



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNTS

the National Census of Domestic Violence Services

Executive Summary for

Iowa

The complexity of the issues is very diverse – the lives we touch on a daily basis. How does one capture the joy of a woman finding a job? How does one capture in one day the numerous systems we interact with, to advocate, to seek change? And how we do that today is different than how it will look tomorrow.”
-An urban program

On November 2nd 2006, 21 out of 28 identified local domestic violence programs in Iowa participated in the National Census of Domestic Violence Services (NCDVS). Designed to address the safety and confidentiality needs of victims, the Census collected an unduplicated, non-invasive count of adults and children who received critical services from local domestic violence programs during the 24-hour survey period. Since some local programs did not participate, this Census provides a powerful glimpse but remains an undercount of the actual number of victims who sought and received services.

VICTIMS SERVED

During the 24-hour survey period 325 victims of domestic violence received housing services from a domestic violence program, either in emergency shelter or transitional housing.

664 adults and children were served in Iowa.

- **257** adults and children found refuge in emergency domestic violence shelters
- **68** adults and children were living in transitional housing programs, designed specifically for domestic violence survivors
- **339** adults and children sought non-residential advocacy and services such as individual counseling, legal advocacy, and children’s support groups

“We are really struggling with capacity issues right now. We’ve had two months of turning people away more often than not.”
-A suburban program

LIMITED RESOURCES

Programs reported a considerable unmet demand for services due to a lack of resources, including limited staffing and overflowing shelters.

40 requests for services were tragically unmet due to a lack of resources.

- **11** unmet requests for emergency shelter
- **27** unmet requests for transitional housing
- **2** unmet requests for non-residential services

“Today I had a client that had a weapon pulled on her when I was talking to her on the phone so she had to hang up. When I called back, all phones had been disconnected.”
- A rural program

HOTLINE CALLS

Domestic violence hotlines provide critical support and information for victims in danger. **272 hotline calls were answered, more than 11 hotline calls every hour.**

“An advocate had to call in sick and we had two out providing prevention programming at a high. The Executive Director covered walk-ins and calls at one outreach office in the mornings and in our second outreach office in the afternoon. Our non-residential support group for Thursday nights was 1.5 hours away from where the advocate lives, so she doesn’t get home until 10:30 pm usually. During her drive home, she called the shelter and had the shelter advocate on shift enter her data so that she could get the data entered for the census.”
- A rural Iowa program

LIMITED STAFF

Most programs operate with relatively few staff.

- **27%** of participating local programs employ less than 10 staff
- **45%** employ 10-20 paid staff
- **18%** employ 21-40 paid staff
- **9%** staff numbers not provided

COMMUNITY POPULATIONS

Across Iowa, local programs provide support to victims in a variety of communities.

- **73%** of local programs are primarily rural
- **5%** of local programs are primarily suburban
- **14%** of local programs are primarily urban
- **9%** community type not provided