



Colorado State Employee Assistance Program

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Program Report  
Fiscal Year 2007–2008

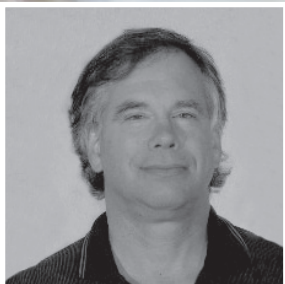


*Good Government Starts Here*



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*C-SEAP provides a diverse array of services based in the behavioral sciences integrating organizational and individual assistance to optimize the productivity, safety, and well being of the Colorado state workforce.*

# Introduction

The Colorado State Employee Assistance Program, or C-SEAP, is the Department of Personnel and Administration's administered program under statutory authorization CRS 24-50-604. C-SEAP provides two primary services within Colorado State government: Individual Assistance (IA) and Organizational Assistance (OA).

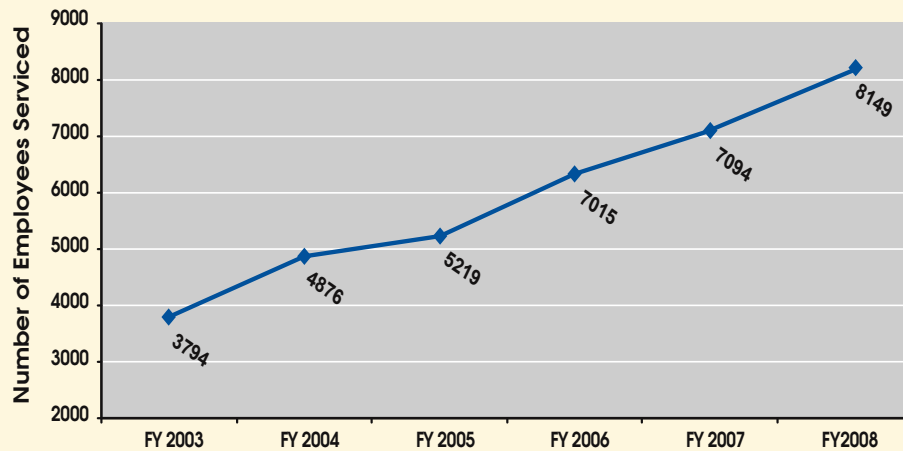
For individual state employees, IA services are designed to maintain and strengthen mental health and productivity through assessment, short-term counseling, and referral. IA addresses work-related problems that affect job performance; personal problems to help reduce the impact these problems have on the employee, the workplace, and coworkers; work/life balance; and personal/career goal attainment.

OA provides a system-wide approach to the management of behavioral risk through departmental consultation and problem solving regarding workplace conflict, violence risk, poor communication, sexual harassment, and many other workplace issues. OA services also address employee/departmental performance improvement and skills development. Tools offered to supervisors, managers, and human resource/risk management professionals include employee referral, mediation, coaching, facilitated groups, organizational development, ongoing workshops/training, and crisis intervention.

# 2008 Accomplishments

C-SEAP, as in years past, had an enormously busy year in 2008 with 1,368 individual employees and 145 family members seen (4,618 total contacts) regarding a wide range of personal and work-related concerns. Organizational Assistance was equally as busy with a total of 6,636 employees reached: 637 workplace consultations for managers, supervisors, and HR/RM professionals; group consultations involving 178 managers, supervisors, and HR/RM professionals; training for 4,930 employees in Anger Education, Dealing with Difficult Customers, Conflict/Stress Management, Coping with Change, Workplace Violence Prevention, Emotional Intelligence, C-SEAP Orientation, and other topics; mediation for 149 employees; and crisis intervention for 187 employees. Workplace consultations led to on-site facilitated groups involving 244 employees and on-site organizational development interventions involving 311 employees. Overall, program utilization increased by 15% (from 7,094 in FY07 to 8,149 in FY08).

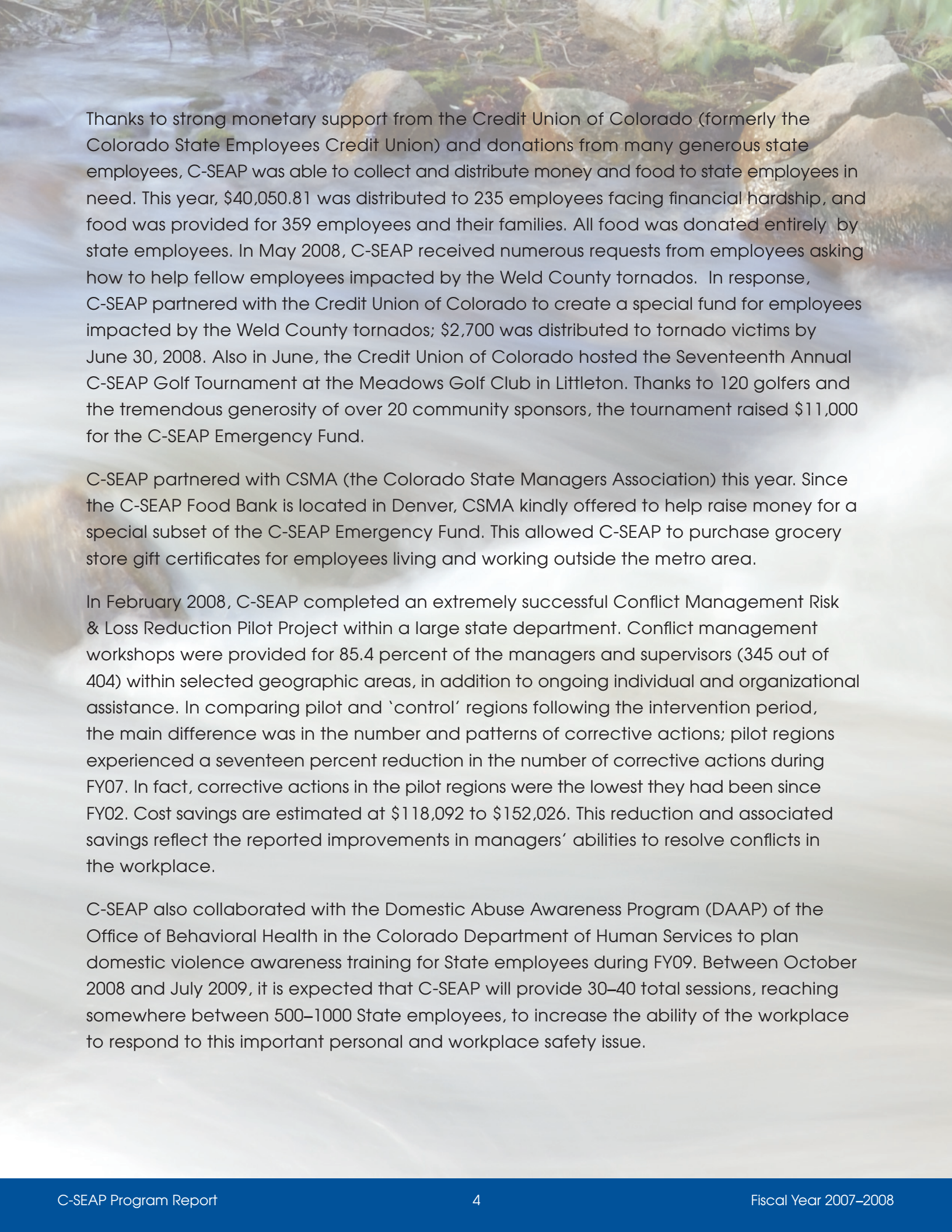
## Total Utilization



The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that employers save anywhere from \$5 to \$16 for every dollar they invest in an EAP. Even a midrange estimate of \$10.50 for every dollar invested in C-SEAP during FY07–08 indicates a cost avoidance to the State of \$5,572,255 in liability employment lawsuits, worker’s compensation claims, absenteeism and accidents, lost productivity, increased use of medical and insurance benefits, and training/recruitment/replacement costs. The approximate cost per employee to operate C-SEAP was \$7.58, well below the national annual mean cost of \$20.29 for employers with over 5,000 employees.

(Source: Employee Assistance Professional Association, Arlington, VA)





Thanks to strong monetary support from the Credit Union of Colorado (formerly the Colorado State Employees Credit Union) and donations from many generous state employees, C-SEAP was able to collect and distribute money and food to state employees in need. This year, \$40,050.81 was distributed to 235 employees facing financial hardship, and food was provided for 359 employees and their families. All food was donated entirely by state employees. In May 2008, C-SEAP received numerous requests from employees asking how to help fellow employees impacted by the Weld County tornados. In response, C-SEAP partnered with the Credit Union of Colorado to create a special fund for employees impacted by the Weld County tornados; \$2,700 was distributed to tornado victims by June 30, 2008. Also in June, the Credit Union of Colorado hosted the Seventeenth Annual C-SEAP Golf Tournament at the Meadows Golf Club in Littleton. Thanks to 120 golfers and the tremendous generosity of over 20 community sponsors, the tournament raised \$11,000 for the C-SEAP Emergency Fund.

C-SEAP partnered with CSMA (the Colorado State Managers Association) this year. Since the C-SEAP Food Bank is located in Denver, CSMA kindly offered to help raise money for a special subset of the C-SEAP Emergency Fund. This allowed C-SEAP to purchase grocery store gift certificates for employees living and working outside the metro area.

In February 2008, C-SEAP completed an extremely successful Conflict Management Risk & Loss Reduction Pilot Project within a large state department. Conflict management workshops were provided for 85.4 percent of the managers and supervisors (345 out of 404) within selected geographic areas, in addition to ongoing individual and organizational assistance. In comparing pilot and 'control' regions following the intervention period, the main difference was in the number and patterns of corrective actions; pilot regions experienced a seventeen percent reduction in the number of corrective actions during FY07. In fact, corrective actions in the pilot regions were the lowest they had been since FY02. Cost savings are estimated at \$118,092 to \$152,026. This reduction and associated savings reflect the reported improvements in managers' abilities to resolve conflicts in the workplace.

C-SEAP also collaborated with the Domestic Abuse Awareness Program (DAAP) of the Office of Behavioral Health in the Colorado Department of Human Services to plan domestic violence awareness training for State employees during FY09. Between October 2008 and July 2009, it is expected that C-SEAP will provide 30–40 total sessions, reaching somewhere between 500–1000 State employees, to increase the ability of the workplace to respond to this important personal and workplace safety issue.

## State Employees Mediation Program

C-SEAP took on the administration of the State Employees Mediation Program (SEMP) in March 2007, adding the management of the Program to C-SEAP's long-standing role as the primary centralized State government resource for collaborative conflict resolution services.

Established in 1986, SEMP's goal is to provide a collaborative, non-adversarial method of resolving workplace disputes, which can be used as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, the grievance process and/or corrective and disciplinary processes.

Mediation through SEMP serves multiple purposes: it allows State employees at all levels a facilitated structure for remaining in, and even strengthening, constructive relationships when conflicts arise; it provides State employees in conflict an opportunity to develop new skills for resolving a current conflict, which skills can also then be applied to other working relationships and future potential conflicts, allowing mediation participants to become informal role models for their colleagues; and it supports a sense of ownership-of-outcomes and heightened personal and professional responsibility for shared decisions.

Further, organizational and corporate research has repeatedly demonstrated that mediation saves time and money by reducing the frequency of adversarial processes including but not limited to litigation. For example: "Brown and Root reported an 80 percent reduction in outside litigation costs, Motorola reported a 75 percent reduction over a period of six years, NCR reported a 50 percent reduction and a drop of pending lawsuits from 263 in 1984 to 28 in 1993" (Ford, John, Workplace Conflict: Facts and Figures, (online) Mediate.com website, July 2000). In the government sector, the Air Force, reporting on its mediation programs under the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1990, reported:

*ADR saves time and increases productivity...ADR participants overwhelmingly approve of the process...ADR can settle disputes that the traditional procedurally strict processes cannot....Where ADR techniques are appropriately used, they resolve disputes, satisfy participants, cost less, and thus serve the public interest. The tax dollars spent on ADR in the Air Force reap superlative rewards for taxpayers." (May 2002).*

### SEMP's activities during FY08:

- Eighty-eight requests for mediation received and assessed by Program Administrator. All received information on mediation processes and procedures, and, where not appropriate to mediation, referral to other resources (e.g., technical guidance on grievance and corrective/disciplinary procedures, resources for crisis intervention, counseling, or risk assessment services via C-SEAP or other entities, Ombuds, EEO, or other).

- Fifty-two (63%) cases proceeded to mediation.
- Twenty-nine cases (over half of those that went to mediation) are classified as successfully concluded, i.e., partial or complete agreements reached, and parties did not move from mediation to adversarial processes.
- In the federal government sector, the Department of Energy (January, 2001: *Interagency ADR Working Group, Workplace Section Report to the Attorney General*) estimated a 1999 savings of \$1,500 per workplace dispute case that was handled via the ADR/mediation program rather than through standard dispute channels. Extrapolating that to SEMP's FY08 case rate of 29 cases successfully concluded, cost savings can be very conservatively estimated at \$43,500. This does not take into account likely savings from litigation cost avoidance in a subset of cases that otherwise would have proceeded to litigation. The costs associated with SEMP are minimal, including 25 percent of the Program Administrator's time (equaling \$17,500 in salary costs), and approximately \$250 in incidental costs per year. Net savings would be conservatively estimated at \$25,750 (in 1999 dollars).
- Four cases (8%) from FY08 remain active at this time.
- Fifty percent of all cases mediated were mediated by a C-SEAP staff member or C-SEAP intern, making C-SEAP the largest organizational contributor to SEMP.
- Thirty-six percent of all cases mediated were mediated by the Program Administrator (Jon Richard, PsyD), who served as most frequent individual resource for mediation services.
- Program Administrator provided 72 hours of service (235 contacts) devoted to receiving and assessing mediation requests and 32 hours (105 contacts) to other Program management activities.

## Emotional Intelligence Program

C-SEAP introduced the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Program this year for supervisors and managers. This program is based on research demonstrating that it takes more than traditional intelligence to be successful at work. Emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing one's own feelings and those of others, for motivating oneself, and for managing emotions well in oneself and in relationships (Goleman, 1998). The program delivers EI services to State supervisors and managers through a three-part process: 1) Information training session, 2) EI Survey interpretation, and 3) Individual follow-up managerial coaching sessions. C-SEAP is working to promote awareness of the program among State agencies, managers, and supervisors via direct orientations, written material and electronic flyers.



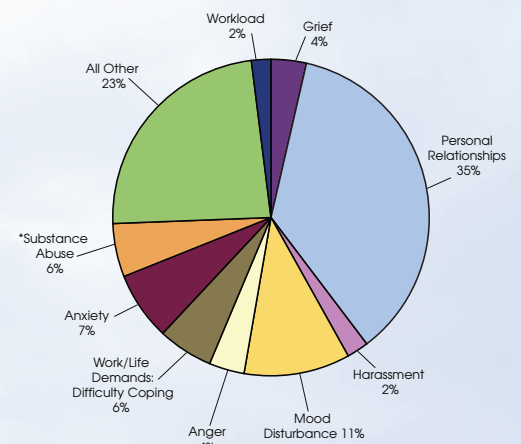
# Individual Assistance

According to Mental Health America of Colorado, psychological problems account for 61 percent of absences from work each year and 65–85 percent of employee terminations. Mental conditions create a burden on the workplace because they are one of the health conditions that most limits the ability to work. In fact, mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the US. It is important to note that while the majority (over 90%) of the individuals who used C-SEAP this year had some form of health coverage, 80 percent indicated that they would not seek counseling anywhere else if C-SEAP services were not available. C-SEAP’s presence increases the likelihood that employees will address mental health/behavioral concerns (like substance abuse, untreated depression, and inappropriate expression of anger) before they impact performance and/or attendance. Colorado’s suicide rate is 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation—almost 40 percent higher than the national average. C-SEAP helped 23 employees this year who were at risk for deliberate self harm and 479 employees who were suffering from symptoms of treatable emotional disorders.

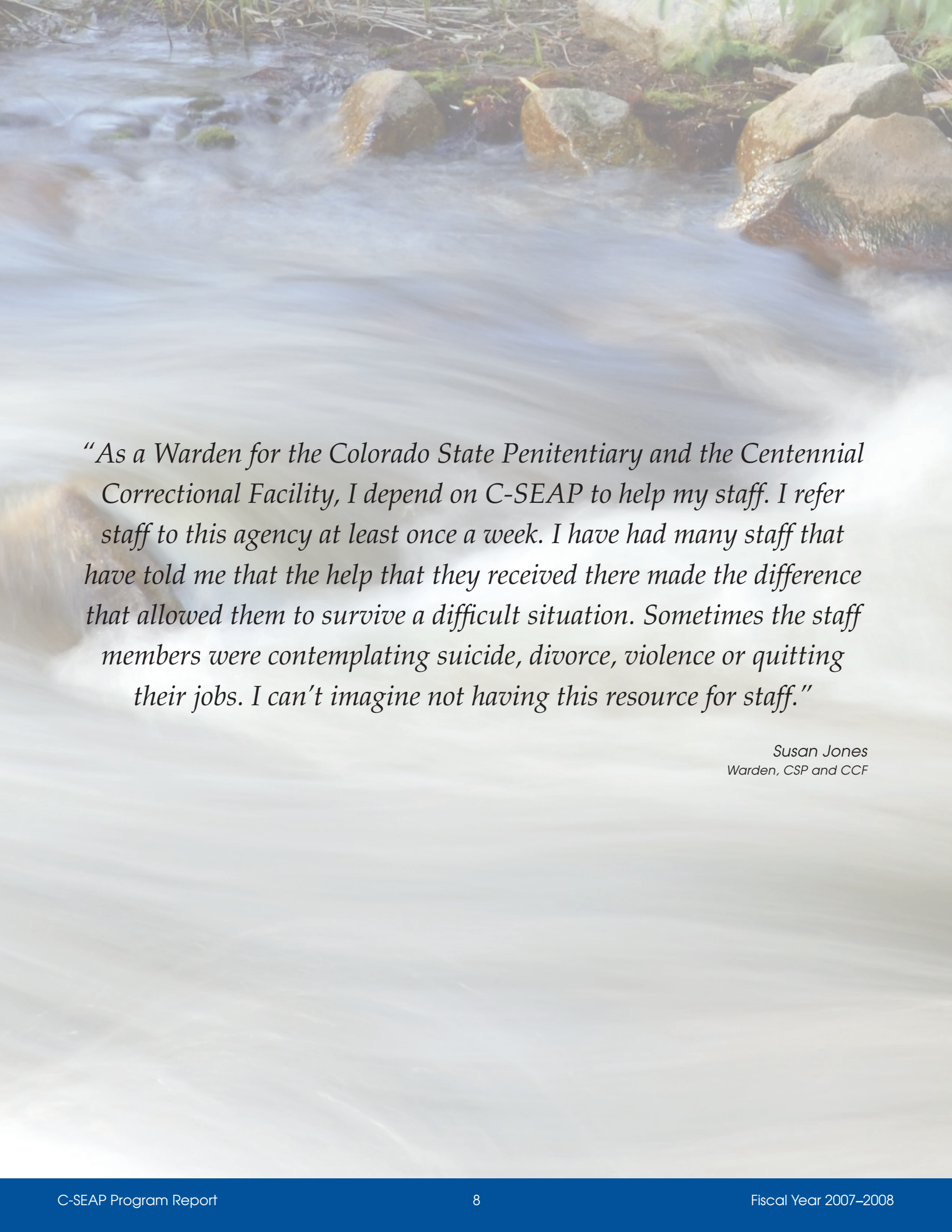
Personal issues can, and most often do, spill over to the workplace. In fact, 59 percent of the employees this year claimed that their performance had been affected by the problem that brought them to C-SEAP. Poor concentration (44%), lack of motivation (26%), tardiness/absenteeism (22%), conflict with supervisor (14%), and conflict with coworkers (13%) were identified as primary performance issues. C-SEAP provided assessment, short-term counseling, and referral services for individual employees struggling with emotional/psychological issues as well as a variety of personal relationship problems including marital issues, parenting, eldercare, and family violence. Work related issues were specifically identified by 327 employees (24%), primarily involving workplace conflict, workplace violence, and performance concerns. Thirteen percent of C-SEAP clients claimed that their jobs were in jeopardy, and 16 percent were considering quitting their jobs within the next three months. Of the 1,368 individual employees who used C-SEAP, 465 missed a total of 14,623 hours of work (in the month prior to their first contact) due to the issue that brought them to C-SEAP, a high cost for the State of Colorado.

This year’s client surveys indicated that 98 percent of respondents believed that C-SEAP had helped with the difficulty/concern that brought them to C-SEAP, and a remarkable 100 percent reported that the assistance they received had a positive effect on their job performance.

**Individual Assessed Problem (N=1,368)**



\*Substance Abuse category includes individuals with single and dual problem areas



*“As a Warden for the Colorado State Penitentiary and the Centennial Correctional Facility, I depend on C-SEAP to help my staff. I refer staff to this agency at least once a week. I have had many staff that have told me that the help that they received there made the difference that allowed them to survive a difficult situation. Sometimes the staff members were contemplating suicide, divorce, violence or quitting their jobs. I can’t imagine not having this resource for staff.”*

*Susan Jones  
Warden, CSP and CCF*

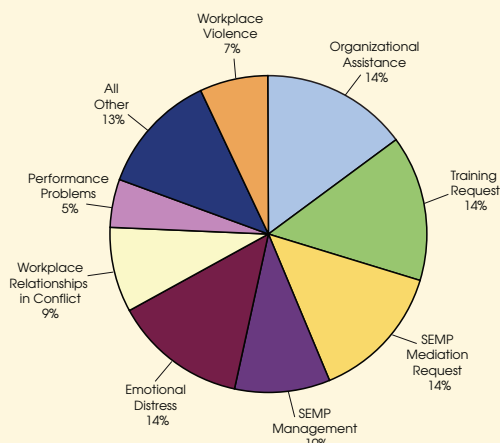
# Organizational Assistance

During the last several years, C-SEAP has seen a steady increase in the number of requests for Organizational Assistance services. This positive trend indicates that managers and supervisors have a growing awareness of EAP services and how they impact the productivity of entire departments as well as individuals. During fiscal year 2008, the program provided training, group consultation, mediation, facilitation, organizational development and crisis intervention for 5,999 employees. A high percentage (96.6%) of class and workshop attendees reported that the training provided useful information to improve job performance and/or work-life balance.

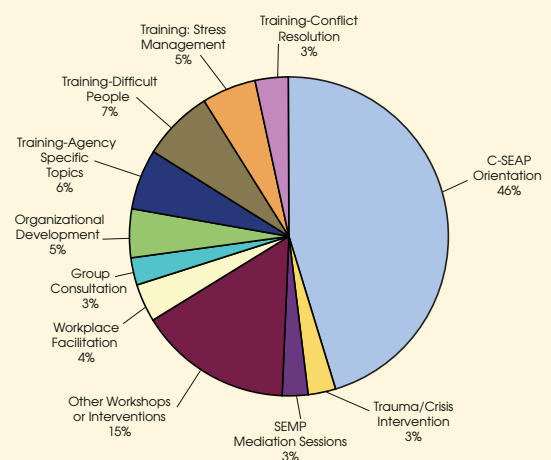
The program also provided 637 workplace consultations to supervisors, managers, and HR/RM professionals regarding employee and/or organizational behavioral risk, performance improvement and skill development. Survey results showed that 100% of the managers who responded to workplace consultation surveys found the service helpful, agreed that the service had a positive effect on employee job performance/productivity and expected the assistance received to be of further benefit to their work units in the future.

According to the Workplace Violence Research Institute, workplace violence is estimated to cost US business and industry in excess of \$36 billion per year in increased medical and disability insurance expenses, absenteeism, turnover, legal fees and liability, reduced productivity and management time. C-SEAP has a direct impact on these costs by providing supervisor/manager consultations regarding unstable and potentially violent employees; referral coordination for fitness for duty evaluations; workplace violence and workplace bullying prevention training; workplace conflict resolution training; anger/stress management classes; counseling for distressed employees; and mediation.

**Workplace Consultation (N=637)**



**Organizational Assistance (N=5,999)**





*“Every state manager should be aware that C-SEAP’s invaluable resources are available to assist them and their employees. Over the years I have benefited from their services in many ways. From assistance with a personal challenge potentially affecting my work to improving the effectiveness of my teams as a supervisor and manager, C-SEAP has helped me be a more productive state employee.”*

*David Kaye  
Director, Division of Human Resources  
Colorado Department of Personnel & Administration*



## Staff and Office Locations

C-SEAP staff consists of 4.5 FTE including the program director, one part-time administrative assistant, two part-time masters-level counselor/consultants, and two full-time doctoral-level counselor/consultants. In addition, the program contracts with one part-time masters-level counselor/consultant in N. Colorado. During FY08, the program supervised six part-time graduate student interns (one master's degree candidate and five doctoral candidates) for a period of nine months, all of whom substantially increased the program's ability to provide services. FY09 internships are planned for five interns (one master's degree candidate and four doctoral candidates). Employees in the greater Denver metro area may visit C-SEAP offices at 633 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1120, a convenient location providing security and privacy to clients. Additional office space is donated by the Department of Corrections (Canon City), Department of Human Services (Pueblo and Grand Junction), Department of Personnel and Administration (Pueblo), Department of Education (Colorado Springs), the Judicial Branch (Fort Collins), Department of Transportation (Greeley), and Northeastern Junior College (Sterling). The program now has nine offices, including the main office in Denver. C-SEAP will be adding 4.5 additional FTE next fiscal year in order to better serve employees located outside the Denver metro area.

# Conclusion

C-SEAP continues to save the state in excess of \$5 million annually by providing a valuable service to state government agencies through individual and organizational assistance. C-SEAP fills an important gap for employees in need of assistance regarding work-related and personal concerns, and for managers seeking reliable and effective support for employees with safety and performance issues. A cost-effective management tool, C-SEAP helps Colorado State government leaders increase employee safety, address employee retention issues, and improve performance, thus adding to the overall value of state services provided to Colorado citizens. As an integral component of the state's progressive and effective organizational strategy, C-SEAP will continue in the coming year to provide OA and IA services and to target costly issues like employee absenteeism, workplace conflict, and violence. One of the principal aims of DPA is to serve the employees who keep Colorado state government running and to recognize the human side of our highly technological service delivery system. The presence of C-SEAP reflects the state's commitment to improving the quality of life and work for its entire workforce.



*“As one who has utilized EAP services, I highly support and endorse C-SEAP. More important, I am appreciative of what it has meant for me and what it means to the success of the State of Colorado.”*



*Rich Gonzales, Executive Director,  
Department of Personnel & Administration*



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