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2014 2016

# 2016 Biennial Report

The 2016 Biennial Report to Congress on the Effectiveness of  
**Grant Programs Under the Violence Against Women Act**

United States Department of Justice  
**Office on Violence Against Women**



# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Considerations for the Reader .....	v
Executive Summary .....	vii
Introduction .....	1
VAWA Funding.....	3
Discretionary Grant Programs .....	4
Formerly Authorized Discretionary Grant Programs.....	5
Formula Grant Programs .....	5
The Scope and Burden of Violence.....	7
Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Sex Trafficking, and Stalking in the U.S. ....	7
Domestic Violence .....	8
Dating Violence.....	9
Sexual Assault.....	10
Sex Trafficking.....	12
Stalking .....	13
The Effectiveness of VAWA Funding: An Overview .....	15
Coordinated Community Response .....	17
Criminal Justice Response .....	19
Law Enforcement .....	19
Prosecution .....	22
Courts .....	24
Probation.....	28

Services to Victims and Families .....	31
Crisis Intervention Services .....	31
Shelter and Transitional Housing .....	32
Legal Advocacy and Legal Services .....	34
Orders of Protection .....	36
Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services .....	38
Historically Underserved and Other Vulnerable Populations .....	41
American Indians and Alaska Natives .....	42
Immigrants and Refugees .....	45
People with Disabilities .....	48
People Victimized in Later Life/Elder Abuse .....	49
Children and Youth .....	51
Victims and Families Living in Rural Areas .....	52
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and/or Transgender (LGBT) Victims .....	53
Community Education, Public Awareness, and Prevention .....	55
Training and Technical Assistance .....	57
Conclusion .....	61
The Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women Later in Life Program (Abuse Later in Life) .....	63
Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program (Arrest) .....	71
Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program (Campus) .....	85
Grants to Assist Children and Youth Exposed to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (CEV) .....	95
Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth) .....	105
Court Training and Improvements Program (Courts) .....	117
Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program (CSSP) .....	129

Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program (Disability) .....	141
Engaging Men and Youth in Preventing Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (EMY).....	151
Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program (JFF).....	155
Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (LAV).....	173
Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Assistance Program (Rural) .....	183
Sexual Assault Services Program—Grants to Culturally Specific Programs (SASP-CS) .....	195
Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program (State Coalitions) .....	203
Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program (STEP) .....	207
Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program (Supervised Visitation) .....	215
Technical Assistance Program (Technical Assistance).....	223
Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program (Transitional Housing) .....	227
Grants to Support Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions (Tribal Coalitions) .....	239
Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program (Tribal Governments) .....	243
Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (Tribal SASP) .....	259
Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations (Underserved) .....	267
Services to Advocate for and Respond to Youth Program (Youth Services) .....	277
References.....	285

## Acknowledgements

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In addition, we wish to express our appreciation to the VAWA grantees who collected and reported the data on which this report is based. Their efforts, and the data and stories they share about responding to domestic/sexual violence, demonstrate the effectiveness of VAWA funding across the country, and highlight where work remains to be done.

Bea Hanson  
Principal Deputy Director  
Office on Violence Against Women  
U.S. Department of Justice

# Considerations for the Reader

In response to the reporting requirements authorized by VAWA 2000, the 2016 Biennial Report to Congress on the Effectiveness of Grant Funds under the Violence Against Women Act (2016 Biennial Report) presents aggregate qualitative and quantitative data submitted by grantees of 23 currently and formerly authorized discretionary grant programs administered by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). This report also presents current research on best practices to respond to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, and stalking, which OVW uses to invest in proven strategies and solutions to further the common goal of ending domestic and sexual violence.

The following sections outline key notes for the reader to consider when reviewing the 2016 Biennial Report.

## The Scope and Burden of Violence

- VAWA addresses domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, and stalking, all of which predominantly victimize women. However, VAWA programs and policies serve all victims of these crimes, including men.
- For brevity, these crimes are referred to throughout this report as “domestic/sexual violence.”

## Data Presentation and Interpretation

- Prevalence data are presented to the tenth decimal place where possible, and presented as whole integers if unavailable.
  - For example: *In 2010, The National Violence Death Review Reporting System (NVDRS) analyzed data from 16 participating states and found that strangulation, hanging, and suffocation account for 11.5% of female homicides annually.*
- Each chapter presents the most frequently reported data (for example, purpose areas or victim services). For more information about the types of data that grantees provide, refer to the sample forms located on the VAWA MEI website: <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/vawamei/forms.htm>.
- Grantee data are often presented as totals across the 2-year reporting period.

- For example: *Grantees received a total of **1,864** hotline calls.*
- In some cases, a total is not available. Some victims may seek multiple services in a given reporting period, or seek services over multiple reporting periods. In those cases, a calculated average across the four 6-month reporting periods is presented.
  - For example: *During each 6-month reporting period, on average, LAV Program grantees provided services to **28,553** victims.*
- Grantee data are presented as whole integers.
  - For example: ***102** Arrest, Rural, and Tribal Governments grantees used funds for law enforcement activities; these Governments grantees supported an average of **56** full-time equivalent (FTE) law enforcement officers.*
  - In some cases, due to rounding, “nearly 100%” is used to indicate that percentages are greater than or equal to 99.5%, but less than 100%.
    - For example: *Nearly **100%** of child victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.*
  - In other cases, due to rounding, numbers may appear the same while their percentages are different.
    - For example: *Courts grants funds supported an average of **5** victim advocates (**20%**) and **5** program coordinators (**18%**) per each 6-month reporting period.*
- Some grantees provide services to victims, children, and other dependents. In these program chapters, demographic tables, as opposed to charts, are displayed. Where they appear, these tables do not include the total for race as persons could select multiple racial categories.

# Executive Summary

Congress first enacted the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 to improve our national criminal justice response to violence against women, ensure services for victims, and create informed policy on the issue.<sup>1</sup>

**PROGRAMS AND POLICIES AUTHORIZED BY VAWA AND SUBSEQUENT** legislation address sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. They promote a coordinated community response to these crimes, meaning an approach in which law enforcement, victim services providers, prosecutors, courts, and others work together in a seamless, systemic way. Reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013, VAWA articulates Congress's commitment to effective strategies for preventing and responding to domestic and sexual violence, holding offenders accountable, and ensuring safety, autonomy, and justice for victims.

*To commemorate the 20th anniversary of VAWA, and hear directly from the communities that have benefited from its funding, OVW launched a yearlong national tour in October of 2014, visiting 50 locations in 20 states. A report, **Twenty Years of the Violence Against Women Act: Dispatches from the Field**, summarizes the conversations from tour stops. It highlights the lasting influence of VAWA on communities' ability to respond to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and identifies barriers and gaps in services.*

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) administers grants under VAWA and provides technical assistance and training to grant recipients so that funds are used to support evidence-based interventions, when and where possible, and so that grantees can effectively combat these crimes in their communities. As of October 2016, OVW administers 15 statutorily authorized discretionary and four formula programs that provide grants to criminal justice agencies, victim services organizations, and other entities that address domestic and sexual violence.

**MD • Grantee Perspective**

[VAWA] funding should be credited with the formation and development of the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI). . . Prior to the formation of SALI, many sexual assault victims had no access to lawyers and often were not even provided with information about legal options outside the criminal justice system. Thanks to LAV grant funding, SALI has been able to fill this gap, helping individual sexual assault victims gain access to the legal representation, information, and advice that are necessary for access to the entire justice system.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT LEGAL INSTITUTE, MARYLAND  
(LAV PROGRAM)**

OVW's grantmaking and technical assistance account for the unique ways—and in some cases disproportionate rates at which—these victimizations affect underserved and vulnerable populations, including women of color, women living in poverty, American Indian and Alaska Native women, people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. In developing programs and policies, OVW also considers the particular impact of domestic and sexual violence on people who are male, immigrants, residents of rural areas, elderly, youth, or college students to ensure that services and justice solutions address their needs.

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, OVW awarded VAWA funding to over **2,000** grantees and technical assistance providers. This Executive Summary is a synopsis of efforts funded through VAWA over this 2-year period to help people and communities recover from the destructive and pervasive effects of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The accompanying 2016 Biennial Report to Congress (2016 Biennial Report) includes detailed descriptions of grantees' accomplishments and aggregated data on their work spanning the 2 years. This summary and the full report include snapshots of the ways grantees are using VAWA funds to help victims and administer justice.

# The Scope and Burden of Violence



## DE • Grantee Perspective

The grant provides support for critical coalition activities including nonprofit governance, board support, systems advocacy, and technical assistance to member organizations, advocates, and others providing direct services. These types of activities are important when building and sustaining strong organizations and when trying to improve how systems and programs can meet the needs of the victims they serve. Yet, it is difficult to find financial support for board governance, advocacy, and technical assistance efforts because they are all one step removed from direct service provision. OVW and the State Coalition Grant Program recognize the value of coalition work and help support and sustain it.

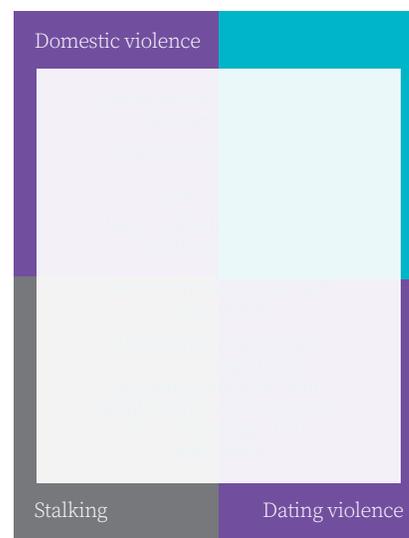
### DELAWARE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (STATE COALITIONS PROGRAM)

OVW relies on current national data and empirical research to inform its understanding of the scope and nature of domestic and sexual violence in the United States. National surveys administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) measure the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and some of the adverse outcomes associated with those victimizations. National data and research findings, taken with numerical and narrative information that VAWA-funded grantees report about the victims they serve and the services they provide, paint a picture of a persistent criminal justice and public health crisis for which solutions—however innovative and effective—are in limited supply.

OVW uses primarily two national measures of incidence and prevalence to estimate the extent of domestic and sexual violence. Because one is health-based and the other is criminal justice-based, these surveys generate different data on rates of violence. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is an ongoing telephone survey that collects information from people ages 18 and older about their experiences of sexual violence, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. The NISVS makes national- and state-level data available simultaneously and contributes to an understanding of the impact of violence and abuse on distinct populations. Whereas the NISVS takes a public health approach to measuring incidence and prevalence, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) represents a criminal justice perspective. Through household telephone surveys, the NCVS collects information on nonfatal crimes, including those reported and not reported to law enforcement, against people ages 12 and older.

Other national data sets, such as the Uniform Crime Report (UCR), which the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) uses to publish statistics on crimes known to law enforcement, and the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), which monitors behaviors that contribute to violence among youth, are also used to further understand the extent to which sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking affect millions of people in the U.S. and the considerable impact of violence and abuse on communities.

OVW uses the findings of studies funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and other federal agencies to further inform its grantmaking. These studies describe the dynamics and impact of domestic and sexual violence, including perpetrator behavior and characteristics, physical and mental health outcomes among victims and their children, criminal justice processes



*The Campus Climate Survey Validation Study (CCSVS) was conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and RTI International, with support from OVW, between 2014 and 2016. The CCSVS was undertaken to validate a survey instrument and method for measuring the prevalence of sexual assault and the campus climate surrounding sexual violence. More than 23,000 students at nine schools completed the survey as part of the CCSVS. The study found that each of the participating schools had unique “climate” factors, and the rate of sexual assault varied across those campuses. For more information, visit: <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ccsvsfr.pdf>.*



### ME • Grantee Perspective

Transportation funding has been extremely helpful. Forty-five taxi rides may not seem like much, but in our area, those are 45 rides that made the difference between victims keeping their jobs, keeping their children safe, and/or getting to court to access a margin of justice. While we anticipated having security deposit funds would shorten shelter stays, we were surprised to find that nearly all of the security deposits we have provided have prevented shelter stays entirely. In so many cases, victims have been able to move to safe, permanent housing with a safety plan in place, court protections, and advocacy support as needed, without having to spend time in shelter.

**HOPE AND JUSTICE PROJECT, MAINE  
(RURAL PROGRAM)**



### OK • Grantee Perspective

Our grant-funded project has touched the lives of 123 victims of domestic/sexual violence, as well as their offenders. We have touched the lives of 154 children whose parents are in the Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court. By the end of our grant cycle, we expect the number of cases in our court to reach approximately 200. Because of the lack of local financial resources, Courts grant funding made all of this possible and without it we would not exist. Oklahoma [ranks] three in the nation in the number of women killed by men. In a community with such profound needs, this funding is making a tremendous difference and we sincerely appreciate it.

**TULSA COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, OKLAHOMA  
(COURTS PROGRAM)**

and outcomes, and the effectiveness of system- and community-based interventions to prevent and respond to domestic and sexual violence and hold offenders accountable.

OVW launched its Research and Evaluation Initiative in 2016 to study effective approaches to combatting domestic and sexual violence. The purpose of the Initiative is to generate more knowledge about strategies for serving victims and holding offenders accountable, thereby equipping communities with information to better align their work with practices that are known to be effective while also increasing grantees' ability to generate empirical knowledge on the efficacy of their work. Information on projects funded in FY 2016 will be included in the next Biennial Report.

## Effectiveness of VAWA Discretionary Grant Funding

VAWA grants are critical to addressing sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. They funded an average of **3,008** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month reporting period, including attorneys for victims, victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), and program coordinators and administrative staff. VAWA provides funding for training, materials, equipment and supplies, and other necessities for responding effectively inside and outside the justice system. Funding is used in some places to enhance existing programs and services, while in other places it is used to fill gaps in services or establish programs where none existed. To the extent possible, OVW prioritizes funding for programs and practices that research has shown to work.

Grants are awarded under discretionary programs according to the eligibility criteria defined in each program's statute. Grants are typically awarded for a 2- or 3-year period, and grantees can usually apply for continuation funding. In addition to administering formula and discretionary programs authorized by VAWA, OVW supports several special initiatives designed to address emerging issues in the field (e.g. the need for more comprehensive services for sexual assault victims) and to enhance victim services and offender accountability through promising and/or evidence-based approaches (e.g. domestic violence homicide reduction). The next sections summarize the types and quantities of activities funded by VAWA during the 2-year period.

### \$224 million in FY2013

In Fiscal Year 2013, OVW made 510 discretionary awards totaling just under \$224 million.

### \$220 million in FY2014

In Fiscal Year 2014, OVW made 471 discretionary awards totaling just over \$220 million.

### \$225 million in FY2015

In Fiscal Year 2015, OVW made 472 discretionary awards totaling just under \$225 million.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>i</sup> These figures include numbers and amounts associated with awards funded through VAWA discretionary programs, including any noncompetitive awards made under those programs.

## Criminal Justice Response

Over the past 20+ years, VAWA funding has transformed how criminal justice systems in many communities respond to domestic and sexual violence. Some of the innovations funded by VAWA are law enforcement collaboration with victim services providers and healthcare professionals, use of evidence-based lethality assessments to curb domestic violence-related homicides, improved forensic medical examinations for sexual assault victims, investigation and prosecution policies and practices that focus on the offender and account for the effects of trauma on victims, specialized law enforcement and prosecution units, specialized courts and dockets, enhanced offender monitoring strategies, and improved training opportunities for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges.

In addition, grantees' reports demonstrate that VAWA-funded criminal justice solutions are evolving alongside the changing dynamics of violence and victimization, and are being used to address domestic and sexual violence as they intersect with challenges such as cyber stalking and with advances in forensic science. In the 2 years covered by this report, VAWA-funded grantees funded under the Arrest Program<sup>ii</sup> reported the following accomplishments in violence against women cases:

- Law enforcement made **66,095** arrests, including **7,367** for protection order violations;
- Prosecutors disposed of **125,812** cases, of which **55%** resulted in convictions;
- Courts disposed of **6,424** criminal cases, of which **66%** resulted in convictions;
- Courts engaged in judicial monitoring of an average of **1,824** offenders for compliance with court-ordered conditions at **13,345** individual review hearings;
- Probation agencies supervised an average of **5,120** offenders and conducted a total of **249,752** monitoring activities; and
- Supervised offenders who violated protection orders or did not attend mandatory batterer intervention had their probation revoked more than half (**61%**) of the time.



### MN • Grantee Perspective

Prior to the funding and the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) Alexandra House was successful in reaching domestic assault victims, referred by law enforcement, approximately 64% of the time. With the funding, lethality assessment procedures are in place in all 11 law enforcement jurisdictions. Now, under the LAP, high risk victims are being reached at a rate of 90%. From 2012-2014, 1,081 victims identified as high risk via the screening tool; currently 81% have or are currently receiving ongoing services.

**ANOKA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, MINNESOTA  
(ARREST PROGRAM)**

*In Queens County, New York, grant funds helped enable the District Attorney's Office to establish a Domestic Violence Bureau, where 16 prosecutors and three paralegals work solely on domestic violence cases.*

*A Systems Specialist in the Duluth Police Department is a liaison between law enforcement and victim service providers in the community.*

*A grant to the state of Michigan supports a cold case prosecution unit in "taking a second look at these cases with fresh eyes and an open mind," leading to charges filed against numerous serial rapists.*



### NC • Grantee Perspective

The grant has given us the freedom to focus on our cases, dedicating a significant amount of time to developing relationships with victims and identifying the underlying issues in their cases. This has led to the successful prosecution of several repeat offenders whose victims were previously uncooperative. Once victims understood that we offered judgment-free support and assistance, they were more likely to return for help, and more educated about their options for safety.

**HAYWOOD COUNTY 30<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLIANCE,  
INC., NORTH CAROLINA (ARREST PROGRAM)**

<sup>ii</sup> Beginning in FY 2016, this program has been renamed the Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program to more accurately reflect the program's scope. For the purposes of this report, the program will be referred to as the Arrest Program.

*Grant funds supported the creation of the Telephone Outreach Project (TOP) in the Philadelphia Police Department, which helps advocates provide safe and supportive outreach to domestic violence victims following an incident.*

*In Pinellas County, Florida, a grant-funded compliance monitoring program in the court ensures legal ramifications for noncompliant domestic violence offenders.*

*A training video for judges and law enforcement officers was produced in Barre, Vermont, titled Every Choice Counts: Men Talk about Change, and featured interviews with domestic violence offenders about the abuse they perpetrated and ways they have changed their behavior.*

*In State College, Pennsylvania, a grant supported law enforcement's use of technology (i.e., forensic phone analysis equipment) to investigate stalking cases.*



#### MN • Grantee Perspective

Before funding existed, victims of domestic violence in Steele County were forced to endure a series of intolerable situations. They lived with relatives in crowded and often unsafe housing units. They moved to a poorer region with fewer options. In many cases, they continued to live with their abusers. The Transitional Housing funding has allowed us to provide victims and their children with the housing that they need. As a result, they have been able to live independently, and to become self-sufficient. They have transformed their lives by setting and achieving goals in employment, education, budgeting, savings, and permanent housing. In addition, they have set goals for their families, which has given them hope for their futures. They have modeled for their children what it means to live in safety, security, and dignity.

**STEELE COUNTY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING,  
MINNESOTA (TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM)**

## Services for Victims and Families

VAWA grant funds are used to provide services to victims and their families as they cope with the immediate and long-term impact of violence in their lives. These services help victims stay safe and establish independence after leaving an abusive relationship, and they connect victims with resources to support their recovery and, if they choose, pursuit of justice. Direct services funded through VAWA include:

- Crisis intervention to help victims deal with their immediate needs after being victimized, find resources, and plan for safety in the aftermath of violence;
- Legal advocacy and representation in civil and criminal matters, which help victims navigate the legal system and obtain favorable outcomes in their cases;
- Assistance with obtaining orders for protection, which are one of the most frequently sought legal remedies for domestic violence victims and have been shown to reduce further violence and improve quality of life for victims;
- Shelter and transitional housing for victims fleeing abuse, with accompanying services to help them find employment and permanent housing for themselves and their children; and
- Supervised visitation and monitored custody exchanges, which account for the elevated risk of violence and homicide faced by victims and their children during the post-separation period.

VAWA-funded grantees provided more than **1 million** services to victims in the 2 years covered by this report. On average, they provided services to **124,916** individuals during each 6-month reporting period, including an average of **111,817** primary victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or child or elder abuse; as well as victims' children.<sup>iii</sup> The services that VAWA-funded grantees provided to victims and family members most often were:

- Housing bed nights: **1,926,892**
- Hotline calls: **591,788**
- Victim advocacy: **288,858**
- Crisis intervention: **171,831**
- Civil legal advocacy: **97,534**
- Criminal justice advocacy: **85,990**

<sup>iii</sup> Reporting forms count victims served by “primary”—or “presenting”—victimization, meaning the victimization for which the person first requested services. However, grantees serve victims who need assistance with multiple and co-occurring victimizations. For example, a grantee might provide transitional housing to a domestic violence victim while also offering her/him counseling services related to sexual assault.

## Coordinated Community Response

VAWA-funded grantees are required to work in meaningful ways with community partners to ensure an effective, coordinated community response (CCR) to domestic and sexual violence. VAWA-funded grantees provide information on their partnerships and collaborative efforts with their applications for funding and over the course of their projects.

Multidisciplinary teams shape local approaches for preventing and responding to violence and abuse, provide cross-disciplinary training so each member understands the others' roles, facilitate referrals, and assess gaps and weaknesses in the community's response. An example of a coordinated community response often funded by VAWA is the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). SARTs are designed to meet victims' needs, improve investigation and prosecution, and foster accountability for each system involved. Another example is domestic violence fatality review teams, which determine what led to a domestic violence homicide and aim to correct system deficiencies identified in the process. Grantees report that collaboration with community partners improves the quality of services and the effectiveness of the justice system response.

The following agencies and organizations met regularly with VAWA-funded grantees during the 2-year reporting period to address systems-level issues related to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking:

- Domestic violence organizations/programs;
- Law enforcement agencies;
- Social service organizations;
- Health/mental health organizations;
- Prosecution offices;
- Sexual assault organizations/programs;
- Courts; and
- Legal services organizations.

## Services for and Response to Underserved and Other Vulnerable Populations

Victims' experiences and a growing body of research confirm that certain populations are victimized by violence and abuse—and report it—at different rates and may have less favorable experiences with the criminal justice system when they report. The ways that victims experience, resist, and survive violence can be shaped by a host of cultural, social, and economic factors.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed our program to implement a Safe Visit/Safe Exchange component, to further assist families with concerns of safety and court approved visitation. In one case in particular, the father is a well-known abuser within our community, and despite his history of abusive tactics our tribal court recognizes his rights to spend time with his children. Fear and anxiety was forced upon the victim and her family, as they needed to comply with the court-approved visitation, and work with a man who victimized and terrorized his former spouse. They turned to our program for support and assistance in addressing concerns of safety for all parties involved. With the support of our staff and the resources provided by the Safe Visit/Safe Exchange component, our program is able to meet the needs and advocate for the safety of not only the former victim, but her children and family.

**PRAIRIE BAND OF POTAWATOMI NATION  
(TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**



### NE • Grantee Perspective

Many of the staff involved in the Open Door Initiative have commented that they have a much greater knowledge of the other partner agencies and their services, and there are more personal connections with staff at partner agencies due to the grant. The genuine desire to continue collaboration during the post-grant period is evident in the commitment of partner agency staff to continue meeting quarterly without being supported by grant funds. These quarterly meetings will encourage sustained connection and potential opportunities for ongoing collaborative projects that will benefit victims receiving services at each partner agency.

**FRIENDSHIP HOME OF LINCOLN, INC., NEBRASKA  
(DISABILITY PROGRAM)**



### CT • Grantee Perspective

One of the most significant opportunities afforded by this grant was the chance to bring together different entities of the criminal justice system... to further our common goals of reducing incidents of domestic violence crimes, improving the accountability of offenders, and supporting successful re-entry into the community. In addition to Families in Crisis, the offender service provider and project partner, the Parole Division partnered by designating two Parole Officers to serve as domestic violence resource officers. Their expertise was developed through cross-training opportunities and inclusion in project team meetings. Several trainings for Parole were held to enhance their understanding of domestic violence, its impact on victims and children, the role trauma plays in decision making, and to highlight strategies to effectively supervise domestic violence offenders in the community.

**CONNECTICUT COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (ARREST PROGRAM)**

Thus, funds authorized by Congress through VAWA are used to address unique challenges that people from underserved and marginalized populations face when they are victimized. Grantees are encouraged—and in many cases are required—to conduct culturally and linguistically specific outreach to these populations and to develop policies, practices, and resources that ensure these victims can access services and that their abusers are held accountable.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, VAWA-funded grantees served:<sup>iv</sup>

- **10,185** victims who identified as American Indians or Alaska Natives;
- **4,830** victims who identified as Asian;
- **21,210** victims who identified as Black or African American;
- **23,654** victims who identified as Latin@ or Hispanic;
- **539** victims who identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander;
- **5,877** victims who were children or youth (infancy to age 17);<sup>v</sup>
- **4,221** victims who were 60 or older;
- **8,436** victims with disabilities;
- **17,812** victims were immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers;
- **17,826** victims with limited English proficiency; and
- **29,581** victims who lived in rural areas.

## Technical Assistance

OVW funds technical assistance providers (TA providers) to offer VAWA-funded grantees training, site visits, tools and resources, and consultation with experts to help them effectively respond to domestic and sexual violence. Technical assistance is designed to enhance and support grantees' implementation of their VAWA-funded projects and thereby maximize the impact of grant funding. In addition, technical assistance supports grantees in building organizational and community capacity to address domestic and sexual violence with a goal of creating sustainable improvements that last beyond the grant period.

In shaping its Technical Assistance Program, OVW solicits input from grantees to ensure that training and other technical assistance is responsive to their needs, promotes good practices, and helps them implement their OVW-funded grant activities most effectively.



### NH • Grantee Perspective

Funding allowed us to hire a team of professionals to focus exclusively on the provision of immigration legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. It allowed us to hire a bilingual, culturally competent staff with expertise in immigration law, domestic violence, and poverty law, which enhanced the program's ability to identify other legal and social needs more effectively and enhance collaborations with our partners and other institutions. We were able to accept a caseload of immigration law cases for immigrant victims of DV/SA significantly above initial projections, to work with our partners to ensure timely referrals and access to services in a way that did not exist only weeks before the program started.

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES, NEW HAMPSHIRE (LAV PROGRAM)**

<sup>iv</sup> Victims were reported once in each race/ethnicity category that applied.

<sup>v</sup> These numbers do not include children and youth indirectly exposed to violence who were served (1,005) by Children Exposed to Violence, Consolidated Youth, and STEP grantees.

The following technical assistance activities were reported by TA providers during the 2-year reporting period:

- Training events: **3,918**
- People trained with TA funds: **244,133**
- Technical assistance site visits: **1,239**
- Responses to requests for information: **38,072**
- Technical assistance products developed or revised: **8,458**

## Education, Awareness, and Prevention

Community education, awareness-raising, and prevention activities funded by VAWA are designed to reduce violence through changing attitudes and beliefs that legitimize or promote domestic and sexual violence. Some promising approaches to this work involve engaging men and boys in advocacy and outreach, promoting bystander intervention, running social media campaigns, and organizing educational and mentoring programs.

More than **1.3 million** individuals participated in VAWA-funded education, awareness, or prevention activities related to sexual assault, domestic or dating violence, stalking, or child or elder abuse. Typically, these events and activities provided information about the nature and dynamics of these victimizations, available resources, and strategies for prevention.

Of these individuals:

- **256,189** were elementary, middle or high school students;
- **525,715** were college students; and
- **603,241** were other youth, professionals, and community members.

## Training for Professionals

Victims have contact with a range of professionals, including law enforcement, prosecutors, court personnel, health and mental health professionals, and others. Victims' experiences with these people can have a profound effect on their recovery and their willingness to assist the criminal justice system. Whether it is a police officer responding to a call, a nurse conducting a sexual assault medical forensic exam, or a judge hearing a case that involves a history of domestic violence, it is critical that each person responds appropriately, makes informed decisions, and prevents further harm. Ongoing training plays a crucial role in equipping people to respond to violence. The majority of OVV-funded programs support training for professionals who work directly with victims.



### USVI • Grantee Perspective

The Women's Coalition of St. Croix Rural Transitional Housing Program is the only program of this type in the U.S. Virgin Islands... Because of the Rural Transitional Housing Program grant, WCSC can fill a gap in housing services to victims. Prior to this program victims remained in WCSC shelter for 6 or more months, and undocumented immigrants would require shelter services for 1-2 years until the necessary paperwork could be filled. The Rural grant funding has allowed victims to move out of the emergency shelter program and access housing and other vital services more quickly, enabling them to become more self-sufficient and independent. As a result it has freed up beds in our shelter, so that we can now serve additional clients throughout the year.

**WOMEN'S COALITION OF ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS (RURAL PROGRAM)**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Now that UTFAV has four full-time staff members we have been effective at serving the 12 tribes of Michigan. We have been able to provide technical assistance to all 12 tribes to enhance their response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Our training and education services have afforded most tribal communities with opportunities to enhance their services to tribal populations, as well as improve the system response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. UTFAV also has had the opportunity to affect policy and/or procedural change at the national and state level to improve the institutional response to domestic violence and sexual assault.

**UNITING THREE FIRES AGAINST VIOLENCE (TRIBAL COALITIONS PROGRAM)**



### OR • Grantee Perspective

Community outreach is another area that has benefited greatly from this funding. In the past outreach efforts were inconsistent and not coordinated between agencies. The funding has allowed the team to develop public presentations such as the Teen Dating Violence presentation, which in the past did not exist. The outreach has allowed us to educate not only victims but their family members and friends also. Educating our community partners has been highly beneficial too. Not only are these partners aware of the services provided by the UCAP team but also are better educated on the signs of possible abuse in their clients. The upside to this is that there has been a significant increase in reports of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**UNION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OREGON  
(RURAL PROGRAM)**



### PA • Grantee Perspective

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the Speak UP Bucknell peer educators educated 907 out of 933 incoming students on sexual assault and positive bystander behavior within the first 2 weeks of the semester; they also conducted a non-mandatory follow-up session in October to approximately 570 first-year students and a second non-mandatory follow-up session in January to approximately 290 first-year students. The ability to have a full-time position dedicated to prevention education has truly allowed our campus to start making a systemic, population-level impact.

**BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY, PENNSYLVANIA  
(CAMPUS PROGRAM)**



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Campus program funding was integral to the creation of a formalized training plan for conduct board members. In the past, board members received limited training on gender-based violence response. Information gleaned at the training on campus judicial policy was a guiding tool in creating high-quality training that was well-received by board members. Funding has helped to ensure that program staff will have an opportunity at least once per year, and often more frequently, to train all conduct board members before they hear cases involving gender-based violence.

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON  
(CAMPUS PROGRAM)**

During the 2-year period covered by this report, VAWA-funded grantees used funds to train a total of **686,966** service providers, criminal justice personnel, and other professionals to improve their response to victims. People trained included the following:

- Victim advocates and other advocacy organization staff: **139,766**
- Law enforcement officers: **89,937**
- Health/mental health professionals, including forensic nurse examiners: **51,705**
- Attorneys and law students: **45,521**
- Educators (K-12), university faculty, and university staff: **31,147**
- Court personnel, including judges: **18,404**
- Prosecutors: **15,680**
- Volunteers: **15,519**
- Child protective services (CPS) workers and child advocates: **14,327**
- Corrections staff: **13,087**
- Faith-based organization staff: **8,434**

## Remaining Areas of Need

VAWA-funded grantees are asked to identify in their reports what needs remain unmet. Their responses help OVW understand the emerging and under-resourced issues faced by victims and the systems designed to serve them, and barriers to holding offenders accountable. Grantees identified the following critical areas of unmet need during the 2-year reporting period:

- Sustaining core services for victims, particularly safe transitional and permanent housing;
- Addressing victims' basic needs, including food, shelter, transportation, and childcare;
- Providing culturally and linguistically competent services, especially interpretation and translation;
- Improving offender accountability through monitoring and batterer intervention programs (BIP);
- Ensuring that services are accessible to people with disabilities and people who are Deaf or hard of hearing;
- Providing civil legal representation for low-income victims in cases involving divorce, custody, and visitation;
- Improving outreach, mitigating barriers such as lack of transportation, and providing accessible services to victims in rural areas;
- Addressing high rates of attrition through the investigation and prosecution stages, including high rates of case rejections by prosecutors in some places;
- High caseloads, frequent staff turnover, and the impact of vicarious trauma on criminal justice and victim services professionals;

- Providing sufficient training to law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges;
- Improving services to sexual assault and stalking victims;
- Enhancing organizational capacity, including hiring and retaining staff;
- Mitigating barriers to confidentiality, particularly in rural and tribal communities;
- Making available comprehensive victim services to address substance abuse and mental health needs that co-occur with, or result from, victimization;
- Building partnerships in general, and specifically building relationships between tribal communities and federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors; and
- Modernizing prevention and community education strategies to keep them relevant to young people's lives.

The 2016 Biennial Report includes aggregated data on activities funded by VAWA during the 2-year reporting period, along with snapshots of the impact of VAWA on individual communities, organizations, and victims. The report reflects 2 years of collective efforts to respond to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking across the nation. It describes significant accomplishments that would not have been possible in the absence of VAWA funding, and highlights where much work remains to be done.



#### **FL • Grantee Perspective**

The Arrest Program has enabled our agency to develop an outstanding training program for forensic examiners, reach out to law enforcement to provide enhanced training services, and support judges and other judiciary staff in fully understanding the law and options available to them in regards to sexual violence. We find that for every training and collateral item (e.g. manuals, benchbooks, etc.) we are able to use Arrest Program funds to develop and distribute, another service provider comes forward and asks for the same or similar services from our agency. The Arrest Program has allowed us to initially develop critical curriculum and continue to build and expand our trainings so that more offenders can be made accountable for their actions.

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
(ARREST PROGRAM)**



# Introduction

The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA) marked an historic step forward in our nation’s response to crimes of violence that predominantly victimize women.<sup>1</sup>

**VAWA CHANGED THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE, CREATING POWERFUL CRIMINAL and civil enforcement tools for holding perpetrators accountable and for offering victims access to safety and justice. In addition, VAWA recognized that, given the strong social barriers that keep these crimes hidden, public support for specialized outreach, services, training, and enforcement is critically important to achieving the vision of a society that no longer tolerates domestic and sexual violence and stalking.**

To this end, VAWA established formula and discretionary grant programs to help communities respond to these crimes and better address the needs of victims. The Department of Justice (DOJ)’s Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) awards grants to support states, territories, tribal communities, local government, educational institutions, and nonprofit victim services agencies across the country in developing innovative and effective strategies to respond to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.



## WV • Grantee Perspective

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the SART Coordinators supported by this funding in West Virginia. Given the skeletal staffing arrangements in many West Virginian rape crisis centers, it stands to reason that without this funding, many of these victims would not have been seen at all. This possibility is particularly unsettling when considering the variety of services that the local coordinators provided to victims. From medical advocacy to crisis intervention, from assistance with the victim compensation process to safety planning—our grant-funded advocates occupy what would otherwise be a gaping hole in our service delivery system.

**WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
(ARREST PROGRAM)**

The Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (VAWA 2000) strengthened the original law by improving protections for battered immigrants, survivors of sexual assault, and victims of dating violence.<sup>2</sup> VAWA 2000 also reauthorized key grant programs created by VAWA and subsequent legislation. It established programs to provide legal assistance for victims, and to address elder abuse, stalking, violence against individuals with disabilities, and safe visitation and exchange of children in cases of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and stalking.



## VT • Grantee Perspective

In traveling to and using other agencies' youth spaces, and in demonstrating to the populations and communities that we wish to serve that grant-funded staff are safe, consistent, understanding, non-judging people in their lives who continue to "show up" for them, we have made great inroads to homeless, runaway, and LGBT youth in our area. As a result, during this 6-month period we've seen a tremendous increase in rural, homeless, and LGBT youth served.

### HOPE WORKS, VERMONT (CONSOLIDATED YOUTH PROGRAM)

*For more information about VAWA 2013 changes to grant programs, visit: <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/ovw/legacy/2014/06/16/VAWA-2013-grant-programs-summary.pdf>*

*The National Congress of American Indians serves as a Resource Center for Implementing the Tribal Provisions of VAWA. For more information, visit: <http://www.ncai.org/tribal-vaawa/pilot-project-itwg/pilot-project>*

*In addition, Tribal Governments and Consolidated Youth Program grantees may serve victims whose primary victimization is sex trafficking.*

The Violence Against Women Act of 2005 (VAWA 2005) improved and expanded legal tools and grant programs, reauthorized programs created by the original VAWA and subsequent legislation, and strengthened federal criminal laws and legal protections for immigrants.<sup>3</sup> The Act also created new programs, with an increased emphasis on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women, as well as meeting the needs of sexual assault and youth victims.

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA 2013) made important changes and improvements to OVV-administered grant programs. It is the first federal funding statute to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.<sup>4</sup>

VAWA 2013 also included an historic provision to address a jurisdictional loophole that left many Native American women without sufficient protection from violence and abuse committed by non-Native perpetrators in Indian Country.<sup>4</sup> The Act recognized tribes' inherent authority to exercise "special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction" (SDVCJ) over both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses, intimate partners, or dating partners, or who violate certain protection orders in Indian Country. The Act also specifies the rights that a participating tribe must provide to defendants, if the tribe elects to exercise SDVCJ. As of March 7, 2015, all tribes could elect to exercise SDVCJ.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, VAWA 2013 amended the federal assault statute to empower federal prosecutors to seek significant penalties for felony-level violence against a spouse, intimate partner, or dating partner committed in Indian Country, including a 10-year offense for assaulting an intimate partner by strangling or suffocating.<sup>4</sup> The new strangulation and suffocation crime addresses the heightened awareness among criminal justice and medical professionals about the prevalence of strangulation and the corresponding escalated risk for severe injury, near fatal assault, and homicide. VAWA 2013 also clarifies that VAWA funds can be used to assist victims with issues related to severe forms of trafficking co-occurring with domestic/sexual violence, and amended several grant program statutes to authorize the use of funds to serve victims of sex trafficking.

A summary of changes encompassed in the 2013 reauthorization of VAWA can be found here: <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/ovw/legacy/2014/06/16/VAWA-2013-grant-programs-summary.pdf>.

To better document the effect of VAWA funding, VAWA 2000 required the U.S. Attorney General to report biennially on the effectiveness of activities carried out with VAWA grant funds. Specifically, the statute provides:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In May 2016, OVV released a new grant solicitation, authorized by VAWA 2013, launching the Grants to Tribal Governments to Exercise Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction Program (Tribal Jurisdiction Program). Data from this program will be presented in future reports.

**Reports by Grant Recipients.** The Attorney General or Secretary of Health and Human Services, as applicable, shall require grantees under any program authorized or reauthorized by this division [i.e., VAWA 2000] to report on the effectiveness of the activities accomplished with amounts made available to carry out that program, including number of persons served, if applicable; number of persons seeking services who could not be served; and such other information as the Attorney General or Secretary may prescribe.

**Reports to Congress.** The Attorney General or Secretary of Health and Human Services, as applicable, shall report biennially to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate on the grant programs described in subsection (a), including the information contained in any report under that subsection.

In response to these reporting requirements, OVW entered into a cooperative agreement with the Muskie School of Public Service, Catherine E. Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy (Muskie School) at the University of Southern Maine to develop and implement state-of-the-art reporting tools to capture data that demonstrate the effectiveness of VAWA grant funding.

## VAWA Funding

VAWA funding has been critical in addressing domestic and sexual violence. As of October 2016, OVW administers **19** statutorily authorized grant programs, **15** of which are discretionary. Additionally, OVW's portfolio includes active awards that were made under previously-authorized programs, as well as a comprehensive technical assistance provider initiative (Technical Assistance Program) and several special initiatives. VAWA also funds four formula grant programs—STOP Violence Against Women (STOP Program), Sexual Assault Services (SASP Program), Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions (State Coalitions Program), and Grants to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Tribal Coalitions Program (Tribal Coalitions Program).

Discretionary grant funds are awarded to a variety of recipients. Eligibility for each program is defined by the program's federal statute. States, tribal governments, city and county governments, government agencies, universities, nonprofit organizations that serve victims, and others may apply for discretionary VAWA funding. Grants are typically awarded for a period of two or three years depending on the specific program, and grantees under most programs may apply for continuation funding.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The Tulalip Tribes is one of the three tribes selected to participate as a pilot program to exercise the “Enhanced Special Domestic Violence Jurisdiction” pursuant of the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2013. The program's value has become clear over the past few months: there is much closer collaboration between the tribal prosecutor's office and the USAO, and whether or not a case is ultimately filed in tribal or federal court. The high point of the year was the day of our first arraignment hearing in a case against a non-Indian. As the hearing concluded, I turned from the bench and was amazed to see the court gallery fully packed. Aunties, grandmothers, and mothers, and other members of the community, came to see this historic event. There were many tears as the reality of this restored jurisdiction was exercised for the first time. As in past reports; the number of cases filed does not reflect the nature and magnitude of the conduct addressed in these cases. Very few of the reported cases were for a single criminal charge, and some reflected significantly higher number of counts, up to more than 30 in one case. Our efforts to send a clear message that DV/SA crimes will be addressed are bearing fruit: numbers for 2014 were up from the year before.

**TULALIP TRIBES OF WASHINGTON  
(TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**

*In addition, VAWA funds several special initiatives to enhance victim safety and autonomy, to increase the availability of victim services, and to enhance offender accountability.*

### \$224 million in FY2013

In Fiscal Year 2013, OVW made 510 discretionary awards totaling just under \$224 million.

### \$220 million in FY2014

In Fiscal Year 2014, OVW made 471 discretionary awards totaling just over \$220 million.

### \$225 million in FY2015

In Fiscal Year 2015, OVW made 472 discretionary awards totaling just under \$225 million.<sup>ii</sup>

During the July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2015 reporting period, OVW administered **20** current and formerly authorized discretionary grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and subsequent legislation. These grant programs are designed to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic/sexual violence and stalking by strengthening services to victims, and holding offenders accountable.

## Discretionary Grant Programs

- Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence and Abuse of Women Later in Life Program (**Abuse in Later Life or ALL Program**)
- Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program (**Arrest Program**)<sup>iii</sup>
- Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program (**Campus Program**)
- Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (**Consolidated Youth or CY Program**)
- Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (**Culturally Specific Services Program or CSSP**)
- Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program (**Disability Program**)
- Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program (**Justice for Families or JFF Program**)
- Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (**LAV Program**)
- Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Assistance Program (**Rural Program**)
- Sexual Assault Services Program—Grants to Culturally Specific Programs (**SASP-CS**)
- Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, or Sexual Assault Program (**Transitional Housing Program**)
- Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program (**Tribal Governments Program**)
- Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (**T-SASP**)
- Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations (**Underserved Program**)

<sup>ii</sup> These figures include numbers and amounts associated with awards funded through VAWA discretionary programs, including any noncompetitive awards made under those programs.

<sup>iii</sup> Beginning in FY 2016, this program has been renamed the Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program to more accurately reflect the program's scope. For the purposes of this report, the program will be referred to as the Arrest Program.

## Formerly Authorized Discretionary Grant Programs

- Grants to Assist Children and Youth Exposed to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (**Children Exposed to Violence or CEV Program**)
- Court Training and Improvements Program (**Courts Program**)
- Engaging Men and Youth in Preventing Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program (**Engaging Men and Youth or EMY Program**)
- Services, Training, Education, and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program (**STEP Program**)
- Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program (**Supervised Visitation Program**)
- Services to Advocate for and Respond to Youth Program (**Youth Services Program**)

In addition, OVW administers the Technical Assistance Program (**TA Program**) to provide grantees with training and expertise they need to meet the challenges of addressing domestic/sexual violence.

## Formula Grant Programs

- Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program (**State Coalitions Program**)
- Grants to Support Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions Program (**Tribal Coalitions Program**)
- STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program (**STOP Formula Grant Program**)
- Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program (**SASP Formula Grant Program**)

This 2016 Biennial Report to Congress on the Effectiveness of Grant Programs under the Violence against Women Act (2016 Biennial Report) describes data submitted by grantees of **20** current and formerly authorized discretionary grant programs. It also includes data submitted by State and Tribal Coalitions, and OVW's technical assistance providers. Data for each of these programs are provided in separate chapters of this report.

*Data from the STOP and SASP Formula Grant Programs are shared in separate Biennial Reports to Congress.*

*Full descriptions of OVW-administered grant programs can be found on the OVW website. For more information, visit: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs>*



# The Scope and Burden of Violence

## Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Sex Trafficking, and Stalking in the U.S.

Domestic and sexual violence have been major public policy issues for 22 years. These forms of violence encompass a continuum of crimes and related behaviors that primarily, but not exclusively, affect women and girls. They may be perpetrated by those closest to victims, by acquaintances, or by strangers. Offenders may use intimidation, threats, coercion, isolation, or other types of control to dominate victims. They may abuse their victims through physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or financial means. The violence is generally purposeful—designed to coerce, entrap, and subjugate victims, and to cause fear. It harms the body, mind, and spirit, and may result in severe trauma, protracted recovery, or permanent injuries. It is not uncommon for victims to experience more than one type of victimization, or to be victimized by multiple perpetrators over their lifetimes. These forms of violence rarely occur as one-time incidents, but rather comprise behaviors that are ongoing, repetitive, and patterned.

*The term “victim” is used in this report instead of “survivor” to emphasize that violence and abuse are criminal in nature and to account for victims who survive violence and those who do not.*

The economic costs of violence are far-reaching; victims rarely receive even partial reparations. Batterers may control or limit their victims’ finances and assets, economically exploit them, or sabotage their employment.<sup>5-9</sup> Violence carries a significant national annual economic burden. In 2003, the cost of medical and mental health services and lost productivity related to domestic/sexual violence (measured in losses related to paid labor, household maintenance, and homicide) was estimated to be \$8.3 billion.<sup>10</sup> However, emerging research shows that mobilizing economic support for victims—by removing financial constraints on healthcare services, supporting educational achievement, and developing employment skills—has the potential to improve victim well-being and produce partial cost avoidance for governmental agencies.<sup>11</sup>

The adverse impact of domestic/sexual violence has a ripple effect, expanding well beyond victims to their children, other family members, workplaces, and communities, ultimately affecting all sectors and institutions of society. While violence touches all communities, victims from historically underserved populations may have familial, financial, cultural, and societal experiences and circumstances that predispose them to poorer outcomes and greater barriers to accessing help from service providers and the justice system. For this reason, Congress authorized VAWA funding to assist historically underserved victims with the unique challenges they face when seeking freedom from violence.

## Domestic Violence

Under VAWA, “domestic violence” includes “any felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.”<sup>11</sup> As with sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, domestic violence affects all segments of society regardless of socioeconomic status, age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity.

Domestic/sexual violence affects millions of people in the U.S. every year. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) found that every minute, 20 people in the U.S. are victims of physical violence by an intimate partner.<sup>12</sup> One in two women and one in five men are victimized by some form of sexual violence (other than rape) at some point in their lives. One in three women and one in 10 men, or 45 million adults, experience physical violence, rape, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lives. More than one-third of female domestic/sexual violence victims suffer multiple forms of physical and sexual violence and stalking, while the vast majority (92.1%) of male victims experience physical abuse alone.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to its immediate consequences, domestic violence affects the long-term physical and mental health of its victims.<sup>12,14–16</sup> Victims may be fearful for their safety and have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. They may suffer physical harm, exhibit suicidal behavior, or miss work or school as a result of the violence inflicted by their partner. Women who are victims of domestic/sexual violence report higher rates of adverse health conditions, such as chronic pain, difficulty sleeping, irritable bowel syndrome, frequent headaches, diabetes, asthma, and activity limitations, than women who have not experienced abuse from an intimate partner. Victims may seek emergency department care at rates four times higher than the general population.<sup>17</sup>

Often coinciding with the physical and mental health consequences of domestic violence are the economic impacts of abuse. A victim’s efforts to secure and maintain employment may be compromised by a variety of controlling tactics used by the abusive partner. Victims may sustain physical and emotional injuries that require them to miss work, make it challenging to stay consistently employed, or make it difficult to concentrate while at work, and batterers may stalk or harass victims at their place of employment.<sup>18–20</sup> The resulting employment instability can lead to significant material hardship, decreased access to job benefits (e.g. health insurance, sick time, retirement), and a general decline in economic well-being.<sup>21</sup> People grappling with food and housing insecurity may be at higher risk of domestic violence than those not living in insecure food or housing circumstances.<sup>8,22</sup>

Strangulation is a particularly serious offense, and an unfortunately common form of power and control that batterers can wield over victims with potentially devastating consequences.<sup>23,24</sup> Experiencing non-fatal strangulation is a significant risk factor for future domestic violence-related homicide.<sup>25</sup> In 2010, The National Violence Death Review Reporting System (NVDRS) analyzed data from 16 participating states and found that strangulation, hanging, and suffocation account for 11.5% of female homicides annually.<sup>26</sup> In response, within the past 10 years, all 50 states have enacted or amended strangulation laws, in addition to the recent VAWA 2013 reauthorization.

A victim's life may be in most danger when they attempt to leave or seek a protection order against their abuser; batterers may feel threatened and may rapidly escalate violence.<sup>27</sup> The impact of domestic violence homicide extends beyond its victims to their family members and communities: research released by the NVDRS showed that about one-fifth (19.8%) of victims of domestic violence-related homicide were "corollary victims," or persons killed who were not the direct domestic violence victim.<sup>28</sup> Almost half (48.8%) of these corollary victims were family or household members. Of these family and household members, nearly half were minors, with more than one-third of these child victims being elementary school aged or younger. Another quarter (27.0%) of corollary victims were new intimate partners of the victim or former intimate partners of the assailant's current partner. In 2014, 953 women were killed by their male partners and 250 men were killed by their female partners in the U.S.<sup>29</sup> Emerging research shows that women's risk of being murdered by their intimate partners is highest in states with higher rates of firearms ownership.<sup>30</sup>

## Dating Violence

"Dating violence," which includes many elements of domestic violence, refers to violence committed by a person who is or has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Dating violence often begins at a young age and involves teenagers or young adults.

Nearly one in four women and one in seven men who were victims of violence were less than 18 years old at the time of their first violent encounter.<sup>12</sup> Dating violence is significantly associated with sexual victimization, too. About 71.1% of female victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner first experienced dating violence before the age of 25. Among female victims of rape, more than four in 10 victims were first raped before age 18.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), a national CDC study of violence-related health risk behaviors among 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders, found that nearly one in six females and about one in 19 males experienced sexual dating violence; about one in 10 females and about one in 32 males were forced to have sexual intercourse; and about one in nine females and about one in 13 males experienced physical dating violence.<sup>31</sup> Emerging research suggests that many youth, regardless of gender, both experience and perpetrate some form

of dating violence.<sup>32,33</sup> Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth appear to experience teen dating violence and unwanted or forced sexual intercourse at rates higher than their heterosexual peers.<sup>34</sup>

The consequences of teen dating violence are serious. Teens who are abused by their dating partners are more likely to be victimized by intimate partners in future relationships, and they are more likely to suffer poor health outcomes, increased rates of heavy drinking, depression, smoking, and suicidal ideation.<sup>35–38</sup> Children exposed to violence, physical abuse, or familial violence may be at increased risk for perpetrating or being victims of teen dating violence.<sup>33,39,40</sup>

Adolescents' use of social media is widespread, and creates opportunities for cyber abuse such as threats, bullying, revenge porn, and sexual coercion, as well as other ways of harassing, monitoring, or controlling victims through technology.<sup>41–43</sup> Among youth who perpetrate dating violence, 40.6% use computer-mediated communication as a tool of abuse—text messaging in particular.<sup>44</sup> In a study of middle- and high-school aged youth, over one-quarter (26.3%) of those in dating relationships reported some form of cyber dating abuse victimization in the prior year.<sup>45</sup> More than half (55.1%) of the sexual cyber abuse victims also reported sexual coercion (being forced to engage in unwanted sexual acts), at a rate seven times greater than those who had not experienced sexual cyber dating violence.

## Sexual Assault

VAWA, as amended by VAWA 2013, defines the term “sexual assault” as “any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.”<sup>44</sup> Broadly, sexual assault may include rape, attempted sexual assault, and threats of sexual violence. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) found that in the past decade, 30% of sexual victimizations were classified as completed rape, 23% as attempted rape, 24% as sexual assault, 18% as threats of rape or sexual assault, and 6% as unwanted sexual contact without force.<sup>46</sup>

The majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by known assailants. The NCVS found that 34% of female victims of rape or sexual violence were assaulted by an intimate partner, 38% by a friend or acquaintance, and 22% by a stranger.<sup>47</sup> Results from the NISVS show that between 2005 and 2010, of all female victims who experienced rape—whether completed, attempted, or alcohol- or drug-facilitated—approximately one-half (51.1%) were raped by a current or former intimate partner and 40.8% by an acquaintance.<sup>13</sup>

While both women and men are victims of sexual violence, women experience lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner at substantially higher rates.<sup>12</sup> Approximately one in five women and one in 59 men in the U.S. have been victims of rape during their lifetimes. Nearly one in two women and one in four men have experienced some form of sexual violence other than rape, including being forced to penetrate a perpetrator or experiencing

*The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is an ongoing telephone survey that collects information from people 18 and older about their experiences of sexual violence, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. The NISVS makes national and state-level data available simultaneously and contributes to an understanding of the impact of violence and abuse on distinct populations. Whereas the NISVS takes a public health approach to measuring incidence and prevalence, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) represents a criminal justice perspective. Through household surveys, the NCVS collects information on nonfatal crimes, including those reported and not reported to law enforcement, against people 12 and older.*

sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, or non-contact unwanted sexual experiences.

A substantial number of victims of sexual assault are first assaulted at an early age. Like other domestic/sexual violence crimes, children, youth, and college-aged young adults are particularly vulnerable populations. The NISVS found that the vast majority (78.7%) of female victims of completed rape were first raped before their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday; 40.4% experienced rape before the age of 18.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, the vast majority (71.0%) of male victims who were forced to penetrate their perpetrators were victimized while under the age of 25; 21.3% of male victims were forced to penetrate their perpetrators before the age of 18. In addition, early sexual victimization may increase the risk of repeated victimization. Previous national findings revealed that women who were raped before the age of 18 were twice as likely to be raped as adults.

Research shows that at least one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college.<sup>48</sup> A study of 1,905 undergraduate college women found that nearly one-third of the respondents experienced at least one incident of unwanted sexual contact.<sup>49</sup> Nearly one-third said they had been stalked or followed repeatedly by the same male; another quarter said they had received multiple obscene phone calls by a male perpetrator. Another study found that among fourth-year college seniors, one-quarter of the women surveyed reported experiencing at least one form of sexual assault while enrolled as a college student: 15% experienced an attempted physically forcible rape, 11% experienced an incapacitated rape, and 10% experienced a physically forcible rape.<sup>50</sup>

In response to the high prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses, the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, in collaboration with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, released the Campus Climate Validation Survey (CCSVS) Final Technical Report.<sup>51</sup> Colleges nationwide can use the validated survey instrument and toolkit to gauge sexual assault prevalence on their campuses, assess students' perceptions of their school's response to sexual assault, and identify solutions. Findings from the pilot study, conducted on nine college campuses with over 23,000 respondents, showed that incoming first-year students were at particular risk of being sexually assaulted early in the school year; highlighting the need for prevention education before college ever begins.

*Colleges nationwide can use the sample study and toolkit to gauge sexual assault prevalence on campus, assess students' perceptions of their school's response to sexual assault, and identify solutions. For more information about the Task Force, visit: <https://www.notalone.gov/assets/ovw-climate-survey.pdf>*

Sexual assault and sexual violence are associated with considerable varied and serious physical, psychological, and emotional health consequences for victims, such as depression, PTSD, shame, and substance abuse.<sup>52,53</sup> Sexual assault may also result in physical injuries ranging from minor injuries and bruising to blunt force trauma, defensive injuries, and attempted strangulation; victims may also suffer internal and anogenital injuries.<sup>54</sup> Students who are victims of sexual assault are more likely to report symptoms of depression and PTSD, and lower academic achievement than those who have not experienced sexual assault.<sup>52,55</sup>

Despite the high prevalence rate, and adverse health consequences of experiencing sexual assault, reporting rates remain low. Research shows that only five to 20% of rapes are ever reported to law enforcement.<sup>56</sup> Victims are more likely to disclose sexual assault to their friends or peers, rather than law enforcement.<sup>57</sup> This is likely due to a combination of factors: a victim may experience shame, self-blame, fear of retaliation or re-traumatization, distrust in law enforcement, or may not identify the experience as a crime. Between 2005 and 2010, victims reported that police collected evidence in only 19% of the cases to which they responded.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, an arrest was only made at the scene or during a follow-up investigation 31% of the time.

In an online study about women's disclosure of sexual assault, almost one-quarter (23.9%) of respondents indicated that they had not previously disclosed an unwanted sexual experience to anyone.<sup>58</sup> Those revealing unwanted sexual experiences for the first time were more likely to blame themselves for the assault (63.8% vs. 39.1%).

## Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is a form of sexual violence that involves the use of physical violence, threats, fraud, or other types of coercion to force victims to engage in commercial sex acts. Traffickers frequently target vulnerable individuals, who may have prior histories of abuse or domestic/sexual violence, and then use violence, force, fraud, coercion, threats, and other forms of power and control to induce victims to perform such acts and stay involved in the sex industry.<sup>59</sup> As with other forms of sexual violence, victims of sex trafficking are disproportionately female.<sup>60</sup> Many victims are also victims of domestic/sexual violence, and frequently experience helplessness, shame, guilt, self-blame, humiliation; they may display symptoms of PTSD, phobias, panic attacks, anxiety, and depression, and suffer from sleep or eating disorders and drug or alcohol addiction.<sup>61-65</sup> Victims typically lack financial security and employment skills. Further, without the housing provided by traffickers, they are homeless. Accordingly, leaving can be a long and complex process that requires extensive social support and significant personal determination.<sup>66</sup>

In 2000, Congress authorized the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).<sup>67</sup> While states subsequently passed laws criminalizing labor and sex trafficking, few traffickers have been prosecuted in the following years due to systemic reluctance to prosecute, inevitable jurisdictional and case complexity, and little participation by sex trafficking victims in the prosecution of traffickers. Specialized courts are now emerging; court personnel are developing expertise in working with victims of trafficking, and responding appropriately by treating trafficked persons as victims, rather than offenders. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), a 24-hour confidential, multi-modal hotline and resource center serving the U.S. and U.S. territories, saw an increase of 259% in calls for assistance from 2008 to 2012.<sup>59</sup> More than 85% of the victims seeking services from the NHTRC were women and girls; the majority of victims were from pimp-controlled commercial sex trade venues (e.g. hotels/motels, streets, truck stops). Further research is needed to

determine the prevalence of sex trafficking as a limited, albeit growing body of research shows that sex trafficking is extremely underreported.

Overall, research on the prevalence of sex trafficking victimization and commercial sexual exploitation remains limited, and obtaining reliable estimates that provide information about victims' experiences has proven complicated.<sup>68</sup> Victims are often invisible to society, as traffickers regularly confine, hide, and relocate them. Moreover, disclosure of their victimization may result in severe repercussions from traffickers, and/or criminalization by law enforcement. As such, many victims are not accounted for in criminal justice databases and statistics.

## Stalking

OVW defines “stalking” as a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. Stalking may include repeated, unwanted, intrusive, and frightening communications from the perpetrator by phone, mail, email, or social media. Perpetrators may leave unwanted items, presents, or flowers; or follow or wait for their victim at locations such as home, school, work, or places of recreation. They may place victims under surveillance, either by themselves or by third parties. They may make direct or indirect threats to harm the victim, the victim's children, relatives, friends, or pets; they may damage or threaten to damage personal property. Perpetrators may engage in cyber stalking, which can involve harassing the victim through the Internet, posting information or spreading rumors about the victim on the Internet, obtaining personal information by accessing Internet records, and using GPS and spyware to track the victim's activities and whereabouts.<sup>12,69,70</sup>

The fear a victim endures is an important factor in stalking situations. According to most state criminal code definitions of stalking, a victim must demonstrate fear as a result of the stalker's actions, before it can be legally considered criminal; no other crime is defined by a victim's emotional response. Research reveals that females who experience stalking are much more likely to be afraid and fearful for their safety than are males.<sup>71-73</sup> Further, stalking is rarely a singular act. Nearly half (46.1%) of stalking victims report at least one unwanted contact per week and 11.1% report that they have been stalked by the same person for five years or more.<sup>69,74</sup>

Though stalking is underreported, approximately one in seven (15.2%) women and one in 19 (5.7%) men in the U.S. have experienced stalking at some point in their lives.<sup>12</sup> The majority (61.7%) of female victims of stalking report being approached at work or at home, more than half report having received unwanted calls (55.3%) or messages (54.5%), and nearly half report being watched, followed, or tracked with some type of device during their lifetimes. The general public may be most familiar with stalking by strangers, but only about one in six (16.2%) women and one in five (20.0%) men are stalked by strangers. The majority of victims are stalked by individuals they know:

about two-thirds (66.2%) of female victims and 41.4% of male victims are stalked by a current or former intimate partner.<sup>13</sup> Women are stalked by their intimate partners at rates far greater than men; approximately one in 11 (9.2%) women and one in 40 (2.5%) men are stalked by intimate partners during their lives. Women who are divorced or separated experience the highest rates of stalking.<sup>74</sup>

Age is a risk factor for stalking. People between the ages of 18 and 24 experience the highest levels of stalking, and more than half of female victims report that their first stalking experience occurred before age 25.<sup>12,69</sup> Stalking is more common on college campuses than in the general population. According to one study of nearly 1,600 college students, approximately four in 10 respondents had experienced some form of stalking victimization.<sup>75</sup> However, victims often do not recognize stalking as a crime. Of students reporting behavior that qualified as stalking, only about one-quarter (24.7%) self-identified as stalking victims; their acknowledgment of the stalking was linked with more severe and injurious offenses by the offenders.

Being stalked, and experiencing fear and threats, was found to be significantly correlated with the severity of PTSD symptoms and psychological distress experienced by female victims of stalking.<sup>76-78</sup> The psychological, emotional, and financial devastation to victims can last for months or even years after the stalking ceases.<sup>79</sup> In addition to the trauma that stalking victims experience, they may also face significant financial hardship as they may have to move, cancel cell phone plans, change jobs, reduce employment, or purchase expensive security systems in attempts to remain safe. Of those stalking victims who had jobs, 13.1% reported they had missed work due to fear or concern for their safety; more than half lost five or more days of work during the previous 12 months; and approximately 130,000 victims were either asked to resign or were fired from their jobs because they were stalking victims.<sup>74</sup>

# The Effectiveness of VAWA Funding: An Overview

Domestic/sexual violence is a pressing public health concern that has extensive consequences for victims, offenders, families, communities, and our nation. Responsive programming that adapts to meet the evolving needs of victims and their families is an essential component of cultivating safe and secure communities. Victim services, the criminal and civil justice systems response, and prevention programming continue to evolve as they are evaluated and informed by research and experience.

Using current research on strategies to respond to these crimes, serve victims, and hold offenders accountable, OVW invests in proven strategies and solutions to further the common goal of ending domestic/sexual violence. The following sections of this report outline critical components of the response to domestic/sexual violence, such as collaborative partnerships between agencies; core victim services; criminal and civil justice practices; culturally specific approaches to serving historically underserved victims; technical assistance and capacity building; and prevention programming. Each section includes peer-reviewed and government-funded research, best practices from the field, aggregate grantee data, and anecdotal reports from grantees themselves that demonstrate the effectiveness of VAWA-funded activities.



# Coordinated Community Response

As communities across the country identified domestic and sexual violence as significant problems, victim advocacy organizations and criminal justice agencies began to collaborate to stop violence, protect victims, and hold offenders accountable. This type of collaboration, which frames all grantees' efforts in addressing domestic/sexual violence, is known as a coordinated community response (CCR). Research shows that efforts to address domestic/sexual violence are most effective when combined and integrated in this way.<sup>80-83</sup>

CCRs foster communication, improve understanding of different roles among members, create changes in practice and policy, and provide opportunities to share critical information that may improve how cases are handled. Typically, representatives of participating organizations increase their knowledge and awareness of each other's roles and responsibilities in their community systems, make professional connections that enable meaningful and increased referrals and services for victims, and influence important decision-making within the legal system.<sup>84</sup> For example, in some states, family violence coordinating councils promote interagency interventions to address domestic violence. The formation and ongoing development of these collaborations may improve the rate at which emergency protection orders became final orders.<sup>85</sup>

First formally developed in Duluth, MN; the CCR framework initially focused on reforms in the criminal legal system and improving the practice of law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges, probation personnel, and victim advocates. Criminal justice practitioners and victim advocates provided and received training on these changes in approach, and established systems to evaluate adherence to the reforms within each sector. Eventually, CCR efforts expanded to include cross-disciplinary collaborations to examine and revise policies; address system challenges and gaps in services; overcome obstacles to victim safety and offender accountability; and produce recommendations for change. CCRs have been broadened further by grantees to include representatives from schools, workplaces, churches, community groups, neighborhoods, and culturally specific populations. Including employers in the coordinated response, for example, may contribute to changing social attitudes about intimate partner violence through the implementation of workplace policies and procedures that support victims and hold offenders accountable. Furthermore, recognizing that an effective response must account for the unique needs of marginalized and culturally specific populations, some grantees have refocused their collaborative efforts on involving a more diverse range of community stakeholders in impactful ways.



## NY • Grantee Perspective

We were able to create an Elder Abuse Multidisciplinary Team which looks at complex cases of elder abuse. As a result of one of these meetings, the district attorney and law enforcement officer were able to plan together what might be necessary to make an arrest and successfully prosecute an offender. At the same time, the victim was linked to services and provided emotional supports. All involved in that case had also been involved with the basic and advanced law enforcement and prosecutor training provided by the grant.

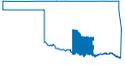
**VERA HOUSE INCORPORATED, NEW YORK (ABUSE IN LATER LIFE PROGRAM)**



## LA • Grantee Perspective

Funds were used to modify the Electronic Police Reporting System for improved documentation and tracking of domestic violence incidents. The four Blueprint Risk Questions are now built into every domestic violence police report narrative (seen by prosecution and judges before the full report at bond setting). Strangulation indicators, language access, and translation information have also been added. Through the Mayor's Office quarterly working group meetings, our Blueprint agencies have initiated discussions about the implementation of the Blueprint, how to strategize solutions for gaps in response or unintended consequences, and share information pertinent to our interagency approach. These meetings have greatly strengthened the implementation of our Blueprint, and our CCR overall.

**CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This grant provides expansion of sexual assault services to Native victims via sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs) at the Chickasaw Nation Medical Center. Grant funding also assists with SANE supplies, and training for those providing the exams. The Chickasaw Nation Medical Center has three fully trained SANE nurses, and one that is completing the supervision part of SANE exams. SANE services at the tribal hospital have been in full operation since October 2012, and since this program began, a total of 15 victims have been served. Prior to this program, SANE exams were only offered at the local community hospital. If a SANE was not available, victims were given the choice to travel 40 miles or more to receive an exam, and often would decide not to follow through. This grant allows the Chickasaw Nation Office of Violence Prevention to be instrumental in developing and implementing the SANE program at our tribal hospital, and ensuring SANE exams are always available for our Native victims.

**CHICKASAW NATION (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**

The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a broadly implemented example of a CCR. Research shows that SARTs can improve legal outcomes, the help-seeking experiences of victims, and relationships between multidisciplinary responders.<sup>86,87</sup> SARTs bring together professionals from the criminal legal, medical, mental health, and advocacy sectors to enhance cross-system coordination and strengthen each sector's ability to respond to sexual assault.

Some SARTs engage an even broader range of professionals—first responders (i.e. law enforcement, advocates, and healthcare providers) as well as those providing and coordinating ongoing resources for sexual assault victims within the community (e.g. mental health, public health, substance abuse, and other social services)—to improve the community response.<sup>88</sup> Through the use of a national protocol for adult and child sexual assault medical forensic examinations and other best practices, SARTs ensure victims' access to immediate care and services and facilitate evidence collection that can be used to support investigation and prosecution.<sup>89,90</sup>

Grantees focus on interagency coordination and collaboration, whether through formal partnerships or community networking; and detail the frequency of victim referrals and victim or case-level consultations, and of systems-level interactions, such as task force, work group, or coordinating council meetings. Across the 2-year reporting period, **1,701** VAWA-funded grantees engaged in coordinated community response-related activities.

# Criminal Justice Response

Domestic and sexual violence are serious crimes that have lasting impacts on victims' lives and take a significant toll on communities, affecting millions of people in the U.S. every year. These crimes have fatal consequences: in 2013, women in the U.S. were 15 times more likely to be killed by intimate partners than by strangers.<sup>91</sup> Nearly three-quarters (72%) of murder-suicides are perpetrated by intimate partners.<sup>92</sup>

Furthermore, the consequences of these crimes can extend beyond the primary victim and reach corollary victims, including family and community members.<sup>28</sup> Those who perpetrate domestic/sexual violence often have extensive criminal histories; they are charged with more assaults and violent offenses than people who do not perpetrate domestic violence, and have high rates of recidivism for both domestic violence and non-domestic violence crimes.<sup>93,94</sup>

The criminal justice system is designed to enhance victim safety and hold offenders accountable for their actions through investigation, arrest, and prosecution, as well as through close judicial scrutiny and management of offender behavior. To ensure that victim safety is paramount in the development of strategies to address these crimes, agencies within the criminal justice system must collaborate through meaningful partnerships with nonprofit, sexual assault, and domestic violence organizations and coalitions.

## Law Enforcement

Law enforcement officers are often the gatekeepers of the criminal legal system. Without an appropriate law enforcement response, victims' safety remains in jeopardy and offenders escape accountability, almost invariably committing more violence. In the absence of thorough investigation, probable cause assessment, arrest, and charging, offenders are immune from prosecution and potential sanctions: arrest rates remain low, removal of firearms from perpetrators is inconsistent, and sexual assault kits go untested.<sup>95-100</sup>

Gender bias affecting law enforcement's response to domestic and sexual violence is a factor impeding the ability to bring offenders to justice.<sup>101</sup> Sexual assault perpetrators are infrequently arrested, and these low rates persist despite corroborating evidence such as witnesses, physical evidence, weapon use, or evidence obtained through a medical forensic exam.<sup>56,102</sup> Victims' perceived "lack of credibility" may be used as a reason not to arrest perpetrators.<sup>103</sup> Officers may believe that intimate partner/non-stranger rape is "not real rape," is the victim's "fault," and does not implicate "public safety" as does stranger rape, while others who affirm victim credibility may attribute the low arrest rate in sexual assault cases to a lack of departmental leadership.<sup>102</sup> In addition, arrest rates can decrease when domestic violence suspects flee from the scene of domestic abuse, as officers do not typically pursue fleeing

*In FY 2014, OVW developed the Domestic Violence Homicide Reduction Initiative (DVHRI), in partnership with the National Institute of Justice. This demonstration project comprises 12 jurisdictions nationwide working to avert domestic violence homicides. DVHRI's intensive partnerships may include state or local government bodies, tribal nations, all sectors of the criminal justice system, domestic violence programs, other victim advocacy and service agencies, and researchers. These projects will utilize and evaluate promising and evidence-based strategies for domestic violence risk assessment and threat management to reduce or eliminate domestic violence homicides (DVHs), particularly in jurisdictions where DVHs are increasing or not diminishing.*

*In many communities, fatality review teams have been established to identify deaths caused by domestic violence and to examine any systemic interventions that occurred prior to these deaths, in the hopes of improving the systemic response to eradicate domestic violence. For more information, visit: <http://ndvfri.org/>*

*In efforts to eradicate bias in the criminal justice system, Attorney General Loretta Lynch recently addressed gender bias in policing with "Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence," eight principles of practice designed to ensure that gender bias does not undermine intervention efforts by law enforcement to safeguard victims and hold offenders accountable. The International Association of Chiefs of Police also supports law enforcement agencies around the country in constructing policy and training initiatives to confront bias in policing.*

offenders or seek arrest warrants for them, despite the likelihood that these assailants will inflict more serious violence and more frequently reoffend.<sup>104</sup>

In jurisdictions where the discretion of law enforcement is subject to mandatory and preferred arrest laws and policies, arrest practices may compromise the interests of victims or may produce disproportionate arrest rates among marginalized populations, including people of color, and particularly African American men.<sup>105,106</sup> Where departmental policy or law does not require officers to make a primary aggressor determination, victim input may not be fully considered in the investigation process, resulting in dual arrest of the parties, arrest only of the victim, or failure to arrest the perpetrator.<sup>107,108</sup> Accordingly, arrests of both victims and perpetrators (i.e. “dual arrests”), as well as the arrest rate of victims solely, are higher in mandatory/preferred arrest jurisdictions.<sup>105,109,110</sup> The consequent adverse outcomes for arrested victims are significant; victims may be reluctant to seek police assistance if they believe that they may be arrested.<sup>111</sup> Further, gender, race, and class neutrality in state and federal law and policy mask interpersonal and structural inequalities that influence domestic/sexual violence, and the systemic responses to these crimes.<sup>112,113</sup> Inattention to these inequalities contributes to the disparate rates, patterns, and impacts of victimization based in gender and sexual identity.<sup>114,115</sup>

Law enforcement recovery of firearms from domestic/sexual violence perpetrators who are prohibited from possession of firearms and ammunition by state and federal laws remains infrequent in many jurisdictions.<sup>98,100</sup> This failure can have deadly consequences. A recent study found that women in states with higher rates of gun ownership are at a higher risk of being killed by someone they know.<sup>30</sup> The researchers found that gun ownership rates alone explain 40% of the variation in women’s homicide victimization rates, compared to only 1.5% of the variation in men’s victimization rates. Many perpetrators are able to acquire or retain guns, as prohibitions against possession or ownership are not always contained in criminal information databases.<sup>116</sup> Thus firearms dealers rely on databases that do not contain all relevant prohibitors, and law enforcement seeking to enforce criminal and civil protection orders, and/or mental health commitment laws, may not be able to identify prohibited persons. Furthermore, while the number of protection orders in the National Criminal Information Center’s database (NCIC), maintained by the FBI, has been level since 2010, the number of orders in state “prohibited persons” repositories has risen during that time, meaning that firearm prohibitor information is only available at the state level in many cases.<sup>116-118</sup> Fortunately, the 2008 NICS Improvement Amendments Act dramatically improved states’ capacities to automate records and submit data to federal databases. Finally, according to a July 2016 report from the Government Accountability Office, just under 7,000 domestic violence offenders were able to buy firearms between 2006 and 2015, due to a “default proceed” which allows gun dealers to proceed with sales if the FBI does not complete a background check within three business days.<sup>119</sup>

Sexual assault kit (SAK) evidence, including DNA, can be a significant resource in sexual assault investigations. It can help identify the assailant in cases of sexual assault committed by a stranger, and it can link a crime—regardless of whether the offender is known—with other crimes committed by the same offender. SAK testing and analysis produces critical evidence that demonstrates intimate contact between victims and suspects, corroborates victims' allegations, and identifies or eliminates possible suspects.<sup>96,97,120</sup> Without evidence beyond a victim's account of what happened, police may elect not to forward cases to prosecutors, who may decline more sexual assault cases than they accept.<sup>121,122</sup> However, thousands of untested SAKs remain in police property lockers across the country.<sup>123</sup> Despite Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) that work to expedite rape case prosecution, failure to submit SAKs for testing persists, as a result of victim-blaming beliefs and behaviors by police, absence of formal policies and protocols for submitting kits to a lab, impact of budget cuts on police and crime lab workforces, frequent turnover in law enforcement leadership, and the lack of community-based advocacy.

Many law enforcement agencies have adopted significant policy, procedural, and practice changes that have enhanced the criminal legal process, contributed to reduced recidivism, and increased victim safety and satisfaction. Swift responses to reported abuse and thorough investigations, supported with training and resources, can increase the rates at which cases are referred to prosecutors, accepted for prosecution, and that result in convictions.<sup>124</sup> Law enforcement officers who are trained in and adhere to best practices are more likely to arrest perpetrators.<sup>125</sup> These practices include: conducting investigations in-person, following up with victims after initial contact, conducting safety planning with victims, assessing the needs of children exposed to violence, providing victims with emergency cell phones, describing protection orders and court procedures, connecting victims with available shelter and services, explaining the effects of domestic violence on children, and helping victims feel safe.

Recognizing that not all domestic violence is the same, that the risks posed by perpetrator coercive controls and violence vary, that threat management must be individually tailored to constrain each perpetrator, and that uniform response to victims will not effectively support their safety strategies, several evidence-based approaches to assessing lethality risk in domestic violence cases are being implemented in jurisdictions across the country.

For example, the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) is an evidence-based intervention now used by law enforcement in 36 states when responding to victims of domestic violence.<sup>126</sup> Responding officers employing the LAP engage domestic violence victims in assessing the levels of risk posed by their intimate partners, and facilitate their access to victim services. Should this assessment tool identify high-risk for repeat, severe, or near-lethal domestic abuse, responding officers, with the permission of victims, place a call to the local domestic violence service program to connect victims with hotline advocates, who can then discuss safety planning, legal and emergency housing options,

*The Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) of the Bureau of Justice Assistance now provides funding to support “multidisciplinary community resource teams engaged in the comprehensive reform of approaches to sexual assault cases resulting from evidence found in previously unsubmitted SAKs.” The Flint, MI Police Department recently reported that funding awarded in 2015 aided in the arrest of a man charged with 11 felonies in three separate rape cases.*



#### **MI • Grantee Perspective**

Funding has helped the Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (WCPO) to identify the scope of the problem of untested SAKs in Wayne County. The WCPO has identified the personnel, tools, equipment, and community partners needed to successfully and timely investigate over 10,000 sexual assaults. This has allowed the WCPO to seek additional funding, and to leverage the existing funds obtained under the [VAWA funding] to address these cases.

#### **WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (ARREST PROGRAM)**

*In some jurisdictions, “high-risk response teams,” often composed of law enforcement, victim advocates, court personnel, human service providers, and attorneys representing victims, deliberate with victims exposed to high risk of recurring, severe violence about possible heightened deterrence strategies to avert repeat violence. Team representatives may make home visits, accompany victims to legal proceedings, advocate for enhanced protective services, or support victims attempting to access critical counseling or economic resources. For more information, visit: <http://www.dvhr.org/>*



### MN • Grantee Perspective

Prior to this funding and [implementing] the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), Alexandra House reached domestic assault victims who were referred by law enforcement approximately 64% of the time. With this funding, LAP processes were implemented in all 11 law enforcement jurisdictions. Now high-risk victims are being reached at a rate of 90%. From 2012-2014, of 1,081 victims identified as high-risk via LAP processes, currently 81% have or are receiving ongoing services.

**ANOKA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, MINNESOTA (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this funding, there was no formalized mechanism for all law enforcement jurisdictions to identify the most dangerous offenders and to target services to those victims at the highest risk for fatality. In the past, law enforcement made attempts to connect victims with advocates, but these connections were inconsistent and not based on an objective, validated screening tool. This funding has provided for better identification of and service to high-risk victims. Additionally, this funding has allowed DVSAS to do proactive, targeted outreach and advocacy to this subset of clients who are in the most dangerous relationships. This grant funded the High Risk Legal Advocate in connecting with 45 victims identified as being in high danger. 14 of the victims who were identified by the LAP had never accessed services before. As research has shown, connecting victims to advocacy services greatly decreases their likelihood to be fatally wounded in a domestic or dating violence incident.

**CITY OF BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON (ARREST PROGRAM)**

and crisis services. When first responders use the LAP process, the frequency and severity of violence decrease, and victims may adopt protective strategies and seek help more often.<sup>127,128</sup> This intervention is also designed to educate victims about risk factors for danger, to improve their decision-making about self-care, and to encourage them to pursue shelter and advocacy services. In other interventions, such as the Domestic Violence Home Visit Intervention (DVHVI), law enforcement and victim advocates forge relationships to provide “second responder outreach” to foster victim engagement in the legal system, offer individualized assistance based on victim needs, enhance victim safety, reduce recidivism, and increase reporting of recurring violence.<sup>129</sup>

VAWA funds efforts to improve and expand the criminal justice system’s response to victims of domestic/sexual violence. In particular, Arrest, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees are awarded funds for law enforcement activities and staff. Other programs that are awarded funds for training can train law enforcement officers, and engage law enforcement in coordinated community response efforts.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **102** Arrest, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees used funds for law enforcement activities;
- These grantees supported an average of **56** full-time equivalent (FTE) law enforcement officers;
- Overall, VAWA-funded grantees trained at least **89,937** law enforcement officers;
- Overall, VAWA-funded grantees trained **11,519** sexual assault nurse examiners/sexual assault forensic examiners (SANEs/SAFEs);
- An average of **57** Arrest and Rural Program grantees used funds to develop, support, and train specialized law enforcement units;
- Law enforcement officers in Arrest Program-funded agencies responded to **229,619** calls for assistance, made more than **66,095** arrests, investigated **169,546** cases, and referred **76,146** cases to prosecutors;
- Overall, an average of **812** VAWA-funded grantees from all programs included in this report engaged in coordinated community response–related meetings with local, state, and/or federal law enforcement agency staff; and
- An average of **157** Rural, Tribal Governments, and T-SASP Program grantees engaged in these meetings with tribal law enforcement.

## Prosecution

Since the enactment of VAWA, significant innovations in the prosecution of domestic/sexual violence have been implemented, such as the development of comprehensive investigation policies and procedures; the establishment and expansion of specialized units; technology upgrades; increased numbers of dedicated prosecutors, investigators, and victim advocates; and the

availability of training and technical assistance. As demonstrated by grantees, these innovations have resulted in improved victim outreach, enhanced charges for repeat abusers, increased prosecution and conviction rates, upgraded sanctions of convicted abusers, and protections and restitution for victims. In addition, with the recognition of sex trafficking as commercial sexual exploitation, legislators, policymakers, and criminal justice system leadership have explored alternatives to criminalization and incarceration for many of those arrested for prostitution, instead identifying them as victims of sex trafficking.<sup>130</sup> However, additional systemic improvements are necessary, as the prosecutorial response to domestic/sexual violence is inconsistent within and across jurisdictions. For example, while laws have been enacted in all states regarding strangulation, it is not prosecuted consistently.<sup>131</sup>

Victim resistance to participation in prosecution is often cited as the most compelling reason to decline prosecution in cases involving domestic/sexual violence.<sup>95</sup> In many cases, a victim's reluctance to participate may be due to the knowledge that s/he will lose financial security if her/his abuser is prosecuted.<sup>132</sup> Victim intimidation or tampering with victim-witnesses are often significant reasons for victim reluctance to cooperate in prosecution, and prosecutors may not routinely screen for either of these factors.<sup>133</sup> In addition, prosecutors often decline domestic/sexual violence cases based on factors other than evidence of the crimes alleged, such as a victim's possible prior criminal record or substance use, and whether the victim invited the suspect to her/his residence.<sup>134</sup> These non-evidentiary factors consistently emerge as significant determinants of whether a case is prosecuted, whether a defendant is found guilty, or the severity of the sentence imposed. However, sexual assault cases may be more likely to be investigated and prosecuted, and reach the final stages of prosecution (i.e. conviction at trial and/or guilty plea bargains), after the implementation of a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) program.<sup>135</sup>

Early intervention and victim outreach immediately after defendants are arraigned may lead to an increase in victim participation in prosecution, and an increase in conviction rates.<sup>81,136,137</sup> Prosecutors should engage victims in the justice process by actively seeking their input and inclusion, prioritizing their safety and well-being, and communicating an understanding of the impact of these crimes. Domestic violence victims whose cases are prosecuted in a way that aligns with these principles may be less likely to report both psychological and physical violence after case disposition.<sup>138</sup> Preliminary evidence shows that videotaping statements of domestic violence perpetrators by prosecutorial staff may improve evidence, increase the conviction rate (particularly when victim testimony is not available at trial), when defendants acknowledge the existence of a protection order, or when they admit to violating the order.<sup>139</sup>

*The National Academy of Science recommends "safe harbor" laws for victims of trafficking under 18 years, whereby minors are referred to child welfare or other social services systems rather than arrested or prosecuted.*



#### NC • Grantee Perspective

The grant has given us the freedom to focus on our cases, dedicating a significant amount of time to developing relationships with victims and identifying the underlying issues in their cases. This has led to the successful prosecution of several repeat offenders whose victims were previously uncooperative. Once victims understood that we offered judgment-free support and assistance, they were more likely to return for help, and more educated about their options for safety.

**HAYWOOD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA 30<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLIANCE, INC. (ARREST PROGRAM)**



#### OK • Grantee Perspective

The grant has allowed the District Attorney's Office to have a prosecutor, dedicated only to these crimes, go through training about the most effective ways to keep victims safe and hold offenders accountable. Without the grant, the District Attorney's Office would not have the funding to employ a dedicated prosecutor who has the time to appropriately develop cases. Having the specialized prosecutor has allowed the office to develop a network with other disciplines in the field to help provide the best services to victims.

**OKLAHOMA DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S COUNCIL (RURAL PROGRAM)**



### WI • Grantee Perspective

Funding has allowed our District Attorney's Office to provide vertical prosecution of felony cases and serious misdemeanors cases. Vertical prosecution is the most effective method of handling the case, as the prosecutor who charges the case and interviews the victim also handles the matter through trial and sentencing. This model has enabled our office to maintain a conviction rate for felony prosecution of 66% or better since 2011. In the most recent 6-month reporting period, the vertical prosecutors achieved a 79% conviction rate, the highest of any prior 6-month reporting period for felony prosecution within the Domestic Violence Unit.

**MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN DISTRICT ATTORNEY (ARREST PROGRAM)**

VAWA grant programs promote development and improvement of effective prosecution strategies to address domestic/sexual violence. In particular, Arrest, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees are awarded funds for prosecution activities and staff. Arrest and Rural Program grantees can use funds to develop, support, and/or train specialized prosecution units; other programs that are awarded funds for training can train prosecutors.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **77** Arrest, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees funded prosecution activities;
- These grantees supported an average of **45** full-time equivalent (FTE) prosecutors;
- Overall, VAWA-funded grantees trained at least **15,680** prosecutors;
- **48** Arrest and Rural Program grantees used funds to develop, support, and/or train specialized prosecution units; and
- Data reported by Arrest Program-funded prosecution offices showed a conviction rate<sup>iv</sup> of **71%** for sexual assault cases.

A total of **160,091** domestic/sexual violence cases were referred to Arrest Program-funded prosecution offices; **74%** of the cases were accepted for prosecution. A total of **125,812** cases were disposed of by Arrest Program-funded prosecutors, with **69,438** of those cases resulting in convictions.<sup>v</sup>

## Courts

From pre-trial to post-conviction, VAWA has supported court systems reforms that increase victims' access to justice, improve offender accountability, and reduce recidivism.<sup>140,141</sup> Judges are leaders in configuring new, specialized court structures and processes, such as criminal domestic violence courts, civil protection order dockets, integrated domestic violence courts, teen or youth courts, sex offender courts, tribal domestic violence dockets, and sex trafficking courts.<sup>142,143</sup> These specialized courts use universal best practices, such as risk assessment, judicial monitoring, case management/coordination, victim advocacy, expedited hearings, opportunities for victim participation, staff training, and partnerships with key stakeholders.<sup>142,144</sup>

A key component of informed judicial decision-making is risk assessment, or the process of appraising an offender's likelihood of recidivism. Judges and judicial officers must evaluate an offender's risk to victims when setting bail and pre-trial release conditions, and determining sentencing, probation, and monitoring terms. Risk assessment tools and processes can be used in civil,

<sup>iv</sup> Convictions include cases of deferred adjudication, which represents 5% of sexual assault conviction outcomes.

<sup>v</sup> Convictions include cases of deferred adjudication, which represents 10% of all conviction outcomes.

criminal, and family law cases to identify red flags for stalking and for severe and potentially fatal domestic/sexual violence.<sup>145-147</sup> By performing these assessments, judges can impose sanctions that deter recidivism. Domestic violence offenders who are sentenced appropriately, given the severity of the crimes, are less likely to commit new domestic violence crimes.<sup>148</sup> In addition, emerging innovations in technology, such as automated forecasting models, may augment effective judicial decision-making by accurately predicting the likelihood that offenders will re-offend, potentially improving release decisions.<sup>149</sup>

Judicial monitoring, a system of mandated court appearances before judicial officers to determine offender compliance with sentencing provisions and to impose swift sanctions for non-compliance, may facilitate offender adherence to court orders and sentencing provisions.<sup>150</sup> Judicial monitoring sessions are opportunities to reiterate and clarify information about requirements, restrictions, and consequences for violations. Likewise, offenders assigned to judicial monitoring may be more likely to understand their obligations and to recognize that noncompliance will result in serious consequences.

Courts have invested significantly in integrated electronic data systems that enhance case management, improve offender accountability, and automate victim notification. Integrated electronic court records can improve the delivery of court information and orders to federal databases, and automate victim notification systems. The VAWA-created federal full faith and credit provision, along with the VAWA and Brady Act firearms prohibitions, encouraged many courts to produce digital orders and files that can be uploaded to the FBI's National Crime Information Center's Protection Order File (NCIC-POF), the Interstate Identification Index (III), and the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) files, thereby improving information exchange.<sup>4,151</sup> In addition, automated victim notification (AVN) systems in nearly all states can be used to apprise victims and providers of offender court events and status changes.<sup>152</sup> These systems can enhance victim safety, improve access to offender information and tracking, increase victims' sense of empowerment, and elicit greater involvement in their legal cases. Research shows that the majority of service providers use AVN systems. Fewer victims are aware that they too can use these systems, although those that do use them report being satisfied.

Specialized courts, in which trained advocates provide support to victims, and judges who demonstrate knowledge of domestic/sexual violence and appropriate treatment of victims, are designed to promote victim agency, involvement, and empowerment, so that victims are part of the justice process and can explain their unique safety concerns.<sup>153</sup> For example, integrated domestic violence (IDV) courts utilize a "one judge, one family" approach, scheduling criminal, civil, protection orders, and other family-related cases and matters to be heard by the same judge, and whenever possible, on the same day. Advocates can privately share information with victims about court processes, publicly facilitate the presentation of victim impact statements and sentencing requests, and support victims throughout the proceedings.



#### AL • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this funding, we did not track domestic violence offenses from each municipal court system. Therefore, in our extremely large county, with multiple municipal courts, the offender was being treated like a first-time offender. As our database expanded to include up to 20 counties in Southern Alabama, we are now able to track these offenses and make them available state-wide through LETS; this would not have been possible without Arrest grant funding. By doing this, we have been able to hold domestic violence offenders accountable and to enhance misdemeanors to felonies and thus have them receive longer jail sentences and longer probation terms.

**MOBILE COUNTY, ALABAMA DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### AL • Grantee Perspective

Having a magistrate on-site keeps the victim from having to drive or go to a different location to secure a warrant. This service also increases victim safety. The Family Justice Center is the first center in the state to provide an on-site magistrate. Now, victims are able to access all services in one building and staff is able to follow the victim from start to finish. Upon coming to the Family Justice Center, victims are offered all services, but participation in all services is not a requirement. During this 6-month reporting period, our on-site Magistrate signed 83 misdemeanor domestic violence warrants and 24 felony domestic violence warrants. The law enforcement coordinator and victim advocate working together has significantly improved the length of time it takes for a victim to file and have an enforceable protection order.

**ONE PLACE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER, MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION, ALABAMA (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### GA • Grantee Perspective

Funding allowed for the opportunity to legitimize an initiative that we believed would work. With the hiring of a coordinator and compliance officer, the court could push prosecutors to eliminate the backlog and expedite the cases in a manner that reduced arraignments and case disposition from being measured in months to days. The hiring of the coordinator has allowed the court to build and re-build procedures to reach out to other initiatives and organizations, and work on the elevation of the integrity of services by allowing the compliance officer to focus on immediate contact with defendants and victims, and enforcing the bond conditions.

**ROCKDALE COUNTY STATE COURT, GEORGIA (COURTS PROGRAM)**

Procedural fairness and justice are important to victims and defendants alike, and may be as important as case outcomes in terms of how victims perceive the fairness of the court's response.<sup>154</sup>

While research is mixed, some findings show that these specialized courts produce greater case efficiency, judicial contact, victim support services and satisfaction, stakeholder collaboration, and more convictions than traditional criminal courts.<sup>144,155–157</sup> The judicial supervision and noncompliance sanctions in specialized IDV courts may lead to lower re-arrest rates among some offenders; however, others may be more likely to be re-arrested for criminal contempt charges, such as violations of protection orders.<sup>158</sup> In either case, the close surveillance of offenders and engagement of victim witnesses in the prosecution may explain the higher reported rates of pre-disposition recidivism, since new offenses in these cases might be more likely to be known to the court.<sup>156,159–161</sup>

Domestic violence criminal courts for youth offenders recognize the developmental needs of juveniles. These courts can offer resources and programs that address the unique assistance and monitoring required by teen abusers, and connect teen victims with specialized services.<sup>162</sup> Teen protection order courts pay special attention to the unique safety requirements of teen victims, such as the overlap of offender and victim social networks and enrollment in the same schools and community programs.<sup>163</sup> Court procedures, rules, and resources for judges and judicial system professionals that enhance teen victim safety and well-being are in varying stages of development.<sup>164</sup>

Sex offender and sex trafficking courts are emerging specialized courts; their design, infrastructure, staffing, and processes are exploratory. While few jurisdictions have established specialized sex offense courts or dockets, there is increasing recognition that sex offense management is flawed within traditional criminal courts, and may be better handled in a specialized manner, outside of typical diversion or treatment courts.<sup>165,166</sup> Emerging research shows these specialized courts should include early case identification; expedited calendaring; appropriate, graduated sanctions; enhanced offender supervision; sex offender treatment and judicial compliance reviews; specialized stakeholder training on clear and consistent responses to noncompliance; community education; and ongoing process evaluation.<sup>167</sup>

In 2000, Congress enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).<sup>67</sup> States subsequently passed laws criminalizing labor and sex trafficking. In the ensuing years, few sex traffickers have been prosecuted, due to the reluctance of law enforcement and prosecution to pursue traffickers through the criminal process; the invariable jurisdictional and case complexity; and sex trafficking victims' serious fear and reluctance to participate in prosecution.<sup>168</sup> However, specialized court personnel have been developing expertise in working with victims of sex trafficking and responding in ways that treat trafficked persons as victims instead of offenders, and that acknowledge the unique risks of victims involved in prosecution.<sup>169</sup>

Furthermore, in recognizing the inherent power of tribes to exercise “special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction” (SDVCJ) over both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses, intimate partners, and dating partners, or who violate protection orders in Indian Country, VAWA 2013 affirmed tribal courts’ ability to respond to these crimes. The Act also specifies the rights that a participating tribe must provide to defendants if a tribe elects to exercise SDVCJ authority.<sup>4</sup> As of March 7, 2015, all eligible tribes can elect to exercise their general authority to implement SDVCJ, and resources for establishing and managing these tribal courts are in development.<sup>170,171</sup> VAWA 2013 also authorized a grant program to assist Indian tribes in exercising special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction.<sup>i</sup> OVV announced the first awards under this program in FY 2016.<sup>4</sup>

The Courts Program supported the development and enhancement of model courts and training for court-related personnel when responding to domestic/sexual violence. VAWA 2013 consolidated the purpose areas of the Courts Program, along with the Supervised Visitation Program, into the new Justice for Families Program, under which the first set of awards were made in FY 2014. Justice for Families Program grantees can also provide legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence, thereby addressing a persistent need identified by former Courts and Supervised Visitation Program grantees, as well as other programs.

Five VAWA-funded grant programs—Arrest, Courts, Justice for Families, Rural, and Tribal Governments—used funds for court activities. Other programs can engage court personnel in coordinated community response efforts.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **61** Arrest, Courts, Justice for Families, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees funded court activities;
- These grantees supported an average of **25** full-time equivalent (FTE) court personnel, such as judges, clerks, and docket managers;
- These grantees trained at least **18,404** court personnel, and used funds to support an average of **38** specialized courts;
- Arrest Program-funded courts disposed of **6,424** sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, and/or related cases, more than half of which (**65%**) were domestic/dating violence misdemeanors; **66%** of all charges disposed of resulted in convictions;<sup>vi</sup>
- Arrest Program-funded court programs engaged in judicial monitoring of an average of **1,824** offenders and conducted **13,345** individual review hearings;
- Overall, an average of **594** grantees engaged in coordinated community response-related meetings with local, state, and federal courts; and
- An average of **133** Rural, Tribal Governments, and T-SASP Program grantees engaged in these meetings with tribal courts.



#### DE • Grantee Perspective

Our Courts Program funding has allowed us to plan and implement a program – the Victim Advocacy and Safety Enhancement Project (VASE) – that is the first of its kind in Delaware. VASE is the first court-based program to recognize and address victimization of justice-involved individuals. Throughout the country, there are other programs, both civil and criminal, which address the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault, but many of them focus on innocent victims or justified offenders. VASE is one of a small number nationally, and the first in Delaware, to recognize that victimization trauma may be the root-cause of criminal behavior and, if left untreated, may result in prolonged criminal justice involvement. The VASE Victim Advocate helps identify victimization experienced by the VASE participants and offers rehabilitative courses of action to address the trauma. The services are voluntary and confidential and available at any time during the defendant’s involvement in the court case.

DELAWARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS  
(COURTS PROGRAM)

<sup>vi</sup> Convictions include cases of deferred adjudication, which represents 29% of all conviction outcomes.



### CT • Grantee Perspective

One of the most significant opportunities afforded by this grant was the chance to bring together different entities of the criminal justice system (Department of Correction, Parole Division, and the Board of Pardons and Parole) to further our common goals of reducing incidents of domestic violence crimes, improving the accountability of offenders, and supporting successful re-entry into the community. In addition to Families in Crisis, the offender service provider and project partner, the Parole Division partnered by designating two Parole Officers to serve as domestic violence resource officers. Their expertise was developed through cross-training opportunities and inclusion in project team meetings. Several trainings for Parole were held to enhance their understanding of domestic violence, its impact on victims and children, the role trauma plays in decision making, and to highlight strategies to effectively supervise domestic violence offenders in the community.

**CONNECTICUT COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### MN • Grantee Perspective

This funding allows us to explore how the collaboration between corrections and advocacy can work to keep our targeted victim population safe, while holding offenders accountable. We've provided training to 346 corrections staff on the complexities of battering, and its impact on victims. We've provided training to 265 victim advocates on the ins-and-outs of felony corrections, so they can better serve victims whose offenders have been sentenced to prison. The trainings have provided corrections and advocacy with an increased understanding of each other's roles. They also identified certain gaps, which led us to recommend various policy and/or protocol changes within corrections. Examples include: victim-centered release planning, information sharing between local CCRs and MN DOC, discontinuing recommending anger management and parenting classes for every domestic violence offender that is sent to prison, and the development of a felony CCR that follows a batterer and victim from incident through expiration of the case (pre-trial, probation, prison and release planning, and supervised release).

**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (ARREST PROGRAM)**

## Probation

In response to heightened scrutiny and more nuanced sentencing by courts in cases of domestic/sexual violence, probation and parole departments have adopted specialized practices for intensive supervision of offenders, domestic violence or otherwise, and specialized units provide outreach and support to victims.<sup>172</sup> Grantees have developed emerging, evidence-based models for probation supervision of domestic violence offenders that frame probation services as one portion of a larger coordinated community response.<sup>173,174</sup> These models, now being implemented across the country, take an integrated systemic approach that incorporates fundamental principles and guidelines for all participating stakeholders, including criminal justice agencies, advocacy organizations, and victim services providers, to use when intervening and working with victims.<sup>175</sup> They provide consistent accountability mechanisms and treatment for perpetrators, while ensuring victim safety. However, further research on effectiveness of different offender management models is needed.

Examples of strategies in sex offender management can include the containment approach, where trained supervisory personnel collaborate to provide specialized treatment, supervision, and polygraph assessment for offenders; the Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) model, in which volunteers provide community supervision after legal supervision is completed; and the use of electronic monitoring using GPS technology.<sup>176</sup> Emerging research shows that GPS programs can produce significantly better outcomes than traditional parole programming.<sup>177</sup> Compliance with parole conditions was higher when offenders were tracked with GPS monitors, while rates of recidivism and re-incarceration were higher among those subjected to traditional parole supervision. Specialized supervision in conjunction with rehabilitation, such as group or individual therapy focused on relapse prevention, appears to be effective in reducing recidivism for sex offenders; however, the use of specialized supervision without rehabilitation does not.<sup>176</sup>

There are many instances when responding to domestic/sexual violence crimes is not straightforward for probation and parole systems. For example, supervision in Indian Country must be developed according to a tribe's goals, expectations, and resources; tribal supervision plans may include alternate goals and objectives as offenders experience successes or setbacks.<sup>178</sup> Similarly, alternative goals and objectives may be utilized by probation and parole systems when working with sex trafficking perpetrators and their victims. Both offenders and victims may have been convicted of other crimes, and consequently, both may be assigned to general probation officers.<sup>179</sup> The identification of victims is thus not always simple. Sex trafficking courts, or specialized criminal dockets for victims, can include diversion programs for sex trafficking victims that are generally staffed by probation staff acting as case managers, who tailor supervision to individual victims' needs, and support them in building resource networks.<sup>180</sup> However, recovery, skill development, and economic security are long-term processes reaching beyond the period of probation.

VAWA-funded grant programs promote the development and improvement of effective probation and parole strategies to address domestic/sexual violence. Five VAWA-funded grant programs—Arrest, Courts, Justice for Families, Rural, and Tribal Governments—used funds for probation activities. Other programs that are awarded funds for training can train corrections personnel.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **63** Arrest, Courts, Justice for Families, Rural, and Tribal Governments Program grantees funded probation activities;
- These grantees supported an average of **32** full-time equivalent (FTE) probation officers;
- An average of **27** Arrest and Rural Program grantees used funds to develop, support, and/or train specialized probation units; and
- Overall, VAWA-funded grantees trained at least **13,087** corrections personnel, including probation and parole officers, correctional facilities staff, and other offender monitors.

Arrest Program-funded probation agencies made **249,752** contacts with offenders and **17,020** contacts with victims. They disposed of **7,445** probation violations, of which **4,564** resulted in partial or full probation revocation, including incarceration.



#### WA • Grantee Perspective

This funding has initiated early threat assessment and safety planning from the start of the first 911 call, promoted home safety checks for high-risk victims, and provided new legal tools and oversight for repeat offenders through our partnerships with parole and probation. We have also improved victim safety by providing culturally sensitive advocacy support and increasing access to services.

**CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON (ARREST PROGRAM)**



# Services to Victims and Families

Victims of domestic/sexual violence face multiple physical, emotional, and financial barriers when seeking to become and remain free from violence.<sup>181</sup> Research has demonstrated that providing trauma-informed services and support that recognize the impact of trauma on victims can improve victim outcomes.<sup>182</sup> Nearly 1,900 domestic violence programs, and 1,300 rape crisis centers operate nationwide. These programs provide core services such as crisis intervention and advocacy, and a broader network of organizations provide further specialized education, preventive, or culturally specific services.

Advocates and communities have worked diligently to create responsive programs and services that address victims' complex needs. During the 2-year reporting period, **18** VAWA discretionary grant programs funded an array of direct services to victims, such as:

- Core services, such as crisis intervention, hotline services, transportation, and referrals to community resources and agencies;
- Safety planning;
- Emergency assistance (e.g. clothing, food, medical care, and housing),
- Victim advocacy, counseling, and support;
- Criminal justice advocacy;
- Civil legal advocacy;
- Civil legal assistance;
- Victim-witness notification; and
- Medical response.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, VAWA-funded grantees provided services to **124,916**<sup>vii</sup> victims, children, youth, and other dependents.

## Crisis Intervention Services

In 2010, more than one-quarter of females and more than one-tenth of males experienced domestic/sexual violence and as a result, reported significant negative impacts requiring support.<sup>12</sup> Many services are delivered to victims through crisis intervention, in which trained professionals, such as victim advocates or social workers, identify, assess, and intervene on behalf of an individual in crisis. Crisis intervention seeks to reduce the psychological stress a victim experiences during an immediate crisis, as well as in the aftermath

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<sup>vii</sup> This number does not include families served by Justice for Families, Supervised Visitation, and Tribal Governments grantees, or non-abusing parents receiving supportive services from Children Exposed to Violence and Consolidated Youth grantees.



### ME • Grantee Perspective

Transportation funding has been extremely helpful. Forty-five taxi rides may not seem like much, but in our area, those are 45 rides that made the difference between victims keeping their jobs, keeping their children safe, and/or getting to court to access a margin of justice. While we anticipated having security deposit funds would shorten shelter stays, we were surprised to find that nearly all of the security deposits we have provided have prevented shelter stays entirely. In so many cases, victims have been able to move to safe, permanent housing with a safety plan in place, court protections, and advocacy support as needed, without having to spend time in a shelter.

HOPE AND JUSTICE PROJECT, MAINE (RURAL PROGRAM)



### WV • Grantee Perspective

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the SART Coordinators supported by the Arrest grant funding to the state of West Virginia. Given the skeletal staffing arrangements in many West Virginian rape crisis centers, it stands to reason that without this funding, many of these victims would not have been seen at all. This possibility is particularly unsettling when considering the variety of services that the local coordinators provided to victims. From medical advocacy to crisis intervention, from assistance with the victim compensation process to safety planning—our grant-funded advocates occupy what would otherwise be a gaping hole in our service delivery system.

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES (ARREST PROGRAM)



### MN • Grantee Perspective

The program also allows us to specifically respond to the way that youth and young adults communicate and use text, email, and phone as a way to access the program. We are also able to eliminate most transportation barriers and can travel to clients in order to provide services. We are able to support youth and young adults who are not interested in one-on-one therapy or support groups, yet still have interest in a certain level of community support by meeting with in-home counselors in our program.

TUBMAN, MINNESOTA (YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM)

of violence. It may involve delivering or brokering emergency housing, legal assistance, healthcare, and economic services, coupled with emotional support, risk assessment, and safety planning.

Crisis intervention assistance can include 24-hour hotlines, victim advocacy, medical accompaniment, emergency shelter, and referrals to other community-based services. Telephone hotlines, which emerged alongside rape crisis centers in the mid-1970s, offer support to victims of domestic/sexual violence, and are available at national, state, and local levels.<sup>183</sup> There have been recent efforts to increase the accessibility of these services by expanding online chat and text hotlines.<sup>184–186</sup>

A core component of crisis intervention is safety planning, done in collaboration with victims.<sup>187–192</sup> Ideally, safety plans provide for safety from immediate violence and incorporate longer term goals, and they can be modified as victim preferences and conditions change. Individualized plans should incorporate risk assessments to gauge the likelihood of further violence to victims and their children. Safety plans may or may not include leaving abusive situations as the ultimate goal, depending on a victim's desired outcomes and the victim's knowledge of how best to stay safe from further abuse. Regardless, safety plans must also incorporate economic, health, housing, and educational needs; and must consider whether the victim will remain in contact with the abusive partner.

Crisis intervention is also vital for sexual assault victims, who may be re-traumatized by the legal and medical systems as well as their families and peer groups. When advocates are present in proceedings following a rape, victims fare better in both the short- and long-term, experiencing less psychological distress, physical health struggles, sexual risk-taking behaviors, self-blame, guilt, and depression.<sup>193,194</sup> Rape survivors with advocates were more likely to have police reports taken (59% of the time) than those without advocates, whose reports were taken only 41% of the time.<sup>195</sup>

Across the 2-year reporting period, VAWA-funded grantees responded to **591,788** hotline calls. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, VAWA-funded grantees provided **38,622** primary victims with crisis intervention services.

## Shelter and Transitional Housing

If victims fleeing abusers cannot find immediate shelter or new housing, they may have no choice but to stay or return to abusive situations. VAWA-funded shelters and transitional housing programs can offer victims and their children alternatives to homelessness. Shelters offer short-term emergency housing and support, and transitional housing programs provide extended housing and support services. These allow victims time to work toward physical, emotional, and economic recovery and to establish permanent, safe, and affordable residential environments for themselves and their children. Unfortunately, victims and service providers consistently reported a severe lack of both

emergency shelter and affordable long-term housing, and this shortfall was cited by communities across the country that were visited during the VAWA National Tour conducted by OVW staff in 2014 and 2015.<sup>196</sup>

The annual Domestic Violence Counts survey provides aggregate nationwide data on the unduplicated number of adults and children requesting and/or receiving services at domestic violence shelter programs in a given 24-hour period.<sup>197</sup>

- 1,752 (93%) of the 1,894 identified domestic violence programs in the U.S. responded to the survey.
- 77% provided emergency shelter and 39% provided transitional housing to victims and their children:
  - 13,167 children and 12,568 adults received emergency shelter, and
  - An additional 8,591 children and 5,976 adults were provided with transitional housing.
- Victims made more than 12,000 requests for services – over 60% of which were requests for emergency shelter or housing – that could not be met, because programs did not have the resources to provide these services.

Women and men who have experienced housing insecurity are at higher risk for rape, physical violence, or stalking. The 2010 NISVS found that 10% of women and 8% of men who faced housing insecurity were victims of intimate partner violence, as compared with 2.3% of women and 3.1% of men who did not face housing insecurity.<sup>198</sup> Housing instability can also be a strong predictor of poor health outcomes for those in abusive relationships, such as PTSD, higher levels of depression, reduced quality of life, increased absence from work and/or school, and increased hospital and emergency room use.<sup>199</sup>

Victim-focused shelter and transitional housing programs that support victims in living free from abuse can assist with removing barriers to long-term housing security. In addition to housing, they may provide follow-up support, counseling and advocacy, legal assistance, financial literacy education and employment counseling, and referrals to other sources of help. One study found that women who were in shelter received a wide range of services for a more extended period of time than women who never entered a shelter.<sup>200</sup>

VAWA-funded transitional housing bridges the gap between emergency and permanent housing. Programs offer a wide range of services (e.g. case management, child care, financial assistance, therapy, job and education development, parenting groups, etc.) to help victims develop self-sufficiency. Housing units are either owned or rented by the programs, from local housing authorities or private landlords. Programs may provide housing at no cost to the victim or provide subsidies to offset rental costs, and may pay all or portions of required deposits, utilities, and phone services. Residents are generally permitted to remain in transitional housing units from 6 months to 2 years and are typically required to establish goals to work toward economic stability.



#### TN • Grantee Perspective

The specific assistance money has been especially instrumental to the successes within our program—without these funds, we would struggle to come up with resources to help clients live sustainable lives away from their abusers/unsafe people. For example, often, the funds are used for housing and utility deposits when clients are finally accepted into housing. Without these deposits, clients would not be able to access safe housing and would possibly be forced to reconsider their decisions to remain independent from their abusers/unsafe people. In short, these funds give our clients their best shot at breaking the cycle of violence and living life free from abuse.

**HELEN ROSS MCNABB CENTER, TENNESSEE  
(YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM)**



#### VT • Grantee Perspective

This reporting period we were able to support 20 victims and their 35 children to move into transitional housing. The ability to support victims to choose their own housing, and to decide what community they will live in, cannot be overstated. For many of these women, their neighbors, their communities and schools, are their lifelines to safety, support, and connection so they can remain housed and employed while dealing with a diverse set of circumstances. It is not uncommon for victims in our service area to barter or trade with neighbors and friends for things like child care, firewood, and snowplowing. One mom in our program gives personal training sessions to her friend in exchange for child care, so that she can work as a bartender and waitress. Especially for those without transportation, being able to remain close to your children's school, or near a bus route, is also vital.

**WOMENSAFE, INC., VERMONT (TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM)**



### FL • Grantee Perspective

An unintended benefit of the Transitional Housing Program has been the opportunity to build relationships with the property managers and bring awareness to them about domestic violence and the effects that it has on housing for victims. We have received several referrals from property managers who have passed along our contact information to other renters in their complexes who they believe are in danger or experiencing domestic violence.

**SHELTER HOUSE, INC., FLORIDA (TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM)**



### NE • Grantee Perspective

We are able to provide victims of domestic violence free civil legal services. Often victims do not have the funds available or access to the funds to retain representation for civil legal issues such as protection orders, divorce, custody, paternity establishment, child support establishment or any other legal issues that arise out of the DV. This is especially true for Native American victims of DV. We are able to help ensure that victims have a legal advocate for their rights. When victims are not legally represented in legal matters, the DV is allowed to continue. The abuser still has an immense amount of power and control, including the financial resources to hire an attorney. By providing victims with free representation in civil legal matters, we are supporting them and allowing them to take back some of the power to control their lives and their futures and the futures of their children.

**LEGAL AID OF NEBRASKA (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**

During each 6-month reporting period, on average:

- Transitional Housing Program grantees provided transitional housing to **1,170** victims, **1,610** children, and **31** other dependents, and provided **949** victims with vouchers or rent subsidies for housing; and
- Abuse in Later Life, CSSP, Rural, Tribal Governments, Underserved, and Youth Services Program grantees provided emergency shelter to **2,345** victims and **2,067** family members, and provided transitional housing to **383** victims and **543** family members.<sup>viii</sup>

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- Transitional Housing Program grantees provided a total of **1,363,499** bed nights, and spent **\$7,196,230** on vouchers and rent subsidies for housing; and
- Abuse in Later Life, CSSP, Rural, Tribal Governments, Underserved, and Youth Services Program grantees provided a total of **318,674** emergency bed nights and a total of **220,911** transitional housing bed nights.<sup>iv</sup>

## Legal Advocacy and Legal Services

Providing legal advocacy and representation for victims of domestic/sexual violence, and ensuring the legal system is responsive to their needs are essential to ending these forms of violence. Knowledgeable VAWA-funded attorneys and legal advocates can provide victims with information, support, and representation in both civil and criminal matters. Since these processes can often be confusing and intimidating, attorneys and advocates can enhance victims' experience in the legal system and improve outcomes by supporting them through attorney access, support with self-representation, language and disability assistance.<sup>201</sup>

The Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant Program is the primary VAWA-funded vehicle for delivering comprehensive legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence. The Tribal Governments Program also funds comprehensive legal services, and VAWA 2013 expanded services under the Justice for Families and Rural Programs to include comprehensive legal assistance. VAWA-funded attorneys provide direct representation for victims in court cases, most often protection order cases but also in family law (e.g. divorce, parental rights and responsibilities, custody/visitation, and child and spousal support), immigration, housing, consumer credit, employment, and other matters. Only attorneys funded by these programs were allowed to provide the full range of direct representation during this 2-year reporting period. Attorneys and paralegals funded by Arrest, Campus, Children Exposed to Violence, CSSP, Courts, Rural, Transitional Housing, and Youth Services

<sup>viii</sup> These numbers do not include emergency shelter provided to non-abusing parents (70) or accompanying family members (122) served by Children Exposed to Violence and Consolidated Youth grantees.

<sup>iv</sup> These numbers do not include the number of emergency shelter bed nights (23,808) provided by Children Exposed to Violence and Consolidated Youth grantees.

Programs also provide civil legal assistance (civil legal services provided by an attorney and/or paralegal), but that service was generally limited to representation and assistance with protection order cases.

Representation in family matters is especially crucial for victims of domestic violence, because offenders may continue to exert control over victims by using the legal system to force contact, restrict victims' access to protection, make implicit threats, and create ongoing challenges through litigation. Through these forms of "paper abuse," offenders can exert coercive control long after victims end the abusive relationship. Victims with children are particularly vulnerable because offenders routinely use the courts to challenge custody, child support, and visitation arrangements.<sup>202,203</sup> Furthermore, judges and court-appointed third parties, like mediators and custody evaluators, do not necessarily have the requisite understanding of domestic/sexual violence, and their decisions and recommendations do not always account for the safety needs of victims and their children.<sup>204</sup>

Attorneys and/or nongovernmental advocates may also assist victims in criminal cases, although they cannot serve as defense counsel for victims who have been charged with crimes. They may accompany the victim to meetings with the prosecutor to clarify evidentiary matters, request bail conditions or modifications, and discuss plea agreements and sentencing sanctions. Research shows that when victims receive services from civil attorneys and community-based advocates, they report being better equipped to express their opinions and have those opinions validated.<sup>205</sup> Those victims who had empowering experiences in criminal court reported a greater improvement in quality of life (measured 6 months after the criminal process), and were more likely to say they intended to use the legal system if violence recurred.<sup>206</sup>

In addition to attorneys, advocates can also support victims navigating the legal system. Criminal justice advocacy can be provided by governmental victim assistants (also known as victim-witness specialists or advocates) in law enforcement and prosecution offices, and includes:

- Explaining the criminal justice system and what to expect at each stage of the proceedings;
- Assisting with victim impact statements;
- Accompanying victims to hearings and interviews;
- Notifying victims of the release of perpetrators from custody, dates of upcoming hearings, continuances, and other events in the criminal case;
- Making meaningful referrals to other services, as appropriate; and
- Preparing crime victim compensation applications.

Civil legal advocacy can also be provided by nongovernmental or community-based advocates and paralegals, and includes:

- Helping victims prepare protection order applications;
- Accompanying them to protection order or other civil or administrative



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

We are now able to provide legal representation to victims, from the beginning of the court process to the end. Even custody issues and divorces that arise out of their domestic violence incident can be addressed. Being able to provide these legal services to our victims helps encourage them to stay away from their abusers. Tribal Governments grant funding makes it possible for our program to pay approved attorneys who care about the victims and will be there to provide legal advocacy throughout the entire court process..

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

The biggest change is providing broad access, information, and support to all victims of domestic violence appearing on the consolidated calendars in all departments. Having bilingual, bicultural support people can make a huge difference. Victims are more likely to feel understood, supported, and safe when working directly with someone who is bilingual and bicultural, versus talking to an Advocate/Specialist through an interpreter. It enhances their ability to follow court directions when accompanied by a bilingual support person (for example, going to the Self Help Center to meet with an attorney about their family law case, or to Family Court Services to schedule an appointment for an emergency screen or mediation). It also enhances their willingness and comfort in accessing community resources, such as shelter-based agencies, social services agencies for food or medical assistance, and for some individuals, referrals for immigration-related services.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA (COURTS PROGRAM)**



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Training addressed the new firearms laws in the state of Washington, and was presented to the staff at the community-based advocacy agency. As a result of this training, victim advocates will be reviewing protection orders to help victims determine whether a firearms relinquishment order (a new form under the new law) should be completed and submitted to the court.

**CITY OF BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON (ARREST PROGRAM)**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Most violations result in litigants calling the police, rather than filing contempt motions in family court. When a violation occurs, police get involved, and the parties go the way of the criminal court proceedings. Having advocates available to explain the differences in restraining orders helps victims know their options and helps keep them safe. It gives them to power to take control over their case and their life.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA (JFF PROGRAM)**

hearings; and

- Advocating at administrative hearings on such issues as eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, unemployment benefits, crime victim compensation, insurance, and Social Security benefits.

The Legal Assistance for Victims Program (LAV Program) is the primary VAWA-funded vehicle for delivering legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, LAV Program grantees:

- Provided services to **28,553** victims and addressed **43,736** legal issues;
- Helped **6,678** victims with more than one type of legal issue (23% of those provided with services); and
- Most frequently supported victims in seeking protection orders (**8,709**), divorces (**8,319**), child custody and visitation (**7,720**), and child support (**4,834**).

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, other VAWA-funded grantees provided:<sup>x</sup>

- Civil legal assistance from attorneys and paralegals to **4,183** victims, primarily limited to assistance with protection orders;
- Civil legal advocacy from nongovernmental or community-based advocates and paralegals to **21,823** victims; and
- Criminal justice advocacy from governmental victim assistants, victim-witness specialists, or advocates to **19,903** victims.

## Orders of Protection

Protection orders are a frequent remedy in the justice system for victims of intimate partner violence; victims of domestic violence are able to petition for a civil order of protection in every state.<sup>207</sup> In addition to prohibiting or limiting an offender's contact with the victim and prohibiting further abusive behavior, orders may address custody, visitation, economic support, firearms restrictions, and other conditions tailored to the victim's needs, circumstances, and preferences.<sup>208</sup> Protection orders should provide victims flexibility, authority, and remedies not present in the prosecution of a criminal case.<sup>209</sup>

VAWA defines protection orders broadly, and its full faith and credit provision requires that all valid protection orders be enforced in all jurisdictions within the U.S., including tribal lands and territories.<sup>210</sup> Not every state allows victims of sexual assault and stalking to petition for and receive protection orders unless they have been the spouse or intimate partner of, or in a family or household relationship with, their abuser.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>x</sup> These numbers do not include an average of 130 victims who received legal advocacy from Campus grantees.

In 2014, 26 states took action to reform their protection order statutes. Some established or strengthened criminal sanctions for violating orders and addressed obstacles to enforcement; others reduced barriers for victims obtaining protection orders. Several states introduced relief to protect victims and families from economic harm (e.g. requiring the respondent to continue paying basic expenses, prohibiting disposal or transfer of property, or requiring return of identification documents).<sup>212</sup>

Research has shown that petitioners' perceptions of safety increased after receiving protection orders, even in cases where orders were violated.<sup>209,213,214</sup> Women using emergency shelter services who also obtained a protection order were found to experience fewer PTSD symptoms and less sexual violence 6 months after leaving the shelter than sheltered women without protection orders.<sup>207</sup>

Although victims can obtain civil protection orders without legal representation, VAWA-funded attorneys, paralegals, and legal advocates can be valuable resources for victims engaged in this process. Research shows that attorney representation, particularly attorneys with domestic/sexual violence experience, can have better outcomes for victims.<sup>215</sup> In addition, cases in which LAV-funded attorneys represented victims in protection order hearings resulted in better agreements, increased court efficiency, and high victim satisfaction.<sup>216</sup>

During the 2-year reporting period, VAWA-funded professionals (e.g. advocates, law enforcement personnel, and prosecutors) provided assistance to victims in securing **69,035** final civil protection orders.

LAV Program grantees primarily deliver legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, LAV Program grantees provided assistance to **8,709** victims seeking protection orders.

Arrest Program grantees focus on improving the enforcement of protection orders. Across the 2-year reporting period, Arrest Program grantees engaged in the following activities, some of which were supported through VAWA funding:<sup>xi</sup>

- Law enforcement agencies made **7,367** arrests for violations of protection orders;
- Prosecution offices disposed of **6,858** protection order violations, with **66%** resulting in convictions;<sup>xii</sup>
- Courts conducted post-conviction judicial monitoring, disposing of **267** violations of protection orders by offenders;

*VAWA 2013 authorized the Justice for Families (JFF) Program, which consolidated the purpose areas from two pre-existing VAWA-funded programs—Court Training and Improvements and Supervised Visitation and Exchange—and added new purpose areas as well. Justice for Families grantees provide legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence.*



#### FL • Grantee Perspective

The grant has allowed for three DV Program Court Specialists to be hired to conduct thorough case management of DV and related cases, explain court process to victims, provide increased access to and information about resources for victims, as well as follow up, make daily updates to the Domestic Abuse Information Network, and attend court hearings. Because of grant funding, post-judgment modifications of civil injunctions and protective orders have been enhanced, including provisions of forms and information to moving party, verification of service on the non-moving party, and assistance in preparation of form orders as directed by the Court.

**SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION, CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA (ARREST PROGRAM)**

<sup>xi</sup> Arrest Program grantees' criminal justice activities reach beyond the individual unit, and, as a result, grantees report criminal justice data for the entire agency within the jurisdiction.

<sup>xii</sup> This conviction rate includes deferred adjudications, which represents 2% of all conviction outcomes.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed our program to implement a Safe Visit/Safe Exchange component, to further assist families with concerns of safety and court approved visitation. In one case in particular, the father is a well-known abuser within our community, and despite his history of abusive tactics our tribal court recognizes his rights to spend time with his children. Fear and anxiety was forced upon the victim and her family, as they needed to comply with the court-approved visitation, and work with a man who victimized and terrorized his former spouse. They turned to our program for support and assistance in addressing concerns of safety for all parties involved. With the support of our staff and the resources provided by the Safe Visit/Safe Exchange component, our program is able to meet the needs and advocate for the safety of not only the former victim, but her children and family.

**PRAIRIE BAND OF POTAWATOMI NATION (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**



### MI • Grantee Perspective

Our programs have been effective in allowing non-custodial parents a way to have access to their children that also keeps the victim and the children safe from violence. Each program has numerous safety measures in place to ensure that there is no contact between non-custodial and custodial parents. For example, separate entrances and exits, parking locations, and staggered arrival and departure times eliminate unwanted contact between an assailant and victim. Monitors also take the time to check in with custodial parents and assess safety concerns or risks, changes in court orders, or concerning behavior that children are displaying after visits.

**MICHIGAN DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT BOARD (JF PROGRAM)**

- Courts imposed sanctions such as partial or total revocation of probation, fines, and/or added conditions for **67%** of those violations; and
- Probation agencies supervised offenders who had **978** protection order violations, **86%** of which resulted in the imposition of sanctions.

The Courts and Justice for Families Programs support courts in improving their responses to victims of domestic/sexual violence. Across the 2-year reporting period, Courts and Justice for Families Program-funded courts:

- Issued **6,316** final civil protection orders;
- Disposed of **1,342** protection order violation cases in criminal courts, with **68%** resulting in convictions;<sup>xiii</sup> and
- Conducted post-conviction judicial monitoring, disposing of **686** violations of protection orders by offenders and imposing sanctions for **77%** of those violations.

## Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services

For many victims of domestic violence, leaving the relationship does not end the abuse perpetrated by their partners. The risk of abuse to the non-abusing parent and children during separation and after divorce often continues or increases; in some cases, abusers may kill their partners and children during this escalating period of violence.<sup>203,217</sup> After separation, children are often exposed, directly or indirectly, to violence, threats, intimidation, manipulation, and coercive controls, which can profoundly compromise their emotional stability and psychological well-being.<sup>218-220</sup> Despite the noted harmful effects of post-separation violence and abuse on victims and children, custody evaluators regularly fail to recommend visitation arrangements that safeguard children and prevent direct contact between the abused and abusive parents.<sup>221,222</sup>

The formerly authorized Supervised Visitation Program, now a part of the Justice for Families program, in addition to the Tribal Governments Program, funds visitation and exchange programs specifically designed to address the safety and security needs of victims of domestic/sexual violence or child sexual abuse. These grantees follow six guiding principles developed by the Supervised Visitation Program National Steering Committee:<sup>223</sup>

- Equal regard for the safety of child and adult victims;
- Appreciation of multiculturalism and diversity;
- Incorporation of an understanding of domestic violence into center services;
- Respectful and fair interactions;
- Community collaboration; and
- Advocacy for child and adult victims.

<sup>xiii</sup> This conviction rate includes deferred adjudications, which represents 5% of all conviction outcomes.



#### WI • Grantee Perspective

Guardians ad litem, judges, and private attorneys continue to express relief that our program provides services that have been long needed in our community. Previously, families exchanged children in parking lots at the police station or fast food restaurants and children were exposed to arguing, physical abuse, and the tensions between their parents at every exchange. Our program has alleviated many of those situations, and as a police officer told us regarding one family, “You prevented a domestic incident today, just by being here.”

**DANE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,  
WISCONSIN (SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM)**

A supervised visitation and exchange program can protect children during visits with their abusing parents by identifying abuse tactics and intervening on behalf of the victim and children.<sup>224,225</sup> These programs offer a safe place for the exchange of a child or a secure and nurturing environment for children to interact with non-custodial parents. Visitation centers employ multiple safety strategies, such as staggered drop-off/pickup times and separate entrances and exits. Staff at supervised visitation centers are trained to intervene during the parent/child visit so that any threats to safety are addressed and the parent is redirected.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, Justice for Families, Supervised Visitation, and Tribal Governments Program grantees provided services to **2,866** families, including **4,365** children, **2,877** custodial parents, and **2,854** non-custodial parents.

Across the 2-year reporting period, these grantees provided the following services to families:

- A total of **73,412** one-to-one visits to an average of **1,877** families; and
- A total of **57,336** supervised exchanges to an average of **836** families.

Families were most likely to be referred to the program by a family court order (**59%**), and to have issues of domestic violence (**87%**).



# Historically Underserved and Other Vulnerable Populations

While domestic/sexual violence affects all communities, historically marginalized and underserved populations experience unique challenges and barriers in becoming and remaining free from violence. The types of violence or control used, the familial structure and gender roles, and the social or cultural norms can be distinct from those in the dominant culture. A victim may perceive, manage, and resist violence based on their access to resources, religious beliefs, cultural practices, race or ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexuality, language, immigration status, geographic location, and economic opportunity.<sup>226–229</sup> Further, race and gender bias in policing, coupled with a lack of training and clear policies for mitigating those biases, adversely affects women, LGBT victims, and victims of color.<sup>230,231</sup> For example, a recent study of law enforcement’s use of exceptional clearance in rape cases found that almost half (47%) of cases are exceptionally cleared, which suggests widespread misuse of this clearance category for rape cases.<sup>232</sup> A 2008 study of police officers’ attitudes toward women and rape found that most officers did not endorse blatantly sexist beliefs, but findings indicated that “they are more likely to discredit victims that do not adhere to stereotyped victim characteristics.”<sup>233</sup>

*VAWA 2005 defines “underserved populations” as including “populations underserved because of geographic location, underserved racial and ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alien status, or age), and any other population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate.” VAWA 2013 further expands the definition of “underserved populations” to include populations underserved because of sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.*

Research documenting domestic/sexual violence in underserved communities is limited, in part due to research designs that do not adequately identify, recruit, and retain minority participants.<sup>229,234–239</sup> Studies that do not include culturally competent research protocols may limit the disclosure of abuse, contributing to the pervasive underreporting of domestic/sexual violence. Both researchers and service providers point to the need for community-based, participatory research to better determine the prevalence of these crimes and culturally appropriate interventions.<sup>240,241</sup>

The U.S. has a history of migration, and a diverse, changing population. In 2015, over one-third (38.4%) of the population identified as a member of a racial or ethnic minority group, such as Asian or Asian American; Black or of African descent; Latino or Hispanic; Native American or American Indian; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; multi-racial; along with other religious and ethnic minorities.<sup>242</sup> Some studies indicate that some minority populations may experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic/sexual violence; other studies show prevalence rates that are similar to the general public.<sup>12,91,198, 227,243–245</sup> Regardless of prevalence, racial, ethnic, and/or religious minorities may encounter barriers to seeking services and becoming free from violence due to factors such as poverty, racism, isolation, exclusion, cultural norms, limited access to services, and a dearth of linguistically and/or culturally appropriate services.<sup>229,246–255</sup> As the U.S. continues to become a more diverse country, researchers and practitioners alike must better determine the prevalence of violence in different communities, the barriers that victims face in seeking services, and best practices to improve culturally appropriate systemic responses.

In addition to racial and ethnic minorities, other historically underserved and vulnerable populations, such as immigrants and refugees; people with disabilities; elderly persons; children and youth; people living in rural areas; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people face unique challenges and barriers to accessing criminal justice, receiving services, and obtaining social and economic supports.

In response, Congress authorized VAWA funding to assist historically underserved victims with the unique challenges they face when seeking to become and remain free from violence.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, VAWA-funded grantees served:<sup>xiv</sup>

- **10,185** victims who identified as American Indians or Alaska Natives;
- **4,830** victims who identified as Asian;
- **21,210** victims who identified as Black or African American;
- **23,654** victims who identified as Latin@ or Hispanic;
- **539** victims who identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander;
- **5,877** victims who were children or youth (infancy to age 17);<sup>xv</sup>
- **4,221** victims who were 60 or older;
- **8,436** victims with disabilities;
- **17,812** victims are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers;
- **17,826** victims with limited English proficiency;
- **29,581** victims who lived in rural areas;
- **183** victims who identified as Deaf or hard of hearing; and
- **168** victims who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBT).<sup>xvi</sup>

## American Indians and Alaska Natives

American Indians (AI) and Alaska Natives (AN) are a diverse people, represented by 566 federally recognized tribes.<sup>256</sup> In 2014, the estimated combined total population of American Indians and Alaska Natives (alone and in combination with other races) reached 5.4 million, or about 2% of the total U.S. population.<sup>257</sup> Approximately 78% of American Indian and

<sup>xiv</sup> Victims were reported once in each race/ethnicity category that applied.

<sup>xv</sup> These numbers do not include children and youth indirectly exposed to violence who were served (1,005) by Children Exposed to Violence, Consolidated Youth, and STEP grantees.

<sup>xvi</sup> All grant programs that serve victims of domestic/sexual violence serve victims who identify as LGBT. As of this report, only the Children Exposed to Violence and Youth Services Programs progress reporting forms provide categories in which to report specific numbers for child and youth victims and children indirectly exposed who self-identified as LGBT. This category will be added to demographics questions in all progress reporting forms in future years.

Alaska Natives (alone and in combination with other races) live outside tribal lands, an increase of 3% since the 2000 Census. Due to a history of colonization, displacement, and racism, AI/AN persons and communities face disproportionately high rates of housing instability, food insecurity, alcohol and drug misuse and abuse, limited income and education, and ill health.<sup>258–260</sup> Nearly 25% of AI/AN people live in poverty.<sup>257,261</sup>

AI/AN women report higher rates of intimate partner violence than women of any other ethnic or racial background.<sup>262,263</sup> A nationally representative study found that AI/AN women were 1.2 times more likely to experience domestic violence than non-Hispanic white women.<sup>264</sup> More than half (55%) of AI/AN women had experienced some type of sexual violence other than rape during their lifetimes.<sup>12</sup> On some reservations, AI/AN women may be murdered at more than 10 times the national average.<sup>265</sup> Due to the high rates of domestic/sexual violence and many other public health disparities, AI/AN women may suffer from an elevated risk of PTSD.<sup>266–269</sup> Coordinated tribal, community, and federal efforts that are culturally appropriate are essential in responding to these epidemic rates of violence.

AI/AN persons and communities routinely experience barriers to accessing criminal justice and supportive services. The public safety challenges in Indian Country vary widely across states and regions—and from tribe to tribe—depending on jurisdictional issues, geography, tribal cultures, and myriad other factors. Due to early treaties and allotment policies, tribal, federal, state, and local lands may be intermingled in a “checkerboard” fashion, which complicates law enforcement and prosecution efforts. Adding to that, the ratio of law enforcement officers to the population served remains lower on Indian reservations than in other jurisdictions across the country.<sup>270</sup> In many places, the local FBI field office, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and the federal courthouse are located many miles away from where tribal members reside, which only compounds the difficulties facing investigators and prosecutors, as well as victims, witnesses, and defendants involved in a federal prosecution.<sup>271</sup>

Efforts to protect AI/AN victims are further complicated because many live in isolated rural communities with limited or no access to cellular/landline phone services, transportation, or emergency care; and limited criminal justice, legal assistance, and safe housing resources.<sup>272</sup> Getting to or receiving services can often be tremendously challenging. Frequently, incidents of domestic violence are under-reported or undocumented because victims are not able to obtain assistance from police or medical professionals.<sup>273</sup> Less than one-third of Native American land is within a 60-minute driving distance of healthcare centers that offer SART/SANE services.<sup>272</sup>

In many parts of Indian Country, tribal courts are holding lawbreakers accountable, protecting victims, providing youth prevention and intervention programs, and dealing with precursors to crime such as alcohol and substance abuse. However, until the passage of VAWA 2013, tribal courts could not exercise jurisdiction over crimes committed by non-Indian domestic violence offenders on tribal land.<sup>274</sup> The restriction resulted from the U.S. Supreme



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

One of the biggest successes has been beginning a major dialogue and discussion through face-to-face contact and conversations amongst almost all of the service and justice agencies within the boundaries of Idaho, in formal meetings, with non-Indian Service Providers from major cities, smaller urban, and rural off-reservation communities. For the first time, the tribal and the non-tribal coalitions to stop domestic and sexual violence are paving a way to improve the lives of American Indian and Alaska Native victims and their dependents, in a more culturally appropriate manner, by the framing of service delivery that is more inclusive to, and receptive by, Native victims and their families, off reservation.”

#### **NATIVE WOMEN’S COALITION (TRIBAL COALITIONS PROGRAM)**



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

The Tulalip Tribes is one of the three tribes selected to participate as a pilot program to exercise the “Enhanced Special Domestic Violence Jurisdiction” pursuant of the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2013. The program’s value has become clear over the past few months: there is much closer collaboration between the tribal prosecutor’s office and the USAO, and whether or not a case is ultimately filed in tribal or federal court. The high point of the year was the day of our first arraignment hearing in a case against a non-Indian. As the hearing concluded, I turned from the bench and was amazed to see the court gallery fully packed. Aunties, grandmothers, and mothers, and other members of the community, came to see this historic event. There were many tears as the reality of this restored jurisdiction was exercised for the first time. As in past reports; the number of cases filed does not reflect the nature and magnitude of the conduct addressed in these cases. Very few of the reported cases were for a single criminal charge, and some reflected significantly higher number of counts, up to more than 30 in one case. Our efforts to send a clear message that DV/SA crimes will be addressed are bearing fruit: numbers for 2014 were up from the year before.

#### **TULALIP TRIBES OF WASHINGTON (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**

*In 2012, to facilitate collaboration and the prosecution of intimate partner crimes committed in Indian Country, OVW implemented the Violence Against Women Tribal Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Pilot Project (SAUSA). Tribal SAUSAs, who are cross-deputized tribal prosecutors, are able to prosecute crimes in both tribal and federal courts, as appropriate. The goal of the program is to train eligible tribal prosecutors in federal law, rules of criminal procedure, and investigative techniques to increase the likelihood that criminal offenses can be prosecuted in tribal court, federal court, or both. The Tribal SAUSA project also helps to accelerate a tribal criminal justice system's implementation of TLOA and VAWA 2013.*



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

This grant allows us to educate service providers about DV/SA intervention and prevention strategies, and about Native traditions, history, customs, and beliefs. We have also conducted outreach towards the Native Community. We have successful experience educating our people about domestic violence and its roots. A promising dialogue has begun among our tribal members; we can foresee a future without violence and a return to Alutiiq traditional heritage.

#### **SUNA'Q TRIBE OF KODIAK (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

Some of the resources that we are able to offer victims that we could not do before is the cultural and traditional activities. Referrals have been made to attend the Mending Broken Hearts Program to heal from unresolved grief and inter-generational trauma. And with the talking circles we are hearing from victims that would like a more holistic and traditional way of healing. Through this initiative we are able to address how trauma has affected them personally, as a family and as a community. We are able to present participants with strategies on how to process the effects of trauma, and become healthier and more balanced.

#### **MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN CRIME VICTIM'S PROGRAM (T-SASP)**

Court's 1978 decision in *Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe*, which held that tribes had no criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian defendants. The ruling extended to domestic violence and dating violence committed by non-Indian abusers against their Indian spouses, intimate partners, and dating partners. The historic VAWA 2013 reauthorization recognized the inherent power of "participating tribes" to exercise "special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction" (SDVCJ) over both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses, intimate partners, or dating partners, or who violate certain protection orders, in Indian Country.<sup>275</sup> The Act also specifies the rights that a participating tribe must provide to defendants in SDVCJ cases.<sup>271</sup>

In February 2014, three Indian tribes—the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona, the Tulalip Tribe of Washington, and the Umatilla Tribes of Oregon—were designated as Pilot Project tribes, and were the first to exercise SDVCJ. In March 2015, the Department of Justice designated two additional tribes—the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation in North and South Dakota and the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana. The Department of Justice established an Inter-tribal Technical Assistance Working Group (ITWG) to support the implementation of SDVCJ, and currently 45 tribes participate in the ITWG. At least 10 tribes have implemented SDVCJ, and as of February 2016, together they have made 51 arrests under the new VAWA provision, resulting in 18 guilty pleas, five referrals for federal prosecution, one acquittal by jury, and 12 dismissals.<sup>276</sup>

To address and redress the history of colonization and displacement, public health disparities, and high rates of domestic/sexual violence, VAWA authorizes tribal grantees to develop and implement culturally appropriate responses to these crimes.<sup>241,273,277,278</sup> The Tribal Governments Program provides funds to tribes to create and administer governmental strategies to curtail domestic/sexual violence. This funding provides tribal governments the flexibility to develop solutions appropriate for their communities.

The Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (T-SASP) provides funds to tribes to specifically address sexual assault. They do this through the development and implementation of direct intervention and related assistance (e.g. crisis intervention, cultural advocacy, hospital accompaniment, transportation, criminal/civil justice advocacy) for AI/AN victims.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average, T-SASP and Tribal Governments Program grantees served **7,286** victims.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees served an average of **10,185** victims and **574** other family members who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native during each 6-month reporting period.

## Immigrants and Refugees

Approximately 40 million people in the U.S., or 13% of the population, are foreign-born.<sup>279</sup> About half are women, and another half are between the ages of 18 and 44. In FY 2015, the U.S. admitted nearly 70,000 refugees—a 20% increase from 2012—and in FY 2013 (the most recent data available), approximately 25,000 individuals were granted asylum.<sup>280,281</sup> Most of these individuals were from Iraq, Burma, Bhutan, and Somalia; 46% of refugees and 49% of asylees were women.<sup>280</sup>

Women who are refugees and asylum seekers are often victims of sexual violence, famine, economic displacement, and war in their home countries, and are unable or unwilling to repatriate to those countries because of fear of persecution or death based on their race, ethnicity, religion, political or social affiliations, or other statuses.<sup>282–285</sup> The violence they suffered may have been state-sponsored or organized by sectarian groups. Increasingly, human trafficking is the violence from which women immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are fleeing.<sup>286</sup>

Immigrant and refugee victims of domestic/sexual violence face many barriers to safety including lack of English proficiency, limited knowledge of the systems in place to help them in their new countries, and cultural barriers, such as pressure to keep these crimes secret for fear of bringing shame upon their families or communities.<sup>248,287,288</sup> In addition to cultural and linguistic barriers, structural barriers to serving immigrant and refugee victims, such as social inequality, isolation, exclusion, financial instability, unemployment, and lack of available social services, can make it difficult for women to exit abusive relationships, and become and remain safe from violence.<sup>289–295</sup>

Even where services are available, victims of domestic/sexual violence who have limited English proficiency face challenges (e.g. waits of hours, days, or even weeks) in their attempts to access services such as counseling, healthcare, housing, and education if no qualified interpreter is available and service providers do not speak their language.<sup>288,296,297</sup> These victims may also encounter language barriers when seeking help from law enforcement. A national survey found that when immigrant victims called law enforcement, responding officers were able to identify the victims' language in fewer than half of the cases; in 30% of those cases, unqualified interpreters were used.<sup>297</sup> Further, clients experienced bias when courts and law enforcement relied on inappropriate or unqualified interpreters who may intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent the victim's statements. In 24% of the more than 6,000 domestic violence cases in which an unqualified interpreter was used, the interpreter was a child or children of the victim or perpetrator; in 23% of these cases, it was a friend or neighbor; and in 8% of these cases, police spoke with the English-speaking perpetrators. Additionally, in sexual assault and domestic violence cases in which a victim called police but no police report was taken, the reason given more than 50% of the time was a language barrier.



### IL • Grantee Perspective

There are few services available in the community that consider the cultural lens, and immigrant victims face unique challenges in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment. Additionally, many immigrant victims are fearful to seek services due to high anti-immigrant sentiment. Therefore, this service is crucial to our community since language barriers, financial challenges, and, most importantly, cultural differences faced by Latinas would prevent them from seeking services outside of our community.

**MUJERES LATINAS EN ACCION, ILLINOIS (SASP-CS)**

*The VAWA self-petition requires that the victims prove that they are or were married to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents; that their spouse subjected them to battery or extreme cruelty in the U.S., that they were married in good faith, that they lived with their abusive spouses, and that they are persons of “good moral character.” A “prima facie determination” on the self-petition enables the applicant to receive public benefits while her/his case is pending. The final approval of the petition results in the granting of deferred-action status and the ability to apply for employment authorization as well as for legal permanent resident status, if the applicant is otherwise eligible.*

*Battered spouses of U.S. citizens who are not in deportation proceedings may concurrently file their VAWA self-petition (I-360), adjustment of status application (I-485) to become a legal permanent resident, and employment authorization application (I-765). Once s/he receives her/his employment authorization documents, the victim may legally work and obtain a driver’s license. For more information, visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/battered-spouse-children-parents>.*



#### **AK • Grantee Perspective**

Funding has allowed ANDVSA to improve services for limited English proficient victims located across Alaska through access to qualified interpreter services and bilingual advocacy, which have allowed victims to meaningfully participate in the justice system ensuring strong enforcement of laws and prosecution of cases. The Alaska Institute for Justice (AIJ)-Alaska Immigration Justice Project continues to be the only non-profit agency in Alaska that provides critical immigration and legal assistance to low-income immigrants and refugees. The project represents approximately 250 immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault annually. Since the start of the grant, AIJ has provided 815 hours of statewide interpretation services for victims allowing limited English proficient victims meaningful access to fully participate in the civil and criminal justice systems.

**ALASKA COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT (ARREST PROGRAM)**

Fear of deportation is a tremendous concern for some immigrant victims of domestic/sexual violence, and can result in victims not calling the police for help.<sup>294,295,298,299</sup> Undocumented immigrant victims, in particular, may be afraid to report abuse to the police, believing it will result in their own deportation. The VAWA self-petition and the U and T visas are remedies available to immigrant and refugee victims of domestic/sexual violence and other crimes to assist them in obtaining safety and escaping their abusers.<sup>287,300,301</sup>

The VAWA self-petition option, first enacted in VAWA 1994, is designed to prevent an abusive citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse from using the threat of not completing immigration documents to keep an abused immigrant spouse from reporting the abuse or leaving the abusive relationship.<sup>1-3,302</sup> Through self-petitioning, a battered immigrant victim can independently seek legal immigration status for her-/himself and her/his children without the assistance or knowledge of the abuser.<sup>300,303</sup> Final approval of the self-petition allows the victim to be granted legal permanent resident status and to apply for U.S. citizenship.

The T and U visas are vehicles of humanitarian relief for victims of certain serious crimes who lack lawful status in the U.S. and who are helpful, have been helpful, or are likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the crimes.<sup>304</sup> T visas may be granted to victims of severe forms of trafficking, and among the crimes for which a U visa may be granted are rape, domestic violence, and sexual assault; victims must have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of the crime.<sup>299,300,305,306</sup> T visa status allows recipients to stay in the U.S. for up to 3 years, and U visas permit up to 4 years; recipients may work during these times and apply for permanent resident status. A national survey of attorneys and advocates who assisted more than 4,000 immigrant victims with U visa applications found that domestic violence was the basis for nearly half of the U visas granted, sexual violence (from rape to sexual exploitation) for nearly one-third, and in slightly more than half of the cases, the recipients had experienced more than one crime.<sup>307</sup>

In addition to funding staff with specialized expertise, VAWA provides funding to train professionals who respond to immigrant victims so they will be better informed about the particular needs of immigrant, refugee, sex-trafficked, and asylum-seeking victims and the challenges they face.<sup>308-310</sup> Funds are also used for culturally specific outreach to immigrant communities, to provide information about services, and in some cases to begin conversations within those communities about domestic/sexual violence.

LAV Program grantees assist immigrant victims in self-petitioning and seeking U visa status. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, LAV Program grantees:

- Addressed **7,390** immigration issues on behalf of victims;
- Provided services to **10,308** victims who were immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers; and
- Assisted **3,594** victims with U visa matters, **1,261** victims with VAWA self-petitions, and **112** victims with T visa matters.

Across the 2-year period, LAV Program grantees:

- Reported a total of **1,376** administrative decisions on U visa matters, **684** administrative decisions on VAWA self-petitions, and **90** administrative decisions on T visa matters.

CSSP, SASP-CS, and Underserved Program grantees also provide assistance to victims on immigration issues. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, these grantees:

- Addressed **467** immigration issues on behalf of victims;
- Provided services to **1,935** victims who were immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers; and
- Reported assisting **191** victims with U visa matters, **92** with VAWA self-petitions, **81** with work authorizations, and **10** with T visa matters.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees served an average of **17,812** victims who were immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers; and an average of **17,826** victims who had limited English proficiency during each 6-month reporting period.



#### FL • Grantee Perspective

This client was an immigrant from Venezuela and spoke little English. Additionally, she confronted immigration issues. After she fled the marital home, the husband attempted to sell off the couple's few assets, attach her to a mortgage she had not entered into voluntarily and deplete all the marital savings. Gulf Coast Legal Services advocated for the client and obtained the alimony award, as well as relief from any and all debts and mortgages incurred in the marriage. This alimony award will be a stepping stone for her to get reliable transportation and pay for all necessary immigration fees she has incurred, prior to connecting with legal aid. Then the client will be able to obtain a valid work permit, which in turn will make stable employment a possibility.

**GULF COAST LEGAL SERVICES, INC., FLORIDA**  
(LAV PROGRAM)



#### AK • Grantee Perspective

The bilingual outreach worker in Homer has developed culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach strategies and increased access to services through the local domestic violence and sexual assault program. She has built a high level of trust through the provision of bilingual advocacy services in Russian, significant travel to villages, and providing support and advocacy services at the Homer Public Library and other identified safe locations outside the shelter. We have made significant progress on building the capacity of remote domestic violence and sexual assault programs to respond appropriately to Alaska Native and immigrant victims and develop innovative outreach strategies to these underserved communities.

**ALASKA INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE (RURAL PROGRAM)**



#### NH • Grantee Perspective

Funding allowed us to hire a team of professionals to focus exclusively on the provision of immigration legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. It allowed us to hire a bilingual, culturally competent staff with expertise in immigration law, domestic violence, and poverty law, which enhanced the program's ability to identify other legal and social needs more effectively and enhance collaborations with our partners and other institutions. We were able to accept a caseload of immigration law cases for immigrant victims of DV/SA significantly above initial projections, to work with our partners to ensure timely referrals and access to services in a way that did not exist only weeks before the program started.

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
(LAV PROGRAM)

*In the U.S., approximately 56.7 million people, 18.7% of the population, live with one or more of a wide array of disabilities, including communicative disabilities such as hearing, sight, and speech challenges; mental disabilities such as intellectual and learning disabilities; and physical disabilities such as mobility challenges, musculoskeletal difficulties, and head and spinal trauma.*



#### OH • Grantee Perspective

The Disability grant funding has empowered Project CARE and its collaborative process to present a one-of-a-kind curriculum in Hamilton County, Ohio that integrates risk reduction, prevention (mostly secondary and tertiary), and intervention frameworks to empower individuals with intellectual disabilities to identify types of abuse, report and gain support for victimization, and most importantly understand it is their right to engage in and enjoy healthy, safe relationships.

**YWCA OF GREATER CINCINNATI, OHIO (DISABILITY PROGRAM)**

## People with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines an individual with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.<sup>311–313</sup> A growing body of research has documented that individuals who are Deaf and/or have a disability experience domestic/sexual violence at higher rates than their hearing counterparts and/or people without disabilities.

Further research is needed to accurately determine the prevalence of victimization among individuals who are Deaf and/or disabled, in part because these victims may be marginalized or overlooked, by society, healthcare professionals, service providers, and researchers.<sup>238,314,315</sup> Validated survey instruments may not be accessible, and healthcare professionals may not screen for domestic/sexual violence when working with Deaf patients or patients with disabilities. Further, people who are Deaf and/or disabled may be inaccurately perceived as asexual and/or undesirable, and thus assumed unlikely to be victimized. However, numerous studies suggest those living with physical, mental, cognitive, or sensory impairments are more likely to experience domestic/sexual violence than those living without these impairments, due to their increased dependence and vulnerability; those with mental health impairments are at particular risk.<sup>316–321</sup>

College students and young adults with disabilities are nearly twice as likely to have experienced psychological, sexual, or physical abuse as those without disabilities.<sup>319,322</sup> Likewise, a growing body of research shows that Deaf college students may be twice as likely to experience physical assault, sexual coercion, or psychological aggression as hearing students.<sup>323,324</sup> Other research indicates that the general population of persons with disabilities are two to five times more likely to experience domestic/sexual violence than persons without disabilities.<sup>321</sup> Deaf adults also experience higher rates of domestic/sexual violence than the general population.<sup>325,326</sup> Further research is needed to determine whether the severity and visibility of disability puts individuals at increased risk for abuse.<sup>319,327</sup>

The consequence of these high rates of domestic/sexual violence among individuals who are Deaf and/or disabled are severe. Persons with disabilities may experience significant barriers to disclosing abuse, such as dependence on caregivers who may be responsible for this violence. Victims with disabilities experience other forms of abuse such as destruction of their adaptive equipment and financial exploitation by their perpetrator, in addition to physical and sexual abuse.<sup>328</sup> When these victims disclose abuse, they may risk protective intervention that could result in losing their independence or being compelled to leave their own homes, particularly if the abuser is also their caregiver.<sup>329</sup> Further, victims may encounter barriers when attempting to obtain services, such as inaccessible shelters or lack of interpreting assistance.

In order to serve Deaf and/or disabled persons most effectively, cross-training between disability services and victim services organizations must occur. Because victims with disabilities come from various cultural, racial, and ethnic populations, and have diverse disabilities, it is critical that victim services, law enforcement agencies, and other first responders tailor their programs to appropriately respond to the full spectrum of assistance these victims need.<sup>330,331</sup>

VAWA funds the Disability Program to train criminal justice professionals, court personnel, and victim services providers to respond effectively to Deaf and/or disabled victims. Disability Program grantees have worked diligently to improve the criminal justice response and services available to these victims and to strengthen collaboration with community agencies.

Across the 2-year reporting period, Disability Program grantees:

- Trained **7,289** people (including health and mental healthcare providers, government agency staff, domestic violence service providers, disabilities organizations staff, law enforcement personnel, and residential, institutional, and independent-living staff) to provide more effective services to victims with disabilities; and
- Provided **1,463** technical assistance activities, which included **1,297** consultations and **166** site visits.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees served an average of **8,619** Deaf and/or disabled victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## People Victimized in Later Life/Elder Abuse

In 2010, the U.S. Census reported a record high number (40.3 million) and percentage (13%) of people aged 65 or older.<sup>332</sup> By 2030, over 20% of Americans, or 73 million people, are expected to be over 65; approximately 40 million of them will be women.<sup>333</sup>

An aging population becomes increasingly reliant on others for day-to-day living; this dependency can increase older persons' vulnerability to abuse. Many older women are retired, receiving public assistance and/or Social Security benefits, and are dependent upon family members for their care; these circumstances increase perpetrators' ability to wield control over the lives of their victims.<sup>334-336</sup> Those in long-standing relationships with few social supports are more likely to report experiencing some form of abuse, as they may perceive their options as limited.<sup>337-339</sup> Non-physical intimate partner violence persists into later life, and may become more severe as physical violence decreases, yet this type of violence is often overlooked.<sup>340</sup> Older women are frequently and inaccurately perceived as asexual and undesirable, and assumed to be unlikely targets of sexual violence, but the incidence of victimization among this population suggests otherwise.<sup>336</sup>



### DE • Grantee Perspective

Many services for people with disabilities and/or mental illness remain fragmented and compartmentalized. This project has started many rich conversations in the community about creating integrated, trauma-informed, and fully accessible services at the intersection. This project has allowed us to begin a critical dialogue on intimate partner violence with disabilities and mental health service providers. Disability advocates now recognize that domestic violence advocates and service providers need to be at the table when addressing issues that affect people with disabilities.

**DELAWARE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DISABILITY PROGRAM)**



### TX • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed us to conduct outreach and education to the Deaf community through social media. This has been a very effective model for providing ongoing education and engagement of the Deaf community on issues related to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Additionally, this funding has allowed us to develop a comprehensive training for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to prepare them for interpreting in situations involving domestic/sexual violence (counseling, shelter, sexual assault forensic exam, law enforcement investigation).

**TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVAL CENTER (DISABILITY PROGRAM)**



### MI • Grantee Perspective

As a direct result of this grant, we have been able to hire a case manager to help victims of abuse in later life. In this period, she has helped 13 victims become free of their abusers and provided services and funds that allow them to live independently from the abuse they have suffered. The grant has allowed Bay County to provide funding and services to people aged 50 to 64 who may not qualify for services from agencies who use the ages of 60 to 65 as an eligibility requirement. Without these funds, many victims would not be able to leave their abuser. The case manager has also responded to 28 information and/or crisis calls regarding elder abuse. In addition, we have contracted with the Bay Area Women's Center (BAWC) who has provided an emergency hotline, shelter, counseling, and independent living classes to 35 older victims of abuse.

**BAY COUNTY DIVISION ON AGING, MICHIGAN (ABUSE IN LATER LIFE PROGRAM)**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Prior to Abuse in Later Life funding, there were no services primarily directed to those victims of abuse who were slightly older, yet not old enough to be considered elders for advocacy and legal groups. Now that we have been able to focus on those that have been ignored for so long, we have addressed the needs of a community that would have otherwise gone unserved. Clients that normally would not be eligible for Adult Protective Services or prosecutorial agencies to pursue elder abuse prosecutions are now able to get protective orders to address their needs.

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, CALIFORNIA (ABUSE IN LATER LIFE PROGRAM)**

In a nationally representative study, one in ten adults aged 60 or older experienced emotional, physical, or sexual mistreatment or potential neglect in the past year.<sup>337</sup> Other research shows that nearly half of women aged 55 and older experience some type of physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, and/or financial abuse.<sup>341</sup> Further, 14% of women over 65 report having been physically or sexually assaulted, or both, by intimate partners during their lifetime, and many of them exhibit symptoms of PTSD, depression, and anxiety even decades after the trauma.<sup>342,343</sup> A better understanding of the scope of elder abuse, and effective responses to the specific needs of these victims, are critical concerns for both service providers and policy makers.<sup>236</sup>

Intimate partner violence among older victims is often overlooked or misidentified. Confusion can arise about appropriate responses and services: historically, neither the domestic/sexual violence services nor the adult protective services (APS) fields have adequately served older victims.<sup>344,345</sup> Only a small percentage of elder abuse is reported to authorities.<sup>337,338</sup> When reported, it is primarily the responsibility of APS agencies, which investigate, prosecute, and protect against abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of vulnerable adults.<sup>346</sup> Historically, these agencies have focused on services associated with family, caregiver, and financial abuse—not domestic/sexual abuse or stalking. Domestic violence services, by comparison, specifically address abuse related to domestic violence, intimate partner sexual assault, and/or stalking. These organizations typically promote agency and empowerment, and define perpetrators primarily as intimate partners. Because of this, they are often unresponsive to the needs of older adults who may need particular assistance or may be victimized by a relative or caregiver, not an intimate partner. Many sexual assault programs are similarly issue-specific. It is thus critical that domestic violence and sexual assault agencies respond to older victims' specific needs and circumstances, and develop effective collaborations with adult protective services and others supporting older adults.<sup>347,348</sup>

The Abuse in Later Life Program addresses these specific needs of older victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including domestic/sexual violence. Grantees collaborate with numerous local professionals and agencies to provide services to victims, and provide training on issues specific to the victimization of older adults. Included in these collaborations are criminal justice personnel (i.e. law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other court staff); adult protective services; community-based elder services; and domestic violence and sexual assault victim service organizations.

In addition to Abuse in Later Life Program grantees, grantees that provide services to victims (with the exception of children and youth-focused grantees) also provide services to older victims, and engage in other funded activities to improve the response to these victims.

Across the 2-year reporting period, Abuse in Later Life Program grantees:

- Used grant funds to train **5,586** individuals, including **2,936** law enforcement officers and **147** prosecutors; and
- Provided services to an average of **585** victims aged 50 or older during each 6-month reporting period.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees served an average of **4,221** victims aged 60 or older during each 6-month reporting period.

## Children and Youth

Each year, millions of children and adolescents are exposed to and/or directly victimized by domestic/sexual violence, although few of these occurrences are reported to authorities.<sup>349</sup> These experiences can significantly damage a child's physical, mental, and emotional health, and the harmful effects of these may last well into adulthood.

In a nationally representative study of children exposed to violence, more than one-third (37.3%) of youth respondents (aged 17 and under) experienced a physical assault, and 5% experienced sexual assault or abuse, in the past year.<sup>350</sup> Nearly one-fifth (19.5%) of respondents witnessed family violence (psychological, emotional, and/or physical) in their lifetime. Other studies indicate that an estimated one in ten adults report being sexually abused as children and that these child victims are more likely to experience other forms of child abuse, maltreatment, and neglect; additionally, girls are more likely than boys to experience sexual abuse.<sup>351,352</sup> However, these incidence of children exposed to or experiencing violence is much higher than the rates of these crimes reported to authorities.<sup>353</sup>

Children who are exposed to violence, whether as witnesses or child victims, can experience a wide variety of immediate and long-term health effects, including PTSD.<sup>353-355</sup> The adverse health effects of these crimes on children can have severe negative consequences.<sup>356</sup> Children may internalize their experiences by becoming withdrawn, anxious, fearful, or depressed; developing attachment disorders; or having nightmares or disturbances in sleep.<sup>354,357</sup> They may externalize their feelings by exhibiting social, behavioral, and cognitive challenges or conditions, such as acting out, displaying aggressive or antisocial behavior, having difficulty focusing in school, or engaging in high-risk or delinquent behavior.<sup>189,358-360</sup> Moreover, these adverse health effects can persist into adulthood.<sup>351,361,362</sup> Adults who were victimized as children show higher incidences of substance abuse and mental health problems, such as bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and suicidality.

Childhood exposure to domestic/sexual violence increases the risk of witnessing, experiencing, or perpetrating other forms of violence (e.g. sibling abuse, property crime, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence) in adolescence and adulthood.<sup>39,355,363-365</sup> Child sexual abuse victims are significantly more likely than their non-abused counterparts to report being



### MI • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this funding, we were unable to provide on-site counseling services. This funding has led to an increase in youth accessing quality mental health services in confidential and effective ways. Youth are seeking services on their own, often without being prompted by adults and we have established a strong, productive, and trusting relationship with Southwest Detroit youth. This has led to 70 teens and young adults obtaining counseling and advocacy services in the past 6 months, well over our goal of serving 100 youth per year.

**LA VIDA/CHASS CENTER, MICHIGAN (YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM)**



### NC • Grantee Perspective

We continue to hear positive feedback from both parents and children about the benefits of [our] services, including the relief that some parents have felt about their child receiving their own support through individual/group counseling, school-based counseling, and shelter services. Children have given positive feedback as well, in terms of being able to talk about what they are going through and relate to other kids going through similar situations. Children receiving shelter services have displayed improved affect and social engagement after learning and practicing self-regulation skills.

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES, NORTH CAROLINA (CONSOLIDATED YOUTH PROGRAM)**



### MN • Grantee Perspective

The responsive design structure for youth and young adult services through this grant, from our beginning planning phases to present, is invaluable. This program allows us to serve a large diversity of clients, such as clients of all genders, and because of the openness of who we can serve we have found that the clients we have served range greatly in ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic background, and more. The program also allows us to specifically respond to the way that youth and young adults communicate and use text, email, and phone as a way to access the program. We are also able to eliminate most transportation barriers and can travel to clients in order to provide services. We are able to support youth and young adults who are not interested in one-on-one therapy or support groups, yet still have interest in community support by meeting with in-home counselors in our program.

**TUBMAN, MINNESOTA (YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM)**

sexually assaulted as adults.<sup>361</sup> Women who were physically or sexually abused and/or witnessed domestic violence as children are more likely than non-exposed women to report victimization by an intimate partner later in life.<sup>366,367</sup> Men exposed to violence as children are significantly more likely than non-exposed men to report perpetrating dating or domestic violence as adults.<sup>368</sup>

Holistic, comprehensive services for child victims, and violence prevention and education programs that focus on building healthy relationship skills, are critical for reducing re-victimization rates.<sup>369–371</sup> Early identification and intervention by healthcare providers and mental health professionals can support families in breaking intergenerational cycles of violence.<sup>356</sup> VAWA-funded grant programs provide services to child and adolescent primary victims of sexual assault, in addition to serving children of victims of domestic/sexual violence. Several programs also provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, and visitation services for children and adolescents who were affected by this violence.

During each 6-month reporting period, on average:

- Children Exposed to Violence, Consolidated Youth, Justice For Families, Rural, SASP–CS, STEP, Supervised Visitation, Transitional Housing, Tribal Governments, and T–SASP Program grantees provided services to **9,611** children (infancy to age 12);
- Grantees from all programs that serve victims and their families provided services to **5,831** adolescents (ages 13 to 17);<sup>xvii</sup> and
- Rural Program grantees provided services to **644** victims of child sexual abuse.<sup>xviii</sup>



### KS • Grantee Perspective

This funding has also allowed many families to meet their basic needs during times of crisis through the availability of client assistance. Because of the far-reaching family relationships in small towns, some victims find they must relocate to another community in order to be safe. Many of these people would not be able to afford the expenses involved in moving if we could not offer some assistance with rent, utilities, transportation, and other expenses. In short, this funding is vital to our organization's ability to address challenges and advocate individually and systematically for victims of domestic and sexual violence in rural areas.

**YWCA CENTER FOR SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT, KANSAS (RURAL PROGRAM)**

## Victims and Families Living in Rural Areas

As of the 2010 Census, nearly 20%, or one in five Americans, lived in rural areas.<sup>372</sup> Rural victims seeking to become and remain safe from violence experience unique challenges and barriers, such as geographic isolation, limited infrastructure and available services, few material resources, strong social and cultural pressures, and lack of anonymity and security when seeking shelter and services.<sup>373–376</sup> Rural victims of violence may have worse psychosocial and physical health outcomes than their urban counterparts, due to these challenges.<sup>374,377</sup>

Rural victims of domestic/sexual violence often face geographic challenges in reaching service providers. They may need to travel great distances, and there

<sup>xvii</sup> Total does not include non-custodial or custodial adolescent parents receiving supervised visitation services from Justice for Families, Supervised Visitation or Tribal Governments grantees. However, it does include children and adolescents served by these three grant programs. In addition, Abuse in Later Life grantees only serve victims aged 50 years and older.

<sup>xviii</sup> Depending upon the age at which a victim seeks services, this number could include both child and adult victims of child sexual abuse.

may be limited public transportation services in their communities. In one study, over 25% of women in small rural and isolated areas lived more than 40 miles from the closest service provider, compared to less than 1% of women in urban settings.<sup>375</sup>

Beyond geographic obstacles, victims residing in rural areas may face a complex interweaving of cultural, psychological, emotional, and systemic barriers to resources. Small, isolated communities may prioritize family privacy, traditional gender roles, and keeping families intact, even when violence is present.<sup>217</sup> This culture can reinforce the normative belief that one should not report crimes because they are private concerns.<sup>378</sup> Further, victims might be reluctant to report domestic/sexual violence in rural communities because there are more practical barriers to maintaining confidentiality and anonymity.<sup>379,380</sup>

Rural criminal justice systems may struggle to respond to victims of domestic/sexual violence due to limited staff and resources. The degree to which perpetrators and victims are “known,” or their political and social standing in the community, may also influence the criminal justice system’s response.<sup>380,381</sup> Relationships between victims and advocates, as well as their healthcare providers, may be affected by lack of privacy, geographic distance, limited referrals, along with community and social pressure to avoid criminal justice engagement.<sup>378,382</sup>

To address these barriers and respond to rural victims of domestic/sexual violence, VAWA funds the Rural Program. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, Rural Program grantees provided services to **15,091** victims.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees provided services to an average of **29,581** victims who lived in rural areas (including reservations and Indian Country) during each 6-month reporting period.

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and/or Transgender (LGBT) Victims

There is increasing research documenting the prevalence of domestic/sexual violence among LGBT victims, which appears to be as high, or higher than, rates of violence among heterosexual victims.<sup>383-388</sup> The NISVS found that 44% of lesbian women and 61% of bisexual women, compared to 35% of heterosexual women, experienced domestic/sexual violence.<sup>389</sup> The same study found that 26% of gay men and 37% of bisexual men experienced these crimes, compared to 29% of heterosexual men. In addition, transgender individuals experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic/sexual violence compared to cisgender individuals.<sup>390</sup> Despite these high rates of violence, the criminal, legal, and community responses to LGBT victims have been at best limited and at worst, destructive.



### UT • Grantee Perspective

The Rural Program funding we have received has allowed us to operate in three counties covering over 6,985 square miles. Many of the people that we help are isolated in their communities and not willing or able to reach out for help due to fear or lack of resources. This program, only possible through this grant, has been influential in building bridges between already existing programs, creating education and awareness about these crimes, building a change in perception within the community, and allowing those in need to reach out for help and stop the violence in their homes and communities.

**CENTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CRISIS, UTAH (RURAL PROGRAM)**



### KS • Grantee Perspective

Often victims are physically isolated by geographic location to services but live in small work and social communities where personal information is accessible to the general public. For example, in Jackson County the local newspaper publishes the names of all individuals applying for protection orders. Victims often face immediate intimidation by third parties with this information so accessible. Despite attempts by law enforcement and advocacy agencies, the paper refuses to stop this practice. This is common practice in the media in rural areas. Victims often are forced to deal with limited support, but significant public and social implications when seeking recourse to stop the violence in their lives.

**YWCA CENTER FOR SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT, KANSAS (RURAL PROGRAM)**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Program funds have allowed staff to provide advocacy for community residents experiencing interpersonal violence. Previously, the drive for some rural residents to get pro bono legal services was a minimum of 30 minutes, to upwards of 75 minutes. With the Campo office and library clinics in place, rural residents now travel much shorter distances to consult with a pro bono attorney and advocate. The Rural Program staff is supremely dedicated, and highly creative, in its quest to bring much-needed services to those who are often marginalized, dismissed, or forgotten.

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, CALIFORNIA (RURAL PROGRAM)**



### VT • Grantee Perspective

By traveling to and using other agencies' youth spaces, and by demonstrating to the populations and communities that we wish to serve, that grant-funded staff are safe, consistent, understanding, non-judging people in their lives who continue to "show up" for them, we have made great inroads to homeless, runaway, and LGBT youth in our area. As a result, during this 6-month period we've seen a tremendous increase in rural, homeless, and LGBT youth served.

**HOPE WORKS, VERMONT (CONSOLIDATED YOUTH PROGRAM)**



### MA • Grantee Perspective

Each of the four TOD@S member agencies participated in the facilitation of multiple trainings that addressed partner abuse and domestic/sexual violence within LGBTQ/T communities of color. Fenway Health's Violence Recovery Program (VRP) and The Network/La Red (TNLR) facilitated two trainings in Spanish for Spanish-speaking substance abuse counselors. These trainings were particularly relevant to the TOD@S mission, reaching providers working specifically with Latino communities who speak Spanish in order to educate them about working with LGBTQ/T victims in communities of color. Attendees reported in their evaluations having a better understanding of LGBTQ/T communities, partner abuse, and the need for screening for partner abuse. They also reported having a better understanding of barriers and challenges LGBTQ/T victims of color face when trying to access support.

**FENWAY HEALTH, VIOLENCE RECOVERY PROGRAM, MASSACHUSETTS (CSSP)**

LGBT victims may be hesitant to report acts of violence due to fear of disclosure, discrimination, and/or retribution, coupled with a historical distrust of and mistreatment in the criminal justice and legal systems.<sup>391-393</sup> LGBT individuals, and in particular, LGBT persons of color and/or transgender persons, may be reluctant to seek help from the legal system for fear of perceived or real bias.<sup>390</sup> In turn, providers may be unprepared to offer sensitive and appropriate advocacy and shelter to LGBT victims of violence.<sup>394</sup> In a national survey of providers, respondents noted the following barriers to serving LGBT victims: a limited capacity to serve heterosexual women and thus a consequent inability to expand services to others; homophobia and transphobia among staff members; fear of backlash from funders, politicians, and the community; and no way to formally document the need for LGBT-tailored services.<sup>235</sup>

Fortunately, emerging research is providing evidence as to how to best serve LGBT victims. This body of work is beginning to document the contexts and consequences of acts and patterns of violence against LGBT people, the array of services and advocacy they require, the particular obstacles they encounter when seeking help and protection, the quality of justice they receive, the strength of their available support networks, and the prevention strategies that can avert violence against them.<sup>385</sup>

In 2013, VAWA was amended to explicitly require that grantees of the Office on Violence Against Women may not discriminate against victims of violence based on actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.<sup>4</sup> In addition, VAWA 2013 identified LGBT victims as an underserved population.<sup>xvi</sup> These historic provisions mark the first ever explicit protections from discrimination for LGBT people appearing within a federal funding statute, and can serve as guidelines for other federal agencies seeking to implement non-discrimination provisions. Because many criminal justice agencies, victim services, and advocacy programs nationwide are funded by VAWA, these nondiscrimination directives herald reduced bias against LGBT victims who seek to become and remain safe from violence.

For more information about the VAWA 2013 nondiscrimination provision, visit:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/docs/faqs-ngc-vaawa.pdf>

# Community Education, Awareness, and Prevention

Key elements of an effective response to domestic/sexual violence are criminal justice and victim services interventions, training for professionals, and strong coordinated community responses, whereby justice system professionals, victim services providers, and others work together to best serve victims and hold offenders accountable. To truly end these crimes, these efforts must be accompanied by broad public education and awareness to help build communities' capacity for prevention.

By presenting violence as a public health issue that is relevant to everyone, and not just victims, grantees work to change both collective social norms and individual behavior and perceptions.<sup>395,396</sup> Depending upon the needs and resources of specific communities, grantees' efforts might range from posting materials on bulletin boards in rural settings to large social media campaigns in major metropolitan areas.

Recent research shows that violence prevention education, such as bystander intervention programs, can be effective in changing behavior and reducing dating violence.<sup>397-399</sup> In some cases, these results have been shown to last several years after program delivery.<sup>400</sup> Comprehensive programs that promote healthy relationships among adolescents employ school-based strategies, parent programs, teacher training, tools for neighborhood organizations, and social media to reinforce their messages.<sup>401</sup> Research shows that children and adolescents are more likely to disclose abuse and bullying; recognize and report abusive behavior; and intend to engage in positive bystander behavior when they receive school-based curricula focusing on changing social norms and building healthy relationships.<sup>402,403</sup> This form of prevention education is particularly effective when it includes multiple lessons and parental involvement.<sup>369</sup> College students who engage in violence prevention as bystanders report feeling greater responsibility for ending interpersonal violence and more confidence as bystanders; they perceive greater benefits of stepping in to help, and have a greater awareness or knowledge of sexual and partner abuse.<sup>404,405</sup>

Some of the most promising practices in primary prevention of these crimes are those directed at engaging men and boys.<sup>406</sup> These approaches may include educational programs, social marketing campaigns, and the fostering of men's commitment as activists and advocates for women. In recognition of the crucial role men and boys can play in the effort to prevent domestic/sexual violence, OVC administers the formerly authorized Engaging Men and



## PA • Grantee Perspective

The Campus grant funding has allowed us to hire a full-time Interpersonal Violence Prevention Coordinator (IVPC) to strengthen our prevention education program. The IVPC oversees the sexual violence peer education program, Speak UP Bucknell, which is becoming a sustainable and effective campus prevention education program. During the 2013-2014 academic year, the Speak UP Bucknell peer educators educated 907 out of 933 incoming students on sexual assault and positive bystander behavior within the first 2 weeks of the semester; they also conducted a non-mandatory follow-up session in October to approximately 570 first-year students and a second non-mandatory follow-up session in January to approximately 290 first-year students. The ability to have a full-time position dedicated to prevention education has truly allowed our campus to start making a systemic, population-level impact.

**BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY, PENNSYLVANIA (CAMPUS PROGRAM)**



## CO • Grantee Perspective

We learned of a young woman who attended both an Orientation education and Freshmen Seminar education. Her mother told project staff that it was this education that led her daughter to end an abusive relationship and seek services and social support in dealing with the impact of that abusive relationship. Both the student and her mother have directly attributed this education to her decision to end the relationship. The student noted that once she twice heard from a peer educator what an abusive relationship looked like, it was no longer possible to rationalize her boyfriend's behavior.

**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, COLORADO SPRINGS (CAMPUS PROGRAM)**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

In March we organized a Sexual Assault Awareness event called “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.” The event asks for everyone in the community to participate, but mainly focuses on men. Male participants literally walk a mile in high heels through downtown. The event focuses on men, to show that sexualized violence is not just a women’s issue. Walking the mile shows support and compassion for victims, and that our men will not tolerate sexual violence in our community. We had a total of 129 participants, 70 of those being men. This was nearly twice as many participants as the first “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” event we hosted. Our participation in these activities gives our program great opportunities to get out in the community to show victims and community members we care and are available to help victims of domestic/sexual violence.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS (TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM)**

Youth Program, now a part of the Consolidated Youth Program.<sup>xix</sup> This program supports a comprehensive focus on youth and children exposed to violence; and men as leaders and influencers of social norms.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- Engaging Men and Youth and Consolidated Youth Program grantees provided **374** ongoing educational and mentoring activities that reached **19,602** youth (**13,010** of whom were students) and **21,587** other community members.

Overall, VAWA-funded grantees conducted **22,725** educational and public awareness programs and events that reached **768,894** students and **575,062** other community members.<sup>xx</sup>

<sup>xix</sup> VAWA 2013 authorized the Creating Hope Through Outreach, Options, Services, and Education for Children and Youth (CHOOSE) and Saving Money and Reducing Tragedies through Prevention (SMART) Programs. Since then, appropriations bills have continued to fund the Consolidated Youth Program, so OVW continues to administer it.

<sup>xx</sup> Not included in this figure are media campaigns and awareness events convened by State Coalitions and Tribal Governments Program grantees.

# Training and Technical Assistance

Nearly all VAWA-funded grant programs provide training and expert technical assistance to a wide variety of professionals on a broad range of topics related to domestic/sexual violence. In the course of seeking services, victims may interact with advocates, law enforcement, prosecutors, court personnel, health and mental health professionals, campus personnel, educators, and government agency staff. To best serve victims of domestic/sexual violence, professionals must understand the causes, circumstances, and consequences of violence, as well as best practices to addressing violence and victimization. With this foundation, they can effectively respond to victims, prevent further harm, avoid unintended negative consequences, and hold offenders accountable. Grantees prioritize training law enforcement, court personnel, healthcare providers, and advocates, who are often first responders to victims, meaning they may be the first people that victims disclose their victimization to or ask for help.

Research shows that law enforcement were most likely to appropriately arrest perpetrators when they received training on and followed these best practices: conducting investigations in-person, following up with victims after initial contact, conducting safety planning with victims, assessing the needs of children exposed to the violence, providing victims with emergency cell phones, describing protection orders and court procedures, connecting victims with available shelter and advocacy services, explaining the effects of domestic violence on children, and helping victims feel safe.<sup>125</sup> Without proper training, an officer may not be able to identify the predominant aggressor in a domestic violence situation, may unknowingly minimize a victim's trauma, may fail to collect all relevant evidence, and may mistakenly arrest the victim. Moreover, if an officer sides with an abuser or is otherwise insensitive to the victim's needs, the victim may not report future assaults.

Healthcare providers can play a critical role in supporting their patients who are victims of domestic/sexual violence, but many of these providers do not ask about violence routinely in their practice due to lack of time, training, or their personal beliefs.<sup>407</sup> When healthcare providers ask questions about interpersonal violence during confidential, routine medical examinations, they provide opportunities for victims to disclose abuse and receive appropriate services and referrals.<sup>408</sup> Research shows that healthcare providers who receive training on screening for and identifying victims of domestic violence improve their practice, professional attitudes, and comfort in asking about violence at home.<sup>409,410</sup> Specialized training for nurses and other medical forensic professionals who examine and treat victims of sexual assault is essential to ensure proper collection and storage of forensic evidence; provision of information and treatment on related medical issues and prophylactic care;

*Grantees provide technical assistance in a variety of ways: webinars, roundtables, monthly conference calls, mentoring, peer-to-peer consultations, site visits, presentations, and more.*



## MA • Grantee Perspective

With these resources, we have been able to provide extensive training and education. We have been able to train and educate law enforcement officers, many of whom are entering communities of color for the very first time. Many come with no prior understanding of the community or the culture, and the way in which it affects victims' decision-making processes. Many know nothing of the historical responsibility of women of color to protect their men at all cost. For many, the only thing they know or understand about our community is what they see in the media, and hear in music. The CSSP grant makes this training possible.

**URBAN LEAGUE OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS (CSSP)**

*The Affordable Care Act extended women's preventive health services to include screening and counseling for domestic/sexual violence. Providers are encouraged to screen for these types of violence during routine healthcare visits, provide brief counseling and assess the patient's safety, and link the patient to local support services. For more information, visit: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/screening-counseling-fact-sheet.html>.*



### NY • Grantee Perspective

We were fortunate to have a series of trainings on transgender victims of sexual violence by FORGE. One of these trainings was specialized for our SANE nurses, which was really well-received. FORGE also trained professional staff all over campus, including members from the University Police Department, the counseling center, faculty members, and student affairs professionals.

**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK (CAMPUS PROGRAM)**

coordination with advocates to ensure that crisis intervention, advocacy, and support services are offered before, during, and after the exam; heightened understanding of common trauma responses to sexual assault; and being prepared to offer testimony in court.<sup>89,90</sup>

Trained professionals involved in divorce, custody, or child protection cases (e.g. judges, Guardians ad litem, custody evaluators, caseworkers, and attorneys) can support victims navigating the criminal and civil legal systems.<sup>206</sup> Training on risk assessment and safety planning is especially important in domestic violence and sexual assault cases, because victims may face greater danger when they attempt to leave.<sup>218,219</sup> Without training, domestic/sexual violence may be minimized or remain unrecognized, and professionals may make inappropriate or even harmful recommendations and decisions.<sup>203</sup> Their actions or inaction may further expose children to an abusive parent, place the victim in danger, or not safeguard the victim from an abuser who uses the court or child protective systems to continue the abuse.<sup>220-222,411</sup>

There is a perpetual need for both basic and advanced training and technical assistance for advocates and staff in the victim services field, which is chronically under-resourced and subject to high staff turnover. Many agencies serving victims of domestic/sexual violence operate with limited budgets, and staff are likely to juggle high caseloads. In 2015, the annual Domestic Violence Counts survey found that victims made more than 12,000 requests for services that could not be met, because programs did not have the resources to provide these services.<sup>197</sup> VAWA-funded grantees offer training and technical assistance for those responding to the needs of victims, such as best practices in organizational structures, developing supportive work environments, managing secondary trauma and stress, reducing compassion fatigue, and improving self-care. Advocates who are well-trained are better able to support victims seeking to become and remain free from violence.<sup>412-414</sup>

Across the 2-year reporting period, **1,290** VAWA-funded grantees convened a total of **26,042** training events, and trained **686,966** professionals, including:

- **139,766** victim advocates and other advocacy organization and agency staff;
- **89,937** law enforcement officers;
- **51,705** health professionals, such as mental health providers, healthcare professionals, and SANEs/SAFEs;
- **45,521** attorneys and law students;
- **24,289** government agency staff;<sup>xxi</sup>
- **18,404** court personnel;
- **15,680** prosecutors; and
- **8,434** faith-based organization staff.



### AK • Grantee Perspective

Alaska Institute for Justice (AIJ) attorneys are able to receive training through the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) on providing overlapping civil and immigration legal services to immigrant victims. Attending NIWAP's 2014 training directly helped AIJ's staff attorneys to effectively represent and protect their clients. For example, one of AIJ's LAV-funded staff attorneys used skills learned at that training to use discovery in a custody case to obtain proof of the abuser's U.S. citizenship and residence with their client in the U.S. for purposes of the client's VAWA self-petition. She also used skills learned at that training to protect her client from questions regarding immigration status during litigation, and effectively argue that her client's lack of status was part of the abuse and weighed against the abuser, rather than AIJ's client, in the custody determination.

**ALASKA INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE (LAV PROGRAM)**

<sup>xxi</sup> This number includes 6,210 tribal government agency staff.

VAWA-funded grantees most often provided training on the dynamics of domestic/sexual violence and services available to victims of these crimes, confidentiality, and safety planning.

Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **308** Disability, State Coalitions, Technical Assistance, and Tribal Coalitions Program grantees provided **182,745** consultations and **5,567** site visits to a broad range of professionals; and
- **103** LAV Program grantees provided technical assistance to legal professionals (including attorneys, judges, prosecutors, legal services staff, Guardians ad litem, friends of the court, and court mediators) and victim advocates.



#### **OR • Grantee Perspective**

As more advocates become aware of the VRLC's holistic model for providing legal services to sexual assault victims, we are receiving more invitations to present at agencies and to groups with whom we have not previously had relationships. For instance, a Legal Assistance to Rape Survivors Project attorney gave a presentation about our services and what it means to do a holistic legal intake to the Cascade AIDS Project. During the presentation, one advocate reflected that he would never have thought to ask a client about the stability of her/his job or housing as a result of a sexual assault. His reflection serves as a powerful reminder that the outreach we do not only results in direct referrals to our services, but also has the capacity to positively impact the lives of victims we may never meet.

**VICTIM RIGHTS LAW CENTER, OREGON (LAV PROGRAM)**



# Conclusion

This report reflects 2 years of collective efforts to respond to domestic/sexual violence across the nation. It describes significant accomplishments that would not have been possible in the absence of VAWA funding, and highlights evolving and ongoing challenges.

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, VAWA discretionary grant programs funded more than **2,000** grantees and technical assistance providers. Over **one million** services were provided to victims and their families as they coped with the immediate and long-term impact of violence in their lives, helping victims remain safe and establishing independence after leaving an abusive relationship, and connecting victims with resources to support their recovery. During each 6-month reporting period, on average, VAWA-funded grantees provided **124,916** individuals with supportive services such as shelter, crisis intervention, and advocacy.

VAWA-funded grantees used funds to train **686,966** service providers, criminal justice personnel, and other professionals to improve their response to victims. More than **1.3 million** individuals participated in VAWA-funded education, awareness, or prevention activities. Law enforcement made **66,095** arrests, and courts disposed of **6,424** criminal cases, of which **66%** resulted in convictions.

The following sections present aggregate quantitative and qualitative grantee data from **23** currently and formerly authorized grant programs, including OVW's comprehensive technical assistance program, that further demonstrates the effectiveness of VAWA funding nationwide.



# The Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women Later in Life Program

While sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking can affect victims in any age group, individuals who are 50 years of age or older who experience elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation can face unique barriers to receiving assistance.

**RECOGNIZING THIS, THE ENHANCED TRAINING AND SERVICES TO END Violence Against and Abuse of Women Later in Life Program (Abuse in Later Life or ALL Program) supports a comprehensive, community coordinated response (CCR) to address and prevent elder abuse.**

## 49 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 49 unique grantees reported activities funded by the ALL Program.

## 585 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 585 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 5,586 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 5,586 people.

Age or disability may increase isolation for victims of elder abuse, and professionals may mistakenly perceive age or disability, rather than abuse, as the reason for a victim's injuries. Victims may depend on their abusers for care or housing, and abusers may intimidate them using threats of placing the victim in a nursing home. The victim may also experience shame or embarrassment in addition to the fear of losing the support their abuser provides. It is particularly critical for criminal justice professionals and victim service providers to recognize indicators that an older individual is being abused.

*Sexual violence against older women is rarely talked about. Ageism contributes to the mistaken notion that older people are "asexual," which fosters the dangerous assumption that they cannot be targets of sexual violence. Older women may be reliant on their perpetrators to provide their care, which makes victims especially vulnerable to continued violence.<sup>336</sup>*



### DC • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this grant, the community had never before collaborated in a multidisciplinary way on elder abuse issues. Ad hoc partnerships based on chance meetings at conferences may have facilitated some positive referrals, but no attempt had been made to bring together key agencies interacting with senior victims. This funding has allowed for a dedicated project coordinator to bring together the systems-based agencies and community organizations, as well as provided training hosted by the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life with national experts with career experience in law enforcement, prosecution, adult protective services, sexual assault, domestic violence, and senior services.

**NETWORK FOR VICTIM RECOVERY, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

The Abuse in Later Life Program enhances the safety of victims by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent elder abuse. Purpose areas include:

- Train programs to assist criminal justice system personnel in recognizing, addressing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
- Provide or enhance services for victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
- Create or support multidisciplinary collaborative community responses to victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and
- Conduct cross-training for victim service organizations, governmental agencies, courts, law enforcement, and nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations serving victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose areas to this program:

- Provide training programs to assist attorneys, healthcare providers, faith-based leaders, or other community-based organizations in recognizing and addressing instances of abuse in later life; and
- Conduct outreach activities and awareness campaigns to ensure that victims of abuse in later life receive appropriate assistance.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address these purpose areas. If an activity falling under one of the added purpose areas could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

### General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **49** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **5** (10%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose area:
  - Created or supported multidisciplinary collaborative community responses to victims.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide services to victims and training for criminal justice professionals to help ensure a CCR to victims of elder abuse. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **49** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **36** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds for program coordinators and victim advocates.

Table 1 Staff supported with Abuse in Later Life grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>36</b>	
Program coordinators	<b>18</b>	<b>50%</b>
Victim advocates	<b>10</b>	<b>28%</b>
Administrators	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train professionals to effectively respond to older victims of domestic/sexual violence and elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **43** (88%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **168** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **5,586** people.
- Most often these trainings reached law enforcement officers (**35%**), elder services agencies (**16%**), and detectives or investigators (**15%**).

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. Victims may receive victim advocacy, crisis intervention, financial counseling, legal advocacy, transportation, safety planning, or other services as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **32** (65%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **585** victims during each 6-month period.
- **98%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.



### NM • Grantee Perspective

The grant funds have enabled project staff to work with local law enforcement and victim services agencies throughout the First Judicial District to ensure that they receive quality, accessible Abuse in Later Life training. Grant funds also enabled us to create the first Law Enforcement Legal Remedies and Resource Booklet. The booklet was created in partnership with the First Judicial District Attorney's Office and it provides a comprehensive list of the applicable laws, statutes, and protection order information. The guide is the first resource guide that has been created that focuses on abuse in later life in New Mexico. Without grant funds, this valuable resource would not exist.

**NEW MEXICO COALITION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

The law enforcement training has been very popular, and the ability to offer a \$150 per participant incentive to send officers has helped us attract officers from agencies who had not signed onto the grant. To date, we have had 97 officers from 10 agencies attend training, exceeding our commitment from law enforcement of sending 64 officers, and there is still demand for more training. Four of those departments have exceeded their commitment of number of officers to send, and three departments elected to send officers who had not committed to send them.

**VERA HOUSE INCORPORATED, NEW YORK**

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Victim advocacy services to **395** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **222** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **204** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy services to **131** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **111** victims; and
- Financial counseling services to **96** victims.

**Hotline calls:**

- Grantees received a total of **1,864** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**76%**) came from victims.

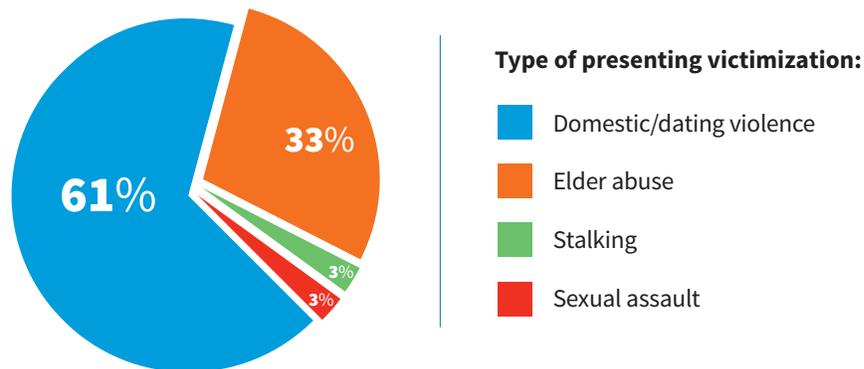
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence, and elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (61%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Abuse in Later Life Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with Abuse in Later Life grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>597</b>	
Victims served	545	91%
Victims partially served	40	7%
Victims not served	12	2%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Abuse in Later Life Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Abuse in Later Life Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve older victims of domestic/sexual violence and victims of elder abuse. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (53%); and
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by a **child/grandchild** (11%) or another **family or household member** (22%).

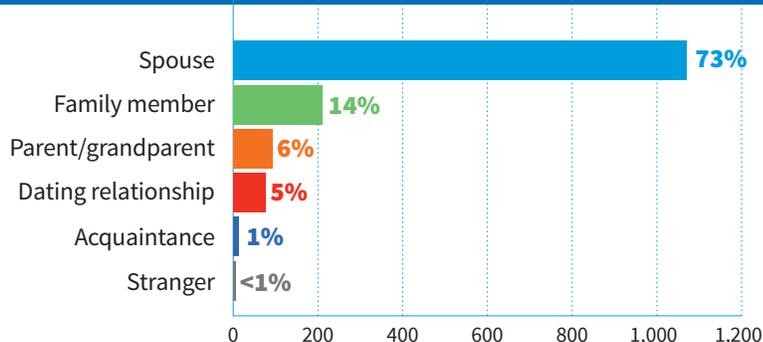


### AR • Grantee Perspective

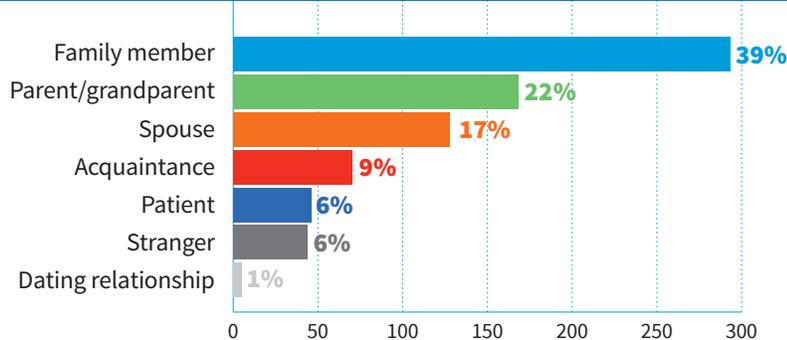
Having a grant-funded advocate to exclusively support victims who are 50 years and older has allowed clients to receive one-on-one support to navigate their recovery, and reach out for assistance (medical, legal, housing, employment, public benefits, etc.) with the support of an advocate. Any victim of domestic violence needs emotional support, but with victims who are 50 years and older, emotional support is essential since some of them have been in an abusive relationship for a longer period of time, and leaving their abuser could be harder to process. Victims are now offered the opportunity to have someone accompany them to apply for any service or to be transported.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,  
DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

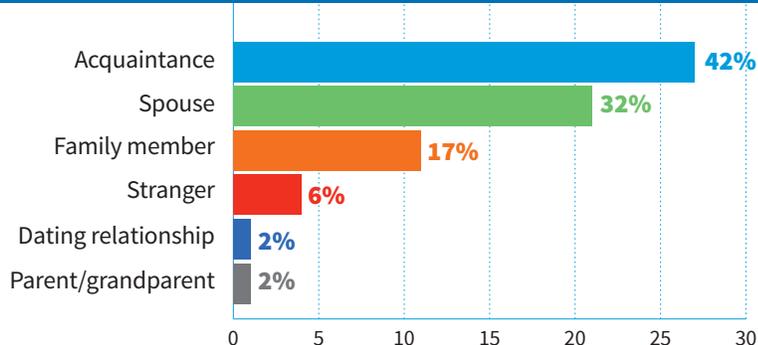
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic/dating violence**

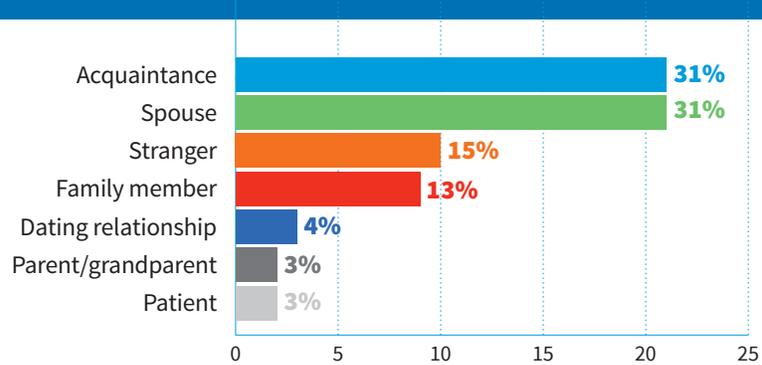


**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Elder abuse**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**



**Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**

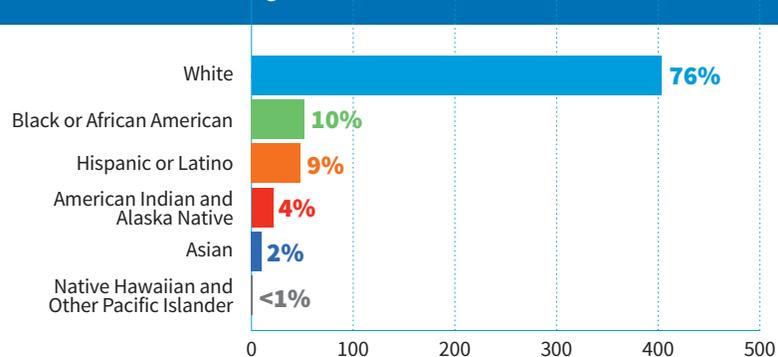
## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

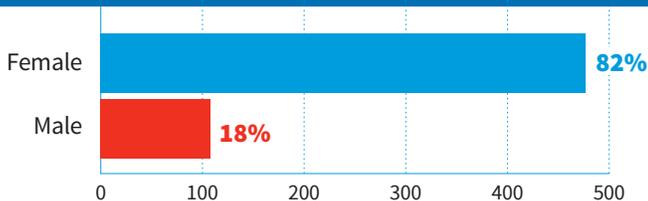
- Victim did not meet eligibility or statutory requirements;
- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Services inadequate/inappropriate for victims with mental health issues;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources; or
- Conflict of interest.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

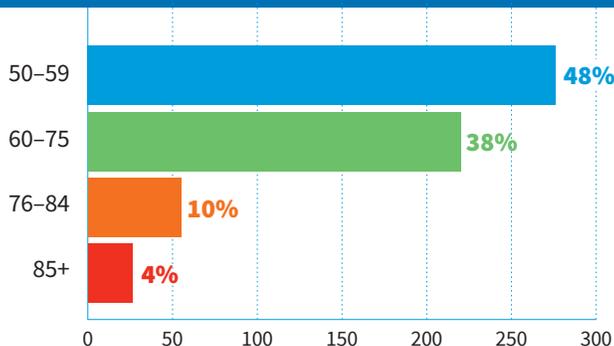
Grantees served or partially served an average of **585** victims during each 6-month reporting period. The majority of those victims were **white** (76%), **female** (82%), and between the ages of **50 and 59** (48%).

**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

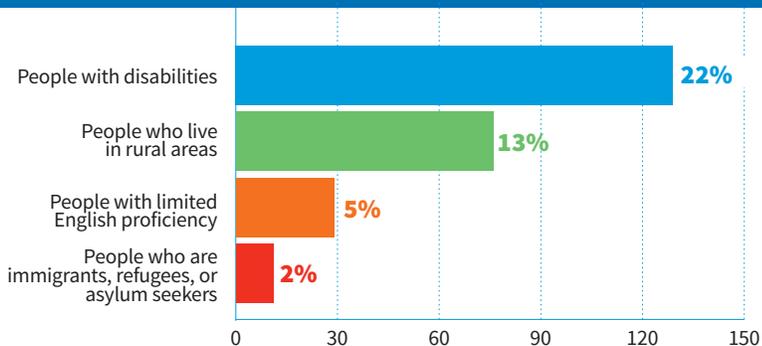
**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)



## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **access to basic needs** as the biggest obstacle facing victims of abuse in later life. These needs included:

- Rent and utilities;
- Food;
- Medication;
- Transportation;
- Healthcare (including mental healthcare); and
- Housing.



### FL • Grantee Perspective

Emergent and long-term housing solutions are desperately needed in our Northeast Florida region. Too often elders who have suffered from abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and have other physical or mental health concerns that require assistance in shelter facilities have been turned down due to their level of need for assistance with the activities of daily living while in a shelter. The costs to cover even emergent issues are high, while affordable long-term housing options are nearly impossible to find for this population.

WOMEN'S CENTER OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA



### MI • Grantee Perspective

There is a continuing challenge to get information about the availability of resources into the hands of older victims. While this community has had a very proactive plan to inform the public of related services, it is apparent that this information is not reaching all seniors or older victims. This lack of awareness results in victims suffering needlessly although these resources are available.

ELDER LAW OF MICHIGAN



### CA • Grantee Perspective

During this reporting period, we assisted a large number of disabled/impaired seniors. These clients face all sorts of medical concerns. They are often on several medications that have various debilitating side effects, they have incontinence issues, have limited mobility, are on oxygen tanks, fatigue easily, are receiving chemotherapy, etc. When we are able to directly represent them, we can file any legal paperwork on their behalf and are very successful in getting accommodations for hearing dates. However, for clients representing themselves, the courts are largely inaccessible. The typical wait time to file a temporary restraining order is between 4-6 hours. The average amount of time spent standing in line is 45 minutes. For many of the people we serve, that is simply not possible.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, CALIFORNIA



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Another challenge faced by the immigrant Asian population is access to officers and social service providers who speak their native language. So often, abuse goes unreported or elderly Asian individuals are unable to properly express themselves due to the language barrier. Although all NYC governmental agencies are mandated to provide translation, which most of the time is over the phone, many times the victim's story is misunderstood or cultural norms are not recognized, resulting in misinformation about the ongoing abuse.

KINGS COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, NEW YORK

Grantees found it particularly difficult to find **safe and affordable emergency, transitional, and long-term housing for their clients**, many of whom require special accommodations.

Grantees also cited the need to provide more **community education and outreach** in order to:

- Increase awareness of the issue of abuse in later life;
- Encourage victims to report abuse; and
- Inform victims, who are often isolated, about available services.

In addition to **low-cost legal assistance**, grantees cited the need for **additional accommodations for victims pursuing legal charges** against their abusers.

Finally, grantees cited the need to reach out and provide specialized services for underserved populations, including:

- Victims with limited English proficiency;
- Immigrant victims;
- Victims with disabilities, including Deaf or hard of hearing populations;
- American Indians/Alaska Natives; and
- LGBT populations.

# Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program<sup>i</sup>

The Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program (Arrest Program) is designed to treat domestic/sexual violence as serious violations of criminal law by encouraging collaborative partnerships among state, local, and tribal governments and courts.

**THROUGH A COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE (CCR), THE ARREST PROGRAM** challenges entire communities to communicate, identify problems, and share ideas for responding to victims of domestic/sexual violence. This results in new responses and the application of best practices to enhance victim safety and ensure offender accountability at each juncture in the criminal justice system through investigation, arrest, prosecution, and close judicial oversight.

## 204 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 204 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Arrest Program.

## 46,941 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 46,941 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 169,546 Cases Investigated

Grantees investigated a total of 169,546 cases.

*Research shows that a more negative response from police can increase the likelihood of victims experiencing greater PTSD symptom severity.<sup>415</sup>*

*Of incidents known to police, roughly 32% result in the arrest or detention of the offender, and an estimated 7% of incidents result in criminal prosecution.<sup>416</sup>*

<sup>i</sup> Beginning in FY 2016, this program has been renamed the Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program to more accurately reflect the program's scope. For the purposes of this report, the program will be referred to as the Arrest Program.

The scope of the Arrest Program is vast, as required to accomplish these goals. Purpose areas include:

- Develop or strengthen policies and training that assist in the recognition, investigation, and prosecution of crimes against older individuals and individuals with disabilities;
- Implement pro-arrest programs, policies, and training in police departments (for example, policies improving responses to protection order violations), and improve tracking of criminal cases;
- Develop state, tribal, territorial, or local policies, procedures, and protocols for preventing dual arrests and prosecutions;
- Coordinate computer tracking systems to ensure communication;
- Provide technical assistance and equipment to facilitate the enforcement of protection orders, including the development of protection order registries, across departments, agencies, states, and tribal jurisdictions;
- Centralize and coordinate police enforcement, prosecution, and judicial responsibility;
- Strengthen legal advocacy service programs;
- Develop and establish comprehensive victim service and support centers, such as family justice centers; and
- Educate judges and court-based personnel (including juvenile courts).

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VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose areas to this program:

- Improve the response of the criminal justice system to immigrant victims;
- Develop and promote legislation and policies to enhance best practices for responding to domestic/sexual violence;
- Develop Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner programs;
- Develop multidisciplinary high-risk teams for reducing domestic violence and dating violence homicides;
- Train prosecutors;
- Develop Sexual Assault Response Teams or similar CCRs to sexual assault;
- Improve investigation and prosecution of sexual assault and treatment of victims;
- Provide HIV testing, counseling, and prophylaxis for victims; and
- Address sexual assault evidence backlogs, including notifying and involving victims, and develop protocols for addressing backlogs.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address these purpose areas. If an activity falling under one of the added purpose areas could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **204** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **15** (7%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Strengthened legal advocacy service programs;
  - Centralized and coordinated police enforcement, prosecution, and judicial responsibility; and
  - Implemented pro-arrest programs, policies, and training in police departments.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, victim services, law enforcement activities, prosecution, court services, supervision of offenders, and batterer intervention programs to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **199** (98%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **486** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>486</b>	
Victim advocates	<b>164</b>	<b>34%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>64</b>	<b>13%</b>
Victim assistants	<b>38</b>	<b>8%</b>
Law enforcement officers	<b>37</b>	<b>8%</b>
Prosecutors	<b>33</b>	<b>7%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### WV • Grantee Perspective

The lack of connectivity within and across disciplines created a training gap that made it a challenge to expeditiously reach out to the “masses.” The tendency for first responders to work in “silos” is slowly changing through collaborations. But it truly is a process. The importance of this project is evidenced in the connections on the state level. With a single email or phone call an identified issue can be added to the annual training for the magistrates and prosecutors. This level of collaboration and shared concern for improving the criminal justice system did not exist prior to Arrest Program funding.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES,  
WEST VIRGINIA**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Arrest grant funding enabled the Program to hire one Victim Assistant who specializes in working with the LGBT community. The Program Coordinator flags DV cases for the Victim Assistant, when victims report being from the LGBT community, to provide an immediate outreach. This governmental social worker supports victims in navigating the criminal justice system while also working with non-governmental community partners to refer LGBT victims back to the community for further support. This holistic approach, along with linguistic and cultural competency proves to be effective in promoting criminal justice engagement among DV victims.

**KINGS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE,  
NEW YORK**



### AK • Grantee Perspective

Between January 1 and June 30, 2014 the Alaska Institute for Justice trained approximately 225 law enforcement officers and 50 prosecutors through three trainings, located in Anchorage and Juneau, with participants from Kodiak traveling to Anchorage for the training. The training provided a valuable forum for prosecutors and law enforcement to discuss gaps in existing services for limited English proficient crime victims, and how to best utilize existing resources to increase access to the criminal justice system for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

ALASKA COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT



### KS • Grantee Perspective

Project staff have received and continue to receive inspiring accounts on how the grant-funded trainings have already begun to impact communities across Kansas to better identify and respond to domestic and sexual violence. For instance, one trainer has begun utilizing the Domestic Violence curricula as part of an on-going, in-house training for every 911 call-taker and dispatcher in the department. In addition, multiple law enforcement agencies have requested specific department trainings utilizing the Domestic Violence curricula.

KANSAS GOVERNOR'S GRANTS PROGRAM



### CO • Grantee Perspective

The Arrest grant funding allows for a specialized, non-systems based advocate to respond to and act as a liaison for victims involved in civil or criminal justice court systems. A non-system based advocate provides individualized support on behalf of the victim, solely for the victim, whereas system advocates ultimately work for the prosecution and justice of offenders. At times these system responses are in conflict with a victim's wishes. Non-systems advocates can avoid that conflict, since services do not depend on cooperation with judicial systems.

COLORADO 6<sup>TH</sup> COMBINED JUDICIAL COURTS

## Training

Grantees train victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court personnel, probation and correction officers, child protection staff, sexual assault forensic and nurse examiners, and mental health and other professionals how to develop an effective CCR to violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **154** (75%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **5,526** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **98,720** people.
- Most often these trainings reached law enforcement officers (**34%**), multidisciplinary groups (**11%**), victim advocates (**10%**), and health professionals (**6%**).

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. Victims receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **169** (83%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **46,941** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Victim advocacy services to **28,130** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **21,187** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy/court accompaniment services to **14,947** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy/court accompaniment services to **13,858** victims; and
- Support group/counseling services to **10,342** victims.

### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **153,859** times;
- Grantees received a total of **309,100** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**51%**) came from victims.

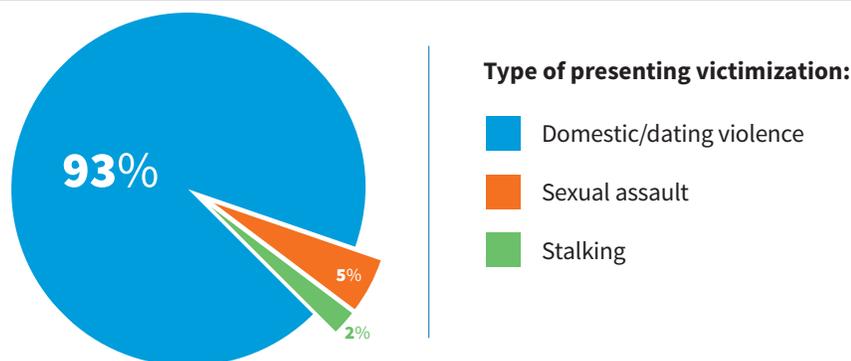
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (93%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Arrest Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with Arrest grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>47,419</b>	
Victims served	<b>46,183</b>	<b>97%</b>
Victims partially served	<b>758</b>	<b>2%</b>
Victims not served	<b>478</b>	<b>1%</b>

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Arrest Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Arrest Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (63%);
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (24%) or by another **family or household member** (9%).



### NE • Grantee Perspective

There was a situation when a Spanish-speaking victim walked in and wanted to find out how to drop a No Contact order. The grant-funded DV Liaison was able to explain to her what needed to be done in order to request the order to be lifted. The same victim returned wanting to file a protection order against the defendant. This victim not only is Spanish-speaking but she is also unable to read or write. The DV Liaison explained the process to her, made sure she had the required information to file, and proceeded to help her fill out the forms and write out her affidavit. The protection order was granted and served to the respondent. The above listed situation alleviated undue stress on the victim by having someone there able to answer her questions and take the necessary steps to keep her safe by assisting her with the protection order process..

CITY OF OMAHA, NEBRASKA OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



### FL • Grantee Perspective

Our therapist works to enhance therapy services to victims of crime. She recognized a gap in group counseling services for men and started up a male support group for victims of domestic and sexual violence. The male victims are both heterosexual and from the LGBT community. She reports that the men attending the group share their stories, have let down emotional guards, and have made strides at changing their own stigmas about what it means to be a male victim in society.

PALM BEACH COUNTY VICTIM SERVICES & CERTIFIED RAPE CRISIS CENTER, FLORIDA

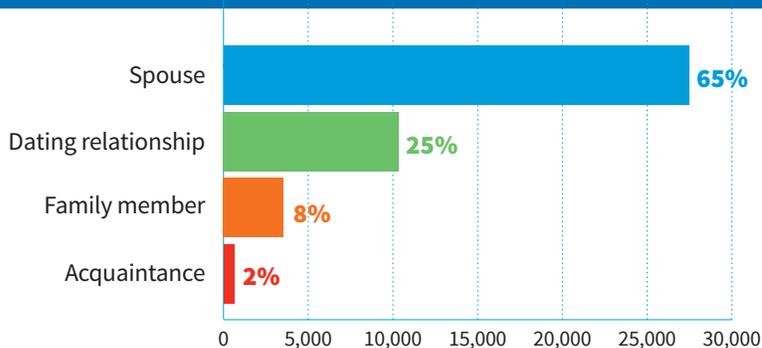


### PA • Grantee Perspective

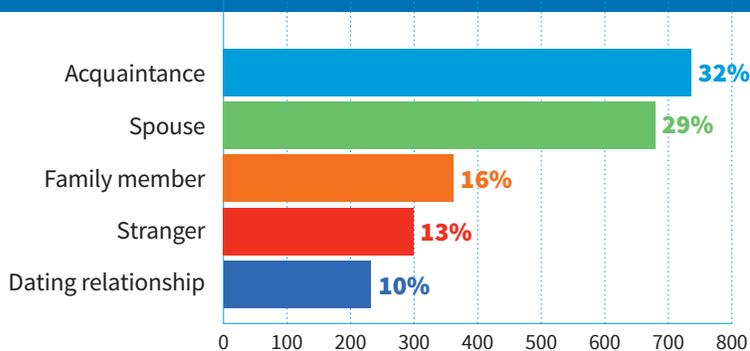
Through this funding, we have been able to develop and implement the Telephone Outreach Project (TOP), which started out as a pilot project in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) in just a few key police districts, and has since grown to reach victims in every police district in the city. To better serve victims, the PPD implemented a specific incident response form (75.48D) for domestic violence incidents. This new form, which allows responding officers to collect a callback number for advocates to reach out to victims who are particularly vulnerable, has allowed Telephone Outreach Counselors to make 1,260 contacts to victims in FY 2014 alone. Outreach Counselors provide safe and supportive outreach to victims, informing them about helpful resources that they may not have otherwise been aware of.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

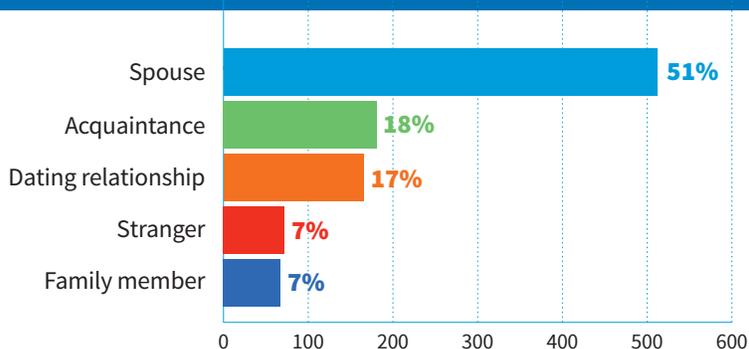
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic/dating violence**



**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

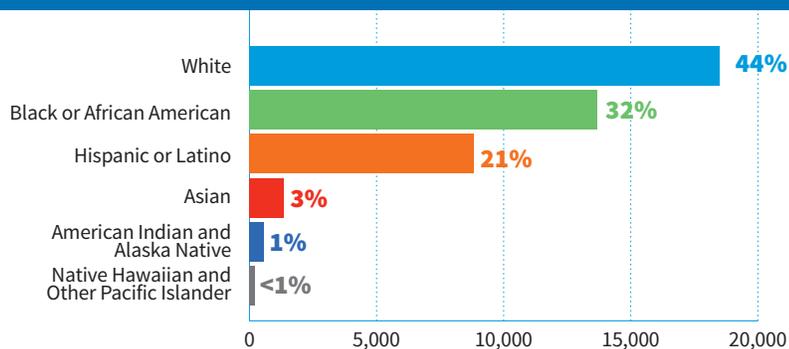
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or partially served:

- Conflict of interest;
- Program unable to provide services due to limited resources;
- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Victim did not meet eligibility or statutory requirements;
- Program rules not acceptable to victim; or
- Hours of operation.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **46,941** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (44%), **female** (89%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (74%).

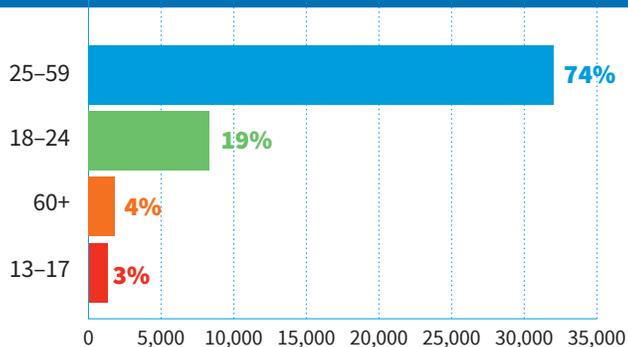
**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

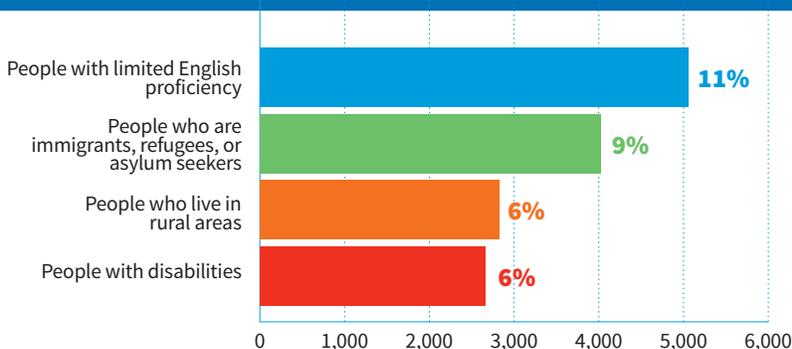


**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

### NC • Grantee Perspective

Sustaining the funding for a specialized prosecution team has created local experts in the fields of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and homicide prevention. Other DA staff, as well as personnel at other organizations, have come to regularly rely on the grant-funded prosecution team for complex legal or ethical issues related to intimate partner violence. Victims and witnesses of these cases have been supported and had their concerns and questions addressed. Several victims have shared their stories with their friends, family, or the new partners of their exes in order to encourage them to come forward and report violence or seek help.

**30<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLIANCE, INC., NORTH CAROLINA**

*Without proper training, an officer may not be able to identify the predominant aggressor, may unknowingly minimize a victim's trauma, may fail to collect all relevant evidence, and may mistakenly arrest the victim. Moreover, if an officer sides with an abuser, a victim may not report future assaults. Research shows that law enforcement were most likely to arrest perpetrators when they received training on and followed these best practices: in-person investigating, following up with victims after initial contact, conducting safety planning with victims, assessing the needs of children exposed to the violence, providing victims with 911 telephones, describing protection orders and court procedures, connecting victims with available shelter and services, explaining the effects of domestic violence on children, and helping victims feel safe.<sup>125</sup>*

## Criminal Justice

The Arrest Program supports the efforts of local jurisdictions to develop or enhance a CCR that brings together law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, victim services, and public and private service providers. It is expected that grantees' criminal justice activities will reach beyond the individual unit or grant-funded staff person, and, as a result, grantees report criminal justice data for the entire agency within the jurisdiction.

## Law Enforcement

Grantees address the role of law enforcement in responding to domestic/sexual violence.

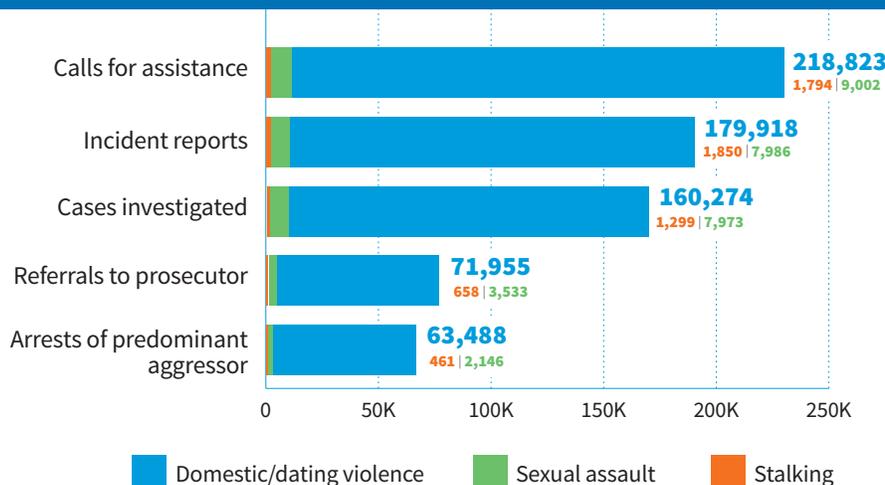
- **62** (30%) grantees used funds for law enforcement activities.
- Law enforcement staff made a total of **102,283** victim referrals to governmental and non-governmental victim services across the 2-year period.

**A proactive response and victim-centered attitude influences whether or not victims report these offenses, and whether appropriate evidence is collected to allow prosecutors to convict offenders.**

A meaningful and serious response by law enforcement agencies includes:

- Documenting all calls for services;
- Actively investigating all sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking incidents;
- Referring cases to prosecutors (as appropriate);
- Seeking warrants and statements of charges (as appropriate);
- Arresting the perpetrator;
- Helping victims secure protection orders;
- Accompanying the victim to the home to retrieve their immediate belongings (as appropriate);
- Making referrals (as appropriate); and
- Providing victims with information about available services.

**Figure 9** Law enforcement activities in Arrest Program criminal cases, July 2013–June 2015



### ND • Grantee Perspective

Arrest grant funds have allowed us to continue to review and analyze how each layer of our system is responding to domestic and sexual violence and stalking. In 2013, 979 law enforcement reports, 208 cases with charges filed, and 218 sentencing hearings were collected and entered into the Domestic Abuse Information Network computerized tracking system. The data analysis allows project partners to openly communicate on trends and brainstorm ways to improve our systems' response. For example, we saw a spike in the number of dual arrests from four in 2011 to 10 in 2012. Because of the tracking system, we were aware of this situation and addressed it with law enforcement. It was determined that additional training was needed, and after the training, we saw the number of dual arrests decrease to two in 2013.

**CITY OF GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTER**

## Prosecution

Jurisdictions with specialized prosecution programs often boast high prosecution and conviction rates. These programs may include specialized prosecution units, specialized prosecutorial training, and vertical prosecution procedures.

- **53** (26%) grantees used funds for prosecution.
- Prosecutors received a total of **160,091** case referrals pertaining to domestic/sexual violence, and accepted a total of **119,118<sup>ii</sup>** (74%) cases for prosecution across the 2-year period.
- Prosecution staff made a total of **96,165** victim referrals to governmental and non-governmental victim services across the 2-year period.

### SD • Grantee Perspective

Due to funding provided, this Arrest grant has continued to give my department the ability to have a dedicated detective. The detective conducts all of the investigations of domestic violence related incidents and holding those who commit these acts of violence accountable through arrests and successful prosecutions. This in itself, has provided the victims with a single point of reference; providing them a familiar law enforcement contact that they feel comfortable with, and with whom they can address possible future incidents or concerns. The added benefit is the dedicated domestic guidance to the field division, while providing expert counsel to the State Attorney's Office for the successful prosecution of these oftentimes delicate and problematic cases.

**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, SOUTH DAKOTA**

**Table 3** Cases received and accepted by prosecutors funded by the Arrest Program by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Case referrals received	Cases accepted for prosecution	Percent accepted
<b>All cases</b>	<b>160,091</b>	<b>119,118</b>	<b>74%</b>
Domestic/dating violence	151,480	112,323	74%
Sexual assault	4,132	2,676	65%
Stalking	4,479	4,119	92%

<sup>ii</sup> Cases accepted, declined, or transferred in the current reporting period may have been received by prosecution in a previous reporting period.



### PA • Grantee Perspective

This funding has enabled us to retain and hire Domestic Violence Investigators (DVI) whose wealth of experience and knowledge guarantee that the Pre-Trial DVI reports contain detailed information that will assist prosecutors in obtaining exceptional sentences. Pre-Trial DVIs are invaluable to prosecutors faced with the obstacles involved in litigating a domestic violence case, providing them with a detailed history of prior criminal acts of an offender, whether or not those crimes were successfully prosecuted. A prosecutor may file pre-trial motions seeking to admit the prior history between the offender and the victim. If admitted, this evidence greatly strengthens the Commonwealth's case. The DVIs contain summaries of prison calls, which often contain valuable information, such as whether a defendant has violated his bail provisions by contacting a victim in violation of a "no contact" provision of bail, or in violation of an active PFA Order. Prosecutors can use this information to revoke or increase a defendant's bail or file for a PFA violation. The DVIs also provide prosecutors with PFA orders and petitions, 911 calls, and witness statements, which can further bolster the Commonwealth's case. Since implementing the program, our Office has received just sentences for these offenders.

BUCKS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE,  
PENNSYLVANIA



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Arrest grant funding has enabled QDA to establish a Domestic Violence Bureau -- fully staffed with 16 ADAs and three paralegals -- that is dedicated solely to the prosecution of domestic violence cases, with nine ADAs devoted to the handling of misdemeanor domestic violence matters. Cases within the bureau are vertically prosecuted, with one ADA handling a case from case inception through disposition. Vertical prosecution has reduced the need for multiple interviews of victims and the reassignment of cases from one ADA to another. As a result, we have high conviction rates and have reduced dismissal rates.

OFFICE OF THE QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY,  
NEW YORK

**Table 4** Cases disposed of by prosecutors funded by the Arrest Program by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Cases disposed of	Dispositions resulting in convictions	
		Number	Percent
<b>All cases</b>	<b>125,812</b>	<b>69,438</b>	<b>55%</b>
Domestic/dating violence	112,639	60,038	53%
Sexual assault	3,019	2,135	71%
Stalking	849	561	66%

NOTE: Convictions include deferred adjudications.

## Courts

Specialized domestic violence courts improve offender compliance with court-ordered conditions and impose enhanced penalties for non-compliance.

- **12** (6%) grantees used funds for court activities.
- Court staff made a total of **6,378** victim referrals to governmental and non-governmental victim services across the 2-year period.

Courts funded by the Arrest Program conduct a range of activities, including:

- Coordinating with criminal justice and social service agencies to identify resources to address gaps in the system of services;
- Providing extensive and ongoing training on domestic/sexual violence issues;
- Implementing practices to ensure consistency in case handling;
- Enhancing case information flow between partner agencies;
- Emphasizing defendant monitoring and accountability; and
- Enhancing protection for, and services to, victims.

## Judicial Monitoring

Judicial monitoring improves the justice system's ability to ensure offender accountability. Convicted offenders are required to make regular court appearances to determine whether they are complying with the conditions of their sentences.

- An average of **1,824** offenders were monitored during each 6-month reporting period.
- A total of **13,345** judicial reviews of individual offenders were conducted across the 2-year period.

The data reported below (Table 5) reflect the consequences imposed for violations of court orders. With each type of violation, the courts took no action in only **2%** of the cases and issued fines in **11%** of the cases. A significant number of cases resulted in the courts adding conditions (**15%**) or partially (**9%**) or fully (**58%**) revoking probation. The courts issued a verbal or written warning in **4%** of the cases.

**Table 5** Dispositions of violations of probation and other court orders by Arrest Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Violation	No action taken		Verbal/written warning		Fine		Conditions added		Partial revocation of probation		Probation revoked/incarcerated	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection order (N = 267)	3	1%	85	32%	13	5%	62	23%	78	29%	26	10%
New criminal behavior (N = 634)	14	2%	31	5%	57	9%	100	16%	93	15%	339	53%
Failure to attend mandated batterer intervention program (N = 1,603)	31	2%	64	4%	216	13%	295	18%	332	21%	665	41%
Failure to attend mandated offender treatment (N = 1,069)	20	2%	32	3%	148	14%	140	13%	157	15%	572	54%
Other condition of probation or parole (N = 4,221)	87	2%	138	3%	403	10%	561	13%	75	2%	2,957	70%

**NOTE:** Other conditions include requirements such as substance abuse and alcohol treatment, parenting classes, and mandatory check-ins.



## OH • Grantee Perspective

Since being awarded funding, Domestic Relations Court and the Battered Women's Shelter have been able to develop procedures for the County Clerk of Court staff members to access an advocate for all persons requesting a civil protection order (CPO), to provide victims with immediate access to an advocate when they present at Court for a CPO, and to provide a dedicated magistrate and case docket to hear all requests for domestic violence CPOs and motions to show cause for contempt regarding violations of CPOs. In the past, deputy clerks only contacted the Battered Women's Shelter when a person specifically requested an advocate, who were not always available to come to the Courthouse.

**MEDINA COUNTY DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT, OHIO**

## Probation and Parole

Following the example of police, prosecutors, and courts, probation departments have adopted specialized methods for managing domestic violence offender cases. These specialized domestic violence units enforce intensive supervision on their probationers and may require attendance at batterer intervention programs.

- **25** (12%) grantees used funds for probation activities.
- Probation staff made a total of **7,266** victim referrals to governmental and non-governmental victim services across the 2-year period.

## Offender Monitoring

Probation officers monitor offenders to review progress and compliance with court orders. Probation officers may meet with offenders in person, by telephone, or via unscheduled surveillance.

- An average of **5,120** offenders were monitored during each 6-month period.
- Across the 2-year period, these agencies reported the following contacts with individual offenders:
  - A total of **114,219** face-to-face contacts with an average of **4,179** offenders;
  - A total of **82,388** telephone contacts with an average of **3,593** offenders; and
  - A total of **53,145** unscheduled surveillance contacts with an average of **2,439** offenders.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

The Arrest grant has enabled Deschutes County to zero-in on high-risk intimate partner cases. High-danger victims are now identified at the time of a domestic assault through the Lethality Assessment Program and are connected with DV program advocates immediately. High-risk offenders on probation now receive heightened supervision which makes victims safer. Prior to the Arrest grant-funded activities, domestic violence offenders were placed randomly on caseloads and there was no domestic violence specific risk assessment being conducted. The Arrest grant provides dedicated time and resources to focus on the highest-risk offenders using evidence-based practices.

DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

### Probation officers also contact victims as a strategy to increase victim safety.

- A total of **7,445** violations were reported across the 2-year period.
- The most frequently reported types of violations and responses to those violations were as follows:
  - Failure to comply with other conditions of probation or parole accounted for **3,005** (40%) of violations and most often resulted in partial or full revocation of probation (**1,840** or 61%);
  - Failure to attend mandated batterer intervention program (BIP) represented **1,511** (20%) of violations and most often resulted in partial or full revocation of probation (**819** or 54%); and
  - New criminal behavior accounted for **1,188** (16%) of violations and was the violation most likely to result in partial or full revocation of probation (**824** or 69%).

The data reported below (Table 6) reflect the consequences imposed for violations of probation. With each type of violation, the courts took no action in only **4%** of the cases and issued fines in **2%** of the cases. A significant number of cases resulted in the courts adding conditions (**19%**) or partially (**34%**) or fully (**27%**) revoking probation. The courts issued a verbal or written warning in **14%** of the cases.



### VT • Grantee Perspective

This grant has made it possible for the legal advocate with Voices Against Violence to connect more victims to probation, allowing them to be more actively involved in sentencing and probation conditions regarding their abuser if they so choose. This project has helped open more communication with probation and an open dialogue regarding victim safety. The co-location has assisted in a smoother community transition with perpetrators while keeping the victim in the loop. We have been able to set up more meetings with probation and victims so their concerns can be heard. The co-location has opened the door to possibly meet with and train other community DV/SA programs and probation offices so communication and victims' concerns will be heard throughout the state.

CITY OF ST. ALBANS, VERMONT VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE

**Table 6** Dispositions of violations of probation and other court orders by Arrest Program-funded probation and parole agencies, July 2013–June 2015

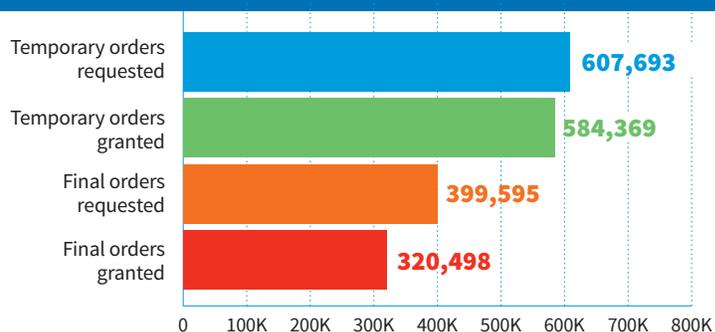
Violation	No action taken		Verbal/written warning		Fine		Conditions added		Partial revocation of probation		Probation revoked/incarcerated	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection order (N = 978)	37	4%	99	10%	25	3%	165	17%	280	29%	372	38%
New criminal behavior (N = 1,188)	35	3%	104	9%	15	1%	210	18%	341	29%	483	41%
Failure to attend mandated batterer intervention program (N = 1,511)	87	6%	191	13%	74	5%	340	23%	444	29%	375	25%
Failure to attend mandated offender treatment (N = 763)	36	5%	147	19%	8	1%	143	19%	293	38%	136	18%
Other condition of probation or parole (N = 3,005)	105	3%	466	16%	25	1%	569	19%	1,206	40%	634	21%

**NOTE:** Other conditions include requirements such as substance abuse and alcohol treatment, parenting classes, and mandatory check-ins.

## Community Measures

Grant funds are intended to support a CCR that will affect the entire jurisdiction. For this reason, grantees are asked to report on the number of protection orders requested and granted within the jurisdiction.<sup>iii</sup>

**Figure 10** Protection orders requested and granted under the Arrest Program, July 2013–June 2015



## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **access to affordable housing**, including emergency shelter and transitional housing, as their biggest unmet need.

Grantees also found it difficult to provide victims with **basic necessities**, such as:

- Employment;
- Child care;
- Job training;
- Food assistance;
- Mental healthcare; and
- Transportation.

Grantees cited difficulty in providing **culturally sensitive victim services, translation, and outreach** to underserved populations, including:

- American Indians/Alaska Natives;
- Immigrants, especially those with limited English proficiency;
- LGBT populations;
- Elderly adults; and
- Persons with disabilities.

<sup>iii</sup> Numbers represent cases in which complete data were available for both orders requested and granted. In some jurisdictions grantees report difficulty in obtaining protection order data; for example, if a city is the grant-funded jurisdiction and protection order data are collected at the county level, it is not possible to report precisely on the number of orders requested or granted in the city.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

The lack of affordable housing is a major issue within our community. Many victims have been forced to stay in domestic violence situations because they simply cannot afford to leave. Our domestic violence shelters constantly remain at capacity and over 1,000 requests for shelter go unfulfilled every month in our community. The need for additional housing and transportation assistance remains extremely high and continues to hinder victims' abilities to successfully leave an abusive partner and to establish and maintain a stable life.

**MULTNOMAH COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATION OFFICE, OREGON**



### MI • Grantee Perspective

Many police and prosecutors still believe that the perpetrator's assertion of consent is difficult to disprove. Societal myths about sexual assault are also still prevalent in police agencies and those myths may play a role in how those cases are investigated. Our unit is in the unique position to review old cases, many of which were closed by a police department or had charges denied by a prosecutor. We have seen many areas in which victims were not served and in many cases, re-victimized.

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**



#### NY • Grantee Perspective

We have found that a greater focus is needed on adequate outreach and support services for Queens County's intensely diverse, multicultural, and multilingual populations, including a need for more bilingual case managers and counselors. This diversity presents special challenges as we try to address the cultural and language barriers that often keep victims from seeking assistance in breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

OFFICE OF THE QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY,  
NEW YORK



#### OH • Grantee Perspective

One of the continuing major issues facing Cuyahoga County is a shortage of practicing attorneys that specialize in civil legal assistance for victims of domestic violence. Many victims report to court pro se and are forced to present their cases against their abusers who frequently retain counsel.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO



#### LA • Grantee Perspective

Offender accountability and the opportunity for rehabilitation is also an area of need. We experience pleas to reduced charges that do not result in any jail time or misdemeanors which would not allow for domestic violence enhancements. We also need standardization among our Batterer Intervention Programs (BIPs) so that judges know what programs to order offenders into, what the quality of the program is, and what successful completion of the program actually means (other than attendance). We need a system of sharing information between BIPs, judges, and probation.

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Grantees reported difficulty in helping victims obtain **legal services**, especially in **civil cases** involving:

- Child custody and visitation;
- Divorce;
- Property; and
- Protection orders.

Grantees also emphasized the need to **expand victim-centered, trauma-informed training** to judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, and first responders.

Grantees cited the need to **improve offender accountability**, through:

- Standardization and improvement of batterer intervention programs (BIPs);
- Better enforcement of protection orders;
- Pre-trial supervision of offenders; and
- Information sharing between courts, probation, and law enforcement.

# Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program

The Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program (Campus Program) is designed to encourage institutions of higher education to adopt a comprehensive, community coordinated response (CCR) to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

## 109 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 109 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Campus Program.

## 906 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 906 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 275,409 Students Reached

Grantees reached a total of 275,409 incoming students through prevention education programming (46% of all incoming students).

Campuses address these crimes by developing campus and community-based responses, which include:

- Campus victim services;
- Campus law enforcement;
- Health services;
- Mandatory education of incoming students; and
- Links to local criminal justice agencies and service providers.

*An examination of ten public universities' sexual assault prevention and reporting policies found that universities' policies tend to focus on the threat of violence, as opposed to perpetrated sexual violence itself, often leaving sexual violence victims without critical resources that a more explicit sexual misconduct policy could provide.<sup>417</sup>*



#### AL • Grantee Perspective

Campus grant funding is providing the university and the community with the means to build a network of both service providers and community participation that approaches Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) issues from both the standpoint of immediate assistance and that of environmental and institutional prevention and response. Prior to the grant, there was no office on campus to specifically meet the needs of DV/SA victims. Currently, because of the grant, a VAWA Program has been established and is building bridges between the university and the service providers to ensure that victims receive the help that they need.

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY



#### PA • Grantee Perspective

Since the inception of the grant, Gannon Police officers receive semi-annual training. Ongoing training ensures that all new officers are trained in appropriate trauma-informed responses. Because of the positive and collaborative working relationship between student conduct, the newly formed judicial board, the Title IX officer and campus police, the process of reporting, responding, investigating, and sanctioning has greatly improved.

GANNON UNIVERSITY, PENNSYLVANIA



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

Campus grant funding has allowed us to build a truly comprehensive prevention education and response program at UCSB. We have been able to provide 24/7 crisis response services to students on our campus, and to build a multi-tiered approach to prevention education through the CARE Connect program. This has resulted in a direct increase in students seeking services, as students who come in for advocacy regularly tell us that they were referred by a friend who completed CARE Connect training. University executive leadership has provided an additional full-time advocate and half-time prevention educator to complement our current grant-funded personnel structure based on the work that we have accomplished. This ability to build capacity is an accomplishment of which we are very proud, and certainly something we would not have been able to accomplish without grant funding.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

The Campus Program enhances the safety of victims by supporting higher education institutions in the development of services and programs uniquely designed to address and prevent domestic/sexual violence on campuses. Purpose areas include:

- Provide personnel, training, technical assistance, and data collection, to increase apprehension, investigation, and adjudication;
- Develop and implement campus policies, protocols, and services that more effectively identify and respond to these crimes;
- Implement educational programming on prevention;
- Develop or strengthen victim services programs, including providing legal, medical, or psychological counseling;
- Provide assistance and information about victims' options on and off campus to bring disciplinary or other legal action, including assistance to victims in immigration or trafficking matters;
- Expand data collection and communication systems;
- Provide capital improvements including improved lighting and communications facilities; and
- Support improved coordination among campus administrators, campus security personnel, and local law enforcement.

VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose areas to this program:

- Develop or adapt and provide developmentally, culturally appropriate, and linguistically accessible print or electronic materials to address both prevention and intervention; and
- Develop and promote population-specific strategies and projects for victims from underserved populations on campus.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address these purpose areas. If an activity falling under one of the added areas could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **109** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **5** (5%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Implemented and operated education programs for prevention;
  - Supported improved coordination; and
  - Developed and implemented campus policies, protocols, and services.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, coordination, prevention education, and victim services to ensure a CCR to sexual/domestic violence on college campuses. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **107** (98%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **84** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and trainers/educators.



### NC • Grantee Perspective

Campus grant funding has allowed us to hire a Prevention of Violence Against Women Coordinator, who has started and acts as Director of the new Women's Center on campus. Hiring a full-time employee to coordinate prevention, education, and awareness efforts on campus, including trainings for key personnel, was not possible prior to receiving funding. In turn, we have been able to increase our focus on sexual violence programming on campus to both incoming and current students, including a new software training program (Think About It), a series of educational workshops for incoming students, and a variety of thematic workshops and social events.

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTH CAROLINA

**Table 1** Staff supported with Campus grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>84</b>	
Program coordinators	29	34%
Trainers/educators	22	26%
Victim advocates	13	15%
Administrators	8	10%
Support staff	7	8%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Campus grant funding was integral to the creation of a formalized training plan for conduct board members. In the past, board members received limited training on gender-based violence response. Information gleaned at the training on campus judicial policy was a guiding tool in creating high-quality training that was well received by board members. Funding has helped to ensure that program staff will have an opportunity at least once per year, and often more frequently, to train all conduct board members before they hear cases involving gender-based violence.

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



### CA • Grantee Perspective

The victim advocate funded by the current grant helped develop content for 90-minute, peer-facilitated mandatory workshops for all incoming students, known as Gaucho FYI. This workshop was developed to introduce all first year and transfer students to a variety of health and safety topics. The victim advocate worked with the Gaucho FYI curriculum team to develop a portion of the workshop that addresses sexual assault, dating/domestic violence and stalking. The workshops were held for approximately eight weeks and served more than 5,983 of the 6,093 incoming students. The Gaucho FYI peer-facilitated workshops are a significant addition to the existing online alcohol education and sexual assault training program that is mandatory for all students before coming to campus as new students.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA



### CO • Grantee Perspective

As part of an overall effort to become compliant with new mandates in the Campus SAVE Act, the grant partnered with the LGBT Resource Center and the Multicultural Office for Student Access, Inclusiveness and Community to develop an inclusive training for UCCS staff that would address the nature of interpersonal violence and effective ways for staff members to respond. This training was intentionally designed to highlight the unique experiences of students who are experiencing violence and abuse who are members of racial/ethnic minorities, LGBT, or living with a disability. The grant staff coordinated with the Dean of Students and the Office of Discrimination and Harassment to deliver the message that UCCS staff members are mandatory reporters of sexual assault, harassment, stalking, domestic violence, and dating violence. Trainees were given opportunities to practice acting out their reporting responsibilities while maintaining trust, respect, and cultural competence with students.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, COLORADO SPRINGS

## Minimum Requirements

Each campus receiving funds must address four requirements:

1. Create a CCR to address sexual/domestic violence on campus. This multidisciplinary response involves the entire campus as well as the larger community including: student affairs, student health, athletics, residence life, campus police, campus judicial boards, local law enforcement, local victim services providers, prosecutors, and state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions.
2. Provide mandatory prevention and education programs about sexual/domestic violence for all incoming students:
  - **452,552** incoming students received prevention education (76% of all incoming students).
  - **275,409** incoming students received prevention education supported with grant funds (46% of all incoming students).
3. Provide training for campus police and security:<sup>i</sup>
  - **2,908** campus police/security officers received training with grant funds.
4. Train judicial/disciplinary board members about sexual/domestic violence:<sup>i</sup>
  - **1,723** judicial/disciplinary board members received training with grant funds.

## Training

In addition to the training of campus police and judicial/disciplinary board members to fulfill minimum requirements, grantees train professional members of the campus community, such as student affairs staff, faculty, campus law enforcement officers, health and mental health staff, and other community-based professionals. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **93** (85%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **1,473** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **34,227** people.<sup>i</sup>
- Most often these trainings reached student affairs staff (**33%**), educators (**20%**), and peer educators (**11%**).

<sup>i</sup> Attendees at training events are not necessarily unduplicated. Attendees may be reported in both the minimum requirements section and the training section.

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims of sexual/domestic violence, including victim advocacy, crisis intervention, and legal advocacy. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **79** (72%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **906** victims during each 6-month period.
- Nearly **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Victim advocacy services to **545** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **456** victims;
- Support to group/counseling services to **307** victims;
- Academic/educational advocacy services to **202** victims;
- Legal advocacy/court accompaniment services to **130** victims;
- Disciplinary board advocacy services to **86** victims; and
- Hospital, clinical, or other medical response services to **64** victims.

### Hotline calls:

- Grantees received a total of **2,855** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**56%**) came from victims.

Victims also requested protection orders with the assistance of grant-funded staff. Across the 2-year reporting period:

- **295** temporary protection orders were requested and **257** were granted (87%); and
- **189** final protection orders were requested and **174** were granted (92%).



### TX • Grantee Perspective

It is impossible to overemphasize the significance of the grant funding for establishing full-time victim advocacy services on our campus. Prior to the grant, there were a few volunteers on our campus who, in addition to their full-time staff positions, were sometimes able to provide some advocacy services, but the addition of a full-time, experienced advocate has made an undeniable difference in access to services for victims. Coupled with the institutionalization of the victim advocacy office, also made possible by the grant, and the addition of a contracted counselor to expertly facilitate support groups and provide additional counseling to victims who were unhappy with or unwilling to attend counseling sessions on campus (often over concerns regarding sharing personal information on campus), it is clear that our students have access to numerous benefits that likely would not have been possible without the grant funding.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN



### KY • Grantee Perspective

The Campus grant funding has allowed NKU to create a centralized location to assist victims that have experienced sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Before the creation of the Norse Violence Prevention Center, it was difficult for students to figure out what resources were available to them. There was no designated advocate on campus to support victims and fulfill all their needs as a student at NKU. Now, with an office and advocate in place, we are better able to support and serve our students.

NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

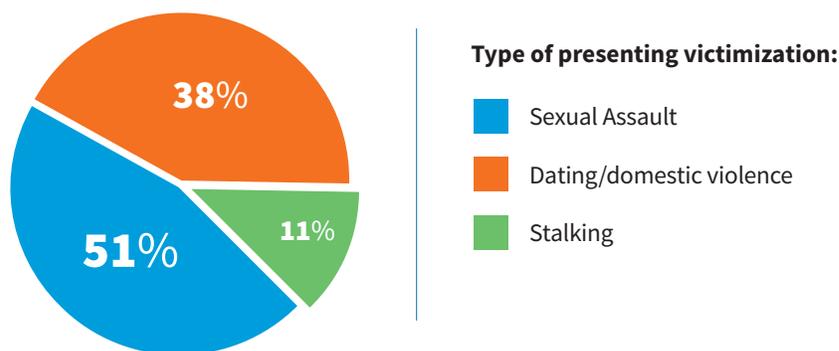
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of sexual/domestic violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **sexual assault** (51%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Campus Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with Campus grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>909</b>	
Victims served	902	99%
Victims partially served	4	< 1%
Victims not served	2	< 1%

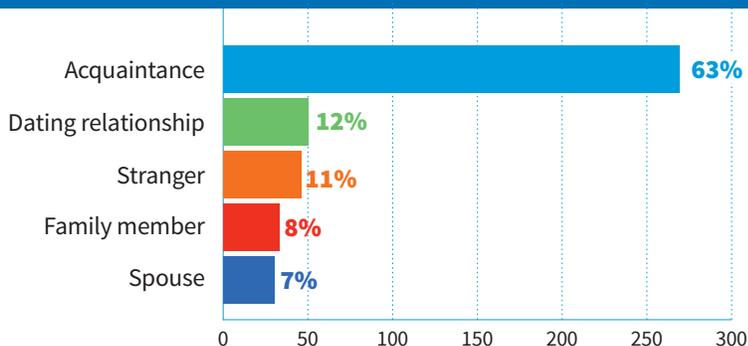
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Campus Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Campus Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

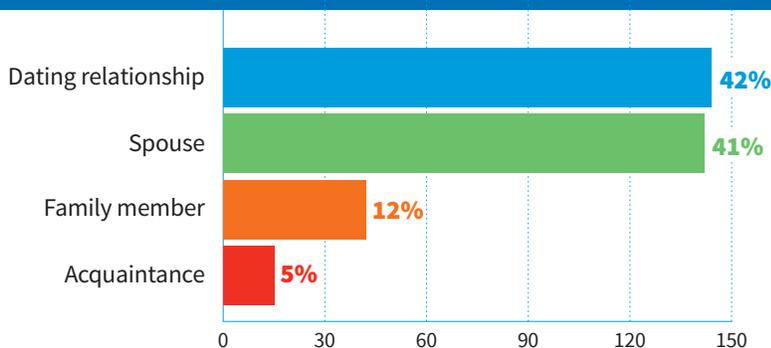
Grantees serve victims of sexual/domestic violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by an **acquaintance** (37%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (26%) or by a **spouse or intimate partner** (22%).

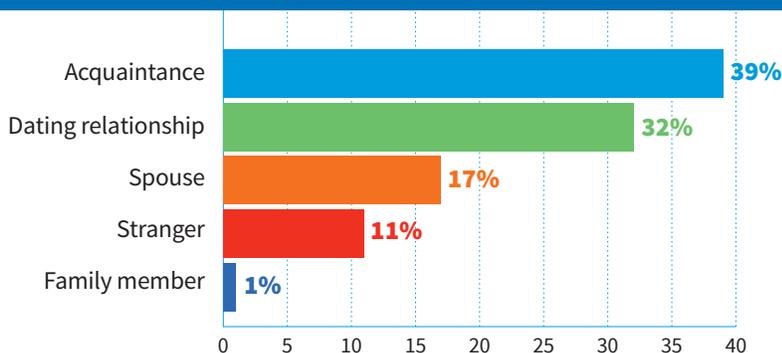
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Dating/domestic violence**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or partially served:

- Program reached capacity;
- Hours of operation;
- Program rules not acceptable to victim; or
- Services were not appropriate for victim.



### MS • Grantee Perspective

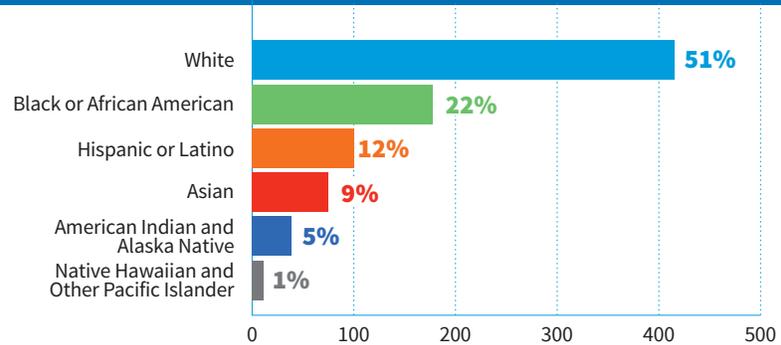
The Campus grant has led to a gradual and now much larger increase in the number of reports of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking on our campus. As more victims interact with our systems, they are able to share with other students that the process is effective and welcoming, and we see a continued, corresponding increase in demand and in reports. The Violence Prevention Office and the Counseling Center saw the highest number of victims since the grant began this past academic year, and as such we have a better picture of how violence is experienced on our campus, and can provide additional services and supports to address those concerns.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

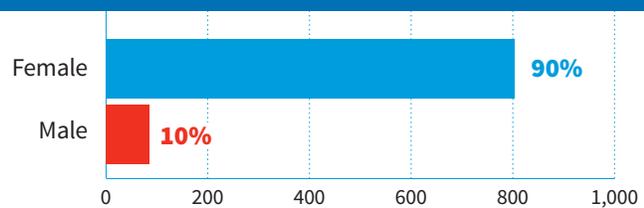
## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **906** victims during each 6-month reporting period. The majority of those victims were **white** (52%), **female** (90%), and between the ages of **18 and 24** (80%).

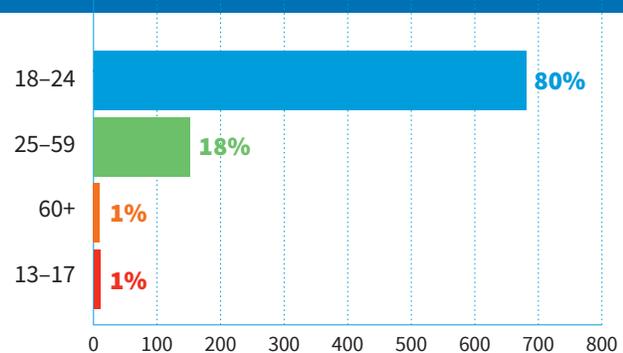
**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

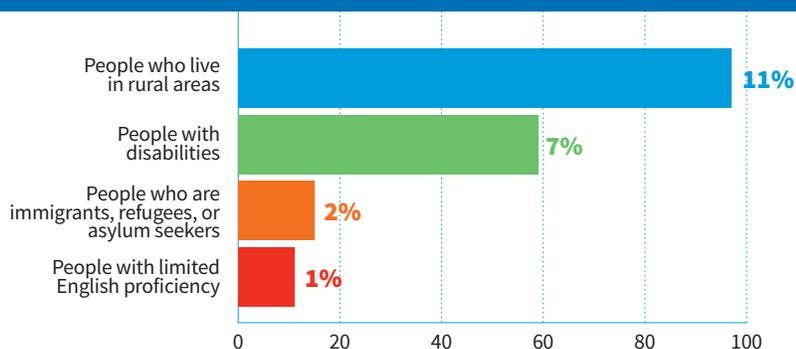


**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

## Campus and Community Measures

Grantees provide information, to the extent that information is available, on sexual/domestic violence offenses that occur on campus and on public property or other property related to the institution, that are reported to campus security or local law enforcement.<sup>ii</sup> Of those reported by grantees:

- **627** offenses resulted in criminal charges being filed in the local jurisdiction; and
- **1,287** offenses resulted in campus/disciplinary board actions.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently emphasized the need to **increase awareness of sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking among all student groups.**

Many pointed to the need to **expand mandatory education to all students**, including students entering campus during winter and spring sessions, online students, graduate students, and off-campus students, including those studying abroad.

In addition to expanding education on sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, many grantees felt that **victims were not sufficiently aware of or willing to use the services and options available to them.** In order to increase victims' use of on- and off-campus services, grantees suggested:

- Training staff, faculty, and graduate students in trauma-informed response and increasing their awareness of the services available to students;
- Involving more students in bystander intervention training;
- Improving the protocol for first responders, including campus security and local police; and
- Better direct communication to students about available services.



### MI • Grantee Perspective

Programming efforts for mandatory education need to increase for semesters other than the Fall semester. This will be implemented more thoroughly in Winter and Spring/Summer 2016 than previously done, but there are specific target populations to consider (transfer students, graduate students, international students, and non-traditional students) who are more likely to start at GVSU in a semester other than Fall when we offer a very large and comprehensive orientation.

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY, MICHIGAN



### VA • Grantee Perspective

A significant area of remaining need on VCU's campus is the translation of resources into languages other than English. There is also a continued need to conduct culturally competent outreach to marginalized victims, such as students of color, transgender victims, male victims, and victims with disabilities.

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

<sup>ii</sup> This information is not limited to offenses responded to with Campus Program grant funding.



#### PA • Grantee Perspective

We need to increase and enhance our communication with our campus population (students, faculty, and staff) regarding our collective prevention and response efforts, as we still struggle with misinformation and misunderstanding about the work that is being done, what we are doing to assist students who come forward, what the process looks like for victims who do come forward (i.e., What happens after I call the Advocate hotline? How is that different than talking to the Title IX Coordinator or Public Safety?), and how students found responsible can and are being held accountable.

BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY, PENNSYLVANIA



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

The most significant area of remaining need with regard to improving services or processes to victims is the need to get systems and laws working in sync with one another. Even campus systems can feel confusing when looking at sexual assault policy versus a code of conduct. If these systems are confusing to professionals, they are likely confusing to victims or even respondents going through the process. Knowing this, our campus is working on creating a joint Title IX/Conduct document that clearly but simply outlines options and processes.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED

Grantees emphasized the need to **reach out to underserved populations on campus**, including:

- International students;
- The LGBT community;
- Students with disabilities;
- Graduate students; and
- Students of color.

They cited the need to **provide culturally appropriate resources** to these populations.

Overall, grantees cited a need to combat **misinformation about sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as well as negative stereotypes of victims**, which they felt **discouraged victims from reporting crimes** to law enforcement and Title IX offices. Grantees suggested a number of interventions to improve reporting of crimes, including:

- Engaging male students in anti-violence initiatives;
- Better engagement with college athletic programs;
- The use of campus climate surveys;
- Increasing offender accountability; and
- Clarifying campus policies and protocols for investigation and disciplinary action.

# Grants to Assist Children and Youth Exposed to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program

The goals and objectives of the Grants to Assist Children and Youth Exposed to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (CEV Program) are to increase the resources, services, and advocacy available to children, youth, and their non-abusing parent or caretaker, when a child has been exposed to domestic/sexual violence.

**THE CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS CHILDREN AND Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program) has received appropriations in FYs 2013 through 2016. This program, which consolidated four programs previously authorized under earlier iterations of VAWA, including the CEV Program, funds projects that support child, youth, and young adult victims through direct services, training, coordination and collaboration, effective intervention, treatment, response, and prevention strategies. The last grants made under the CEV Program were awarded in FY2011.**

## 17 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 17 unique grantees reported activities funded by the CEV Program.

## 128 Child Victims Served

On average, grantees served 128 child victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 694 Children Served

On average, grantees served 694 children indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month reporting period.

*Children who are exposed to or experience violence, can suffer from both immediate and long-term health effects, such as depression, anxiety, difficulty focusing in school, delinquency, and/or post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>354,355</sup>*



### PA • Grantee Perspective

The CEV grant funding has allowed us to focus on the needs of children who have been exposed to violence, and/or were a direct victim of violence. Often the needs of those children's non-offending caretakers are addressed and focused on, leaving a gap in addressing the challenges faced by the children themselves. Therefore, because of this specific program funding, we were able to provide services such as a psycho-educational group to guide and encourage the non-abusing parents and caretakers in addressing the needs of children exposed to or victimized by violence. We were able to increase services focused on providing clinical level interventions to children in three residential programs, and served children outside of our agency through collaboration with community agencies such as Head Start.

YWCA YORK, PENNSYLVANIA



### NC • Grantee Perspective

This funding allowed us to make significant progress in working collaboratively to help children exposed to violence. The forming of the CEV Collaborative itself created a greater understanding of the policies and protocols specific to each agency and how it impacted services. It allowed increased staff development that was critical to the provision of quality, comprehensive services. It allowed an increase in the number of clinicians trained in evidence-based treatment and it resulted in an expansion of the Parent-Child Interaction Therapy treatment program. This in turn, assisted more children. Overall, systems change was established due to the presence of these funds and allowed for a strong foundation in which to continue our defense of the children we serve.

30TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLIANCE, NORTH CAROLINA

Grantees provided culturally, linguistically, and community-relevant services to meet the needs of underserved populations, or provided referrals to existing services in the community.

## Grantees engaged in the following purpose areas:

- Provide services for children and youth exposed to domestic/sexual violence, which may include direct counseling, advocacy, or mentoring, and must include support for the non-abusing parent or the child's caretaker; and
- Provide training, coordination, and advocacy for programs that serve children and youth (such as Head Start, child care, and after-school programs), on how to safely and confidentially identify children and families experiencing domestic violence and properly refer them to programs that can provide direct services to the children and family.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **17** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training to professionals working with children and victim services to both child victims and children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **17** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **19** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support mental health professionals and child advocates.

**Table 1** Staff supported with CEV grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>19</b>	
Mental health professionals	5	24%
Child advocates	4	22%
Counselors	3	15%
Program coordinators	2	11%
Administrators	2	10%
Case managers	1	6%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees provide training to social service and healthcare professionals, educators and other school staff, child care providers, and other professionals to improve the professional identification of and response to children exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **13** (76%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **119** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **2,417** people.
- Most often these trainings reached child protective service workers (**25%**), mental health professionals (**17%**), educators (**8%**), and child care staff (**8%**).

## Services for Child Victims, Children Indirectly Exposed, and their Non-Abusing Parents/Caregivers

Child victims and children indirectly exposed to violence need comprehensive support services that meet a wide array of needs to help them become and remain safe from violence.

- **16** (94%) grantees used funds for victim services.

## Child Victim Services

Grantees may provide child victims with individual or group counseling services; offer education advocacy with the child's school; assist the child and accompanying parent or caregiver in obtaining a protection order; and provide safety planning, court accompaniment, shelter, and/or transportation.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **128** child victims during each 6-month period.
- Nearly **100%** of child victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### **During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Child advocacy services to **83** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **55** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **47** victims; and
- Education advocacy to **18** victims.

## Child Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve child victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **sexual assault** (95%).



### **NC • Grantee Perspective**

We used our CEV funding to hire a social worker to work with English speaking families, which increased our bilingual social worker's capacity to serve more families with limited English proficiency. We were then able to provide linguistically, culturally, and community relevant services to these families, including using bilingual resources, being able to communicate with family members in their native language, and being able to discuss DV issues related to their specific culture. This would not have been possible without CEV funding.

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY CSS WOMEN'S COMMISSION,  
NORTH CAROLINA**



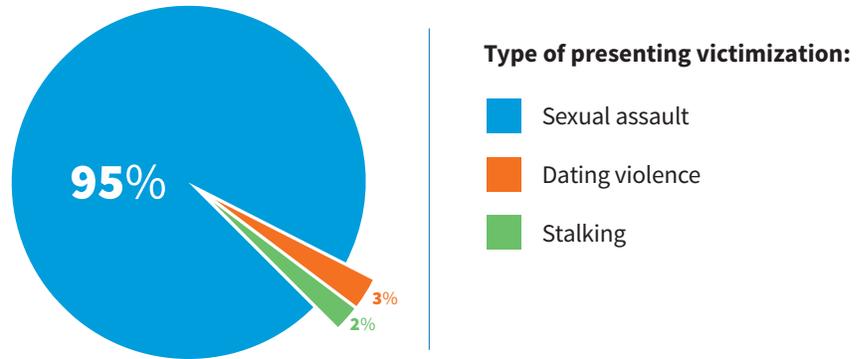
### **IA • Grantee Perspective**

CEV grant funds have allowed Helping Services to train 321 professionals, community members, and volunteers on the impact of domestic violence on children, on identifying and referring children to services, and on responding to a child's disclosure of abuse. One participant wrote, "Now I know what to look for in children. I never really understood how abuse affects children." Collaboration, information, and resource sharing has increased throughout the service area amongst youth-serving agencies as more information is presented.

**HELPING SERVICES FOR NORTHEAST IOWA**

**Figure 1** Provision of child victim services by CEV Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Child victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**Table 2** Child victims seeking services with CEV grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Child victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total child victims seeking services</b>	<b>128</b>	
Child victims served	89	69%
Child victims partially served	39	30%
Child victims not served	< 1	< 1%

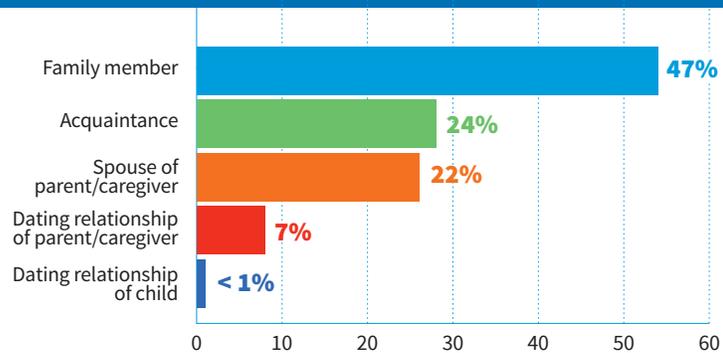
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the CEV Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the CEV Program grant.

### Child Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve child victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of child victims served or partially served were victimized by a **family or household member** (44%).
- The remaining child victims were most commonly victimized by an **acquaintance** (23%) or by a **spouse or intimate partner of the parent/caregiver** (22%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by child's relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



**NOTE:** Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for dating violence and stalking victimizations.

## Reasons Child Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why child victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Services were not appropriate for victim; or
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources.

## Services for Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence

Grantees provide a variety of services to children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence, including child advocacy, crisis intervention, and individual or group counseling. Children indirectly exposed to violence may also require assistance with school- and/or health-related issues, transportation needs, and legal issues. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help children become and remain safe from violence.**

- Grantees provided services to an average of **694** children indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period.
- **98%** of children indirectly exposed to violence who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Child advocacy services to **439** children;
- Support group/counseling services to **357** children;
- Education advocacy to **203** children;
- Crisis intervention services to **137** children; and
- Parent-child counseling or treatment intervention to **115** children.

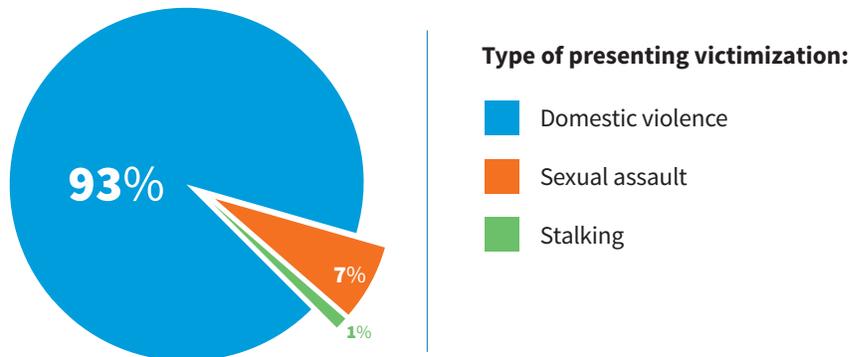
## Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence Seeking Services

Grantees serve children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of children served or partially served were indirectly exposed to **domestic violence** (93%).

**Figure 3** Provision of services to children indirectly exposed to violence by CEV Program grantees, by type of violence

Children served by type of victimization (6-month average)



NOTE: No children reported being indirectly exposed to dating violence.

**Table 3** Children indirectly exposed to violence seeking services with CEV grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Children seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total children seeking services</b>	<b>707</b>	
Children served	637	90%
Children partially served	57	8%
Children not served	13	2%

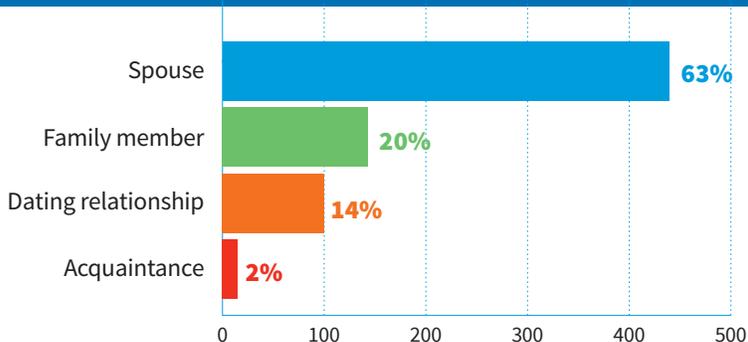
NOTE: "Partially served" represents children who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the CEV Program grant. "Not served" represents children who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the CEV Program grant.

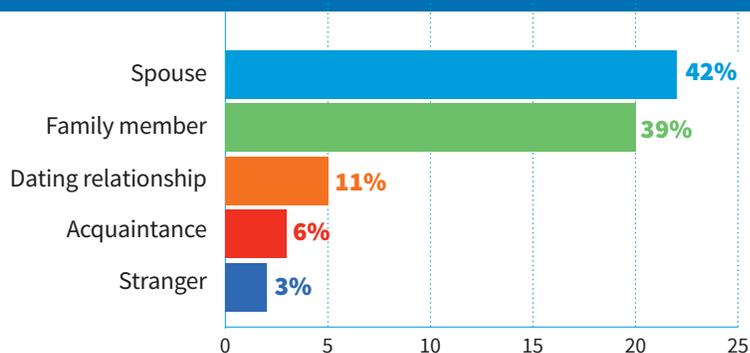
### Indirectly Exposed Children’s Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of children served or partially served were indirectly exposed to violence by a **spouse or intimate partner of a parent/caregiver** (61%); and
- The remaining children were most commonly exposed to violence by another **family or household member** (22%).

**Figure 4** Type of indirect exposure by child’s relationship to offender: Domestic violence



**Figure 5** Type of indirect exposure by child's relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**

**NOTE:** Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for dating violence and stalking victimizations.

## Reasons Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why children indirectly exposed to violence were not served or were only partially served:

- Program reached capacity;
- Hours of operation;
- Services were not appropriate for child;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources; or
- Transportation.

## Demographics of Children Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **128** child victims and **694** children indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period. The majority of child victims were **white** (78%), **female** (71%), and between the ages of **0 and 12** (70%). The majority of children indirectly exposed to violence were **white** (49%), **female** (53%), and between the ages of **0 and 12** (89%).

**Table 4**Demographic characteristics of children served with CEV grant funds,  
July 2013–June 2015

Characteristic	6-month average			
	Child victims		Children indirectly exposed	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Race</b>				
Asian	0	0%	6	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2	2%	19	3%
Black or African American	9	7%	140	22%
Hispanic or Latino	17	14%	202	32%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	< 1	< 1%	3	< 1%
White	95	78%	308	49%
Unknown (missing)	7		64	
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	90	71%	364	53%
Male	37	29%	329	47%
Total	127		693	
Unknown (missing)	1		< 1	
<b>Age</b>				
0–12	89	70%	617	89%
13–17	38	30%	75	11%
Total	127		692	
Unknown (missing)	1		2	
<b>Other</b>				
Children with disabilities	7	5%	26	4%
Children who are Deaf or hard of hearing	1	< 1%	2	< 1%
Children with limited English proficiency	1	< 1%	21	3%
Children who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	2	2%	10	1%
Children who live in rural areas	102	79%	284	41%
Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex	1	< 1%	1	< 1%
Children who are homeless/runaways	1	1%	26	4%
Children with mental health issues	25	19%	67	10%

## Support Services and Referrals for Non-Abusing Parents/Caregivers

In addition to services for children, grantees provide support services and referrals to non-abusing parents/caregivers of child victims and children indirectly exposed to violence. Grantees may either provide these services directly, or refer parents to other agencies.

- Grantees provided support services to an average of **354** non-abusing parents/caregivers.
- Grantees provided referrals to an average of **250** non-abusing parents/caregivers.

**During each 6-month period, grantees provided the following services and/or referrals to non-abusing parents/caregivers:**

- Advocacy services;
- Case management;
- Support group/counseling services;
- Parent education or classes; and
- Education advocacy.

## Shelter Services

Grantees provided emergency housing to an average of **22** non-abusing parents/caregivers and **37** accompanying family members for a total of **6,786** bed nights.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited the need for **more staff, especially clinicians, to treat children exposed to violence**, and for **expanded options for treatment**.

Grantees also cited a number of **barriers that prevent children from receiving treatment**, including:

- Limited transportation;
- A lack of adequate screening for exposure to violence;
- Difficulty providing appropriate services for underserved populations, including immigrants, LGBT populations, and adult male victims;
- Limited bilingual staff and translation services; and
- Limited understanding among school personnel, service providers, and parents about the impact of violence on children.



### WA • Grantee Perspective

This CEV grant-funded initiative allowed KCSARC to create a solid working relationship with agencies that can partner with us to enhance the services delivered to child victims and their families. KCSARC specializes in resolving the trauma. However, many families have other needs that are better addressed by the youth-serving agencies in the community. Our partnerships with the two youth-serving agencies will remain in place. They have become accustomed to the treatment that we provide here, and are more knowledgeable as to the follow-up services that will benefit the families.

**KING COUNTY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESOURCE CENTER, WASHINGTON**



### TX • Grantee Perspective

With CEV grant funding, our agency was able to provide a therapeutic classroom for children and families living in emergency shelter. With increased need for child care for working parents, the on-site center was unable to consistently meet the immediate needs of families recently displaced from their homes because of violence. Through our work, we have grown to understand the specific needs of families who enter emergency shelter; one of those being a need for sensitive and specialized child care. For parents, it provides much needed time to heal and time to plan for what comes next. For children, this care is a space to begin processing the trauma in a safe environment and a time to play and begin to rebuild their understanding of safe relations with adults and peers.

**TRAVIS COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVAL CENTER, TEXAS**



### NC • Grantee Perspective

Currently, there are waiting lists for services and there needs to be increased staffing and clinicians to assist with this, especially during the summer months when many children find themselves without a safe place. There is a need to expand the evidence-based curriculum to include a school-based treatment program; the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools Program is a recommended expansion. There also continues to be a need for additional therapy types and for our area, the use of animal assisted therapy is a good option.

**30<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLIANCE, NORTH CAROLINA**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

One of the most significant areas of remaining need continues to be the need for more accessible, safe, and inexpensive forms of public transportation here on Long Island. The geography of Long Island, New York, especially Suffolk County, is itself a huge obstacle when it comes to having to rely on public transportation services. Suffolk County is a mixture of suburban and rural communities and the distance between some towns can be lengthy. Public transportation in Suffolk County often requires multiple transfers and long waiting times even for short distance travels. It is also frequently exposed to budget cuts which ultimately impact service routes.

**VICTIMS INFORMATION BUREAU OF SUFFOLK, INC.,  
NEW YORK**

Grantees also reported a need for **improved training for law enforcement, hospital personnel, and prosecutors on trauma-informed practices and on recognizing signs of exposure to violence.**

Finally, some grantees mentioned the need for enhanced **community collaboration** between service providers, courts, and law enforcement.



### TX • Grantee Perspective

Service providers generally do not have an in-depth understanding of how trauma affects young children's development and behavior, and ability to succeed in group settings. School personnel, after school programming staff, community child care facility staff, and extracurricular activity staff often are not able to identify how trauma, such as domestic and/or sexual violence, can impact behaviors, development, and a child's success in academics or group settings. Subsequently, children with "disruptive behaviors" are often labeled, and referred to medical professionals, who also may not recognize signs of trauma and may prescribe medications to manage behavior. Symptoms may subside, but healing from exposure to violence will likely not occur.

**TRAVIS COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL  
ASSAULT SURVIVAL CENTER, TEXAS**



### NJ • Grantee Perspective

It has been noted in previous reports that children exposed to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and their non-abusing parents and caregivers would benefit from strengthened relationships between the criminal and family court systems and the community agencies providing services to these families. Establishing formalized partnerships between the courts, law enforcement, child protective services, and community agencies, to improve the community response to families affected by domestic violence continues to be an issue for consideration.

**SHELTER OUR SISTERS, NEW JERSEY**

# Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies

VAWA 2013 authorized the Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program), which consolidated the purpose areas from four pre-existing VAWA-funded programs: the Children and Youth Exposed to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking Program (Children Exposed to Violence or CEV Program), the Engaging Men and Youth in Preventing Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (Engaging Men and Youth or EMY Program), the Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program (STEP Program), and the Services to Advocate for and Respond to Youth Grant Program (Youth Services Program), and added new purpose areas as well.

**CONSOLIDATED YOUTH PROGRAM GRANTEE INCORPORATE CEV, EMY, STEP,** and Youth Services purpose areas, including teen dating violence awareness prevention, programs that respond to children's exposure to violence in their homes through services and training, and engaging men as leaders and role models.

## 32 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 32 unique grantees reported activities funded by the CY Program.

## 810 Child Victims Served

On average, grantees served 810 child victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 14,910 People Reached

Grantees reached a total of 14,910 people at community-wide events.

*Findings from a nationally representative study of children exposed to violence, showed that one-third of respondents experienced a physical assault in the past year, and 13% of those aged 14-17 experienced sexual assault or abuse in that time.<sup>350</sup>*



### VT • Grantee Perspective

Now, years deep into our Consolidated Youth grant, our site is reaping the benefits of all of our foundational work since the start of this project -- both in system improvements in a coordinated community response and in individual stories of victims helped by such a coordinated response. We have seen an improved awareness of and coordination of services/referrals to domestic violence services by child protection system staff, in cases where children who are exposed to domestic violence are involved in the child welfare system. We have also facilitated multiple referrals, from medical providers working with pregnant women with opiate dependence, to domestic violence victim services. These referrals and subsequent coordinated response of wrap-around care enabled these women to have safe shelter and access to victim services, including legal and economic services to support them in safely caring for their babies.

HOPE WORKS, INC., VERMONT



### CO • Grantee Perspective

As a result of this funding, the programming provided to our partner schools is much more intentional in its design; the messages given are consistent and cumulative across all age groups of students, parents, and school staff, and duplication in services has been avoided. The core service partners on this project have been able to place much more attention on prevention efforts than was possible in the past, and school buy-in and support for work on interpersonal violence has significantly increased.

CENTER ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, COLORADO

Grantees must provide culturally, linguistically, and community relevant services to meet the needs of underserved populations, or referrals to existing services within their community.

### Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Provide services for children and youth exposed to domestic/sexual violence, including youth victims of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, such as direct counseling, advocacy, or mentoring, and must include support for the non-abusing parent or the child's caretaker;
- Provide training, coordination, and advocacy for programs that serve children and youth (such as Head Start, child care, and after-school programs) on how to safely and confidentially identify children and families experiencing domestic violence and properly refer them to programs that can provide direct services to the children and family; and
- Create public education campaigns and supporting community organizing to encourage men and boys to work as allies to women and girls, endeavoring to prevent domestic/sexual violence.

VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **32** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

**6** (19%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training to professionals that work with children; training and public education to engage men and youth in ending violence; and victim services to child victims and children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **32** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **47** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and administrators.

**Table 1** Staff supported with CY grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>47</b>	
Program coordinators	12	25%
Administrators	7	16%
Educators/trainers	6	13%
Mental health professionals	5	11%
Case managers	3	7%
Child advocates	3	7%
Victim advocates	2	5%
Counselors	2	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees provide training to social service and healthcare professionals, educators and other school staff, child care providers, and other professionals to improve the professional identification of and response to children exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- 22 (69%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of 235 training events.
- Grantees trained a total of 4,163 people.
- Most often these trainings reached social service organization staff (17%), educators (16%), and health and mental health professionals (16%).

## Community Organizing/Mobilization and Prevention

Grant-funded staff assist in community organizing and mobilization, encouraging men and boys to work as allies to prevent physical and/or sexual violence and build safe, supportive, and accountable communities.

- 12 (38%) grantees used funds for community organization/mobilization and prevention.

## Community Organizing Events

Grantees provide community-wide events, such as school presentations and public forums, for members of the communities they are working in.

- Grantees hosted a total of 329 community-wide events.
- Grantees reached a total of 14,910 people at community-wide events.
  - Grantees most frequently hosted school presentations (46%), public forums (16%), information tables (12%), and culturally specific events (12%).



### NC • Grantee Perspective

Grant-funded counselor staff continued the “Children’s Program Consultation” process by which grant-funded counselor staff meets with every new parent that enters the shelter in a consultation format to assess and address client needs. This protocol helps to provide more consistent and efficient advocacy and to promote service participation and engagement.

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES, NORTH CAROLINA**



### CO • Grantee Perspective

Staff in our partner schools receive extensive training on domestic, sexual, and teen-dating violence, how interpersonal violence (IPV) and trauma impact children and youth, and how schools can appropriately respond to students who have experienced IPV. Specifically, teachers are taught techniques to make their classrooms trauma-sensitive and are given information on how to successfully provide resources to students and families. Three partner schools participated in training this report period, with the fourth school scheduled to train in the Fall 2015 semester. For schools that trained in the 2014/15 School Year, pre/post test results indicate that teachers learned positive norms related to domestic violence, and made drastic improvements in understanding how trauma impacts students and how to appropriately respond.

**CENTER ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, COLORADO**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

The CY grant funding has allowed Jenesse and the Coordinated Community Response Network (CCRN) to facilitate an on-campus violence prevention curriculum to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade student body of Locke Family of Schools. During the 6-month reporting period, the Jenesse Comprehensive Youth Project/CCRN reached 3,349 youth, and over 500 parents, teachers, and other youth organizations. We provided onsite outreach to approximately 2,700 students at the target school Locke Family of Schools, Jordan High School, and 45 students at King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science. Three hundred students attended the Youth Conversation and we presented the educational series to 355 9<sup>th</sup> graders at Locke Family of Schools. Twenty parents attended the Parent Conversation (Locke Family of Schools), and a Peer Ambassador program was implemented at Locke Family of Schools. Thirty teachers and administrators at Jordan High School participated in a workshop on Human Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention during professional development. And finally, the Youth Exposed to Violence training series was well received by our partners and community stakeholders, reaching over 200 participants.

JENESSE CENTER, INC., CALIFORNIA

## Ongoing Community Organizing Activities

In addition to community-wide events, grantees provided ongoing community organizing/mobilization and prevention activities, such as educational courses and leadership/mentoring trainings, to targeted groups of men and youth.

- Grantees provided **87** ongoing community organizing activities.
  - The most common types of ongoing activities provided were leadership/mentorship trainings (**34%**) and educational courses (**25%**).
- Grantees provided these ongoing activities to **13,389** men and youth.
  - Grantees most frequently reached unaffiliated adult community members (**68%**); culturally specific community group members, both youth and adults (**12%**); and elementary, middle, high school, and university students (**12%**), through these ongoing activities.

## Public Education/Awareness Campaigns

Grantees create public education campaigns encouraging men and boys to work as allies with women and girls to prevent domestic/sexual violence.

- **9** (28%) grantees used funds for public education/awareness campaigns.
- Grantees provided a total of **111** public education/awareness campaigns.
- Grantees most frequently supported print materials (**19%**), online social media (**18%**), and media articles/opinion editorials (**13%**).

## Services for Child Victims, Children Indirectly Exposed, and their Non-Abusing Parents/Caregivers

Child victims and children indirectly exposed to violence need comprehensive support services that meet a wide array of needs to help them become and remain safe from violence.

- **14** (44%) grantees used funds for victim services.

## Child Victim Services

Grantees may provide child victims with individual or group counseling services; offer education advocacy with the child's school; assist the child and accompanying parent or caregiver in obtaining a protection order; and provide safety planning, court accompaniment, shelter, and/or transportation.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **810** child victims during each 6-month period.
- Nearly **100%** of child victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Crisis intervention services to **597** victims;
- Child advocacy services to **193** victims; and
- Support group/counseling services to **138** victims.

### Child Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve child victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **dating violence** (72%).



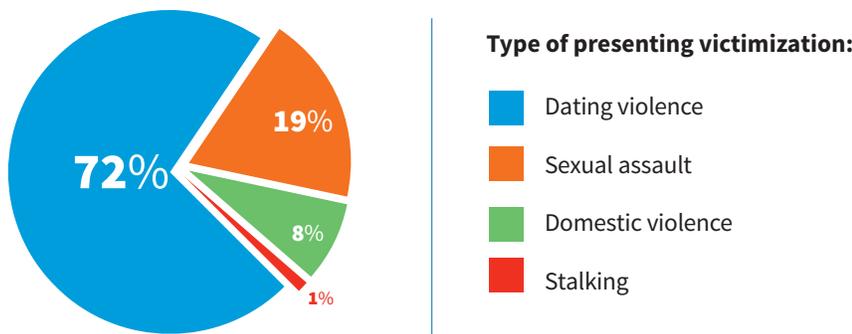
**FL • Grantee Perspective**

Grant funds were used to provide advocacy services to children alleged to be victims of sexual trauma. This included supporting them through initial investigative services by law enforcement and the Department of Children and Families. Children are brought to the CAC for videotaped forensic interviews and medical exams and the Advocates help the children to feel comfortable in the setting, and acclimate them for the services they will receive. They also ensure children are stable prior to leaving the Center and connect them to mental health services to ensure their ongoing well-being. The Advocate works with the child on an ongoing basis to ensure they are linked with all necessary services.

**ORLANDO HEALTH, INC./CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER AT THE HOWARD PHILLIPS CENTER, FLORIDA**

**Figure 1** Provision of child victim services by CY Program grantees, by type of victimization

**Child victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**Table 2** Child victims seeking services with CY grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Child victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total child victims seeking services</b>	<b>812</b>	
Child victims served	782	96%
Child victims partially served	29	4%
Child victims not served	2	< 1%

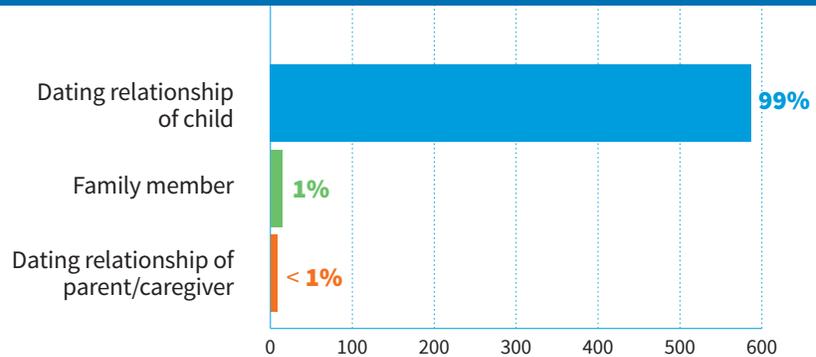
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the CY Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the CY Program grant.

## Child Victims' Relationship to Offender

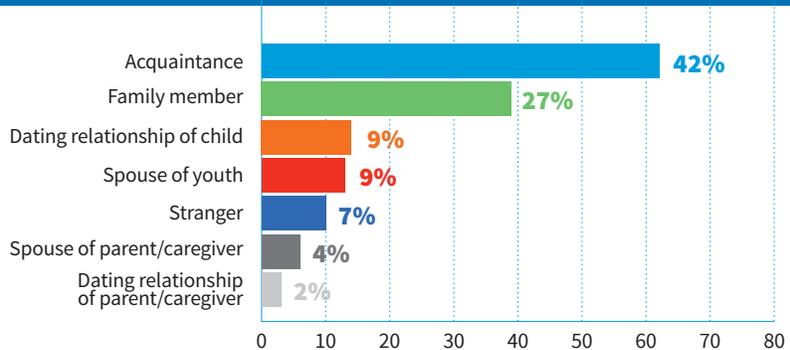
Grantees serve child victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of child victims served or partially served were victimized in the context of the **child's dating relationship** (75%).
- The remaining child victims were most commonly victimized by an **acquaintance** (8%) or **family member** (6%).

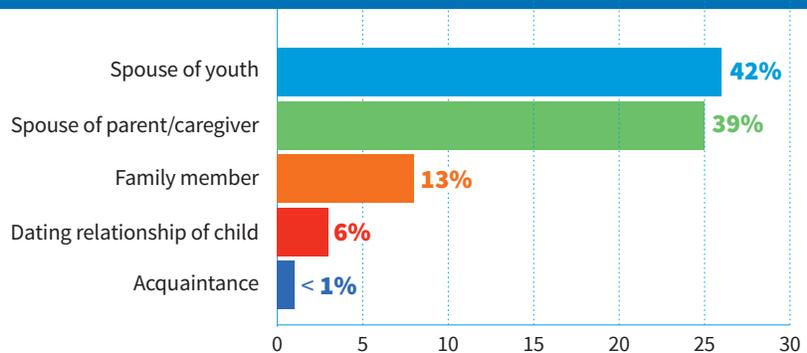
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by child's relationship to offender: **Dating violence**



**Figure 3** Type of victimization by child's relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by child's relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**



**NOTE:** Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for stalking victimization.

## Reasons Child Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why child victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Insufficient/lack of language capacity;
- Program reached capacity;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources;
- Services inappropriate or inadequate for children with mental health issues; or
- Services not appropriate for child.

## Services for Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence

Grantees provide a variety of services to children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence, including child advocacy, crisis intervention, and individual or group counseling. Children indirectly exposed to violence may also require assistance with school- and/or health-related issues, transportation needs, and legal issues. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help children become and remain safe from violence.**

- Grantees provided services to an average of **295** children indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of children indirectly exposed to violence who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Support group/counseling services to **208** children;
- Child advocacy services to **162** children;
- Crisis intervention services to **62** children; and
- Education advocacy to **38** children.

## Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence Seeking Services

Grantees serve children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of children served or partially served were indirectly exposed to **domestic violence** (92%).



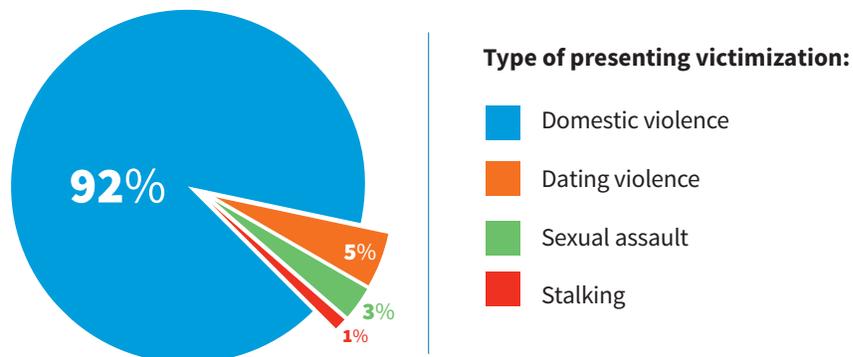
### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The CY grant funding has enabled our program to assist nine children and two non-abusing parents during this reporting period. The Advocate assisted the victim and family with education and awareness on the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault, along with providing DV/SA counseling at no cost for the victim and non-abusing parents. Transportation is always an issue in our rural area, and with services being some distance away, we were able to assist with fuel for the victims to get to and from required appointments, including medical appointments and counseling appointments.

**KALISPEL TRIBE OF INDIANS**

**Figure 5** Provision of services to children indirectly exposed to violence by CY Program grantees, by type of violence

Children served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 3** Children indirectly exposed to violence seeking services with CY grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

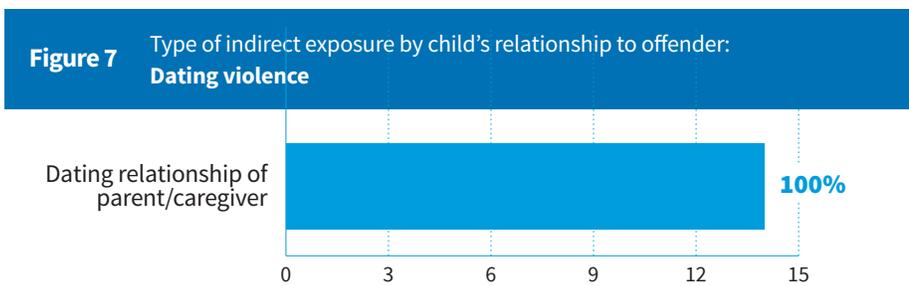
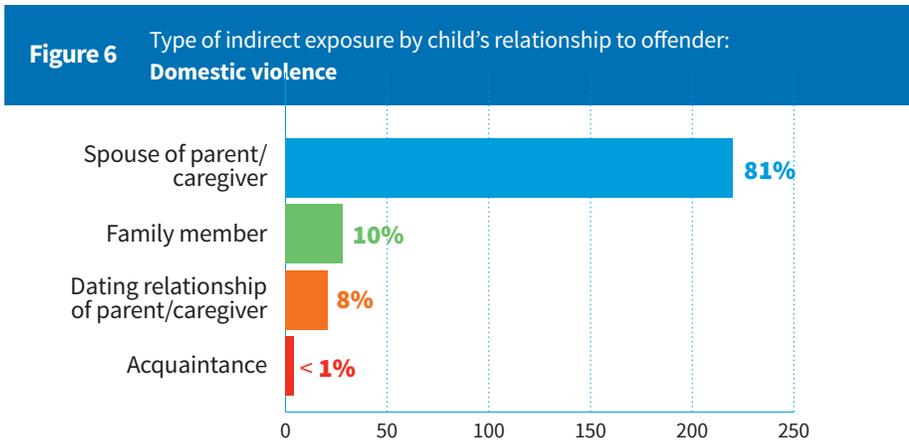
Children seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total children seeking services</b>	<b>299</b>	
Children served	294	98%
Children partially served	< 1	< 1%
Children not served	4	1%

**NOTE:** “Partially served” represents children who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the CY Program grant. “Not served” represents children who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the CY Program grant. During the 2-year reporting period, one child was partially served in one of the 6-month reporting periods.

## Indirectly Exposed Children’s Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve children indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of children served or partially served were indirectly exposed to violence by a **spouse or intimate partner of a parent/caregiver** (76%).
- The remaining children were most commonly exposed to violence by a **dating partner of a parent/caregiver** (12%) or **family member** (11%).



**NOTE:** Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for sexual assault and stalking victimizations.

## Reasons Children Indirectly Exposed to Violence Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why children indirectly exposed to violence were not served or were only partially served:

- Insufficient/lack of language capacity;
- Program reached capacity;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources; or
- Services not appropriate for child.

## Demographics of Children Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **810** child victims and **295** children indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period. The majority of child victims were **white** (60%), **female** (90%), and between the ages of **13 and 17** (78%). The majority of children indirectly exposed to violence were **Black or African American** (52%), **female** (52%), and between the ages of **0 and 12** (78%).

**Table 4** Demographic characteristics of children served with CY grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Characteristic	6-month average			
	Child victims		Children indirectly exposed	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Race</b>				
Asian	25	4%	4	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	8	1%	8	3%
Black or African American	114	17%	149	52%
Hispanic or Latino	124	18%	50	18%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4	1%	1	< 1%
White	413	60%	110	39%
Unknown (missing)	127		10	
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	709	90%	152	52%
Male	77	10%	142	48%
Total	786		294	
Unknown (missing)	25		1	
<b>Age</b>				
0–12	30	4%	227	78%
13–17	616	78%	60	21%
18–24	148	19%	3	1%
Total	794		290	
Unknown (missing)	17		5	
<b>Other</b>				
Children with disabilities	16	2%	6	2%
Children who are Deaf or hard of hearing	< 1	< 1%	< 1	< 1%
Children with limited English proficiency	13	2%	5	2%
Children who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	9	1%	2	1%
Children who live in rural areas	35	4%	15	5%
Children who are homeless/runaways	92	11%	46	16%
Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex	70	9%	2	1%
Children with mental health issues	72	9%	24	8%

## Support Services and Referrals for Non-Abusing Parents/Caregivers

In addition to services for children, grantees provide support services and referrals to non-abusing parents/caregivers of child victims and children indirectly exposed to violence. Grantees may either provide these services directly, or refer parents to other agencies.

- Grantees provided support services to an average of **273** non-abusing parents/caregivers.
- Grantees provided referrals to an average of **165** non-abusing parents/caregivers.

**During each 6-month period, grantees provided the following services and/or referrals to non-abusing parents/caregivers:**

- Crisis intervention services;
- Advocacy services; and
- Support group/counseling services.

## Shelter Services

Grantees provided emergency housing to an average of **49** non-abusing parents/caregivers and **85** accompanying family members for a total of **17,022** bed nights.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited the need for **more community prevention education and outreach**. In particular, grantees expressed a need for more prevention programming for:

- High school students;
- Elementary and middle school students;
- Members of linguistic and cultural minorities; and
- Underserved populations, including LGBT youth, African American men and boys, and immigrant populations.

Grantees expressed the need to **provide a better variety of services to young people, especially mental health services**.



### MA • Grantee Perspective

As we are a pan-Asian agency, we seek to provide services in as many Asian languages as we can. However, in our prevention methods, we are only educating professionals and community members in English, due to a lack of time and funding capacity to effectively translate materials into all of the languages we currently serve. With the three core personnel under the grant, we do not meet all of the language needs of the diverse Asian communities in our service area. Additionally, with societal stigmas around domestic/dating/sexual violence, we find it challenging to introduce teen dating violence to schools or to recruit Youth Empowerment Project participants, because teachers and principals are concerned with potentially how “controversial” it is to teach this topic to youth.

**ASIAN TASK FORCE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,  
MASSACHUSETTS**



### TX • Grantee Perspective

Overall there is much awareness and dialogue in the schools and in the community about bullying; however, healthy dating relationships and sexuality appear to be much harder to address. Nevertheless, students articulated how important such conversations are to their safety, to their trust in parents and other adults, and to their understanding of healthy relationships. In fact, having an open and respectful dialogue about sensitive topics models healthy relationships. It is therefore important to promote a space and tools for conversations through community outreach.

**TRAVIS COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER, TEXAS**

Grantees also reported a need to **improve screening, intervention, and referrals** for young victims of violence. They felt this could be addressed by:

- Creating and enforcing school policies on sexual assault and intimate partner violence;
- Training school personnel, service providers, and law enforcement on proper response protocol; and
- Addressing inconsistencies among service providers' understandings of mandated reporting requirements.



### VT • Grantee Perspective

There remains a significant need for culturally relevant responses to youth who experience sexual exploitation and other sexual violence, teen dating violence, or stalking. These responses are consistently coordinated across sectors, based on long-term collaborations which are institutionalized, rather than being dependent upon individuals and their relationships. Collaborations take into account the complexities of youths' experiences, including gender identity, sexual orientation, past experiences with sexual or other violence or abuse, etc. We respond to the most urgent issues in youths' lives (for example, ongoing risks from perpetrators, lack of stable supportive housing, economic issues, social isolation, substance addiction, complex trauma), in addition to prioritizing safety; offering youth a range of options; maximizing choice and control for youth; and offering youth a credible vision of a future which could be better than the present.

**HOPE WORKS INC., VERMONT**



### MA • Grantee Perspective

Our community lacks protocols for routine screening questions that assess a young person's interpersonal safety; policies or procedures in school to respond to an incident of dating violence; and lack of staff training to assist victims of DV. The most commonly accessed supports and resources for youth very rarely have training or information to identify abusive situations/relationships or to dispel common myths and misconceptions among youth. There are still widespread and generational myths and misconceptions about the commonality and appropriateness of abuse within relationships. Community supports rarely have the knowledge or training to properly plan safety with youth and connect them with the appropriate resources.

**YWCA OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS**

# Court Training and Improvements Program

The Court Training and Improvements Program (Courts Program) supported federal, state, tribal, territorial and local courts or court based programs in improving their responses to domestic/sexual violence through specialized court processes, such as dedicated court dockets, specialized courts, and enhanced court procedures, and by providing judicial training.

**THE 2013 REAUTHORIZATION OF VAWA REPLACED THE COURTS Program, along with the Supervised Visitation Program, with a new, comprehensive grant program: the Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program (Justice for Families or JFF Program). The Justice for Families Program improves civil and criminal justice system response to families with histories of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse. The last Courts Program grants were awarded in FY 2014.**

## 33 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 33 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Courts Program.

## 1,372 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 1,372 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 7,601 Cases Disposed

Grantees disposed of a total of 7,601 cases; 69% of which resulted in convictions.

Grantees engaged in the following purpose areas:

- Improve internal civil and criminal court functions, responses, practices, and procedures;
- Educate court-based and court-related personnel on issues relating to victims' needs and best practices for holding perpetrators accountable;
- Collaborate and train with agencies and organizations to improve implementation and enforcement of relevant federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local law;
- Provide technical assistance to federal, state, tribal, territorial, or local courts wishing to improve their practices and procedures, or to develop new programs; and
- Enable courts or court-based programs to develop new or enhance current programming.

*A New York statewide investigation of domestic violence courts found that these courts reduced rearrests for any criminal charges, inclusive of domestic violence charges, among convicted offenders who were subject to policies such as judicial supervision and sanctions for noncompliance.<sup>158</sup>*



### FL • Grantee Perspective

Courts grant funding has enabled the County to devise and implement a comprehensive compliance monitoring program with legal ramifications for failure to comply with court-ordered conditions of the injunction orders. The Courts funding has also enabled DV stakeholders from the County to come together for a continuous discussion of how we can handle injunctions better so that safety is maximized. The improvements we've devised and implemented in the last three years have had lasting effect on the perception of how seriously DV injunctions are handled in Pinellas County.

COUNTY OF PINELLAS 6<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
FLORIDA



### OH • Grantee Perspective

The impact of having two full-time Justice System Advocates (JSAs) cannot be overstated. It is the most essential portion of the grant funding because it puts the victim directly in the path of a knowledgeable and supportive professional whose sole purpose is to support that victim's interests. Although victim safety and security is paramount to the Court staff, they still have to be impartial. There are numerous supportive services that the JSAs are able to provide that would not be available without grant funding. These include, but are not limited to: support during the protection order process from someone looking out solely for the best interest of the victim; assistance with writing the statement to the Court used by the judicial officer in making the determination as to whether to grant or deny an ex parte order; assistance in making the decision on whether or not to file for a protection order and the safety concerns and potential consequences to filing; direct access to the shelter run by their agency; and direct referrals to individual counseling and support groups run through the Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT,  
OHIO

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **33** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **3** (9%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Developed new or enhanced existing court infrastructure, including specialized courts, dockets, intake centers, and interpreter services;
  - Improved internal civil and criminal court functions, responses, practices, and procedures; and
  - Educated court-based and court-related personnel on issues relating to victims' needs.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff engage in issuing protection orders or helping victims obtain them, family matters, criminal cases, and other specialized court activities relating to domestic/sexual violence. They also provide training, victim services, offender supervision, and batterer intervention and sex offender management programs to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **29** (88%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **28** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support case/docket managers and victim advocates.

**Table 1** Staff supported with Courts grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>28</b>	
Case/docket managers	8	30%
Victim advocates	5	20%
Program coordinators	5	18%
Compliance monitors	4	13%
Probation officers	1	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train court-based and court-related personnel on issues relating to victims' needs, including safety, security, privacy, confidentiality, and economic independence, as well as information about perpetrator behavior and best practices for holding perpetrators accountable. **This training improves the professional responses to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **21** (64%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **101** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **2,166** people.
- Most often these trainings reached court personnel (**30%**), victim advocates (**19%**), and attorneys/law students (**12%**).

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims navigating the court and legal system. Victims may request legal advocacy to secure a protection order or custody of their children; translation services; victim advocacy, such as planning or accompaniment to court; or access to supervised visitation and exchange services. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **12** (36%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **1,372** victims during each 6-month period.
- **98%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Civil legal advocacy to **844** victims;
- Victim advocacy to **633** victims; and
- Criminal justice advocacy to **447** victims.

### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **4,096** times; and
- Grantees made a total of **1,301** referrals to governmental victim services and **3,019** to non-governmental victim services.



### AZ • Grantee Perspective

The funding has also allowed us to provide training in the area of domestic violence and the Deaf community by using DeafHope as a great resource. The empowerment director of DeafHope, Amber Hodson, is on call for both Emerge! and the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD) to reach out to, and the training she provided to both agencies was invaluable. We have also been able to use the funding to pay for ASL interpreters for Deaf victims who access Emerge! Services. We are also able to pay for the COPD counselors and Emerge! to put on education programs for Deaf teens. We spent a lot of money on sending attorneys from DV Court to training and it has been very well spent, especially where defense attorneys were concerned. The Public Defenders assigned to DV court, who treat victims with the utmost respect, seem to have an increased understanding of the dynamics involved in these cases, are very careful about victim safety, and are cautious about making requests that might compromise victim safety. Sending the attorneys to training together has fostered a great working relationship in the courtroom, which has resulted in a better delivery of justice for everyone.

TUCSON CITY COURT, ARIZONA



### OH • Grantee Perspective

The significance of these funds on Ohio's Domestic Relations Summit cannot be understated. As a result of this funding, the Summit featured a powerful domestic violence track (including four funded sessions) and a plenary session led by Dr. Peter Jaffe on domestic violence risk assessment, lethality, and homicide. Because domestic violence themes had such a prevalent position during the Summit, many of the court (county) teams infused their discussions with appropriate responses to domestic violence. The success of the Summit was evidenced by the energy it generated. The Supreme Court is committed to improving the judicial response in cases involving domestic violence and it continues to leverage general revenue funds to maximize federal funds.

SUPREME COURT OF OHIO



### VT • Grantee Perspective

The biggest change is providing broad access, information, and support to all victims of domestic violence appearing on the consolidated calendars in all departments. Having bilingual, bicultural support can make a huge difference. Victims are more likely to feel understood, supported, and safe when working directly with someone who is bilingual and bicultural, versus talking to an Advocate/Specialist through an interpreter. It enhances their ability to follow court directions when accompanied by a bilingual support person (for example, going to the Self Help Center to meet with an attorney about their family law case, or to Family Court Services to schedule an appointment for an emergency screen or mediation). It also enhances their willingness and comfort in accessing community resources, such as shelter-based agencies, social services agencies for food or medical assistance, and for some individuals, referrals for immigration-related services.

HAVE JUSTICE WILL TRAVEL, VERMONT

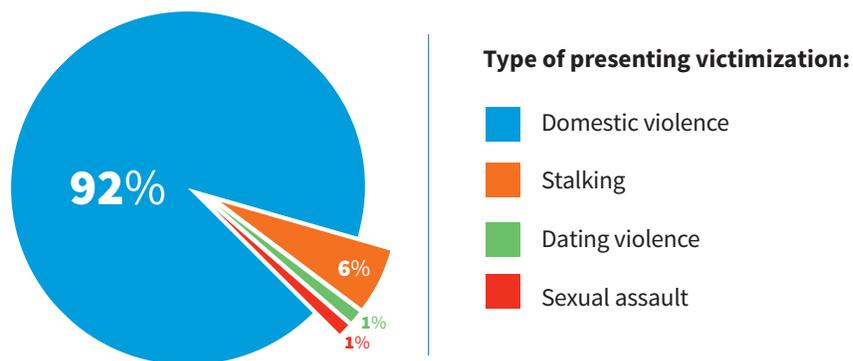
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic violence** (92%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Courts Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Victims served by type of victimization** (6-month average)



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with Courts grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>1,397</b>	
Victims served	1,326	95%
Victims partially served	46	3%
Victims not served	25	2%

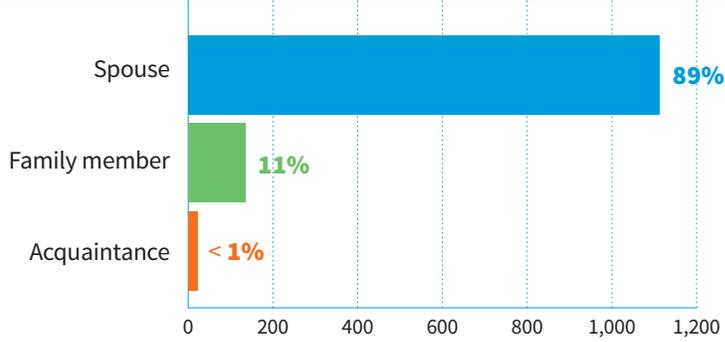
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Courts Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Courts Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

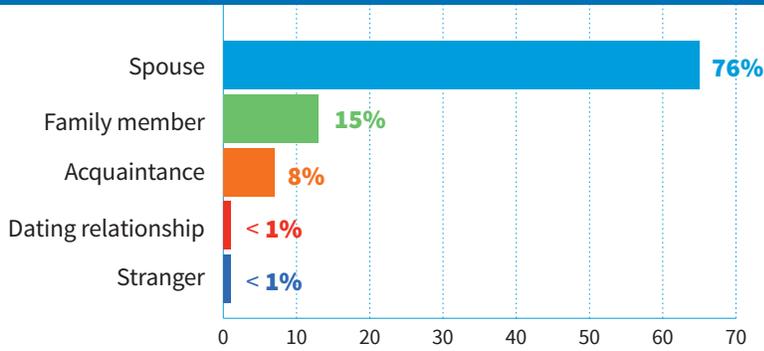
Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (86%).
- The remaining victims were most often victimized by another **family or household member** (11%) or in the context of a **dating relationship** (2%).

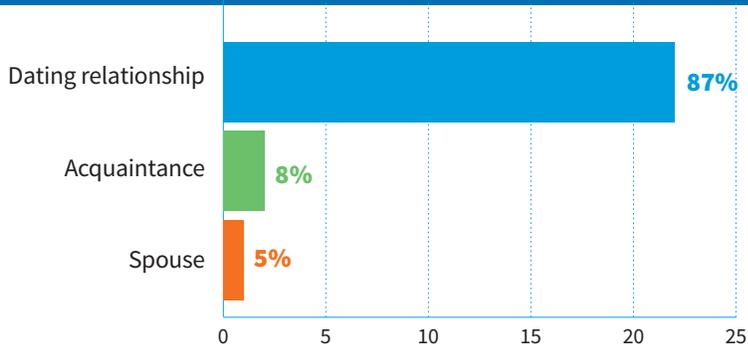
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**



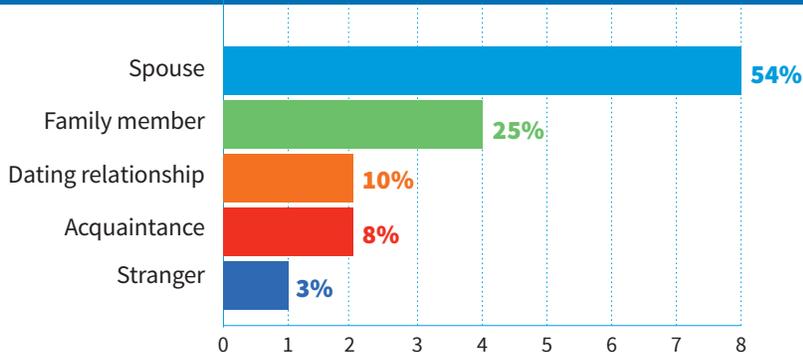
**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Dating violence**



**Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

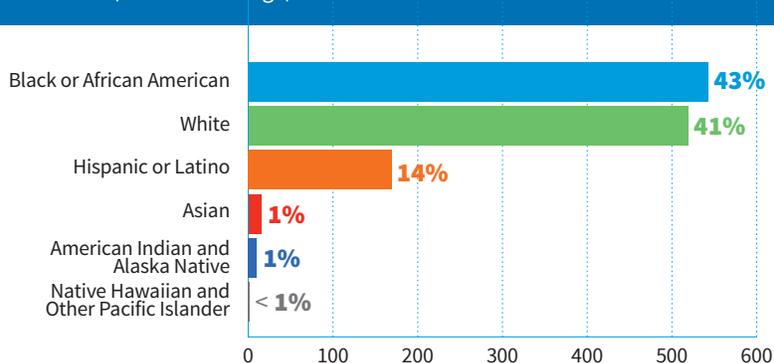
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources;
- Hours of operation; or
- Insufficient/lack of language capacity.

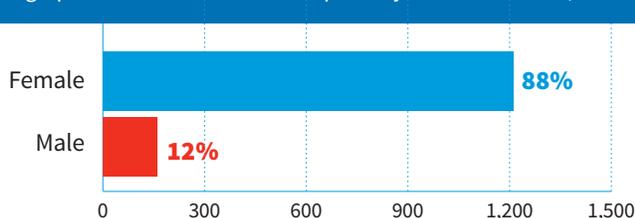
## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **1,372** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **Black or African American** (43%), **female** (88%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (76%).

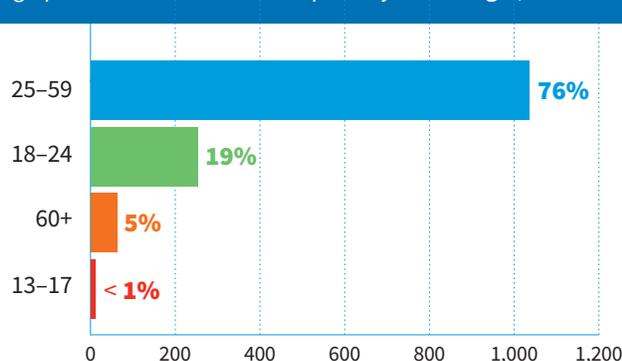
**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

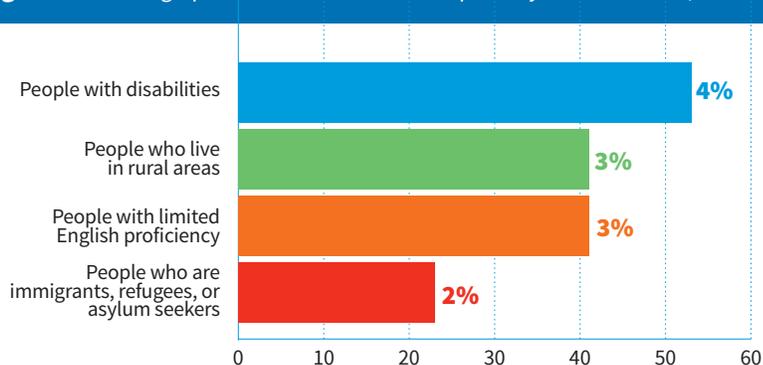


**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

## Criminal Justice

To enhance protection for and services to victims within the court system, grantees work with criminal justice and social service agencies to address service gaps, provide training, ensure consistency in case handling, enhance case information flow among partner agencies to improve judicial decision-making and partner agency operations, and emphasize defendant monitoring and accountability.

- **17** (52%) grantees used funds for criminal case activities.

*When victims receive services from civil attorneys and community-based advocates, they report being better equipped to express their opinions and have those opinions validated.<sup>205</sup>*

## Case Dispositions

**Table 3** Dispositions of cases by Courts Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Cases disposed of	Dispositions resulting in convictions	
		Number	Percent
<b>All cases</b>	<b>7,601</b>	<b>5,271</b>	<b>69%</b>
Misdemeanor domestic/dating violence	4,291	2,721	63%
Violation of probation or parole	1,178	1,082	92%
Domestic violence ordinance	655	452	69%
Felony domestic/dating violence	643	452	70%
Violation of protection order	592	420	71%

**NOTE:** Convictions include deferred adjudications.

## Criminal Protection Orders

Criminal protection orders are issued as bail conditions or as conditions of release to protect victims during the pendency of the criminal case or following the conviction, or deferred adjudication, of offenders.

<b>Table 4</b> Criminal protection orders issued by Courts Program-funded courts by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015		
<b>Type of case</b>	<b>Granted as condition of:</b>	
	Bail	Deferred disposition/ probation
<b>All cases</b>	<b>3,913</b>	<b>1,610</b>
Domestic violence	3,460	1,529
Dating violence	443	80
Sexual assault	8	0
Stalking	2	1

## Judicial Monitoring

Judicial monitoring occurs when the court schedules regular probation or court reviews to determine whether convicted offenders are complying with the terms of their sentences. Probation officers may meet with offenders in person, by telephone, or via unscheduled surveillance.

- An average of **1,603** offenders were monitored in each 6-month reporting period.
  - The overwhelming majority of offenders reviewed were domestic violence offenders (**97%**).
- A total of **13,528** judicial reviews of individual offenders were conducted across the 2-year period.

Judges monitor offenders to review progress and compliance with court orders. The data reported below (Table 5) reflect the consequences imposed for violations of court orders. With each type of violation, the courts took no action in only **11%** of the cases and issued fines in **<1%** of the cases. A significant number of cases resulted in the courts adding conditions (**12%**), or partially (**11%**) or fully (**26%**) revoking probation. The courts issued a verbal or written warning in **39%** of the cases.

**Table 5** Disposition of violations of probation and other court orders by Courts Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Violation	No action taken		Verbal/written warning		Fine		Conditions added		Partial revocation of probation		Probation revoked/incarcerated	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection order (N = 381)	41	11%	78	20%	0	0%	49	13%	26	7%	187	49%
New criminal behavior (N = 342)	116	34%	87	25%	5	1%	60	18%	17	5%	57	17%
Failure to attend mandated batterer intervention program (N = 892)	75	8%	557	62%	1	<1%	74	8%	75	8%	110	12%
Failure to attend mandated offender treatment (N = 203)	25	12%	81	40%	1	<1%	29	14%	25	12%	42	21%
Other condition of probation or parole (N = 735)	23	3%	195	27%	3	<1%	102	14%	133	18%	279	38%

**NOTE:** Other conditions include requirements such as substance abuse and alcohol treatment, parenting classes, and mandatory check-ins.

## Civil Justice

### Civil Protection Orders

Civil orders of protection, also known as restraining orders, are court-issued injunctions that prohibit or limit an offender's contact with the victim and prohibit further abusive behavior. These orders may also include custody and visitation directives, economic relief, and temporary restrictions on possession of firearms. Orders of protection are enforceable throughout the country, not solely in the issuing jurisdiction.

- **12** (36%) grantees used funds for civil protection order cases.

**Table 6** Civil protection orders issued by Courts Program-funded courts by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Temporary orders	Final orders
<b>All cases</b>	<b>5,464</b>	<b>4,455</b>
Domestic violence	3,109	2,940
Dating violence	294	226
Sexual assault	103	154
Stalking	1	0
Type of victimization unknown	1,957	1,135

**Table 7**

Types of relief issued in final protection orders by Courts Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Types of relief	Number of protection orders/cases
Firearms restrictions	3,747
Stay away/no contact	3,650
Custody	851
Sole parental rights to petitioner	693
Sole parental rights to respondent	18
Shared parental rights	48
Allocated parental rights	200
Batterer intervention program (BIP)	288
Other offender treatment (e.g. substance abuse or other counseling, does not include BIP)	268
Supervised visitation/exchange	184
Child support	64
Economic relief (e.g. spousal support, debt assignment, payment of obligations and/or losses)	48

**NOTE:** Custody represents the number of protection orders in which custody was addressed but the specific outcome was not known.

**Table 8**

Post-judgment/post-adjudication judicial reviews of civil protection order conditions, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Civil protection order case reviews	544	2,541

## Family Cases

The issues facing victims in family law matters — divorce, custody, child or spousal support, or parental rights and responsibilities — are complex. When criminal and/or protection order cases are also pending, the situation can be overwhelming and burdensome for victims, and competing or conflicting orders may place them at greater risk. Grantees may structure their dedicated docket or specialized court to include family matters where families are experiencing domestic violence. This could be a “one judge, one family” system in which one judge hears all matters relating to that family. Specially trained court staff who are aware of the dynamics of domestic violence will understand that some offenders use the court system to exert control over victims and force ongoing contact.

- 4 (12%) grantees used funds for family cases.

**Table 9** Number of new and pending family cases addressed by the Courts Program, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Divorce (children in common)	58	658
Divorce (no children in common)	22	171
Parental rights/responsibilities	15	20

**Table 10** Post-judgment/post-adjudication judicial reviews of family cases, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Family case reviews	4	43

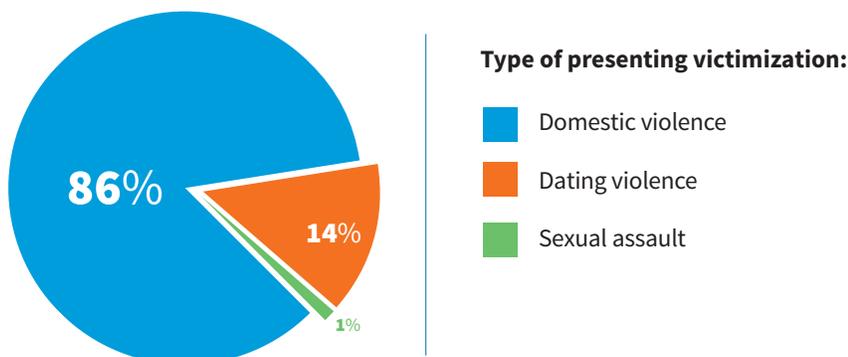
## Court-Based Probation or Other Offender/Respondent Compliance Monitoring

Probation officers or other court-based compliance monitors conduct offender monitoring to determine whether offenders/respondents are complying with the terms of their court orders. Those orders could be pre-trial, bail, protection orders, probation, or other conditions of release.

- **10** (30%) grantees used funds for probation or monitoring activities.
- An average of **1,356** offenders were monitored during each 6-month reporting period.
- On average, grantees reviewed BIP information or contacted BIP staff for **611** offenders/respondents, and had meetings or contact with **382** offenders/respondents.
- As a strategy to increase victim safety, probation staff made an average of **223** victim contacts during each 6-month reporting period.

**Figure 10** Offenders/respondents monitored by the Courts Program, by type of offense

**Offenders monitored by type of offense (6-month average)**



### ID • Grantee Perspective

The Courts grant funding provides the level of treatment to address the highest risk offenders with co-occurring disorders. This intensive monitoring and treatment would not be possible without this funding. The grant provides resources that are not funded by probation for felony and misdemeanor offenders. The DV Court funding provides resources for offenders that in many cases would be incarcerated. The court provides support to victims and the community by assisting offenders to understand the consequences of their continued criminal behavior and by providing appropriate monitoring and treatment to aid them in future success. The grant funding eases the financial burden on the probationers that are not living with their families and are trying to support two households. This allows them to stay focused on their treatment and recovery by not having to pay the full amount of treatment costs. Case management provided by The Mental Wellness Center is being utilized as a result of the grant funding.

**IDAHO DISTRICT 7 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT**



### OH • Grantee Perspective

Over the last 20+ years, the quality of education on domestic violence for the judiciary has improved tremendously and transformed court practices and procedures to better respond to victims and abusers. However, the impact of domestic violence on the allocation of parental rights and responsibilities remains a challenge for courts, particularly where domestic violence (or sexual assault) is not substantiated, evidence is not introduced, or the evidence is inartfully articulated for the court. Courts seek to issue fair orders that promote healthy relationships between parents and their children, yet the correlation of past violence on a future parent-child relationship is often difficult to gauge. Efforts to develop and disseminate research-based tools that are meaningful to the judiciary must persevere.

SUPREME COURT OF OHIO



### TN • Grantee Perspective

In regard to offender accountability, this is being addressed by way of new legislation but courts and communities need assistance in tracking offenders more thoroughly. Mandated programs and agencies could be utilized in the courts, additionally where more monitoring is required. In addition, a compliance review board could be a major factor in keeping track of offenders.

COUNTY OF HAMILTON, TENNESSEE



### OH • Grantee Perspective

An area of remaining need is to improve the system of communication with Courts in the County who handle cases that have the same victims and/or perpetrators (i.e. Juvenile Court; Common Pleas Municipal Court; Common Pleas Felony Division; and Civil Stalking Protection Orders). This process has begun with the substantial talks between Juvenile Court and DR Court but the overall inter-communication between the courts needs to be streamlined and looked at as mandatory. Victims regularly voice frustrations about how different courts give them different information or even issue competing orders.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT, OHIO

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **additional training for judges, court personnel, and law enforcement on the dynamics of domestic violence** as their biggest need.

For **offenders**, grantees also reported a need for:

- Financial assistance to complete batterer intervention programs (BIP);
- BIP offered in multiple languages;
- Age-appropriate programming for young/teen offenders; and
- **More consistent monitoring.**

Grantees identified a number of **unmet needs for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking**, including:

- Affordable permanent housing;
- Supervised visitation;
- More victim services in rural areas; and, most notably,
- **Quality pro-bono and low cost legal representation.**

Finally, many grantees cited a need for **better communication between court systems on overlapping cases.**



### IL • Grantee Perspective

Legal aid for victims of domestic violence is a growing need in our jurisdiction. We have two agencies in Winnebago County that provide pro bono services to domestic violence victims. While these agencies provide outstanding support, they are only able to serve as many victims as funding and staff allow, and the need is greater than that. Frequently, victims represent themselves pro se in DV-related divorce, parentage, and orders of protection cases in the DV and Family courts, while the batterer is represented by an attorney. The economic disparity facing victims of DV, particularly victims facing a batterer who has utilized family resources to hire an attorney, is daunting. Because DV-related cases are inappropriate for mediation, such cases that involve matters of custody and visitation, necessarily require the appointment of a guardian ad litem (GAL), and thus the need for legal representation for victims is exacerbated by the need for pro bono and reduced fee legal representation for children in DV-related cases by GALs.

17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT- WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS

# Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program

The Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking (Culturally Specific Services Program or CSSP) creates a unique opportunity for culturally specific community-based organizations to address the critical needs of victims of domestic/sexual violence in a manner that affirms a victim's culture and effectively addresses language and communication barriers.

**GRANTEES MAY EITHER BE A CULTURALLY SPECIFIC COMMUNITY-BASED program with existing expertise in serving victims of domestic/sexual violence, or a culturally specific community-based program that partners with another organization with expertise in serving victims of domestic/sexual violence.**

## 75 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 75 unique grantees reported activities funded by the CSSP Program.

## 3,445 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 3,445 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 376 Immigration Matters

On average, grantees provided assistance with immigration matters to 376 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

*Latina and African American women who are sexually assaulted may bear an additional burden in seeking support, as they are disproportionately affected by income and asset poverty, and may have limited access to legal, medical, and social support services that may aid in violence prevention and recovery.<sup>418</sup>*



#### NC • Grantee Perspective

CSSP funding has allowed us to grow as an organization and to build our infrastructure by expanding in many directions to offer a comprehensive range of services to South Asian victims of domestic violence. It has helped us shore up our partnerships and collaborations, leverage each others' resources to go that extra mile for our clients, conduct community education and public awareness campaigns, and build the capacity of mainstream organizations and first responders on the culture-specific considerations unique to the South Asian cultures. It has helped Kiran mainstream South Asian clients to access resources which our clients could not do in the past, due to cultural and linguistic barriers.

**KIRAN, INC., NORTH CAROLINA**



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

Prior to the grant, KAFSC did not have enough staff or an extensive enough program to provide comprehensive DV services to a large number of Korean American (KA) victims. However, with the growth of our DV program, we are receiving referrals from other agencies and we are able to accommodate them all with culturally and linguistically competent services for their KA clients. Also with these collaborative relationships, we are able to increase our resource database and refer KA victims to mainstream agencies, with confidence that they will be well taken care of and respected at other agencies.

**KOREAN AMERICAN FAMILY SERVICE CENTER, CALIFORNIA**



#### MA • Grantee Perspective

Without this funding we would be unable to provide a comprehensive, holistic, interlocking system of services to limited English proficiency (LEP), immigrant Asian victims of domestic violence. We utilize the Public Health services model and adhere to the Ecological theory to inform our practice. This grant not only funds our direct services program for victims (CSSP), but also much-needed legal services (LAV); housing support, otherwise scarce in this climate (Transitional Housing); and finally, funds critical cultural competence education and outreach services for community members and professionals (EMY). This grant is a central component in our ability to provide extensive services to the LEP, immigrant Asian population. In our small office, we provide services that are often inaccessible in the community and the only option for many victims.

**ASIAN TASK FORCE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, MASSACHUSETTS**

CSSP enhances the safety of victims and their children by supporting community-based culturally specific projects to address and prevent domestic/sexual violence. Purpose areas include:

- Increase communities' capacity to provide culturally specific resources and support for victims and their families;
- Enhance traditional services to victims through the leadership of culturally specific programs offering services to victims of domestic/sexual violence;
- Work in cooperation with the community to develop education and prevention strategies highlighting culturally specific issues and resources regarding victims of domestic/sexual violence;
- Provide culturally specific resources and services that address the safety, economic, housing, and workplace needs of victims, including emergency assistance;
- Provide culturally specific programs for children exposed to domestic/sexual violence;
- Work with state and local governments and social service agencies to develop and enhance effective strategies to provide culturally specific services to victims;
- Strengthen criminal justice interventions, by providing training for law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, and correctional facilities on culturally specific responses to domestic/sexual violence; and
- Examine the dynamics of culture and its impact on victimization and healing.

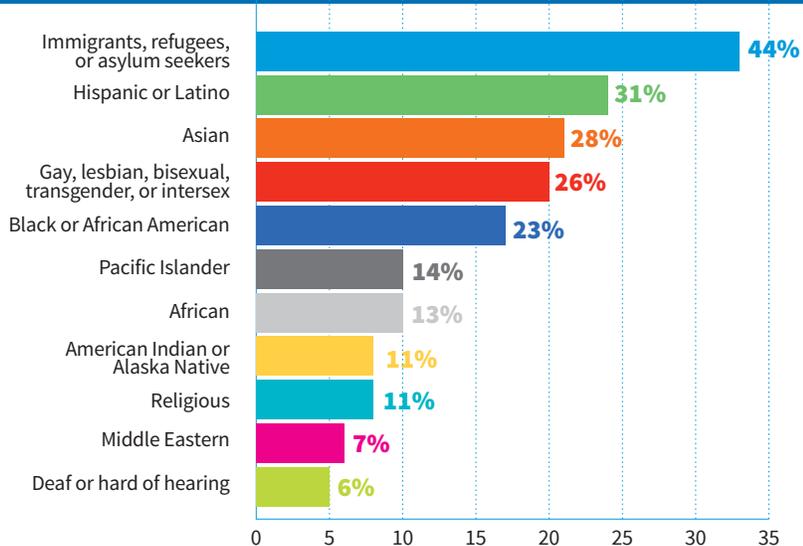
VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons**. VAWA 2013 also modified the focus of CSSP by redefining "culturally specific" to mean primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups as defined in section 1707(g) of the Public Health Service Act ("American Indians [including Alaska Natives, Eskimos, and Aleuts]; Asian Americans; Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders; Blacks; and Hispanics"). As of FY 2014, Underserved Program now focuses on services for Deaf or hard of hearing victims, LGBT victims, and victims from underserved religious/ethnic backgrounds.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **75** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **6** (8%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Enhanced traditional services to victims through the leadership of culturally specific programs offering services to victims of domestic/sexual violence;
  - Increased communities' capacity to provide culturally specific resources and support for victims and their families; and
  - Worked in cooperation with the community to develop education and prevention strategies.

**Figure 1** Grantees serving culturally specific populations by type of population, July 2013–June 2015 (6-month average)



## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, training, outreach, advocacy, counseling, court and medical accompaniment, and community education to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **75** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **95** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.



## IL • Grantee Perspective

Thanks to the CSSP grant funding, Apna Ghar has been able to hire a veteran Education and Training Coordinator with 25 years of community education and violence prevention experience. The Education and Training Coordinator served on Apna Ghar's Board soon after it was established, and she joined the staff as a Community Educator and Legal Advocate in 1992-1995. She is able to provide a longitudinal perspective on critical changes in options for abused immigrant women (VAWA, T visa, etc.) that advocates have won since the early 1990s, while observing the ongoing systemic barriers, such as language access, to receiving equal and basic services from the police and courts. She has engaged her broad network of contacts and her experience in training design to develop templates for trainings that are accessible to professionals in the criminal justice, social service, and healthcare systems.

APNA GHAR, INC. (OUR HOME), ILLINOIS



## WA • Grantee Perspective

During this reporting period, we provided three trainings to over 56 providers. We provided training on best practices in serving LGBT victims of sexual violence to military sexual assault advocates; the first training of its kind offered to military personnel from military bases and installations across the Pacific Northwest. We also offered training on inclusive, culturally responsive service provision to LGBT victims of intimate partner violence. One session was offered as a pre-conference institute at the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence, drawing a large, interdisciplinary crowd of DV advocates, medical and mental health professionals, government officials, state coalition staff, and many others.

THE NW NETWORK OF BI, TRANS, LESBIAN & GAY SURVIVORS OF ABUSE, WASHINGTON

**Table 1** Staff supported with CSSP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>95</b>	
Victim advocates	25	26%
Program coordinators	22	23%
Administrators	10	11%
Counselors	10	10%
Outreach workers	8	9%
Trainers	8	8%
Support staff	5	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court personnel, probation officers, child protection staff, mental health and other professionals how to develop an effective coordinated community response to violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **62** (83%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **831** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **15,889** people.
- Most often these trainings reached victim advocates (**14%**), multidisciplinary staff at the same training (**10%**), culturally specific staff (**9%**), and law enforcement officers (**8%**).

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide general information to the community, highlighting culturally specific issues and resources, to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. **Community education and outreach activities can be used as a tool to connect people across cultural differences with a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities, inclusive of all members.**<sup>i</sup>

- **64** (85%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **2,062** education events.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **67,839** people.

<sup>i</sup> Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables a professional to improve his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.

**Table 2** People educated with CSSP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Community members educated	2-year total	
<b>Total community members educated</b>	<b>67,839</b>	
Community members	32,404	48%
Middle/high school students	6,390	9%
Parents/guardians	6,286	9%
Faith-based groups	5,934	9%
University or college students	5,522	8%
Community groups	3,251	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



**NY • Grantee Perspective**

Prior to receiving the CSSP grant, there was little or no communication between agencies and organizations dealing with DV and SA issues. The grant also allowed us to build strong partnerships with law enforcement and community-based service providers to make sure we can meet all of the needs of the victims: legal, educational, supportive, housing, etc., in a holistic way. Throughout the duration of the grant, we have had a steady and increasing flow of clients who have learned about our DV services through our comprehensive outreach efforts, word of mouth, and a cross-referral relationship with various key partners outlined in this report. We have distributed thousands of informational brochures and maintained a strong presence at all major immigrant-focused events, conferences, and festivals, regionally and throughout New York.

**HISPANIC RESOURCE CENTER OF LARCHMONT AND MAMARONECK, NEW YORK**

## Victim Services

Victims of domestic/sexual violence within diverse cultures experience unique barriers when seeking and utilizing assistance. Culturally competent services for these victims may include providing advocacy and support to those who seek protection orders; accompaniment during medical procedures, such as a sexual assault forensic examination; providing interpretation or translation services; assistance with safety planning; accompaniment to court; shelter and transitional housing assistance; or immigration assistance. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **69** (92%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **3,445** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Victim advocacy services to **1,856** victims;
- Counseling services to **1,833** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **1,388** victims;
- Language services (i.e. interpretation or translation) to **511** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **462** victims;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **459** victims; and
- Civil legal assistance services to **320** victims.

**Grantees used 22 specific languages for these activities:**

*Acholi, Arabic, ASL, Creole, English, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Korean, Lingala, Mai Mai, Nepali, Portuguese, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Sudan Arabic, Tamil*

**Grantees used 52 specific languages when responding to these requests for information or assistance:**

*Acholi, Arabic, ASL, Bangla, Bangladeshi, Bengali, Burmese, Cantonese, Chinese, Creole, English, Farsi, Filipino, French, Gambian, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Hmong, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Kannada, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Korean, Lao, Lingala, Mai Mai, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Mongolian, Moroccan, Nepali, Pakistani, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Sudan Arabic, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Telegu, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese, Yiddish*



**NY • Grantee Perspective**

CSSP funding has supported AVP in strengthening and deepening our community-based services in every borough, transforming us into a truly City-wide service provider, and increasing our engagement with marginalized LGBT and HIV-affected communities, particularly transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) people and LGBT people of color (POC). Since 2010, AVP has increased our engagement with TGNC victims by nearly 150%, up to 15-20% of clients served, and with POC by nearly 20%, up to more than 75% of clients served. Additionally, we have brought more TGNC POC onto staff (now 5 staff members identify as TGNC POC), and are working with local TGNC POC community leaders to coordinate on continuing to raise awareness and build safety within all communities. This is essential, as AVP understands how pervasive and deadly domestic/sexual violence remain in our communities, and how they intersect with other forms of violence, for example, hate violence and institutional (i.e. police) violence.

**NEW YORK CITY GAY AND LESBIAN ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT**

**Other services:**

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **6,049** times;
- Grantees received a total of **23,159** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**64%**) came from victims.

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided assistance with the following immigration matters:**

- U visa services for **163** victims;
- VAWA self-petition services for **84** victims;
- Work authorization services for **79** victims;
- T visa services for **7** victims;
- Cancellation of removal matters for **6** victims; and
- Other immigration matters for **81** victims.

Grantees provide emergency shelter or transitional housing to victims and their family members. Emergency shelter can include nights in safe houses or hotel/motel accommodations.

**Table 3** Victims sheltered with CSSP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Shelter services	Victims (6-month average)	Family members (6-month average)	Bed nights (2-year total)
Emergency shelter	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,451</b>
Transitional housing	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,148</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3,599</b>

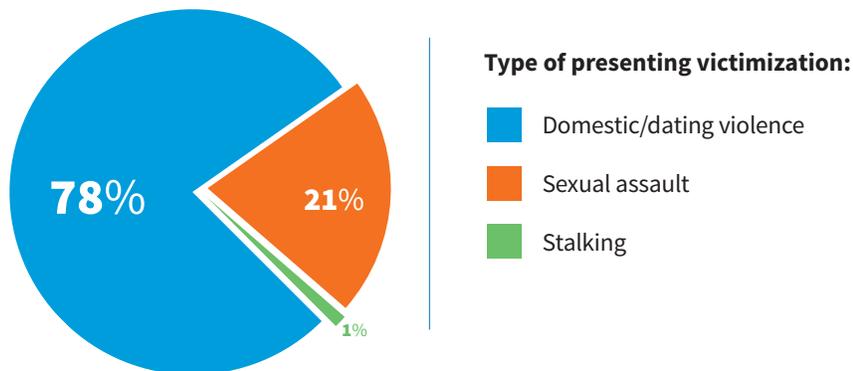
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (78%).

**Figure 2** Provision of victim services by CSSP grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 4** Victims seeking services with CSSP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>3,489</b>	
Victims served	3,284	94%
Victims partially served	162	5%
Victims not served	44	1%

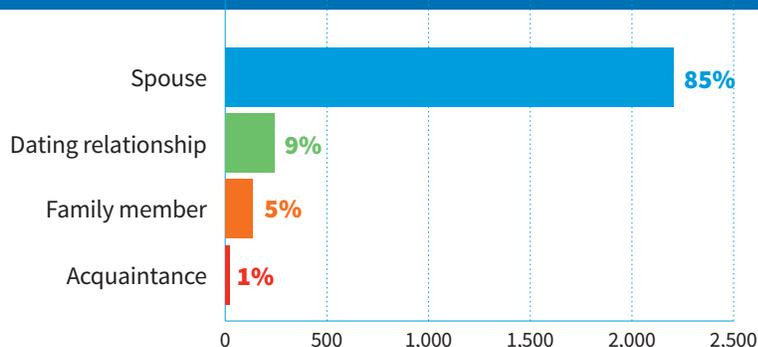
NOTE: “Partially served” represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the CSSP grant. “Not served” represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the CSSP grant.

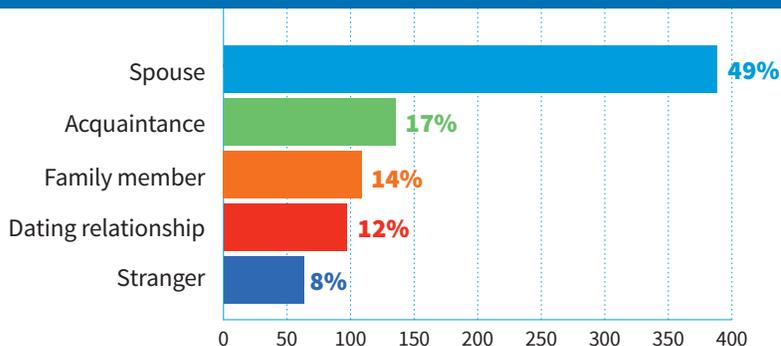
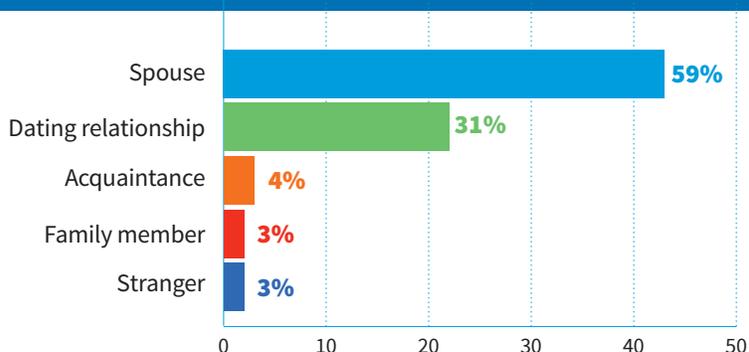
### Victims’ Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (76%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (10%) or by another **family or household member** (7%).

**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: Domestic/dating violence



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault****Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**

## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

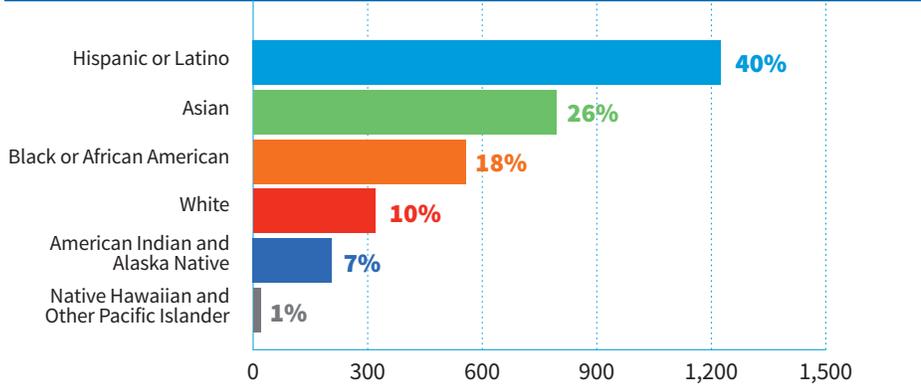
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program reached capacity;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources;
- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Hours of operation;
- Conflict of interest; or
- Transportation.

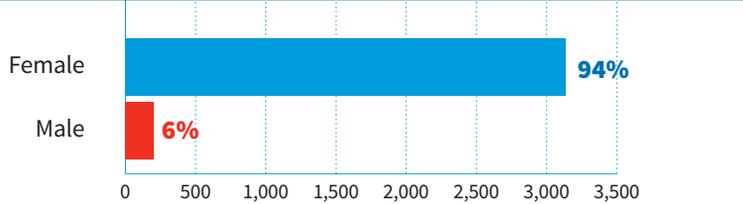
## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **3,445** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of victims served or partially served were **Hispanic or Latina** (40%), **female** (94%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (80%).

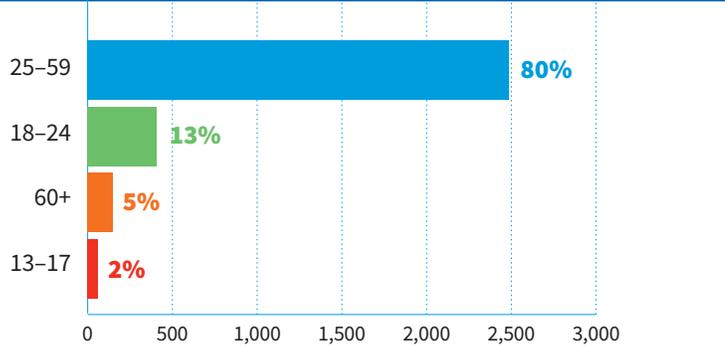
**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



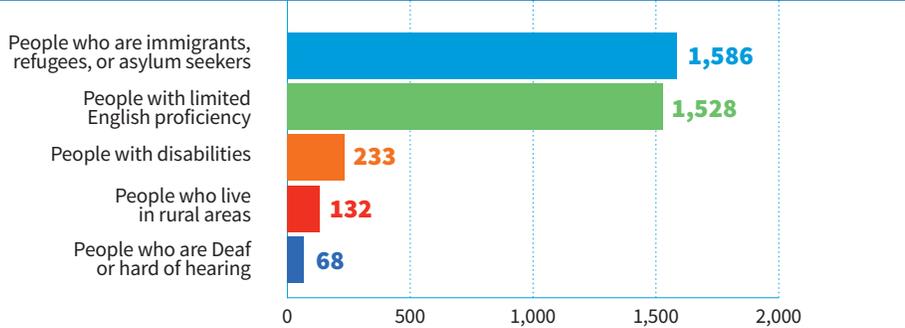
**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)





### NY • Grantee Perspective

LGBT/LGBT People of Color are less likely to report when they are victims of a crime than their heterosexual and/or white counterparts due largely in part to the fear (whether real or anticipated) of being re-victimized by systems (e.g. criminal justice, medical, mental health) that have been historically unfavorable to their communities. Lack of culturally competent providers, inadequate screening tools, antiquated beliefs around what constitutes domestic violence/sexual assault (e.g. it has to be between a man and a woman, a man cannot be raped, a woman cannot abuse/rape another woman), are still prevalent in today's society and some law enforcement and service providers subscribe to that thinking, which affects the services and care that they provide/fail to provide to LGBT victims.

IN OUR OWN VOICES, NEW YORK



### DC • Grantee Perspective

Many Asian/Pacific Islander victims do not understand or distrust the American legal system. Consequently, DVRP staff spend a significant amount of time explaining domestic legal systems and processes, allaying fears, and discussing options. All of this information can sometimes be overwhelming for fluent English speakers who are familiar with the legal system, but the sense of confusion and frustration can be exponentially greater for the population that DVRP serves. DVRP staff does what it can to assist and support Asian/Pacific Islander victims, but the lack of affordable, culturally competent legal service providers, who are capable of speaking to them in their native language, remains a significant challenge. Without sufficient legal representation, some clients face adverse legal dispositions regarding their custody, divorce, order of protection, or immigration cases. The most heartbreaking experiences are those in which victims feel so weary and frustrated by the process that they simply withdraw from the legal proceedings, resulting in devastating consequences.

ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE PROJECT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

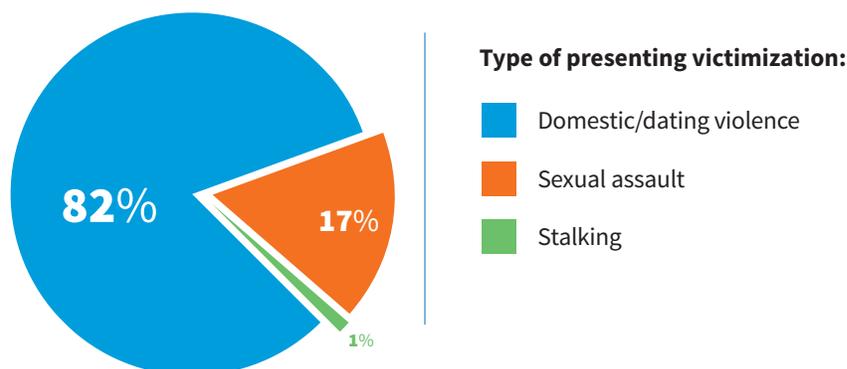
## Secondary Victims

Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by domestic/sexual violence, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **815** secondary victims during each 6-month period.

**Figure 10** Provision of services to secondary victims by CSSP grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Secondary victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **access to interpretation and translation services for victims** as their biggest unmet need. The inability to understand and be understood by law enforcement, service providers, and court personnel **can discourage victims from seeking assistance.**

Grantees also reported a need for more **culturally and linguistically appropriate victim services**, especially:

- Mental health services; and
- Legal services.

Several grantees emphasized the need to provide **training to law enforcement, first responders, courts, and service providers on culturally sensitive, trauma-informed practices, especially within marginalized communities.**

Many grantees felt that more **community education and outreach was needed in the communities in which they worked** in order to:

- Combat cultural taboos against discussions of sexual assault and domestic violence;
- Engage men in discussions about domestic/sexual violence;
- Reach underserved populations, especially youth and elders; and
- Increase awareness of available services.

Finally, grantees often struggled to **help victims meet basic needs**, including:

- Emergency, transitional, and long-term housing;
- Transportation;
- Employment; and
- Child care.



**NJ • Grantee Perspective**

Education remains the single most significant area of remaining need with regard to improving services to victims. From the community’s perspective, there is a stigma associated with domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and a large percentage of the community continues to sweep the issues under the proverbial rug, pretending that they do not exist. As mental health professionals, we know all too well that our community is not immune to issues of abuse. Nonetheless, we regularly hear that community leaders, educators, parents, volunteers, camp counselors, etc. are simply unaware of what signs of abuse, assault, and neglect look like. In other situations, parents do not know how to address the topic of sexual abuse with their young children.

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AND CHILDREN’S CENTER, NEW JERSEY**



**CA • Grantee Perspective**

Access means being able to go into a place for assistance and know that you can fully and effectively communicate with people there. For a Deaf individual requesting a sign language interpreter, the request is often responded to with hostility or just denied. The DV/SA service system forces the victim to either read lips, write notes back and forth or use her/his child to interpret. Daunted and exhausted by having to advocate for her/his communication needs every step of the way, too often the victim is re-victimized and will drop any efforts to seek justice. It is just too much work to have what seems to be a basic right - access to communication.

**NORCAL SERVICES FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING, CALIFORNIA**



**OH • Grantee Perspective**

With the continued implementation of the SafeZone program and subsequently having more shelters that are SafeZone members, it is still true that of Ohio’s 80+ shelters, only 12 DV shelters have been identified by BRAVO and our MOU partner, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network (the statewide DV coalition), as serving male-identified and transgender victims. There continues to be a lack of understanding that those in LGBT relationships also face domestic violence, battering, and power and control issues.

**BUCKEYE REGION ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION, OHIO**



# Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program

The Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program (Disability Program) recognizes the need to focus on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking against individuals who are Deaf and/or disabled.

**THESE CHALLENGES SIGNIFICANTLY COMPOUND PROBLEMS FACING** those seeking support to end the violence in their lives. They also complicate the criminal justice system's ability to investigate and prosecute cases, and create difficulties for victim service providers to assist victims.

## 43 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 43 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Disability Program.

## 7,289 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 7,289 people.

## 22 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 22 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

The Disability Program enhances the safety of victims of domestic/sexual violence by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent these crimes against individuals with disabilities.

*People with disabilities may be even more susceptible to domestic/sexual violence, due to key risk factors, such as lower socioeconomic status (e.g., more poverty, less education and income), increased isolation, and increased dependency on others.<sup>316</sup>*



#### WA • Grantee Perspective

The Disability grant is enabling us to develop tools for advocates, attorneys, therapists, and victims that we believe will make the legal system more equitable for victims with mental health concerns, and result in greater safety for victims and their children. We have already seen that the funding has had a transformative impact on our partner agencies and in our community. We are very grateful that we have been entrusted with these resources and are able to make a critical difference.

**KING COUNTY COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WASHINGTON**



#### NE • Grantee Perspective

Many of the staff involved in the Open Door Initiative have commented that they have a much greater knowledge of the other partner agencies and their services, and there are more personal connections with staff at partner agencies due to the grant. The genuine desire to continue collaboration during the post-grant period is evident in the commitment of partner agency staff to continue meeting quarterly without being supported by grant funds. These quarterly meetings will encourage sustained connection and potential opportunities for ongoing collaborative projects that will benefit victims receiving services at each partner agency.

**FRIENDSHIP HOME OF LINCOLN, INC., NEBRASKA**

### Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Provide personnel, training, technical assistance, advocacy, intervention, risk reduction, treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance;
- Conduct outreach activities to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive appropriate assistance;
- Conduct cross-training for victim service organizations about risk reduction, intervention, and prevention;
- Provide technical assistance to help with modifications to policies, protocols, and procedures to ensure equal access to services;
- Provide training and technical assistance on the requirements of shelters and victim services organizations under federal anti-discrimination laws;
- Modify facilities, purchase equipment, and fund personnel so that shelters and victim service organizations can accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities;
- Provide advocacy and intervention services for individuals with disabilities; and
- Develop model programs providing advocacy and intervention services within organizations.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

### General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **43** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **2** (5%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.

Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:

- Provided personnel, training, technical assistance, advocacy, intervention, risk reduction, treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance;
- Conducted cross-training for victim service organizations about risk reduction, intervention, and prevention; and
- Provided technical assistance to help with modifications to policies, protocols, and procedures to ensure equal access to services.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, consultation, and information to service providers about responding to violence against women with disabilities. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **43** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **54** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and administrators.

Table 1 Staff supported with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>54</b>	
Program coordinators	27	50%
Administrators	7	13%
Victim advocates	5	9%
Disability advocates	4	7%
Support staff	4	7%
Trainers	3	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train professionals in the service-delivery system to respond more effectively to victims with disabilities by providing information on the unique needs of these individuals and the special challenges they face when they become victims of violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **27** (63%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **279** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **7,289** people.
- Most often these trainings reached domestic violence program staff (**20%**), disability organization staff (**19%**), and attorneys/law students (**11%**).



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Without funding from the Disability grant, it would not be possible for the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence to dedicate a full-time staff person to lead the Domestic Violence and Mental Health Collaboration Project, and it would not have been possible for us to create the transformational changes that we have been able to make through this project. Work group members shared that having a full-time project manager has helped with the continuity of the project and the sustainability of our initiatives over time, even as staff at the partner agencies have changed. We are very grateful that we have been entrusted with these resources and are able to make a critical difference.

**KING COUNTY COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WASHINGTON**



### OH • Grantee Perspective

Training was provided to Solon, OH city employees, including law enforcement, fire, EMS, and other administrative staff, regarding effective response to individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. This included a review of ADA, assistive technology, Deaf culture, use of sign language interpreters, and a live demonstration of available technology. The training was successful in providing information to city employees, and they feel better prepared to respond effectively. Additionally, this training was used as a pilot for training curriculum.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER, OHIO**



### FL • Grantee Perspective

As a result of Disability Program funding, the Project Coordinator attended the Brain Injury Association of Florida Camp TBI. The Project Coordinator engaged in meaningful interactions with victims living with disabilities as a result of a traumatic brain injury; she gained hands-on experience and knowledge regarding day-to-day challenges and obstacles faced by individuals living with disabilities as a result of a traumatic brain injury. Information gained regarding challenges and obstacles faced by individuals living with disabilities was shared with collaborative team members, and will continuously inform the process of creating best practices when working at the intersection of domestic violence and traumatic brain injury.

**FLORIDA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



### WA • Grantee Perspective

A video was developed to explain the Disability grant-funded project and highlight the need for effective access to advocates in long-term care for resident victims. Participants from the Resident Advisory Workgroup participated in the filming and were interviewed to give their input and thoughts about the project. Partner agency representatives were also interviewed. The OWW-approved video was shown to all participants at the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs' annual conference, to raise awareness of sexual violence in long-term care and promote the 101 training. The video is also available on partner agency websites.

#### DISABILITY RIGHTS WASHINGTON



### SD • Grantee Perspective

Our Disability Project Coordinator has received contacts to provide information to various professionals on topics surrounding violence towards individuals with disabilities. One of the presentations to local criminal justice students resulted in the professor asking her to be a permanent trainer each Spring semester. The Network's membership has continued to reach out to our Disability Project Coordinator for disability-related needs and we expect this to greatly increase as the project moves into implementation.

#### SOUTH DAKOTA NETWORK AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide general information to the community to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. **Community education can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.**<sup>i</sup>

- **12** (28%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **603** education events.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **8,303** people.

Table 2 People educated with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Community members educated	2-year total	
<b>Total community members educated</b>	<b>8,303</b>	
Deaf individuals	<b>4,637</b>	<b>56%</b>
People with disabilities	<b>2,994</b>	<b>36%</b>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Technical Assistance

In addition to training, grantees provide technical assistance to service providers to enable them to improve services to individuals with disabilities who are victims of domestic/sexual violence. Technical assistance may be provided through site visits, consultations, information responses, referrals, or other collaboration, and may include guidance on collaboration and cross-training for responding to victims with disabilities; responding to violence against women with mental illness; accessible communication (ASL interpreters/communication devices); and managing disclosure, confidentiality, and safety.

- **17** (40%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees provided a total of **1,463** technical assistance activities.

<sup>i</sup> Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables a professional to improve their response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. All victims receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **3** (7%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **22** victims during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Counseling/support group services to **18** victims;
- Peer support services to **12** victims;
- Case management to **4** victims;
- Employment to **4** victims;
- Personal planning to **4** victims;
- Crisis intervention to **3** victims; and
- Transportation to **3** victims.

### Other services:

- Grantees received a total of **68** hotline calls; and
  - One-third (**34%**) of these calls came from victims.

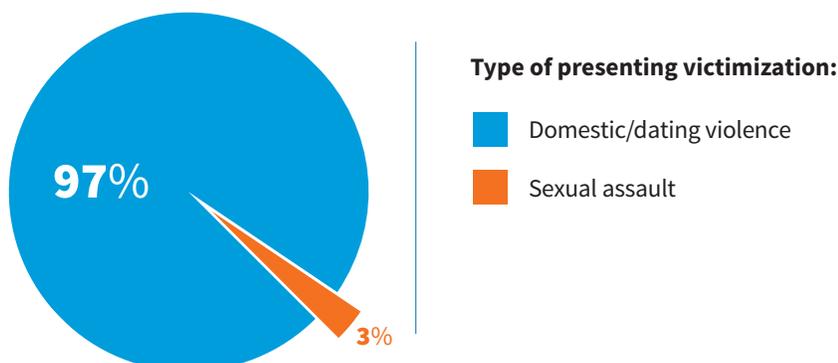
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (97%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Disability Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 3** Victims seeking services with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

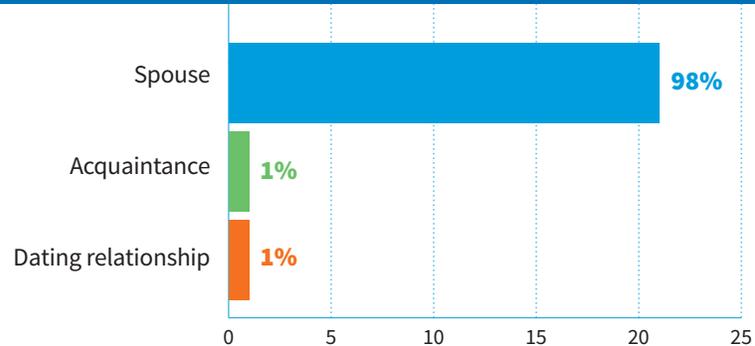
Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>22</b>	
Victims served	21	98%
Victims partially served	1	2%
Victims not served	0	0%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Disability Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Disability Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (94%).
- The remaining victims were victimized by an **acquaintance** (2%) or a **stranger** (2%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**

**NOTE:** Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for sexual assault victimization.

## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

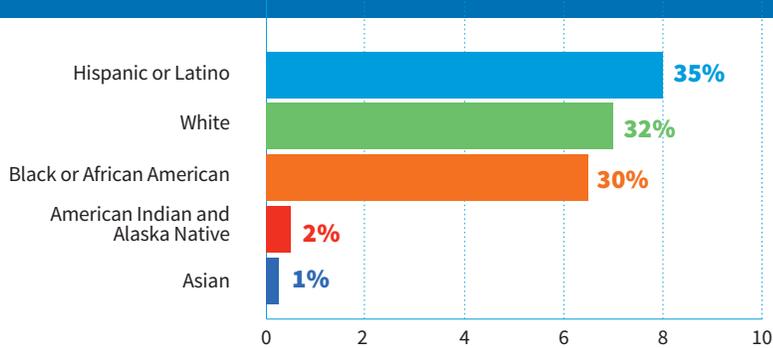
During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program rules not acceptable to victim; or
- Transportation.

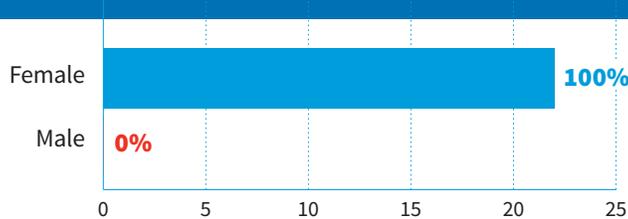
## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **22** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **Hispanic or Latina** (35%), **female** (100%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (60%).

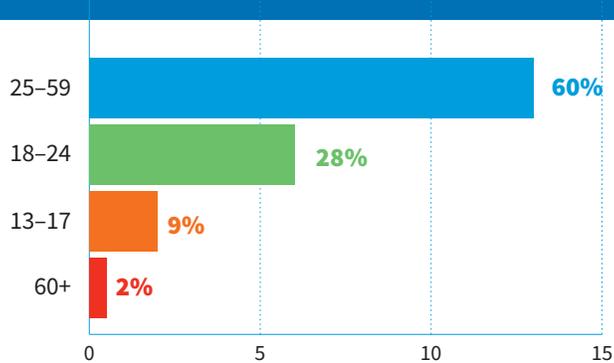
**Figure 3** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

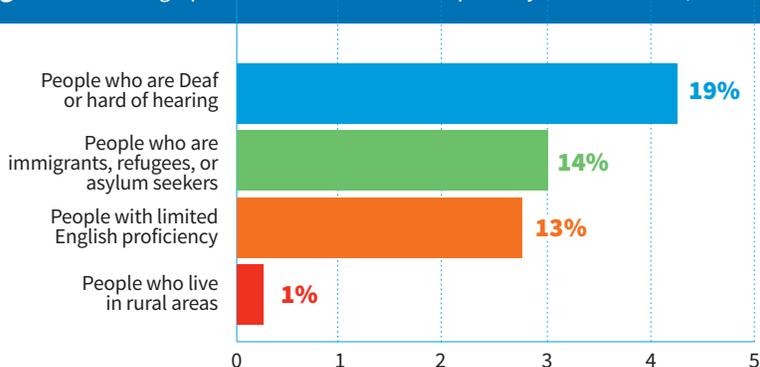


**Figure 4** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)**MN • Grantee Perspective**

Victims with disabilities lack access to services that are person-centered, empowering, and trauma-informed. For example, the Sexual Violence Center (SVC) is unable to make safe referrals for victims with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) to other agencies, as SVC does not know which agencies can appropriately serve people with I/DD. There is lack of access to specific groups for victims with I/DD and a lack of welcoming and understanding in all groups that may serve people with I/DD.

THE ARC GREATER TWIN CITIES, MINNESOTA

**MI • Grantee Perspective**

Better communication needs to happen across interconnecting systems, such as hospitals/ doctors, law enforcement and the criminal justice system. While education and training is certainly a good place to address the gaps in knowledge and understanding of victims with disabilities, we need much more than that, including a common language base, greater awareness of resources, electronically accessible resources, and better collaboration between systems and other community organizations/agencies.

YWCA WEST CENTRAL MICHIGAN

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **access to victim services** as the biggest unmet need for victims with disabilities. Grantees attributed this to a **lack of specialized support services** and a **dearth of service providers who understand the unique needs of victims with disabilities**. These needs included:

- Safe and reliable transportation;
- Safe and accessible emergency shelter and long-term housing;
- Employment;
- Interpretation services for Deaf or hard of hearing victims; and
- Healthcare.

Grantees cited a need to **provide more training to service providers and the criminal justice system** on:

- The use of appropriate language and terminology when working with victims with disabilities;
- Accommodating the unique needs of clients with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities; and
- Trauma-informed practices for working with victims with disabilities.

Grantees also noted the need to engage in **education and outreach to victims about their rights**, noting that people with disabilities often lack knowledge about the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Grantees reported the **need for community education** in order to:

- Raise awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault against people with disabilities; and
- Combat social stigmas and discrimination against people with disabilities, which prevent victims from getting the help they need.

Finally, grantees pointed to the need to **ensure better collaboration between providers** serving victims with disabilities.



#### **WA • Grantee Perspective**

Disability and sexual assault advocates do not understand the complex long-term care system and how to access victims. Advocates do not have information on the rights of people living in long-term care facilities. Victims of sexual assault have limited or no access to sexual assault advocates. Stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities may impede victim access to services. Sexual assault advocates see the long-term care system as a “closed” system, meaning they do not have access to victims. Disability advocates and long-term care ombudsmen have limited experience supporting victims in a trauma-informed manner.

**DISABILITY RIGHTS WASHINGTON**



#### **TX • Grantee Perspective**

People with I/DD lack access to information, services, and places. People with I/DD often do not receive the same sexual health education, including education on sexual violence and consent, as those without disabilities. They are often seen as asexual beings.

**TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER**



# Engaging Men and Youth in Preventing Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program

The Engaging Men and Youth in Preventing Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (Engaging Men and Youth or EMY Program) funds projects that develop or enhance efforts to engage men and youth in preventing crimes of violence against women with the goal of developing mutually respectful, nonviolent relationships.

**THE CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH** Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Youth as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program) has received appropriations in FYs 2013 through 2016. This program, which consolidated four programs previously authorized under earlier iterations of VAWA, including the EMY Program, funds projects that support child, youth, and young adult victims through direct services, training, coordination and collaboration, effective intervention, treatment, response, and prevention strategies. The last grants made under the EMY Program were awarded in FY 2011.

## 31 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 31 unique grantees reported activities funded by the EMY Program.

## 3,654 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 3,654 people.

## 47,860 People Reached

Grantees reached a total of 47,860 people through community-wide events.

*Programs and campaigns may increase men's awareness about gender-based violence, encouraging them to commit to ending it by becoming formally involved in violence-prevention efforts, and/or by being a role model and vocal proponent of respectful relationships in their own families and communities.<sup>419</sup>*



### FL • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed Martha's House staff to build capacity on community engagement, including providing prevention on the outer layers of the social ecology model in their community and society. The community meetings, possible because of this funding, have benefited both the individuals participating as well as the community of Okeechobee. Because of this project Okeechobee is transforming into a community that encourages safe bystander intervention. Implementing the social marketing campaigns in conjunction with the mentoring project will integrate safe, healthy relationship standards throughout the community.

#### FLORIDA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



### MO • Grantee Perspective

The results of the Outreach Program's efforts have prompted greater interest in domestic violence and sexual assault prevention in our community as a whole. True North, for example, was able to facilitate a Men As Allies breakfast in April of 2015 with local celebrities and political figures declaring their stance against violence against women, as a direct result of some of the awareness and prevention activities provided by the agency's outreach team throughout the funding period. The Men As Allies group has now become a solid committee and worked, even after the project's completion, to promote male participation in awareness and education efforts by hosting an "Extreme Challenge" at Venture Out, a University of Missouri-based ropes course. The event promoted domestic violence and sexual assault awareness and invited boys' athletic teams, civic groups, families, etc., to participate by physically challenging themselves and others, and to learn about violence prevention through video PSAs created by student athletes and the Columbia Public School system.

#### TRUE NORTH OF COLUMBIA, INC., MISSOURI



### MS • Grantee Perspective

The EMY grant has allowed the program to hire staff and ensure the planning and development of the public awareness campaign. This funding will allow the program to create an overall public service announcement with men speaking out about the violence. More community mobilization to recruit and train men and boys has been realized with the funding. Without the funding, this level of community involvement featuring men would be virtually impossible.

#### CATHOLIC CHARITIES, INC., MISSISSIPPI

Grantees encourage children and youth to pursue nonviolent relationships and reduce their risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of physical and/or sexual violence. They do this by creating public education campaigns and assisting in community organizing efforts encouraging men and boys to work as allies to prevent physical and/or sexual violence.

### These efforts may include the following:

- Strategic radio public service announcements and print materials;
- Online resources that include relevant violence prevention information;
- Activities that engage men as leaders; and
- Activities that highlight violence against women prevention messages.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **31** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training and public education, acting as community organizers to engage men and youth in preventing physical and/or sexual violence through leadership trainings, public forums, and awareness campaigns. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **31** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **23** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators, administrators, and educators/trainers.

**Table 1** Staff supported with EMY grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>23</b>	
Program coordinators	9	40%
Administrators	4	18%
Educators/trainers	4	18%
Support staff	2	9%
Community organizers	2	8%

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees provide training to social service and healthcare professionals, educators, athletic organization staff, youth program staff, and other professionals on the burden and impact of domestic/sexual violence, and the ways men and boys can work as allies to address and redress these crimes.

**This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **20** (65%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **202** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **3,654** people.
- Most often these trainings reached social service organization staff (**15%**), health and mental health professionals (**9%**), and domestic violence program staff (**8%**).

## Community Organizing/Mobilization and Prevention

Grant-funded staff assist in community organizing and mobilization, encouraging men and boys to work as allies to prevent physical and/or sexual violence and build safe, supportive, and accountable communities.

- **26** (84%) grantees used funds for community organization/mobilization and prevention.

## Community Organizing Events

Grantees provide community-wide events, such as school presentations and public forums, for members of the communities they are working in.

- Grantees hosted a total of **481** community-wide events.
- Grantees reached a total of **47,860** people at community-wide events.
  - Grantees most frequently hosted school presentations (**41%**), information tables (**18%**), culturally specific events (**17%**), and public forums (**11%**).

## Ongoing Community Organizing Activities

In addition to community-wide events, grantees provide ongoing community organizing/mobilization and prevention activities, such as educational courses and leadership/mentoring trainings to targeted groups of men and youth.

- Grantees provided **287** ongoing community organizing activities.
  - The most common types of ongoing activities provided were educational courses (**43%**) and leadership/mentorship trainings (**23%**).
- Grantees provided these ongoing activities to **27,800** men and youth.
  - Grantees most frequently reached elementary, middle, high school, and university students (**41%**); culturally specific community group members, both youth and adults (**17%**); and unaffiliated adult community members (**15%**), through these ongoing activities.



### DC • Grantee Perspective

After surveying the Men of Code [high school] seniors at the end of the 3-year program and grant, we found that 92% of the seniors believed that Men of Code has had a positive impact on their lives and 100% of the seniors believed that what they learned in the program will influence their future behavior. Eighty-five percent of the seniors do believe in bystander intervention and stated they would step in to intervene in an abusive situation if it was safe to do so. Ninety-two percent of the seniors believe it is their responsibility as a man and as an athlete to be a leader in preventing sexual assault. Over 85% of the seniors feel comfortable addressing the topics of healthy relationships, sexual violence, power and control, masculinity and leadership, and believed that Men of Code clearly explained these topics.

**BECKY LEE WOMEN'S SUPPORT FUND, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



### TX • Grantee Perspective

Funding has allowed MCN to train and offer technical assistance to organizations seeking information on working with Latino migrant men in sexual/domestic violence. We have been able to offer resources and training to over 90 organizations on how to interact with and engage Latino migrant men in their communities.

**MIGRANT CLINICIANS NETWORK, TEXAS**



### DC • Grantee Perspective

With our audience of young men, we realized how important it is to remain in constant communication with these young men as they are constantly bombarded with different things taking up their attention, whether it is personal, for school, or for family. Thus, we worked hard to stay in contact with the coaches and the boys through more workshops, more contact, and more follow-up. We worked to create stronger mentoring relationships with the boys, and did see more boys reaching out to their mentors outside of school hours and asking for support in areas such as dating and life after graduation. We saw that when discussing certain current affairs issues such as Jameis Winston and rape, the boys still had questions regarding consent as well as accountability. The boys additionally still struggle with the idea of intervention versus snitching.

**BECKY LEE WOMEN'S SUPPORT FUND, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



### MN • Grantee Perspective

As far as we are aware, the BeMore Campaign is the only ongoing domestic/dating violence prevention campaign in Minnesota engaging African American men, young men, and boys. Our approach is holistic, and engages African American men, young men, and boys in understanding what healthy relationships really look like, and in uncovering and addressing the role that personal/familial and historical trauma play in perpetuating unhealthy and violent behaviors in men. This grant-funded initiative is making a difference in our community. For example, a number of the probation officers assigned to young men we have engaged have described how the young men's attitudes are changing: they are becoming better listeners, less reactive, and more thoughtful. Probation officers see these as signs that our interventions are working.

THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP, MINNESOTA



### CA • Grantee Perspective

During our conversations with community members, the notion people should not "air dirty laundry" and that what happens within the confines of an intimate or familial relationship "is their business" often arises. These notions contribute to the silence around intimate partner and family violence, and the discomfort with public acknowledgement of this phenomenon within our communities. It seems that this issue needs a salient face or spokesperson that can infiltrate the community consciousness and truly bring this issue out of the shadows, initiate meaningful community discourse, and build momentum toward cultural norm change.

INTERVAL HOUSE, CALIFORNIA



### MA • Grantee Perspective

There is a dearth in services that can be provided for teen batterers. Men that get remanded to batterer intervention programs later in life many times started as perpetrators in unhealthy and abusive relationships as teens. If we want to do true prevention we also need to have a program that serves to support and engage young men who are abusive.

BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION,  
MASSACHUSETTS

## Public Education/Awareness Campaigns

Grantees create public education campaigns encouraging men and boys to work as allies with women and girls to prevent domestic/sexual violence.

- **22** (71%) grantees used funds for public education/awareness campaigns.
- Grantees provided a total of **271** public education/awareness campaigns.
- Grantees most frequently supported print materials (**17%**), web-based videos (**15%**), billboards (**14%**), online social media (**14%**), and radio advertisements (**14%**).

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited the need for **more consistent awareness and prevention programming**, including **bystander intervention training**, in order to effectively reach young men.

Grantees felt that having **consistent and sustainable sources of funding** would help in these efforts.

Many grantees reported a need to **combat community taboos against reporting** domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as **tendencies to blame victims**.

Grantees also reported a need for **improved services for teen offenders**.

Finally, some grantees identified a number of **basic needs for young victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking**, including:

- Emergency shelter and affordable permanent housing;
- Transportation;
- Child care, and
- Employment.

# Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program

VAWA 2013 authorized the Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program (Justice for Families or JFF Program), which consolidated two pre-existing VAWA-funded programs: the Court Training and Improvements Program (Courts Program), and the Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program (Supervised Visitation Program), and added new purpose areas as well.

**JUSTICE FOR FAMILIES GRANTEES SEEK TO IMPROVE THE RESPONSE** of the civil and criminal justice system to families with a history of domestic/sexual violence or child sexual abuse. JFF grantees do this by promoting the development of supervised visitation and exchange centers, improving civil and criminal court responses to victims of domestic/sexual violence, and training court-based and court-related personnel on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The last grants made under the Courts and Supervised Visitation programs were awarded in FY 2013.<sup>i</sup>

## 74 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 74 unique grantees reported activities funded by the JFF Program.

## 1,110 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 1,110 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 40,199 Supervised Visitations

Grantees provided a total of 40,199 supervised visitation and exchange services to an average of 853 families.

*In specialized courts, trained advocates can provide support throughout the proceedings and share information with victims; and judges demonstrate knowledge of domestic/sexual violence and respectful treatment of victims. These practices can help victims as they navigate legal proceedings.<sup>153,154</sup>*

<sup>i</sup> Justice for Families was authorized by VAWA 2013 in March of 2013, and Congress appropriated funds for this new program. However, OWW had already accepted applications under the former Supervised Visitation and Courts programs for FY 2014 funding, so FY 2014 Justice for Families awards were made to applicants that had applied under the two programs' solicitations.



### OK • Grantee Perspective

Our grant-funded project has touched the lives of 123 victims of domestic/sexual violence as well as their offenders. We have touched the lives of 154 children whose parents are in the Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court. By the end of our grant cycle, we expect the number of cases in our court to reach approximately 200. Because of the lack of local financial resources, Courts grant funding made all of this possible and without it we would not exist. Oklahoma [ranks] three in the nation in the number of women killed by men. In a community with such profound needs, this funding is making a tremendous difference and we sincerely appreciate it.

TULSA COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, OKLAHOMA



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Funding has allowed the court to create the first IDV Court in the county. Program success depends on litigants receiving intensive supportive services. Without this grant, the court would not have the ability to fund a case manager position or self-help services staff to provide these services. Grant funds have also enabled probationers to re-enroll in batterers' treatment. Current participants were non-compliant with treatment terms because of their inability to pay for treatment.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SOLANO



### ID • Grantee Perspective

This funding has given the Domestic Violence Court the option to provide free counseling to families dealing with domestic violence, case management and free civil legal services to victims, and domestic violence treatment to offenders. These wonderful services remove the financial burden on families to seek and obtain services which are life-changing and hopefully, reduce incidences of domestic violence in our community.

ADA COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT, IDAHO

## Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Provide supervised visitation and safe exchange of children and youth by and between parents in situations involving domestic or dating violence, child sexual abuse, sexual assault, or stalking;
- Educate and train court-based and related personnel on issues relating to victims' needs, perpetrator behavior, and offender accountability;
- Provide resources in juvenile court matters to ensure victims receive necessary services;
- Provide civil legal assistance to victims and non-offending parents (where the other parent is represented by counsel);
- Enable courts or court-based or related programs to develop new or enhanced:
  - Court infrastructure;
  - Community-based initiatives within the court system;
  - Offender management/monitoring/accountability programs;
  - Safe and confidential information storage and sharing databases;
  - Education and outreach to improve community access to the courts; and
  - Other projects to improve court responses to domestic/sexual violence.

VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **74** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **5** (7%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Establishment and expansion of supervised visitation and safe exchange services;
  - Improved internal civil and criminal court functions, responses, practices, and procedures; and
  - Educated court-based and court-related personnel on issues relating to victims' needs.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide supervised visitation and safe exchange for children; develop community consulting committees; engage in issuing protection orders or helping victims obtain them; support victims in family matters and/or criminal cases; and establish statewide training and technical assistance projects to increase supervised visitation and safe exchange options. They provide training, supervised visitation, victim services, offender management, and support criminal and civil courts. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **65** (88%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **73** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.



### NY • Grantee Perspective

With the Justice for Families grant funding, SPCC has been able to hire two full-time Visitation Specialists and a third Visitation Specialist at four hours per week, to serve families that are in need of supervised visitation and exchange services. All Visitation Specialists and Supervisors within the program are knowledgeable in the area of domestic violence. Together, these staff members will be able to serve an additional 75 families per year.

**THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION AND CARE OF CHILDREN, NEW YORK**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Using the JFF grant funds, a Staff Attorney and DV advocates from two partnering, local DV agencies are assigned to assist both parties of the DV restraining order case in all departments onsite, with detailed information and with DV-specific resources, before and after the hearing. Helping both victims and perpetrators understand the court process and the court orders improves the victim's safety and the restrained party's accountability. Court proceedings can move more rapidly because the parties are more prepared for their hearings and can make more informed decisions.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA**



### FL • Grantee Perspective

The training activities that were funded through this grant have been the catalyst for the change in all areas of our Safe Haven's [Supervised Visitation] program. The training has moved our program from an awareness of domestic violence to a deep understanding of the adult and child victim, the batterer, and the cycle of violence. The committee members and staff continually remind each other to view situations/questions/procedures through the lens of domestic violence. The training has brought a paradigm shift to all areas of operation. Ultimately, the training has brought security for all because of the changed perceptions of the families who utilize our services.

**SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT, FLORIDA**

**Table 1** Staff supported with JFF grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>73</b>	
Supervision staff	<b>25</b>	<b>34%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>16</b>	<b>22%</b>
Victim advocates	<b>6</b>	<b>8%</b>
Administrators	<b>6</b>	<b>8%</b>
Supervised visitation and exchange center security	<b>5</b>	<b>7%</b>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train law enforcement, court personnel, legal personnel, prosecutors, probation officers, guardians ad litem, victim advocates, child welfare workers, and other social service agency staff to help improve the response to victims, children, and families with a history of domestic/sexual violence or child sexual abuse. **This training enables visitation staff to meet the safety needs of all family members and improves the professional response to victims while increasing offender accountability.**

- **51** (69%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **184** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **4,241** people.
- Most often these trainings reached court personnel (**26%**), attorneys/law students (**12%**), law enforcement officers (**11%**), and corrections personnel (**7%**).



### AR • Grantee Perspective

Eight judges attended the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence held in San Diego, California. Upon returning from their training these judges started working on statewide initiatives including Best Practices Bench Cards and the development of training curriculum to accompany the implementation of the Best Practices Bench Cards. Several judges have taken the lead in creating Domestic Abuse Task Forces and have begun the process of looking at standardizing Batterers' Intervention Programs. In the last legislative session, these judges were instrumental in supporting legislation to implement a statewide rollout of a danger assessment. Sending the judges to national training helped them to come back to the state of Arkansas and effectively lead.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS, ARKANSAS

## Victim and Family Services

### Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims navigating the court and legal system. These services may include legal advocacy to secure a protection order or custody; civil legal assistance; criminal justice advocacy; and victim advocacy, including safety planning. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **12** (16%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **1,010** victims during each 6-month period.
- Nearly **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

**During each 6-month reporting period, on average, grantees provided:**

#### Advocacy services:

- Civil legal advocacy to **495** victims;
- Victim advocacy to **475** victims;
- Civil legal assistance to **221** victims; and
- Criminal justice advocacy to **185** victims.

#### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **1,194** times; and
- Grantees made a total of **1,162** referrals to governmental victim services and **3,481** to non-governmental victim services.

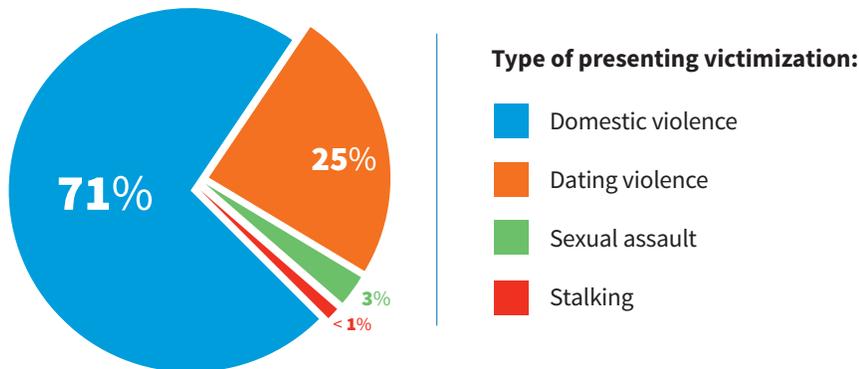
### Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic violence** (71%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by JFF Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

As a result of the grant, DV victims are able to receive information and support they need in order to make well-informed decisions about their personal safety and their children's safety. The majority of victims that the advocates are providing support to are not informed about the types of protection that a restraining order can provide them, and also what protections a restraining order does not provide. By having intimate one-on-one contact with victims in the court system, advocates are able to discuss available options for them. Victims are then able to decide (based on the provided information) what course of action to take, and what action is best suited for their family and their personal situation.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

**Table 2** Victims seeking services with JFF grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>1,014</b>	
Victims served	993	98%
Victims partially served	17	2%
Victims not served	4	<1%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the JFF Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the JFF Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

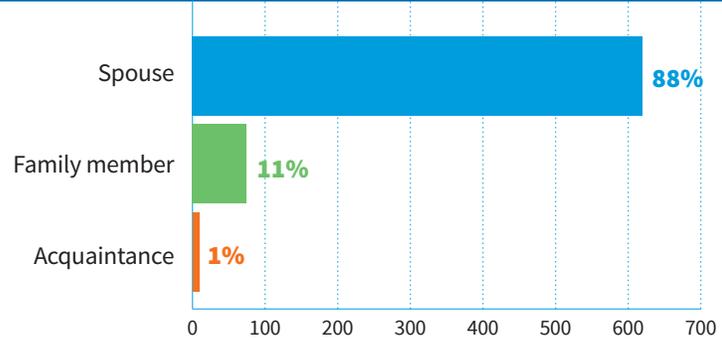
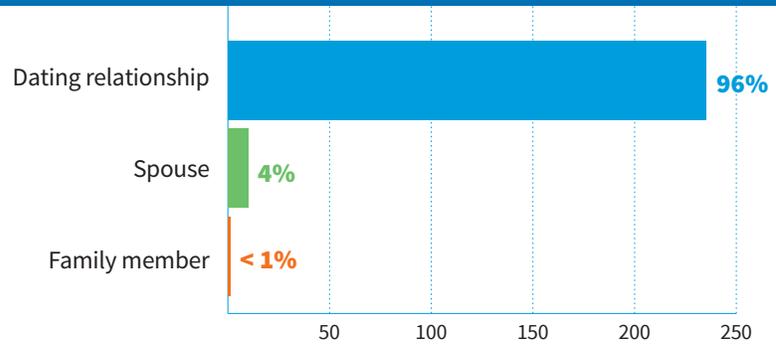
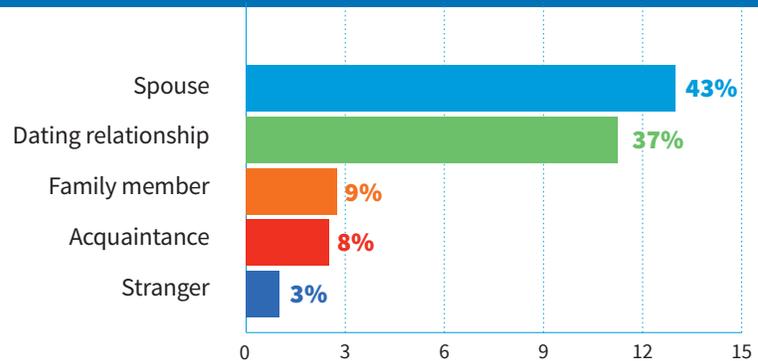
- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (66%).
- The remaining victims were most often victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (25%) or by a **family member** (8%).



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

Using the JFF grant funds, a Staff Attorney and DV advocates from two partnering, local DV agencies are assigned to assist both parties of the DV restraining order case in all departments onsite, with detailed information and with DV-specific resources, before and after the hearing. Helping both victims and perpetrators understand the court process and the court orders improves the victim's safety and the restrained party's accountability. Court proceedings can move more rapidly because the parties are more prepared for their hearings and can make more informed decisions.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence****Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Dating violence****Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**

**NOTE:** Numbers for relationships to offender were too small to compute for sexual assault victimization.

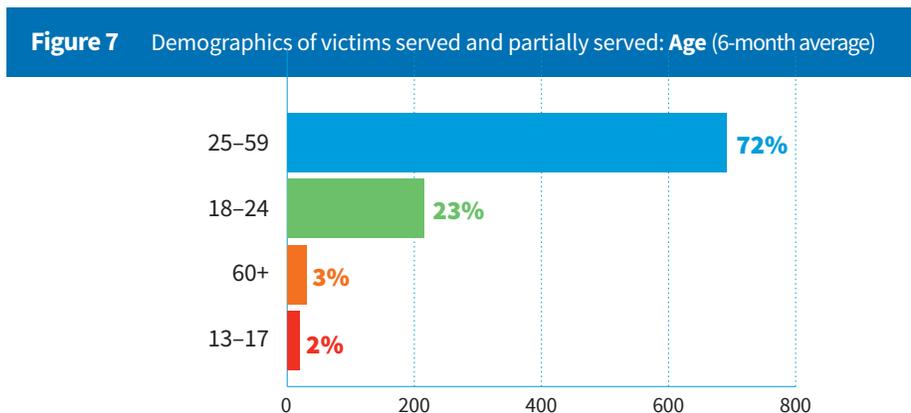
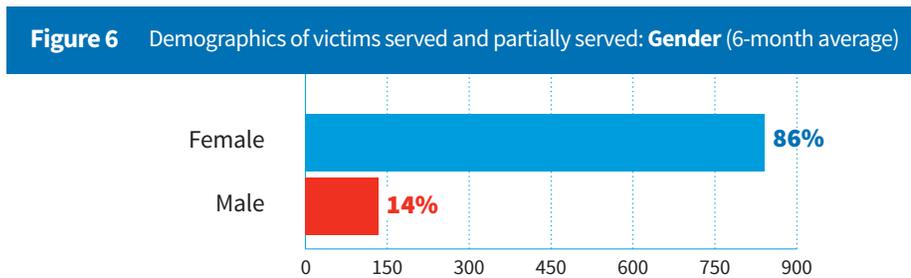
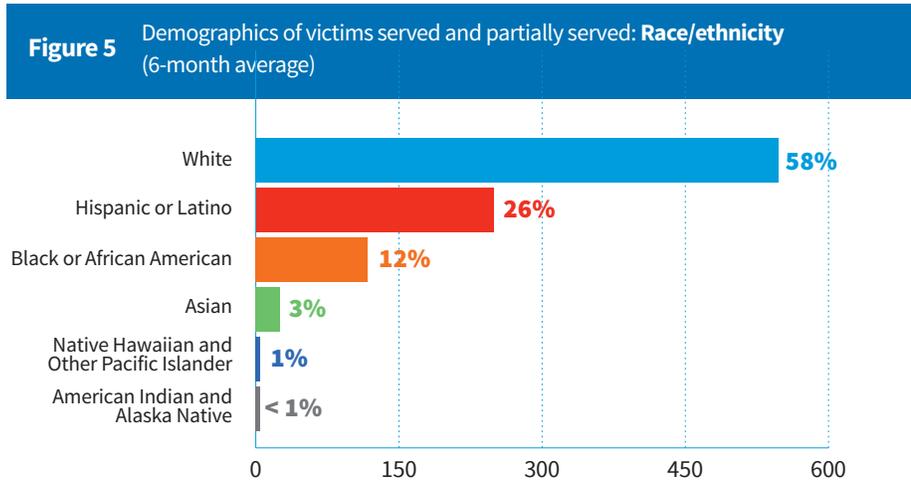
## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

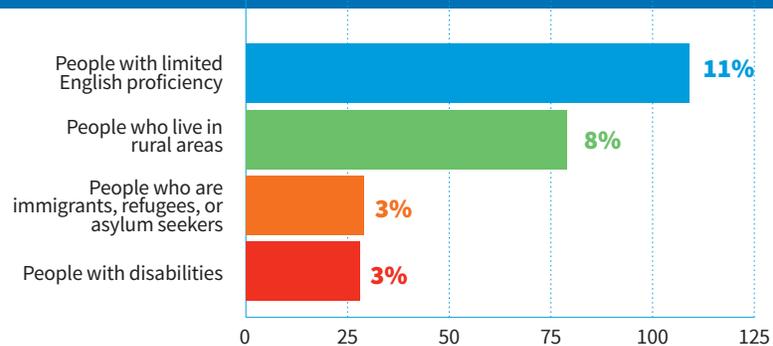
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources;
- Insufficient/lack of language capacity; or
- Lack of child care.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **1,010** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (58%), **female** (86%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (72%).



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

## Legal Services

Grantees began providing legal services to victims and non-offending parents on July 1, 2014. These services, which were provided by grant-funded attorneys or paralegals, can include representing non-offending parents in matters of child sexual abuse, providing assistance to victims in divorce and custody cases, and helping victims obtain protection orders against their abusers. Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015:

- 6 (8%) grantees used grant funds for legal services;
- 340 victims received legal services;
- 74% of victims who sought grant-funded legal services received them; and
- 564 legal issues were addressed.

Grantees provided assistance with the following types of legal services most frequently:

- 51% of victims received services related to custody/visitation;
- 44% of victims received services related to protection orders; and
- 26% of victims received services related to divorce.

## Services for Families

Grantees provide one-to-one supervised visits, group supervised visits, and supervised exchanges. Before providing services, grantees conceptualize and develop supervised visitation and exchange services through community-based consulting committees. **This comprehensive, collaborative planning process ensures the safety of adult victims of domestic/sexual violence and their children during visitation or exchange.**

- 34 (46%) grantees used funds to provide supervised visitation and safe exchange services to families.
- Grantees provided services to an average of 853 families during each 6-month period.
- 98% of families who requested services received them during each 6-month reporting period.

**Across the 2-year period, grantees provided the following services:**

- A total of **18,120** one-to-one supervised visits to an average of **502** families;
- A total of **16,084** supervised exchanges to an average of **210** families; and
- A total of **5,995** group supervised visits with an average of **173** families.

During the 2-year reporting period, grantees reported that the following safety and security problems occurred during supervised visitation and/or safe exchanges:

- **56** attempts to contact other party;
- **44** violations of protection orders;
- **36** threats made; and
- **17** times security staff were unavailable.

During each 6-month reporting period, nearly **one-third** (27%) of families receiving services completed services or services were terminated.

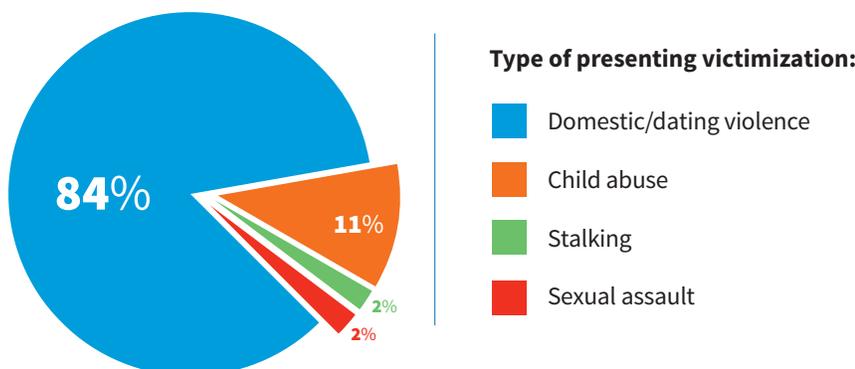
- **58%** of the families discontinued involvement because threats ceased, there was a change in the court order, mutual agreement, or treatment was completed; and
- **31%** were terminated because they habitually did not keep appointments, were incarcerated, did not comply with program rules, or were terminated due to supervisor’s discretion.

**Families Seeking Services**

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence and their children. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of families served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (84%).

**Figure 9** Provision of family services by JFF Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization  
**Families served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**OR • Grantee Perspective**

JFF grant funding has allowed us to continue to provide supervised visitation services and to add critical legal support for low income victims of DV. The former was absent in our community until grant funds were awarded, and the latter always falls short of need, so these funds have truly addressed critical gaps in service and been effective in keeping victims much safer than if those services were not available. In many instances, we believe victims and their children have been protected from serious emotional and physical harm. And it is clear that legal outcomes for women served by this program have been positive and supported victims in protecting themselves and accessing justice and safety during restraining order and contested custody proceedings.

**MULTNOMAH COUNTY FAMILY COURT SERVICES- SAFETY FIRST PROGRAM, OREGON**



**ND • Grantee Perspective**

JFF grant funds are taking the CCR efforts one step further by allowing us the opportunity to develop collaborative relationships with project partners who are involved when a domestic violence offender has a civil court order and/ or criminal charges, to ensure our system is holding them accountable as well. Continuing to collect and analyze data allows project partners to identify trends and concerns and brainstorm ways to improve our efforts.

**COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTER, NORTH DAKOTA**



**NY • Grantee Perspective**

Program staff are fluent in Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, French, and Italian. Over the past 6 months, 18% of the families who were served had at least one member who spoke limited English. Program staff have also connected victimized parents to Safe Horizon domestic violence case managers who are able to provide supportive services including case management, safety planning, shelter and housing assistance, civil legal services, and advocacy.

**SAFE HORIZON, NEW YORK**

**Table 3** Families seeking services with JFF grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Families seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total families seeking services</b>	<b>868</b>	
Families served	844	97%
Families partially served	9	1%
Families not served	16	2%

**NOTE:** “Partially served” represents families who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the JFF Program grant. “Not served” represents families who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the JFF Program grant.

## Families Referred to Supervised Visitation or Safe Exchange Programs

Grantees report on referral source and primary victimization for all families they serve or partially serve.

- The majority of families served or partially served were referred by a **family court order** (62%).
- The remaining families were most commonly referred by a **protection order** (19%) or a **domestic violence court order** (8%).

**Table 4** Average number of families using supervised visitation or safe exchange by primary victimization and referral source, July 2013–June 2015

Referral source	Number of families	
Family court order	528	62%
Protection order	162	19%
Domestic violence court order	67	8%

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥50 families).

## Reasons Families Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons families were not served or were only partially served:

- Family was not accepted into program;<sup>ii</sup>
- Program rules were not acceptable to the family; or
- Services were not appropriate for party(ies).

For those families who were not accepted into the program, grantees reported the following reasons:

- Client unwilling to agree with program rules;
- Situation was deemed too dangerous; or
- Conflict of interest.

<sup>ii</sup> These are families who requested grant-funded services and were willing and able to partake in those services, but who were not accepted into the program.

## Demographics of Families Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **853** families during each 6-month reporting period. The majority of custodial parents were **white** (74%), **female** (77%), between the ages of **25 and 59** (89%), with children between the ages of **0 to 6** (50%). Noncustodial parents were most likely to be **white** (73%), **male** (77%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (91%).

<b>Table 5</b> Demographic characteristics of parents and children served with JFF grant funds, July 2013–June 2015						
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>6-month average</b>					
	<b>Custodial parent</b>		<b>Non-custodial parent</b>		<b>Children</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Race</b>						
American Indian and Alaska Native	23	3%	25	3%	50	4%
Asian	16	2%	18	2%	31	2%
Black or African American	94	11%	118	14%	175	14%
Hispanic or Latino	96	11%	98	12%	179	14%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	3	< 1%	2	< 1%	5	< 1%
White	625	74%	591	70%	914	73%
Unknown (missing)	11		12		31	
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	657	77%	197	23%	616	48%
Male	196	23%	655	77%	655	52%
Total	853		852		1,270	
Unknown (missing)	0		1		2	
<b>Age</b>						
0–6	–	–	–	–	651	50%
7–12	–	–	–	–	519	40%
13–17	1	< 1%	1	< 1%	119	9%
18–24	82	10%	68	8%	3	< 1%
25–59	759	89%	772	91%	0	0%
60+	10	1%	12	1%	–	–
Total	852		852		1,291	
Unknown (missing)	1		1		0	
<b>Other</b>						
People with disabilities	43	5%	97	11%	62	5%
People with limited English proficiency	33	4%	33	4%	20	2%
People who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	32	4%	33	4%	9	1%
People who live in rural areas	179	21%	176	21%	253	20%



### OK • Grantee Perspective

The University of Tulsa College of Law conducted a snapshot analysis of 110 domestic violence misdemeanors filed in 2013, prior to receiving our grant funding. That study showed in 2013 the average number of days between case filing and guilty plea was 169. In 2013, the dismissal rate was 31%. After receiving the grant, a total of 123 cases have been assigned to the IDV Court and another 19 family cases to the IDV Family Court pilot project. Out of all 123 criminal cases, only 13 defendants have been charged with a new crime or PO during the pendency of their cases. Only five have re-offended since entering a guilty plea. None of the IDV defendants on electronic monitoring have re-offended. None of the victims in our IDV Court have been murdered by their intimate partners. Our overall Batterer Intervention Program compliance rate was 79.5% and compliance with supervision was 78%. We are proud of increased compliance with court orders, lower dismissal rate, and Spanish interpreter services to ease the stress for limited English proficiency victims.

TULSA COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, OKLAHOMA

## Criminal Justice

The Justice for Families Program promotes a coordinated community response that includes representatives from victim service agencies, child welfare agencies, law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, healthcare providers, and public and private community resources. To enhance protection for and services to victims within the court system, grantees work with criminal justice and social service agencies to address service gaps; provide training; ensure consistency in case handling; enhance case information flow among partner agencies to improve judicial decision-making and partner agency operations; and emphasize defendant monitoring and accountability.

## Criminal Cases

JFF-funded courts use funds for dedicated dockets, specialized courts, and other practices to enhance case flow, information sharing, and successful prosecution of domestic/sexual violence and child sexual abuse.

- **14 (19%)** grantees used funds for criminal case activities.

## Case Dispositions

**Table 6** Dispositions of cases by JFF Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2105

Type of case	Cases disposed of	Dispositions resulting in conviction	
		Number	Percent
<b>All cases</b>	<b>8,815</b>	<b>5,280</b>	<b>60%</b>
Misdemeanor domestic/dating violence	5,081	2,893	57%
Felony domestic/dating violence	1,020	633	62%
Violation of probation or parole	937	758	81%
Domestic violence ordinance	854	382	45%
Violation of protection orders	750	494	66%

**NOTE:** Convictions include deferred adjudications.

## Criminal Protection Orders

Criminal protection orders are issued as bail conditions or as conditions of release to protect the victim during the pendency of a criminal case or following a conviction, or deferred adjudication, of the offender.

**Table 7** Criminal protection orders issued by JFF Program-funded courts by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2105

Type of case	Granted as a condition of:	
	Bail	Deferred disposition/ probation
<b>All cases</b>	<b>3,421</b>	<b>1,815</b>
Domestic violence	2,711	1,503
Dating violence	646	246
Stalking	36	50
Sexual assault	28	16

## Judicial Monitoring

Judicial monitoring occurs when the court schedules regular probation or court reviews to determine whether convicted offenders are complying with the terms of their sentences. Probation officers may meet with offenders in person, by telephone, or via unscheduled surveillance.

- An average of **643** offenders were monitored in each 6-month reporting period.
  - The overwhelming majority of offenders reviewed were domestic violence offenders (**98%**).
- A total of **6,214** judicial reviews of individual offenders were conducted across the 2-year period.

Judges monitor offenders to review progress and compliance with court orders. The data reported below (Table 8) reflect the consequences imposed for violations of court orders. With each type of violation, the courts took no action in only **8%** of the cases and issued fines in **4%** of the cases. A significant number of cases resulted in the courts adding conditions (**16%**), or partially (**8%**) or fully (**48%**) revoking probation. The courts issued a verbal or written warning in **17%** of the cases.



### OK • Grantee Perspective

The University of Tulsa College of Law conducted a snapshot analysis of 110 domestic violence misdemeanors filed in 2013, prior to receiving our grant funding. That study showed in 2013 the average number of days between case filing and guilty plea was 169. In 2013, the dismissal rate was 31%. After receiving the grant, a total of 123 cases have been assigned to the IDV Court and another 19 family cases to the IDV Family Court pilot project. Out of all 123 criminal cases, only 13 defendants have been charged with a new crime or PO during the pendency of their cases. Only five have re-offended since entering a guilty plea. None of the IDV defendants on electronic monitoring have re-offended. None of the victims in our IDV Court have been murdered by their intimate partners. Our overall Batterer Intervention Program compliance rate was 79.5% and compliance with supervision was 78%. We are proud of increased compliance with court orders, lower dismissal rate, and Spanish interpreter services to ease the stress for limited English proficiency victims.

TULSA COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, OKLAHOMA

**Table 8** Dispositions of violations of probation and other court orders by JFF Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Violation	No action taken		Verbal/written warning		Fine		Conditions added		Partial revocation of probation		Probation revoked/incarcerated	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection order (N = 305)	22	7%	17	6%	37	12%	40	13%	5	2%	184	60%
New criminal behavior (N = 178)	20	11%	31	17%	0	0%	51	29%	11	6%	65	37%
Failure to attend mandated batterer intervention program (N = 476)	40	8%	141	30%	4	1%	63	13%	72	15%	156	33%
Failure to attend mandated offender treatment (N = 129)	11	9%	48	37%	0	0%	43	33%	3	2%	24	19%
Other condition of probation or parole (N = 390)	19	5%	12	3%	12	3%	42	11%	21	5%	284	73%

**NOTE:** Other conditions include requirements such as substance abuse and alcohol treatment, parenting classes, and mandatory check-ins.

## Civil Justice

### Civil Protection Orders

Civil orders of protection, also known as restraining orders, are court-issued injunctions that prohibit or limit an offender's contact with the victim and prohibit further abusive behavior. These orders may include custody and visitation directives, economic relief, and temporary restrictions on possession of firearms. Orders of protection are enforceable throughout the country, not solely in the issuing jurisdiction.

- **10 (14%)** grantees used funds for civil protection order cases.



### IL • Grantee Perspective

Courts grant funding has allowed the 17th Judicial Circuit Court and Winnebago County to develop and implement a dedicated Domestic Violence Coordinated Court System focusing on intimate-partner criminal and civil cases, as well as orders of protection. Through grant funding, access to legal advocacy has been increased and offender accountability has been enhanced, through the addition of a Case Docket/Resource Coordinator to monitor offender compliance in the DV Civil Court.

17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT, WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS

**Table 9** Civil protection orders issued by JFF Program-funded courts by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Temporary orders	Final orders
<b>All cases</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>1,861</b>
Domestic violence	516	194
Dating violence	30	17
Sexual assault	9	2
Stalking	0	0
Type of victimization unknown	3,345	1,648

**Table 10** Types of relief issued in final protection orders by JFF Program-funded courts, July 2013–June 2015

Types of relief	Number of protection orders/cases
Stay away/no contact	1,566
Firearms restrictions	737
Custody	1
Sole parental rights to petitioner	345
Allocated parental rights	170
Shared parental rights	13
Sole parental rights to respondent	0
Batterer intervention program (BIP)	245
Child support	222
Supervised visitation/exchange	166
Other offender treatment (e.g. substance abuse or other counseling, does not include BIP)	128
Economic relief (e.g. spousal support, debt assignment, payment of obligations and/or losses)	45

**NOTE:** Custody represents the number of protection orders in which custody was addressed but the specific outcome was not known.

**Table 11** Post-judgment/post-adjudication judicial reviews of civil protection order conditions, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Civil protection order case reviews	193	1,215

**IL • Grantee Perspective**

One of the largest areas of remaining need is legal aid for victims of DV/SA litigating in our family courts. Many victims requesting an order of protection, divorce, or parentage case have the benefit of legal advocacy through government or non-government legal advocates, but do not have the benefit of actual legal representation from an attorney. Most often, the offender has used family resources to obtain legal counsel, or both parties are pro-se. This leaves the victim to represent her- or himself in legal proceedings which most often involve custody, visitation, child support, and protection from further abuse. Legal aid resources in our community are exceptional, but extremely limited, and the private bar is unable to step-up and handle the volume of cases needing pro-bono representation.

**17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT, WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

## Family Cases

The issues facing victims in family law matters — divorce, custody, child or spousal support, or parental rights and responsibilities — are complex. When criminal and/or protection order cases are also pending, the situation can be overwhelming and burdensome for victims, and competing or conflicting orders may place them at greater risk. Grantees may structure their dedicated docket or specialized court to include family matters where families are experiencing domestic violence. This could be a “one judge, one family” system in which one judge hears all matters relating to that family. Specially trained court staff who are aware of the dynamics of domestic violence will understand that some offenders use the court system to exert control over victims and force ongoing contact.

- 8 (11%) grantees used funds for family cases.



**KY • Grantee Perspective**

Court staff often experience frustration with domestic/sexual violence cases due to lack of victim cooperation, a seemingly ongoing cycle of returning to the perpetrator, and the frequent lack of solid proof of the violence. Therefore, the significant need for training for courts around the state remains. Training on the dynamics and impact of domestic violence and community collaboration are key; much frustration can be alleviated if courts are trained to utilize resources in the community that would provide holistic support to victims and their children, as well as assist perpetrators in receiving the help they need. It is absolutely essential that professionals who interact with individuals impacted by domestic violence have a thorough understanding of what is at stake and how to address it.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS, KENTUCKY

**Table 12** Number of new and pending family cases addressed by the JFF Program, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Divorce (children in common)	380	3,448
Divorce (no children in common)	175	1,348
Parental rights/responsibilities	16	75

**Table 13** Post-judgment/post-adjudication judicial reviews of family cases, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Number of cases (6-month average)	Number of hearings (2-year total)
Family case reviews	126	267

### Court-Based Probation or Other Offender/Respondent Compliance Monitoring

Probation officers or other court-based compliance monitors conduct offender monitoring to determine whether offenders/respondents are complying with the terms of their court orders. Those orders could be pre-trial, bail, protection orders, probation, or other conditions of release.

- **10** (14%) grantees used funds for probation or monitoring activities.
- An average of **1,666** offenders were monitored during each 6-month reporting period.
- On average, grantees reviewed BIP information or contacted BIP staff for **1,328** offenders/respondents, and had meetings or contact with **1,178** offenders/respondents.
- As a strategy to increase victim safety, probation staff contacted an average of **129** victims in each 6-month reporting period.



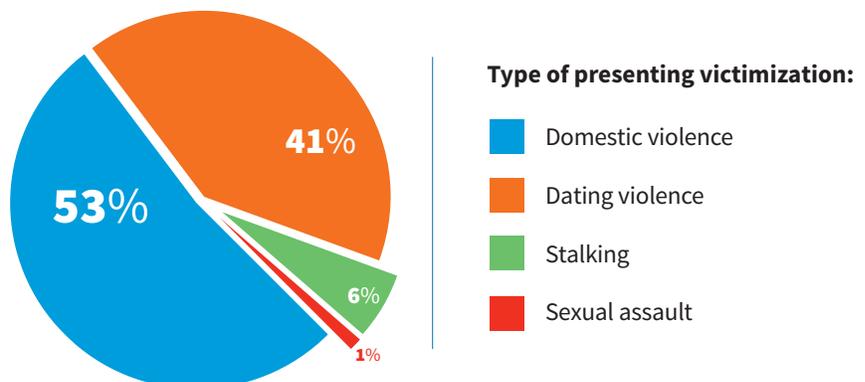
**IA • Grantee Perspective**

Improved case investigation by law enforcement officers is essential. This includes more accurate and detailed reports completed in a timely manner, incorporating in-car recordings and photographs of the victim and offender, and use of a single evidenced-based DV risk assessment. Prosecution would benefit from access to medical records of parties seeking treatment following a domestic violence incident. While this can be done through a subpoena, attorneys would have the record in a timelier manner if the release was signed at the time of medical treatment.

IOWA JUDICIAL BRANCH, STATE COURT ADMINISTRATION

**Figure 10** Offenders/respondents monitored by the JFF Program, by type of offense

Offenders monitored by type of offense (6-month average)



## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently reported the need for **pro bono or low cost civil legal services** for victims and for **improved legal resources for pro-se litigants**.

Grantees also felt that **more training was needed on trauma-informed response and evidence-based practices** among:

- Judges and court personnel;
- Prosecutors; and
- Law enforcement and first responders.

Grantees also mentioned the need to **improve communication and coordination between courts and service providers, and between specialized DV courts and other courts within their jurisdictions** in order to improve legal outcomes.

A number of grantees pointed to the need to **improve access to batterer intervention programs (BIP)** through:

- Financial assistance for offenders to attend classes; and
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate BIP.

Many grantees underscored the need to provide **comprehensive services to victims in order to improve outcomes in criminal and civil proceedings**.

These services included:

- Emergency shelter and long-term affordable housing;
- Transportation;
- Child care;
- Safe supervised visitation and exchange services;
- Emergency financial assistance; and
- Mental healthcare and substance abuse counseling.

These needs were especially pronounced in **rural areas**.

Grantees also mentioned the need to improve **legal and victim services for underserved populations**, including:

- People with disabilities;
- People with limited English proficiency;
- Teen victims; and
- Elderly victims.

Finally, **providers of supervised visitation and exchange underscored the need to improve access to services** by:

- Opening satellite facilities;
- Expanding hours of service; and
- Increasing awareness of their services within their communities.



### OH • Grantee Perspective

The overall inter-communication between the courts needs to be streamlined and looked at as mandatory. Victims regularly voice frustrations about how different courts give them different information or even issue competing orders. This is being looked at as a high priority to ensure victims have faith in the overall system of justice and they are receiving the remedies they are entitled to under law without interruption from other courts.

**CUYAHOGA COUNTY DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT, OHIO**



### WA • Grantee Perspective

Funding for Batterer Intervention Programs is our largest barrier to meeting the success rates of program completion. There are no funding assistance programs for batterers to apply for assistance to pay for court-ordered treatment. In Washington, the law dictates that DV treatment is 52 weeks. This is a great goal to get batterers set up with providers to educate them on domestic violence, teach them new coping skills, and teach them about healthy relationships, but with treatment being a full year the cost is very prohibitive for many to remain in compliance.

**THURSTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT, WASHINGTON**



### OR • Grantee Perspective

Safe, affordable housing is a huge need and a current crisis locally, with rental vacancy rates at less than 1%. Victims who are either forced to move from the family residence or choose to leave for safety reasons are in an untenable position of often having no stable place to go to. Though many receive the DV emergency housing/transition grant, there is virtually nothing available or affordable to rent. We have clients living in travel trailers without power, camping out, sleeping in their cars, or doubling up with friends/family. Our domestic violence shelter is limited to eight families. The lack of affordable housing also impacts offenders/non-custodial parents who, upon release from prison or jail, risk falling back into criminal behavior and substance abuse due to lack of stable, transitional housing.

**DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON**



# Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

The Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (LAV Program) is intended to support victims of domestic/sexual violence who are seeking relief in legal matters arising from their abuse. The LAV Program develops innovative, collaborative projects that provide quality representation to victims of domestic/sexual violence, and provides opportunities for communities to examine how the legal needs of victims can be met.

**THE LAV PROGRAM MAKES AWARDS TO LAW SCHOOL CLINICS, DOMESTIC violence services programs and shelters, bar associations, rape crisis centers, and other sexual assault services programs; private nonprofit entities; Indian tribal governments and tribal organizations; territorial organizations; legal aid or statewide legal services; and faith- and/or community-based legal service providers. Grant funds may be used for direct legal services to victims of domestic/sexual violence. In addition, grant funds may be used to provide enhanced training for lawyers representing these victims as well as for advocates.**

## 245 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 245 unique grantees reported activities funded by the LAV Program.

## 28,553 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 28,553 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 43,736 Legal Issues Addressed

Grantees addressed an average of 43,736 legal issues and achieved a total of 105,543 outcomes.

Grantees may provide assistance to adult and youth victims in family, immigration, employment, administrative agency, and housing matters; campus administrative or protection or stay away order proceedings; or other similar matters; in addition to criminal justice investigations, prosecutions, and post-trial matters (including sentencing, parole, and probation) that impact the victim's safety and privacy.

*Legal representation in family matters is especially crucial for victims of domestic violence, because offenders may continue to exert control over victims by using the legal system to force contact, restrict victims' access to protection, make implicit threats, and create ongoing challenges through litigation. Through these forms of "paper abuse," offenders can exert coercive control long after victims end the abusive relationship.<sup>202</sup>*



### CA • Grantee Perspective

During this reporting period, the raw number of clients served increased by 30%; our success rate in court and negotiations was over 90%; we saw a 350% increase in the amount of information and advice given; we fundamentally ramped up our initial meeting with clients to maximize effectiveness and client safety; we saw a 200% increase in the support services and safety planning done by our volunteer legal advocate; we conducted our first pro se legal clinic; and we trained more community members than ever before. These efforts resulted in tangible life-changing results for our clients: they prevented victims from experiencing discrimination in housing, education, and employment; they kept children out of harm's way and in stable custody arrangements favoring the non-abusing parent; they protected clients' privacy in criminal proceedings against their assailants; and they secured legal immigration status for victims.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, CALIFORNIA



### MA • Grantee Perspective

The LAV grant funds civil legal attorneys to represent rape and sexual assault victims throughout MA in the areas of safety, privacy, education, housing, immigration, employment, and financial stability. Prior to LAV grant funding, rape and sexual assault victims in MA did not have access to victim-centered, victim-empowered, holistic civil legal services to help stabilize and rebuild their lives following sexual violence. LAV grant funding has allowed the VRLC to train service providers, law enforcement, medical and mental health professionals, and others, in order to integrate civil legal services into a coordinated community response to sexual violence.

VICTIM RIGHTS LAW CENTER, MASSACHUSETTS

## Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Implement, expand, and establish cooperative efforts and projects between domestic violence and sexual assault victim services organizations and legal assistance providers to help victims of domestic/sexual violence; and
- Implement, expand, and establish efforts and projects to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic/sexual violence by organizations with a demonstrated history of providing such direct legal or advocacy services.

## VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose area to this program:

- Implement, expand, and establish efforts and projects to provide competent, supervised pro bono legal assistance for victims of domestic/sexual violence.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address them. If an activity falling under the added purpose area could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **245** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **20** (8%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose area:
  - Implemented, expanded, and established efforts and projects to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic/sexual violence by organizations with a demonstrated history of providing direct legal or advocacy services on behalf of these victims.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide direct legal services, training, and mentoring for lawyers representing victims, and support services for victims, to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **244** (nearly 100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **382** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support staff attorneys and victim advocates.

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>382</b>	
Attorneys	<b>220</b>	<b>58%</b>
Victim advocates	<b>40</b>	<b>10%</b>
Paralegals	<b>37</b>	<b>10%</b>
Legal advocates	<b>30</b>	<b>8%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Pro Bono Attorneys and Law Students

The civil justice system can address the needs of victims of violence in many ways. Law schools, licensure programs, continuing legal education programs, pro bono projects, and law firms can provide and receive training on the many complex legal issues that victims face. Grantees may coordinate efforts between law firms and law schools, local and state bar associations, victim services organizations, and legal services programs to provide quality representation to victims.

- Grantees recruited **3,864** pro bono attorneys, trained **3,173** pro bono attorneys, and mentored **3,285** pro bono attorneys.
  - Of those trained and mentored, pro bono attorneys accepted **5,284** and completed **3,989** cases.
- Grantees recruited **4,218** law students, trained **3,447** law students, and mentored **2,110** law students.
  - Law students worked on an average of **6,843** cases during each 6-month period.



### TX • Grantee Perspective

The receipt of LAV grant funding enabled Mosaic to hire an additional family law attorney, which was an area of tremendous need for the agency. Given the complexity and duration of family law trials, it is extremely difficult to find attorneys willing to take such cases on a pro bono or reduced fee basis. Despite extensive efforts, Mosaic has been unable to develop long-term partnerships with pro bono attorneys in this field. Before receiving LAV grant funding, Mosaic had one family law attorney, who was extremely limited in the number and types of cases that she could accept. Because cases accepted by Mosaic involve a history of domestic violence, family law cases tend to be particularly litigious and time-intensive, which limits Mosaic's overall capacity. By increasing the size of Mosaic's legal staff, Mosaic can effectively double the number of family law clients served by the agency.

**MOSAIC FAMILY SERVICES, TEXAS**



### DC • Grantee Perspective

With the addition of the new LAV legal staff, NVRDC was able to on-board 93 new civil cases, while managing 171 active cases and adding 119 new criminal legal clients, while maintaining 234 active cases during the current reporting period. This is a 127% increase in referrals to civil and a 180% increase in new clients receiving crime victim's rights legal assistance. Overall, NVRDC's legal team was able to manage an increase of 166% in active civil cases and 207% increase in active criminal cases because of the increased capacity through additional LAV legal staff.

**NETWORK FOR VICTIM RECOVERY, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



### VA • Grantee Perspective

We are effectively multiplying every federal grant dollar and increasing its impact, as a result of extensively leveraging the time and resources of private pro bono attorneys from the region's leading firms. In fact, our LAV Program-funded project is our largest collaborative project to date, enabling Tahirih, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, and Legal Aid (with support from The Law Firm of J. Allen Cohen), to work together in a much more meaningful way to ensure wrap-around and holistic legal services are delivered to victims. For example, in order to ensure that a victim feels fully supported as s/he pursues her/his legal needs, and to ensure seamless services between agencies, Tahirih immigration attorneys may be invited to join the client's intake call with the partner agency attorney, who is in the process of opening her/his case for services in other legal areas.

**TAHIRIH JUSTICE CENTER, VIRGINIA**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

LAV grant funding has also provided the Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Program (DVLAP) most of the resources to continue to work to improve the systems that LGBT victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking access when seeking help. This has included providing training to attorneys -- both civil and criminal, judges, domestic and sexual violence service providers, victim advocates, faith-based organizations, prosecutors, law students, District Attorney Advocates, law enforcement, victim's compensation advocates, social workers, and mental health service providers, among countless others that interface with victims accessing services. During just this last year, DVLAP provided training to more than 900 people. This means LAV grant funding has allowed DVLAP to provide more than 185 trainings to more than 7,000 people since late 2005. The result of these trainings has meant that people across the country are better prepared to assist LGBT victims.

LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER, CALIFORNIA



### NM • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed us to assess the legal needs of the clients seeking services in rape crisis centers around the state. We are in a much better position to predict what will be needed and what types of legal service providers need to be developed statewide. This funding has also allowed us to gain a better understanding of what legal needs service providers have. Technical assistance requests have provided us with insight into many insidious legal issues that were not obvious when legal service providers were not imbedded in the rape crisis centers. This funding has allowed us to create a direct service that did not exist at all prior to the grant receipt. These services are oftentimes essential services that maintain crucial supports such as housing, financial support, and education rights, which might otherwise simply fade away without legal services.

NEW MEXICO COALITIONS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS, INC.

## Training

The 2013 reauthorization removed previously authorized purpose areas under the LAV Program that permitted grantees to provide training with their grant funds. The information below comes from grantees whose awards were made in FY 2013 and earlier years, before the VAWA 2013 changes went into effect. As such, these activities were reported with less frequency and at lower volumes in the periods covered by this report than in periods covered in earlier Reports to Congress.

Grantees provide training for lawyers and other professionals who serve victims of domestic/sexual violence facing complex legal issues. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **161** (66%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **2,396** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **59,412** people.
- Most often these trainings reached attorneys (**19%**), victim advocates (**14%**), law students (**10%**), and law enforcement officers (**6%**).

## Technical Assistance

The 2013 reauthorization removed previously authorized purpose areas under the LAV Program that permitted grantees to provide technical assistance with their grant funds. The information below comes from grantees whose awards were made in FY 2013 and earlier years, before the VAWA 2013 changes went into effect. As such, these activities were reported with less frequency and at lower volumes in the periods covered by this report than in periods covered in earlier Reports to Congress.

To improve the professional response to victims of domestic/sexual violence, grantees provide technical assistance to a range of professionals, including attorneys, victim advocates, judges, legal services staff, mediators, friends of the court, and guardians ad litem. Technical assistance encompasses a wide range of topics, such as training on identifying legal issues, assisting victims with securing protection orders, guidance on immigration paperwork, and/or preparing for a divorce trial.

- **103** (42%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees most frequently reported providing technical assistance to victim advocates (**25%**), attorneys (**23%**), legal services staff (**16%**), and prosecutors (**11%**).

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. Beyond traditional legal services, lawyers and non-lawyers provide safety planning and other support services. The partnerships between legal services providers and victim services organizations allow grantees to increase the number and type of support services they offer. The need for legal services includes emergency access to protection orders, legal representation in divorce and custody matters, housing, economic assistance, employment advocacy, and immigration assistance. **Victims require competent legal representation so they can become and remain safe from violence.**

- **244** (nearly 100%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **28,553** victims during each 6-month period.
- **93%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

## Non-legal Victim Services

Grantees provide support services and safety planning as needed.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grant-funded lawyers provided:

- Safety planning to **11,400** victims;
- Support services to **4,646** victims; and
- Pro se clinics/group services to **719** victims.

### During each 6-month period, on average, other grant-funded staff provided:

- Safety planning to **9,025** victims;
- Support services to **6,476** victims;
- Non-attorney legal advocacy services to **5,336** victims; and
- Pro se clinics/group services to **684** victims.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence (79%)**.

*Victims with children are particularly vulnerable because offenders routinely use the courts to challenge custody, child support, and visitation arrangements. Furthermore, judges and court-appointed third parties, like mediators and custody evaluators, do not necessarily have the requisite understanding of domestic violence and their decisions and recommendations do not always account for the safety needs of domestic violence victims and their children.<sup>204</sup>*



### MD • Grantee Perspective

It is important to stress that that LAV grant funding should be credited with the formation and development of the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI). SALI is one of a small but growing handful of legal services providers in the country (and the only one in Maryland), that is devoted to the needs of sexual assault and abuse victims. Attorneys have been able to help victims with legal problems caused by sexual assault due to this crucial LAV grant funding. Prior to the formation of SALI, many sexual assault victims had no access to lawyers, and often were not even provided with information about legal options outside the criminal justice system. Thanks to LAV grant funding, SALI has been able to fill this gap, helping individual sexual assault victims gain access to the legal representation, information, and advice that are necessary for access to the entire justice system.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT LEGAL INSTITUTE, MARYLAND**



**CA • Grantee Perspective**

Expanding the LAV grant to serve sexual assault victims seeking asylum allowed us to respond to an urgent need in the community. These victims are some of the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach; we continue to see a high number of young sexual assault victims, primarily teenage girls and women. Expanding the grant to include these victims has allowed Centro to work closely with Oakland and Hayward Unified School Districts to reach young mothers and teenagers, as well as with community- and faith-based groups to make sure that we are connecting as quickly as possible with victims upon their arrival in our community. Once Centro begins working with asylum seekers to provide legal services, they are able to immediately connect them to LAV partners for additional support services that they desperately need and were not previously aware of.

**FAMILY VIOLENCE LAW CENTER, CALIFORNIA**



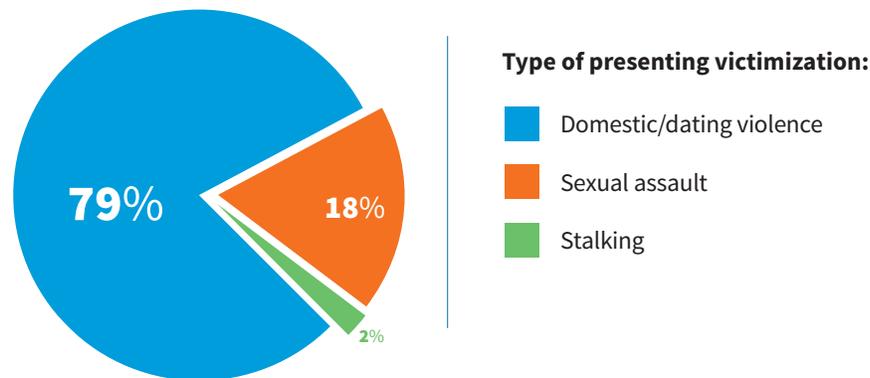
**MI • Grantee Perspective**

The LAV grant funding has allowed us to do two things we did not have the ability to do prior: First, sexual assault victims are now provided with legal assistance that is coordinated with the individual advocacy a client needs to navigate the criminal and civil legal systems simultaneously. Second, a sexual assault victim now has legal assistance with those issues that were marginalized prior. Beyond just making sure a client is safe and moving on to the next client, the attorney can devote the time needed to assist the client to move through the healing process. This has meant representing the client at eviction hearings (both when the action was related to the abuser's actions and when the client was not in an emotional position to face such a crisis alone), employment issues, and obtaining public benefits.

**LAKESHORE LEGAL AID, MICHIGAN**

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by LAV Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with LAV grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>30,646</b>	
Victims served	24,330	79%
Victims partially served	4,224	14%
Victims not served	2,093	7%

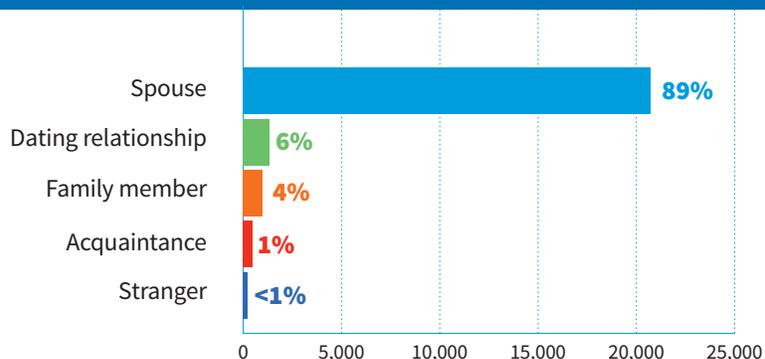
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the LAV Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the LAV Program grant.

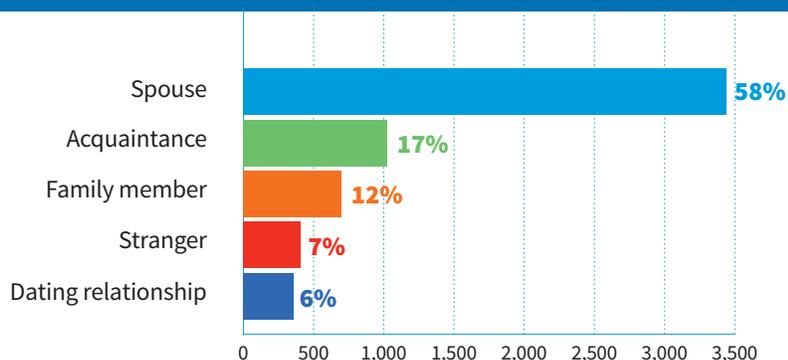
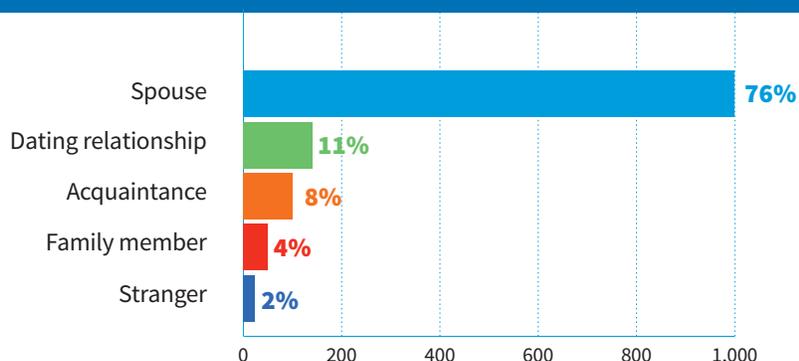
**Victims' Relationship to Offender**

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (83%);
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (6%) or by another **family or household member** (6%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic/dating violence**



**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault****Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking****NY • Grantee Perspective**

LAV grant funding has allowed Day One to continue and strengthen its legal services to young victims through various forms of litigation and advocacy. These needs manifest in family court, criminal law, immigration, public benefits, housing, and education. For young victims of dating and sexual violence that regularly meet resistance to the disclosure of their experiences, the benefit of a culturally competent and knowledgeable attorney can be critical. Day One's clients -- often youth of color, low income, and whose experiences of sexual orientation and gender identity lie along a spectrum -- are reluctant to engage in legal or social service systems that they perceive as hostile. Through LAV grant funding, whether through legal services, advocacy, or legal advice and counsel, we have provided a range of holistic and victim-centered services to young people.

**DAY ONE, NEW YORK**

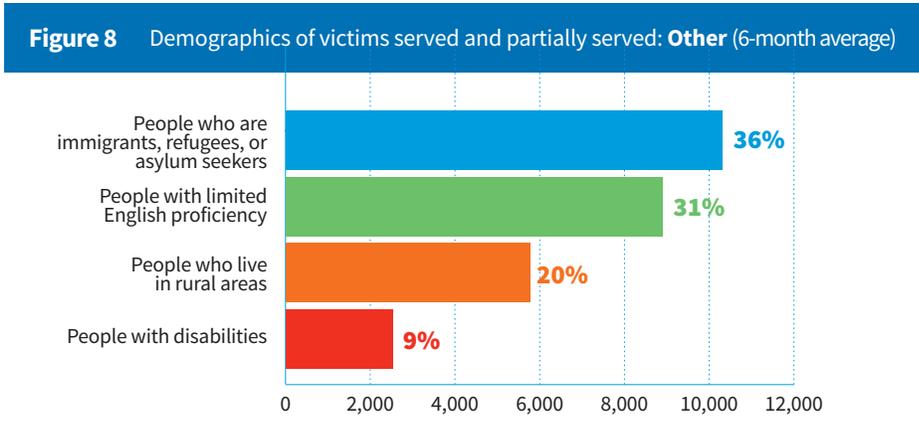
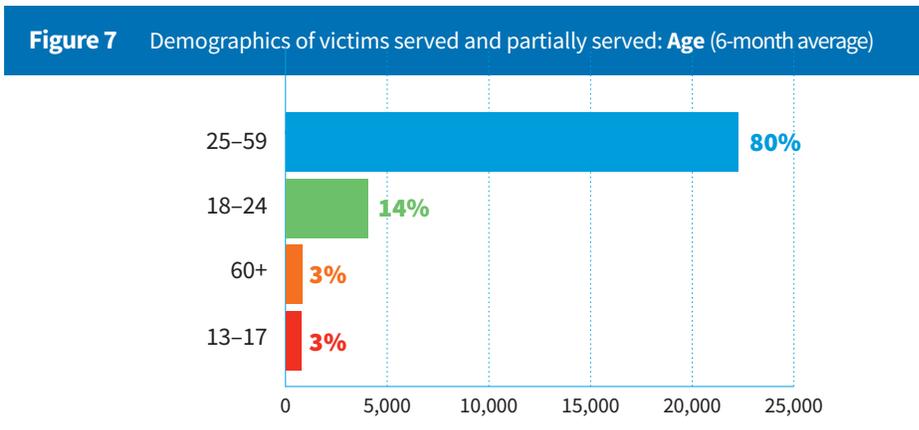
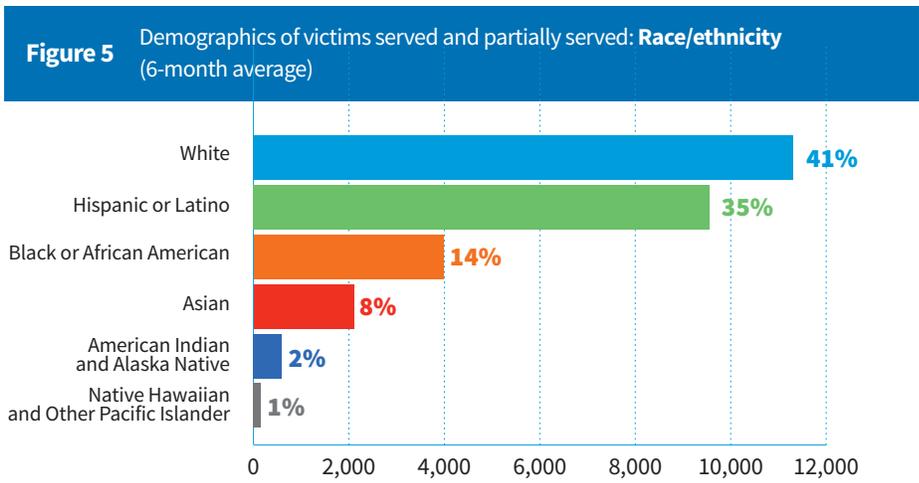
## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or partially served:

- Program unable to provide services because of limited resources;
- Victim did not meet eligibility or statutory requirements;
- Program reached capacity;
- Conflict of interest; or
- Services were not appropriate for victim.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **28,553** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (41%), **female** (94%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (80%).



## Legal Services

Grantees represent victims of domestic/sexual violence in a variety of legal matters, including family law (divorce, child custody, and visitation), protection orders, immigration, and housing.

- Grantees addressed an average of **43,736** legal issues during each 6-month reporting period.
- Grantees provided multiple instances of legal services to an average of **6,678** victims (23% of those receiving services).
- Grantees achieved a total of **105,543** legal outcomes.
- Most grantees provided legal assistance with protection orders and divorces.



### FL • Grantee Perspective

One of our partners, Coast to Coast Legal Aid, has been able to represent and advise clients on their Injunctions for Protection, divorce, paternity, housing, public benefits, and immigration cases; each client has one attorney and one paralegal who knows the client and the client's story. In the past, Coast to Coast Legal Aid was able to provide immediate legal assistance to victims of domestic violence with their Injunctions for Protection, but for any other additional family law matter, s/he would have to go on a waiting list; if the victim had a different legal issue, s/he would have to be referred to a different unit or the other legal aid program. The clients who participate in the LAV Program are very appreciative of the holistic approach.

FLORIDA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

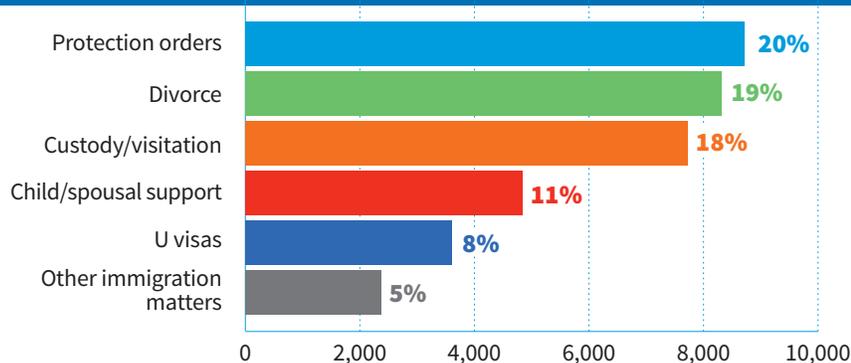


### TN • Grantee Perspective

Divorce is perhaps the greatest request for service received by LAET and the one request that most often cannot be met. Divorce is often the last step for a victim in her/his journey out of abuse and towards safety, permanency, and stability in her/his life. LAET has seen many victims over the years try to complete their own divorce without assistance of counsel, often with disastrous results. Courts are not friendly to pro se litigants, and it is well known that victims of domestic violence face particular challenges, in that their abuser will use the court system to continue to control the victim. LAV grant funds have enabled LAET attorneys to develop a caseload of divorces of victims that brings the full force of effective legal advocacy to bear. Attorneys are able to engage in the full range of discovery methods, obtain expert witnesses, pay for often expensive medical and other records, and fully litigate cases as necessary.

LEGAL AID OF EAST TENNESSEE

**Figure 9** Legal issues addressed by LAV Program grantees, July 2013–June 2015 (6-month average)



**Table 3** Outcomes of legal issues addressed by LAV Program grantees, July 2013–June 2015

Legal matter	Outcomes (N=105,543)		Information/referrals/advice	Court decision	Brief services	Negotiated resolution/filed action
	N	%				
Protection order	25,694	24%	35%	36%	9%	12%
Child custody/visitation	20,105	19%	44%	23%	13%	12%
Divorce	19,407	18%	47%	21%	13%	9%
Child/spousal support	10,813	10%	45%	24%	11%	12%
Other immigration matters	4,815	5%	28%	4%	8%	1%

**NOTE:** Outcomes data represent issues disposed of, not the number of victims. Percentages for outcomes are based on the number of issues disposed of in each category; not all categories of outcomes or legal matters are included. Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### CT • Grantee Perspective

The legal services programs in Connecticut make domestic violence a priority, and the domestic violence programs provide a significant amount of legal advocacy. However, the resources available for legal representation continue to be inadequate to address the needs of the approximately 60,000 victims seen by the domestic violence programs each year. Quite simply, there are not enough attorneys for those circumstances when non-attorney advocacy alone will be unable to provide victims with equal footing in the civil legal system.

**GREATER HARTFORD LEGAL AID, INC., CONNECTICUT**



### CO • Grantee Perspective

We are zealous and conscientious in our representation of U visa applications and only process clients who are victims and who have cooperated in the investigation and/or prosecution of perpetrators. Nonetheless, there is still a refusal by some law enforcement agencies to certify. There is no standard from one jurisdiction to another as to whether law enforcement will or will not sign the certification (it seems in jurisdictions with a high percentage of minority populations and/or where there is an anti-immigrant political climate, there is less likelihood of obtaining the requested certification). Significantly, our immigration department has over a 95% approval for U visa applications and has successfully terminated removal proceedings for several clients. Even so, the challenge of obtaining certification remains a barrier to meeting a client's legal needs.

**MILE HIGH MINISTRIES JUSTICE AND MERCY LEGAL AID CLINIC, COLORADO**



### OH • Grantee Perspective

Appalachian counties collectively had 38.6% of residents below 200% of the poverty level. The corresponding rate for non-Appalachian counties was 32.4% of residents. Fewer job opportunities, poor roads, little to no public transportation, and scattered population makes contact with social service agencies, including law enforcement, difficult for victims of domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault. In most of the Appalachian counties, there are very few practicing attorneys who are not prosecutors, defenders, or judges. Survey after survey throughout the state of Ohio indicates time and again that access to legal assistance is a tremendous barrier for victims.

**SOUTHEASTERN OHIO LEGAL SERVICES**

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **the need for more attorneys** in order to serve a greater number of victims and to provide more comprehensive services for their clients. In particular, grantees mentioned the need for **more family law attorneys able to represent clients in custody and divorce cases**.

Grantees reported numerous **difficulties meeting the needs of immigrant victims and victims with limited English proficiency**. These difficulties included:

- A need for more interpreters;
- A shortage of bilingual advocates and attorneys;
- Better translation of court documents and informational materials;
- Culturally-informed social and mental health services;
- Better outreach to immigrant victims; and
- Better immigration legal services.

Grantees noted that low-income victims **face significant financial burdens**, which can jeopardize their safety. These include:

- Access to housing, transportation, food, and child care;
- Difficulty securing stable employment with a living wage;
- Consumer credit issues stemming from victimization; and
- Costs associated with litigation, such as mediation, guardian ad litem fees, and expert testimony.

Grantees emphasized the need to **improve outreach and services to chronically underserved populations**, including:

- Rural victims;
- LGBT victims;
- Victims of sexual assault and non-intimate partner violence; and
- Victims with disabilities.

Grantees also cited a need for **better training of judges and law enforcement**, especially around issues of:

- Trauma-informed practice;
- Immigration and U visa applications;
- Proper investigation of domestic violence and sexual assault cases; and
- Custody.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

Another area of significant need is to more adequately fund and improve support for language resources for victims with limited English skills. For instance, in our community, interpreters are only available for hearings. The lack of interpreters puts victims in an untenable position, in which they either enlist a friend or family member, or in the worst case scenario, an advocate, to act as interpreter. This not only goes against best practice, but also serves to reinforce a deeply ingrained distrust of systems among victims with limited English skills.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES, OREGON**

# Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Assistance Program

The Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Assistance Program (Rural Program) recognizes that victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and child sexual abuse who live in rural communities face unique challenges and barriers to receiving assistance rarely encountered in urban areas, including:

- Geographic isolation;
- Poor economic structure;
- Strong social and cultural pressures;
- Lack of available services in rural jurisdictions; and
- Lack of anonymity and security when seeking shelter services.

**THESE CHALLENGES SIGNIFICANTLY COMPOUND PROBLEMS FACING** those seeking support to end violence in their lives. They also complicate the criminal justice system's ability to investigate and prosecute cases, and create difficulties for victim service providers to identify and assist victims.

## 127 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 127 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Rural Program.

## 15,091 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 15,091 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 2,707 Calls for Assistance

Grantees fielded a total of 2,707 calls to law enforcement for assistance.

*Rural victims of domestic/sexual violence who seek to become and remain safe from violence face geographic challenges in reaching service providers. They may need to travel great distances, and there may be limited public transportation services in their communities. In one study, over 25% of women in small rural and isolated areas lived more than 40 miles from the closest service provider, compared to less than 1% of women in urban settings.<sup>375</sup>*



### MT • Grantee Perspective

Without funding to visit these communities to conduct trainings or provide rural technical assistance each community would continue to operate independently. The location of a sexual assault or domestic violence incident should not determine whether or not a victim receives support or if a perpetrator is held accountable. This grant has worked to ensure that victims heal and perpetrators are held responsible no matter where violence happens.

BOZEMAN, MONTANA, POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Rural Program enhances the safety of victims and their children by supporting projects uniquely designed to identify, address, respond to, and prevent these crimes in rural America. Purpose areas include:

- Implement, expand, and establish collaborative initiatives among law enforcement officers; prosecutors; victim advocates; healthcare providers, including sexual assault forensic examiners; and related parties to investigate and prosecute these crimes;
- Provide treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance to adult and minor victims; and
- Work cooperatively with rural communities to develop education and prevention strategies that address their unique social, economic, and geographic conditions.



### ME • Grantee Perspective

We needed to convince ourselves, our community partners and the women/men that we work with it is possible to create lives free not only of domestic violence and addiction, a huge task in and of itself, but also that there is relief from generational poverty, mental illness, and medical issues associated with long term drug use. I am proud to report that we are having remarkable success. This success ripples out to improved advocacy within our agency and the state as a whole, improved services from community partners and dramatically safer and more satisfying lives for the women/men and children we serve. We cannot begin to express our gratitude to the Rural Program.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PROJECT, AUGUSTA, MAINE

In addition to these purpose areas, as of VAWA 2013, Rural grantees must implement one or more of the following strategies:

- Develop multidisciplinary teams focusing on high risk cases with the goal of preventing domestic and dating violence homicides;
- Increase treatment, counseling, advocacy, and legal assistance;
- Develop education and prevention strategies;
- Develop, enlarge, or strengthen programs addressing sexual assault; and
- Focus on the needs of victims residing in remote rural and geographically isolated areas.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address them. If an activity falling under one of the added areas could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **127** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **30** (24%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose area:
  - Provided treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance to adult and minor victims.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, training, outreach, law enforcement, prosecution, and probation, among other services, to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **124** (98%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **383** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.

**Table 1** Staff supported with Rural grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>383</b>	
Victim advocates	<b>135</b>	<b>35%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>66</b>	<b>17%</b>
Trainers	<b>40</b>	<b>10%</b>
Administrators	<b>24</b>	<b>6%</b>
Support staff	<b>22</b>	<b>6%</b>
Counselors	<b>19</b>	<b>5%</b>
Outreach workers	<b>17</b>	<b>5%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### MT • Grantee Perspective

In 2013, the program was able to hire local community members in both Mineral County and the Seeley-Swan Valley as program specialists, and open satellite offices in each community. The Seeley-Swan Valley office also staffs a part-time mental health counselor who provides free mental health counseling to victims. Now that we have locally-based staff providing services rather than a Missoula-based coordinator, we are able to provide better services to communities including increased access to support services for victims, and more trainings for professionals.

**MISSOULA COUNTY, MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF GRANTS AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**



### KS • Grantee Perspective

Rural Program funding has allowed us to provide intensive, on-site technical assistance and support to the four rural, dual sexual assault and domestic violence advocacy programs in western Kansas (MOU partners) that together serve about 1/3 of rural western Kansas. Rural grant funding allowed for MOU partners to set aside time to have much-needed conversations and assessments of sexual assault services and responses by their programs and communities, and discuss unique barriers to victims coming forward or accessing help. It has also allowed for resources to help support the MOU partners in enhancing sexual assault services. As a result of Rural Program funding, KCSDV has seen an increase in requests for training and technical assistance from MOU partners on additional topics such as teen dating violence, culturally relevant services and immigration remedies for victims. Funding has allowed for the training of advocates, law enforcement officers, and other allied professionals that is accessible and in their rural communities.

**KANSAS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



### MT • Grantee Perspective

Rural Grant funding allowed us to bring in national trainers to reach a group of over 100 from around our service area and beyond, which made a tremendous impact. Over half of the law enforcement officers from our service area attended the training, and as a result of the training, the Lewis and Clark County Attorney's office is working with an expert witness for adult sexual assault cases, which it has not traditionally done.

FRIENDSHIP CENTER OF HELENA, MONTANA



### MT • Grantee Perspective

This Rural grant has enabled SAFE Harbor to make a concentrated effort to reach out to the LGBT community and to expand the relationship that was in place with Salish Kootenai College and the Center for Prevention and Wellness. Within a conservative, rural and disconnected area such as the Flathead Reservation, the community is already struggling with issues of racism, economic alienation and a lack of diversity. For those individuals within the LGBT community it is extremely challenging for them to express themselves, share their ideas or even discuss the issues they are facing. When it comes to the topic of domestic violence and other forms of violence within this community, those who are not LGBT often scoff or make disparaging remarks. SAFE Harbor has been able to make greater inroads for community awareness and understanding as well as direct outreach with this group.

SAFE HARBOR, RONAN, MONTANA



### NE • Grantee Perspective

Rural grant funding has allowed us to enhance our Revolution program, which continues to be extremely successful. Through this program, we have been able to address school assemblies and spread the message of non-violence to thousands of area students. Revolution has also been receiving requests from agencies and schools across the U.S. for assistance in creating their own peer prevention programs, focusing on reducing violence in relationships. Revolution has also been asked on many occasions to assist in various community service activities. This allows us to provide outreach to a wide audience that we might not be able to access otherwise. The Building Healthy Relationship (BHR) groups that we provide in the schools have become invaluable to guidance counselors and students. BHR also gives students who are experiencing difficulty in their relationships an outlet to talk about these issues. Because of the incredible trust established, on several occasions, guidance counselors have asked advocates to assist with issues involving their own family members.

CENTER FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS, COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA

## Training

Grantees train victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court personnel, probation officers, child protection staff, and mental health and other professionals how to develop an effective coordinated community response to violence. **This training improves professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **106** (83%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **3,552** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **45,982** people.
- Most often these trainings reached law enforcement officers (**13%**), victim advocates (**12%**), educators (**11%**), and health professionals (**8%**).

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide general information to the community to increase awareness of the five crimes. **Community education can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.**<sup>i</sup>

- **108** (85%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **13,360** education events.
- Grantees educated a total of **379,477** people.

Table 2 People educated with Rural grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Community members educated	2-year total	
<b>Total community members educated</b>	<b>379,477</b>	
Middle and high school students	146,902	39%
Community members	100,132	26%
University or college students	35,190	9%
Elementary school students	34,807	9%
Parents or guardians	17,314	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

<sup>i</sup> Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and/or child sexual abuse. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or child sexual abuse that enables a professional to improve his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. All victims receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **111** (87%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **15,091** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Victim advocacy services to **9,098** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **8,808** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **4,368** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **3,429** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy services to **2,418** victims;
- Transportation services to **1,475** victims; and
- Child advocacy services to **1,129** victims.

### Other Services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **17,566** times;
- Grantees received a total of **152,801** hotline calls.
  - The majority of these calls (**55%**) came from victims.

Grantees provide emergency shelter or transitional housing to victims and their family members. Emergency shelter can include nights in safe houses or hotel/motel accommodations.

**Table 3** Victims sheltered with Rural grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Shelter services	Victims (6-month average)	Family members (6-month average)	Bed nights (2-year total)
Emergency shelter	<b>1,337</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>148,478</b>
Transitional housing	<b>62</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>36,299</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>184,777</b>

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence and child sexual abuse. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (81%).



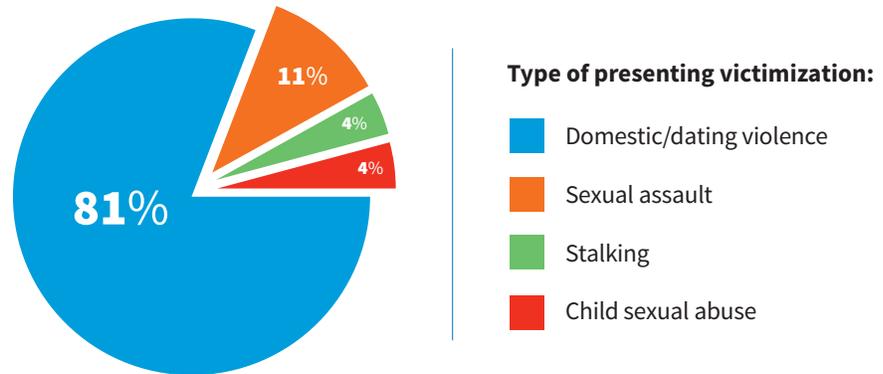
**WV • Grantee Perspective**

Rural grant funds have established full-time advocacy for victims in seven areas of West Virginia that previously had no sexual assault services available. Services offered as a direct result of this program have provided thousands of victims with support and resources that would otherwise not be available. Rural grant funds were the catalyst for the development of eight Sexual Assault Response Teams, which collaborate on issues and cases involving victims of sexual assault, stalking and dating violence. This networking ensures that a core of first responders is working together to provide victim-focused and comprehensive services to victims and reduces increased trauma to the victim.

**WEST VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR RAPE INFORMATION AND SERVICES**

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Rural Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**Table 4** Victims seeking services with Rural grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>15,271</b>	
Victims served	14,829	97%
Victims partially served	263	2%
Victims not served	180	1%

**NOTE:** "Partially Served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Rural Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Rural Program grant.



**Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

Prior to the grant, mental health was next to nothing. Within our reservation we only had 2 mental health providers to service the whole reservation. With the grant we were able to secure a contracted mental health counselor who specializes in domestic and sexual violence. She provides services 2 times a week or more as needed. We have been able to refer clients to her during crisis mode instead of waiting several weeks to a month or more to receive mental health help.

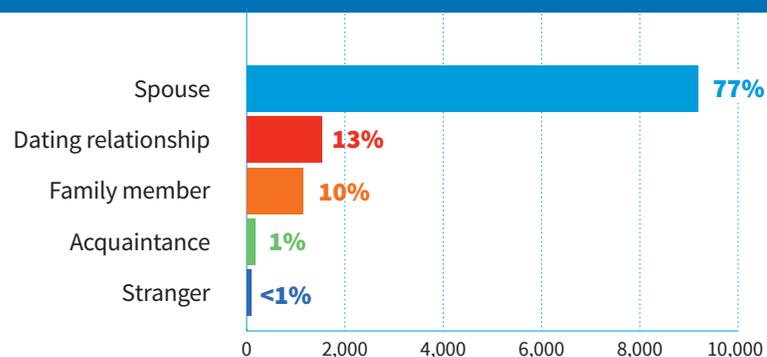
**THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES OF FT. BERTHOLD, NEW TOWN, NORTH DAKOTA**

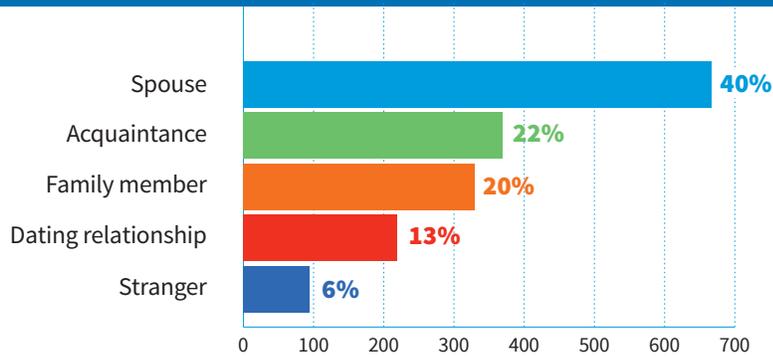
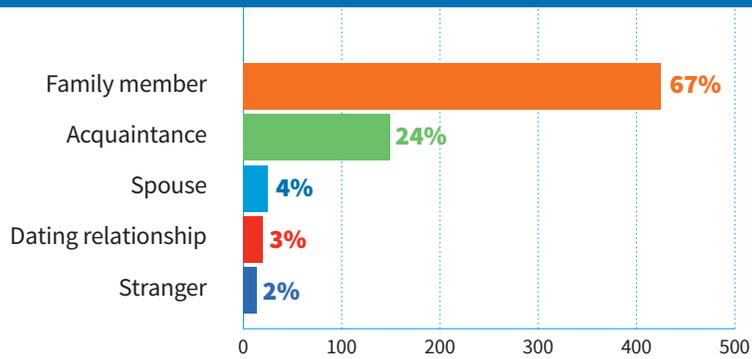
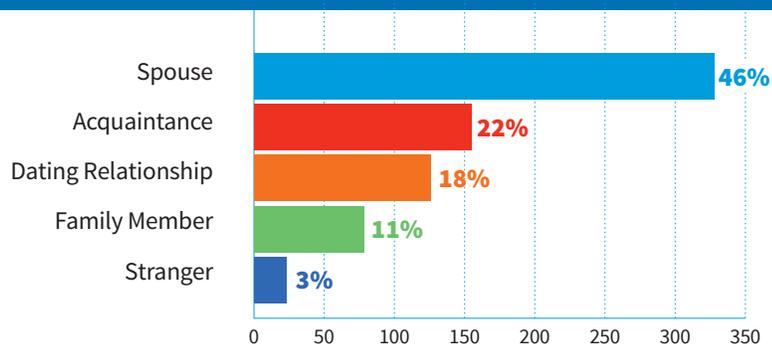
**Victims' Relationship to Offender**

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence and child sexual abuse. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (68%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (13%) or by another **family or household member** (10%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: Domestic/dating violence



**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault****Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Child sexual abuse****Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**

## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

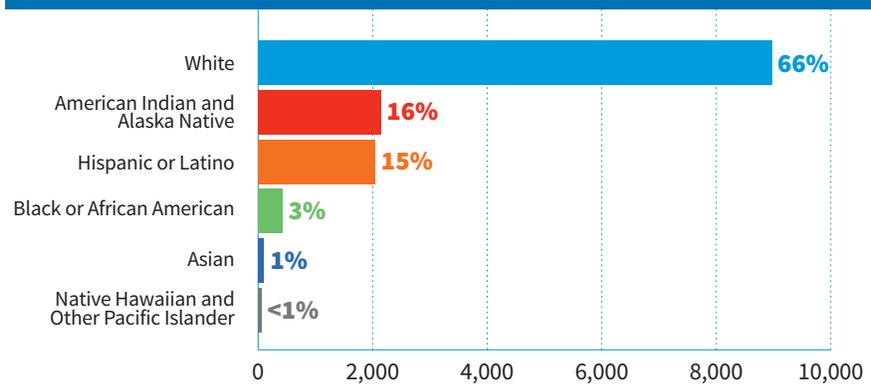
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program reached capacity;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources/priority setting;
- Victim did not meet statutory requirements;
- Conflict of interest; or
- Program rules not acceptable to victim.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **15,091** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (66%), **female** (90%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (66%).

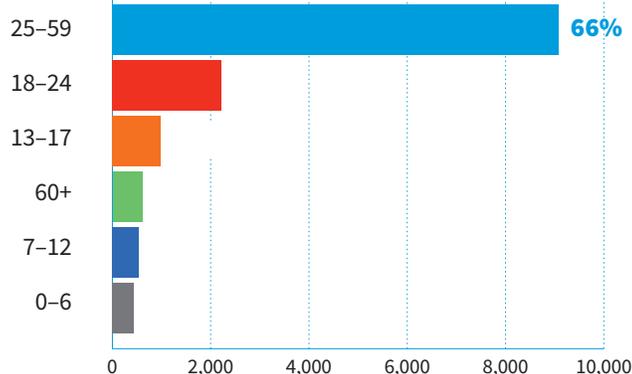
**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



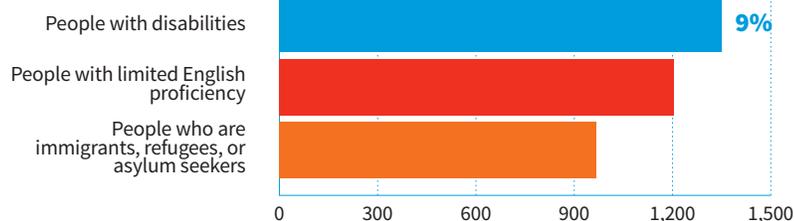
**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: Age (6-month average)



**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: Other (6-month average)



**KS • Grantee Perspective**

Often survivors are physically isolated by geographic location to services but live in small work and social communities where personal information is accessible to the general public. For example, in Jackson County the local newspaper publishes the names of all individuals applying for protection orders. Survivors often face immediate intimidation by third parties with this information so accessible. Despite attempts by law enforcement and advocacy agencies, the paper refuses to stop this practice. This is common practice in the media in rural areas. Survivors often are forced to deal with limited support but significant public and social implications when seeking recourse to stop the violence in their lives.

**YWCA CENTER FOR SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT, KANSAS**

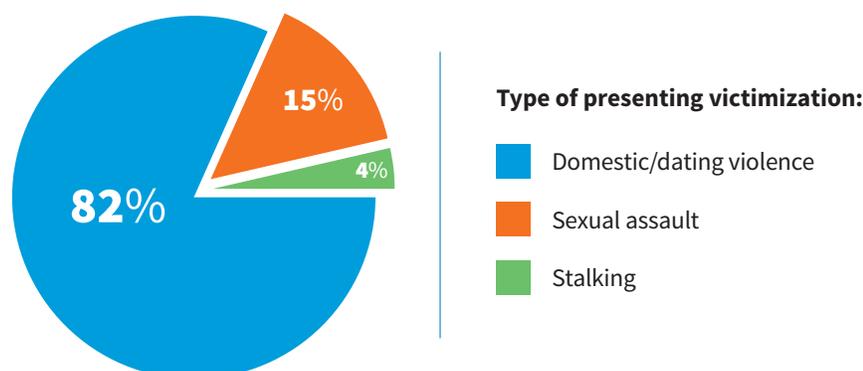
## Secondary Victims

Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **6,558** secondary victims during each 6-month period.

**Figure 10** Provision of services to secondary victims by Rural Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Secondary victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



## Criminal Justice

The Rural Program promotes a coordinated community response that includes representatives from victim service agencies, child welfare agencies, law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, healthcare providers, and public and private community resources.

## Law Enforcement

Grantees address the role of law enforcement in responding to domestic/sexual violence.

- **18** (14%) grantees used funds for law enforcement activities.
- Law enforcement staff made a total of **2,806** victim referrals to governmental and non-governmental victim services across the 2-year period.

**A proactive response and victim-centered attitude influences whether or not victims report these offenses, and whether appropriate evidence is collected to allow prosecutors to convict offenders.**

A meaningful and serious response by law enforcement agencies includes:

- Documenting all calls for services;
- Actively investigating all sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking incidents;
- Referring cases to prosecutors (as appropriate);
- Seeking warrants and statements of charges (as appropriate);
- Arresting the perpetrator;
- Helping victims secure protection orders;
- Accompanying the victim to the home to retrieve their immediate belongings (as appropriate);
- Making referrals (as appropriate); and
- Providing victims with information about available services.

*Without proper training, an officer may not be able to identify the predominant aggressor, may unknowingly minimize a victim's trauma, may fail to collect all relevant evidence, and may mistakenly arrest the victim. Moreover, if an officer sides with an abuser, a victim may not report future assaults. Research shows that law enforcement were most likely to arrest perpetrators when they received training on and followed these best practices: in-person investigating, following up with victims after initial contact, conducting safety planning with victims, assessing the needs of children exposed to the violence, providing victims with 911 telephones, describing protection orders and court procedures, connecting victims with available shelter and services, explaining the effects of domestic violence on children, and helping victims feel safe.<sup>125</sup>*

**Table 5** Law enforcement activities in Rural Program criminal cases, July 2013–June 2015

Law enforcement activities	Sexual assault	Domestic/ dating violence	Stalking	Child sexual abuse	Total
Calls for assistance	165	2,194	121	227	2,707
Incident reports	341	3,306	152	970	4,769
Cases investigated	392	3,271	177	740	4,580
Referrals to prosecutor	220	1,134	56	511	1,921
Arrests of predominant aggressor	87	1,195	39	229	1,550

**NOTE:** Grantees report only on law enforcement activities that are funded under the Rural Program and they may receive funds for one or for a number of these activities. Therefore, no relationships can be inferred or comparisons made between activities reported here.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees reported ongoing issues of **poverty and the lack of basic services** in rural areas as the biggest challenges to serving victims.

Grantees report difficulty in helping victims **meet their basic needs**, such as:

- Affordable housing and shelter services;
- Child care;
- Employment;
- Access to credit;
- Food security;
- Healthcare, including mental health and substance abuse counseling;
- Legal services; and
- Relocation expenses.

Rural grantees reported **significant gaps** in available services, especially for **underserved populations**, including:

- American Indians/Alaska Natives;
- Immigrants;
- LGBT populations;
- Elderly adults; and
- Persons with disabilities.

Grantees working with these populations **lack the resources** and the coordinated community response required to:

- Provide linguistically and culturally specific services; and
- Help increase the safety of victims.

Grantees reported ongoing needs for new and expanded **community education campaigns**, such as:

- Cyberstalking/bullying;
- Teen dating violence; and
- Sexual assault.

Grantees also stressed the need to **expand education and training to law enforcement**, including police, prosecutors and judges.

Overall, **isolation and lack of access to public or private transportation** and the **lack of confidentiality** in rural areas hinder victims' efforts to establish safety and self-sufficiency, as well as service providers' efforts in supporting them to do so.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

The rural location and static economy continue to be barriers to those who could benefit from services. Many victims are not employed outside the home, are undereducated, and are completely dependent on their abuser for basic needs such as food and shelter. The lack of jobs, particularly family wage jobs, in our area can be an insurmountable barrier for many victims. They would rather stay in their situation than face an uncertain future with no job or means of feeding and clothing their children.

UNION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OREGON



### KS • Grantee Perspective

There is a lack of bilingual staff in sexual assault and domestic violence programs, and in particular rural programs. Current bilingual SA/DV advocates are frequently over-burdened because of the significant need, and victims typically rely on bilingual staff for all of their service needs, referrals, and assistance. This often leaves bilingual advocates in the position of acting as an interpreter rather than in the advocacy role when working with other allied professionals and systems.

KANSAS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



### VT • Grantee Perspective

Victims frequently express that they do not feel supported by law enforcement or legal agencies and they don't feel enough is being done from a community response perspective to support their safety and/or validate their abuse. Because of this and because of the insulating nature of being in a rural area with deeply ingrained cultural beliefs of what constitutes abuse, generational poverty, and high rates of addiction, victims are often reluctant to come forward to seek services.

VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, VERMONT



### KS • Grantee Perspective

Often victims are physically isolated by geographic location to services, but live in small work and social communities where personal information is accessible to the general public. For example, in Jackson County the local newspaper publishes the names of all individuals applying for protection orders. Victims often face immediate intimidation by third parties with this information so accessible. Despite attempts by law enforcement and advocacy agencies, the paper refuses to stop this practice. This is common practice in the media in rural areas. Victims often are forced to deal with limited support but significant public and social implications when seeking recourse to stop the violence in their lives.

YWCA CENTER FOR SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT, KANSAS



# Sexual Assault Services Program—Grants to Culturally Specific Programs

The Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) was created by VAWA 2005, and is the first federal funding stream dedicated solely to direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. SASP encompasses four different funding streams for states and territories: tribes; tribal organizations and nonprofit tribal organizations; state, territorial, and tribal sexual assault coalitions; and culturally specific organizations.

**THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES CULTURALLY Specific Grant Program (SASP-CS) is to establish, maintain, and expand sustainable sexual assault services provided by culturally specific organizations. Grantees are nonprofit organizations that focus primarily on culturally specific communities and have experience in the area of sexual assault, or who partner with an organization having such expertise. They provide intervention, advocacy, accompaniment (e.g. accompanying victims to court, medical facilities, and police departments), support services, and related assistance for adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault; non-offending family and household members of victims; and those collaterally affected by sexual assault.**

## 31 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 31 unique grantees reported activities funded by the SASP-CS Program.

## 1,069 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 1,069 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 277 Secondary Victims Served

On average, grantees served 277 secondary victims during each 6-month reporting period.

*In a national survey, providers (at legal services, social services, and domestic violence and sexual assault programs) who serve immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking related that, when victims called law enforcement, responding officers were able to identify the language spoken by victims in fewer than half of the cases and, in 30% of those cases, unqualified interpreters were used. They further reported that clients experienced bias when courts and law enforcement relied on inappropriate or unqualified interpreters who may intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent the victim's statements.<sup>297</sup>*



**WA • Grantee Perspective**

For a grass-roots community based organization like ours, SASP-CS grant funding was extremely instrumental in our ability to successfully implement and grow our sexual assault program. API Chaya has been able to focus on and broaden our sexual assault outreach and services due to SASP funding over a multi-year period. In particular, the flexibility of the funding allows us to adapt quickly to the needs of communities we serve and our organization.

API CHAYA, WASHINGTON



**CA • Grantee Perspective**

SASP-CS grant funding has dramatically boosted CPAF’s ability to respond to the needs of sexual assault victims in the Asian and Pacific Islander community. SASP funding has also enabled CPAF to build deeper relationships with community partners who help in guiding CPAF’s approach when designing culturally specific services. CPAF has increased the number of sexual assault victims that it serves at its community center, as well as at its shelters, compared to the previous years. CPAF has also expanded program offerings for victims of sexual assault, some of whom may have graduated from the shelter program but are still in need of additional support and healing.

CENTER FOR THE PACIFIC ASIAN FAMILY, CALIFORNIA



**NY • Grantee Perspective**

Over the last 26 years of Sakhi’s existence, we have not had the opportunity to address such a critical need as sexual assault in the South Asian community. With this funding we are able to introduce new initiatives which are more holistic, hire appropriate personnel, and adjust the way we do our work. It has enabled us to engage in critical conversation and community-building strategies with the goal of ending sexual and other gender-based violence against women.

SAKHI FOR SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN, NEW YORK

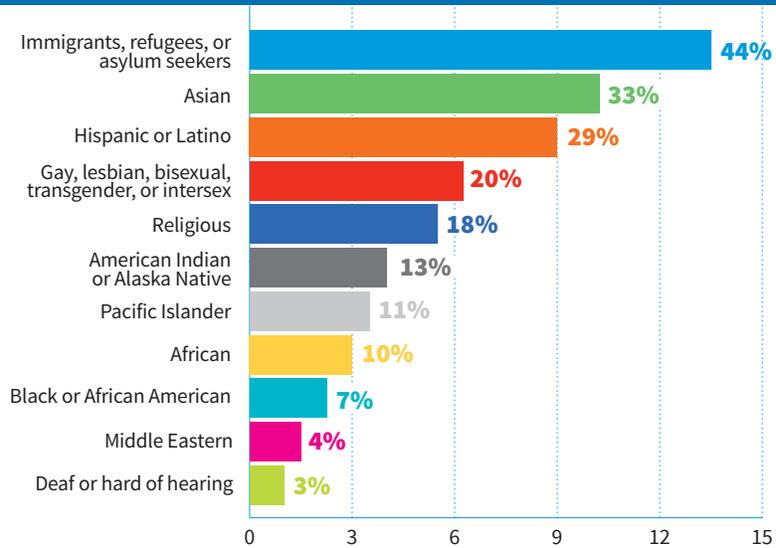
VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons**. VAWA 2013 also modified the focus of SASP-CS by redefining “culturally specific” to mean primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups as defined in section 1707(g) of the Public Health Service Act (“American Indians [including Alaska Natives, Eskimos, and Aleuts]; Asian Americans; Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders; Blacks; and Hispanics”).

### General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **31** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **2** (6%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.

**Figure 1** Grantees serving culturally specific populations by type of population, July 2013–June 2015 (6-month average)



## Staff

Grant-funded staff primarily establish, maintain, and expand coordinated community responses within their catchment areas; and provide victim services, including advocacy, crisis intervention, legal assistance, court and hospital accompaniment, and transportation. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **31** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **31** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.

Table 1 Staff supported with SASP-CS grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>31</b>	
Victim advocates	<b>11</b>	<b>35%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>7</b>	<b>23%</b>
Counselors	<b>7</b>	<b>22%</b>
Administrators	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Victim Services

Grantees address the specific cultural needs of victims, and may provide crisis intervention, safety planning, and services such as legal advocacy, medical and counseling services from healthcare professionals, and accompaniment to forensic exams and to court. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **31** (100%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **1,069** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.



### CA • Grantee Perspective

SASP-CS funding has allowed our agency to hire culturally sensitive promotoras who are specifically engaging with victims of sexual assault and their families. The funding that we receive gives us the flexibility to serve secondary victims and not limit services. We have identified that the crisis intervention that our staff provides, as well as their increased knowledge of community resources, plays a major role when assisting those that feel that all doors have been closed to them. CLFA staff is also able to expand to other areas and take this sensitive information to various underserved parts of the county and give it that culturally specific attention that will encourage community involvement and promote services and information.

CLFA CENTRO LA FAMILIA ADVOCACY SERVICES, INC., CALIFORNIA

*The lack of culturally sensitive and appropriate services can pose daunting barriers to safety, justice, and healing. Victims may choose not to engage in services or may terminate services early if programs fail to incorporate issues of culture and heritage.*

*Grantees used 24 specific languages for these activities: Bambara, Bangla, Burmese, Cantonese, Chinese, English, French, Fulani, Gujarati, Hindi, Ilocano, Japanese, Korean, Lakota, Mandarin, Marathi, Moore, Nepali, Portuguese, Cape Verdean Creole, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu, and Vietnamese.*

*Grantees used 4 specific languages when responding to these requests for information or assistance: English, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish.*



#### NY • Grantee Perspective

This reporting period, Sauti Yetu served 30 victims by providing short-term crisis intervention, 12-14 weeks of cognitive behavioral therapy, and advocacy and interpretation. These services would not have been possible without the SASP-CS funding. In addition to the services, we have been able to conduct language-specific outreach in Fulani, Soninke, Bambara, Mandingo, and Moore, just to mention a few. Clients tell us that hearing of services in their own languages has reduced their isolation and the stigma of speaking out against sexual assault.

**SAUTI YETU CENTER FOR AFRICAN WOMEN, INC.,  
NEW YORK**

#### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Support group/counseling services to **646** victims;
- Victim advocacy services to **514** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **482** victims;
- Transportation services to **176** victims;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **174** victims;
- Language services (i.e. interpretation or translation) to **122** victims; and
- Civil legal advocacy services to **120** victims.

#### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **2,271** times;
- Grantees received a total of **6,851** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**43%**) came from victims.

#### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided assistance with the following immigration matters:

- U visa services for **28** victims;
- VAWA self-petition services for **8** victims;
- T visa services for **2** victims;
- Work authorization services for **2** victims;
- Cancellation of removal matters for **1** victim; and
- Other immigration matters for **6** victims.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of sexual assault.

**Table 2** Victims seeking services with SASP-CS grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>1,083</b>	
Victim served	<b>1,046</b>	<b>97%</b>
Program partially served	<b>23</b>	<b>2%</b>
Victims not served	<b>14</b>	<b>1%</b>

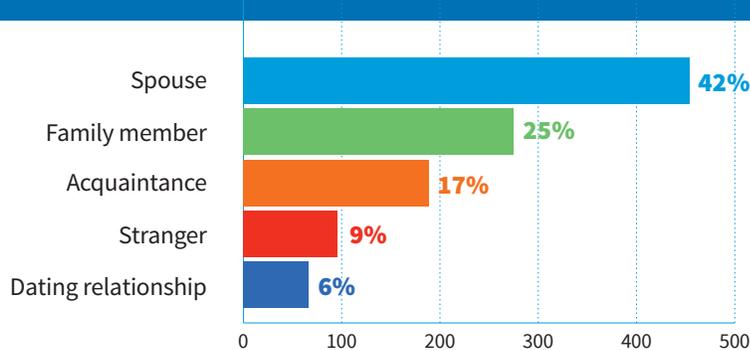
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the SASP-CS grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the SASP-CS grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of sexual assault. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (42%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by another **family or household member** (25%) or by an **acquaintance** (17%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Limited resources;
- Transportation;
- Program reached capacity;
- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Program rules not acceptable to victim; or
- Victim did not meet statutory requirements.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **1,069** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **Hispanic or Latina** (36%), **female** (94%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (70%).



### OH • Grantee Perspective

Immigrants in general and Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs) specifically, find sexual violence is still considered a taboo subject. A seminal report showed that APIs feeling shame or fear of losing face in the eyes of community is a major factor to under-reporting of sexual abuse. Despite the alarming statistics regarding sexual assault issues in the API communities and critical needs for services, there are very limited sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking services for immigrant APIs in the region. The primary sexual assault services agency, the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center who is also a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) partner for Project: Together, serves over 18,000 clients annually, but only a small fraction of one percent of their clients are API victims. This is in large part due to low percentage of victims seeking help, and the unavailability of culturally specific services.

**ASIAN SERVICES IN ACTION, INC., OHIO**

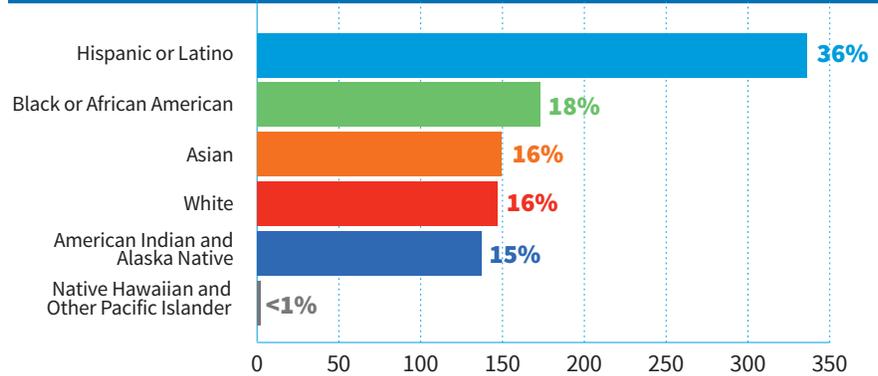


### MA • Grantee Perspective

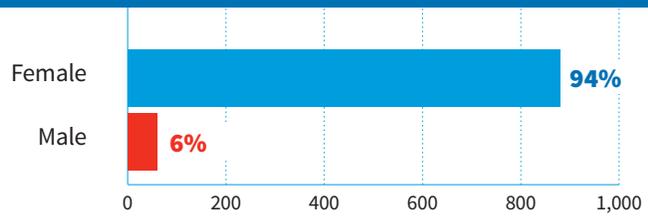
We have been able to provide legal advocacy, emotional support, housing help, criminal justice advocacy, crisis intervention, employment counseling, accompaniments to healthcare centers, job training, material assistance, transportation, and victim advocacy to victims who might not have felt comfortable at mainstream rape crisis centers. We have been able to train our DV advocates on sexual assault and its prevalence in the LGBT communities. We have noticed that many of our DV victims also present with a history of sexual assault and sexual violence -- now we have both programs within one agency. We have been able to advertise our services to LGBT and mainstream organizations. This has led to a greater system-wide capacity to serve LGBT victims as providers and community organizations have become aware of this resource available for victims.

**GAY MEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT, MASSACHUSETTS**

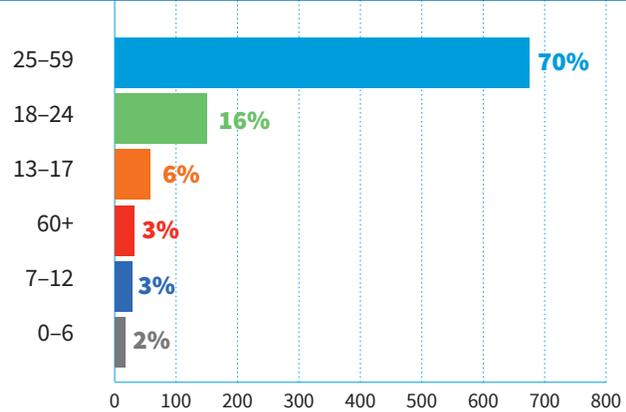
**Figure 3** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



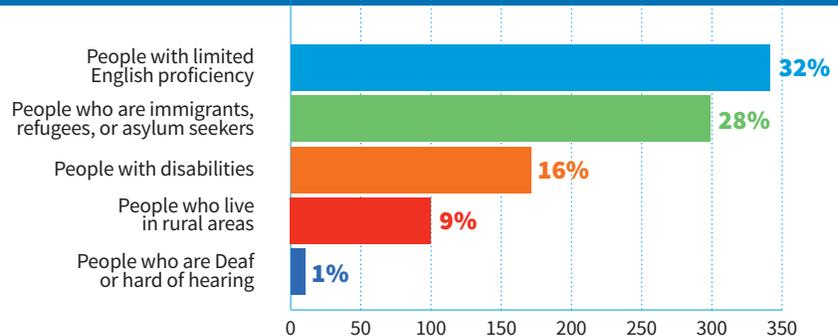
**Figure 4** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)



## Secondary Victims

Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by sexual assault, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **277** secondary victims during each 6-month period.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **victims' reluctance to access services and report crimes** as their biggest obstacle to providing services. They attributed this reluctance to a number of factors, including:

- **Cultural taboos** around discussing sexual violence;
- **Familial pressures** to refrain from reporting or disclosing sexual assault;
- **Mistrust of law enforcement** and fear of deportation;
- **A lack of confidentiality and anonymity** within some communities;
- **Insufficient knowledge of victims' legal rights;** and
- **Insufficient legal accountability for offenders.**

Grantees also reported a need for more **culturally and linguistically appropriate victim services**.

Several grantees emphasized the need to provide **training to law enforcement, first responders, and service providers on culturally sensitive, trauma-informed practices**.

Grantees frequently mentioned the need to **assist victims with basic necessities**, such as:

- Shelter/housing;
- Transportation;
- Child care;
- Food; and
- Healthcare costs.

Many grantees also mentioned a need for more **culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate mental healthcare services**.

Finally, several grantees noted a need for **greater public awareness and understanding of the dynamics of sex trafficking** within marginalized communities.



### IL • Grantee Perspective

There is a large need for an increase in the prosecution rate of those who commit sexually violent crimes. The number of arrests and charges for these crimes is woefully low. This impacts victims of sexual violence as well as the community on a variety of levels. For victims, it sends the message that the crime that was perpetrated against them is not one that merits consequences. Thus, victims end up feeling as if the criminal justice system failed them, or they feel victimized by a system that is supposed to protect them. For the community, it means that there are people living amongst them who were able to commit a crime and not be held accountable for their actions. This creates a dangerous living environment for everyone.

**MUJERES LATINAS EN ACCION, ILLINOIS**



### IL • Grantee Perspective

Language and services accessibility remain among the most-needed for immigrant victims. Our victims so often feel nervous and fearful to report to and interact with law enforcement and the court system, and have encountered low-quality translation services that significantly affect the case. Going to the hospital without understanding the medical terms, the examination procedures, and not being able to communicate with nurses, doctors, and staff is an intimidating and scary experience. Therefore, high quality and accessible interpretation services remain needed.

**KOREAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN NEED, ILLINOIS**



### WI • Grantee Perspective

Continued efforts to improve the cultural competency and awareness of providers remains essential. It is vital that this continued awareness, education, and the resulting strategies of inclusion address individuals who do not conform to binary gender. While we are seeing more agencies opening their doors to transgender women, for example, most agencies are still unsure of how to work with victims who are gender non-conforming, gender fluid, or who otherwise do not identify as or express their gender in binary (male/female) ways.

**FORGE, INC., WISCONSIN**



# Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program

The Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program (State Coalitions Program) funds state-level coalitions to collaborate and coordinate with relevant federal, state, and local entities. Coalitions consist primarily of organizational members (e.g. sexual assault programs, domestic violence programs, tribal victim services agencies, and other victim services agencies) but may also include individual members.

**STATE SEXUAL ASSAULT COALITIONS AND STATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** coalitions play a critical role in advancing the goals of VAWA, serving as a collective voice to end domestic/sexual violence through collaboration with federal, state, and local organizations.

## 90 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 90 unique grantees reported activities funded by the State Coalitions Program.

## 120,863 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 120,863 people.

## 130,679 Technical Assistance Activities

Grantees provided 126,938 consultations and 3,741 site visits.

## Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Coordinate state victim services activities; and
- Collaborate and coordinate with federal, state, and local entities engaged in domestic/sexual violence activities, including but not limited to:
  - Provide training and technical assistance (TA) to member agencies;
  - Expand the technological capacity of coalitions and/or member agencies; and
  - Bring local programs together to identify gaps in services and to coordinate activities.

*Coalitions play a number of roles in responding to domestic/sexual violence: they serve as governing or organizing bodies for local agencies; they advocate for policy, legislation, or practice changes on behalf of their member agencies; and support collaboration between agencies building community relationships.*

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **90** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **34** (38%) grantees reporting were domestic violence coalitions, **32** (36%) were sexual assault coalitions, and **24** (27%) were dual sexual assault/ domestic violence coalitions.

Nearly all grantees use funds to develop or enhance standards of service for underserved populations, by identifying gaps in services and supporting member and community organizations in their provision of outreach to and services for victims.

- **84** (93%) grantees used funds to address underserved populations.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, education, and technical assistance to help end domestic/sexual violence and hold offenders accountable. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **90** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **122** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and administrators.

<b>Table 1</b> Staff supported with State Coalitions grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: <b>Selected groups</b>	
<b>Staff funded</b>	<b>6-month average</b>
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>122</b>
Program coordinators	<b>39</b> <b>32%</b>
Administrators	<b>30</b> <b>25%</b>
Support staff	<b>17</b> <b>14%</b>
Communications specialists	<b>9</b> <b>7%</b>
Technical assistance providers	<b>9</b> <b>7%</b>
Systems advocates	<b>7</b> <b>6%</b>
Trainers	<b>6</b> <b>5%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees help train states, territories, and communities to develop coordinated responses to reduce domestic/sexual violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **86** (96%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **4,705** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **120,863** people.
- Most often these trainings reached victim advocates (**34%**), multidisciplinary staff at the same training (**13%**), and law enforcement officers (**9%**).

## Technical Assistance

Grantees provide technical assistance to member programs through site visits and other consultations. Consultations may include in-person, telephone, electronic, or other types of contact with programs. The goal of technical assistance is to improve the response of professionals and organizations to victims of domestic/sexual violence, by improving organizational infrastructure; developing, revising, and implementing policies, protocols, and procedures; and providing materials on relevant issues.

- **88** (98%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees provided a total of **130,679** technical assistance activities.

**Across the 2-year period, providers most frequently delivered the following forms of assistance:**

- A total of **126,938** consultations; and
- A total of **3,741** site visits.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently reported the need to **provide culturally informed and linguistically appropriate domestic violence and sexual assault services and outreach to underserved populations** within their respective states, including:

- Immigrant communities;
- Victims with limited English proficiency;
- Victims with disabilities;
- Male victims;
- Incarcerated victims;
- Members of the Deaf and hard of hearing community;
- LGBT victims;
- Homeless victims;
- Seniors; and
- Victims in remote rural areas.



### TX • Grantee Perspective

Texas has over 100 domestic violence programs, some of which are in extremely rural areas that do not have the funds to send all their direct service staff to trainings. Through this State Coalition funding, TCFV hosts trainings in these remote rural areas such as Alpine, Borger, and Dumas. The trainings are attended by over 30 advocates and staff from local programs. The area directors (TCFV Board members representing each of the nine regions), communicate with their local members and select the topics they want TCFV to address in their regional training. If TCFV does not have the expertise on staff we locate an external expert who can provide the training. With the State Coalitions funding, we are able to provide travel, per diem, and presenter fees, and offer up to six hours of much needed training to local domestic violence programs in need of external expertise.

#### TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE



### AZ • Grantee Perspective

The training department would not be able to deliver the volume of trainings that it currently delivers without this funding. During the January-June 2014 reporting period, grant-funded staff trained or facilitated training to nearly 1,900 people on a wide range of topics, for over 6,000 person hours of training provided. The trainings offered provide important information on sexual and domestic violence, service delivery, and systems response. This grant also allows us to attend training and technical assistance events. Some of the most valuable information we gather and are able to implement within our organization, with members and with systems, is from training and technical assistance events.

#### ARIZONA COALITION TO END SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



### HI • Grantee Perspective

In addition to the training and education provided by the Coalition, the State Coalitions grant funding also allows for the opportunity to provide technical assistance and quality assurance to member programs. As a direct result of this generous funding, HSCADV has the opportunity to connect with the community directly and provide support to programs as needed. Member programs in rural communities often lack resources to attend trainings and this funding allows us the opportunity to provide general training as well as technical assistance. It is also very valuable in allowing member program staff to connect with Coalition staff during site visits, training, and technical assistance visits.

#### HAWAII STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



#### WA • Grantee Perspective

It is exciting to see prevention education provided in the middle schools, and school staff connecting student victims with services. However, this is still highly dependent upon individual staff members and decisions of individual schools; these are not yet district-wide and systemic in their implementation. This will be our challenge for the upcoming school year -- to make our changes systemic, and thus also sustainable.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASHINGTON



#### FL • Grantee Perspective

The most significant areas of remaining need for improving services to victims of sexual assault is training law enforcement and prosecutors in the neurobiology of trauma and trauma-informed investigations and prosecutions. It is imperative that law enforcement and prosecutors improve their skills in interviewing victims in a way that acknowledges how trauma affects their memories and their responses to sexual assault. They need to learn how to use the information gleaned from employing techniques like the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview to corroborate victims' stories and hold perpetrators accountable.

FLORIDA COUNCIL AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE



#### MN • Grantee Perspective

Our member advocacy agencies are continuously challenged with diminishing resources and pressures to change service delivery models. Over time the number of free-standing sexual assault programs has decreased, largely due to the funding realities. Several programs have merged with domestic violence programs -- some with more success at maintaining the uniqueness of their work than others. Our challenge as a coalition is to design and offer opportunities for the movement to think critically about how we weather these changes in a way that can result in more stable advocacy organizations and ones that maintain the ethical commitment to serving the breadth of sexual assault victims.

MINNESOTA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

Grantees also felt that **more training was needed on trauma-informed response and evidence-based practices** among:

- Law enforcement and first responders;
- Prosecutors; and
- Judges and court personnel.

A majority of grantees reported **difficulty in maintaining current services given budget cuts and financial constraints**, as well as **difficulty meeting new state and federal mandates without concurrent increases in funding**.

Many grantees underscored the need to **assist victims in meeting their basic needs** so they can achieve economic self-sufficiency. These needs included:

- Healthcare;
- Housing;
- Employment;
- Affordable child care;
- Transportation; and
- Education and tuition assistance.

Several grantees also mentioned the need for **low-cost or pro bono civil legal assistance for victims**, as well as **enhanced accountability for offenders**, including:

- Improved standards for Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP);
- Alternatives to criminal justice BIP; and
- Increased prosecution of sex offenders.

Finally, a number of grantees noted a need for more **education and outreach about sexual assault and domestic violence in schools and communities** in order to:

- Increase awareness of available services;
- Combat victim-blaming; and
- Encourage reporting of domestic violence and sexual assault.



#### WV • Grantee Perspective

Within the larger community victims are discriminated against and judged by some employers, co-workers, landlords, neighbors, faith leaders, media journalists, medical professionals, etc., to be responsible for their own victimization. This represents an evident lack of understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence. There is much work needed in educating the general public and professionals involved in responding to domestic violence about the dynamics, indicators, severity, impact, and helpful intervention and prevention strategies in dealing with domestic violence.

WEST VIRGINIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program

The Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program (STEP Program) supports middle and high schools in developing and implementing effective training, services, prevention strategies, policies, and coordinated community responses for students who are victims of, or exposed to, physical and/or sexual violence.

**THE CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program)** has received appropriations in FYs 2013 through 2016. This program, which consolidated four programs previously authorized under earlier iterations of VAWA, including the STEP Program, funds projects that support child, youth, and young adult victims through direct services, training, coordination and collaboration, effective intervention, treatment, response, and prevention strategies. The last grants made under the STEP Program were awarded in FY 2011.

## 9 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 9 unique grantees reported activities funded by the STEP Program.

## 122 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 122 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 5,484 Students Reached

Grantees reached a total of 5,484 students through prevention and education events.

*The 2013 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that, among high school students who have had a dating relationship, 20.9% of female students and 10.4% of male students experienced some form of dating violence, whether physical or sexual, with all health-risk behaviors being most prevalent among students who experienced both physical and sexual abuse.<sup>420</sup>*



### OH • Grantee Perspective

STEP grant funding has allowed us to make tremendous strides toward preventing and effectively addressing physical and sexual violence within the Lakewood City School District. In previous reporting periods we discussed developing and implementing policy, training all secondary level staff, reaching thousands of students with education and awareness efforts, and working with parents and community members to encourage a deeper understanding of power-based violence. All of these aforementioned efforts were led and carried out by STEP grant-funded staff, which would otherwise not have been possible without this funding.

LAKWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO



### IA • Grantee Perspective

With STEP grant funding, we have been able to implement a violence prevention program district-wide. Staff development time is hard to get in a district our size, but with the money and the commitment to the project, we were able to reserve 2 hours of staff development time this spring. That would have been less likely to happen without the grant. Besides the staff time, this project has given us the opportunity to engage a wider audience in the violence prevention dialogue and unite all our staff in one clear message: violence will not be tolerated, and we all can do our part to prevent it.

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, IOWA

The STEP Program enhances students' safety by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent physical and sexual violence in schools. Purpose areas included:

- Provide training to school administrators, faculty, counselors, coaches, healthcare providers, security personnel, and other staff on the needs and concerns of students who experience physical and/or sexual violence, and the impact of such violence on students;
- Develop and implement policies in middle and high schools regarding appropriate, safe responses to, and identification and referral procedures for, students who are experiencing or perpetrating physical and/or sexual violence;
- Provide support services for students and school personnel, such as a resource person who is either on-site or on-call;
- Provide developmentally appropriate educational programming to students regarding physical and/or sexual violence;
- Work with existing mentoring programs and develop strong mentoring programs for students, including student athletes, to help them understand and recognize violence and violent behavior, how to prevent it and how to appropriately address their feelings; and
- Conduct evaluations to assess the impact of programs and policies.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **9** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Provided training to school administration and staff;
  - Provided support services for students and school personnel; and
  - Provided developmentally appropriate educational programming to students.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide policy and program development, prevention education, training, and victim services to increase safety and ensure a coordinated response to violence against youth in middle and high schools. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **9** (100%) grantees used funding for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **16** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and victim advocates.

**Table 1** Staff supported with STEP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>16</b>	
Program coordinators	6	36%
Victim advocates	4	24%
Trainers/educators	3	16%
Administrators	1	9%
Support staff	1	7%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### SC • Grantee Perspective

Having a Victim Service Provider Advocate in the schools has proven effective, as there is a liaison available to assist with the issues of domestic and teen dating violence, thereby freeing up the Guidance Department that was getting flooded with relationship issues.

**LANCASTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA**



### MA • Grantee Perspective

As part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, we sponsored a training for parents titled, “The Importance of the Bystander in Teen Dating Abuse: Parents Matter in Teens’ Lives.” It was facilitated by Jarrod Chin of Mentors in Violence (MVP), and 12 MVP-trained student leaders from Melrose High School. Through interactive activities, the training opened a dialogue around verbal, emotional, and physical abuse in relationships, the role of parents and other bystanders in intervening, and further resources for help. A scenario was discussed involving technology and abuse. Copies of the Teen Dating Abuse Policy were made available. Approximately 35 parents attended. A survey conducted afterwards indicated that 100% of participants rated the training as good or excellent and 100% would recommend the training to other parents.

**MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MASSACHUSETTS**



### OR • Grantee Perspective

Our students are becoming change makers in their communities. A student who has worked in the STEP program for 2 years was invited to Washington, DC to participate in the first-ever tribal youth gathering based on her involvement with STEP and the Early College Academy. She used the opportunity to advocate for DV-related issues to politicians. We are also being requested for national speaking engagements about strategies that work to address youth and native teen dating violence issues. We also are regularly consulted around policy development within local schools.

**NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTER, OREGON**

## Training

Grantees train school administrators, faculty, and staff on the burden and impact of physical and/or sexual violence, and the needs and concerns of students who experience these crimes. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- 9 (100%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **92** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **3,997** school personnel.
- Most often these trainings reached teachers (**63%**), coaches/athletic staff (**5%**), and school administration (**4%**).

## Minimum Requirements

Grantees provide educational programs to students to increase awareness of physical and/or sexual violence, as well as indirect exposure to violence.

- Grantees held a total of **504** prevention and education events reaching a total of **5,484** students.
- Grantees trained **361** peer educators.

Grantees also develop and support youth advisory committees that shape strategies used in prevention and education efforts and programming.

- Grantees held a total of **271** committee meetings with **755** committee members.

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims of physical and/or sexual violence, including crisis intervention, victim advocacy, counseling, and legal advocacy. Victims also receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. In addition, grantees provide the same services to youth indirectly exposed to these crimes. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help youth become and remain safe from violence.**

- **7** (78%) grantees used grant funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **122** victims during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Crisis intervention services to **84** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **67** victims; and
- Victim advocacy services to **62** victims.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of physical and/or sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served were victims of **sexual assault** (36%).



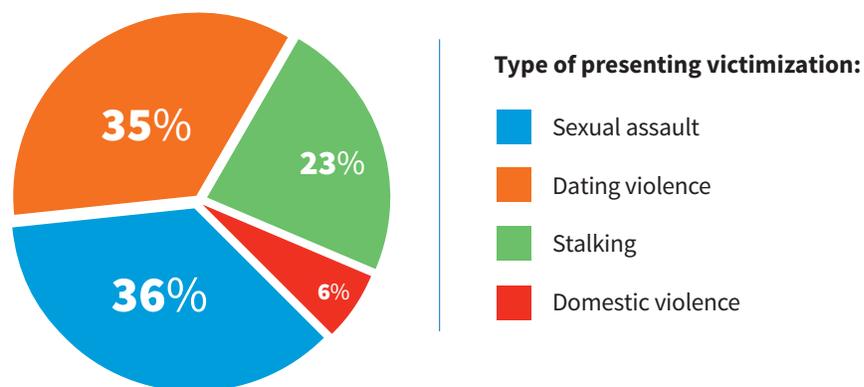
### OH • Grantee Perspective

As student victims came forward with disclosures of physical and sexual violence, program coordinators in partnership with administration and support staff have been able to provide a trauma-informed response in order to ensure victims were offered school-based and community options for advocacy and healing services. This grant funding has allowed a trauma-informed, victim-centered response to physical and sexual violence to be prioritized within the district in a way it had not been in the past.

LAKESIDE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by STEP Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 2** | Victims seeking services with STEP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>122</b>	
Victims served	122	100%
Victims partially served	0	0%
Victims not served	0	0%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the STEP Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the STEP Program grant.

**NY • Grantee Perspective**

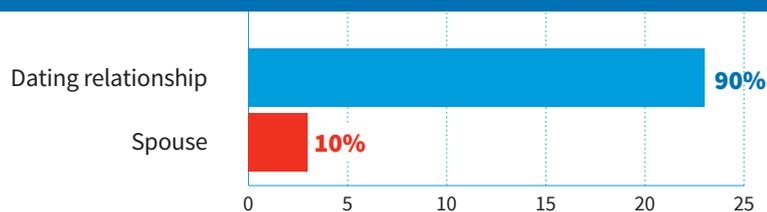
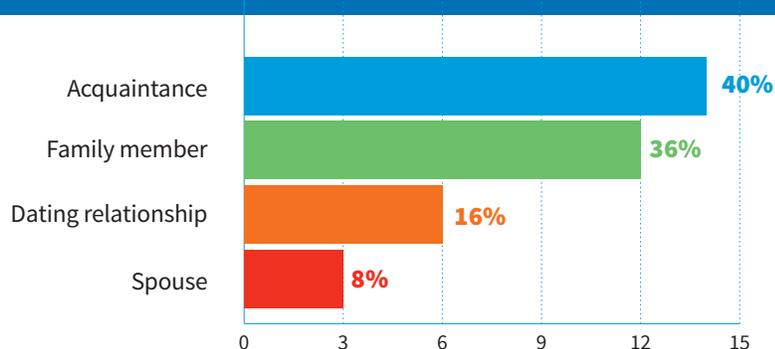
The representatives from each partner school and advocates have truly learned that the need for victim services directed at the youth population in our community was underestimated prior to the project implementation. Without this project, the students who have been directly served may not have told anyone if the STEP Advocates were not available to them. Additionally, the staff and faculty would be less aware of the issues within their schools and in the students' lives, and the DV/SA staff would not have had the opportunity to reach an entire group of our community in need of support services.

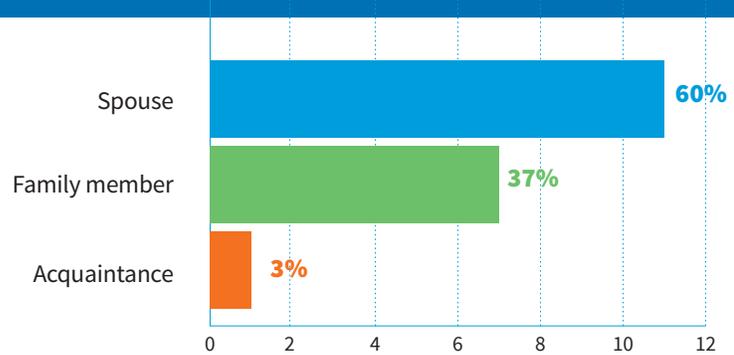
**FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW YORK**

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of physical and/or sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served were victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (36%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by another **family or household member** (23%) or by a **spouse or intimate partner** (21%).

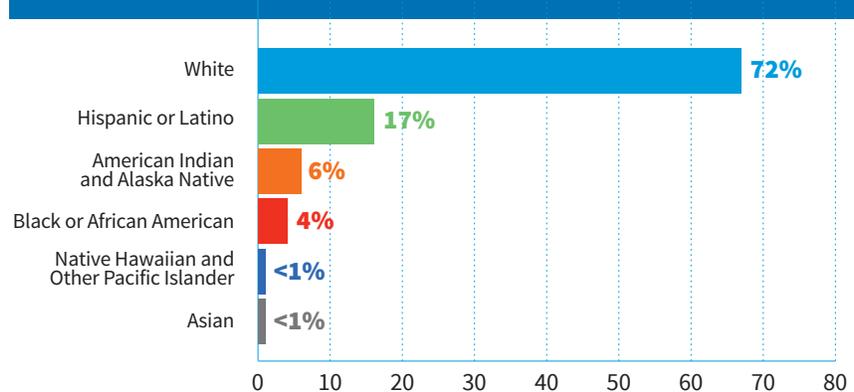
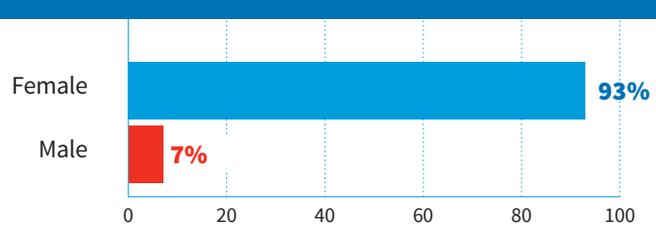
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Dating violence****Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**

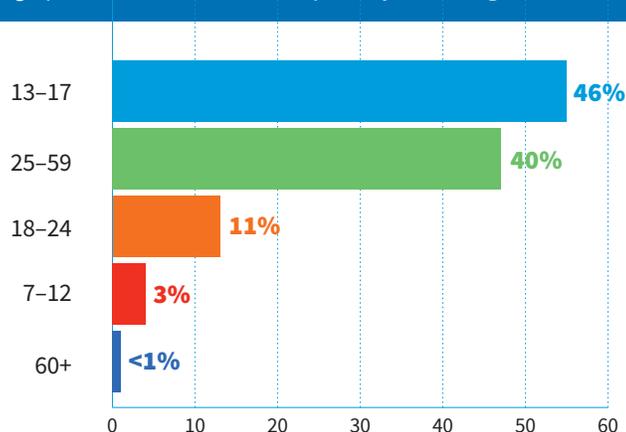
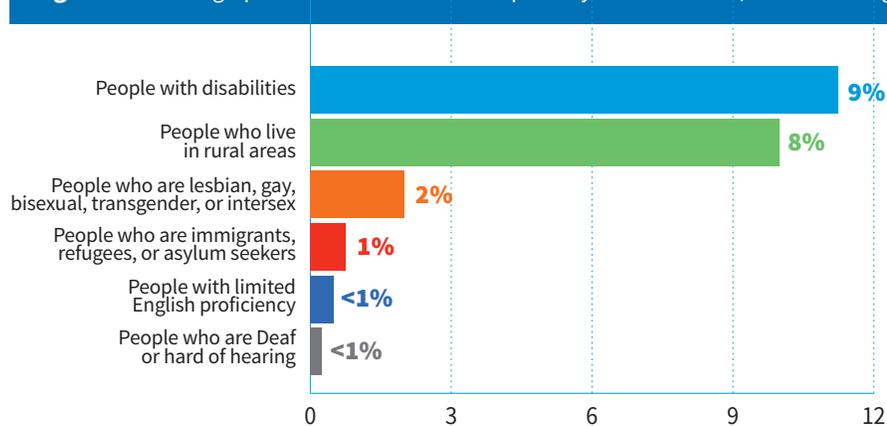
**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**

NOTE: Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for stalking victimization.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served an average of **122** victims during each 6-month reporting period. The majority of those victims were **white** (72%), **female** (93%), and between the ages of **13 and 17** (46%).

**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)

**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

## Services for Youth Indirectly Exposed to Violence

Grantees provide services to youth indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help youth become and remain safe from violence.**

- Grantees provided services to an average of **17** youth indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of youth indirectly exposed to violence who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### **During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Crisis intervention services to **16** youth indirectly exposed;
- Victim advocacy services to **15** youth indirectly exposed; and
- Civil/legal advocacy to **13** youth indirectly exposed.



#### WA • Grantee Perspective

It is exciting to see prevention education provided in the middle schools, and school staff connecting student victims with services. However, this is still highly dependent upon individual staff members and decisions of individual schools; these are not yet district-wide and systemic in their implementation. This will be our challenge for the upcoming school year -- to make our changes systemic, and thus also sustainable.

**FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASHINGTON**

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited the need to take measures to **ensure that changes to programs are applied systemically throughout school districts, and that programs will be sustained beyond the grant period.**

Grantees felt that changes could be made to achieve **more systemic and sustainable results**, including:

- Training all staff and faculty on trauma-informed response;
- Dedicating classroom time to discussing issues of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
- Community outreach and education, especially to parents and guardians; and
- Revising and creating new district policies to support victim safety and offender accountability.

Yet, grantees noted that such changes could be difficult to implement, given the **limited budgets of many school districts, as well as time constraints faced by teachers.**

Some grantees also reported a **shortage of victim services in their communities**, especially in rural areas.



#### CA • Grantee Perspective

Another area of remaining need is on the school campuses with regard to the stress put on teachers to solely prioritize academic achievement. With this stress and district-wide budget cuts, it has been difficult to find time to both conduct trainings with teachers and staff, and to implement violence prevention education in the classroom with students.

**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA**



#### NY • Grantee Perspective

The areas seen as having the most significant need with regard to improving services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking is the lack of services in our community to address these issues, along with the lack of understanding about victim rights within schools, law enforcement, and other agencies. The prevalence of these issues goes beyond the capacity of providing services in three districts.

**FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW YORK**

# Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program

The Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program (Supervised Visitation Program) funds the supervised visitation and safe exchanges of children—by and between parents—in situations involving domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, child abuse, or stalking. The goals of the program are to ensure the safety of adult victims and their children during supervised visits and exchanges; protect children from the trauma of witnessing domestic or dating violence; and reduce the risk of further abuse, injury, or abduction of the children during supervised visits and monitored exchanges.

**THE 2013 REAUTHORIZATION OF VAWA REPLACED THE SUPERVISED Visitation Program, along with the Courts Program, with a new comprehensive grant program: the Grants to Support Families in the Justice System Program (Justice for Families or JFF Program). The Justice for Families Program improves civil and criminal justice system response to families with histories of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse. The last Supervised Visitation Program grants were awarded in FY 2014.**

## 83 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 83 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Supervised Visitation Program.

## 1,987 Families Served

On average, grantees served 1,987 families during each 6-month reporting period.

## 97,671 Supervised Visitations

Grantees provided a total of 97,671 supervised visitation and exchange services.

*For many victims of domestic violence, leaving the relationship does not end the abuse perpetrated by their partners. The risk of abuse to the non-abusing parent and children during separation and after divorce often continues or increases; in some cases, abusers may kill their partners and children during this escalating period of violence. After separation, children are often exposed, directly or indirectly, to violence, threats, intimidation, manipulation, and coercive controls, which can profoundly compromise their emotional stability and psychological well-being.<sup>218</sup>*

### WI • Grantee Perspective



Guardians ad litem, judges, and private attorneys continue to express relief that our program provides services that have been long needed in our community. Previously, families exchanged children in parking lots at the police station or fast food restaurants, and children were exposed to arguing, physical abuse, and the tensions between their parents at every exchange. Our program has alleviated many of those situations, and as a police officer told us regarding one family, “You prevented a domestic incident today, just by being here.”

**DANE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, WISCONSIN**



#### MD • Grantee Perspective

The funding has allowed the Center to implement a supervised visitation program and to launch a monitored exchange program. This funding has specifically allowed for staff, equipment and supplies, rental space, domestic violence prevention technical assistance and direct training to the staff, and generally allowing the Center to operate. This funding has truly helped fill a gap in services in Baltimore by providing a safe alternative to unsupervised or minimally supervised visits between parents with a history of abuse and their children.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME CONTROL AND PREVENTION, MARYLAND



#### TX • Grantee Perspective

This funding has created a unique opportunity in Travis County to provide comprehensive and quality supervised visitation and safe exchange services using a victim-centered approach with highly trained and qualified staff. The funding has also served as a catalyst for systems change to implement a different philosophical approach, from child-centric to victim-centered, with regard to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. The grant has provided a platform to begin discussions in the jurisdiction that are new and innovative.

TRAVIS COUNTY JUSTICE PLANNING, TEXAS



#### MI • Grantee Perspective

The Supervised Visitation grant funding allowed us to employ a Grant Project Coordinator which our program never had before. This position enabled us to increase community outreach, build and strengthen relationships with new and existing referral sources, and has thus increased referrals and the number of families accessing our services. Additionally, having a Grant Project Coordinator allowed us to provide training to community groups, attend community collaborative meetings, and update and create new program materials for referral sources and parents.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES, MICHIGAN



#### IL • Grantee Perspective

As a result of the funding we are open six days a week. In addition to the full-time director we are able to employ two full-time bilingual facilitators, two part-time staff, and one relief staff.

LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

## Grantees engaged in the following purpose areas:

- Provide supervised visitation and safe exchange of children by and between parents in situations involving domestic/sexual violence;
- Protect children from the trauma of witnessing domestic or dating violence or experiencing abduction, injury, sexual abuse, or death during parent and child visitation and exchanges; and
- Protect parents or caretakers who are victims of domestic or dating violence from experiencing further violence, abuse, and threats during child visitation and exchanges.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **83** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **3** (4%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide supervised visitation and safe exchange for children; develop community consulting committees; and offer training opportunities to staff, partner agencies, and community organizations to increase supervised visitation and safe exchange options. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **81** (98%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **137** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support supervision staff and program coordinators.

**Table 1** Staff supported with Supervised Visitation grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>137</b>	
Supervision staff	56	41%
Program coordinators	38	27%
Administrators	18	13%
Security	14	10%
Support staff	6	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Training

Grantees train law enforcement, court staff, legal staff, guardians ad litem, victim advocates, social service agency staff, and child welfare workers to improve the response to children and families affected by domestic/sexual violence. **This training is designed to help agencies and staff give equal regard to the safety and best interests of children and their non-offending parents.**

- 68 (82%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **364** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **4,276** people.
- Most often these trainings reached attorney/law students (**12%**), victim advocates (**10%**), court personnel (**9%**), child welfare workers (**9%**), and supervised visitation and exchange center staff (**9%**).

## Services for Families

Grantees provide one-to-one supervised visits, group supervised visits, and supervised exchanges. Before providing services, grantees conceptualize and develop supervised visitation and exchange services through community-based consulting committees. **This comprehensive, collaborative planning process ensures the safety of adult victims of domestic/sexual violence and their children during visitation or exchange.**

- 78 (94%) grantees used funds for family services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **1,987** families during each 6-month period.
- **98%** of families who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### Across the 2-year period, grantees provided the following services:

- A total of **54,766** supervised exchanges to an average of **1,361** families;
- A total of **40,666** one-to-one supervised visits to an average of **619** families; and
- A total of **2,239** group supervised visits with an average of **76** families.

During the 2-year reporting period, grantees reported that the following safety and security problems occurred during supervised visitation and/or safe exchanges:

- **99** attempts to contact other party;
- **78** threats made;
- **28** violations of protection orders; and
- **22** times security staff were unavailable.



### TX • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed the Center to act as the bridge between the advocacy community and the family court system to provide consultation and training. The Center is often sought out for its expertise in post-separation violence and safe access which was not happening before this funded program. Multiple efforts with this funding have allowed the center to share its vision and goals and to share promising practices with diverse partners. As a result of this ongoing resource sharing, the Center was able to be a part of the criminal and family law courts coming together on multiple projects. This was a result of this grant program, since its inception and subsequent creation of the visitation center in Dallas. The collaborative relationships formed have resulted in the creation of a multidisciplinary training committee that includes a family law judge, a criminal court judge, attorneys, and domestic violence advocates (including the visitation center) that have produced three local trainings on legal issues and domestic violence, which will continue to be an annual event.

**DALLAS COUNTY VISITATION PROVIDER: FLP FAMILY CENTER, TEXAS**



### VA • Grantee Perspective

The Fairfax County Safe Havens Program used funding to provide a 2-day customized immersion training to staff, partners, and other community visitation programs, facilitated by Inspire Action from Social Change. Many participants who provided supervised visitation in a community setting were not familiar with the dynamics of domestic violence and learned how they impact the supervised visitation and exchange process. The feedback received from participants was largely positive, and participants stated they felt they had a better understanding of domestic violence and felt more equipped to work with families where there might be domestic violence.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY JUVENILE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT SERVICES, VIRGINIA**



**ND • Grantee Perspective**

Our program, Kids First (KF), has seen a significant increase in the number of services we have been able to provide since receiving this grant. In 2013, KF provided a total of 47.5 hours of supervised visits and 207 supervised exchange services for families experiencing domestic violence, and in 2014, KF provided a total of 847.75 hours of supervised visits and 511 supervised exchange services. This represents a 55% increase in the number of visitation hours, and a 147% increase in the number of exchanges for families experiencing domestic violence from 2013 to 2014. We attribute these increases in services to the collaborative relationships made possible through this grant funding, as well as the policy revisions implemented during our planning year, which helped make our Center services more individualized and welcoming to clients.

**COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTER, NORTH DAKOTA**



**WI • Grantee Perspective**

The funding from the Safe Haven [Supervised Visitation] grant has allowed The Parenting Place to become known for being a safe place for victims and children, and for our community as a whole to become more educated around domestic violence. This award has also helped judges, guardians ad litem, attorneys, and others to know that there is a place in our community where children and victims can be safe, while engaging in visitations or exchanges.

**THE PARENTING PLACE, WISCONSIN**

During each 6-month reporting period, approximately **one-third** (31%) of families receiving services completed services or services were terminated.

- **61%** of the families discontinued involvement because threats ceased, there was a change in the court order, mutual agreement, or treatment was completed; and
- **26%** were terminated because they habitually did not keep appointments, were incarcerated, did not comply with program rules, or were terminated due to supervisor’s discretion.

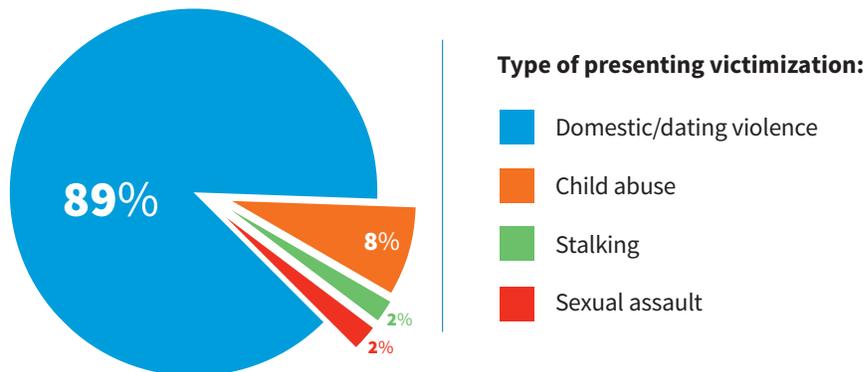
**Families Seeking Services**

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence and their children. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of families served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (89%).

**Figure 1** Provision of family services by Supervised Visitation Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Families served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



**Table 2** Families seeking services with Supervised Visitation grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Families seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total families seeking services</b>	<b>2,036</b>	
Families served	1,960	96%
Families partially served	27	1%
Families not served	49	2%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents families who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Supervised Visitation Program grant. "Not served" represents families who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Supervised Visitation Program grant.

## Families Referred to Supervised Visitation or Safe Exchange Programs

Grantees report on referral source and primary victimization for all families they serve or partially serve.

- The majority of families served or partially served were referred by a **family court order** (57%).
- The remaining families were most commonly referred by a **protection order** (18%) or a **domestic violence court order** (13%).

**Table 3** Average number of families using supervised visitation or safe exchange by primary victimization and referral source, July 2013–June 2015

Referral source	Number of families	
Family court order	1,142	57%
Protection order	352	18%
Domestic violence court order	254	13%
Child welfare agency	62	3%
Self referral	51	3%

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥50 families).

## Reasons Families Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why families were not served or were only partially served:

- Program rules not acceptable to the family;
- Hours of operation;
- Family was not accepted into program;<sup>i</sup>
- Services were not appropriate for party(ies);
- Program reached capacity; or
- Services were not appropriate or inadequate for people with mental health issues.

For those families who were not accepted into the program, grantees reported the following reasons:

- Client unwilling to agree with program rules; or
- Situation was deemed too dangerous.

<sup>i</sup> These are families who requested grant-funded services and were willing and able to partake in those services, but who were not accepted into the program.

## Demographics of Parents and Children Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **1,987** families in each 6-month reporting period. The majority of custodial parents were **white** (68%), **female** (78%), between the ages of **25 and 59** (86%), with children between the ages of **0 to 6** (51%). Noncustodial parents were most likely to be **white** (65%), **male** (77%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (87%).

**Table 4** Demographic characteristics of parents and children served with Supervised Visitation grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Characteristic	6-month average					
	Custodial parent		Non-custodial parent		Children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Race</b>						
American Indian and Alaska Native	22	1%	24	1%	45	2%
Asian	46	2%	41	2%	83	3%
Black or African American	286	15%	346	18%	530	18%
Hispanic or Latino	278	14%	267	14%	461	16%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	19	1%	18	1%	35	1%
White	1,335	68%	1,252	65%	1,954	67%
Unknown (missing)	37		46		98	
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	1,558	78%	461	23%	1,540	51%
Male	439	22%	1,508	77%	1,484	49%
Total	1,997		1,969		3,024	
Unknown (missing)	2		7		2	
<b>Age</b>						
0–6	–	–	–	–	1,543	51%
7–12	–	–	–	–	1,193	40%
13–17	5	< 1%	2	< 1%	274	9%
18–24	249	13%	222	11%	3	< 1%
25–59	1,706	86%	1,718	87%	0	0%
60+	28	1%	27	1%	–	–
Total	1,989		1,969		3,013	
Unknown (missing)	10		8		13	
<b>Other</b>						
People with disabilities	46	2%	98	5%	103	3%
People with limited English proficiency	92	5%	94	5%	53	2%
People who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	95	5%	92	5%	25	1%
People who live in rural areas	387	19%	374	19%	573	19%

## Community Measures

All grantees (83) are mandated to report parental abduction data for the entire jurisdiction receiving funds. However, grantees report difficulty in obtaining data on parental abductions because many jurisdictions do not collect this information.<sup>ii</sup>

- Grantees reported a total of **528** criminal parental abductions.
- Grantees reported a total of **609** civil parental abductions.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited a need to **increase offender accountability**. They felt this could be achieved by:

- The use of batterer intervention programs (BIPs);
- Expanded education for judges and court personnel on the dynamics of domestic violence; and
- Parenting classes for offenders.

Many grantees expressed a need for **more free and low-cost civil legal services** for victims, arguing that **financial disparities between victims and their abusers frequently lead to unfavorable outcomes for victims** in divorce and custody cases.

Grantees also emphasized the **need to provide basic services** to victims and their families, including:

- Assistance locating safe and affordable transitional and permanent housing;
- Transportation to supervised visitation sites;
- Affordable child care; and
- Mental health services, including family therapy.

Many grantees wished to improve their services by providing **additional locations for visitation** and **offering expanded hours to their clients**.

Finally, grantees emphasized the need to **educate community members on the dynamics of domestic and dating violence and prevention**, as well as to **raise awareness of available services**.

<sup>ii</sup> Although parental abduction is a crime in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, often parental abduction constitutes a crime only in cases in which a custody order has been violated. In other states, no custody order is required for parental abduction to be considered a criminal offense. In civil cases, the court has the authority to address the welfare or the return of the child as well as to impose sanctions, such as fines or restraining orders, on parents who violate court orders. Civil remedies may also include compensation to the injured parent and/or child. Criminal courts, in contrast, focus on the offender and may issue a warrant for the arrest of the offending parent.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

Few offending parents using our center are ordered to batterer intervention programs, and much of the most dangerous behavior is completely flying under the radar of the court and law enforcement. It would be helpful if there was better knowledge of risk assessment on the part of judges, attorneys, and custody evaluators, as there is a tendency to discount reported abuse in the absence of convictions on DV or SA charges.

DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON



### TX • Grantee Perspective

Access to adequate, quality, low-cost civil legal services continues to be a significant need for victims of domestic/sexual violence in Dallas County. Our community continues to see victims in the family court system lose custody of their children due to complete lack of or inadequate representation. Lack of adequate legal services that incorporate an understanding of domestic violence, and all of the issues related to post-separation violence, have created an over-representation of victims at the visitation center who are visiting parents. As a result, victims, who end up visiting their children, are clients in the centers for extremely long periods of time due to their inability to be able to file a motion to get back into court.

DALLAS COUNTY VISITATION PROVIDER: FLP FAMILY CENTER, TEXAS



### NY • Grantee Perspective

A barrier that limits clients' access to supervised visitation and safe exchange services is a lack of public transportation. The Center is located in Jamestown which is in the southern portion of Chautauqua County. Due to the size of Chautauqua County and many clients with no access to transportation, a second location in Dunkirk in the northern portion of Chautauqua County would open up needed services further within the county. Free and low-cost transportation that would transport clients from opposite ends of the county does not currently exist. The creation of this resource would alleviate the transportation challenges faced by our clients.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, NEW YORK



# Technical Assistance Program

The Technical Assistance Program (TA Program) provides VAWA grantees with training, expertise, and problem-solving strategies to address the diverse needs of victims of domestic/sexual violence.

Technical assistance (TA) providers are national, tribal, or statewide agencies; or governmental, academic, or other nonprofit organizations with the capacity to provide nationwide training and technical assistance. This may include:

- Educational opportunities;
- Conferences, seminars, and roundtables;
- Peer-to-peer, individualized consultations;
- Policy development; and
- Site visits.

**THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE TA PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE A WIDE range of direct technical assistance to VAWA grantees and subgrantees, so that they can successfully implement grant-funded projects. In addition, the TA Program focuses on building the capacity of criminal justice and victim services organizations to respond effectively to domestic/sexual violence. Providers seek to support grantees in fostering partnerships among organizations that have not traditionally worked together to address these forms of violence, such as faith- and community-based organizations.**

## 223 Projects

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, the TA Program funded 223 projects.

## 100,660 TA Activities

Grantees provided a total of 52,550 consultations, and responded to 38,072 requests for information.

## 244,133 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 244,133 people.

The Technical Assistance (TA) Program provides grantees with training, expertise, and problem-solving strategies so they can better address domestic/sexual violence. TA projects may offer in-person or online educational opportunities, peer-to-peer consultations, site visits, and more, so that grantees can work with experts and one another.



### AK • Grantee Perspective

Because we are a LAV-funded agency, AIJ staff attorneys are able to receive training through the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) in how to provide overlapping civil and immigration legal services to immigrant victims. Attending NIWAP's 2014 training directly helped AIJ's staff attorneys to effectively represent and protect their clients. For example, one of AIJ's LAV-funded staff attorneys used skills learned at that training to use discovery in a custody case to obtain proof of the abuser's U.S. citizenship, and residence with their client in the U.S., for purposes of the client's VAWA self-petition. She also used skills learned at that training to protect her client from questions regarding immigration status during litigation, and effectively argued that her client's lack of status was part of the abuse and weighed against the abuser, rather than AIJ's client, in the custody determination.

ALASKA INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE



### DC • Grantee Perspective

Funds allowed the Healthy Relationships Program (HRP) to continue to utilize technical assistance providers, to successfully develop and implement new program policies and procedures specific to sexual violence advocacy programs. Funds for technical assistance and travel have provided program staff the opportunity to attend local and national trainings on best practices in supporting underserved victims to adopt practices into this program's development, specifically the CLSSP Institute, the National Sexual Assault Conference, and the 8-week sexual assault advocate/hotline counselor training provided by the DC Rape Crisis Center.

LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



### AL • Grantee Perspective

Technical assistance has allowed us to adopt best practices, meet and learn from peer organizations, and develop and strengthen programs. For instance, we visited our peer Caminar Latino for a site visit, and they then came to Alabama to train us on their curriculum about facilitating a support group. Through these visits, we are energized by new ideas and knowledge to drive the work forward.

THE HISPANIC INTEREST COALITION OF ALABAMA

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **223** individual projects, located in **93** provider agencies for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period. Providers may deliver technical assistance in discrete issue areas related to a specific knowledge gap or promising practice, or may manage multiple projects spanning a variety of topics.

- TA projects funded an average of **286** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- **155** (70%) individual TA projects used funds to specifically address underserved populations.

## Training

TA providers offer training events to other VAWA grantees to enhance services for victims of domestic/sexual violence, to improve offender accountability, and to promote coordinated community responses to reduce violence. **This training helps grantees successfully implement projects supported by VAWA grant funds.**

- **182** (82%) TA projects used funds for training.
- TA providers convened a total of **3,918** training events.
- TA providers trained a total of **244,133** people.
- Most often these trainings reached multidisciplinary staff at the same training (**21%**), law enforcement officers (**10%**), domestic violence program staff (**9%**), and attorneys/law students (**7%**).

## Technical Assistance

TA providers deliver technical assistance through site visits, consultations, information responses, and referrals. Assistance may include guidance on developing, revising, and implementing policies, protocols, and procedures; building a coordinated community response and community support; and overcoming barriers to effective service delivery.

- **185** (83%) individual TA projects used funds for technical assistance.
- TA providers delivered a total of **100,660** technical assistance activities.

### Across the 2-year period, TA providers delivered the following forms of assistance:

- A total of **52,550** consultations;
- A total of **38,072** information request responses;
- A total of **8,799** referrals; and
- A total of **1,239** site visits.

## Products

To provide standardized best practices to professionals and organizations, TA providers develop, revise, and distribute a variety of products about domestic/sexual violence, including training curricula, reports, tool kits, and other materials.

- **191** (86%) individual TA projects used funds for products.
- TA providers developed or revised a total of **8,458** products.

## Remaining Areas of Need

TA providers most frequently reported the **need to help grantees provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services and resources to diverse groups of underserved populations**, including:

- Immigrant communities;
- Victims with limited English proficiency;
- Victims with disabilities;
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated victims;
- Members of the Deaf or hard of hearing community;
- LGBT victims;
- American Indian and Alaska Native communities;
- Racial minorities; and
- Seniors.

The need to provide **linguistically appropriate, culturally informed** services was particularly pronounced for **immigrant victims and victims with limited English proficiency (LEP)**. According to TA providers, the **needs of immigrant and LEP victims** included:

- Training for law enforcement on cultural sensitivity and providing adequate translation and interpretation services;
- Training for service providers, court personnel, and attorneys on immigration proceedings, including the U visa application process;
- Improved translation and interpretation services; and
- More bilingual advocates and service providers.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Our TA provider was able to come out and meet with our staff as well as several of our collaborating partners. They led us in a discussion about how sexual assault is viewed in our community and all over Indian Country. During these discussions tribal women began sharing about the sexual exploitation of children in native communities. This opened up an ability to talk about various aspects of how children and families are affected by sexual violence in tribal communities. This technical assistance resulted in the forming of an Advisory Board, an Awareness Campaign, as well as a site visit which opened up a conversation with our community on what may be happening and how we can better reach out, educate, and provide services to child victims and their families.

**PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE SEWA UUSIM SYSTEM OF CARE**



### WI • Grantee Perspective

While many providers, agencies, and professionals working with victims are very eager (and in many cases competent) to work with transgender victims, FORGE is constantly reminded of how limited the knowledge of the majority of professionals is to respectfully or effectively work with transgender victims. Shelters and other traditionally sex-segregated or sex-specific services are struggling with serving transgender victims. As a result -- and the result of trans people so frequently being denied services or made uncomfortable seeking services -- trans victims are often not receiving either post-assault care, or longer-term healing services.

**FORGE, INC., WISCONSIN**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Cultural competency is an area that needs further development in many jurisdictions. Cultural competency and issues of victim safety and offender accountability may not appear directly linked. However, cultural biases, lack of language access, and poor procedural justice in courts result in a system that is confusing and difficult to navigate for victims and offenders alike. Many jurisdictions have no access to culturally specific services at court, making it critical that court personnel receive training in areas like defining cultural competency, immigration, and court culture.

**CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION, NEW YORK**



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Limited English proficient victims are not being adequately served by mainstream programs -- from law enforcement to court systems to mainstream domestic violence organizations, because they continue to fail to provide basic language access. Limited English proficiency (LEP) victims often depend on culturally specific organizations for their multi-lingual, multi-cultural staff and victim-centered approaches, but they have limited resources to meet the immense need of LEP victims who have nowhere else to turn. Even for culturally specific programs designed to serve Asian and other immigrant and refugee communities, as immigration patterns shift globally, many are faced with new refugee populations, primarily from Southeast Asia, with unique cultural and linguistic needs, as well as other challenges related to trauma, poverty, and basic access to healthcare and education.

ASIAN PACIFIC INSTITUTE ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, CALIFORNIA

TA providers discussed the need to **assist service providers, especially non-profit organizations, with organizational management** in order to ensure their long-term sustainability. These needs included:

- Providing adequate staff training and development opportunities;
- Increasing organizational capacity through technical assistance;
- Providing alternative modes of training, including more online and remote training opportunities; and
- Assisting organizations with day-to-day administrative tasks, including grant management and data tracking.

Grantees also underscored the need to take steps to **improve offender accountability, especially in sexual assault cases**. These steps included:

- Better training for law enforcement on the appropriate handling of sexual assault cases;
- Better enforcement of protective orders;
- Community education to combat misconceptions about sexual assault and promote reporting; and
- Greater engagement of prosecutors and courts regarding offender accountability.

Finally, many grantees pointed out that **one of the greatest dangers facing victims of sexual assault and domestic violence is a lack of financial self-sufficiency**. To address this problem, grantees proposed a number of remedies, including:

- More transitional and long-term affordable housing;
- Employment counseling and training;
- Access to reliable transportation; and
- Legal action to address fraud, debt, and identity theft.



### OR • Grantee Perspective

SATF continues to see a need for sexual assault specific training for multidisciplinary responders, specifically for law enforcement. Training is necessary to address law enforcement investigative practices, and crime reports that are not informed by and responsive to what prosecutors need in order to build an effective case for sexual assault crimes. There is a lack of training in which law enforcement learn best practices in response to sexual assault, including effective investigation techniques, which in turn include the ability to recognize, investigate, and prosecute sexual assault crimes within domestic violence situations. We also see a lack of access to ongoing technical support and opportunities for developing a professional, thorough, victim-centered, and trauma-informed collaborative response to sexual assault crimes.

OREGON SEXUAL ASSAULT TASK FORCE



### MD • Grantee Perspective

Victims of domestic and sexual violence experience economic harms that extend far beyond the short-term. They often contend with issues such as debt, ruined credit, loss of housing and employment, and identity theft, all of which can remain long after the abuse has ended. Efforts to maximize victims' future income through services such as financial literacy and employment training provide little sustainable benefit without first addressing the long-term economic harms from which DV/SA victims currently suffer.

CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY AND JUSTICE, MARYLAND



### IA • Grantee Perspective

Many nonprofit grantees excel in services, helping and empowering victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in innumerable ways. However, these same organizations may struggle to operate their organizations efficiently and effectively. Without dedicating energy and resources into organizational management, infrastructure, and staff development, their good works and services are often not sustainable. Specialized training and technical assistance on nonprofit sustainability and management skills are essential to sustaining the organizational capacity of nonprofit grantees.

IOWA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

# Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program

The Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (Transitional Housing Program) funds programs that provide transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related support services to victims, their children, and other dependents.

**THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE** holistic, victim-centered transitional housing services that move individuals to permanent housing.

## 240 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 240 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Transitional Housing Program.

## 3,358 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 3,358 victims, 4,300 children, and 93 other dependents during each 6-month reporting period.

## 1,363,499 Bed Nights

Grantees provided a total of 1,363,499 bed nights to victims, their children, and other dependents.<sup>i</sup>

Grantees provide housing units, rental vouchers, and victim-centered services such as case management, housing advocacy, counseling, job training, child care, transportation, and other assistance. It is crucial that these programs provide a wide range of flexible and optional services that reflect the differences and individual needs of victims, and allow them to choose the best course of action for their specific circumstances. Trained staff work with victims to help them determine and reach their goals for permanent housing.

*Research shows that when victims work to become and remain free from violence, they may experience negative consequences such as limited access to financial resources, potentially escalating violence, and residential instability.<sup>219</sup>*

<sup>i</sup> This number does not include nights spent in housing supported through a voucher or other rental assistance.



#### MN • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this grant, victims of domestic violence in Steele County were forced to endure a series of intolerable situations. They lived with relatives in crowded and often unsafe housing units. They moved to a poorer region with fewer options. In many cases, they continued to live with their abusers. The Transitional Housing grant funding has allowed us to provide victims and their children with the housing that they need. As a result, they have been able to live independently, and to become self-sufficient. They have transformed their lives, by setting and achieving goals in employment, education, budgeting, savings, and permanent housing. In addition, they have set goals for their families, which has given them hope for their futures. They have modeled for their children what it means to live in safety, security, and dignity.

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSING OF STEELE COUNTY,  
MINNESOTA**



#### KS • Grantee Perspective

When women enter the emergency shelter, they are uprooting their lives and just beginning to work on understanding and overcoming the trauma of domestic violence. These victims now have the opportunity to sustain that progress through entering the Transitional Living Program (TLP) and receiving rental assistance, case management, and therapy services. Thanks to the TLP, clients who may otherwise be forced to return to their abusers due to financial limitations are now able to save money and create a more stable and safe environment for themselves and their children.

**SAFEHOME, INC., KANSAS**



#### NH • Grantee Perspective

We have been able to provide rental assistance to clients who would otherwise be unable to obtain safe and stable housing. We have advocated for clients to enter into rental agreements under their own name, with our rental subsidy, in order for them to build good rental history. We have had victims say this is the first time they have felt safe in years, and they are subsequently able to focus on building the lives they had envisioned for themselves. They are able to enroll in school, gain meaningful employment, learn a desired language, and many other activities, which they were unable to access or complete in their unsafe living environments.

**BRIDGES: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL  
VIOLENCE SUPPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

The Transitional Housing Program enhances the safety and security of victims, their children, and other dependents by supporting an array of services that are critical to the provision of temporary housing and the attainment of permanent housing. Purpose areas include:

- Provide transitional housing, including funding for the operating expenses of newly developed or existing transitional housing;
- Provide short-term housing assistance, including rental or utilities payments assistance, and assistance with related expenses such as security deposits and other costs incidental to relocation to transitional housing; and
- Provide support services designed to help victims fleeing violence locate and secure permanent housing and integrate into a community by providing them with services, such as transportation, counseling, child care services, case management, and other assistance.

VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose areas to this program:

- Expand support services to help victims secure employment, via employment counseling, occupational training, job retention counseling, and/or counseling concerning reentry into the workforce.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address them. If an activity falling under the added purpose area could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **240** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **17** (7%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose area:
  - Provided support services, including counseling, transportation, and employment services.

## Provision of Housing

The ability to provide housing is a vital part of supporting victims in leaving their abusers by allowing them to live safely in the community. Grantees note that without housing, a victim must often choose between becoming homeless or remaining with their abuser.

- **206** (86%) grantees used funds to directly support housing units.

Grantees use a variety of strategies to provide housing to victims, their children, and other dependents. Some programs use funds to support either program-owned or -rented units, whereas other programs use rental assistance vouchers to provide housing to victims. During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided victims, children, and other dependents:

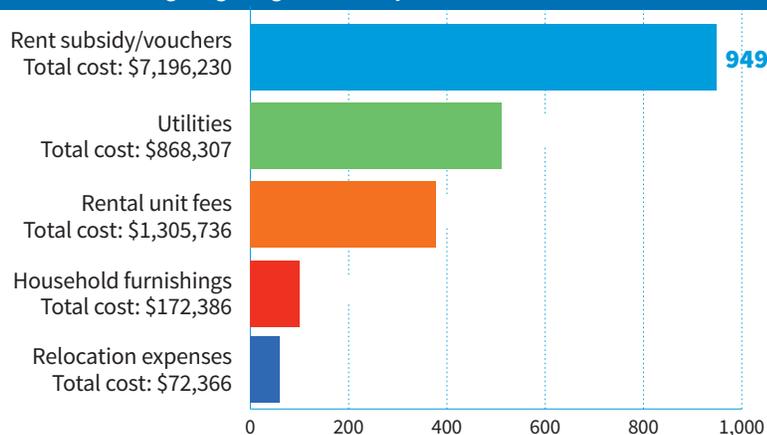
**During each 6-month reporting period, on average, grantees provided victims, children, and other dependents:**

- **393** program-owned housing units;
- **199** program-rented housing units; and
- **881** vouchers/rent subsidies.

## Housing Assistance

In addition to funding housing units, grantees used funds to support other expenses related to housing, such as relocation expenses and utilities.

**Figure 1** Average number of victims provided with housing assistance by Transitional Housing Program grantees, July 2013–June 2015



### IA • Grantee Perspective

The Transitional Housing grant funding has been utilized to provide an array of services designed to meet the needs of domestic violence victims. We currently have eight individual apartment units that are designated for victims in our Compass program. Victims can participate in the transitional living component of our program for up to 2 years. Participants who complete our transitional living program are given the option of remaining in the current rental unit, which becomes a permanent housing option for them. When participants choose this option, we then designate one of the other community rental units for our next transitional housing client. In addition to our transitional housing services, this grant allows us to provide short-term rental assistance (6 months) in an apartment of the participant's choice. In this service, each individual lease is in the client's name and is a permanent housing opportunity. This service is particularly important for victims with children who want to remain in a specific area of town because of their employment, daycare, or school for their children.

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF IOWA-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES, IOWA**



### MA • Grantee Perspective

The lack of English proficiency has been identified as a barrier in obtaining better jobs. In order to get living wage jobs and benefits, clients need to speak English at a higher level. For the past year, the Transitional Housing Director has been overseeing our pilot online English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, which provides classroom support in conjunction with the online program. Clients have said that this English program has been helpful, and administrators from the online program itself have reported that our clients are learning at a more rapid pace than their general constituents that do not have the benefit of classroom support. With increased English proficiency, hopefully clients will be able to access better jobs in the future.

**ASIAN TASK FORCE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, MASSACHUSETTS**

## Increasing Accessibility of Housing and Service

Some programs are able to offer units that are accessible to people with disabilities and/or enhance their programs' accessibility by providing interpretation services, language lines, translation of documents, and/or telecommunication devices for Deaf or hard of hearing victims.

- An average of **626** housing units were accessible to people with disabilities (for example, people who are blind or vision-impaired, people with physical disabilities, and people with diagnosed mental illness, if their activities are so limited) during each 6-month period.
- An average of **18** programs provided services and/or resources to victims with limited English-language proficiency and/or those who are Deaf or hard of hearing.



### CA • Grantee Perspective

This additional program funding has allowed us to staff a multidisciplinary team that helps address our clients' identified needs and barriers from multiple professional backgrounds. Thus, we are able to provide comprehensive services to our clients that include counseling, mental health services and individual therapy, support groups, case management, parenting support, and advocacy on multiple levels. In increasing the amount of supportive and follow up services (support groups, case management, vocational/school re-entry support), we have been able to streamline referral processes and access to quality care, and have created strong linkages to other community resources and partners as needed by our clients.

#### PROTOTYPES-STAR HOUSE, CALIFORNIA



### DE • Grantee Perspective

An important advantage of the Transitional Housing funding is the level of local housing expertise that it infuses into our entire domestic violence program. There are multiple Housing Authorities and there are many independent housing units, each with different criteria, income guidelines, and applications. This system is often confusing to victims and staff. Having a highly-trained Transitional Coordinator who is well-versed in all of these units is a benefit to all victims who are accessing transitional services.

#### PEOPLE'S PLACE II, INC., DELAWARE

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide direct services to victims, children, and other dependents, as well as program administration. **Being able to hire staff is critical for the overall function and success of programs.**

- **234** (98%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **204** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support case managers and program coordinators.

**Table 1** Staff supported with Transitional Housing grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>204</b>	
Case managers	84	41%
Program coordinators	31	15%
Housing advocates	22	11%
Victim advocates	15	7%
Transitional services advocates	15	7%
Administrators	13	6%

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Services for Victims, Children, and Other Dependents

Grantees provide an array of support services to victims, their children, and other dependents to locate, secure, and maintain permanent housing and economic stability. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **235** (98%) grantees used funds for services provided to victims, their children, and other dependents.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **3,358** victims, **4,300** children, and **93** other dependents during each 6-month period.
- **73%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

## Support Services for Victims

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Case management services to **2,842** victims;
- Housing advocacy services to **2,002** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **1,658** victims;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **1,637** victims;
- Financial counseling services to **1,572** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **1,563** victims;
- Victim advocacy services (e.g. assistance obtaining healthcare or social services) to **1,548** victims;
- Transportation services to **1,224** victims; and
- Employment counseling services to **1,097** victims.

## Support Services for Children and Other Dependents

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Case management services to **1,844** children and other dependents;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **1,393** children and other dependents;
- Children's activities to **1,038** children;
- Advocacy services (e.g. assistance obtaining healthcare or social services) to **1,036** children and other dependents;
- Transportation services to **764** children and other dependents;
- Support group/counseling services to **754** children and other dependents; and
- Crisis intervention services to **738** children and other dependents.



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Transitional Housing grant funding continues to provide us with the capacity to build partnerships with local child care programs in the community. We created a list of culturally and linguistically sensitive child care programs and continue to provide information and resources to our participants to locate on-site job readiness classes and off-site job trainings. Through this funding, our program participants can choose the child care program in the community that is the most convenient for them, and the Transitional Housing Program offers a monthly subsidy of \$100 per child towards child care expenses. This subsidy helps participants tremendously, and gives our participants time to find work or search for employment while their children are in child care.

**THE KOREAN AMERICAN FAMILY SERVICE CENTER,  
NEW YORK**



### VA • Grantee Perspective

With the addition of Transitional Housing grant funds, we were able to hire a full-time Project Coordinator, offer increased counseling and services, and partner with other community organizations to offer additional services. Beginning this year, each resident is offered individual counseling sessions and individual case management. Group counseling sessions are offered weekly. Twice each month residents are offered a financial empowerment group as well as individual financial counseling. In addition to formal groups, Transitional Housing grant funds have afforded us the staff and resources to offer informal group activities and family group activities. Each month we offer community meetings, coffee hours, cookouts, and other special events to bring the residents together. Our newest addition is a community garden. These informal activities create opportunities for wider participation -- sometimes attracting residents who are otherwise unwilling to attend formal group sessions. They also provide staff with greater insight into what residents' needs are and allow us to be more responsive. Accordingly, in the coming months, we will be adding employment readiness workshops, a group for older victims, and a stress management group.

**WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER OF NEW RIVER VALLEY,  
VIRGINIA**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving this funding we were only able to provide safe support housing to single victims of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), 16-21 years old, leaving a vast number of our parents and older members without access to CSE-specific and independent-style supportive housing. This grant has awarded us the opportunity to provide six additional beds to victims aged 18-24 years old and their children in a more independent-style housing program.

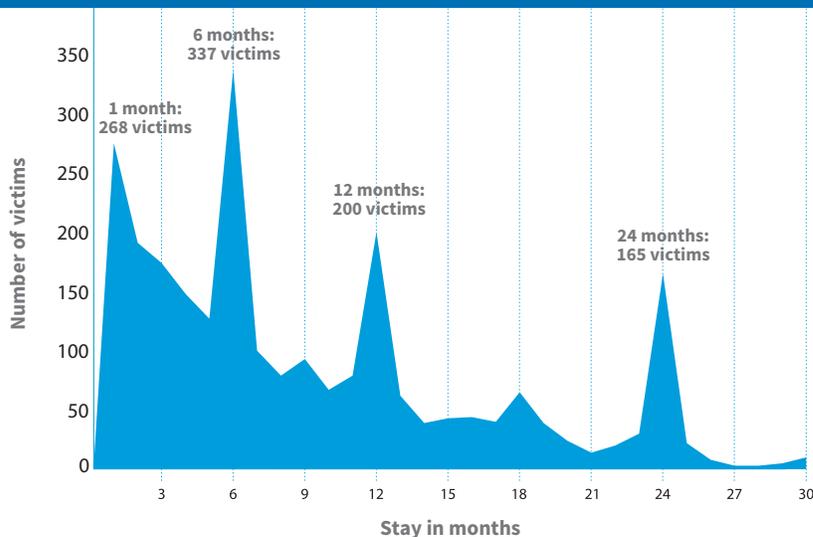
#### GIRLS EDUCATIONAL AND MENTORING SERVICES, NEW YORK

**Table 2** Victims, children, and other dependents sheltered with Transitional Housing grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Transitional housing	Number of people (6-month average)	Number of bed nights (2-year total)
Victims	1,170	544,666
Children	1,610	803,038
Other dependents	31	15,795
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,811</b>	<b>1,363,499</b>

**NOTE:** These numbers do not include victims, children, or other dependents receiving housing through a voucher or other rental assistance.

**Figure 2** Victims and their families' length of stay in transitional housing in months, June 2013–July 2015



## Victims, Children, and Other Dependents Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence.

**Table 3** Victims seeking services with Transitional Housing grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average					
	Victims		Children		Other dependents	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>4,623</b>		<b>5,736</b>		<b>99</b>	
Victims served	2,934	63%	3,823	67%	85	86%
Victims partially served	424	9%	478	8%	9	9%
Victims not served	1,265	27%	1,436	25%	6	6%

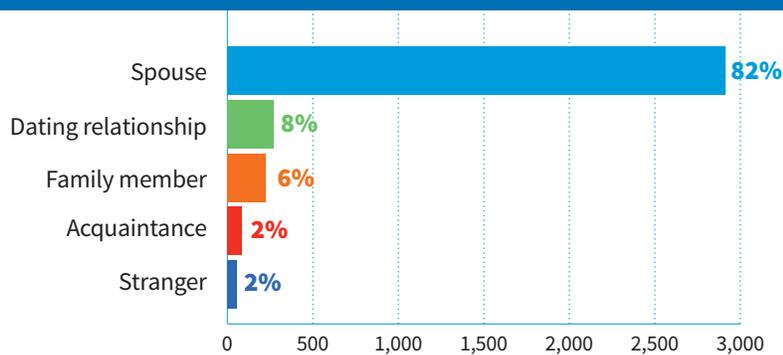
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims, children, and other dependents who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Transitional Housing Program grant. "Not served" represents victims, children, and other dependents who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Transitional Housing Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (82%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (8%) or by another **family or household member** (6%).

**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 reporting period, grantees reported that an average of **982** victims, **1,128** children, and **5** other dependents were not served or were only partially **served solely due to a lack of available housing**.

Grantees most frequently noted the following additional barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program reached capacity;
- Services were not appropriate for party(ies);
- Victim did not meet statutory requirements;
- Program rules not acceptable to party(ies); or
- Services not available based on family composition.

## Demographics of Victims, Children, and Other Dependents Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **3,358** victims, **4,300** children, and **93** other dependents during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (45%), **female** (99%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (84%).

**Table 4** Demographic characteristics of victims, children, and other dependents served with Transitional Housing grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Characteristic	6-month average					
	Victims		Children		Other dependents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Race</b>						
American Indian and Alaska Native	188	6%	268	6%	2	3%
Asian	144	4%	129	3%	6	7%
Black or African American	929	28%	1,429	34%	26	29%
Hispanic or Latino	593	18%	945	23%	31	35%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	52	2%	66	2%	5	5%
White	1,500	45%	1,525	37%	20	23%
Unknown (missing)	56		128		5	
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	3,325	99%	2,133	50%	51	57%
Male	29	1%	2,113	50%	39	43%
Total	3,354		4,245		90	
Unknown (missing)	5		55		4	
<b>Age</b>						
0–6	-	-	2,131	50%	-	-
7–12	-	-	1,415	33%	-	-
13–17	3	< 1%	692	16%	-	-
18–24	454	14%	-	-	74	83%
25–59	2,789	84%	-	-	10	11%
60+	84	3%	-	-	5	6%
Total	3,330		4,238		88	
Unknown (missing)	29		63		5	
<b>Other</b>						
People with disabilities	614	18%	197	5%	10	11%
People with limited English proficiency	441	13%	225	5%	8	9%
People who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	433	13%	169	4%	9	9%
People who live in rural areas	790	24%	925	21%	16	17%

## Transitional Housing and Destination Upon Exit

Grant funds can be used to house victims for up to 24 months.<sup>ii</sup> Grantees reported that victims most often moved to permanent housing of their choosing, after their stay in grant-funded housing.



### NY • Grantee Perspective

During this 6-month period, five participants were able to benefit from follow-up services. Of those five participants, four of them utilized civil-legal advocacy and court accompaniment for custody, support, and divorce proceedings. While participants are able to transition into permanent housing and obtain economic self-sufficiency, legal proceedings can remain a part of victims' lives for years to come, especially if they have children in common with their abuser. Additionally, these proceedings can be exceedingly stressful and traumatic for victims, as they must face their abusers in court. Follow-up services have allowed for the housing specialist to continue supporting the participants as they endure lengthy court proceedings. Participants appreciate being able to depend on the support of the housing specialist they have come to know and trust during their time in transitional housing.

CAYUGA/SENECA COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY,  
NEW YORK

Destination upon exit	2-year total
Permanent housing of choice (Section 8, return to home, rent or purchase housing)	1,869
Temporary housing with family or friend	261
Transitional housing (not grant-funded program)	90
Healthcare facility/substance abuse treatment program	37
Hotel or motel	22
Domestic violence emergency shelter	17
Incarceration/jail	17
Homeless emergency shelter	17
Unknown	165

## Victims' Perception of Risk of Violence Upon Exit

Victims most often reported perceiving a lower risk of violence (88%) after their stay in Transitional Housing grant-funded housing units.

Perception about risk of future violence	2-year total	
Lower risk of violence	1,888	88%
Equal risk of violence	141	7%
Greater risk of violence	16	1%
Does not know	199	5%
Unknown	362	

## Follow-up Support Services

If grantees use funds for housing units and support services, they are required to provide a minimum of 3 months follow-up services to victims after their stay in transitional housing units. These follow-up services are intended to continue to connect victims and their families with assistance from the program.

- **208** (87%) grantees used funds for follow-up services.



### VA • Grantee Perspective

We have continued to provide transition assistance in the form of follow-up support service for former participants who have moved to permanent housing. These follow-up support services help address some of the adjustment issues they might have before they reach crisis level, and it facilitates stability and reduces the chances of future homelessness. Through Journeys' follow-up after care services, we were able to prevent three former participants from going back to homelessness. Of the three, two reached out to the program and requested rental assistance to enable them to pay their rents. A Journeys' case manager advocated and connected the other client to the Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning System that provided needed funds to help her maintain her housing. Another former participant attended a 2-year community college when she graduated from Journeys, and continued in her education, completing her associate degree program. A Journeys' case manager helped her to transition to a 4-year college. She will be returning to school this fall, taking classes in Biological Engineering. All our former clients still living within United Community Ministries' (UCM) service areas are still eligible to access other UCM programs, including our weekly food pantry; energy assistance, both in the winter and summer months; thrift store discounts; back-to-school supplies; and the Christmas/Holiday room gift program. These follow-up support services have continued to provide needed support that our graduate families need.

UNITED COMMUNITY MINISTRIES, INC., VIRGINIA

<sup>ii</sup> By statute, a grantee may waive the 24-month restriction for no more than 6 months for victims who have made a good-faith effort to acquire permanent housing but have been unable to do so.

**During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:**

- Case management services to **494** victims and **290** children and other dependents;
- Housing advocacy services to **248** victims and **63** children and other dependents;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **206** victims and **157** children and other dependents;
- Victim advocacy services to **205** victims and **110** children and other dependents;
- Support group/counseling services to **167** victims and **90** children and other dependents;
- Crisis intervention services to **165** victims and **92** children and other dependents; and
- Transportation services to **124** victims and **81** children and other dependents.

**WA • Grantee Perspective**

Safe, affordable housing is scarce and competitive in Seattle and the surrounding areas. This shortage is further exacerbated by the barriers many of our clients face, such as poor credit history, evictions, insufficient income, lack of employment, and safety concerns. For victims, having to move further away from Seattle, sometimes to the edges of King County and beyond, has resulted in even more challenges. For example, they become isolated from support networks, have to change service providers, and may have to travel far to work or school.

**THE SALVATION ARMY HICKMAN HOUSE,  
WASHINGTON**

**GA • Grantee Perspective**

The needs of immigrant victims of domestic violence for immigration relief, access to housing, employment, transportation, and child care remains great in our region. These factors make it more difficult for an immigrant victim to leave her/his abuser than for victims with work permits, social security numbers, and driver's licenses.

**CHEROKEE FAMILY VIOLENCE CENTER, GEORGIA**

**Remaining Areas of Need**

Grantees cited **access to safe and affordable permanent housing** as the biggest obstacle confronting victims of domestic/sexual violence.

In addition to **high prices and low availability of rental units**, victims encountered **additional challenges to securing housing**, including:

- Long waitlists for Section 8 and public housing;
- No credit or poor credit history;
- Inability to meet the income requirements of landlords and property managers;
- A history of evictions;
- The presence of a criminal background; and
- Outstanding debt.

These challenges sometimes pushed victims into housing that was **unsafe, outside their target area, or poorly maintained**.

Grantees also cited difficulty in **helping clients secure employment that provided a living wage**. Challenges included:

- High unemployment rates in service areas;
- Lack of training and/or education;
- Little or no employment history;
- An inability to secure child care, especially for nighttime shifts; and
- Inadequate access to reliable transportation.

Finding employment and housing was particularly difficult for **underserved populations**, including:

- American Indians/Alaska Natives;
- Immigrants, especially those with limited English proficiency or those in the process of obtaining legal status;
- LGBT populations;
- Victims of sex trafficking; and
- People with disabilities.

Grantees emphasized the need to **provide additional services to victims to promote self-sufficiency**, such as:

- Affordable or pro bono civil legal services;
- Mental healthcare and substance abuse counseling;
- Financial education; and
- Job training, employment counseling, and education.



#### **AZ • Grantee Perspective**

Fair wage employment opportunities continue to remain an obstacle. Individual employment barriers that are often seen with victims (sporadic work history, lack of employable skills, transportation issues, child care, etc.) are compounded by histories of those with co-occurring issues, including substance abuse, mental health, and trauma or abuse histories. Other factors such as physical health, legal issues, safety issues, and schedules often mandated by various systems (i.e. probation, parole, child protective services, etc.) often make immediate employability problematic, and economic self-sufficiency goals more difficult.

**NATIONAL ADVOCACY AND TRAINING NETWORK,  
ARIZONA**



#### **MS • Grantee Perspective**

Lack of child care hinders many women in obtaining employment and for those that are employed, it limits the flexibility they might need with their work schedules. While this grant does provide some funding for child care services, there is a lack in availability of child care agencies in this area that provide non-traditional hours of service. Many individuals served by this program work nights, weekends, and holidays. These issues continue to inhibit individuals and families from being successful in maintaining permanent housing after leaving an abusive relationship.

**GULF COAST WOMEN'S CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE,  
MISSISSIPPI**



# Grants to Support Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions

The Grants to Support Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions (Tribal Coalitions Program) builds the capacity of nonprofit, nongovernmental tribal coalitions, to end domestic/sexual violence in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities.

**COALITIONS CONSIST PRIMARILY OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS** (e.g. sexual assault programs, domestic violence programs, tribal victim services agencies, and other victim services agencies) but may also include individual members. The Tribal Coalitions Program enhances the safety of victims by supporting projects uniquely designed to address domestic/sexual violence amongst American Indian and Alaska Native women.

## 20 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 20 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Tribal Coalitions Program.

## 7,767 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 7,767 people.

## 2,381 Technical Assistance Activities

Grantees provided 1,960 consultations and 421 site visits.

Tribal Coalition grantees play a number of roles in responding to domestic/sexual violence: they serve as governing or organizing bodies for local agencies; they advocate for policy, legislation, or practice changes; and support collaboration between agencies to improve access to critical services for American Indian and Alaska Native women.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This funding allows us to provide a voice for Native victims of sexual violence. It also allows us to bring Advocates together to reduce isolation, to train them, provide community awareness, and to engage victims in a meaningful way.

MINNESOTA INDIAN WOMEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT COALITION



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The current funding has allowed our Tribal Coalition to continue our services, maintain our office, and expand our staff. More importantly the funding for Strong Hearted Native Women's Coalition has provided our communities, families, and Tribal governments with a unified tribal women's voice. This funding has allowed nine reservations to come together and be representatives for their women and young girls. Our services and technical assistance have expanded outside of the nine reservations and spread throughout San Diego County encompassing 18 reservations.

STRONG HEARTED NATIVE WOMEN'S COALITION, INC.

## Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence in AI/AN communities;
- Enhance the response at the tribal, federal, and state levels; and
- Identify and provide technical assistance (TA) to coalition members and tribal communities to improve access to critical services.

## VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose areas to the program:

- Assist Indian tribes and tribal leadership in developing and promoting state, local, and tribal legislation and policies that enhance best practices for responding to these forms of violence.

This purpose area was implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address it. If an activity falling under the added purpose area could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **20** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- The majority of grantees (**90%**) were dual sexual assault/domestic violence coalitions.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose area:
  - Increased awareness of domestic/dating violence and sexual assault against American Indian and Alaska Native women.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, education, and technical assistance to help end domestic/sexual violence in AI/AN communities and hold offenders accountable. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **20** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **33** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support administrators and program coordinators.

**Table 1**Staff supported with Tribal Coalitions grant funds,  
July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>33</b>	
Administrators	12	36%
Program coordinators	7	21%
Support staff	6	20%
Trainers/educators	4	11%
Communications specialists	1	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

**Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

The Coalition's grant funding allows tribal domestic violence advocates to receive training that is focused on being Native-specific. Every training that the Sacred Hoop Coalition provides is built around the reality of Native victims, and instead of being a special topic covered at a mainstream domestic violence training, it is at the core of the training. Advocates can feel free in this environment to discuss what is happening within their tribal communities without fear of judgment or misunderstanding. This allows coalition members to receive the help and service that they need in order to create safe and accessible programs for Native victims of domestic violence.

**MENDING THE SACRED HOOP****Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

First, because of the isolation -- geographically and in staff numbers -- of tribal programs on reservations and in urban areas, there are few opportunities for advocates to receive training on advocacy skills. Oftentimes advocates begin their position and are greeted with an empty office and little to no training. There is no continuity from one advocate to the next, and the new advocate is left to figure their job out on their own. The most requested training from the Sacred Hoop Coalition is from its members, to frame what advocacy is and to provide education on the direct skills necessary to provide services to victims. When advocates receive this type of training it builds their confidence and improves the response to Native victims seeking services.

**MENDING THE SACRED HOOP**

## Training

Grantees train professionals to improve their response to AI/AN victims of domestic/sexual violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **17** (85%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **271** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **7,767** people.
- Most often these trainings reached domestic violence program staff (**20%**), multidisciplinary staff at the same training (**17%**), tribal government/tribal government agency staff (**7%**), and sexual assault program staff (**7%**).

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide information and outreach to communities to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. Outreach activities can include distributing information at community gatherings such as powwows, basket-weaving and beading circles, bake sales, and parades. **Community education and outreach activities can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.**<sup>i</sup>

- **19** (95%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees convened a total of **331** education events.
- Grantees educated a total of **14,810** people.
- Most often this education reached community members (**44%**), students (**21%**), tribal elders (**7%**), and tribal government/tribal agency staff (**7%**).

<sup>i</sup> Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables an individual to improve his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Collaboration between tribal programs and non-Native programs is an area that continues to need work. With the recent closure of one of the three tribally operated shelter programs, it will be critical that tribal programs continue to work with their non-Native counterparts to ensure that the needs of Native women are being met. Cultural competency is also critically important, as our tribal communities work with the non-Native local programs.

UNITING THREE FIRES AGAINST VIOLENCE



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Protection orders are another area that we continue to have issues with in Oklahoma. We still have instances where tribal protection orders are not given full faith and credit. We have also experienced state court personnel advising victims to go ahead and file for an order of protection through the state court when they already have a valid protection order through their tribal court.

NATIVE ALLIANCE AGAINST VIOLENCE



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Another area of significant need is services specifically designed for the LGBT community with consideration for how these services should be offered in terms of being inclusive, culturally responsive, and comprehensive.

SOUTHWEST INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S COALITION



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Community engagement in victim assistance and offender accountability, such as changing community norms and sensitizing families to violence, is a significant area of need. Victim safety and assistance would improve greatly if our communities would stand strong against violence.

STRONG HEARTED NATIVE WOMEN'S COALITION, INC.

## Technical Assistance

Grantees provide technical assistance to help other professionals and organizations improve their response to AI/AN victims and develop their organizational infrastructures, through site visits and consultations. Assistance may include developing or enhancing culturally appropriate services, building a coordinated community response and community support, and supporting victim service administration and operations.

- **18** (90%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees provided a total of **2,381** technical assistance activities.

### Across the 2-year period, providers most frequently delivered the following forms of assistance:

- A total of **1,960** consultations; and
- A total of **421** site visits.

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited a need for **ongoing staff training because of high turnover** among advocates and other program staff.

Grantees also felt that more training was needed on **trauma-informed response, especially when working with American Indian/Alaska Native victims** among:

- Tribal leadership and courts;
- Law enforcement and first responders;
- State courts; and
- Native and non-native service providers.

Furthermore, **outdated tribal codes and jurisdictional issues between tribal, state, and local government** often hampered grantees' ability to **hold offenders accountable for their actions**.

Many grantees underscored the need to **provide services and advocacy to underserved populations**, including:

- Youth;
- Elders; and
- The LGBT community.

Finally, grantees emphasized the need for **community outreach and education in order to address common misconceptions** about domestic/sexual violence and to **increase awareness of available services**.

# Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program

The goals and objectives of the Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program (Tribal Governments Program) are to decrease the number of violent crimes (sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking) against American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women and girls, assist Indian tribes in using their sovereign authority to respond to those crimes, and ensure that people who commit violent crimes against AI/AN women are held responsible for their actions through a strong coordinated community response.

## 252 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 252 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Tribal Governments Program.

## 6,768 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 6,768 victims and 3,336 children during each 6-month reporting period.

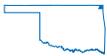
## 1,563 Cases Investigated

Grantees investigated a total of 1,563 cases, and referred 1,330 cases to prosecutors.

## Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Develop and enhance culturally competent governmental strategies to reduce violent crimes against and increase the safety of Indian women;
- Increase tribal capacity to respond to victims of domestic/sexual violence;
- Strengthen tribal justice interventions, including tribal law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, and correctional facilities;
- Enhance services to Indian women victimized by domestic/sexual violence;
- Develop a community response regarding the education and prevention;
- Protect the safety of victims and their children by providing supervised visitation and safe visitation exchange;
- Provide transitional housing, support services, and financial assistance to victims; and
- Provide legal assistance to victims seeking justice.

*A nationally representative study found that AI/AN women were 1.2 times more likely to experience domestic violence than non-Hispanic white women.<sup>264</sup>*



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Currently, and in the past, our tribe has not been willing to put funds toward this project. However, our governing body is beginning to admit the severity of this issue for our tribe (and local community) and the significant impact we have been able to make. With these funds we have been able to: 1) Open the first ESTOO Family Violence Prevention Office; 2) Hire a full-time advocate and a part-time institutional advocate/director; 3) Train the staff we have hired to be advocates on a cultural and local level and to think about social justice and social change; 4) Provide advocacy and long-term transitional housing assistance; and 5) Create an education and awareness campaign to spread the word about our services and support, while at the same time beginning to chip away at the idea that abuse toward women is something that is a product of their gender.

**EASTERN SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The Chugach Women's Violence Intervention (CWVI) Project is committed to providing the women of the Chugach region with a plan for safety, recovery, and a life free from violence. Without the support of the Tribal Governments Program, there would be no funded staff to work towards these aims. Without Tribal Governments Program funding women's healing events cultivating community across the region would be few and far between. The chance for victims to make connections in other villages -- during the history of the CWVI Project -- has proven to promote healing and lessen feelings of isolation.

**CHUGACHMIUT**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The service areas that the grant covers do not have any other programs specific to Native victims and most of our cases have Native involvement with either the victim, the offender, or the children being Native American. Our Tribal Governments Program encourages and supports Native victims, increases offender accountability (regardless of race), and teaches our Native children that violence is not our way of life, and that healthy relationships are safe, violence free, and deserved by everyone.

**IOWA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA**

## VAWA 2013 added the following purpose areas to the program:

- Expand primary victimization to include sex trafficking;
- Address the needs of youth victims, including providing support to their non-abusing parent or caretaker; and
- Develop and promote legislation and policies that enhance best practices for responding to domestic/sexual violence against Indian women.

These purpose areas were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address them. If an activity falling under one of the added purpose areas could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **252** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Enhanced services to Indian women victimized by domestic/sexual violence;
  - Increased tribal capacity to respond to crimes against Indian women; and
  - Worked in cooperation with the community to develop education and prevention strategies directed toward issues of domestic/sexual violence and addressed the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, training, outreach, supervised visitation, law enforcement, prosecution, probation, court services, and batterer intervention programs, among other services, to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **245** (97%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **406** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and administrators.

**Table 1** Staff supported with Tribal Governments grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>406</b>	
Victim advocates	<b>165</b>	<b>41%</b>
Administrators	<b>51</b>	<b>13%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>46</b>	<b>11%</b>
Support staff	<b>21</b>	<b>5%</b>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed the Tribe to hire a dedicated person (via contract and now staff), to address the issues of violence against its women and girls. Having someone with no other responsibility except to address this issue has given the women and girls in the tribal community a voice. They were able to tell their stories so that the community, administration, and leaders fully understood how they were being violated. That understanding encouraged the Tribal Council to form the Task Force with the sole task of recommending program services that will work. The Task Force listened to the voices of the women of the community and created a program that would always empower and give space and voice to women. The end result is the Wampanoag Women's Center: A Harbor for the Women of the First Light. This Women's Center is a safe space meant to empower and restore the women of the Wampanoag Tribe in a cultural way that is directed by them.

WAMPANOAG TRIBE OF GAY HEAD AQUINNAH



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

We are 100% confidential, but on occasion, a victim asks if they can speak at our community events. The victim stories are powerful and seem to help others to tie together how our services indeed help those in need. Many of our events were recorded by our communications department and a YouTube video was made that plays on TV sites around the Cherokee Nation and community.

CHEROKEE NATION



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This grant is allowing us to educate service providers about domestic/sexual violence intervention and prevention strategies, about Native traditions, history, customs, and beliefs. Trainings for Kodiak professionals on understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault, the cycle of violence, the importance of its intervention and prevention, as well as the cultural competency of serving Native women who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence and/or sexual assault, were developed specifically for those groups and utilized, thanks to this funding. The funding has allowed us to conduct outreach towards the Native Community. We have successful experience of educating our people about domestic violence and its roots. A promising dialogue has begun among our tribal members; we can foresee a future without violence and a return to Alutiiq traditional heritage.

SUNAQ TRIBE OF KODIAK

## Training

Grantees train a wide range of professionals, from tribal elders and spiritual leaders to health professionals and victim advocates, among others, how to develop an effective coordinated community response to violence.

**This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **147** (58%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **814** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **15,778** people.
- Most often these trainings reached tribal government/tribal government agency staff (**12%**), multidisciplinary staff at the same training (**11%**), and victim advocates (**11%**).

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide information and outreach to the community to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. Outreach activities can include distributing information at community gatherings such as powwows, basket-weaving and beading circles, bake sales, and parades. **Community education and outreach activities can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.**<sup>i</sup>

- **204** (81%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **215,569** people.
- Grantees conducted a total of **5,209** outreach activities.

<sup>i</sup>Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables an individual to improve his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This funding has allowed us to facilitate consistent and ongoing groups with youth and women in our community. This has increased our ability to be proactive in educating our communities on domestic violence, to recognize warning signs, to provide resources and prevention methods for those affected. We have also been able to build better collaborative efforts within the community, discuss topics not previously acknowledged, and enhance services to victims of domestic violence. The cultural component is very important to maintain, as the teenagers are energized by having the drum and singing available, and that gives them a sense of belonging and connection, and broadens their willingness to participate and learn.

**RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

We have provided direct services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children, including, but not limited to: civil legal advocacy, crisis intervention and counseling, safety and self-sufficiency planning, education and support, transportation, planning and referrals for employment, social services, healthcare, child care, parenting education, support systems, and networking. We believe we are making an impact not only on our tribal members but on the entire Kodiak community, in changing people's perceptions that domestic violence is not a family matter, it is a community matter, and that it's our responsibility to protect the well-being of victims and their children by sending the message that the abuser's behavior is not acceptable and we will not tolerate it.

**SUNAK TRIBE OF KODIAK**

**Table 2** People educated with Tribal Governments grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups

Community members educated	2-year total	
<b>Total community members educated</b>	<b>215,569</b>	
Community members	111,524	52%
Students	46,036	21%
Parents/guardians	13,250	6%
Community groups	9,716	5%

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims and their children, including safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **213** (85%) grantees used funds for victim services.

Grantees provide victims with a wide range of services, including victim advocacy, civil legal advocacy, and crisis intervention. Victims also need assistance with material goods and services, as well as health, education, financial, transportation, employment, and legal issues. In addition, grantees provide a variety of services to victims' children, including, but not limited to, child care, transportation, and counseling.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **6,768** victims during each 6-month period.
- **98%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.
- Grantees also provided a total of **43,778** services to an average of **3,336** children of victims during the 2-year reporting period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Victim advocacy services to **4,497** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **3,065** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **2,375** victims;
- Transportation services to **1,936** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **1,697** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy services to **1,055** victims; and
- Cultural advocacy services to **1,050** victims.

**Other services:**

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **36,053** times; and
- Grantees received a total of **84,712** hotline calls.

**Across the 2-year period, grantees most frequently provided the following services:<sup>ii</sup>**

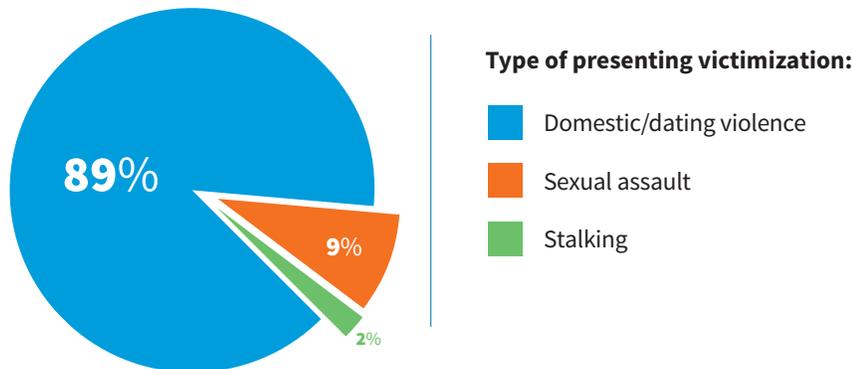
- Victim advocacy services **110,836** times;
- Support group/counseling services **39,430** times;
- Transportation services **28,846** times;
- Crisis intervention **24,337** times;
- Civil legal advocacy **16,582** times;
- Cultural advocacy **10,667** times; and
- Criminal justice advocacy **10,374** times.

**Victims Seeking Services**

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (89%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Tribal Governments Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization  
**Victims served by type of victimization** (6-month average)



<sup>ii</sup> The Tribal Governments Program is unique in that grantees are asked to report the number of times each type of service is provided. This allows for the reporting of an unduplicated count of number of services, despite the duplicated count of number of victims served.

**Table 3** Victims seeking services with Tribal Governments grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

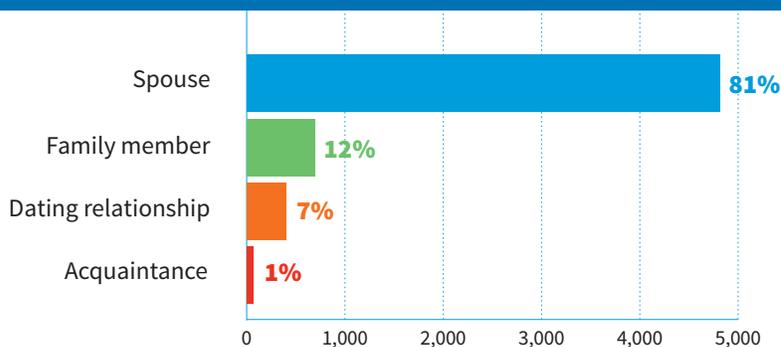
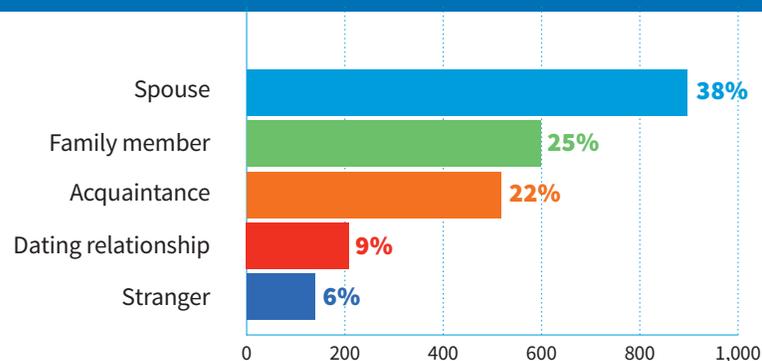
Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>6,919</b>	
Victims served	6,325	91%
Victims partially served	444	6%
Victims not served	151	2%

**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Tribal Governments Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Tribal Governments Program grant.

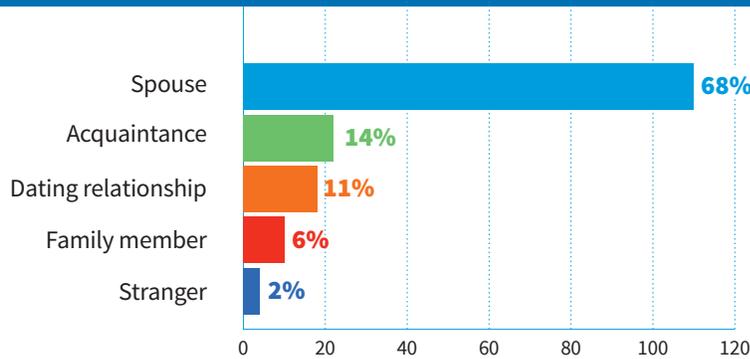
## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (77%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by another **family or household member** (13%) or in the context of a **dating relationship** (7%).

**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic/dating violence****Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**

**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**



### Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

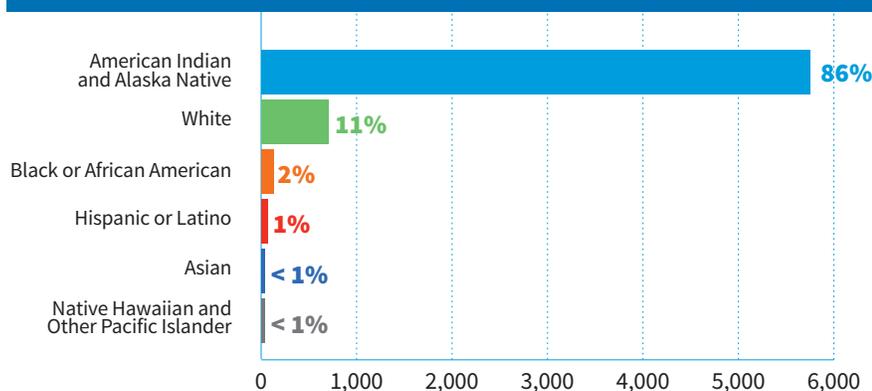
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

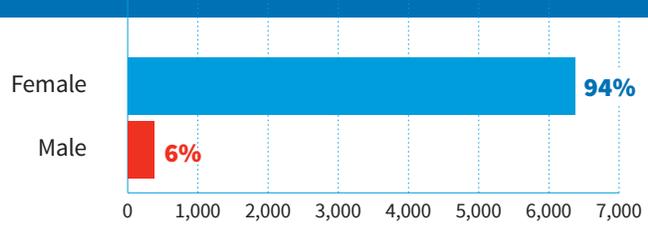
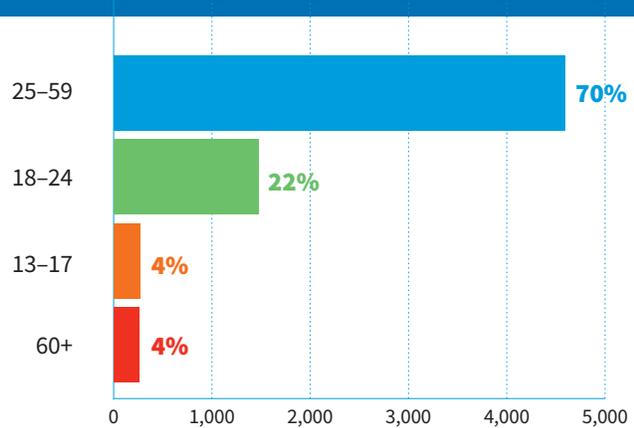
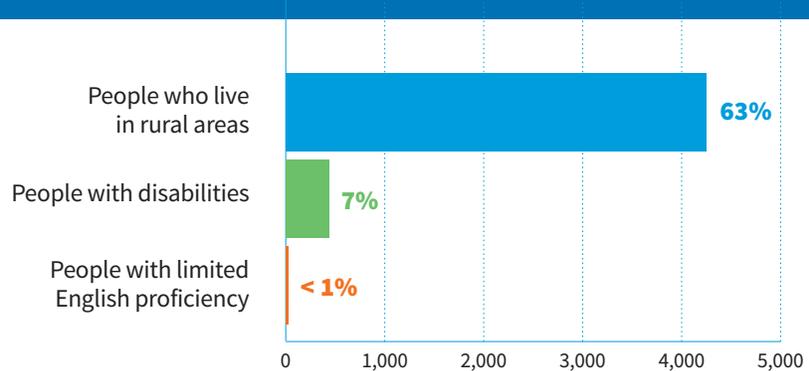
- Victim did not meet statutory requirements;
- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Program unable to provide service due to limited resources;
- Program rules not acceptable to victim;
- Services were not appropriate for victims with substance abuse issues; or
- Program reached capacity.

### Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **6,768** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **American Indian or Alaska Native** (86%), **female** (94%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (70%).

**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

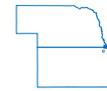
## Shelter/Transitional Housing Assistance

Grantees provide emergency shelter or transitional housing to victims and their family members. Emergency shelter can include nights in safe houses or hotel/motel accommodations.

- **153** (61%) grantees used funds for shelter/transitional housing services.

**Table 4** Victims sheltered with Tribal Governments grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Shelter services	Victims (6-month average)	Family members (6-month average)	Bed nights (2-year total)
Emergency shelter	962	1,137	163,264
Transitional housing	312	470	181,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,273</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>344,436</b>



**Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

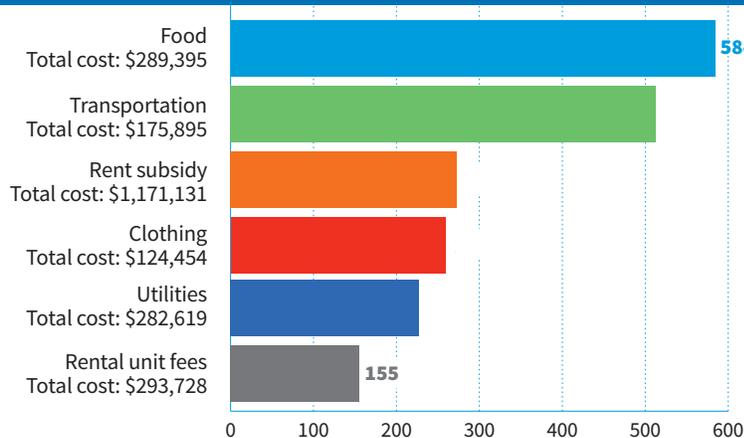
Prior to these funds, social services staff would serve clients through advocacy and support as much as possible, but had nothing but referrals to offer in times of crisis. Referrals to safe houses that were nearly always already full, and located over an hour away, were not appropriate to meet the needs of tribal families in this area when they were in a crisis situation. Those times of crisis are when clients are most motivated to seek assistance and that is a critical time to provide the education and support needed by the victim. Shelter is the most common urgent need for victims of domestic violence. Being able to assist with this need engages the client in the program services and builds rapport between the client and staff who were there to help them during their urgent time of need.

**THE SAC AND FOX NATION OF MISSOURI**

## Housing Assistance

In addition to transitional housing, grantees assist victims with expenses for transportation, food, clothing, security deposits, rent, utilities, and relocation costs to enable them to maintain or procure housing.

**Figure 9** Average number of victims provided with housing assistance by Tribal Governments Program grantees, July 2013–June 2015



## Legal Services

Grant-funded lawyers, paralegals, and specially appointed advocates provide legal services to victims.

- **63** (25%) grantees used funds for legal services.
- Grantees addressed an average of **763** legal issues during each 6-month reporting period.
- Grantees provided legal services to an average of **492** victims every 6 months.
- Grantees provided multiple instances of legal services to an average of **200** victims every 6 months (41% of those receiving legal services).
- Grantees achieved a total of **3,233** case outcomes.
- Most grantees provided legal assistance with protection orders and custody/visitation arrangements.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

We are able to provide victims of domestic violence free civil legal services. Often victims do not have the funds available or access to the funds to retain representation for civil legal issues such as protection orders, divorce, custody, paternity establishment, child support establishment, or any other legal issues that arise out of the DV. This is especially true for Native American victims of DV. We are able to help ensure that victims have a legal advocate for their rights. When victims are not legally represented in legal matters, the DV is allowed to continue. The abuser still has an immense amount of power and control, including the financial resources to hire an attorney. By providing victims with free representation in civil legal matters, we are supporting them and allowing them to take back some of the power to control their lives and their futures and the futures of their children.

LEGAL AID OF NEBRASKA

## Supervised Visitation

Grantees provide an array of supervised visitation and/or exchange services to families. These services include, but are not limited to, one-on-one supervised visits, group supervised visits, supervised exchanges, and telephone monitoring.

- **13** (5%) grantees used funds for supervised visitation and/or exchange services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **26** families during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of families who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### Across the 2-year period, grantees provided the following services:

- A total of **586** supervised exchanges to an average of **7** families; and
- A total of **526** one-to-one supervised visits to an average of **14** families.

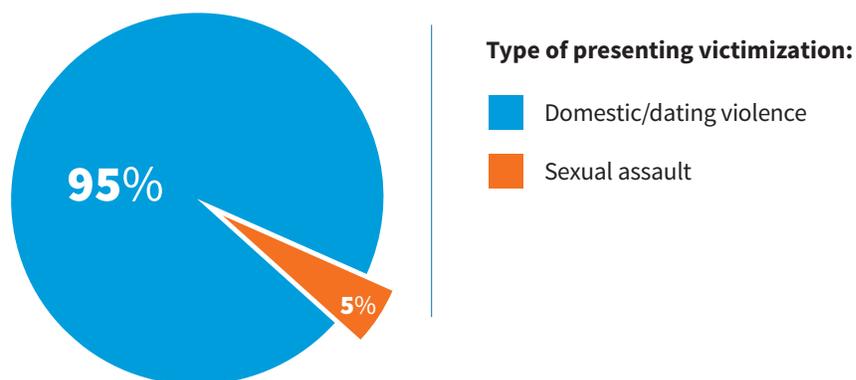
## Families Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence and their children. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of families served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (95%).

**Figure 10** Provision of family services by Tribal Governments Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Families served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 5** Families seeking services with Tribal Governments grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Families seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total families seeking services</b>	<b>26</b>	
Families served	24	92%
Families partially served	2	8%
Families not served	< 1	< 1%

**NOTE:** “Partially served” represents families who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Tribal Governments Program grant. “Not served” represents families who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Tribal Governments Program grant.

## Demographics of Families Served and Partially Served

The majority of custodial parents were **American Indian or Alaska Native** (84%), **female** (89%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (80%), with children between the ages of **0 and 6** (44%). Non-custodial parents were most likely to be **American Indian or Alaska Native** (90%), **male** (73%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (77%).

## Criminal Justice

In addition to the disproportionate impact of violence on Native women, men, and children, there are unique legal and geographical barriers to responding to these crimes. Factors including the race of the victims and perpetrator, the legal status of the land on which the incident occurred, and the type of crime committed determine under whose jurisdiction a particular crime falls. Some crimes fall under federal jurisdiction, others under the tribe’s, and the legal factors of some incidents are such that no agency has jurisdiction, meaning that victims can face escalated danger and their offenders will not be held accountable. VAWA 2013 included a provision that restores tribes’ inherent authority to exercise jurisdiction over some crimes of domestic violence and violations of protection orders involving non-Native offenders. In addition to jurisdictional issues, many tribal communities are remote and isolated and some tribes have limited resources for responding to domestic/sexual violence. For instance, law enforcement response time in some parts of Alaska can take hours or even days in bad weather.

The Tribal Governments Program supports the efforts of tribal governments to develop or enhance a coordinated community response that brings together law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, victim services, and public and private service providers. Some Tribal Governments grantees have used grant funds to support their effort to exercise jurisdiction under VAWA 2013, in accordance with all applicable laws.

*The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found that nearly half of AI/AN women have been victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.<sup>12</sup>*

*The 2015 American Community Survey found that 26.6% of AI/AN people live in poverty, making this population particularly vulnerable to domestic violence.<sup>421</sup>*

*In rural areas, victims may be fearful of contacting law enforcement because of a lack of anonymity. For rural victims who do contact law enforcement, there may be additional barriers. There may be fewer law enforcement officers in rural communities, or existing officers may be responsible for large areas, leading to lengthier response times.<sup>373</sup>*

*Without proper training, an officer may not be able to identify the predominant aggressor, may unknowingly minimize a victim's trauma, may fail to collect all relevant evidence, and may mistakenly arrest the victim. Moreover, if an officer sides with an abuser, a victim may not report future assaults. Research shows that law enforcement were most likely to arrest perpetrators when they received training on and followed these best practices: in-person investigating, following up with victims after initial contact, conducting safety planning with victims, assessing the needs of children exposed to the violence, providing victims with 911 telephones, describing protection orders and court procedures, connecting victims with available shelter and services, explaining the effects of domestic violence on children, and helping victims feel safe.<sup>125</sup>*

## Law Enforcement

Grantees use funds to support law enforcement response to domestic/sexual violence. Tribal law enforcement officers respond to emergency calls for assistance, interview key witnesses, and are often familiar with the people and circumstances involved in a given case, due to the small and isolated nature of some tribal communities. Every other agency, including the prosecution, depends on them to supply critical information about a case. For this reason, it is common for tribal law enforcement officers to provide continuing assistance throughout the length of a case. Tribal law enforcement is a vital component of the peacekeeping and accountability process for the tribal nations they serve.

- 22 (9%) grantees used funds for law enforcement activities.
- Law enforcement staff made a total of **1,147** victim referrals to tribal and non-tribal victim services across the 2-year period.

**A proactive response and victim-centered approach influences whether or not victims report these offenses, and whether appropriate evidence is collected to allow prosecutors to convict offenders.**

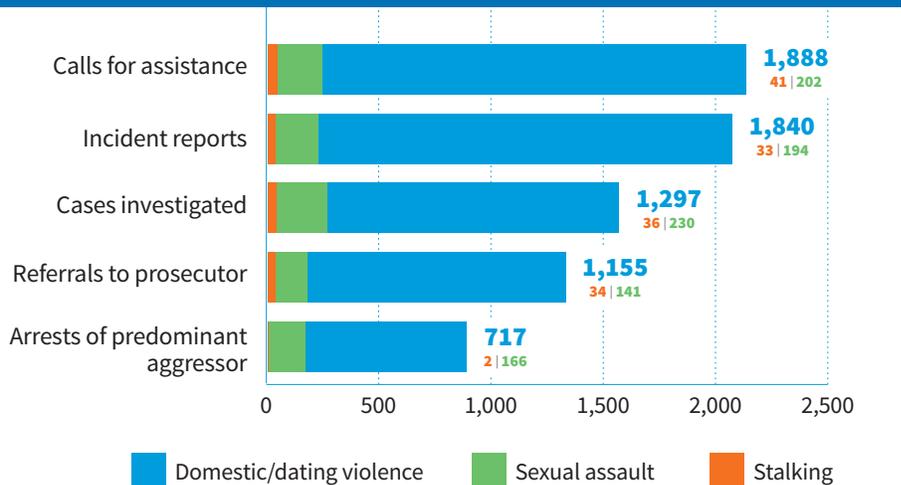


### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

With the position of a Special Victims Criminal Investigator, which is funded by Tribal Government grant funds, our Tribal Police Department is now able to take a more proactive and community-integrated approach to many areas of domestic violence. At the core of the training being provided by the position, is for law enforcement management and investigative staff to insure the appropriate response, and that investigations are being conducted by front line staff. Coordinating with federal law enforcement and developing investigative strategy concepts has improved, due to education and communication of the investigator's roles and responsibilities. The ability for the police department to have a focused position has improved the efficiency of the whole agency and the casework is being completed with a higher level of expertise.

**CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE UMATILLA INDIANS**

**Figure 11** Law enforcement activities in Tribal Governments Program criminal cases, July 2013–June 2015



**NOTE:** Grantees report only on law enforcement activities that are funded under the Tribal Governments Program and they may receive funds for one or for a number of these activities. Therefore, no relationships can be inferred or comparisons made between activities reported here.

## Prosecution

Tribal prosecutors play a significant role in securing safety and justice for Native victims of domestic/sexual violence. Approaches to prosecution vary by state and tribal nation. Tribal police and prosecutors need to be equipped with the tools, resources, and expertise to respond to domestic/sexual violence, make charging decisions, and issue sentences consistent with applicable statutes. **Grantees that use funds for prosecution activities may pursue prosecution by making referrals to appropriate external agencies and/or by prosecuting case referrals they received.**

- **12** (5%) grantees used funds for prosecution.
- Prosecutors received a total of **1,224** case referrals pertaining to domestic/sexual violence, and accepted a total of **1,113**<sup>iii</sup> (91%) cases for prosecution across the 2-year period.
- Prosecution staff made a total of **872** victim referrals to tribal and non-tribal victim services across the 2-year period.

**Table 6** Cases received and accepted by prosecutors funded by the Tribal Governments Program by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Case referrals received	Cases accepted for prosecution	Percent accepted
<b>All cases</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>91%</b>
Domestic/dating violence	1,110	1,011	91%
Sexual assault	91	81	89%
Stalking	23	21	91%

**Table 7** Cases disposed of by prosecutors funded by the Tribal Governments Program by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Cases disposed of	Dispositions resulting in convictions	
		Number	Percent
<b>All cases</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>83%</b>
Domestic/dating violence	668	558	84%
Sexual assault	67	57	85%
Stalking	12	9	75%

**NOTE:** Convictions include deferred adjudications.

<sup>iii</sup> Cases accepted, declined, or transferred in the current reporting period may have been received by prosecution in a previous reporting period.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The grant has allowed the Domestic Violence Paralegal to be the liaison between the attorneys and clients. For some of our clients, this will be their first time dealing with the court process and there is a fear of the unknown. The paralegal is not only able to inform them step-by-step of what they should expect at court, but is also able to take the burden off the client by keeping victims up to date with their case, set up appointments on their behalf to meet their attorney, and relay information between attorney and client, which allows the client to focus on healing.

#### EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS

## Courts

**There is wide variety in the types of tribal court systems, and the laws are unique to each tribal nation.** Some tribal courts are modeled similarly to Western-style courts, where written laws and rules of court are applied. Other tribes adhere to more traditional means of resolving disputes, including the use of peacemaking, elders' councils, sentencing circles, and banishment. Many tribes that are implementing new tribal courts, or enhancing established ones, are developing hybrid or blended systems that incorporate traditional dispute resolution procedures that are effective in their cultures and communities, while also ensuring that the “rule of law” and due process principles are applied.

- **4** (2%) grantees used funds for court activities.
- A total of **1,125** judicial reviews of individual offenders were conducted across the 2-year period.
- Court staff made a total of **16** victim referrals to tribal and non-tribal victim services across the 2-year period.

**Table 8** Disposition of court cases funded by the Tribal Governments Program by type of victimization, July 2013–June 2015

Type of case	Cases disposed of	Dispositions resulting in convictions	
		Number	Percent
<b>All cases</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>65%</b>
Domestic/dating violence	<b>686</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>69%</b>
Sexual assault	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>45%</b>
Stalking	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38%</b>

**NOTE:** Convictions include deferred adjudications.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

This grant has allowed the Chickasaw Nation Violence Prevention to implement a Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) for Chickasaw citizens and other Native individuals. A counselor was hired to provide intakes, assessments, and weekly group counseling to court identified abusers. The BIP works closely with tribal and state law enforcement, courts, and probation and parole. The program initially began in Pontotoc County and has now expanded to include Carter County as well. This service has allowed Violence Prevention to provide wrap-around services for Native families.

#### CHICKASAW NATION

## Tribal Probation/Offender Monitoring

Offender monitoring occurs when the court schedules probation or court reviews to determine whether offenders are complying with the terms of their sentences. Probation officers may meet with offenders in person, by telephone, or via unscheduled surveillance.

- **11** (4%) grantees used funds for review activities.
- An average of **538** offenders were monitored during each 6-month reporting period.

- Across the 2-year period, these agencies reported the following contacts with individual offenders:
  - A total of **6,774** face-to-face contacts with an average of **306** offenders;
  - A total of **3,315** telephone contacts with an average of **211** offenders; and
  - A total of **231** unscheduled surveillance contacts with an average of **32** offenders.

**Table 9** Probation activities funded by the Tribal Governments Program, June 2013-July 2015

Activity	
Average number of offenders (6-month average)	<b>538</b>
Total number of offenders who completed probation	<b>256</b>
Offenders completing probation without violations	<b>134</b>
Offenders completing probation with violations	<b>122</b>

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **housing**, including **emergency shelter, transitional housing, and long-term affordable housing**, as their biggest unmet need. While shelter services were sometimes available in nearby areas, grantees reported that victims were often reluctant to use these resources, preferring to remain within their own communities.

Even with housing, grantees reported that victims continued to struggle to achieve independence due to their **inability to access basic necessities**, such as:

- Employment;
- Child care;
- Job training;
- Food assistance;
- Utility assistance; and
- Transportation.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Adequate and affordable housing continues to be a major challenge in our small, rural geographical area. We have resources in surrounding cities and counties; however, many Native American victims prefer to stay within their community. We currently collaborate with a local shelter 20 miles south of our area. Even with this resource, our clients prefer to stay in one of two hotels that we currently collaborate with, or alternatively, they choose to stay in their current situation for fear of not knowing where they or their children would be placed.

**KALISPEL TRIBE OF INDIANS**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

A victim also needs a car to complete daily tasks like grocery shopping, transporting children to school, etc. A victim who is gaining her/his independence cannot truly be independent when s/he is reliant upon others for transportation. Also, in order to find employment and to get to a job daily, a car is vital. Our program recognizes the lack of transportation in the rural areas where we are as a huge obstacle to gaining independence. Further funding for our transportation needs and those of our clients would be of great assistance.

**LOS COYOTES BAND OF INDIANS**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

A significant area that needs immediate attention is one that has become a mantra for Native American Domestic Violence Programs: jurisdictional issues affect services provided to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. For instance, neighboring counties treat us as if we are a foreign country and as if our laws are beneath theirs. This mindset has led to law enforcement picking and choosing which court records (more specifically, domestic violence protective orders and civil records) they will respect. It is unfortunate that it will take a serious injury for our neighbors to help us in our fight against domestic violence.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Although domestic violence and sexual assault are crimes, still there remains an unacceptable level of community tolerance for these matters. Intergenerational attitudes among some families in the community perpetuate the notion that violence is a norm and not something that should be addressed within the family, socially, or criminally. A targeted campaign of public outreach that challenges tolerance for violence within families would raise awareness of the social and financial costs of violence. This, along with holding perpetrators criminally accountable, would result in victims feeling more comfortable in reporting domestic violence.

**MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

To better serve victims we could also benefit from additional program staff. Having only four staff members when fully staffed is challenging and limits the number of services we can offer. Furthermore, our program is in need of more competitive wages for our staff, as the low wages for the support technician positions lead to high turnover. Turnover results in vacant positions, which cause the SART Lead and Counselor to work outside the realm of their normal duties, and which diverts their primary focus.

**SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE OF MICHIGAN**

Many grantees reported the need for measures to **enhance offender accountability**, including:

- Specialized training for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement on the dynamics of domestic violence;
- Funding for dedicated domestic violence investigators and prosecutors;
- Longer sentencing for repeat offenders;
- Updating tribal codes regarding domestic violence and sexual assault;
- Developing Native Batterer Intervention Programs;
- Better enforcement of protection orders;
- Improved victim access to legal assistance; and
- Ability to access and enter information into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) databases.

Grantees reported that **jurisdictional issues between tribal governments, cities, states, and counties**, further complicated their ability to hold offenders accountable.

Despite significant strides toward combatting domestic violence, grantees reported a **severe underreporting of sexual assault** within their communities.

Grantees also cited the need for **community education to combat entrenched beliefs about domestic/sexual violence**.

Grantees reported a number of unique **challenges in providing victim services in Native communities**, including:

- A high rate of substance abuse among perpetrators and victims;
- Histories of trauma and mental illness;
- Isolation of victims, especially in rural areas; and
- Family dynamics that discourage reporting of domestic/sexual violence.

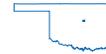
These challenges were exacerbated by **staff shortages and high turnover rates** in grantee organizations, especially in rural and geographically isolated communities.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Reporting of sexual assault continues to be an ongoing struggle. While there are many victims of sexual assault on the Port Gamble S'Klallam reservation, reporting continues to be low, and victims continue to be reluctant to speak out. Victims may feel reluctant to report because they do not see a purpose. Lack of evidence and delayed reporting has led to sexual assault cases going unprosecuted. Police training on how to recognize sexual assault may help encourage reporting, and prosecutor training may help build cases.

**PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

We also face many issues specific to small, rural, and tribal communities. Small, inclusive populations make it harder to keep victims safe due to bullying by community and family members, rumors that blame victims, and close proximity to abuser.

**IOWA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA**

# Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program

The Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (T-SASP) was created by VAWA 2005, and is the first federal funding stream dedicated solely to developing culturally relevant services that are specifically responsive to sexual assault victims within tribal communities. Because tribes reflect great diversity of history, geographic location, language, socioeconomic conditions, and retention of traditional spiritual and cultural practices, the T-SASP tribal grantees are strongly encouraged to incorporate cultural and traditional practices (e.g. talking circles, healing ceremonies, and sweat lodges) for those who have been sexually victimized.

**THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF T-SASP IS TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN,** and expand culturally specific intervention and related assistance for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) victims of sexual assault. Grantees are Indian tribes, tribal government organizations, and nonprofit tribal organizations. They provide intervention, advocacy, accompaniment (e.g. accompanying victims to court, medical facilities, and police departments), support services, and related assistance for adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault; non-offending family and household members of victims; and those collaterally affected by sexual assault.

## 32 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 32 unique grantees reported activities funded by the T-SASP Program.

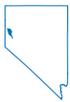
## 518 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 518 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 216 Secondary Victims Served

On average, grantees served 216 secondary victims during each 6-month reporting period.

*Many Native Americans do not live near a facility offering SANE or SART services. Research shows gaps in sexual assault services and coverages for more than two-thirds of Native American lands, and some communities have no coverage at all.<sup>272</sup>*



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Before the T-SASP funding, there was no Tribal Sexual Assault Program. The funding has allowed PLPT Victim Services to initiate a culturally specific Tribal Sexual Assault Program. Prior to the funding, the nearest sexual assault program was located in Reno approximately 45 minutes away from the reservation. The current Sexual Assault Advocate and Counselor have been trained on how to assist a sexual assault victim through Reno's forensic medical exam. In the past, no other advocate or staff member had been trained in this area and provided this kind of service. Native people prefer familiarity and generally do not trust outsiders; therefore, the T-SASP funded Native Sexual Assault Advocate's role has been vital in assisting the victims through the delicate process of the medical forensic exam, court procedures, emotional support, and advocacy.

#### PYRAMID LAKE PAIUTE TRIBE VICTIM SERVICES PROGRAM



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

T-SASP funding allows me to help secondary victims. I can help grandparents, boyfriends/girlfriends, and parents with this grant. It allows us to offer support as a holistic approach which can only help not hurt. In my experience, one isolated incident may seem isolated, but it tends to run into many other incidents of being re-victimized. Many times I will provide services to a child only to find that the parent had also suffered sexual abuse in the past and consequently lacks the toolset to provide the right support, or any support, to the child who may be victimized now. We can provide services to a boyfriend who has seen his girlfriend raped and help him receive the services he needs to be a support system for his girlfriend. These are just examples of how the T-SASP grant can and has helped individuals begin their healing process.

#### IOWA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA, VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

VAWA 2013 added the following new purpose area to this program:

- Address the needs of youth victims, including providing support to their non-abusing parent or caretaker.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

These changes were implemented in FY 2014, meaning that grants made on or after October 1, 2014 could specifically address them. If an activity falling under the added purpose area could not be captured in sections of the existing form that grantees use to report, they could describe their accomplishments in narrative sections of the form.

## General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **32** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

## Staff

Grant-funded staff primarily establish, maintain, and expand coordinated community responses within their catchment areas; and provide victim services, including advocacy, crisis intervention, legal assistance, court and hospital accompaniment, and transportation. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **31** (97%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **26** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and counselors.

**Table 1** Staff supported with T-SASP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>26</b>	
Victim advocates	<b>15</b>	<b>58%</b>
Counselors	<b>4</b>	<b>15%</b>
Program coordinators	<b>3</b>	<b>13%</b>
Administrators	<b>2</b>	<b>7%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Victim Services

Grantees address the specific cultural needs of AI/AN victims, and may provide crisis intervention, safety planning, and services such as legal advocacy, medical and counseling services from healthcare professionals, and accompaniment to forensic exams and to court. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **30** (94%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **517** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Support group/counseling services to **327** victims;
- Transportation services to **287** victims;
- Victim advocacy services to **244** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **231** victims;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **170** victims;
- Cultural advocacy services to **141** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy services to **140** victims; and
- Civil legal advocacy services to **85** victims.

### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **3,919** times;
- Grantees received a total of **3,646** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**55%**) came from victims.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of sexual assault.

Table 2 Victims seeking services with T-SASP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015		
Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>520</b>	
Victims served	<b>493</b>	<b>95%</b>
Victims partially served	<b>25</b>	<b>5%</b>
Victims not served	<b>3</b>	<b>1%</b>

**NOTE:** “Partially served” represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the T-SASP grant. “Not served” represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the T-SASP grant.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

The T-SASP grant provides funding for a Victim Advocate. The Victim Advocate works with clients and their families, connecting them to the resources they need to heal from what happened to them. When the CAC was without a Victim Advocate, an advocate was brought in from the local women’s shelter, but due to her own job responsibilities, she could not provide follow-up services. The Victim Advocate is able to spend time with the non-offending caregiver and child and get to know them. She provides support and resources during the visit to the CAC, and throughout the life of the case. The Victim Advocate refers clients for services, including behavioral health, housing assistance, and helps with paperwork for protective orders and Violent Crimes Compensation.

**KAWERAK, INC. CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Primarily, T-SASP funding during this reporting period has allowed for the ongoing on-the-job training and utilization of a full-time T-SASP Case Manager, which in turn has increased the center’s ability to provide wrap-around services for therapy clients including, but not limited to, transportation to therapy appointments, brief check-in sessions, and personalized scheduling of sessions. Thus, the T-SASP Therapist has been able to provide more thorough assessments, engagement of victims and families to services, and a variety of length and type of appointment sessions.

**MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS**



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

T-SASP funding has allowed the provision of therapeutic services specific to victims of sexual assault and sexual abuse which would not be possible otherwise. If the Sault Tribe did not have this federal grant, victims of sexual assault and sexual abuse seeking services would have to either self-pay or have health insurance to receive treatment from a private/community mental health provider. If they were to request services through the Tribe's behavioral health program, they would not receive the priority status that they are currently ensured through the T-SASP grant.

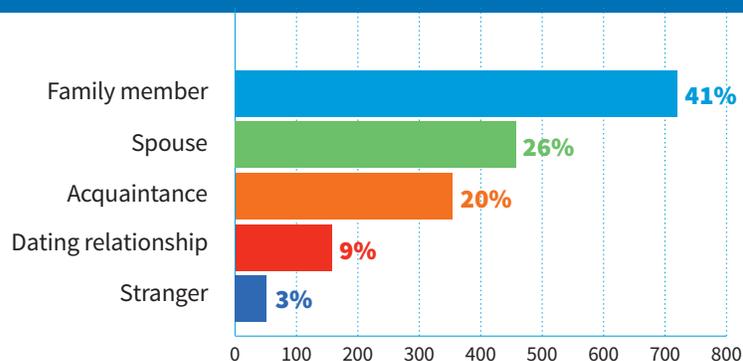
SAULT STE. MARIE TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of sexual assault. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **family member** (41%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (26%) or by an **acquaintance** (20%).

**Figure 1** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

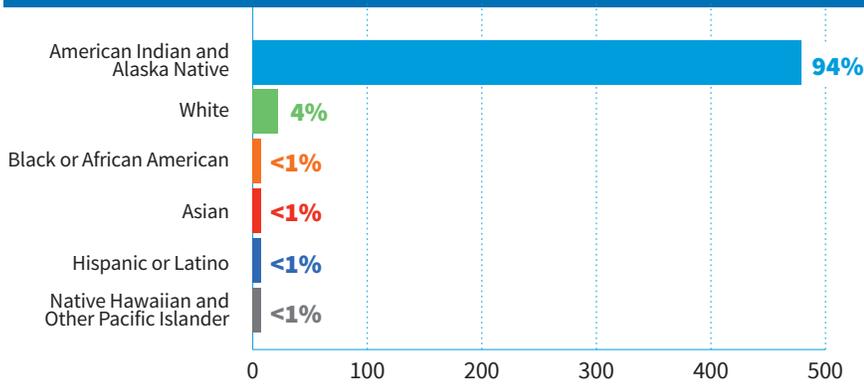
During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Services were not appropriate for victim;
- Victim did not meet statutory requirements;
- Transportation;
- Lack of child care;
- Program reached capacity; or
- Hours of operation.

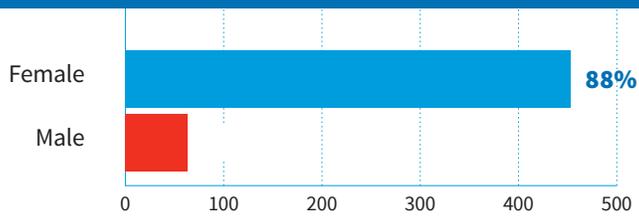
## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **517** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **American Indian and Alaska Native** (94%), **female** (88%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (35%).

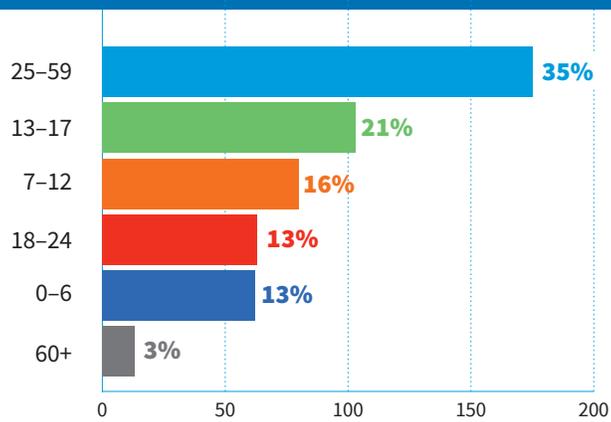
**Figure 2** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



**Figure 3** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 4** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



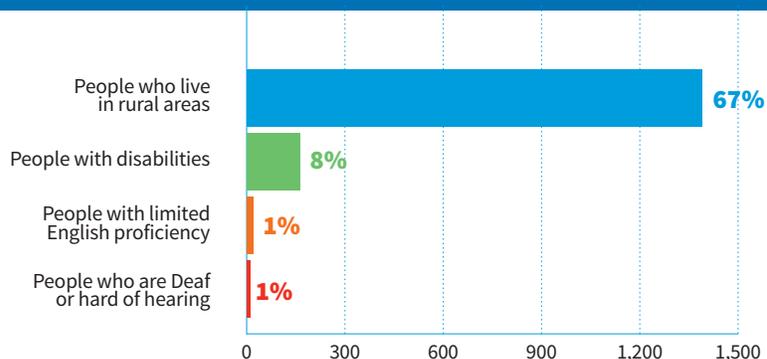


### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Another area where opportunities exist is having community education and awareness beginning at the earliest age possible. We need to be reaching out to the community and service providers on the signs of sexual abuse. If we can engage and teach the signs and symptoms of sexual abuse and what to do and how to respond to it, we can increase trust with victims and accountability of offenders.

**MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN CRIME VICTIM'S PROGRAM**

**Figure 5** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)



## Secondary Victims

Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by sexual assault, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **216** secondary victims during each 6-month period.



### Tribal • Grantee Perspective

Mental health services continue to be a critical need, to help ensure that children and families have the professional support needed to deal with the trauma of sexual violence. Mental health services are extremely limited and often non-existent in rural areas. Additionally, professionals often lack specialized training and the skills necessary to effectively address trauma and the impact of sexual violence. Domestic and sexual violence advocacy programs tend to focus on the provision of services to adult victims, which often leaves children and families with little resources for victim advocacy services.

**MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM**

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **a need for more community education and outreach** in order to:

- Combat stigma associated with sexual violence;
- Increase reporting of sexual assault;
- Increase awareness of available sexual assault services; and
- Teach youth and adults about consent, healthy relationships, and how to respond to incidents of sexual assault.

Grantees also frequently discussed the need for **enhanced mental health and substance abuse services** for child and adult victims of sexual assault.

Many grantees, especially those in rural areas, reported a need for **more law enforcement personnel to respond to and investigate claims of sexual assault**.

In addition to increasing numbers of law enforcement personnel, grantees also stressed the importance **of improving collaboration between tribal service providers, law enforcement, courts, and outside service providers.**

Some grantees cited a need for more **ongoing support for victims**, including:

- Transportation;
- Legal services;
- Emergency shelter and long-term housing; and
- Child care.

Finally, several grantees noted a need for **greater public awareness and understanding of the dynamics of sex trafficking in tribal communities.**



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

We, as well as many other rural areas and reservations, are in dire need of a second investigator. Our current sexual assault/domestic violence investigator is overwhelmed with cases, and as she covers the largest reservation in Minnesota both geographically and population-wise, she spends a lot of time on the road going from one interview to the next and back to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Office in Bemidji, which takes away from her time on the cases. One sexual assault case in itself is time consuming; these cases need the time and attention of our investigators, and the victims we serve deserve no less than a thorough investigation of the horrific crimes against them, or offenders will continue to get away with victimizing these people.

**WHITE EARTH RESERVATION DOVE PROGRAM**



#### **Tribal • Grantee Perspective**

It is important for sexual assault service programs to have strong collaborations with local law enforcement departments, as well as local tribal and state court systems. The initial referral is generally time-sensitive in reference to seeking a conviction due to loss of evidence. The ability of an advocate to respond immediately is so important. The knowledge and availability of a SANE nurse is crucial to those who are seeking conviction.

**SEMINOLE NATION DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM**



# Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations

The Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations (Underserved Program) funds projects to develop and implement outreach strategies and enhanced services to adult and youth victims of domestic/sexual violence in underserved populations.

**GRANTEES DO THIS BY BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF BOTH MAINSTREAM organizations and organizations specifically serving underserved populations to provide culturally appropriate and inclusive services; and increasing training and outreach activities of organizations providing services to underserved populations.**

## 9 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, 9 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Underserved Program.

## 207 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 207 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 78% Served LGBT Victims

The majority (78%) of grantees served victims who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or intersex.

The Underserved Program responds to the needs of some underserved populations (i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBT) victims, the Deaf or hard of hearing community, and certain religious/ethnic minorities) that, prior to VAWA 2013, were included under the Culturally Specific Services Program (CSSP) and the Sexual Assault Services Program – Culturally Specific (SASP-CS).

*The term “underserved populations” means populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age), and any other population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate.<sup>4</sup>*

*Service providers may be unprepared to offer sensitive and appropriate advocacy and shelter to LGBT victims of violence for a variety of reasons, such as limited capacity, fear of backlash, homophobia, and transphobia.<sup>394</sup>*



#### NY • Grantee Perspective

As a result of the grant funding, we have been able to put together a dynamic team to serve the Deaf community. Our Underserved grant allows us to outreach to, connect with, educate, advocate for, and support our Deaf community on issues of violence and violence prevention. Our team is able to help address the domestic violence (which Deaf people experience 1.5 times more than hearing people) and sexual assault (which Deaf people experience 3.8 times more than hearing people) issues which our victims face. We have seen a remarkable increase in the number of victims in their late teens and early twenties coming to us, who are struggling to heal from sexual abuse they experienced as children. Most of these young Deaf adults' perpetrators were family members, both hearing and Deaf. Without these grant funds, we would not be able to provide the critical services Deaf victims need to begin or continue their respective healing journeys.

**ADVOCACY SERVICES FOR ABUSED DEAF VICTIMS,  
NEW YORK**



#### NY • Grantee Perspective

This funding has helped us to expand our services to include prevention. In addition, it has helped us to continue providing trauma-informed and culturally, as well as linguistically, competent services to victims from the Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian communities, and many others in New York City.

**ARAB AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER,  
NEW YORK**

VAWA 2013 narrowed the scope of the CSSP and SASP-CS Programs to focus only on certain ethnic and racial minorities. To ensure continued support for underserved populations, Congress authorized the Underserved Program. Competitive awards will be made for the first time in FY 2016, and former Abuse in Later Life Program grantees, former Disability Program grantees, and culturally specific organizations focusing on sexual assault will be eligible to apply.

The Underserved Program enhances the safety of victims and their children by supporting community-based culturally specific projects to address and prevent domestic/sexual violence. Purpose areas include:

- Work with federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, agencies, and organizations to develop or enhance population specific services;
- Strengthen the capacity of underserved populations to provide population specific services;
- Strengthen the capacity of traditional victim service providers to provide population specific services;
- Strengthen the effectiveness of criminal and civil justice interventions by providing training for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other court personnel on domestic/sexual violence in underserved populations; and
- Work in cooperation with underserved populations to develop and implement outreach, education, prevention, and intervention strategies that highlight available resources and the specific issues faced by victims of domestic/sexual violence from these populations.

The Attorney General may use up to 25% of funds available under the Underserved Program to make one-time planning grants to eligible entities to support the planning and development of specially designed and targeted programs for adult and youth victims of domestic/sexual violence in one or more underserved populations.

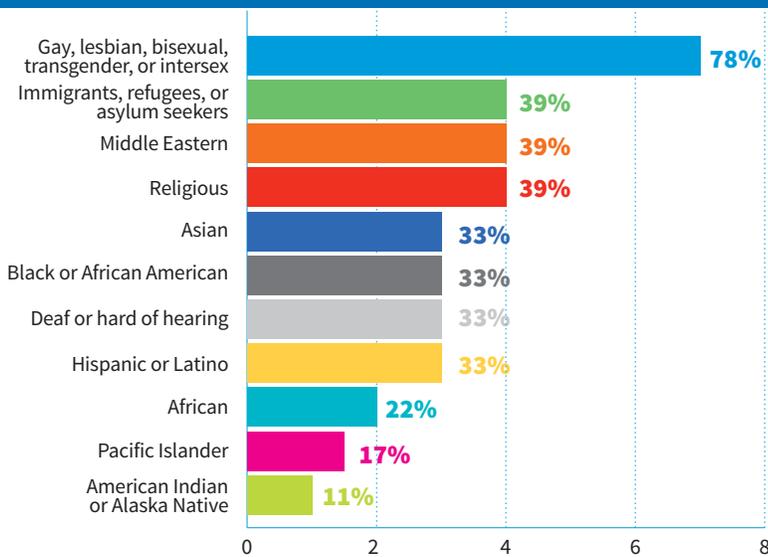
VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

## General Grant Information

The Underserved Program was authorized by VAWA 2013. Information for this report was submitted by **9** individual grantees for the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- The majority (**78%**) of grantees served victims who identified as LGBT.

**Figure 1** Grantees serving culturally specific populations by type of population, July 2014–June 2015 (6-month average)



## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, training, outreach, advocacy, counseling, court and medical accompaniment, and community education to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **8** (89%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **7** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.



### CA • Grantee Perspective

We have been able to hire a full-time Domestic Violence Case Manager. She has been able to provide intensive DV case management to an ever-increasing caseload of clients. She has also played a large role in recruitment, interpreting for the women's group and in therapy, and co-facilitating the women's support group. Her presence as a trustworthy DV support resource in the community has established the center as a refuge for DV victims. The full-time DV case manager has also allowed the Wellness Program Coordinator (MSW I) more time for outreach, cultural presentations, trainings, collaborating with agencies, establishing integral programmatic processes, and integrating evaluations into programs.

**THE ARAB CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY CENTER,  
CALIFORNIA**



### OH • Grantee Perspective

The Underserved grant funding has allowed BRAVO to expand and extend our service provider training and technical assistance programing. BRAVO's SafeZone Project represents the largest and most collaborative, comprehensive training and technical assistance program we have undertaken. BRAVO has been able to build capacity and reach places in Ohio that we had yet to provide services by providing the ability and opportunity to travel around Ohio, reaching areas not otherwise reachable with previous funding levels.

**BUCKEYE REGION ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION, OHIO**



### NJ • Grantee Perspective

As we have continued to work within the community, thanks to the continued funding stream, we are in a better position to offer a broader prevention and awareness program for the community. The very existence of such a program, led by a board-approved committee, is itself a tremendous step forward by the community in acknowledging the existence of the issue and, more importantly, the community's responsibility to insure the safety of each member of the congregation, which includes religious services, social functions, youth programming, and more. If this program meets its goal, we will be able to help communities statewide, and possibly nationwide, raise awareness within their own congregations of these issues without needing to have us be physically present to provide such programming, while concurrently sending a message that we remain available to offer further prevention services as well.

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AND CHILDREN'S CENTER OF CLIFTON-PASSAIC INC., NEW JERSEY**

## Training

Grantees train victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court personnel, probation officers, child protection staff, mental health and other professionals how to develop an effective coordinated community response to violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **8** (89%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **45** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **1,414** people.
- Most often these trainings reached victim advocates (**17%**), victim assistants (**10%**), health professionals (**8%**), and government agency staff (**8%**).

## Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide general information to the community to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. **Community education and outreach activities can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.<sup>i</sup>**

- **6** (67%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **66** education events.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **4,065** people.

**Table 1** People educated with Underserved grant funds, July 2014–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Community members educated	1-year total	
<b>Total community members educated</b>	<b>4,065</b>	
Community members	<b>1,674</b>	<b>41%</b>
Child care professionals	<b>771</b>	<b>19%</b>
Middle/high school students	<b>725</b>	<b>18%</b>
University/college students	<b>314</b>	<b>8%</b>
Parents/guardians	<b>210</b>	<b>5%</b>

**NOTE:** Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only ( $\geq 5\%$ ).

<sup>i</sup> Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables a professional to improve his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system

## Victim Services

Underserved victims of domestic/sexual violence may face unique barriers to seeking and utilizing assistance. Supporting these victims with a wide range of services may include providing advocacy and support to a victim who is seeking a protection order; accompaniment during medical procedures, such as a sexual assault forensic examination; providing interpretation or translation services; assistance with safety planning; accompaniment to court; shelter and transitional housing assistance; or immigration assistance. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **6** (67%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **207** victims during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Victim advocacy services to **161** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **116** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **107** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **73** victims;
- Transportation services to **67** victims;
- Language services (i.e. interpretation or translation) to **49** victims; and
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **28** victims.

### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **16** times; and
  - Grantees used English, Arabic, and American Sign Language (ASL) for these activities.
- Grantees received a total of **543** hotline calls;
  - The majority of these calls (**66%**) came from victims; and
  - Grantees used English, Arabic, and ASL when responding to these requests for information or assistance.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (80%).



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Underserved grant funding has made it possible for NorCal to provide dedicated services to victims. Even though all our Client Advocates are DV-trained, they are overwhelmed with other non-DV/SA clients, so that it is hard for them to focus on services to victims. Our experience working with DV/SA clients is that their service needs are urgent and often labor-intensive.

**NORCAL SERVICES FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING, CALIFORNIA**



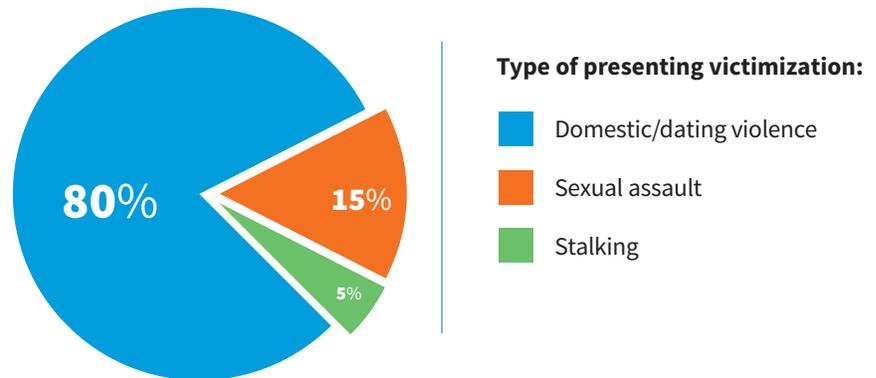
### NJ • Grantee Perspective

Underserved grant funding has allowed us to expand our existing services and stretch our staff to continue improving their efficiency during each reporting period. We have offered individual therapy, vocational support, and material support to an increasing number of clients. Utilizing the funding, we updated the camp training that we have been offering for the past several years to include how to create a safe environment free of bullying, abuse, neglect, and assault for campers, but also for staff as well. We have been invited back to present these workshops summer after summer.

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AND CHILDREN'S CENTER OF CLIFTON-PASSAIC INC., NEW JERSEY**

**Figure 2** Provision of victim services by Underserved Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



**Table 2** Victims seeking services with Underserved grant funds, July 2014–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>207</b>	
Victims served	204	98%
Victims partially served	4	2%
Victims not served	0	0%

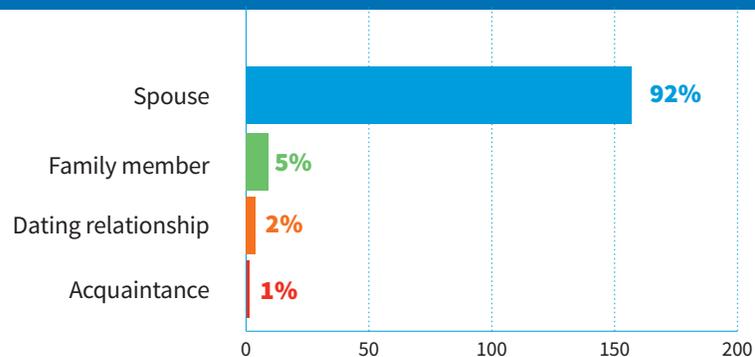
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Underserved Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Underserved Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

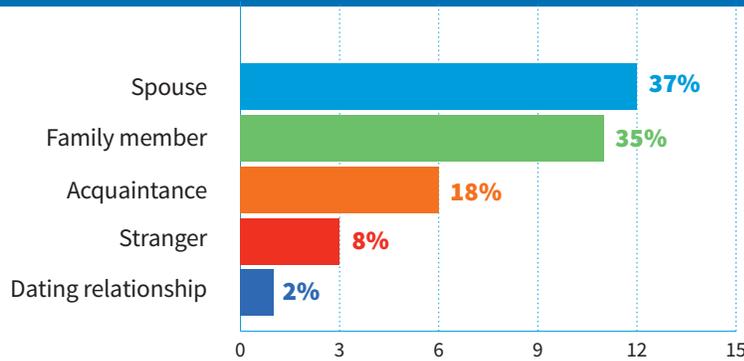
Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (83%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by another **family or household member** (9%) or by an **acquaintance** (4%).

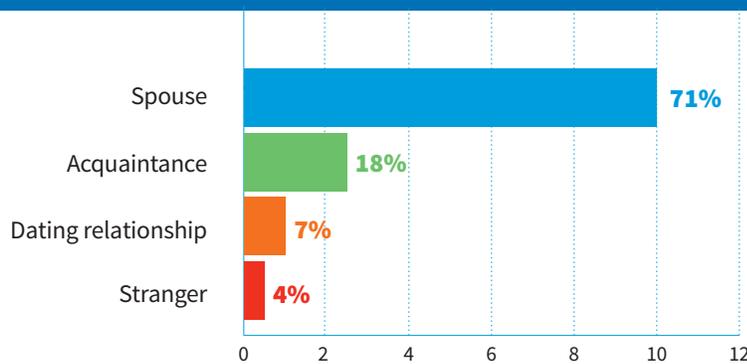
**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic/dating violence**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



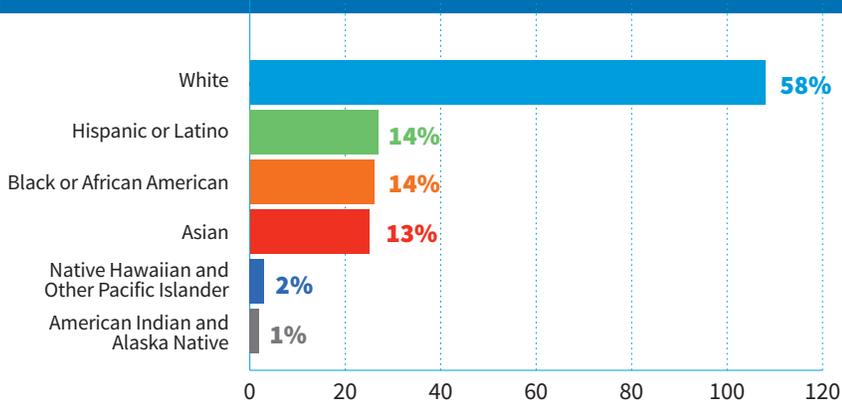
**Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**

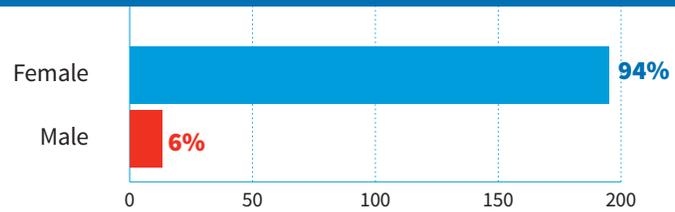
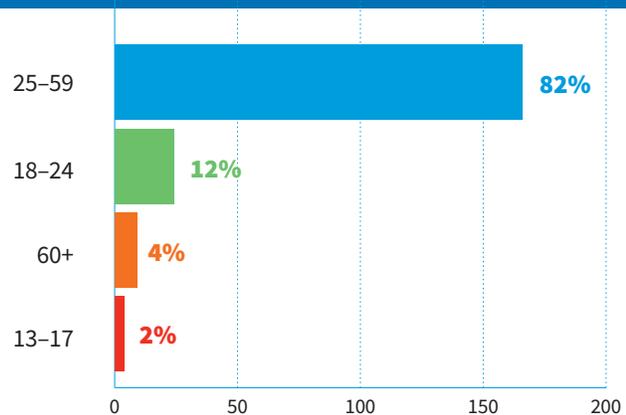
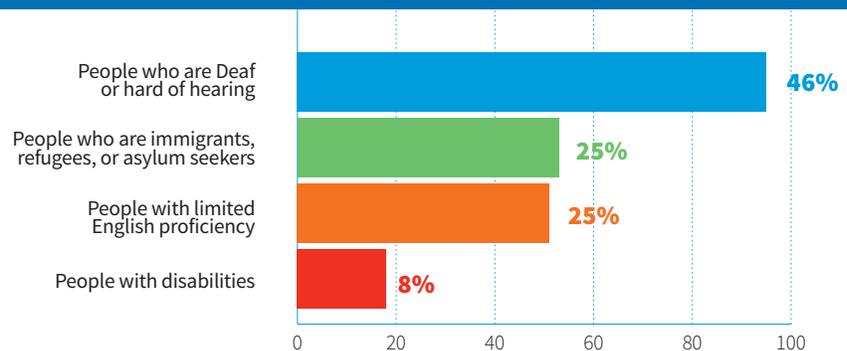


## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **207** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of victims served were **white** (60%), **female** (94%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (81%).

**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)



**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

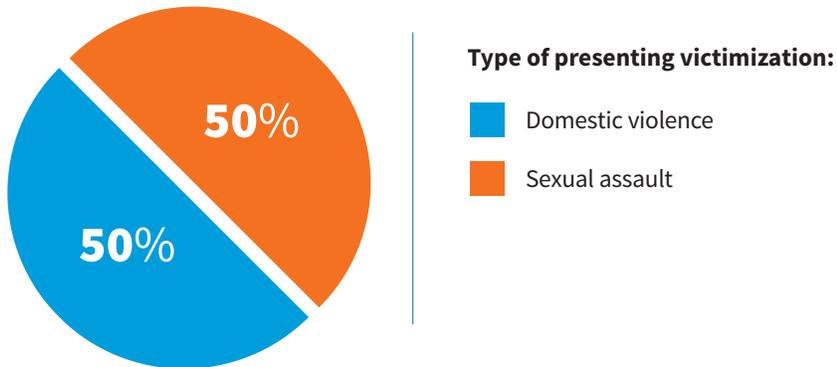
## Secondary Victims

Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by domestic/sexual violence, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **6** secondary victims during each 6-month period.

**Figure 10** Provision of services to secondary victims by Underserved Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Secondary victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)



### Remaining Areas of Need

Because only two reporting periods of data are available for the Underserved Program, and the grantee pool is very small, it is not yet feasible to extrapolate trends regarding remaining areas of need reported by grantees. These will appear in future Reports to Congress.



# Services to Advocate for and Respond to Youth Program

The Services to Advocate for and Respond to Youth Grant Program (Youth Services Program) funds projects that provide direct intervention and related assistance services for youth victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking that are designed to meet the specific needs of youth and young adults (ages 13-24).

**THE CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS CHILDREN AND Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program)** has received appropriations in FYs 2013 through 2016. This program, which consolidated four programs previously authorized under earlier iterations of VAWA, including the Youth Services Program, funds projects that support child, youth, and young adult victims through direct services, training, coordination and collaboration, effective intervention, treatment, response, and prevention strategies. The last grants made under the Youth Services Program were awarded in FY 2011.

## 32 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 32 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Youth Services Program.

## 912 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 912 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 6,189 Hotline Calls

Grantees received a total of 6,189 hotline calls; 76% of which came from victims.

*The 2013 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that, among high school students who have had a dating relationship, 20.9% of female students and 10.4% of male students experienced some form of dating violence, whether physical or sexual, with all health-risk behaviors being most prevalent among students who experienced both physical and sexual abuse.<sup>420</sup>*



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Prior to receiving Youth Services grant funding, the Union of Pan Asian Communities was unable to address the specific needs of youth and young adults impacted by teen dating violence. Funding has allowed for the allocation of space specifically designated to those who are negatively impacted by dating violence. Hiring a Program Manager/Therapist and a part-time Youth Mentor has assisted in providing targeted services in San Diego's City Heights, Southeast San Diego, and area communities. Because the Helping Empower Authentic Relationships for Teens program is unique to the community, funding has assisted in bringing this needed service to those in San Diego who were previously underserved.

UNION OF PAN ASIAN COMMUNITIES, CALIFORNIA

The primary purpose of the Youth Services Program was to provide direct counseling and advocacy for youth and young adults who have experienced domestic/sexual violence. Grantees provided culturally, linguistically, and community relevant services to meet the needs of underserved populations, or provided referrals to existing services in the community.

### Grantees also engaged in the following purpose areas:

- Provide mental health services, legal advocacy, and other services such as child care, transportation, educational support, and respite care for youth and young adults who have experienced domestic/sexual violence; and
- Work with public officials and agencies to develop and implement policies, rules, and procedures in order to reduce or eliminate domestic/sexual violence.

### General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **32** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **3** (9%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.
- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
  - Provided direct counseling and advocacy for youth and young adults;
  - Provided linguistically, culturally, and community relevant services for underserved populations; and
  - Provided mental health services for youth and young adults.



### TRIBAL • Grantee Perspective

Access to this grant has allowed the Menominee Crime Victims Program to maintain a full-time staff member who is dedicated to providing services to our youth. The Youth Victim Witness Specialist position is fully funded through this grant funding. This staff member plays an important role in services and outreach to our youth victims of sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. Through these funds, the Youth Victim Witness Specialist has been able to focus on the immediate services that have not been provided to our youth, existing services to youth and young adults on the Menominee Indian Reservation, as well as the initial crisis response.

MENOMINEE CRIME VICTIMS PROGRAM-  
MAEHNOWESEKIYAH WELLNESS CENTER

### Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, outreach, counseling, and advocacy to increase youth victim safety. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **32** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **29** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates, program coordinators, and counselors.

Table 1 Staff supported with Youth Services grant funds, July 2013 - June 2015: Selected groups	
Staff funded	6-month average
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>29</b>
Victim advocates	8 29%
Counselors	8 28%
Program coordinators	7 23%
Outreach workers	3 10%
Administrators	2 6%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

## Victims Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims of domestic/sexual violence, including counseling, victim advocacy, crisis intervention, and legal advocacy. Victims also receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed.

**These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help youth become and remain safe from violence.**

- **32** (100%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **912** victims during each 6-month period.
- **99%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

### During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Counseling/support group services to **576** victims;
- Victim advocacy services to **445** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **368** victims;
- Transportation services to **152** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **135** victims;
- Housing advocacy to **107** victims;
- Material assistance (e.g. clothing, food, or personal items) to **106** victims; and
- Criminal justice advocacy/court accompaniment services to **70** victims.

### Other services:

- Grantees received a total of **6,189** hotline calls; and
  - The majority of these calls (**76%**) came from victims.

Grantees also provide emergency shelter or transitional housing to victims and their family members. Emergency shelter can include nights in safe houses or hotel/motel accommodations.



### FL • Grantee Perspective

The Youth Services grant has connected vulnerable populations, specifically migrant, human trafficking, and LGBT youth to Sexual Assault Services and Corbett Trauma Center, who would not have had access to medical exams, crisis intervention, advocacy, and counseling. The relationships and collaborations that developed between community members and CCTB has resulted in wrap-around services for those most vulnerable to violence. These collaborations mean improved sexual assault services; access to HIV/AIDS prophylaxis; and mental health, substance abuse, and other services that are often a result of victimization. In addition, cross-training between agencies and service providers ensure a continued holistic response for youth who experience sexual violence.

**CRISIS CENTER OF TAMPA BAY, INC., FLORIDA**

**Table 2** Victims sheltered with Youth Services grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Shelter services	Victims (6-month average)	Family members (6-month average)	Bed nights (2-year total)
Emergency shelter	7	3	919
Transitional housing	2	3	691
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1,610</b>

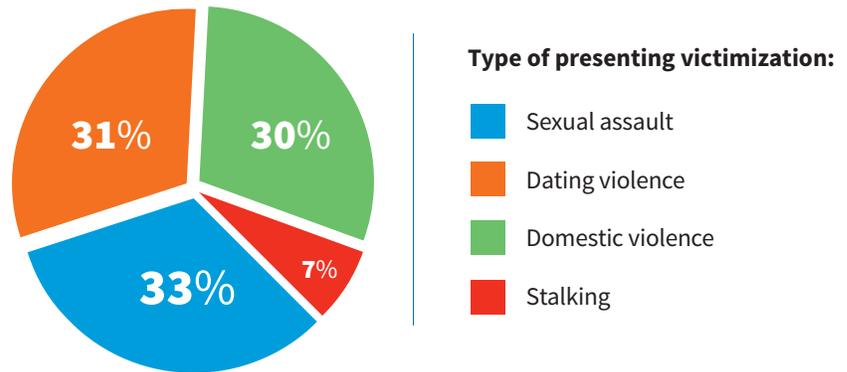
## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **sexual assault** (33%).

**Figure 1** Provision of victim services by Youth Services Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)

**Table 3** Victims seeking services with Youth Services grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>924</b>	
Victims served	901	98%
Victims partially served	11	1%
Victims not served	11	1%

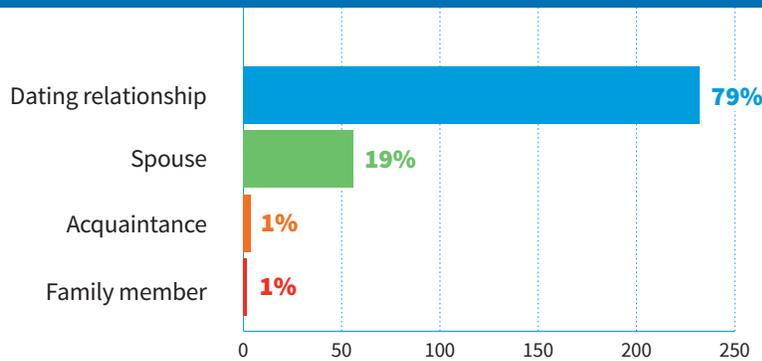
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Youth Services Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Youth Services Program grant.

## Victims' Relationship to Offender

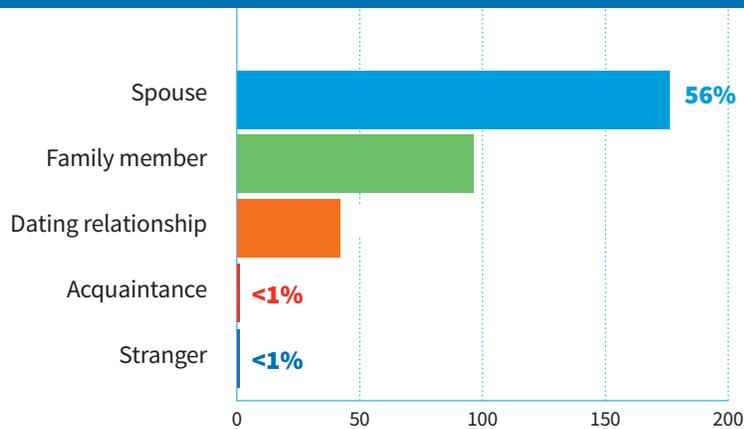
Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (34%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (27%) or a **family or household member** (19%).

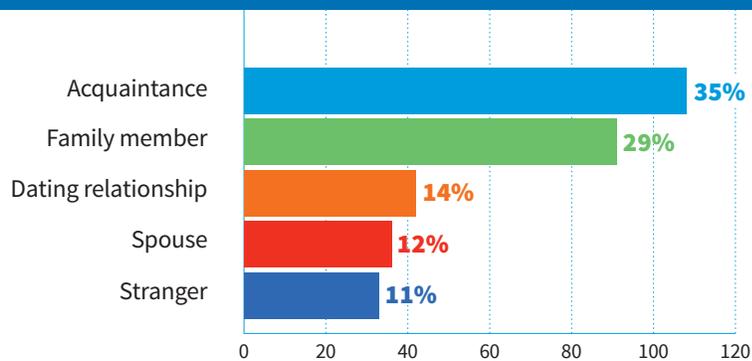
**Figure 2** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Dating violence**

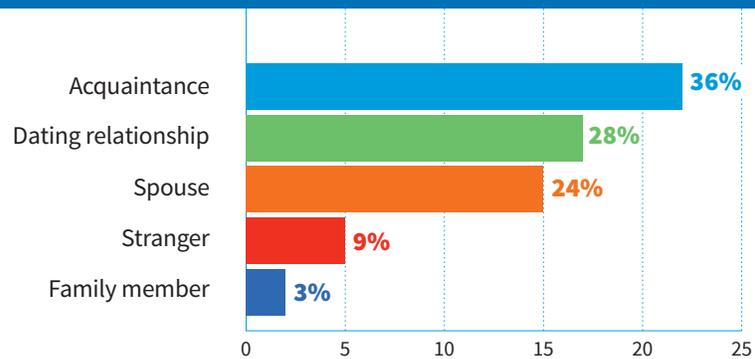


**Figure 3** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**



**Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking**

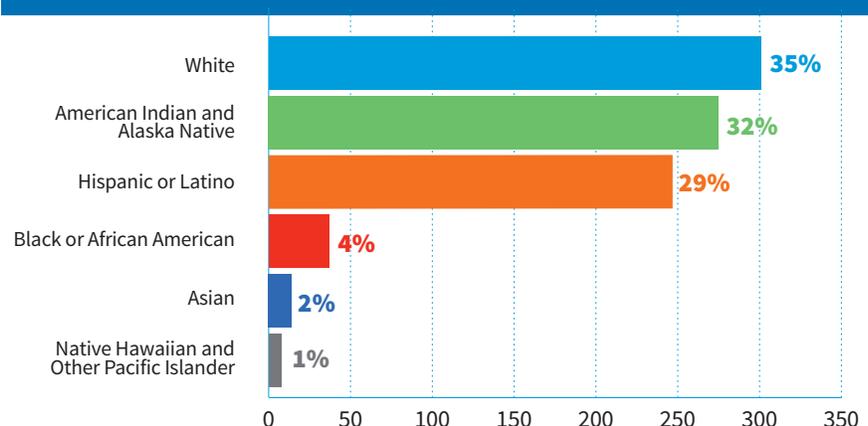
## Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees most frequently noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or partially served:

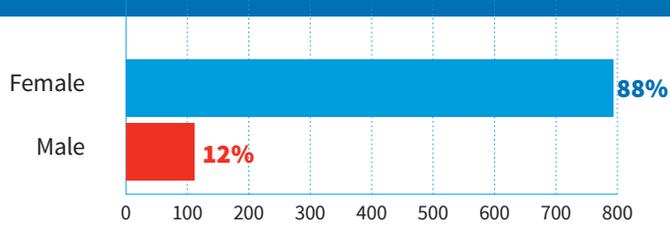
- Program reached capacity;
- Transportation;
- Services inappropriate or inadequate for victims with mental health issues;
- Services inappropriate or inadequate for victims with substance abuse issues;
- Victim did not meet eligibility or statutory requirements; or
- Program unable to provide services due to limited resources.

## Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

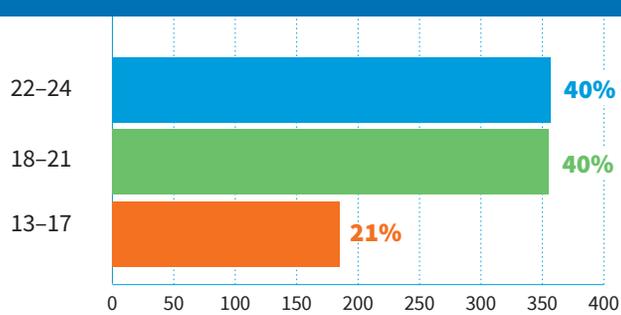
Grantees served or partially served an average of **912** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **white** (35%), **female** (88%), and between the ages of **13 and 17** (40%).

**Figure 6** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

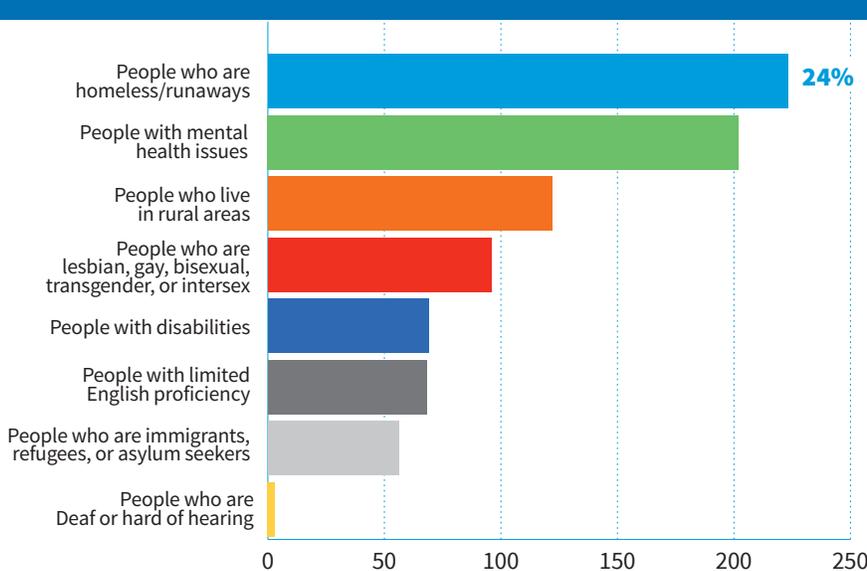
**Figure 7** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



**Figure 8** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)



**Figure 9** Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)



**OH • Grantee Perspective**

Lack of education about the definition of dating violence, how to identify dating violence, and how to assist young victims continue to be themes that we see in our communities throughout Cuyahoga County. The full-time advocate has continued to hear from school personnel that dating violence does not occur in their schools, that law enforcement did not pursue a protection order violation, or that the juvenile detective is not going to pursue the case because of their age. As we have continued to work on this project for the past several years, it is evident that continued education and collaboration around issues of dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault is needed as a means to better connect teens with services.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER, OHIO**



### MN • Grantee Perspective

Throughout our grant period we have seen a steady rise in the number of clients who self-identify as having mental health issues. Along with that rise we have observed more clients who would like to build mental health supports as part of their goal plans. With this growing number we see a need for more flexible mental health resources for youth and young adults. Clients who are highly mobile, have limited communication methods (phones or email), or limited transportation access are often unable to continue with certain mental healthcare services due to lack of consistent appointment attendance. More open access, walk-in options, or call-in service options would assist many young people with connecting with mental health resources on a regular basis.

TUBMAN, MINNESOTA



### CA • Grantee Perspective

Because many youth depend on either public or parental transportation, their active and consistent participation in intervention services depends also on these modes of transportation and support. It is believed that groups that focus on dating, and address unhealthy dating practices, are best delivered in the school setting as a part of the teens' daily regime and curriculum. Doing so will eliminate the barrier of transportation, help youth more easily make the transition from prevention to intervention services, and provide a consistent message to all cultures, gender/sexual identifications, and to both victims and potential perpetrators.

UNION OF PAN ASIAN COMMUNITIES, CALIFORNIA



### GA • Grantee Perspective

Another area of significant need is in regards to working with LGBT victims of dating/domestic violence (including stalking and sexual assault). This is a group that has limited access, in some cases, to local resources, depending on where the victim resides. They may feel outside of the "accepted" community as it is, and are grappling with seeking help while in an abusive relationship, which adds another layer of stress to the equation. Victims sometimes experience re-victimization, minimization, or re-traumatization, because social service organizations lack the required skill and training to appropriately address DV in the LGBT community. This again underscores the need for education, not just around DV, but also in addressing DV in the LGBT community and educating organizations that may serve this population.

CHRIS KIDS, INC., GEORGIA

## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited a need for **better education and outreach** to youth, parents, and the community at large on **prevention and awareness of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking** among young people, and to **increase visibility of available services**.

Grantees indicated a need for **better training among program staff, law enforcement, and teachers** in order to:

- Combat victim-blaming mentalities;
- Increase awareness of the dynamics of domestic/sexual violence among young people;
- Increase offender accountability; and
- Encourage reporting of domestic/sexual violence.

In addition to providing better training and education, grantees noted that **many young victims lack access to basic necessities**, including:

- Safe shelter and long-term housing options;
- Transportation;
- Child care;
- Education and job training;
- Employment; and
- Mental health services.

Grantees emphasized the need for **services to be easily accessible to young people**, who often lack transportation.

Finally, grantees noted a need to improve services and outreach to **underserved populations**, including:

- LGBT populations;
- Male victims;
- Victims with limited English proficiency; and
- Immigrant victims.



### TN • Grantee Perspective

The most significant area of need in our community for youth and young adults experiencing violence is for safe and affordable housing. We find that a large portion of our clients are homeless coming into the Youth on Living Life without Abuse program, whether they are staying in a shelter, on the streets, or are "couch-homeless," and staying with friends or family. Although we have a local Transitional Housing Program for victims of DV/SA, this program typically has quite a long wait list as well as limited resources to help victims. We have found that a large portion of our time is spent problem-solving with clients around their housing situations and, often, permanent solutions take months to materialize due to limited subsidized housing availability in Knoxville.

HELEN ROSS MCNABB CENTER, TENNESSEE

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# 2016 Biennial Report

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**Grant Programs Under the Violence Against Women Act**