



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNTS REPORT

Letter from the President and CEO

March 2020

On behalf of the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), an organization dedicated to creating a social, political, and economic environment in which domestic violence no longer exists, I am pleased to share our 14th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Founded 30 years ago this year, we represent the 56 state and territory coalitions against domestic violence and are a leading voice against violence.

We began conducting this survey fourteen years ago to provide accurate information about how many survivors of domestic violence use shelters and services, without compromising their safety or confidentiality. Each annual report tells the uplifting story of people who work every day to end domestic violence. But it also shares the tragedy of all the survivors who cannot get help and are still in danger. Urgent public policy changes are needed.

The Domestic Violence Counts Report sheds light on the tremendous work of advocates at local domestic violence programs, from providing emergency shelter for a family in the middle of the night to standing beside them in court. Domestic violence programs stretch every penny of funding and leverage community volunteers to provide essential services and use creative approaches to meet survivors' needs.

But despite their heroic efforts, domestic violence programs simply do not have enough funding. Many survivors and their children are turned away when shelters are full or counselors are unavailable. This report provides a snapshot of the services provided and unmet needs on a single day. This year, local programs were unable to meet 11,336 requests for services—primarily requests for shelter—because programs lacked sufficient resources. These numbers are alarming on their own, but the true scope of the problem is worse; many survivors are afraid to come forward or have no services in their communities.

For these survivors, we must, and can, do better. With your help, we can ensure that all survivors get the support they need. Congress can:

- Increase funding for and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to include economic justice provisions, homicide prevention programs, and resources for survivors facing complex challenges;
- Increase funding for and reauthorize the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) to bolster existing programs, reach underserved communities, and expand statewide prevention efforts;
- Stabilize the Crime Victims Fund and raise the cap to distribute more funds to the field; and
- Enact policies to help rebuild survivors' lives, including increased workplace protections and access to housing, childcare, transportation, legal assistance, and comprehensive services that are tailored to survivors' needs and local concerns.

Visit [NNEDV.org/TakeAction](https://www.nnedv.org/takeaction) to join us in calling for a strong federal response to domestic violence.



Yours in working for a world where violence no longer exists,

Deborah J. Vagins

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President and CEO
National Network to End Domestic Violence