



Meeting Survivors' Needs through Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services & Supports: Results of a Multi-State Study

"This program saved my life. I had no place to go, no money. I now have a job, apartment, and I am learning how to get over my fears. I don't have nightmares anymore thanks to counseling."

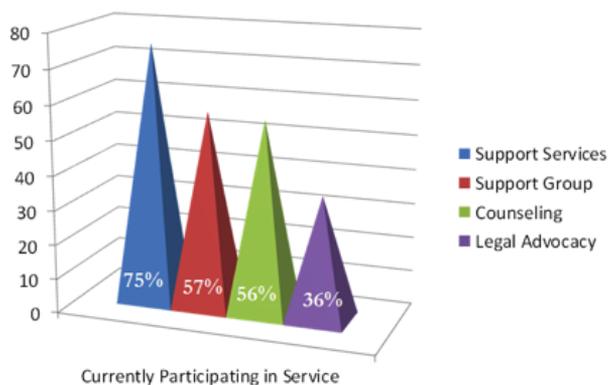
Survivor from Washington

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC DV) and the University of Connecticut School of Social Work reports new data that documents how well local domestic violence programs are addressing the needs of those reaching out to them for assistance. This substantial data collection effort involved 90 urban, rural and suburban community-based domestic violence programs and nearly 1,500 domestic violence survivors surveyed in 2010 about their experiences seeking and receiving non-residential domestic violence services and supports.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

- **Survivors found services and supports helpful.** More than three out of four of the nearly 1,500 domestic violence survivors who used support groups, counseling, supportive services and legal advocacy found these services to be "very helpful." The vast majority of other survivors using these services found them to be "helpful."
- **DV programs facilitated positive outcomes for survivors.** After seeking and receiving help, 95% of survivors were more knowledgeable about planning for their safety and more hopeful about the future.
- **The state of the economy continues to have a negative effect on survivors.** About 45% of the survivors reported experiencing financial difficulties, including many not being able to pay their bills.

Types of Services Currently Being Used



"When I felt lonely and challenged, thoughtful counseling gave me strength to go on."

Survivor from program identified by Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

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SURVIVORS SERVICES & SUPPORTS NEEDS

- Survivors were asked about 54 different specific services and supports they might need. These were combined statistically into the following 11 areas of need:
 - Information/support needs - **93 percent**
 - Safety needs – **88 percent**
 - Legal advocacy needs – **76 percent**
 - Child-related needs – **65 percent**
 - Economic needs – **59 percent**
 - Victimization-related needs – **57 percent**
 - Family-related needs – **57 percent**
 - Physical/mental health needs – **51 percent**
 - Criminal legal needs – **32 percent**
 - Immigration-related needs – **30 percent**
 - Vulnerability-related needs – **24 percent**
- Help with counseling for children was the number-one child-related need for mothers.

Everyone has been very supportive. I never would have come this far emotionally or financially without the assistance I have received from this program. I have grown as a person and I am now strong enough to encourage my old[er] daughters to have healthy relationships.

Survivor from Massachusetts

ADDITIONAL DATA OF INTEREST

- There were more similarities than differences across racial/ethnic groups and rural/urban location.
- Nearly half (46.4 percent) of the survivors participating in the study came to the U.S. from another country. Of those, 76 percent identified as immigrants or refugees.
- Over half of the participating programs in the study operated with an annual budget of less than \$500,000; the average starting salary for a full-time staff member was reported as \$29,000.

BACKGROUND ON METHODOLOGY

Meeting Survivors' Needs through Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services & Supports was conducted by Dr. Eleanor Lyon and Dr. Jill Bradshaw of the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and Anne Menard of NRC DV with joint support from the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The findings from a similar study focused on shelter services were released in 2009.

The researchers collaborated with programs across four states - Alabama, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Washington - and with four culturally-specific national organizations and their associated programs across the nation. These included the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, Casa de Esperanza, the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, and the Women of Color Network.

Quantitative findings were enriched by open-ended responses and results of 10 focus groups conducted with 73 survivors. They reinforced the complexity of needs and the importance of services sensitive to and responsive to needs of particular groups, whether defined by gender, culture, sexual orientation or gender identity, location or age (i.e. men, older individuals/teens, differences across race/ethnicity and country of origin, LGBTQ).

Please contact research@nrcdv.org with any questions or comments.

For a copy of the study materials, go to www.vawnet.org/Research/MeetingSurvivorsNeeds.