

NNEDV

Domestic Violence Counts 2011

A 24-Hour Census of Domestic Violence Shelters and Services



NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



To the staff at the 1,726 local domestic violence programs that participated in the 2011 National Census of Domestic Violence Services, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to provide us with a glimpse of the incredible, life-saving work you do every day.



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Domestic Violence Counts National Summary

On September 15, 2011, 1,726 out of 1,944, or 89%, of identified local domestic violence programs in the United States and territories participated in the 2011 National Census of Domestic Violence Services. The following figures represent the information reported by the 1,726 participating programs about services provided during the 24-hour survey period.

67,399 Victims Served in One Day

36,332 domestic violence victims found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs. In addition to a safe place to lay their heads at night, shelter residents were provided with a variety of comprehensive services, some of which are listed in the chart below.

31,007 adults and children received non-residential assistance and services, including counseling, legal advocacy, and children's support groups.

This chart shows the percentage of programs that provided the following services on the Census Day.

Services Provided by Local Programs:	Sept. 15
Children's Support or Advocacy	79%
Emergency Shelter	74%
Court/Legal Accompaniment/Advocacy	53%
Transitional Housing	35%
Bilingual Advocacy (by a bilingual advocate)	33%
Job Training/Employment Assistance	22%

22,508 Hotline Calls Answered

Domestic violence hotlines are a lifeline for victims in danger, providing support, information, safety planning, and resources. In the 24-hour survey period, local and state hotlines answered 21,748 calls and the National Domestic Violence Hotline answered 760 calls, averaging more than 16 hotline calls every minute.

26,339 Educated in Prevention and Education Trainings

On the survey day, 26,339 individuals in communities across the United States and territories attended 1,396 training sessions provided by local domestic violence programs, gaining much needed information on domestic violence prevention and early intervention.

10,581 Unmet Requests for Services in One Day

Victims made more than 10,000 requests for services, including emergency shelter, housing, transportation, childcare, and legal representation, that could not be provided because programs did not have the resources to offer these services.

64% of Unmet Requests Were for Housing

Emergency shelter and transitional housing continue to be the most urgent unmet needs with 6,714 requests unmet. Other frequently requested unmet needs include legal representation, counseling, and legal advocacy.

Programs were unable to provide services for many reasons:

- 43% reported not enough staff.
- 19% reported not enough specialized services.
- 18% reported no available beds or funding for hotels.
- 14% reported limited funding for translators, bilingual staff, or accessible equipment.

"As the downturn of the economy continues, the need for our services has greatly increased, and the needs of our clients have escalated. It is not uncommon for us to work with women living in tents in the woods or in campers without heat and running water. They need safety not only from their abusers but also from living on the streets."

—Washington Advocate

Victims Served

“The Sheriff’s Department brought a victim to us. She had a gash over her eye because her abusive boyfriend threw a plate at her head. She grabbed their 9-month-old baby and fled through a bedroom window. She is with us now and is safe and sleeping; we are going to take care of her.”

—Georgia Advocate

“We recieved a call from a woman who had slept in her car with her four children after being assaulted by her ex-partner. She had gone to the emergency room the night before and was very tired and scared. We met her, got her food and clean clothes for her children, and she came to shelter that afternoon.”

—Washington Advocate

In just one day, across the United States and its territories, 67,399 victims of domestic violence sought services from 1,726 domestic violence programs and shelters. For the sixth consecutive year, the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) conducted its annual National Census of Domestic Violence Services (Census), a one-day snapshot of services requested and provided on that day, as well as a count of requests for services that were unmet.

Reaching Out

Victims often reach out for help after a particularly violent or threatening act of abuse or when the daily violence has escalated to a point at which they fear for their lives or their children’s lives. When victims seek help, it is a critical time for them and for domestic violence service providers to intervene to provide help and safety. “Shortly after 1 a.m., I received a call from a woman who had been beaten by her husband, and she was concerned about broken ribs. She didn’t want to report the assault to the police or go to the hospital because of her husband’s standing in the community. We talked until 6 a.m. when the alarm went off for her children to get up and get ready for school,” reported an Arkansas advocate.

On September 15

Local and state hotlines answered 21,748 hotline calls, and the National Domestic Violence Hotline answered an additional 760 calls.

Safety and Refuge

Survivors who are trying to escape from abuse and begin new lives have many basic needs: shelter, money, transportation, childcare, legal assistance, and more. One of the most immediate needs is a safe place to stay, particularly when a survivor is leaving the abuser because that is often the most dangerous time for the victim. An advocate in Virginia shared, “A woman met with us to go over her options because she was leaving

her abuser. Almost immediately after meeting with us, she called in a frantic state because her abuser had found out where she was going and was following her. We advised her to go directly to the police department. She filed for an emergency protective order, and we got her safely settled into the shelter.”

Emergency Shelters

On September 15, 2011, 36,332 adults and children found refuge in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program. Of the more than 67,000 victims served on the survey day, 35 percent found safety in emergency shelters and 19 percent were living in transitional housing.

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Non-Residential Services	Total
Children	12,062	7,551	6,258	25,871
Adults	11,570	5,149	24,749	41,468
Total	23,632	12,700	31,007	67,339

Transitional Housing

In addition to emergency shelter, survivors often need long-term housing. Some domestic violence programs are able to provide transitional housing—temporary accommodation designed as a stepping stone between crisis and stability. Programs generally offer transitional housing for a period of six months to two years. Without transitional housing, survivors would often struggle to find safe, affordable housing for themselves and their children immediately after leaving emergency shelters. Finding permanent housing can be difficult in the aftermath of abuse because affordable housing is limited and survivors often lack the financial resources.

On September 15

74% of programs provided emergency shelter for survivors and their children.

35% of programs provided transitional housing for survivors and their children.

Advocacy and Support

Victims of domestic violence often feel isolated and alone and have a number of pressing and long-term needs. After facing abuse and violence, survivors need compassion and support to heal emotional wounds and rebuild their lives. Domestic violence advocates provide this support and advocacy to survivors staying in shelter or transitional housing, as well as those who are not.

On the survey day, 31,007 individuals received non-residential services. These services include support, advocacy, and counseling. The chart below shows the percentage of programs that provided the following services on the survey day.

On September 15	
Court/Legal Accompaniment/Advocacy	53%
Transportation	53%
Group Support/Advocacy	48%
Advocacy Related to Housing/Landlord	42%
Financial Skills/Budgeting	28%
Job Training/Employment Assistance	22%
Medical Services/Accompaniment	18%
Legal Representation	10%

For a complete list of services programs provided on the Census Day and throughout the year, see page 7.

Despite limited resources, domestic violence agencies and their staff strive to help survivors. Whether they are providing safety planning, connecting survivors with resources, or advocating on survivors' behalf, advocates are there to strengthen survivors' voices. An Idaho advocate shared, "Inspiring hope and changing lives are what we try to do. We try to encourage and empower them to move forward and begin to heal. We are a support system and a firm foundation toward a hopeful future."

Prevention and Education: Ending Domestic Violence

In addition to providing support for survivors, domestic violence advocates know that education and prevention are crucial to ending domestic violence.

On September 15

Domestic violence advocates provided 1,396 trainings and educational sessions for 26,339 individuals.

On the survey day, domestic violence programs provided educational sessions on understanding and identifying dating violence, bullying, sexual harassment, and domestic violence for students from grade school through college, as well as educators and parents.

In addition to teaching students about healthy relationships, domestic violence trainings for community members and other service providers teach them to know how to intervene appropriately and safely. These educational sessions also help victims know that there are options and that they don't have to stay in abusive relationships.

In Texas, an advocate shared, "A group of Spanish-speaking clients gathered today to discuss ways to help other women in their community who continue to live in fear. Some of their ideas included reaching out to young women through schools and community programs, telling their stories to Spanish-language radio programs, and engaging in a training program to reach out to women. The energy in the room was inspiring!"

"A shelter resident came to us after her abuser tried to kill her by hitting her in the head with a concrete block. During her stay in shelter, she told us that it had been a very long time since she had felt safe."

—Arkansas Advocate

"Today, a 63-year-old woman left shelter and moved into a safe apartment. She had suffered abuse for most of her 40-year marriage. We were her first stop for help. Because of the information and support she received from us, she said that for the first time in 40 years, she feels empowered to live a life free from violence. She is ready to begin her new life!"

—Indiana Advocate

Unmet Needs

“A woman in need of emergency shelter was directed to our agency. We made more than 20 phone calls in 2 hours to find a shelter for her, but nothing was available in the entire state. We did a safety plan with her for the night and put together a collaboration plan with other agencies for the next day. We worked with her until she had a plan in place.”

—Massachusetts Advocate

“This year, our agency has seen a 75 percent increase in requests for counseling services and a 45 percent increase in need for emergency shelter services.”

—Idaho Advocate

Despite helping more than 67,000 people on September 15, 2011, domestic violence programs were unable to meet 10,581 requests for services because of a lack of funding, staffing, or other resources. Although programs have historically struggled to find resources to provide comprehensive services, funding cuts, reduced donations, and dwindling community resources are severely straining programs’ ability to help survivors.

On September 15

10,581 requests for services were unmet because of limited resources.

6,714 (64%) unmet requests were for emergency shelter or transitional housing.

3,867 (36%) unmet requests were for non-residential services.

On the survey day, 43 percent of programs reported not enough staff, 18 percent reported no available beds in shelter or money for a hotel stay, and 19 percent reported no funding for specialized services, such as a drug and alcohol counseling.

Struggling To Meet the Need

Housing continues to be the most sought after service. Requests for emergency shelter or transitional housing account for 64 percent of the unmet requests for services. One Delaware advocate shared, “We are unable to take in an average of ten families a month that are in need of emergency shelter. Our funds to support hotel stays for high-risk survivors are depleting quickly. There are countless more domestic violence survivors who are now homeless due to domestic violence and there simply are not enough beds and long-term services available to substantially help them.”


Victims of domestic violence also desperately need pro-bono legal assistance to help with the complex issues they face. Programs reported that assistance with obtaining protection/restraining orders, child custody, divorce, and child support were the most sought-after legal services. Additionally, they need assistance with violations of protections orders, housing issues, child protective services hearings, public benefits denials, financial issues, immigration, and criminal defense needs. One Colorado advocate noted, “We need more resources for legal advocacy. We have only two legal aid agencies that serve victims of domestic violence. They have very few staff and can only serve victims with the most severe cases. Moreover, our area has only two immigration attorneys, neither of whom can afford to take pro bono cases.”

Wisconsin Advocate

“Due to federal and state budget cuts over the past few years, our agency staff has dwindled to bare-bones status. Yet, the number of victims seeking services has increased. Additionally, the cases have become more complex. This is taking a heavy toll on our limited staff’s time and energy and agency resources. Our agency cannot absorb more cuts and still continue to provide the necessary services our community so desperately needs.”

Additional Barriers

Many victims face additional barriers because they live in isolated and rural areas or because they are members of communities with limited resources or culturally-specific services. This is especially true for victims from culturally or linguistically specific communities and those



who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ). “Domestic violence in LGBTQ communities remains a problem that is often minimized or ignored in mainstream society. The work of agencies such as ours is crucial to providing resources and support to these marginalized groups,” noted a Missouri advocate from an LGBTQ-specific program.

For survivors from immigrant populations, both those with documentation and those seeking documentation, language barriers and fear of discrimination or deportation can be enormous deterrents that keep victims from seeking help. A survivor from New Mexico told her advocate, “I put up with the abuse because I was always scared that he would take my baby. He threatened that he would call immigration and have me deported, and he would keep my baby.”

An Oregon advocate shared a note from a recent client, “I am glad that someone understands and recognizes where I am from and my cultural background. The advocate shares the same values as me and is there for me. I really appreciate the services, and I am grateful for this program.”

Victims with complex medical, mental health or substance abuse issues need additional resources beyond the services that domestic violence programs are typically able to provide. These victims are particularly affected by diminishing resources. As one Colorado advocate noted, “The continued tight financial situation of our country impacts families. The lack of work, rising costs, and the increase in alcohol and other substance abuse have created a firestorm in our communities.”

It Takes a Community

During difficult times, community resources are crucial for domestic violence programs and the survivors they serve. As communities are coping with the closure of some programs or reduction in hours or resources of others, social service providers must come together and support each other more than ever before.

Ninety-one percent of programs participating in this year’s census reported that coordinating with community partners is extremely important to their work. “Our collaboration with local law enforcement is invaluable,” reported a Florida advocate. “We were able to help a survivor whose abuser’s friend had recently broken into her home to threaten her. With our help, local detectives have sent out a warrant for his arrest, and she is safe in shelter.”

Despite funding cuts and reduced staffing, domestic violence programs continue to provide life-saving services, which are in great demand. More funding is needed to support the vital work of domestic violence programs. “Each year we provide more services to an ever increasing number of women, men and children. We have staff that are creative, working flexible hours to make sure that we can continue to provide comprehensive services despite continued decreases in funding,” said an agency director from Iowa. “I constantly worry about our ability to meet the needs of victims of violence. I worry about the toll this work has on my staff. They keep doing more with less.”

“Domestic violence survivors and victims are reaching out for assistance but the availability of resources are growing increasingly scarce. Other services such as homeless programs, walk-in counseling services, and youth programs are shutting their doors.”

—Illinois Advocate



Saving Lives

Despite funding cuts and reduced staff, domestic violence programs continue to provide life-saving services, which remain in great demand. In just one day, more than 67,300 survivors found safety and help at domestic violence programs.

Without compassionate advocates answering crisis calls or programs opening their doors, survivors would have nowhere to go. As the impact of the economic downturn continues and options for finding safety are fewer, domestic violence programs continue to be a lifeline for survivors.

In North Dakota...

"I felt like I had lost everything until I came to the center for help. When no one else took my situation seriously, you did. For women in my situation, we are taught that we never speak about the abuse we endure in our homes. Calling the hotline for help is a last resort, and if we don't get a good response from you, then we are never going to call again. The staff here has been amazing to me and my children. I would be in a very bad place or possibly dead if the center wasn't here to help us."

In New Jersey...

"When I arrived at this program, I was emotionally broken, traumatized by the abuse that happened to me, unsure if I was going to make it. Then I went back to my abuser thinking he had changed. I remembered what you told me about the cycle of violence and shortly after my return he started with the name calling and threats. I am so happy I called you back, and that I was able to return to the shelter. The shelter was like a rebirth for me and my baby."

In Illinois...

"Everyone here has been so wonderful that I've begun to think of every one of you as a friend. Everyone made time to listen to me when I was unable to think straight. There was such a sense of peace within these walls, there really aren't words to explain. Everyone here has made it possible for me to succeed. If I needed information, I had it in minutes. If I needed a listening ear, you were there within seconds. I haven't laughed so much or so hard in years. Thank you."


Services Provided on the Census Day

Services Provided	On Sept. 15, 2011	Throughout the Year
Individual Support or Advocacy	98%	100%
Children's Support or Advocacy	79%	92%
Emergency Shelter (including hotels or safe houses)	74%	88%
Court/Legal Accompaniment/Advocacy	53%	92%
Transportation	53%	85%
Advocacy Related to Public Benefits/TANF/Welfare	49%	86%
Group Support or Advocacy	48%	90%
Advocacy Related to Housing Office/Landlord	42%	82%
Advocacy Related to Mental Health	36%	81%
Transitional Housing	35%	41%
Bilingual Advocacy (services by someone who is bilingual)	33%	62%
Advocacy Related to Child Welfare/Protective Services	32%	83%
Financial Skills/Budgeting	28%	73%
Rural Outreach	26%	64%
Therapy/Counseling for Adults (by a licensed practitioner)	25%	45%
Advocacy Related to Immigration	24%	77%
Advocacy Related to Substance Abuse	24%	73%
Childcare/Daycare	24%	46%
Job Training/Employment Assistance	22%	55%
Advocacy Related to Disability Issues	21%	75%
Advocacy/Support to Teen Victims of Dating Violence	18%	83%
Medical Services/Accompaniment	18%	70%
Therapy/Counseling for Children (by a licensed practitioner)	16%	37%
Translation/Interpretation Services (3rd party translator w/ advocate)	15%	63%
Media/Press Response or Outreach	12%	67%
Legal Representation by an Attorney	10%	23%
Advocacy Related to Technology Use (Cyberstalking, etc.)	9%	66%
Support/Advocacy to Victims of Trafficking	7%	58%
Advocacy with the Military	4%	34%
HIV/AIDS Counseling and/or Support	4%	22%

Summary Data

State or Territory	Response Rate	Adults Served	Children Served	Total People Served	Unmet Requests for Services	Hotline Calls Answered	Total People Trained	Served in Shelter	Served in Transitional Housing	Non-Residential Served
AK	100%	362	203	565	39	92	155	301	62	202
AL	100%	515	345	860	97	134	864	215	119	526
AR	92%	304	224	528	26	240	399	251	57	220
AS	100%	1	3	4	0	0	0	4	0	0
AZ	95%	818	793	1,611	195	336	218	942	297	372
CA	97%	3,046	2,317	5,363	924	1,283	1,325	1,621	1,201	2,541
CO	89%	859	458	1,317	235	670	683	414	208	695
CT	100%	602	156	758	56	204	551	172	90	496
DC	100%	355	259	614	94	71	117	69	314	231
DE	86%	74	40	114	3	20	18	53	15	46
FL	100%	1,848	1,318	3,166	119	687	776	1,521	405	1,240
GA	80%	1,036	959	1,995	243	507	349	606	539	850
GU	100%	8	19	27	0	2	0	13	9	5
HI	100%	354	131	485	23	78	42	148	44	293
IA	100%	522	302	824	117	414	519	342	135	347
ID	100%	455	183	638	280	192	203	150	74	414
IL	100%	1,676	982	2,658	904	1,118	772	670	430	1,558
IN	100%	1,066	773	1,839	218	435	781	687	364	788
KS	96%	731	286	1,017	138	321	429	272	85	660
KY	100%	769	416	1,185	70	274	550	434	250	501
LA	100%	568	380	948	51	314	583	398	143	407
MA	100%	1,257	542	1,799	479	596	816	359	429	1,011
MD	100%	606	260	866	183	545	112	222	186	458
ME	100%	274	132	406	22	115	113	83	138	185
MI	88%	1,393	1,157	2,550	271	562	830	846	848	856
MN	59%	847	558	1,405	315	807	508	598	137	670
MO	87%	1,263	749	2,012	378	537	301	1,063	271	678
MP	100%	26	52	78	0	4	0	22	45	11

State or Territory	Response Rate	Adults Served	Children Served	Total People Served	Unmet Requests for Services	Hotline Calls Answered	Total People Trained	Served in Shelter	Served in Transitional Housing	Non-Residential Served
MS	77%	141	140	281	20	92	185	110	102	69
MT	90%	162	117	279	26	107	118	67	118	94
NC	55%	986	540	1,526	287	493	1,723	578	104	844
ND	100%	145	84	229	38	75	242	54	35	140
NE	100%	323	172	495	129	228	330	144	84	267
NH	100%	150	74	224	5	40	196	77	53	94
NJ	100%	870	422	1,292	82	444	228	311	226	755
NM	76%	381	305	686	24	100	62	303	173	210
NV	87%	329	147	476	25	141	140	195	77	204
NY	74%	2,934	1,638	4,572	449	1,478	896	1,591	673	2,308
OH	100%	1,203	655	1,858	196	626	902	751	265	842
OK	74%	497	281	778	94	397	520	353	106	319
OR	96%	1,209	483	1,692	423	650	490	332	406	954
PA	100%	1,612	721	2,333	712	807	1,052	766	447	1,120
PR	100%	257	126	383	45	138	114	105	81	197
RI	100%	122	68	190	29	65	425	49	55	86
SC	92%	268	141	409	21	159	269	247	4	158
SD	42%	114	101	215	21	108	45	105	10	100
TN	100%	815	311	1,126	92	250	615	305	136	685
TX	88%	3,098	2,500	5,598	1,212	2,250	3,820	2,269	1,179	2,150
UT	100%	370	461	831	63	277	445	294	276	261
VA	100%	791	513	1,304	225	439	323	671	125	508
VI	100%	39	22	61	1	39	4	12	5	44
VT	100%	347	188	535	65	147	74	93	127	315
WA	87%	1,158	726	1,884	502	749	417	570	510	804
WI	88%	1,000	620	1,620	270	616	465	629	284	707
WV	100%	317	169	486	16	160	203	95	57	334
WY	88%	195	149	344	29	115	22	80	87	177
TOTAL	89%	41,468	25,871	67,339	10,581	21,748	26,339	23,632	12,700	31,007

A pair of hands, one larger and one smaller, are gently holding a small, white, corrugated metal house. The house has a gabled roof and a small square window. The background is a soft, out-of-focus image of a person's face, suggesting a child or a woman.

The small victories that happen every day in the fight to end domestic violence and sexual assault are proof that progress is being made to end abuse. The smile from a woman who receives gas money so she can get to work, a hug from a child who is given a backpack full of school supplies, the gratitude from a family that will have food for dinner; these are things that programs see every day.

—Wyoming Advocate



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