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From: Dallas Denny <aegis@gender.org>
Subject: Re: AEGIS Referral Database
Cc: Kitt Kling <AlexFox@erols.com>

Hey, Ya'll:

One of AEGIS' functions has been to maintain a database of helping professionals, members, and others. The database currently has 7200 records, of which about 3500 are those who offer some type of service-- counseling, support groups, physicians, electrologists, aestheticians, shopping sources, gay and lesbian community centers, youth groups, publishers, etc. I believe it is far and away the most comprehensive database of its type, and so should be a great resource for the potential new AEGIS/ITA organization.

This database was started in 1990. Until 1994 it was kept as lists in WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS, at which time I began transferring it into a database. It took me two years, working 30 minutes to 2 hours a day 2-4 days per week, to get everything transferred.

The database is updated daily, whenever I get a notice of change or address, see a new service provider, or when someone requests information or joins AEGIS. I make an effort to type accurately, but the database has not been spellchecked and I've never had the time to "work" it as it should be working. What it really needs is to be re-organized, which each service provider assigned a designation from a list. Gianna provided such a superstructure some years ago, but I've not yet implemented it-- because of time. Right now, there is a field for services delivered, but it is descriptive; hence, psychological care providers may be listed as psychologist, LICSt, counselor, psychiatrist, etc.

A second thing the database needs is to be kept current by contacting service providers once per year for updated information. This is another task I haven't had time to do.

A third thing needed is to have changes made to accomodate the new zip code and area code changes that have happened in the past few years. The area code changes have affected most states.

Nonetheless, the database is in pretty good shape, and as current as it can be, considering the information I have.

Jessica has spoken with Kitt Kling, who has expressed an interest in maintaining the database. She just cyberintroduced us. I'll be talking with Kitt about the database. I think he has some ideas about which program to use (fortunately, it won't be difficult to transfer the data, as RapidFile has a variety of export formats).

We'll also be consulting with Gwen Smith about putting referral info on the WWW. I know that the web supports databases; it may be that we can keep the database on the web, with access given only to those charged with updating it, and invisible to everyone else; info for the public could be exported