

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2011—
June 30, 2012



Letter from the Executive Director

Every year as we reflect on the previous twelve months, Breaking Free seems to accomplish a little more than we did the previous year in our work to end the sexual exploitation of women and girls. Although we may not be able to end sexual exploitation during our lifetime, it is our continued hope that drives us to do the work that we do so that our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren will never experience the horrors of being sex trafficked in their lifetime.

We can hardly believe it has been nearly sixteen years since our doors opened in 1996. We continue to be blessed by the generosity of our loyal supporters and funders throughout the local community and nation. We cannot do the work that we do without all of you. This past year has been filled with both tremendous blessings and expansion activity. Specifically, we have experienced a nearly 10% increase in the need for our services, which tells us that human trafficking is expanding throughout the state of MN and that now more than ever, we need the support of the community and partners to continue to combat sex trafficking in our state.

Thank you for your prayers, time, donations, and financial support, all of which are vital to the sustainability of our programs. Thank you also for taking the time to read though the enclosed information regarding the success we have had in our 2011/12 fiscal year. While we have made great progress, we realize there is still a great deal of work to be done. It is with you that we stand up against this injustice and collectively give voice to the millions of lost and voiceless victims still waiting to be rescued from their oppressors.

One of the foundational values that Breaking Free works to instill in the women and girls that we serve is that ***they are worth saving***. It is my hope that you will join us in this fight as we continue to let the survivors of this horrific crime know that they are worth saving and tell the world ***that no one deserves to be bought, sold or traded at any price.***

Sincerely,

Vednita Carter
Founder & Executive Director



Breaking Free, Inc. was established in October 1996, by Founder and Executive Director, Vednita Carter, as a non-profit 501c3 organization serving women and girls involved in systems of abuse and commercial sexual exploitation. While based in African American culture, Breaking Free is committed to working with diverse populations of sexually exploited women and girls. Its headquarters is in Saint Paul, MN with two satellite offices in Minneapolis and Rochester, MN. Over the last 16 years, Breaking Free has served more than 5,500 clients and reached over 22,000 individuals via street outreach, while systematically growing its programming to embrace a full continuum of care including; advocacy, education, permanent and transitional housing, life/job skills, criminal justice advocacy and public policy programs that educate the community, raise awareness and decrease demand for commercial sex.

Mission:

To educate and provide services to women/girls who have been victims of abuse and commercial sexual exploitation and need assistance escaping violence in their lives.

Our Overall Goal:

To improve the quality of life of women and girls leaving systems of violence by assisting them to assume responsibility over their own lives and to function as actively and independently in society as possible to achieve self-sufficiency

Breaking Free strives to empower women to choose healthy, self-sufficient lifestyles. Our other fundamental goals include but are not limited to:

- Provide education, crisis **intervention**, and advocacy to sex trafficked women and girls
- **Prevention**- Decrease their exposure to and involvement in systems of violence (i.e. sex trafficking, domestic violence, physical/ sexual/ emotional abuse, homelessness)
- Coordinate, facilitate, and connect families with community resources and services that will assist the family with increasing and **maintaining stability and family functioning**
- Provide and/or coordinate **safe, stable housing** for women/youth and their children
- Provide opportunities for **education and life skills** to prepare clients for the workforce, to enable them to move out of poverty to become self-sustaining and improve the parenting skills of mothers
- Operate within a **culturally appropriate**, age and gender-specific context realizing that women respond to other people who understand their specific culture, challenges, and family dynamic
- **Educate the community** about the effects of commercial sexual exploitation on women and girls and the negative effects on the community
- Bring change to public policy regarding the treatment of victims and the prosecution of pimps and “johns” while working to educate men about their role in this in an effort to decrease the demand for sexual services to **decrease the demand for sexual services**

Breaking Free’s 2011-12 Year-end Service Numbers

Overall Stats & Demographics

- > 466 sex trafficked women and girls received advocacy and direct services
- > 65% of clients seeking services have minor children/dependents at time of intake
- > 145 youth ages 21 and under (included in the 466) received housing/supportive services/case management services
- > Of the 466 clients served, 100% were at or below the poverty line
- > 55 youth ages 18 and under received housing/supportive services/case management services (included in the 466)
- > 76% were from the Twin Cities urban area, 24% were rural MN and/or were from out of state
- > An additional 425 sexually exploited women and girls were reached and provided with resources through Street Outreach efforts in Minneapolis and St. Paul
- > 86% of the clients served suffer from some type of emotional, physical, or mental disability
- > **Breaking Free provides comprehensive case management to 99% of our clients**

Racial Demographics:

The **primary target population** that we work with is females in the age range of 14 to 59 years, all who have been exploited sexually for commercial purposes. They are predominantly African American and women of color (59%); of low socioeconomic status, most of them are single parents with an average of one to three children, and most struggle with poor mental health and chemical abuse issues.

Black	208	45%
Nat./American	11	2%
Asian	6	1%
White	189	41%
Latino	19	4%
Biracial	33	7%
	466	100%

Total 466 of which 59% are women and girls of color

Breaking Free families suffer from many complex problems related to poverty including prostitution, limited education and vocational experience, drug dependency, abuse and criminal histories often related to their abuse. Breaking Free clients are typically referred to as “hard-core clients”, many of whom have been previously unsuccessful in getting their lives back on track.

Direct Services, Education & Life/Job Skills-

A total of 15,079 individual direct services were provided to our clients including advocacy, case management, crisis intervention, education, counseling, cash assistance, housing, rental assistance, therapy, referrals, criminal justice advocacy, legal services, food/clothing assistance, and other various direct services.

- > 257 women/girls attended educational/support groups (116 in St. Paul, 68 in Minneapolis, 4 in Rochester and 69 in Ramsey County Corrections Facility)
- > 88 utilized resources and opportunities for job/life skills and higher education
- > 79 clients successfully completed the 14 week curriculum and graduated from our Sisters of Survival Program
- > 58% of court ordered women/girls have completed the required programming and have utilized Breaking Free's services
- > 57 survivors enrolled in higher education or have completed their GED
- > 69 incarcerated women and girls received access to services and education
- > 50 clients and 4 staff (former victims) accessed pro-bono legal and criminal justice services through our new Staff Attorney who provided 44 criminal justice advocacy services and 70 legal services. Another 472 criminal justice advocacy services (letter writing, communications with parole and probation etc.) by our advocates.

Public Policy & Social Change

- > 94 perpetrators attended the John School (based on number of arrests this is a 22% increase from the previous year)
- > 196 presentations were made to the community, service providers, and law enforcement, and the court system, about the issue of sex trafficking reaching 4,723 community members.
- > Breaking Free increased its reach throughout the state by partnering with new partners in law enforcement and the criminal justice system to increase referrals into our diversion programs for both victims and perpetrators.

Housing- 60-70% of our clients are in need of safe housing (youth is closer to 80-90%)

In 2011/12, we expanded our Transitional Housing Program to three scattered-site locations with capacity for 13 clients (doubling capacity in this program and partnering with City Hill Church). We were also recently awarded a new HUD grant, which will allow us to double capacity in our Permanent Housing Program to 36 independent living apartments in our upcoming 2012/13 fiscal year. This program allows clients and their children to stay as long as necessary for them to become self-sufficient. This program also includes four units dedicated to unaccompanied trafficked youth. **Breaking Free continues to be one of only a few programs in the country that provides**

transitional housing specifically designed for and dedicated to victims of sex trafficking and is the only program in the country to provide permanent supportive housing.

80 women, girls and their children resided in Breaking Free's Housing Programs

- > 37 clients and two of their children in our Transitional Housing Program
- > 21 clients and 20 of their children in our Permanent Housing Program

Other Highlights:

- > **New Services-** One of the greatest new additions to our team has been the hiring a Staff Attorney/Public Policy Manager who has developed an in-house legal services/clinic for our clients, as well as a Criminal Justice Advocacy program that has had a tremendous impact on victims involved in the criminal justice system. This program provides courtroom advocacy, education to clients about their legal rights, and judge and prosecutor/public defender training. Through the provision of criminal justice advocacy and support, sexually exploited women and girls receive fair, equal, and just treatment at every stage of the legal process. Furthermore, legal professionals are trained to identify and better advocate for victims with both criminal and civil legal needs.
- > **John School Expansion-** In the 2011/12 fiscal year, we received public endorsements of our John School Program by Ramsey County Attorney John Choi and Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom and have had several other prosecutors, public defenders, judges, and law enforcement officers commend our programs and services and increase referrals to our diversion programs. This has resulted in a 22% increase in the number men court-ordered to our program.
- > **New Office-** Breaking Free is based in St. Paul with a satellite office in Minneapolis. In March of 2012, we were invited by Olmsted County Attorney's Office/ Corrections and Rochester Police to open a satellite office in Rochester to work with law enforcement and our other collaborative partners to provide education and diversion options to both victims and perpetrators of prostitution in Olmsted County. We operate this office one day per week in Rochester, but our primary work continues to be serving local, inner-city exploited women and girls.
- > **Stakeholder Outreach-** This year Breaking Free initiated important roundtable conversations with stakeholders (law enforcement, prosecutors, and advocates) about strategies for identification, decriminalization, and diversion of victims into victim-centered services and programming, the need for a dual-approach to combating the demand (criminal sanctions and re-education through the John School), and to develop protocols for meeting community-specific needs. It was effective because it engaged local stakeholders as joint partners in the problem-solving process.

- > **The Safe Harbor Bill** was passed during the 2011 legislative session. This new law protects minor victims of sex trafficking in MN and mandates a systems response and services for girls, as well as, increases fines and penalties for traffickers and perpetrators who purchase minors for sex. Breaking Free played an instrumental role in working with our partners to provide survivor testimony and expert input on the development of this policy change.

Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers:

Breaking Free, Inc. has a Governing Board of six diverse directors from varying professional backgrounds and areas of expertise. During this past year, our board has successfully balanced our budget and provided strategic leadership and financial oversight that has taken our organization to a new level of stability that sets us up for a more sustainable future. In 2011/12 Breaking Free's staff consisted of seven full-time employees, three part-time support staff, and many dedicated interns and volunteers. The majority of the staff are also survivors of sex trafficking, which gives them a unique perspective and ability to relate with the women and girls we serve that other non-survivor led programs lack. Many (25+) volunteers actively contribute to services at Breaking Free, each providing 10-20 hours of service per month; and many more participate on monthly basis, as well as help with Breaking Free fundraisers and events. Overall, we have had over 200 volunteers contribute more than a combined 4500 hours worth of time to our programs.

Breaking Free understands that to address a complex issue such as the elements of sex trafficking, collaboration with other overlapping organizations and programs is necessary, in particular culturally specific programs. We work with many different service providers (over 45), City/County Attorney's Offices, and other professionals throughout the community. Some of the key organizations collaborated with are:

- > **RESOURCE, Inc. Recovery Resource Center**

Breaking Free maintains a contract with Resource Incorporated, Chemical Dependency Treatment Center, located in Minneapolis MN. Women in need of chemical dependency treatment and/or continuing care are referred from Breaking Free to Resource and provided short term/long term treatment and continuing care depending on their need. In addition, a weekly chemical health/relapse prevention group is facilitated on site at Breaking Free.

- > **St. Paul Police Department, City Attorney's Office**

Breaking Free works with the Saint Paul Police Department, the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, the City of Saint Paul Attorney's Office and the court system to advocate for prostituted women and children's rights within the system.

- > **City Hill Fellowship Church**

Breaking Free works closely with City Hill Church who has purposed a home to Breaking Free and assists to provide volunteer support and donations through the Breaking Free Transitional "House of Hope" Program Eden Prairie.

- > **The MN Statewide Human Trafficking (HTTF) Task Force and Gerald Vick Task Force**

Breaking Free has been a member and instrumental voice on both Task Forces and co- chairs the statewide MN HHTF.

- > **The Women's Foundation- MN Girls Are Not For Sale Campaign**

Breaking Free has a long-standing relationships with the Women's' Foundation and has had an instrumental in its new initiative to end the commercial sexual exploitation of minors in MN.

- > **Other Partnerships Include:**

FBI/ICE, Ramsey County Attorney's Office/Corrections/Probation, Olmsted County Attorney's Office/Corrections/Probation, St. Paul Police, Rochester Police, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center Police, Minneapolis Police, and Bloomington Police. All of these partners work with Breaking Free on trainings, different criminal justice issues, and referrals into our diversion programs.

2011/12 Major Funders

Dick and Joyce McFarland Family Foundation

HBG/PAK Properties

Higher Standards

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Karon Family Foundation

March Family Foundation

Mary Alphonse Bradley Fund

MN Office of Justice Program

Nathan Cummings Foundation

North Heights Church

Office of Violence Against Women

Otto Bremer Foundation

Ramsey County

Ramsey County Bar Foundation

Rochester Area Foundation

Scott Equipment Company

Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet

Soroptomist International

The Kinney Family Foundation

The Noreen Charitable Trust

The Patrick & Aimee Butler Foundation

The Rochester Foundation

WCA Foundation

Wells Fargo Community Funding Council

Women of African Decent Giving Circle

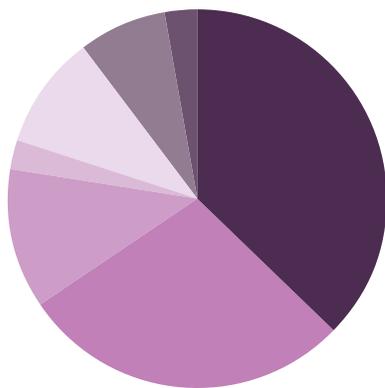
Women of Influence Giving Circle

Women's Foundation of MN/MN Girls Are Not For Sale Campaign

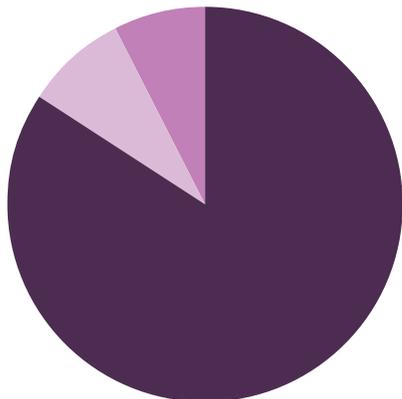
Zonta International

Funding Report:

Breaking Free maintains a vigorous fundraising strategy including federal, state, and local contracts, government grants, private foundation grants, individual donor campaigns, and various fundraisers and events throughout the year. The agency takes the funding of its programming most seriously and continues to diversify its revenue sources. Breaking Free has also increased its earned income revenue by creating two annual fundraising events, increasing its presentation and speaking fees, increasing the fee for perpetrators to attend the “John School”, and by developing the Breaking Free Boutique, a new self-sustaining program that teaches clients how to produce and sell art, jewelry, and other small items, as well as sell the items through an e-commerce store and events. *(Full financial reports are available upon request)*



Government Grants	321,146	37.3%
Private Grants	243,853	28.3%
Individual Donations	102,290	11.9%
Events	23,612	2.7%
Earned Income	82,830	9.6%
In-Kind	64,073	7.5%
Other	23,216	2.7%
Total	861,020	100%



Program Expenses	589,327	84.3%
Management & General	58,755	8.4%
Fundraising	51,153	7.3%
Total	699,235	100%

Thank you to our many supporters,
donors and foundations.

YOU CAN HELP WOMEN AND GIRLS BREAK FREE

Sponsor-make a monetary donation
(monthly or 1 time)

Donate-food, furniture, gift cards

Volunteer- your time or services

Invite-ask us to speak to your organization,
school, or church

Educate-host an awareness event or goods drive

Shop- at our on-line boutique or host a party