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# Women's Crisis Center sends out SOS

## Budget crunch reaches critical point

BY KARI WETHINGTON | [KWETHINGTON@NKY.COM](mailto:KWETHINGTON@NKY.COM)[E-mail](#) | [Print](#) | [digg us!](#) | [del.icio.us!](#) | [Click-2-Listen](#)

Women's Crisis Center said funding cutbacks at the state and federal levels are impeding its ability to provide necessary services to the community. Leaders at the center, which offers domestic violence/sexual assault counseling services to residents in 13 Northern Kentucky counties, said it has been grappling with a budget crunch for years, but the situation is at a critical point.

"It's the worst that I've seen it, to be blunt," said Kim Adams, the center's executive director. "If we get cut any more, services will suffer, and I fear some of the people we serve may fall through the cracks and won't get the services they need."

The problem is being felt by similar agencies across the state and nation according to the 2007 National Census of Domestic Violence Services, released this month.



The crisis center was one of more than 1,300 domestic violence programs across the country - and 14 in Kentucky - that participated in the census, which provides the most recent data documenting the number of individuals served by the programs.

The data were collected over 24 hours on Sept. 25.

In Kentucky, the programs served more than 1,189 adults and children in one day. Still, 106 requests for service went unmet because of lack of funding and staff.

The Kentucky Domestic Violence Association said shelters across the state have seen a 43 percent loss in state revenue between 1996 and 2007. Based in Frankfort, the association administers state and federal funds for the state's domestic-violence programs, including the Women's Crisis Center.

The association said the fiscal year 2008 federal budget slashes \$35 million from the Victims of Crime Act Fund, a key funding source which serves about 3 million crime victims each year; cuts \$2.1 million from the Legal Assistance to Victims program; and applies a 1.74 percent rescission to Labor Health and Human Services funding, creating a \$2.2 million cut to the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

"We're in bad straits and if we have any more cuts we're going to have cut services," said Sherry Currens, executive director of the statewide organization.



### How to help

**Donate:** To the Women's Crisis Center. Information at [www.wccy.org](http://www.wccy.org) or 859-491-3335.

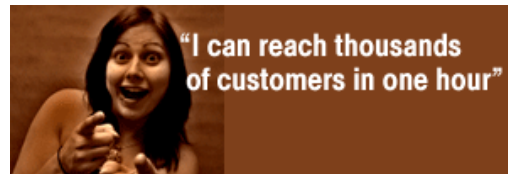
**Volunteer:** Use the above contacts for more information.

**Attend a fundraiser:** 7:30 p.m. Feb. 20 Fourth Annual Girls' Nite Out at Drawbridge Inn, Fort Mitchell. Tickets are \$10 and proceeds benefit the center. Information: 859-653-1995.

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Laura Kinney, who works in Florence as the center's director of rural services, has been with the organization for 20 years and has never seen things in such dire straits.

"I'm concerned," she said. "We're feeling as an agency there's not a whole lot (left) to cut but direct services to clients."

Staffing is a big issue for the crisis center and the state's other domestic violence programs. Kinney and Adams said that a lack of funding makes it difficult to offer adequate salaries for its employees.

"We have very dedicated staff," Kinney said, "but there comes a point where we all have to make commitments to ourselves and our families as well as to the work we do."

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