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Offices located in Aitkin, Bemidji,  
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[www.supportwithinreach.org](http://www.supportwithinreach.org)

2 2nd Street NW  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Dear Aitkin County Commissioners,

Support Within Reach, respectfully requests a time slot at your June 23<sup>rd</sup> board meeting. At this meeting we would like to have about 20 minutes of your time to give you an update of our organization and how we are helping victims of sexual violence in the Aitkin County area.

**Brief History:** Support Within Reach (SWR) began its work in Aitkin County in 2010 when we merged with Sexual Assault Services for Aitkin County who was struggling financially. Later that same year, the organization went through a name change in order to create a new name more inclusive to our entire service area. In January 2014, we were asked to help Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, and Clearwater Counties (SAP). In the year prior, SAP's longtime Executive Director had passed away after several years battling cancer and they were experiencing cash flow issues. The organization would not have been able to keep their doors open in the next few months without assistance. The Board of Directors of the both organizations decided to merge the two organizations with the surviving entity and the new name of the organization would be Support Within Reach. The newly merged organization is now over a year old. Our budget and cash flow is strong. We are the largest stand-alone sexual violence organization in the state of Minnesota and the second oldest sexual violence program.

SWR is a sexual violence resource and advocacy center that provides services in a six county area of north/central Minnesota (District One – Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, and Hubbard Counties and District Two – Aitkin and Itasca Counties). SWR is the sole organization that is specifically mobilizing around the wide-spread public health issue of sexual violence in Aitkin County. Services are provided to women, children, and men who

are primary victims (the actual victim) or secondary victims (support person to the victim) of sexual violence. Sexual violence includes child sexual abuse (molestation and incest), stranger/non-stranger sexual assault/rape, date acquaintance rape, intimate partner sexual violence, drug facilitated sexual assault, sexual harassment, and exposing/obscene phone calls, sexual exploitation, and internet related crimes/child pornography, and sexual exploitation /trafficking. Sexual violence can occur in the context of family settings as well as dating, personal relationships, and with strangers.

SWR provides services to women, children and men who have experienced sexual violence directly or indirectly. Our services are available 24 hours a day. Sexual violence advocates are able to provide options and information related to their experience, provide a listen ear to what they are going through and offer emotional support. Our services are free and confidential.

### **Services SWR Provides:**

#### **Victim Support & Advocacy Services**

- 24 hour Crisis Line
- Basic One on One Peer Counseling
- Follow-up Support
- Medical Accompaniment to Sexual Assault Examinations
- Law Enforcement Advocacy through the reporting process
- Counseling Prosecution Advocacy through the lengthy court process
- Support Groups
- Outreach to Outlying Areas

#### **Community Action Volunteer Program**

- Accepts Volunteers and Interns

#### **System Change Program**

- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (Itasca Only)
- Sexual Assault Multi-Disciplinary Act Response Team

#### **Prevention Education and Awareness Program**

- Pre-school/Daycare-4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Middle/High School
- Chemically Dependent, Developmentally Disabled, Youth at Risk
- Professional Development related issues surrounding sexual violence
- Community Awareness
- Other programs available upon request.

**SWR Aitkin County 2014 Client Stats**

- New Primary Clients-4
- Ongoing Primary Clients-11
- New Secondary Clients -6
- Ongoing Secondary Clients-9
- Primary Clients Pervious Year-8
- Secondary Clients Pervious Year -3

**Total Number of Clients-23**

Thank you,

*Melissa Canfield*

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Melissa Canfield  
Sexual Violence Coordinator

*Amanda Ysen*

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Amanda Ysen  
Executive Director