

Serving Children and Adolescents In Need, Inc. Sexual Assault Services & Information

Volunteer Information

MISSION

The goal of the Sexual Assault Services and Information program is to ensure that there is minimal trauma added to the victim when going through the criminal justice system by providing emotional support during hospital examinations, police interrogations, and court accompaniment.

If a victim is provided with some type of support, expected recovery will be swifter. Many times a victim and their families are unsure of their options, and our program will assist them throughout the case.

There is a volunteer available by calling our hotline pager – 790-2041.

In order to insure our safety, we do not respond to crisis calls at a home unless a peace officer is present.

VOLUNTEER SCREENING

As a SASI program volunteer, you will be dealing with persons going through a very difficult period in their life. We are looking for volunteers who have both the emotional stability to help, as well as a sincere interest in people and the helping process. The screening process is a mutual selection process in which the agency observes the trainee to ascertain that (s)he will be appropriately suited for this type of activity as well as giving the applicant time to evaluate SCAN, Inc. as a place to invest their time. The training will give you a chance to learn something new about yourself and practice in using good helping skills.

In the course of the training, applicants are provided with information about SCAN, Inc. and explained what would be expected of them. Every volunteer trainee submits an application with a staff member. They are also asked to respond to an interview questionnaire.

We are looking for volunteers who possess:

- Good verbal and listening skills
- Ability to assume responsibility
- Past crisis/volunteer experience
- A good self-concept
- Emotional stability

Initial trainers have the responsibility during training to continue the SCAN, Inc. evaluation of the trainee, and to encourage the trainee to continue his/her evaluation of SCAN, Inc. in order that questions, problems, and doubts can be addressed directly.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

1. 24-hour crisis intervention – emotional support during medical examinations, police investigations, and court proceedings.
2. Assistance with Crime Victim's Compensation applications.
3. Referral services – refer clients to the appropriate agencies for services not provided by SCAN.Inc./SASI.
4. Preventive education to the community.
5. Counseling services.

ROLE WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. The advocate DOES NOT investigate.
2. The advocate mediates during police questioning by providing emotional support when victims are asked embarrassing, sometimes frustrating questions.
3. The advocate cooperates fully with police investigation.
4. The advocate also mediates with hostile and emotional family members.

MONITORING OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be monitored periodically in the following manner:

1. By documentation turned in by the volunteer on each call (s)he has responded to. Documentation must be turned in within 5 days of completed shift, or through verbal communication with staff on the next working day.
2. Volunteer must turn in monthly timesheets.

PERSONAL BELIEFS

Under no circumstances will volunteer services be used to promote personal, political, or religious beliefs. If the client has found strength in prayer, or has had a church affiliation in the past, and suggests that it would be helpful now, it is appropriate to offer religious resources. Keep in mind that SCAN, Inc. is an information and referral agency, even with such delicate topics as abortion.

ACCOMPANIMENT

If you are meeting a sexual assault survivor face-to-face, do so in a public place, (i.e., hospital, police station). **Do not** transport a client during a crisis or meet with them in their home, to insure your safety as well as theirs. When you accompany a sexual assault survivor to the hospital, inform a back-up staff member where you will be, and that you need them to be on back-up call for you. In the event that you need to change locations (i.e. from hospital to police station) with the client, again notify the back-up staff member of the new location. When you are called out, you must inform the Program Director, for your own safety.

PUBLIC SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

The Executive Director must authorize all presentations made by volunteers or staff, and must approve the content before the presentation. All volunteers will be periodically monitored by staff.

GRIEVANCES

Problems arising from interrelationships between volunteer advocates and area agencies are referred to the Executive Director for resolution. Any official complaint as a private citizen will be labeled as such.

REFERRALS

Resources and referrals not researched by the staff must be cleared before they can be recommended to a victim. A current referral list is provided for you. SCAN, Inc. will not accept responsibility for any cost, medical or otherwise, on behalf of clients (i.e. we do not accept collect calls and we do not pay cab fares).

OBSERVATION OF CRISIS CALLS

Listening to another volunteer take a crisis call is a useful training device. It should be done only for supervisory or training purposes, and only with the permission of the volunteer or staff member who is taking the call. If the client asks if someone else is listening, use a reflecting statement such as "It sounds like you are very concerned with confidentiality". If the client states that they do not want anyone listening to their call, please discontinue doing so. Remember that our priority is client's confidentiality and safety.

COMMITMENT

Volunteers are committed to regular shifts, including weekends and holidays.

TRAINING

If a trainee misses a session of training, they must arrange to make up that session or do self-study from the Office of the Attorney General Training Manual.

MEDIA

The Executive Director is SCAN, Inc.'s official spokesperson, unless otherwise advised.

VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL GROUNDS

The activities listed below constitute a breach of professional guidelines and are grounds for possible termination as a volunteer. These activities are subject to the Executive Director's attention.

1. Giving out the name of any other volunteer.
2. Giving out home/work telephone numbers of any volunteer or staff.
3. Meeting a client in person unless cleared through staff.
4. Encouraging co-dependency, repeat callers, etc.
5. Not referring all media calls to staff.
6. Failing to participate in SCAN, Inc./SASI activities.
7. Using alcohol/drugs when on-call or on duty.
8. Breaching confidentiality.
9. Having a weapon on person during service times.
10. Personally transporting a client without prior discussion.
11. Harming a client other volunteer, or staff member, either verbally or physically.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Each SCAN, Inc. and SASI staff member and volunteer regards its primary obligation to the welfare of the SCAN, Inc. organization and the individuals it services.

Information received is revealed only after careful consideration of the circumstances and the following conditions:

- The individual poses a clear and imminent danger to self or others
- The individual is a child who has revealed abuse

Confidential information can be revealed to law enforcement and/or child protective services.

When citing case examples during trainings or educational presentations, the identity of all individuals must not be revealed, unless the individual has given written consent to have his/her identity revealed.

Ideas for the improvement of the program or the betterment of a survivor may be contributed. Information will be obtained from appropriate individuals before any ideas are implemented.

Personal opinions will be kept separate of SCAN, Inc. and SASI at all times.

A positive working relationship with all other agencies will be maintained.

Cases will never be discussed with family members, friends acquaintances, etc. If they are discussed, the staff member or volunteer may be charged with violating an individual's right to privacy, a Class C misdemeanor.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAY DISMISS A VOLUNTEER IF ANY OF THESE POLICIES ARE VIOLATED.

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and received a copy of, the above volunteer information.

Volunteer Signature

Date

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the above information with the volunteer.

SASI Program Director Signature

Date

For Staff Use

Application Received _____

Called to Schedule Interview _____

Interview Date _____