



WTCS Changes Name, Keeps Focus

Lawrence-Based Agency Now “The Willow Domestic Violence Center”

LAWRENCE, KAN. — March 15, 2010 — Domestic violence shelter and services provider Women’s Transitional Care Services today announces its new name: The Willow Domestic Violence Center.

The new name better reflects the organization’s mission: to restore the health and safety of victims of family and domestic violence. The name’s imagery was inspired by the strength and resiliency of willow trees, whose branches are known to sprout new roots, even when they have broken and fallen.

“We realized that willow trees are survivors, just like the women we serve,” Kathy Perkins, board president, said. “Not only that, but willow trees provide shelter in a storm, and so do we.”

When Women’s Transitional Care Services was founded in 1976, its mission was to serve women who were starting to live independently for the first time—often because of divorce—and who needed a safe place while rebuilding their lives and finances. But Executive Director Sarah Terwelp said the former name no longer reflected the organization’s mission.

“We certainly have evolved during the past 34 years,” said Terwelp, who just celebrated her tenth anniversary with the organization. “Our services shifted from women going through a divorce to focusing specifically on those experiencing domestic abuse. Our name simply no longer suited us, nor did it appropriately describe what we do. It was time for a change.”

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Now standing on stronger footing since last summer's financial crisis, The Willow Domestic Violence Center has refocused on increasing community awareness about its services for domestic violence survivors in Douglas, Franklin and southern Jefferson counties. The name change is one part of a larger strategic initiative by the board of directors and agency staff to enhance stability, growth and community awareness.

"This is simply one of the more visible parts of our 'fresh start' initiative for the overall long-term health of the organization," Perkins said. "Going forward, we know people will start hearing from and about us much more often—especially with opportunities to get involved, make a difference and ensure each community we serve is a safer place."

About The Willow Domestic Violence Center

Founded as Women's Transitional Care Services in 1976, The Willow Domestic Violence Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to its vision to eliminate family and domestic violence in our communities by providing safety, education and advocacy. The agency supports and assists victims of domestic violence by providing resources and safe shelter while making plans toward being safe. The Willow Domestic Violence Center can be found online at www.willowdvcenter.org.

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