

Women in Crisis Center opens doors in Fairbanks

FAIRBANKS—The Women In Crisis—Counseling & Assistance Center is now providing 24-hour services to victims of rape and sexual assault.

The Center, opened in September with a grant from the Alaska Criminal Justice Planning Agency, has expanded its hours with the help of a CETA grant from the Manpower Division. Four employees' salaries are paid through the CETA program, enabling the Center to augment its volunteer program and provide additional trained counselors and advocates.

The Center offers telephone crisis counseling as well as long-term counseling for victims of rape. The staff and volunteers also serve as advocates for victims of rape who wish to report the crime to police. The advocate accompanies the victim through the criminal justice system from the point of contact, through medical examinations, investigations and court proceedings. All the services provided through the center are at no cost to the victim.

The Center was founded by the Fairbanks chapter of the National Organization for Women to deal primarily with rape and sexual assault, but has found a demand in Fairbanks to serve victims of battering as well. Since opening, the Center has received an equal number of calls from victims of rape and battering, a total of 34 calls from October 1, 1977 to December 31, 1977. Additional statistics of rapes and batterings reported to Fairbanks City Police and Alaska State Troopers

show a total of 35 rapes and 81 assaults.

To meet the needs of battered women, the Center has established two "safe homes" or private homes where women may spend a limited amount of time while deciding what to do or

while avoiding a dangerous situation at home.

To further assist victims of battering, the Fairbanks center is seeking additional state funds, primarily to provide transportation money for women in rural communities, so that they can

get to Fairbanks, or on to the Anchorage shelter if necessary.

Volunteers and staff from the Center are available to speak to interested groups and organizations about the program, and to recruit more volunteers.

For more information, inter-

ested persons can call the Center at 452-2293. The emergency number for crisis calls or rape reports is 452-RAPE (452-7273). The center is located in Room 116, 515 First Avenue in Fairbanks.