

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

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1-8-02

DATE: JANUARY 3, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR GRANT SUBMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE OF FEMA GRANT FUNDS FOR PROJECT RESILIENCE AND STATE PASS THROUGH OF SAMHSA GRANT TO FUND ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD'S RESPONSE TO THE FALLOUT OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

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**ISSUE:** City Council consideration of the Alexandria Community Services Board's application through the State Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services for funds available for the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program funded and administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and for funds available through the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- 1) Authorize the grant submission of \$421,601 in FEMA funds to support 39 weeks of continued crisis counseling services provided by 15 (10 full time equivalents) temporary outreach workers;
- 2) Authorize the receipt of \$249,423 in SAMHSA funds to expand the provision of professional emergency mental health services, including critical incident stress management to first responders and other individuals and groups affected by terrorism and subsequent events, and for prevention services to reduce substance abuse and suicide attempts expected to increase as a result of the kind of community trauma experienced this fall<sup>1</sup>. These funds would support three temporary professional full time equivalent positions (including salary and benefits) for a period of one year; and
- 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute all documents that may be required.

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<sup>1</sup>Based on the experience of the Oklahoma City bombing, mental health professionals have indicated that there is increased risk in the community for such reactions to trauma.

It should be noted that these grant-funded positions would terminate upon the expiration of the grants. The individuals who are to fill these positions would be notified of this condition of employment at the time they are hired, and would sign an agreement of understanding with regard to this condition. There are no funds available in the City budget to continue these activities once the grant funds are expended.

**BACKGROUND:** After the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, the Northern Virginia region was declared a disaster area on September 21. The State Mental Health Disaster Coordinator invited the five Northern Virginia Community Services Boards (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax-Falls Church, Loudoun, and Prince William) to prepare requests for funding to enhance crisis counseling services to respond to the aftermath of the attacks. Alexandria applied for an Immediate Services Grant (ISP) of \$124,000 which was approved for a 60 day period, and Alexandria's crisis counseling project was named Project Resilience. Project Resilience involved the temporary hiring of fifteen outreach workers indigenous to the community and selected for their experience providing outreach. After intensive training, the outreach workers began providing educational and counseling services to individuals, groups and families under the supervision of a clinical social worker skilled in working with trauma.

Attachment 1 provides a brief status report on Project Resilience that summarizes the group and individual contacts that have been made through December 8, 2001.

**DISCUSSION: FEMA Funding for crisis counseling and outreach** - The award of the Individual Services Program grant for Project Resilience made Alexandria eligible to submit a Regular Services Grant through FEMA that would fund the continuation of Project Resilience for another nine months. The Alexandria Community Services Board at its November 1 meeting authorized the submission of the continuation grant, which was due to the state on November 21. The continuation grant requests \$421,601 to maintain crisis counseling efforts over the next nine months, a period of time that experts project will be a very difficult time for the community. The grant is restrictive in that it limits the types of activities funded to individual and group crisis counseling services, education services and referrals. The FEMA grant specifically will not provide funds for traditional mental health or substance abuse services to existing or new consumers.

The Board plans to provide the following continued services with the help of the temporary Project Resilience outreach staff:

**Individual and Group Crisis Counseling Services:** to assist disaster survivors and citizens touched by the disaster to understand what happened, their current situation and reactions, address their needs for support and other services, linking with others who may be able to help them;

**Education Services:** to present Project Resilience resource information on dealing with stress and related topics in various media outlets; and

Referrals: to ensure that those who may require long-term, more formal mental health care beyond the scope of the Project Resilience are linked to a licensed mental health professional.

SAMHSA Funding for licensed therapist mental health services - The State Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services received a grant from SAMHSA to do a needs assessment of the terrorism-related mental health needs of Northern Virginians. As a result of the outcome of this study, Alexandria was awarded \$249,423 to hire three full-time licensed therapists for a period of one year (including salary and benefits). This funding will be used to provide the following:

An emergency services worker to perform mobile crisis intervention services to adults, children and adolescents experiencing psychiatric, behavioral, and/or substance abuse related emergencies;

A critical incidence stress management worker to perform debriefings of first responders, other community workers, and any citizen who requires this level of targeted intervention to avoid post-traumatic stress disorder; and

A licensed therapist skilled in substance abuse prevention who will provide support and early intervention services to children, adolescents and adults.

These services may also be contracted through private providers that would be reimbursed with the grant funding. No local match is required for this federal grant.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Receipt of \$671,024 in combined federal funds (no city match required). It should be noted that there are no monies available in the City budget to continue these activities once the grant funds are expended. The grant-funded positions would terminate upon expiration of the grant, and the individuals who fill these positions would be notified of this condition of employment.

**ATTACHMENT:** 1. Alexandria Project Resilience Status Report, October 28, 2001 - December 8, 2001

**STAFF:**

William L. Claiborn, Ph.D., Director, Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse

Deborah Warren, DCSW, Director of Consultation and Education, Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse

**Alexandria Project Resilience  
October 28, 2001 thru December 8, 2001**

<b>Resource for client in need</b>	<b>Number of Referrals to Identified Resource</b>
Within Project Resilience	<b>42</b>
Other Disaster Agencies	<b>6</b>
Longer Term Mental Health Services	<b>9</b>
Community Services	<b>30</b>
Other/Not reported	<b>31</b>
Referral accepted	<b>113</b>
Referral declined	<b>5</b>

<b>GROUP CONTACTS</b>	
<b>Group Crisis Counseling (Support group focusing on the needs of the individuals involved)</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
After Mass Coffee Brunch	<b>40</b>
Counseling/Ed (Women's Recovery House)	<b>7</b>
Rec Program (John Adams Elementary)	<b>45</b>
Residential (MR Group Home/Linden)	<b>10</b>
Rec Program (Hammond Middle)	<b>40</b>
After Mass Brunch (St. Joseph's Church)	<b>4</b>
Child Care Providers (Arlandria)	<b>12</b>
Residential (Randolph G.H.)	<b>8</b>
MR Group House	<b>19</b>
African American Group (Arlandria)	<b>10</b>
Counseling (Our Lady of Lourdes)	<b>12</b>
St. Joseph's	<b>5</b>
Play Group (Ramsey Recreation Center)	<b>15</b>
Private Residence	<b>15</b>
After Mass Brunch (St. Rita's)	<b>8</b>
School Program (McArthur Elementary)	<b>5</b>
Expecting Mothers (Casey Clinic)	<b>9</b>
Family Group (Arlandria)	<b>3</b>
After School Program (John Adams)	<b>40</b>
Residence (Bellefonte Group Home)	<b>9</b>
MH Group Home	<b>10</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>326</b>

**Alexandria Project Resilience**  
**October 28, 2001 thru December 8, 2001**

<b>Group Educational Services</b> (General psychoeducational information presented to community forums/groups)	<b>Number of Participants</b>
ESL Classes	189
Mt. Vernon School Faculty	80
T.C. Williams H.S. (Guidance Counselors)	20
Cora Kelly Day Care	5
Charles Houston Day Care	6
Hospital Clinic (play group)	15
Family Center (Arlandria)	4
Sudanese Artists Group	5
Community Neighborhood Groups	20
School (Teacher/Staff/Parents)	40
Child Care Providers	53
Charles Houston Recreation Center	16
Mt. Vernon Recreation Center	45
Afghan Community Group	8
Patrick Henry Recreation Center	3
Mt. Vernon Recreation Center	1
Virginia Employment Commission	14
T.C. Williams H.S. Students	8
Sudanese Community Groups	419
William Ramsey Recreation Center	141
Gardeners Meeting at Lee Center	10
Ethiopian Community Group	18
T.C. Williams H.S. Middle Eastern Student Association	17
Casey Clinic: Expectant Mothers Group	9
Boy Scouts	18
T.C. Williams H.S. Girls Group	5
Essex House	15
N.J. Lee Recreation Center	25
Alexandria Women in Business	15
Beyond Behaviors Staff	7
Grief Education Fire/Police & Families	12
Jobless Group	24
Arab Community Soccer Teams	24
Arab Community Shop Owners	14
George Mason After School Program	2
Sistah Supper Club (Women's Club)	5
St. Joseph's Church	7
Barrett Library	30
Good Shepherd Catholic Community	100
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>1,449</b>
<b>Individual Educational Services</b> (Occurs when the outreach worker briefly discusses educational information with a disaster survivor.)	<b>Number of Contacts Total</b>
In-person brief contact:	1,483
Telephone contact:	449

<b>Material Distribution (Totals)</b>	
Material left in public places	4,453
Material handed to people with no further interaction	4,826
Material handed to people followed by a brief discussion of the material	6,976

**Alexandria Project Resilience**  
**Reactions Identified During Individual Crisis Counseling Contacts**  
**Dates Reflected: October 28 through December 8, 2001**

<b>Behavioral</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Aggression	6	Sadness Numb, Disconnected	102 22
Excessive Activity Level	38	Irritability/Anger	52
Apathy/Decreased Energy Level		Despair, Hopelessness	24
Isolation/Withdrawal	17	Guilt/Self-Doubt	9
Hyper vigilance	21	Mood Swings	
Reluctance to Leave Home	12	Preoccupation with Disaster, Safety	
Drug, alcohol, Prescription abuse	5	Anxious/fearful	71
<b>Physical</b>		<b>Cognitive</b>	
Headaches	18	Confusion	
Gastrointestinal Problems	34	Recurring Dreams/Nightmares	18
Sleep Disturbances	44	Lack of Concentration	48
Memory Problems		Difficulty Making Decisions	13
Appetite Changes	8	Questioning Spiritual Beliefs	
Worsening of Chronic Conditions	14	Preoccupation with Finding jobs	
Fatigue/Exhaustion	16	Suicide attempts	1
Other		Intrusive thoughts	4

**Alexandria Project Resilience  
Individual Crisis Counseling Contacts**

**(A contact is reported if the outreach worker assists the disaster survivor to understand their current situation & their reactions to the disaster.)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>10/28 -11/3</b>	<b>11/4 -11/10</b>	<b>11/11 - 11/17</b>	<b>11/18 - 11/24</b>	<b>11/24 - 12/1</b>	<b>2/2 - 12/8</b>	<b>10/28 - 12/8</b>
Male	3	8	14	10	15	7	<b>57</b>
Female	31	25	17	12	37	29	<b>151</b>
<b>Age</b>							
Preschool (0-5)			1				
Childhood (6-11)		2			2		<b>4</b>
Preadolescent/ (12-17)		3	3	5	6	3	<b>20</b>
Adult (18-64)	23	20	22	10	37	30	<b>142</b>
Older Adult (64+)	10	3	9	8	5	3	<b>38</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>							
White	1	3	3	1	2	2	<b>12</b>
Hispanic Origin	21	13	15	8	34	13	<b>104</b>
African American/Black	3	12	8	10	13	11	<b>57</b>
American Indian/Alaska Native							
Other	7	5	2	1	2	10	<b>27</b>
Don't know					3		<b>3</b>
<b>Language</b>							
English	3	18	17	13	14	11	<b>76</b>
Spanish	22	10	7	8	27	20	<b>94</b>
American Sign Language							
Others	8	4	11	1	3	5	<b>32</b>