

## Center For Siouxland History

Center For Siouxland (formerly the A.I.D. Center) is a non-profit human service agency located in Sioux City, Iowa. Center For Siouxland (CFS) was organized on August 1, 1975, as a cooperative effort of the Iowa Department of Social Services, United Way of Siouxland, Area Agency on Aging, and YMCA. Our mission is to “provide assistance, information, and direction by building bridges between people with needs and people with solutions.”

The agency’s first office was located at 722 Nebraska Street, in the YMCA. Initial programs included emergency financial assistance, crisis intervention, traveler’s aid, assistance to older people, and a 24-hour program of information and referral. A housing counseling program was added in early 1976.

The A.I.D. Center was incorporated in April 1977. In 1978, the agency received certification as a HUD Housing Counseling Agency. In 1979, the Senior Advocacy program, offering senior resource information, outreach, and legal service access was developed.

In 1981, the Consumer Credit Counseling Service was added, and a food pantry was formally organized. In August 1981, needing additional space, the A.I.D. Center moved to 406 5<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1982, the agency was designated as the coordinator of the new Federal Surplus Food program for low income people for five counties. CFS sponsored the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) from 1983-2014. RSVP provided volunteer opportunities such as Seniors in Schools, Meals on Wheels, food pantry assistants, and free income tax preparation for seniors age 55+ at Woodbury County non-profits. Case Management for Frail Elderly, VITA free income tax preparation, and the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program for Woodbury County were all added in 1983.

In July 1984, the Board of Directors purchased an office building at 206 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street and the agency moved once again. In 1987, the agency opened a free clothing outlet at 219 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street. In July 1988, in cooperation with the City of Sioux City, the A.I.D. Center established an Emergency Family Shelter closed on June 30, 2008, after providing temporary shelter to homeless individuals and families for 20 years. Between 1989 and 2009, the Senior Companion program provided low-income seniors with a stipend in exchange for providing assistance and friendship to homebound and/or handicapped seniors who have difficulty completing daily living tasks.

The A.I.D. Center changed its name to Center For Assistance, Information and Direction in January 1998. In May 1998, following a major capital campaign, the Board of Directors purchased an office building at 715 Douglas Street and the agency moved to our current location. In 1999, La Casa Latina became a program of CFS and located their offices in our former office building at 206 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The program assists Latino/Hispanic immigrants with becoming active, participating members of the Siouxland community. In November 2006, La Casa Latina became affiliated with the Mary Treglia Community House.

In June 2002, CFS opened Bridges West, a 22 unit (8 family and 14 single) transitional housing facility for homeless families and individuals. While at Bridges West, clients have access to supportive services such as case management, child care, health, dental, and mental health care, substance abuse counseling and treatment, and youth enrichment activities designed to help them transition into a successful

permanent housing situation. This project was unique since this was the first time that a single room occupancy transitional housing unit had been funded using Iowa Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

In June 2003, Center For Assistance, Information, and Direction (formerly the A.I.D. Center) officially changed its name to Center For Siouxland. The mission statement of CFS is “To provide assistance, information, and direction by building bridges between people with needs and people with solutions.”

In July 2004, the 2-1-1 Helpline went live. CFS’s local coordination of the 2-1-2 helpline provides the residents of 9 counties in Northwest Iowa and Dakota County in Nebraska with 24-hour information and referral services to local human services agencies as well as volunteer opportunities. In July 2012, 2-1-1 became affiliated with Siouxland Aging Services.

From March 2011 until February 2014, CFS sponsored the Siouxland Volunteer Center (SVC). The SVC served as a clearinghouse to recruit, train, and support community volunteers. The SVC mobilized people and resources to assist during times of disaster and delivered creative solutions to community problems. Additionally, the SVC Director facilitated the process for non-profits and emergency management officials to develop meaningful non-disaster volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers.

Currently, CFS is located at 715 Douglas Street and offers six different programs and services designed to meet the diverse needs of the people in Northwest Iowa, Southeast South Dakota, and Northeast Nebraska. These programs include: Bridges West Transitional Housing, Client Trust/Representative Payee Program, Consumer Credit Counseling, HUD – Certified Housing Counseling, VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), and Prescription Medication Assistance,