

### A. Application Purpose

The State of Georgia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), the state's STOP VAWA administering agency, is pleased to submit this application for the FY 2011 Safe Havens program in partnership with the SAFFT<sup>1</sup> Family Visitation & Community Center (SAFFT), Judge Russell Jackson, Superior Court judge in the Bell-Forsyth Judicial Circuit, Forsyth County Family Haven, and No One Alone (NOA's Ark). In February 2011, CJCC sent an alert about this grant opportunity to nine supervised visitation centers identified through both the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Network and the Supervised Visitation Center Network web directory ([www.svnetwork.net](http://www.svnetwork.net)). Three supervised visitation centers expressed general interest in applying with CJCC for this grant opportunity. Of those three, SAFFT was the only agency that ultimately decided to move forward with CJCC.

CJCC is applying for this grant opportunity because the Safe Havens mission fits squarely with the organization's focus on coordinated community response to address the myriad of social problems associated with domestic violence and other violent crimes against women. In the recently submitted 2010-2012 State of Georgia STOP Implementation Plan, CJCC voiced a commitment, on behalf of current sub grantees, to encourage collaborative, coordinated community responses that provide equity and accountability for those participating. The Safe Havens program provides an opportunity for CJCC to work collaboratively with a local community to address the very real dangers domestic violence victims face when trying to leave their abusers,<sup>2</sup> especially when the victim and abuser have a child in common that may require

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<sup>1</sup> SAFFT stands for Supporting Adoption and Foster Families Together. SAFFT Family Visitation and Community Center is the name of the supervised visitation headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. DeKeseredy, W.S. (2006), Separation/Divorce Sexual Assault: The Contribution of Male Support, *Feminist Criminology* 1(3), p. 228-250. ; Tjaden, P., Thoennes, N. (2000) U.S. Department of Justice, *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey*, available at: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/181867.pdf>.

them to interact during custody visits or exchanges. As project coordinator, CJCC will ensure that each partner at the local level is compensated for their time spent on the project, that all partners have an opportunity to participate in crafting the policies and procedures that will govern supervised visitation and exchanges, and that all partners participate in creating a technical assistance request for education and cross-training activities aimed at educating stakeholders in the legal and advocacy systems about the dangers inherent in custody cases within the domestic violence context (e.g. family law attorneys, advocates, judges, and court personnel). This project's ultimate goal is to create a model protocol for Georgia agencies that currently provide supervised visitation in the child abuse context to expand services to cases of domestic violence where custody is at issue. CJCC will document the paradigm and practice shift required for supervised visitation providers to add services for domestic violence involved custody cases so that other communities can use the information to create their own coordinated community response.

*1. Problem Description: Projected Need, Target Population, Service Gaps, and Project Fit*

*a. Case Volume and the Incidence of Family Violence*

SAFFT currently serves two of Georgia's 159 counties. SAFFT Family Visitation and Community Center is located in Forsyth County and also serves Dawson County, which are located in the Northeastern and Bell-Forsyth Judicial Circuits, respectively. While Forsyth county is located within the Atlanta MSA<sup>3</sup>, parts of Dawson County are considered rural.<sup>4</sup> SAFFT is relatively new to the issue of visitation in domestic violence and child custody cases.

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<sup>3</sup> Metro Atlanta Chamber, Metro Atlanta: 28-County Metropolitan Statistical Area, available at: [http://www.metroatlantachamber.com/files/file/about\\_atlanta/map\\_list\\_counties\\_primary\\_cities.pdf](http://www.metroatlantachamber.com/files/file/about_atlanta/map_list_counties_primary_cities.pdf), Accessed: February 28, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, *Rural Health Grants Eligibility Advisor*, available at: <http://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/RuralAdvisor/RuralHealthAdvisor.aspx>, Accessed: February 28, 2011.

While the agency has provided supervised visitation services in child abuse and neglect cases since 2008, the organization started working with the Forsyth County Superior Court to provide visitation in custody cases involving domestic violence as of June 2010. SAFFT currently works collaboratively with their local Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), child protective services (CPS), and their juvenile court judges to provide visitation in cases of child abuse and neglect. The organization currently receives referrals for approximately 3-4 domestic violence and child custody cases per month.

Based on CJCC's research and conversations with the Office on Violence Against Women, SAFFT would be the second center in the state to formalize their partnerships with their local Superior Courts and work collaboratively with their local domestic violence shelters, family law bar, the family violence intervention providers (FVIP), DFCS, and CPS to establish a formal protocol for supervised visitation in child custody cases involving domestic violence. Once these relationships are formalized and a protocol is established, the center will accept increased referrals from the Superior Courts for families who may require their services.

In 2009, there were 238 family violence case filings in the Dawson and Forsyth County Superior Courts.<sup>5</sup> In this same year, there were another 167 child custody filings in these circuits.<sup>6</sup> In total, family violence and child custody cases represent 6% of all cases filed in the Superior Courts for these counties. While these statistics do not specify what proportion of the custody cases filed involve domestic violence, based on past research, CJCC projects that approximately 34 (20%) of the child custody filings will be contentious, of which up to 25 (75%)

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<sup>5</sup> Christopher Hansard, Administrative Office of the Courts, email to Stefanie Lopez-Howard, February 24, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard, personal communication.

may involve domestic violence – which may warrant supervised visitation or exchange services for the victims' safety.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the filings in Superior Court, domestic violence and child custody issues may arise as part of the temporary protective order (TPO) process. Victims who share a child in common with their abuser may require assistance from supervised visitation providers to help with either safe exchanges or fully supervised visits to comply with no-contact provisions in their protective orders. In 2010, there were 923 family violence incidents in the counties which SAFFT serves. These incidents involved 1,576 victims, of which 737 (47%) were the former spouse, present spouse, or child of the aggressor.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in 2010, 392 TPO's<sup>9</sup> were filed in the proposed service areas, of which 163 (42%) involved a provision for visitation or custody of a child the parties shared in common.<sup>10</sup> In total, CJCC and SAFFT project that up to approximately 188 families per year may need supervised visitation or exchange services given the volume of Superior Court cases and TPO's.

Anecdotally, the domestic violence providers who are partners on this grant, local judges and SAFFT have voiced a need for these services based on recent, lethal incidents involving custody exchanges. In June 2011, a man murdered his ex-girlfriend in front of their young children during a custody exchange that took place in a secluded bank parking lot. The couple was exchanging the child in North Fulton County, but they were from Forsyth County and the man

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<sup>7</sup> Some studies speculate that approximately 20% of divorcing couples have highly contentious divorces and that as many as 75% of these divorces may involve domestic violence. See, Kielitz, S. (1997). National Center for State Courts, *Domestic Violence and Child Custody Disputes: A Resource Handbook for Judges and Court Managers*, cited in National Judicial Education Program, (2009). *Intimate Partner Sexual Abuse: Adjudicating this Hidden Dimension of Domestic Violence*, available at: <http://njep-ipsacourse.org/>, Accessed February 28, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Georgia Crime Information Center (2009), *Georgia Crime Statistics Reports: Family Violence Report*, available at: <http://services.georgia.gov/gbi/crimestats/displayReports.do>, Accessed February 28, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Maggie Beck-Coon, Georgia Commission on Family Violence, email message Stefanie Lopez-Howard, February 4, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Daryl Beggs, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Georgia Protective Order Registry, email message to Stefanie Lopez-Howard, March 2, 2011.

drove the woman's corpse to the local hospital.<sup>11</sup> In February 2010, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* reported on the dearth of supervised visitation services for custody cases in which domestic violence is a factor.<sup>12</sup> The article was released following a spate of murders involving domestic violence victims who were killed while exchanging their young children with their former partners.

Currently, the domestic violence victims that SAFFT serves generally do not access domestic violence services, and the organization recently had a client cancel divorce proceedings and remove the supervised visitation order. If this client had the support of a domestic violence advocate or counselor, she may have been able to follow through with the divorce action and supervised visitation. Indeed, the grant partners have been shocked to learn that many of the victims using SAFFT's services have not received domestic violence counseling or safety planning – particularly because both NOA's Ark and Forsyth County Family Haven have excellent relationships with the Sheriffs' offices in Dawson and Forsyth, respectively. This grant may help raise awareness about domestic violence services to a cohort of women who may never have sought help through the criminal justice system.

*b. County Demographics and Population Outlook*

The demographic make-up of SAFFT's service area truly reflects Georgia's diversity. Generally, 31% of the population in 2009, the most recent year for which data is available, was children younger than 19.<sup>13</sup> In the proposed service areas, the population demographics are 4%

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<sup>11</sup> Morris, M. (June 6, 2011). Police: Man shot ex-girlfriend in front of couple's two children, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, retrieved from: <http://www.ajc.com/news/north-fulton/police-man-shot-ex-968475.html>, Accessed August 11, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Simmons, A. (February 17, 2010). Safety of custody sharing questioned after slayings, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, retrieved from: <http://www.ajc.com/news/safety-of-custody-sharing-309440.html>, Accessed: August 11, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2009)a. *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for Counties: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009*, available at: <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/CC-EST2009-alldata.html>, Accessed February 28, 2011.

African-American, 90% White (includes White Hispanic), 8% Hispanic, and 5% Asian. Furthermore, the median household income is generally at or above the national median (\$51,425) for the population SAFFT serves.<sup>14</sup> Between 14.6% (Forsyth County) and 3.2% (Dawson County) of those in the service area speak a language other than English at home.<sup>15</sup> To meet the needs of the substantial Hispanic population and limited English proficient parents in SAFFT's service area, the organization intends to hire a bilingual visitation monitor.

*c. Current Services, Gaps, and Project Fit*

As mentioned previously, SAFFT offers supervised visitation for cases referred to them through CPS, the Juvenile Court, and/or DFCS. Additionally, SAFFT recently began taking referrals in June 2010 from the Superior Court for supervised visitation in custody cases that involve domestic violence. While SAFFT's relationship with the Superior Court judges is not formalized and the agency has not developed a protocol for referrals and the supervised visitation agency's role in informing the court and the attorneys involved in the case about the victim's safety or the offender's compliance with the visitation requirements, they have quickly responded to a need that the Superior Court judges in the area have voiced. Currently, SAFFT serves 3-4 families per month that need supervised visitation in domestic violence cases. As such, there is a lack in both counties for a formal coordinated community response to address victim and child safety in child custody cases that involve domestic violence.

However, as the Memorandum of Understanding appended to this application demonstrates, SAFFT has the clear commitment of Judge Russell Jackson, Superior Court judge in the Bell-Forsyth Judicial Circuit, the Forsyth County Family Haven, and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to execute a successful response to this problem. Moreover, the agency

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<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2009)b. 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, available at: [http://www.factfinder.census.gov/jsp/saff/SAFFInfo.jsp?\\_pageId=gn10\\_select\\_state](http://www.factfinder.census.gov/jsp/saff/SAFFInfo.jsp?_pageId=gn10_select_state), Accessed: February 28, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2009)b.

and CJCC are also committed to cross-training with its partners, local judges, and consulting committee members about the dangers of domestic violence in child custody disputes, the role of supervised visitation, and the services their agencies have to offer. Committee members will work together to educate each other regarding available resources that the respective partner agencies have to offer for domestic violence victims and children who witness it. The judges and community-based organizations will discuss education needs and put together a technical assistance request for OVW providers. The group will also work together to examine current practices following Praxis International's Safety Audit Toolkit. The budget includes funds to purchase this toolkit so that CJCC's Project Coordinator can oversee the facilitation of this analysis. We hope this process will help identify areas of commonality and difference between the current practices established for visitation in child abuse and deprivation cases. The Safety Audit process, in which all consulting committee members will participate, will help identify gaps and needs for the supervised visitation protocol the committee will create.

The partnership with SAFFT will be a new venture for CJCC. While CJCC does not currently fund SAFFT, the services the organization proposes complement many of the STOP VAWA and VOCA funded services in the area the organization proposes to serve. CJCC currently funds the Forsyth County Family Haven with both VOCA and STOP VAWA money to provide core services including safety planning, a crisis hotline, safe shelter, and criminal justice advocacy to female victims of domestic violence and any children who witness such violence. One of CJCC's identified STOP VAWA-funded best practice projects serves both Dawson and Lumpkin counties. NOA's Ark provides a victim advocate in the Sheriff's Department to respond to and follow-up with family violence calls in Lumpkin and Dawson counties. Since this advocate has been in place, the organization reports no domestic violence homicides in

Lumpkin County because victims are assessed for lethality and connected to services immediately. SAFFT's program will provide another safe haven in which victims with children may seek comfort and safety from their abusers. With a strong collaborative effort, the victims in Forsyth and Dawson county may no longer have to fear retaliation or harm from their abusers during custody exchanges or visitation and the separation period.

SAFFT provides services with sliding scale fees that depend on the visiting parent's ability to pay. Thus far, SAFFT's security procedures also comply with the basic tenets of the Guiding Principles<sup>16</sup>, however, the organization seeks to strengthen current practices to better meet the particular dangers domestic violence victims face. Currently, SAFFT does not have a paid security professional on staff, though their procedures are robust given their sparse resources. For example, SAFFT does not allow the visiting party to bring cameras or cell phones with them during appointments. All SAFFT staff has a panic button under his/her desk that allows him/her to alert the local police department of any dangerous situations without raising alarms. The organization also has delayed arrival and exit policies for the custodial and visiting party in domestic violence cases. The visiting party arrives first and waits in an area blocked off from the sign-in area for the custodial parent to bring the child. When the custodial parent arrives, a visitation monitor escorts the child to the visiting party. Currently the rent on the building is less than \$100 per year because it was donated to the center by Forsyth County. However, due to expanded need, the Executive Director has been actively searching for another location to house the center, rather than expand the current one, and thus a pro-rated rent cost has been included in the grant budget for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years of the project. The parking lot and entry areas of the current location are monitored with video equipment, which will enable

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<sup>16</sup> U.S Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (2007). *Guiding Principles: Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program*, available at: <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/guiding-principles032608.pdf>.

SAFFT staff to monitor, record or intercept any potential interactions an abuser may try to have with a victim on the premises. The part-time visitation monitor and the Domestic Violence Court Liaison, who will also monitor visits, will be trained to note any stalking or battering behaviors the batterer may exhibit toward the child(ren) or the victim. The Domestic Violence Court Liaison will also follow-up with both parties after each visit to check-in about the visitation arrangement, any concerns the parties may have, and on the victim and child's safety. Visitors must also announce themselves and only staff can allow persons in and out of the facility.

### **B. What Will Be Done**

CJCC will partner with SAFFT Visitation & Community Center to develop supervised visitation protocols for their center, a coordinated community response to domestic violence and child custody issues, and cross-training for members of the response effort, including judges. Specifically, CJCC will serve as project coordinator over the local effort to create protocols for referral, orientation, and follow-up in child custody cases in which domestic violence is a factor. SAFFT will work with a team of stakeholders to develop their protocols. The core members of the Consulting Committee are outlined more specifically in the appended MOU.

To meet victims where they are – particularly those located in the rural parts of Dawson County – the Dawson County Sheriff's Office has offered to share a currently under utilized space. This space will allow SAFFT to best serve victims in both Dawson and Forsyth by taking the supervised visitation and exchange services to them. The space is two adjoining offices that have two separate entrances. Because one of the offices was outfitted for the Sheriff's Office to conduct forensic interviews, the office is equipped with a two-way mirror and recording equipment, if it is necessary, to monitor visits. NOA's Ark currently uses this space for weekly

group counseling sessions. Dawson County will be part of the protocol CJCC and its partners create.

To meet the goals of creating a comprehensive coordinated community response to domestic violence and child custody and creating a model protocol for other communities in the state wishing to add supervised visitation in the domestic violence context to extant services, CJCC will bring the stakeholders in the counties SAFFT intends to serve together on a monthly basis during the planning phase of this grant to accomplish the following activities:

**- First 3 months:**

- Establish a work plan, meeting dates, assignments and roles in SAFFT's Supervised Visitation Protocol Consulting Committee;
- Plan and discuss the methodology for the Safety Audit CJCC's Project Coordinator will help facilitate;
- Discuss barriers and opportunities that will help create a successful protocol and will suit the needs of each county;
- Set dates for attending Site Visits to observe how other, previously-funded Safe Haven programs, created and are implementing their established protocols;
- Discuss topics to be covered in cross-training about domestic violence and child custody to judges, court personnel, attorneys, and advocates;
- Identify and invite representatives from the Family Violence Intervention Provider(s) in Bell-Forsyth and Northeastern Judicial Circuit, the family law bar, a judge from the Northeastern Judicial Circuit, representatives from DFCS and CPS, and local law enforcement;
- Attend OVW-sponsored training (if applicable);

**- Months 3-6:**

- Begin conducting Safety Audit and gathering data;
- Attend at least one site visit;
- Create request for training technical assistance;
- Discuss performance measures for project success and data collection on outcomes;
- Continue Consulting Committee meetings to discuss progress on audit and begin brainstorming potential protocols;
- Attend OVW-sponsored training (if applicable);

**- Months 6-9:**

- Attend remaining site visits;
- Finalize data gathering for Safety Audit and begin writing up findings;
- Begin outreach to other stakeholders to join the Consulting Committee, including: FVIP provider, DFCS, family law attorneys, law enforcement, and court personnel;
- Continue Consulting Committee meetings to discuss progress on audit and begin brainstorming potential protocols;
- Attend OVW-sponsored training (if applicable);
- Draft data collection and reporting instrument for performance measures;

**- Months 9-12:**

- Finalize Safety Audit findings and recommendations to begin drafting Supervised Visitation Protocols and Policies;
- Draft and finalize Supervised Visitation Center policies in accordance with Guiding Principles;

- Continue Consulting Committee meetings to discuss progress on audit and begin brainstorming potential protocols;
- Finalize data collection and reporting instrument;
- Begin preparing to implement protocols;
- Attend OVW training (if applicable).

During the planning phase SAFFT's Consulting Committee will meet in-person on a quarterly basis. Committee members will conduct conference calls every month there is not an in-person committee meeting. The Project Coordinator will work separately with SAFFT, Judge Jackson, Forsyth County Family Haven, and OVW technical assistance providers to coordinate training and site visits.

In the second and third years of the grant period, Consulting Committee members will convene in person meetings and/ or conference calls on a bimonthly basis to discuss any challenges with project implementation, improve the protocols where pitfalls arise, and provide each other with technical assistance about difficulties the parties may encounter during protocol implementation. Consulting Committee members will also participate in any ongoing OVW-sponsored training during that time period. The Consulting Committee will aim to provide training and education to the Superior Court judges (4 Bell-Forsyth, 8 Northeastern Superior Court), court personnel, family law attorneys, and advocates in years 2 and 3 of the implementation phase. Below is a rough outline of the ongoing activities in years 2 and 3 of the implementation phase:

- Provide cross-training for project partners about the intersection between domestic violence and child custody. Training will also include sessions for supervised visitation

monitors about respectful interactions with batterers (hopefully provided through the FVIP) and the dynamics of post-separation battering and domestic violence;

- Finalize and implement protocols for responding to child custody cases where domestic violence is a factor;
- Hire and train additional, bilingual supervised visitation monitor for SAFFT, and a Domestic Violence Court Liaison;
- Continue Consulting Committee meetings to discuss protocol implementation needs;
- Purchase laptop for SAFFT and supervised visitation software to track visits and incidents;
- Contract with security officers;
- Start scheduling between 10-15 new cases per month for domestic violence supervised visitation at SAFFT;
- Continue quarterly meetings to discuss protocol implementation and any amendments the protocol may need;
- Begin referring domestic violence clients to local domestic violence providers and conduct client follow-up;
- Attend OVW-sponsored training.

### **C. Who Will Implement the Project**

CJCC will assign a Project Coordinator to participate in the Consulting Committee, attend Site Visits, provide technical assistance to the local project with research about best practices, and to attend all OVW-mandated training. CJCC will also provide fiscal management for the Safe Havens grant and will approve and monitor expenses and budget implementation. Other services CJCC will offer its local partners include: use of the teleconference line for monthly and

quarterly Consulting Committee calls, use of meeting space, and coordination between project partners and other CJCC-funded programs in the area. The Project Coordinator will also be charged with guiding the Safety Audit process.

SAFFT Family Visitation and Community Center will be responsible for setting the pace and agenda for project planning and implementation. SAFFT will lead the effort in developing protocols in both the court system and for supervised visitation in its center and supervised exchanges. The Program Director will lead and participate in all Planning Phase Meetings. SAFFT will also hire appropriate staff to oversee the implementation of the protocols the community develops, as well as, visitation monitoring. This person is designated as the Domestic Violence Visitation Court Liaison in the attached budget. The person will be charged with tracking all visiting parties' compliance with the terms of the supervised visitation and ensuring that the victims referred to the center are connected with their local domestic violence service provider. The Domestic Violence Court Liaison will also follow-up with families after their visits to ensure that the victim and her children continue to feel safe and that any battering behaviors in which the abuser engages are addressed. Additionally, the liaison will be charged with conducting orientations for each family when visits or exchanges initiate. The liaison will also conduct orientations for Dawson County families at the satellite location mentioned previously and will monitor visits as well as exchanges there. Finally, the liaison will coordinate with both the domestic violence service providers partnered on this grant and local FVIPS to provide training for monitors and center staff about the dynamics of battering, domestic violence, and interacting with batterers. The SAFFT Program Director will also spearhead outreach efforts to potential members of the Consulting Committee including to the potential Family Violence Intervention Provider, family law attorneys, DFCS, CPS and law enforcement. SAFFT already

has a relationship with DFCS and CPS in Forsyth County because of the visitation services the agency provides in child abuse and neglect cases. The goal of reaching DFCS and CPS is to have representatives from either Dawson County on the Consulting Committee as well.

Judge Jackson will represent the judiciary on the Consulting Committee and be the liaison between the visitation center, the Committee and the other Superior Court judges in the Bell-Forsyth circuit. Additionally, Judge Jackson will help guide the creation of protocols for referring domestic violence and child custody cases for visitation, reporting on supervised visitation compliance to the courts, and improving court procedures to ensure that the victim's safety and the best interests of the child are at the core of all custody decisions in domestic violence cases. It is the desire of the proposed Committee members that the judge's credibility in the court system will also help bring judges from the Northeastern circuit to join the Consulting Committee. Finally, Judge Jackson will provide feedback on the kinds of education and training judges on the Superior Court may need.

Forsyth County Family Haven is the domestic violence service provider and shelter located in the same county as SAFFT visitation and community center. The shelter's expertise in domestic violence issues and the particular dangers victims face during separation will be integral to develop SAFFT's safety and visitation protocols. An outreach advocate who will work for Family Haven is also included in the budget to ensure that the agency is prepared to provide services to victims referred to the agency from SAFFT and to be present for victims during the orientation process. CJCC expects that this person will help victims referred for services follow-up with such issues as obtaining social services, referrals to counseling or support groups for domestic violence victims, crisis intervention and safety planning. The

Executive Director or Director of Programs at the Family Haven will participate on the Consulting Committee meetings. Training for SAFFT staff will be coordinated through them.

Similarly, a Victim Advocate for NOA's Ark in Dawson County is also included in the budget to be present during a victim's orientation to the visitation or exchange services in Dawson County, and to connect the victim to necessary support. NOA's Ark's advocate will help connect the victim, and her children if necessary, to counseling, safety planning, or other social services the victim might need. As part of this person's duties on this grant, they will also attend the Consulting Committee meetings. Both the Family Haven and NOA's Ark victim advocates will be integral parts of the Safety Audit process and to providing feedback about the protocols developed for supervised visitation and exchanges in Dawson and Forsyth counties.

#### **D. Sustainability Plan**

SAFFT currently receives PSSF funding through the State of Georgia Department of Human Services to provide visitation services in cases of child abuse and neglect. Prior to receiving that grant, the organization conducted and continues to conduct three to four fundraisers per year, applies for local and state grants, and sustains an ongoing fundraiser for their facility that allows donors to take ownership of the program by providing funds and having bricks engraved with their family name and contribution on the building's façade. Fundraisers and private donations comprise approximately 50% of the organization's budget. SAFFT intends to receive additional funding through a contract that is under negotiation with the local Department of Family and Children Services. Moreover, SAFFT also receives quarterly contributions for services the organization provides to the juvenile court.

With respect to the domestic violence and child custody visitation services, SAFFT already had a fee structure in place, which will be revised according to the information learned

through the site visits and OVW-mandated training. The income from this fee structure is currently sufficient to maintain the domestic violence and child custody visitation services the organization is providing. These fees currently cover the hourly cost of providing a monitor and a small portion of the organization's operations. The fee structure is \$50 for the initial visit and \$25 for each subsequent visit. The organization provides a sliding scale for indigent clients, though this has not been a factor thus far because of the wealth concentrated in Forsyth County, where the median household income is \$88,040.00. When services are expanded for Dawson County, the median incomes in these regions (\$51,222.00, respectively), will be taken into account. The ultimate goal in designing and implementing the sliding scale fee structure is to provide sufficient income to cover the ongoing costs of providing supervised visitation and/or exchanges in domestic violence and child custody cases in both Forsyth and Dawson counties. Finally, SAFFT may also choose to apply for VOCA funds when CJCC releases a request for proposals for competitive applications in 2012. CJCC's experience with this project will equip staff to evaluate supervised visitation projects submitted as part of competitive applications in the future.