



NNE DV

# Domestic Violence Counts

## National Survey of Domestic Violence Services

### Instructions for Participating Programs

## Tips on Telling a Compelling Story

In the Domestic Violence Counts survey, questions 12 and 16 are opportunities for you to tell us a compelling story of survivors accessing your services or unmet requests. These stories give the DV Counts depth and help portray the life-saving work that happens every day in DV programs.

We have a few tips on writing these short anecdotes/narratives:

- Convey **how the survivor felt** (e.g., scared, frightened, overwhelmed, unsure, confused, supported, acknowledged, relieved, relaxed, safe, etc.). It is especially compelling if the survivor articulated these feelings to you and you can actually recall their words and provide them in a short quote.
- Tell us **how your advocacy helped** a survivor (see examples below).
- Tell us about the **perceived impact of the unmet request** (e.g., “We didn’t have shelter space, so the survivor was unable to escape that evening.”).
- Do NOT share details that could identify the survivor. Please **use fake names and anonymize** the information including using “several” children rather than the number, no demographic information, etc. Consider what may be personally identifying in your community.

The term ‘**personally identifying information**’ means information for or about an individual including information likely to disclose the identity/location of a victim, regardless of whether the information is encoded, encrypted, hashed or otherwise protected, including—

- (A) a first and last name;
- (B) a home or other physical address, contact information (including a postal, e-mail or Internet protocol address, or telephone or facsimile number);
- (C) a social security number, driver license number, passport number, or student identification number; and
- (D) any other information, including date of birth, racial or ethnic background, number of children, identifying information about children (age, gender, etc.), place of employment, or religious affiliation, that would serve to identify any individual.

**Please use complete sentences so these quotes can be used in the published report.**

#### Examples:

“A survivor we worked with told us how grateful she was for meeting people who were knowledgeable, loving, and caring. She said she felt truly safe for the first time in more than a decade.”

“We assisted a survivor apply for a VAWA self-petition. Her husband abused her for years and told her that she would be deported if she went to the police. After working with us, she told us that she felt ‘free as a butterfly.’”

“A woman in our shelter told us she had nowhere to go and told us that we ‘saved her life.’ While the children in shelter were doing their homework, I noticed one of the young boys crying. I asked him what was wrong and why he was crying. He said that nothing was wrong and he was just happy to be here and he loved all of us. He told me that no one had ever cared for him and his mom so much, and asked if they could keep staying because he’s scared they’d have to move again. I told him that we had an apartment for them and they would never have to go back.”