback from victims who return to volunteer.

One possible way to gain insight into these publics would be to give an anonymous survey to each client as they utilize the service. It is important to point out that this would be difficult to implement given the circumstances on which clients come to FVRC. Privacy is often their primary concern. The promise of anonymity may not be enough to encourage a response. Census information may provide a starting point for further research on possible contributors. The information we require is political and societal to determine who these contributors are. Our third public is much easier to assess as Governmental distribution records are readily available to its citizens.

A summary of research results by the methods outlined above may provide better identification of FVRC's publics and their needs. It could highlight what level of correct or incorrect knowledge exists about the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. An important result would help determine when, where and how to appropriately promote the proposed website. Levels of computer literacy, usage and type of internet connection (dial-up, high-speed etc) would impact the design and construction of the website. Thus such research would greatly serve our website campaign.

The current website for the Family Violence and Rape Center is incomplete and inaccessible. We are going to create a new website for the center which addresses these problems, and also design a campaign to let the public know of the new site.

One concern of the current website is that we believe people who may be seeking help from the center may access the site in a public place, such as the public library, or in the home of the person who is abusive. Also, the current website seems harsh, and uninviting. We plan to redesign the website so that the links work, the site is appealing, inviting and simple to use.

The main publics we will be addressing are governmental organizations (both state and local) who donate to the center, community groups who donate to the center, churches, employees and volunteers of the center, the clients who seek help at the center, and the Latino population of Chatham County.

There are many intervening publics in Chatham County who will need to be addressed as we seek to get the word out about our new website. The local media, the online Chatham Chat, the local radio station, the local newspaper and the newsletter of the center.

#### Governmental Donors

Objective – Let the groups who donate money to the center see how their funds are being used and follow the progress of the FVRC. Although we do not expect an increase in funding from the government, we do want the number of government leaders who decide funding who are aware of the FVRC's mission and progress to increase.

Strategy – Create awareness among the leaders of the governmental organizations of the new website.

Tactic – Send letters to the leaders of the governmental organizations along with a copy of the newsletter which announces the new website.

### Community Groups

Objective – Increase the amount of donations from the community groups by 20%.

Strategy – Send the group leaders to the website and let the groups see all that the center does, and how it uses their money.

Tactic – An eye-catching front page of the newsletter which advertises the reveal of the new website, a mention of the website in the thank you letters for their funding.

Objective - Change the community groups' attitude toward the FVRC. If people had viewed the website before they would not have thought highly of the organization. In today's world, a quality website is a must for any organization and allows the organization to be taken seriously. The number of people in the community who know what the organization does will increase by 15%.

Strategy – Make groups better informed about the center's goals and how it benefits the community. Once they know this their attitudes will change.

Tactic – Before the newsletter is sent out and the new website is revealed to these people, do a survey of group leaders and their attitudes. Repeat this survey after they have been exposed to the website. We expect a change in their attitudes toward the better.

### Individual Donors

Objective – Increase the number of people in the community who donate money to the FVRC by 20%.

Strategy – Increase awareness of the organization in the community and raise donations by letting the people know about the new website.

Tactics - Allow people to donate money directly online using PayPal.

- Allow people in the community to sign up for the FVRC's newsletter so they can keep up to date on what is happening with the organization.
- Allow people to access the newsletter online so that they will return to the website.

(I think this can be two objectives. Raise awareness and raise money among potential individual donors. We need to look at this.)

-Advertise the new website in the local newspaper and through Chatham Chat with a website link.

- Give a news release to the local newspaper. Having the information show up in other media outlets will help get the word out to people who may not have ordinarily been exposed to the message and will also offer extra credibility.

- A public service announcement on the radio with the information for the new site.

### Churches

Objectives - The Churches of Chatham County believe that the FVRC as an organization brakes apart families. We need this to change because they are an important public in the community and we need their support to be as successful as possible. We expect a change in their overall attitudes after 6 months.

Strategy – Have a website which is caring and focuses on the family unit. This will help change the attitude that the FVRC is wrecking homes.

Tactics – Contact the church, include the new website in their newsletter/bulletin, ask to put up posters or distribute the information about the center at the church.

- Personally address the opinion leaders of the church and direct them to the website.

- Measure whether or not the request gets through and that the information shows up in their church newsletter.

## Employees and Volunteers

Objectives – Increase the number of volunteers at the center by \_\_%.

Strategy – If the website is linked out and easy to find then people who are interested in volunteering will have no problem finding the FVRC.

Tactics – Get the website listed on [www.volunteermatch.com](http://www.volunteermatch.com)

## Clients

Objectives – Increase awareness of what the center offers around the community for people who may need its services.

Strategy - Make the center easy to find online and also around the town so that people who need help know where to go.

Tactics – Create wallet-sized cards which have all of the basic necessary information about the center and the website which can be tucked into a pocket or wallet. Have these cards available in the public bathrooms around the area, for privacy reasons.

-Advertise the website in the local library, which is a place many people go when they have a problem, or need to use a computer.

-Have the website linked from local databases which offer places for people to go who need help.

- Have the website appear when one searches for a center like the FVRC in the area on [www.google.com](http://www.google.com).
- Have the website available with North Carolina Health Information.
- Have the website available with the Chatham County Partnership for Children.

Objective – Encourage people who are victims to find this website and be encouraged to get help. We will see more hits on our website. We will ask people who come into the center how they heard about it, and there will be an increase in the number of people who cite the website.

Strategy – Have an inviting website which outlines the warning signs of abusive relationships and offers contact information of the center.

Tactics – Links to sites which give the warning signs of abuse and outline when to get help.

- Use language which is caring and lets people know that the FVRC is able to help them.
- Advertise locally to attract people who are victims but are not getting help.

#### Latino Population

Objectives – Make the website available to the people of the area who speak Spanish, we will see an increase in the number of hits on the page which is in Spanish.

Strategies – By advertising at the local Hispanic Center we will be able to get our name out and let people know that at the FVRC they can get counseling in their native language.

Tactics – Offer the same wallet sized cards in Spanish as well as English.

- Have an eye-catching link to the basic information of the center in Spanish on the website.
- Advertise at the local Hispanic Center with flyers and brochures about the center.