



2015-2016 Annual Report to the Florida Legislature

# RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence does not  
go away by looking away.

It stops when we stand together.  
It stops when we say it must,  
and not just one of us,  
but all of us.





“I am proud of the work the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Department of Children and Families, and Florida’s law enforcement and community stakeholders have done to support domestic violence survivors and their children. Florida is now at a 45-year crime low, and we will continue to work together to provide survivors with the support and services they need. The safety of our families and communities is a top priority in our state and that is why we will keep fighting to make sure every survivor and child effected by domestic violence remains safe and has the resources they need.”

—Governor Rick Scott

“Domestic violence continues to affect far too many families throughout our state. That is why it is critical that we work together to respond to domestic violence in ways that support survivors and their children and that hold batterers accountable for their violent acts. My office is committed to working with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Florida’s 42 certified domestic violence centers, and our statewide law enforcement agencies and state attorneys to reduce, and ultimately end domestic violence in our state.”

—Attorney General  
Pam Bondi

“Responding to domestic violence is critical because it impacts every member of a household. DCF is proud to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence to provide the protection and services victims need to heal and recover, and to generate more public awareness of the resources available to combat domestic violence.”

— Secretary Mike Carroll,  
Department of Children  
and Families

# INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence remains a pervasive societal issue that impacts thousands of individuals and families in Florida. It threatens our most basic and fundamental need to be safe in our homes and communities. Our state's ability to respond appropriately can predetermine whether domestic violence survivors and their children can experience a violence-free life. Therefore, we must explore innovative solutions to respond effectively to domestic violence crimes that devastate our families and permeate our communities. Just last year in Florida, 199 women, children, and men lost their lives as a result of domestic violence, and statistics indicate that between 25 and 33 percent of women and one in seven men will experience physical violence by a partner or former partner during their lifetime.

Dismantling and disrupting domestic violence requires an efficient approach that focuses on holding perpetrators accountable for their violence while ensuring that survivors and their children have access to the resources and services necessary to live independently and free from violence. Florida has a demonstrated history of creating and implementing groundbreaking programming and services and is considered a national leader in responding to domestic violence because of the support of our Governor, Attorney General, and Legislature, who consistently prioritize the needs of survivors by

funding services and ensuring policy recommendations include a focus on perpetrator accountability. This support, in conjunction with a unique and innovative public private partnership between The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), serves as the cornerstone in responding to domestic violence. Our state and communities are committed to ensuring that one day every home will be peaceful and safe.

Florida law requires that FCADV create a statewide status report on domestic violence and distribute it to the Florida Legislature.<sup>1</sup> Information contained in this report includes the statistical data prescribed by statute, a description of many of the innovative services and programs available to survivors of domestic violence and their children, federal and state funding sources, and data collected from state and local domestic violence fatality review teams.

## **The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

FCADV is the private, nonprofit organization that serves as the statewide professional association for Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers. In this role, FCADV provides leadership, advocacy, education, training, technical assistance, and support to certified domestic violence centers, their community partners, and other statewide professionals to improve services, practices, and policies related to domestic violence. FCADV is statutorily required to implement, evaluate, and fund the state's domestic violence services.<sup>2</sup> As such, FCADV conducts annual monitoring of certified domestic violence centers to ensure the provision of quality services and fiscal accountability. FCADV also serves as the primary voice for survivors of domestic violence and their children in the public policy arena.

## **The Florida Department of Children and Families**

The DCF Domestic Violence Program serves as FCADV's primary partner to end domestic violence in Florida. To that end, the DCF Domestic Violence Program's primary responsibilities include oversight of funding, initial certification of newly formed domestic violence centers, and annual renewal of certifications for existing centers. As a result of the implementation of the Statewide Child Protection Investigation (CPI) Project, DCF and FCADV continue to work collaboratively to revise policy and training programs to address the complexities associated with the needs of families involved in the child welfare system that are experiencing domestic violence.

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<sup>1</sup>Pursuant to s. 39.904, Florida Statutes

<sup>2</sup>Pursuant to s. 39.9035, Florida Statutes

## AT A GLANCE

# WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors, violence, or threats of violence that one person uses to establish power and control over a current or former intimate partner. It is not a disagreement, a marital spat, or an anger management problem. Domestic violence is abusive, disrespectful, dangerous, and may include abuse that is physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, or economic. The use of threats, intimidation, isolation, pet abuse, and using children as pawns are examples of the tactics batterers use to perpetrate domestic violence.

### **Domestic Violence Defined in Statute**

Florida law defines domestic violence as any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household member by another family or household member.<sup>3</sup>

# RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAVES LIVES

## Domestic Violence Crime in Florida<sup>4</sup> January – December 2015

- Overall crime decreased by 1.6 percent, while reported domestic violence offenses increased by 0.5 percent
- 107,666 domestic violence offenses were reported to law enforcement
- 199 individuals died as a result of domestic violence homicide, representing approximately 19.1 percent of all homicides in Florida
- Law enforcement made 66,276 arrests for domestic violence related crimes

## Individuals Seeking Services Fiscal Year 2015-16

- 16,362 individuals received emergency shelter at a certified domestic violence center
- Domestic violence survivors and their children spent 600,621 nights in emergency shelter
- Advocates received 122,999 hotline calls
- 113,907 safety plans were completed with survivors
- 33,042 women, children, and men received outreach services
- 5,205 requests for emergency shelter went unmet due to lack of capacity and resources

<sup>3</sup>Pursuant to s. 741.28, Florida Statutes

<sup>4</sup>Information from FDLE's 2015 Annual Uniform Crime Report: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSAC/UCR/2015/CIF\\_annual15.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSAC/UCR/2015/CIF_annual15.aspx)

# FLORIDA'S CERTIFIED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTERS

Florida's certified domestic violence centers are on the front lines responding to domestic violence by providing safety, services, and hope for survivors and their children.

Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers are located throughout the state and are responsible for providing critical, life-saving emergency shelter, services, and programming to survivors and their children. In Florida, our centers are on the front lines of responding to domestic violence by providing a place of safety, security, healing, and empowerment to survivors of domestic violence and their children fleeing violent homes. Certified domestic violence centers are the only state-designated organizations responsible for the provision of a continuum of services to survivors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, as they begin to achieve safety and independence.

Certified domestic violence centers are statutorily required to provide specific services that include: information and referrals; counseling and case management; temporary emergency shelter; a 24-hour crisis hotline; training for law enforcement personnel; assessment and appropriate referral of residential children; and community educational training related to the incidence of domestic violence, the prevention of such violence, and the services available for persons engaged in or subject to domestic violence.<sup>5</sup>

During the 2015-16 fiscal year, certified centers provided 600,621 nights of life-saving emergency shelter to 16,362 women, children, and men. Many survivors fled violent homes with their children, who represented 46.6 percent of those served in emergency shelter. This past year, centers provided emergency shelter to an additional 965 domestic violence survivors and their children and experienced an increase of 53,963 shelter nights.

In addition to the services required by Florida Statutes, a majority of our certified centers supplement their programs with important ancillary services, such as transportation, rent and utility assistance, transitional housing, legal and court advocacy, work skills and job-readiness training and placement, financial literacy, and training and education programs.

<sup>5</sup>Pursuant to s. 39.905, Florida Statutes

## ADVOCATES RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY:

**Completing 113,907 survivor-focused safety plans**

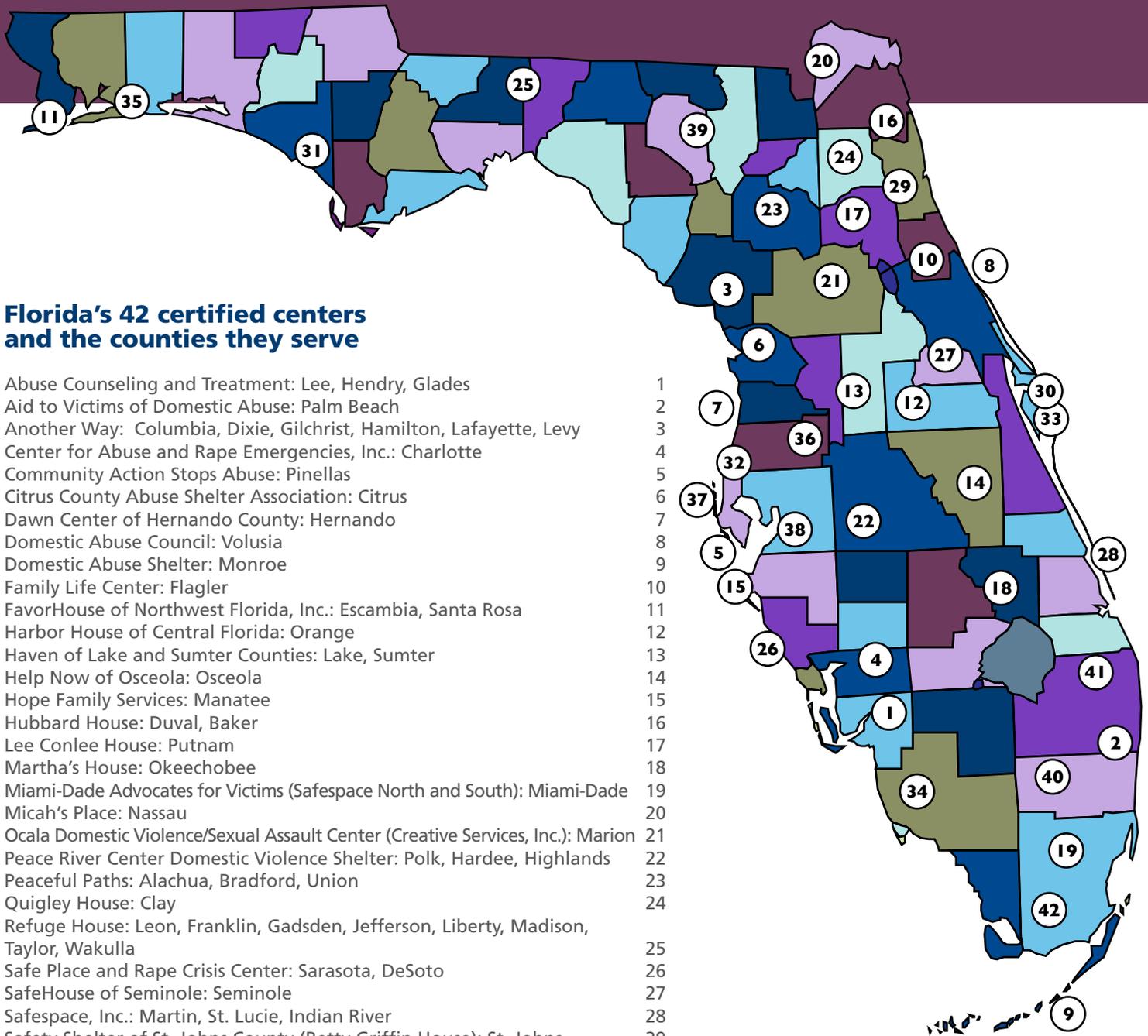
**Providing 412,454 hours of counseling and advocacy**

**Offering 485,940 direct service information and referrals to survivors, family members, and individuals seeking assistance**

**Spending 127,792 hours facilitating child and youth-specific activities**

**Providing youth-targeted community education to 111,322 participants**

**Providing education and training programs to 77,142 adults**



## Florida's 42 certified centers and the counties they serve

- Abuse Counseling and Treatment: Lee, Hendry, Glades
- Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse: Palm Beach
- Another Way: Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy
- Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies, Inc.: Charlotte
- Community Action Stops Abuse: Pinellas
- Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association: Citrus
- Dawn Center of Hernando County: Hernando
- Domestic Abuse Council: Volusia
- Domestic Abuse Shelter: Monroe
- Family Life Center: Flagler
- FavorHouse of Northwest Florida, Inc.: Escambia, Santa Rosa
- Harbor House of Central Florida: Orange
- Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties: Lake, Sumter
- Help Now of Osceola: Osceola
- Hope Family Services: Manatee
- Hubbard House: Duval, Baker
- Lee Conlee House: Putnam
- Martha's House: Okeechobee
- Miami-Dade Advocates for Victims (Safespace North and South): Miami-Dade
- Micah's Place: Nassau
- Ocala Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Center (Creative Services, Inc.): Marion
- Peace River Center Domestic Violence Shelter: Polk, Hardee, Highlands
- Peaceful Paths: Alachua, Bradford, Union
- Quigley House: Clay
- Refuge House: Leon, Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla
- Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center: Sarasota, DeSoto
- SafeHouse of Seminole: Seminole
- Safespace, Inc.: Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River
- Safety Shelter of St. Johns County (Betty Griffin House): St. Johns
- Salvation Army Brevard County Domestic Violence Program: Brevard
- Salvation Army of Panama City Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Program: Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Washington
- Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program of West Pasco: Pasco
- Serene Harbor: Brevard
- The Shelter for Abused Women and Children: Collier
- Shelter House: Okaloosa, Walton
- Sunrise Domestic and Sexual Violence Center: Pasco
- The Haven of RCS: Pinellas
- The Spring of Tampa Bay: Hillsborough
- Vivid Visions: Suwannee
- Women in Distress of Broward County: Broward
- YWCA of Palm Beach County: Palm Beach
- Victim Response, Inc. (The Lodge): Miami-Dade

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# CERTIFIED CENTERS

IN A SINGLE DAY<sup>6</sup>  
IN A SINGLE YEAR

RECEIVED  
806 hotline calls

SHELTERED  
2,293 in emergency  
shelter or transitional  
housing

PROVIDED  
1,056 adults  
and children with  
outreach services

RECEIVED  
122,999<sup>7</sup> hotline calls

SHELTERED  
16,362 in emergency  
shelter

PROVIDED  
33,042 adults  
and children with  
outreach services

## INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Domestic violence does not discriminate and occurs regardless of ethnicity, age, religion, culture, or socioeconomic status. To respond appropriately to Florida's unique and diverse population, Florida's certified domestic violence centers provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services tailored to the specific needs of each individual and/or family seeking services. FCADV operates the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline, which provides trilingual emergency services and legal counsel to survivors. In addition, FCADV provides access to interpreter language services for certified domestic violence centers to ensure a linguistically specific response to survivors.



<sup>6</sup><http://nncadv.org/downloads/Census/DVCounts2015/Florida.pdf>

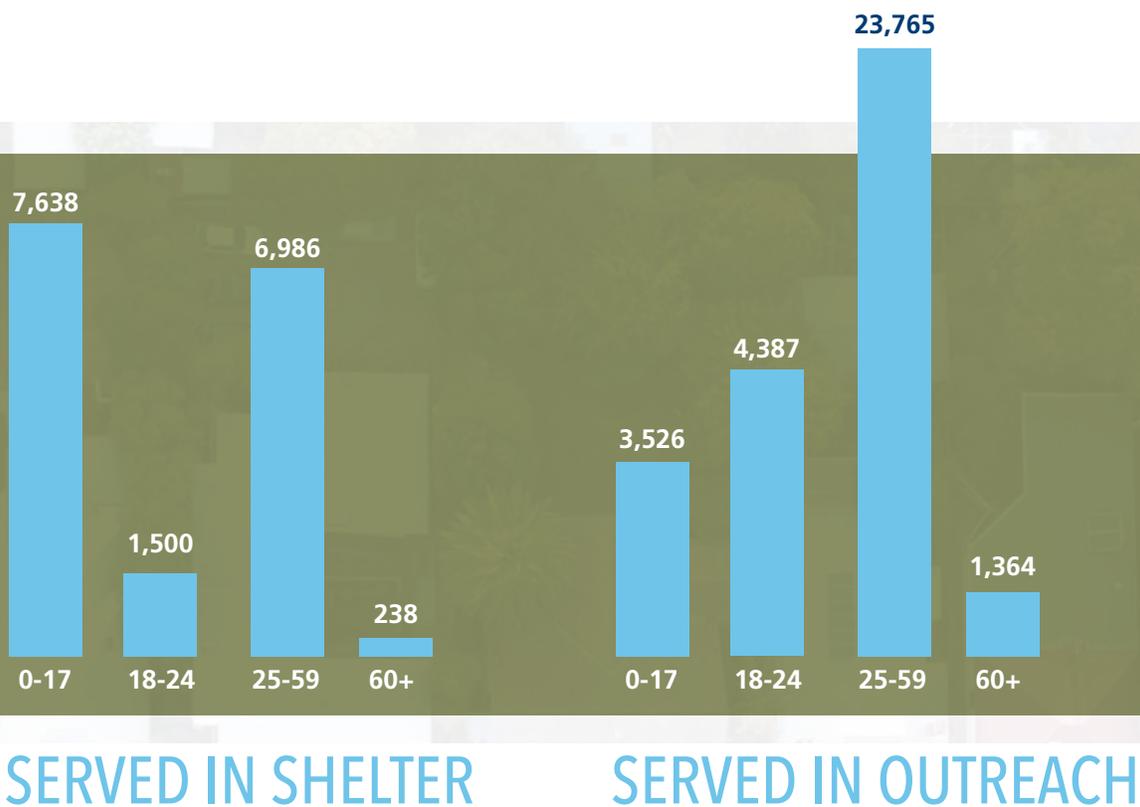
<sup>7</sup>Includes calls received by the FCADV Florida Domestic Violence Hotline

### SERVED IN SHELTER

Caucasian	5,934	<div style="width: 80%;"></div>
African American	5,792	<div style="width: 80%;"></div>
Hispanic	2,958	<div style="width: 40%;"></div>
Haitian	326	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>
Middle Eastern	103	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Asian	91	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Native American	80	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Did not declare	1,078	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>

### SERVED IN OUTREACH

Caucasian	15,992	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
African American	7,539	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>
Hispanic	7,172	<div style="width: 45%;"></div>
Haitian	406	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Asian	309	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Middle Eastern	151	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Native American	87	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Did not declare	1,386	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>



## WORKING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Florida’s certified domestic violence centers serve as the primary community leader in responding to domestic violence through the provision of emergency shelter, critical direct services, and important outreach programs. Ultimately, however, ending domestic violence in our communities requires leadership from local stakeholders and partners. To that end, certified domestic violence centers are engaged with organizations, agencies, and individuals within their respective communities that share the commitment of combatting domestic violence.

### These coordinated community collaborations:

- provide safety, services, advocacy, and outreach to survivors and their children;
- hold perpetrators accountable for their violent acts; and
- raise awareness about the impact of domestic violence on our families and communities.

### These community partners include:

- Faith-based community organizations
- Health care and legal service providers
- K-12 school systems
- Colleges and universities
- Domestic violence task forces
- Community-based care lead agencies
- Affordable housing organizations
- Batterers’ intervention programs
- Law enforcement
- Prosecutors
- Judicial offices
- Private corporations

By working together with community partners and leaders, Florida’s 42 certified centers can effectively maximize and leverage local resources on behalf of domestic violence survivors and their children.

# COMMUNITIES

# RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Florida's certified domestic violence centers have a long history of collaborating with community partners to create and implement important programming that efficiently and effectively responds to domestic violence. Our communities focus their efforts on increasing safety for survivors, strengthening perpetrator accountability, and enhancing and expanding prevention programs. The following are selected examples of the unique programs created by certified domestic violence centers and local partnering agencies for their communities.

## **Pinellas County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team**

Since 2001, the Pinellas County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (the team) conducted reviews of intimate partner deaths and near deaths. During the past 15 years, the team reviewed 138 cases and published annual reports that were distributed to local stakeholders. Based on trends identified during the fatality review process, the team secured experts to conduct training to address those issues. Specifically, the team requested Dr. Edward Gondolf conduct training regarding the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs (BIPs) with a goal of increasing referrals to such programs. Additionally, Mark Wynn, a retired law enforcement officer from Tennessee, conducted training for law enforcement officers regarding revising policies and prac-

tices to increase local arrest rates. The team's trend analysis also resulted in training about intimate partner violence for media outlets, physicians, and child protective investigators, as well as community members.

The trends identified by the team contributed to the Pinellas County Domestic Violence Task Force's role in consulting with the local civil injunction court on improving referrals to BIPs and creating a system to ensure weapons are surrendered when a respondent is served with an injunction. Project partners created an educational information packet for survivors that includes a detailed description of the injunction for protection process and outlines action steps necessary when a violation occurs with an existing injunction. Partners created educational brochures that include safety planning and community resource information for family members and friends and information specifically tailored for the African-American and elder communities.

## **Commit to Change Program**

Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse (AVDA)'s *Commit to Change Program* is a violence prevention initiative, that engages youth leaders in positively challenging and changing knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors held by young people about violence and abuse. AVDA conducts educational sessions in the Palm Beach County school system about healthy relationships and facilitates an after school club where youths become the primary drivers of social change in their community. The youth leaders of *Commit to Change* serve as advisors for AVDA's county-wide prevention initiative while also conducting school-wide events.

Recent positive outcomes of AVDA's *Commit to Change Program* include youth recognizing that excessive jealousy in an intimate relationship is considered abusive

behavior and an increase in self-reporting by youth that there is a trusted adult to discuss problematic issues in their relationship. *Commit to Change* youth leaders are engaged on the individual level with other youth while focusing synergistic work on the relationship and community levels through the implementation of a mentoring program for young men and a social media campaign that encourages boys and men to hold other men accountable for behavior and actions.

# RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH PROGRAMS, ADVOCACY AND TRAINING

Created with the founding principles of cooperation and unity among domestic violence centers, FCADV advocates for programs, policies, and funding that benefit survivors and their children served by our 42 certified domestic violence centers.

By viewing the provision of domestic violence service through a statewide lens, FCADV is uniquely positioned to advance a comprehensive, statewide approach that focuses on the development of innovative services, programs, and best practices to respond to the needs of survivors and their children.

In 2004, FCADV was statutorily designated by the Legislature as the administrator of state and federal funding earmarked for domestic violence services. As the administrator of these funds, FCADV subcontracts with Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers, a multitude of law enforcement agencies, state prosecutors' offices, statewide associations, and community-based organizations dedicated to providing services and resources to survivors and their children while holding perpetrators accountable for their violence. FCADV ensures compliance with administrative, programmatic, and fiscal accountability requirements of each provider by engaging in a stringent monitoring process. This statewide role leads to efficient and effective coordination among agencies responding to domestic violence throughout Florida.

In addition to the programs and initiatives on the following pages, FCADV also provides training, technical assistance, and education to certified domestic violence centers, collaborative community partners, agencies, and service providers throughout the state. Each year, thousands of hours of

training and technical assistance are provided to these entities to strengthen knowledge, enhance standards, and build capacity to provide quality services to domestic violence survivors and their children. FCADV tailors each training to address the specific needs identified by the center and/or local community organizations. More than 98 percent of participants in attendance at FCADV trainings reported they will utilize the concepts learned to enhance and expand their advocacy for families experiencing domestic violence.

The following FCADV programs and initiatives are highlighted as examples of programming designed to respond to domestic violence by focusing on the needs of survivors and their children while holding perpetrators accountable for their violent behavior. This is not an exhaustive compilation of all the resources, programs, and initiatives coordinated by the organization, but represents a snapshot of select activities. For additional information about FCADV's programs and services, please visit [www.fcadv.org](http://www.fcadv.org).

## RESPONDING BY LISTENING TO SURVIVORS

### Survivor Listening Project

FCADV conducts the Annual Survivor Listening Project to hear firsthand about current survivor experiences throughout Florida. This project was instituted to ensure the

survivor's experiences and perspectives continue to guide programmatic standards and to inform FCADV's support and prevention efforts. FCADV conducts listening groups with domestic violence survivors statewide to receive feedback about their most pressing needs and concerns regarding systemic response, and to learn about successful efforts. Survivor feedback informs FCADV's planning for the development of programming and policy priorities for the upcoming year.

FCADV and its statewide stakeholders periodically convene to identify current trends within systems that require attention to enhance the safety of domestic violence survivors and their children. FCADV partners with the appropriate entities to develop innovative programming and policies to address the needs identified by survivors and partnering agencies. A broad variety of issues are discussed including: local system barriers that limit access to services; culturally and linguistically specific needs; and quality of services received. To date, the voices of more than 400 domestic violence survivors, representing all ages and ethnicities living in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the state, have impacted FCADV's funding, policy, and program recommendations.

In the past year, FCADV garnered feedback from 65 survivors receiving services from 11 certified domestic violence centers representing a cross-section of rural and urban

communities throughout the state. Overall, 90 percent of survivors reported positive experiences with shelter and outreach services provided by certified domestic violence centers. Challenges reported by survivors included: access to affordable legal assistance; providing for children's needs, such as daycare and medical care; transportation; and navigating systems that unnecessarily mandated the survivor, instead of the perpetrator, to inappropriate services. Securing input from survivors is critical to ensuring that resources and programming are prioritized to address the most pressing needs while removing the barriers that inhibit survivors from accessing safety for themselves and their children. FCADV continues to conduct the Survivor Listening Project to ensure survivors' voices remain at the forefront of Florida's efforts to eradicate violence in our state.

## DURING FISCAL YEAR 2015-16, FCADV:

**Responded to 7,042 technical assistance requests from domestic violence centers, collaborative partners, and other agencies**

**Conducted 172 onsite technical assistance visits and trainings for certified domestic violence center staff and/or Board of Directors, collaborative partners, and other agencies**

**Conducted 118 webinars**

**Conducted 69 regional and statewide training events and/or conferences**

**Administered and managed 169 contracts**

**Conducted 99 monitoring visits and/or desk reviews**

## RESPONDING TO FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INVOLVED IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

### Child Protection Investigation Project

Protecting children from the effects of domestic violence is a mutual priority of FCADV, DCF, and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). “Family violence threatens child” is one of the most prevalent maltreatment offenses reported to the Statewide Florida Abuse Hotline. Recognizing that children in the foster care system often experience substandard life outcomes, FCADV, DCF, and the OAG partnered to create this groundbreaking program designed to provide a coordinated community response for families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse by co-locating domestic violence advocates within CPI Units. These co-located advocates provide consultation to child welfare professionals, support and referral services to survivors, and coordination with community partners to develop strategies to improve collaboration

and resolve barriers. This immediate intervention, sometimes within hours of a child abuse report, helps to stabilize the crisis and increase safety in the home. The ultimate goals of this statewide project are to bridge the gap between child welfare and domestic violence service providers to enhance family safety and to create permanency for children by focusing on keeping the child safe in the home with the non-offending parent, while increasing perpetrator accountability measures and strategies.

In 2009, the CPI Project was originally conceived and implemented with the creation of seven pilot sites. Four additional sites were added in 2011, three of which focused on providing linguistically and culturally specific services. In 2014, the Governor and Legislature provided \$2 million to expand the highly successful CPI Project. This appropriation allowed for expansion to 45 counties where a high volume of domestic violence-related child maltreatment removals occur. In 2015, the Legislature again prioritized survivor and child safety by allocating an additional \$2 million to expand the CPI Project to all 67 counties in Florida.

**In Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16, these projects collectively utilized a seamless system of wraparound services, which allowed 9,856 children, whose families were involved in the child welfare system, to remain in the home with the non-offending parent. During this time, co-located advocates:**

- **received and followed up on a total of 8,038 CPI Project referrals from child welfare professionals;**
- **participated in 4,885 child welfare case staffings; and**
- **provided 12,341 case consultation services to child welfare professionals.**

**As a result of these collaborative services, the need for foster care services was significantly reduced and resulted in a potential cost savings of \$25,975,488 by keeping the children out of the foster care system.**

## RESPONDING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

### Law Enforcement Training Initiative

To increase perpetrator accountability in domestic violence cases, FCADV provides training and technical assistance on best practices in evidence collection and prosecution of domestic violence perpetrators to law

enforcement, advocates, and prosecutors. Trainings also include establishing appropriate protocols for responding to domestic violence calls, maintaining the confidentiality of survivor information, and effectively assessing the risk for potential domestic violence homicides. FCADV also provides education related to understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and how that informs decisions by both survivors and perpetrators.

**During FY 2015-16, FCADV conducted eight advanced law enforcement trainings to more than 29 law enforcement agencies statewide, including personnel from the U.S. Department of Defense.**

### **Law Enforcement Enhanced Response Program**

Designed to provide domestic violence survivors and their children with protection and services while improving a community's capacity to hold batterers accountable, the Law Enforcement Enhanced Response program supports six Florida communities in enhancing their response to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. This program challenges the community to listen, communicate, identify problems, and share ideas that will result in responses that ensure survivor safety and offender accountability. The goals of the program include assisting survivors and their children with accessing the protection and services necessary to live violence free while improving the community's capacity to hold offenders accountable.

FCADV assisted the law enforcement grantees with revising the agencies' policies and procedures specifically to increase survivor safety and offender accountability. These changes include: the creation of policies that require frontline patrol officers to perform risk assessments and screening for indicators that suggest the presence of a highly lethal domestic violence situation; implementation of checklists that ensure officers responding to domestic violence calls are collecting appropriate evidence; creation of a separate, standalone domestic violence unit; and, strengthening relationships with the local certified domestic violence center.

### **Intimate Violence Enhanced Service Team (InVEST)**

InVEST was created specifically to reduce and prevent domestic violence homicides. FCADV and the OAG identified 11 communities with the highest rates of domestic violence homicides to implement this pilot program. InVEST utilizes a coordinated community response model designed to reduce the number of domestic violence homicides by increasing services for survivors identified in high lethality domestic violence situations while increasing perpetrator accountabil-

ity throughout the criminal justice process. Preventing domestic violence homicides requires a comprehensive, multifaceted, and community-based response in which law enforcement, other criminal justice partners, and domestic violence centers work together to hold perpetrators accountable while providing enhanced advocacy for survivors. The InVEST program comprises members from law enforcement, domestic violence centers, child welfare agencies, courts, and other partners who utilize non-traditional approaches by identifying high risk cases and ensuring that all systems tailor their response to address the unique and diverse needs of each survivor.

InVEST partnerships implemented batterer accountability measures and provided enhanced advocacy and safety for more than 3,000 survivors per year who were identified as high risk for being murdered by their intimate partner. Since the program's inception, no survivors participating in the InVEST program were murdered by the abuser. This is of particular note since participants entering the program are considered to be in the most dangerous and high lethality domestic violence situations.

**During the past fiscal year, law enforcement agencies participating in the InVEST and Law Enforcement Enhanced Response programs arrested 7,030 domestic violence perpetrators, while law enforcement agencies filed 7,131 arrests for prosecution with the local state attorney's office.**

**Financial security is the number one predictor of whether or not a victim of domestic violence will have the resources to leave and stay free from abuse. In 98 percent of domestic violence cases, financial abuse keeps survivors trapped in abusive relationships.**

## RESPONDING THROUGH ENHANCING FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT AND LITERACY

### Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives

FCADV's Statewide Economic Justice Initiative is a program created to directly respond to the financial control exercised by perpetrators. Lack of financial knowledge and resources is the number one indicator of whether a domestic violence victim will stay, leave, or return to an abusive relationship.<sup>8</sup> Financial abuse occurs in 98 percent of all domestic violence cases.<sup>9</sup> Survivors report that abusers utilize a multitude of economically-related tactics to gain and maintain power and control over them, such as creating large amounts of debt in joint accounts, withholding funds from the survivor or children to obtain basic needs such as food and medicine, prohibiting the survivor from working, and not allowing the survivor to access bank accounts.<sup>10</sup>

To address economic abuse and assist survivors with gaining financial independence, FCADV launched the following programs as part of the organization's Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives.

### Economic Empowerment Saves Lives: Allstate's Guide to Financial Independence

FCADV's Statewide Economic Justice Initiative includes a critical partnership with The Allstate Foundation, a national foundation focused on financially empowering domestic violence survivors through the provision of resources and education. The Allstate Foundation and Allstate Florida provides funding to FCADV to advance financial independence for survivors of domestic violence and their children by coordinating grants for selected certified domestic violence centers to implement local economic empowerment projects. Collectively, these projects

help survivors learn about financial abuse while providing them the necessary skills to build a secure and stable financial future for their families. Grantees utilized The Allstate Foundation's "Moving Ahead Through Financial Management" curriculum to assist 2,024 survivors with budgeting, investing, retirement planning, debt reduction, completing job readiness programs, gaining new employment, participating in microloans or microenterprises, and other financial literacy components based on each survivor's unique situation and needs.

### Team Allstate Florida: Agents and Centers Changing Lives

Another component of FCADV's Statewide Economic Justice Initiative is the *Allstate Agents and Domestic Violence Centers Changing Lives Program*. An integral part of this collaboration is the formation of the Statewide Advisory Team (SAT) composed of local Allstate agents and certified domestic violence center executive directors. The SAT focuses on two primary goals: increasing financial resources available for economic opportunities for domestic violence survivors in Florida and establishing community-driven partnerships between local Allstate agents and their certified domestic violence centers. FCADV convenes meetings annually with the SAT to identify potential funding and training opportunities that support the expansion of Florida's Allstate Economic Justice Project. The SAT provides leadership and guidance to FCADV regarding the unique opportunities associated with partnering certified centers with local Allstate agents in their respective communities.

FCADV and Allstate Florida coordinate statewide donation drives among local agents and their local domestic violence centers. In the most recent fiscal year, agents participated in four donation drives, which included a school supply drive, a holiday gift drive, a special Mother's Day drive, and a spring cleaning supply drive.

<sup>8</sup>Jinseok Kim & Karen Gray, *Leave or Stay?: Battered Women's Decision After Intimate Partner Violence*, 23 *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 1465, 1466 (2008) citing Deborah K. Anderson & Daniel G. Saunders, *Leaving an Abusive Partner: An Empirical Review of Predictors, the Process of Leaving, and the Psychological Well-being*, 4 *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 163 (2003); Ola W. Barnett, *Why Battered Women Do Not Leave: Part 1: External Inhibiting Factors Within Society*, 1 *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 343 (2000).

<sup>9</sup>Chen, Tim. "How to Stop Domestic Financial Abuse - US News." *US News RSS. U.S. News & World Report*, 26 Apr. 11. Web. 06 Aug. 2014.

<sup>10</sup>Additional information available at: <http://nnedv.org/resources/je-resources/about-financial-abuse.html>

The partnership between FCADV, The Allstate Foundation, Allstate Florida, local certified centers and Allstate agents led to enhanced awareness among insurance agents regarding understanding and recognizing the initial signs of domestic violence, appropriately referring survivors to services, and educating their community on the impact of domestic violence on the economy. Local agents partner with domestic violence advocates to conduct training utilizing elements from The Allstate Foundation's curriculum and sharing their financial literacy expertise with survivors.

## RESPONDING TO SURVIVORS FROM UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

### Rural Statewide Initiative and Underserved Communities

The Rural Statewide Initiative and Rural/Underserved Projects utilize a community organizing model designed to respond to the unique needs and challenges experienced by survivors residing in the most geographically isolated rural areas in Florida. In 1996, FCADV established domestic violence and sexual assault outreach services in 19 rural counties where none previously existed. During the 2015-16 fiscal year, FCADV funded 8 certified domestic violence centers providing services in 11 of Florida's most isolated rural communities where increasing access to appropriate and safe programs and services is essential to ensuring the safety of survivors and their children. Services provided in Florida's rural and isolated areas are culturally and linguistically appropriate and informed by the voices of local community members.

### Domestic Violence and Disabilities Program/Domestic Violence in Later Life Program

FCADV supports certified domestic violence centers with creating accessible services, complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and effectively responding to the needs of survivors with disabilities. FCADV's Domestic Violence and Disabilities program offers training and technical assistance related to increasing awareness of disability issues, creating comprehensive safety plans for persons with disabilities, mitigating barriers associated with

disclosure of abuse, and addressing economic challenges experienced by survivors. Many survivors of abuse in later life are not financially literate because their abuser controlled family finances as a tactic of abuse. This program offers advocates educational information about compliance with the ADA as it relates to providing services in emergency shelter. Advocates strengthen their knowledge regarding tailoring services to survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or experience low-vision, or are living with cognitive and emotional disabilities.

As part of this programming, FCADV conducts training and technical assistance for certified centers to address complexities associated with providing services to those individuals experiencing abuse in later life. Training components include successfully addressing barriers to services for elder survivors with disabilities and utilizing intervention methods to increase outreach to this underserved population. Florida is a transient state as it relates to the elder population, as aging individuals relocate to communities with a warmer climate. Therefore, FCADV provides comprehensive training to domestic violence center staff regarding Florida's statutorily mandated reporting requirements, as compared to other states' mandates to ensure advocates possess a thorough understanding of the differences between states to ensure they are able to articulate such to those accessing services.

Last year, FCADV conducted an Abuse in Later Life Institute with attendees representing certified domestic violence centers, legal aid, law enforcement, and other agencies serving survivors who are in later life. Presentations at the institute included information related to trauma-informed services, preventing financial exploitation, elder care coordination, and technology and safety considerations for survivors who are in later life. FCADV also updated and distributed its Abuse in Later Life brochure and created and distributed resource cards for banks and financial institutions on the dynamics of financial exploitation. These informational cards assist staff employed at financial institutions with identifying survivors of domestic violence and referring them to appropriate agencies such as certified domestic violence centers.

## RESPONDING THROUGH THE LEGAL SYSTEM

### Legal Initiative

Survivors of domestic violence continue to identify legal assistance as a priority need to successfully achieving safety, permanently remaining independent, and living free from violence. Through the Statewide Legal Initiative's "Clearinghouse Project," both private attorneys and legal aid providers represent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking survivors in civil injunction for protection hearings. Survivors benefit from this project by receiving services such as: referral for pro bono legal representation; legal consultation in dissolution, custody and paternity cases; child support; immigration; public benefits; housing; dependency; or any other civil legal action. During FY 2015-16, Clearinghouse Project attorneys provided 2,819 consultations and represented 923 survivors to secure injunctions for protection. Of those, 27 were specific to sexual violence, 25 specific to dating violence, 14 specific to stalking, and 857 specific to domestic violence. While FCADV's Clearinghouse Project provides critical legal services, the need remains staggering. The Florida Office of the State Courts Administrators reported that in FY 2014-15 (the most current data available), survivors filed 51,613 domestic violence, 3,569 dating violence, 1,136 sexual violence, and 11,838 stalking injunction petitions statewide. In addition, FCADV provides training and technical assistance related to issues trending for lawyers participating in the Clearinghouse Project as well as state attorneys that prosecute domestic violence crimes.

## RESPONDING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

### Technology and Safety Program

The use of technology to stalk, harass, threaten, and ultimately harm survivors of domestic violence has increased exponentially with the use of cell phones, GPS monitoring devices and applications, spoofing and spyware applications, and the proliferation of social media. The Technology and Safety Program provides advocates throughout Florida with training regarding the intersection of intimate partner violence and high-tech stalking. Issues such as cyberstalking, the safe use of technology, social media and social networking sites, and security of survivor data are addressed by bringing together a trained domestic violence advocate and an information technology professional to bridge the gap between advocacy and technology.

## RESPONDING THROUGH PREVENTION EFFORTS

### DELTA FOCUS and State Level Prevention Partnerships

FCADV's Primary Prevention Initiative is focused on changing the environments and conditions in which people live, work, and play with the overall goal of preventing intimate partner violence from occurring by creating conditions that make first-time perpetration and first-time victimization less likely.

To accomplish that goal, FCADV partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2002, to develop and implement the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) program. The program ex-

panded in 2014 when FCADV and two previously-funded communities in Florida were awarded the competitive CDC DELTA Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United with States (FOCUS) grant. This grant program provides resources to promote strategies that address not only individual and relationship factors associated with domestic violence, but overall community and societal influences that place people at risk for or protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence.<sup>11</sup>

To expand prevention efforts and engage a diverse community of partners, FCADV collaborates with the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Education Office of Safe Schools, the Healthy Families Florida statewide home visiting program, the Florida Police Chiefs Association, the Florida Sheriffs Association, and other state-level agencies that work toward enhancing the safety and well-being of Florida's citizens. This multi-disciplinary Leadership Team is currently focused on implementing and evaluating strategies where school resource officers, teachers, home visitors, and health providers receive the training and support needed to promote healthy relationships and policies within their respective spheres of influence. Recent accomplishments of FCADV and the Leadership Team include:

- the creation of training videos for Florida's school resource officers (SROs) and conducting in-person training of SROs on implementing statutory requirements related to teen dating violence;
- conducting an assessment of certified domestic violence centers engaged with local community partners to assess growth in building capacity; and
- integrating primary prevention principles in statewide training for Florida's child abuse prevention home visiting programs.

### **Primary Prevention Initiative**

In 2007, the Florida Legislature dedicated funding statewide to Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers to further the goal of preventing domestic violence at its inception phase by engaging community stakeholders and providing educational programming for youth. Each certified domestic violence center engages in primary prevention programming that focuses on five areas: community partnerships with non-tradition-

al partners; prevention activities with youth; increasing organizational capacity; program evaluation; and sustainability. All aspects of primary prevention programming address risk and protective factors for perpetration and victimization of domestic violence. Each of the 42 certified domestic violence centers coordinate Community Action Teams (CATs), which include community stakeholders who partner to prevent violence and promote healthy relationships in their communities.

This past year, domestic violence centers:

- began implementing social marketing plans to promote messaging related to educating their communities on the importance of healthy relationships;
- conducted planning regarding the implementation of additional strategies at the community and societal levels;
- conducted primary prevention programming sessions with youth;
- conducted CAT meetings; and
- attended primary prevention webinars conducted by FCADV.

FCADV utilized the National DELTA program as the blueprint for creating the State-wide Primary Prevention Initiative.

### **Strong Families and Domestic Violence Prevention Campaign**

The Florida Legislature provided funding for the creation and implementation of a "Strong Families and Domestic Violence Prevention Campaign". FCADV partners with Family First and their All Pro Dad fatherhood program to implement this educational campaign. The primary goal of the campaign is to engage men, primarily fathers, and their children with preventing domestic violence by creating strong families that promote safe and healthy relationships.

During FY 2015-16, FCADV and All Pro Dad partnered to create Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that focused on educating youth about healthy relationships, modeling positive relationship behaviors, creating boundaries, and responding appropriately to intimidation by others. Recognizing that young boys respond positively to messages delivered by athletes, the PSAs featured former Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy.

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<sup>11</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html>

The following educational resources were created in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole to correspond with and accompany the PSAs:

- 5 Ways Dads Can be a Good Example of a Great Man;
- 5 Things Dads Must Teach Their Sons about How to Treat Girls; and
- 5 Things Moms Must Teach Their Sons about How to Treat Girls.

The resources received a stunning total of 62,261 downloads during the year.

A component of the campaign also includes partnering on the All Pro Dad *Father & Kids Experience*. This signature, sports-themed event provides fun, inspirational opportunities for fathers and their children to strengthen their relationships through interactive games and other hands-on experiences. This family-fun event provides the opportunity to educate participants about FCADV and Family First's common message regarding the importance of developing safe and healthy relationships. In FY 2015-16, All Pro Dad held events in Miami, Tampa, Tallahassee, and Jacksonville with a total of 3,500 in attendance.

## RESPONDING TO CRISIS CALLS

### The Florida Domestic Violence Hotline

FCADV operates and manages the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline, which provides multilingual services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hotline advocates provide support, advocacy, information, and referral services for survivors of domestic violence, their children, families, and friends residing in Florida's 67 counties. The FCADV, in partnership with Florida Legal Services, Inc., administers the Domestic Violence Legal Hotline, which provides comprehensive legal advice, information, and referrals to survivors of domestic violence. During the 2015-16 fiscal year, the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline received 27,587 calls, 3,652 of which were handled by the legal hotline.

Callers to the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline primarily requested assistance specific to receiving shelter, support services, information regarding the civil and criminal justice system, and additional financial resources. The most frequently sought advice

on the Legal Hotline included information regarding how to obtain an injunction for protection and instructions related to preparing for related court appearances. Survivors also requested legal information related to obtaining a divorce in the state of Florida, child custody, parenting rights, and interstate jurisdiction.

## RESPONDING THROUGH INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

FCADV's *Community Collaborative Response to Increase Access to Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking* program creates a unique opportunity for select Florida communities to increase the resources, services, and advocacy available to survivors. Collaborative efforts between nonprofit community-based organizations, government agencies and mental health organizations ensure that survivors identified are referred to appropriate services and receive the assistance they request. Project partners:

- establish and strengthen multidisciplinary collaborative relationships;
- increase organizational capacity to provide safe, accessible, and responsive services to survivors;
- identify needs and strengths within their respective service areas; and
- develop and implement plans to address those specific needs.

This past year, one of the anti-stalking projects developed an Anti-Stalking Toolkit for working with survivors of stalking, which includes: law enforcement's response to victims of stalking; evidence gathering in stalking cases; criminal justice interventions in stalking cases; and best practices in victim advocacy. The project team also conducted cross trainings for each partnering organization to increase the organizational capacity of each agency to serve survivors of stalking and created a tip sheet for law enforcement on how technology is used to stalk.

Collaborative projects focus on building strong relationships at the community level between certified domestic violence centers and their local mental health service providers. It is important to note that not all survivors of domestic violence experience post-traumatic stress disorder or any other major

mental health or substance abuse complexity. However, it is important that advocates are well prepared to support those survivors where such issues exist to ensure services are provided from an empowerment-based approach. It is critical for advocates to refer survivors when necessary to local mental health providers that understand the certified domestic violence centers' trauma-informed approach to working with survivors and their children.

A component of all of the community collaborative projects is cross training of each partners' organizations to build capacity and gain a baseline understanding of each agency's mission. Training conducted by mental health and substance abuse providers has increased domestic violence center advocates' understanding of the complications of providing services to survivors experiencing the co-occurrence of trauma symptoms and major mental health and substance abuse complexities. Additionally, these projects have strengthened referral procedures and increased the number of referrals to collaborating mental health and substance abuse providers. Further, survivors are able to successfully remain in shelter, safe from their abusive partner, while receiving services from trusted community providers.

Last year, a domestic violence center partnered with a local mental health/substance abuse services provider to offer onsite supportive substance abuse services to survivors. The center provided confidential space for a co-located counselor to meet with self-referred survivors, making it convenient to access services onsite. The center also provided training to the mental health organization's clinical staff on the intersection of domestic violence and substance abuse, the appropriate medical response to domestic violence, and the basic dynamics of domestic violence, with the goal of increasing their capacity to provide empowerment-based services to survivors.

Another grantee created a tip sheet for law enforcement to use in the field when working with survivors of domestic violence managing mental health complexities. A collaborative workgroup consisting of domestic violence center and mental health agency partners collaborated to create an empowerment-based document. The tip sheet incorporated feedback from local survivor listening groups that were conducted as a part of the project. The project staff also cross trained community partners on the intersection of domestic violence and mental health complexities.

Providing culturally appropriate information is critical to reaching out to survivors from underserved communities. One grantee developed and produced a culturally and linguistically appropriate, Spanish-language informational brochure for survivors related to the intersection of domestic violence, mental health, and substance abuse and places to access assistance. Coordinated community responses such as these benefit survivors long-term by increasing safety, increasing batterer accountability, coordinating services, and identifying available community resources.

# THE CRIME

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRIME IN FLORIDA

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) publishes annual and semi-annual Uniform Crime Reports (UCRs) that serve as a reliable indicator of the number, rate, and types of crime and criminal activity known to and reported by the state's law enforcement agencies. In addition to overall crime statistics, domestic violence crimes and arrests are segregated in the UCR data by the respective crime categories.

The 2015 UCR<sup>12</sup> reflected that while overall crime decreased 1.6 percent, domestic violence crimes increased by 0.5 percent. Domestic violence homicides in 2015 decreased 2.9 percent but continue to represent more than 19 percent of all homicides in Florida. While this decrease is certainly positive, the report also reflected an increase of 12.5 percent in **aggravated** stalking and an 11.2 percent increase in **simple** stalking. An increase in these crimes raises concern as stalking is a known precursor to domestic violence homicide.

In 2015, law enforcement agencies reported a total 107,666 domestic violence offenses and arrested 66,276 individuals.

Domestic violence crimes against spouses and cohabitants are overwhelmingly the most frequently reported relationship between perpetrators and victims. While the statewide increase of reported incidences of domestic violence was minimal, 15 counties experienced **increases** of 10 percent or more. Overall, 35 of Florida's 67 counties reported increases in domestic violence crimes, 29 experienced decreases, and 3 remained constant. It should be noted that the data contained in the annual report and reflected in the UCR only represents domestic violence offenses reported to law enforcement agencies, and domestic violence is recognized as a significantly underreported crime. An estimated 27 percent of women and 13.5 percent of men who are physically assaulted, and less than 20 percent of women who are raped by an intimate partner report these crimes to law enforcement.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Information from FDLE's 2015 Uniform Crime Report: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSACIUCRI/2015/CIF\\_annual15.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSACIUCRI/2015/CIF_annual15.aspx)

<sup>13</sup>Tjaden, Patricia & Thoennes, Nancy. National Institute of Justice and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, "Extent, Nature and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey," (2000)

## HEADLINES AROUND OUR STATE



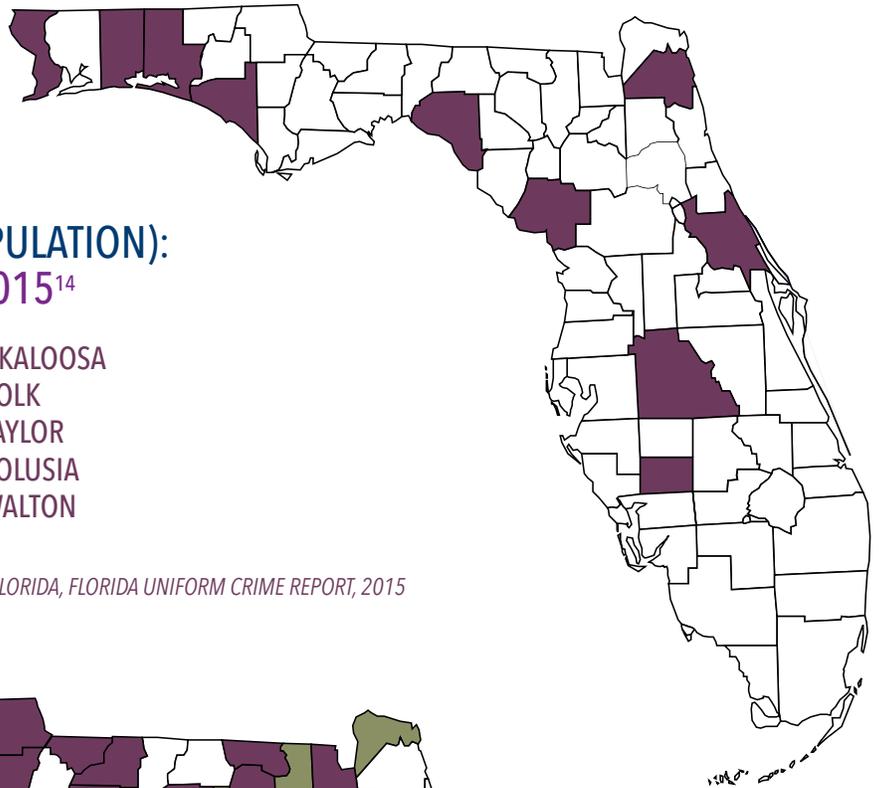
Excerpted from newspaper articles

## TOP 10 COUNTIES (BY % OF POPULATION): DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES, 2015<sup>14</sup>

BAY  
DESOTO  
ESCAMBIA  
LEVY  
MANATEE

OKALOOSA  
POLK  
TAYLOR  
VOLUSIA  
WALTON

SOURCE: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT. CRIME IN FLORIDA, FLORIDA UNIFORM CRIME REPORT, 2015 [COMPUTER PROGRAM]. TALLAHASSEE, FL: FDLE. FLORIDA

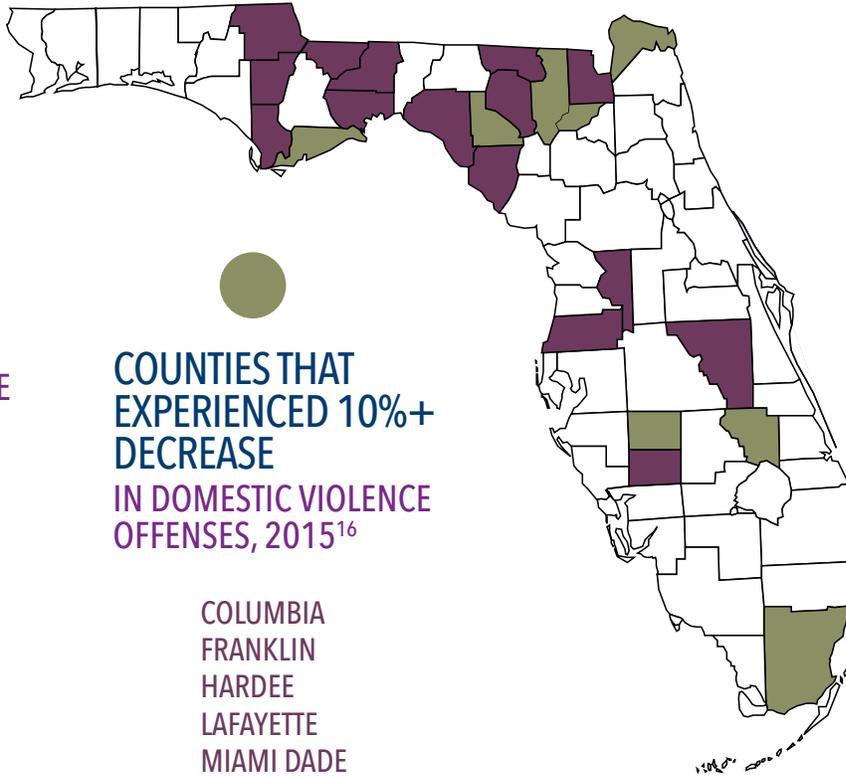


## COUNTIES THAT EXPERIENCED 10%+ INCREASE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES, 2015<sup>15</sup>

BAKER  
CALHOUN  
DESOTO  
DIXIE  
GADSDEN  
GULF  
HAMILTON  
JACKSON  
LEON  
OSCEOLA  
PASCO  
SUMTER  
SUWANNEE  
TAYLOR  
WAKULLA

## COUNTIES THAT EXPERIENCED 10%+ DECREASE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES, 2015<sup>16</sup>

COLUMBIA  
FRANKLIN  
HARDEE  
LAFAYETTE  
MIAMI DADE  
NASSAU  
OKEECHOBEE  
UNION



<sup>14</sup>Retrieved from <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSAC/Data-Statistics/UCR-Domestic-Violence.aspx>

<sup>15</sup>Ibid

<sup>16</sup>Ibid

\*PERCENT CHANGES SHOULD BE INTERPRETED WITH CAUTION. IN SMALL COUNTIES WITH LOW NUMBERS OF CRIME, A SMALL INCREASE MAY PRODUCE A LARGE PERCENT CHANGE.

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## FATALITY REVIEW TEAMS

### GENDER/AGE

#### PERPETRATOR

**95% male**

**5% female**

**Average age: 41**

#### DECEDENT

**87% female**

**13% male**

**Average age: 42**

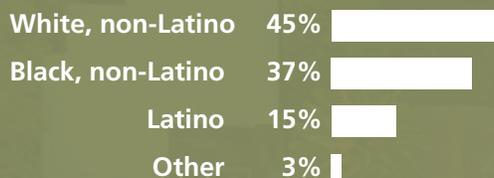
Florida's commitment to responding to and preventing domestic violence is evidenced by the existence of a Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and 25 active local teams, representing one of only nine states with both statewide and local teams. Since 2009, the Attorney General's Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team conducted comprehensive reviews of domestic violence fatalities with the goal of preventing domestic violence homicides. The team identifies gaps in the service delivery system and offers policy and practical recommendations to strengthen safety factors and reduce risk factors that contribute to these deaths. The statewide team is co-chaired by Attorney General Pam Bondi and FCADV, and comprises representatives from a variety of state and local entities that interact with survivors, their children, and perpetrators of domestic violence. Members represent the court system, probation, parole, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, certified domestic violence centers, legal providers, health care providers, and the defense bar.

During FY 2015-16, the statewide team produced the 2016 *Faces of Fatality* report that includes descriptive statistics of domestic violence homicides based on data collected by local fatality review teams. The deaths reviewed primarily occurred between 2010 and 2015. In total, local teams across the state submitted 62 reviews of fatal or near-fatal domestic violence homicides in Florida. The following represent highlights excerpted from the *Faces of Fatality, Vol. VI*.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup>For more information about the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team: <http://fcadv.org/projects-programs/sdvfrt>

## RACE/ETHNICITY

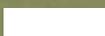
### PERPETRATOR



### DECEDENT



# RELATIONSHIP OF PERPETRATOR TO DECEDENT

Spouse	37%	
Intimate partner	39%	
Ex-spouse	5%	
Other	19%	

## Key Findings

- There was evidence of separation at the time of death in 23 percent of fatalities.
- Couples were known to have lived together at the time of the death in 75 percent of fatalities.
- 47 percent of perpetrators possessed a known criminal history of domestic violence, and in 32 percent of fatalities there were known prior reports to police by the decedent alleging domestic violence by the perpetrator.
- In 22 percent of fatalities there were allegations by the decedent of death threats made by the perpetrator.
- In 24 percent of fatalities there was a known No Contact Order issued against the perpetrator.
- There was a known permanent injunction for protection filed against the perpetrator by the decedent in 7 percent of fatalities, and in 22 percent there was a known permanent injunction for protection filed against the perpetrator by someone other than the decedent.
- 30 percent of perpetrators committed suicide and an additional 3 percent attempted suicide unsuccessfully.

## 2016 Recommendations

- FCADV should develop a pilot project to enhance the InVEST model to increase participation by state attorneys' office victim advocates in the ongoing review of domestic violence police reports and partner with prosecutors on cases where risk factors are identified.
- FCADV and the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team should develop a domestic violence media guide for journalists and reporters to reduce and prevent framing domestic violence incidents and homicides in ways that may be perceived as blaming survivors or victims. The guide should include education regarding the role of victim-blaming statements and sentiments in perpetuating inaccurate stereotypes while neglecting community efforts to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes.
- Florida's child welfare agencies should improve collaboration with community partners when there are surviving children.

**"Domestic violence homicides represent approximately 20 percent of all homicides in the state of Florida. Each death is a reminder that we must do all we can to understand why these fatalities occur, work collaboratively to find solutions that keep survivors of domestic violence and their children safe, and hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes. I am proud to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence in co-chairing the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, and our great state attorneys who work tirelessly to protect victims, as we work together to find solutions to reducing and preventing domestic violence deaths in Florida."**

**Attorney General Pam Bondi**

# FUNDING

# RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES

## **Domestic Violence Trust Fund and General Revenue**

The primary source of state funding for domestic violence emergency shelter, services, programs, and training is through the Domestic Violence Trust Fund (DVTF). These funds are distributed to Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers to provide critical, life-saving programs and services to domestic violence survivors and their children. DVTF receives funds from a portion of fees for both marriage license and dissolution of marriage, fines for domestic violence crime convictions, and any general revenue appropriated during the annual Legislative Session.

## **Domestic Violence Diversion Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**

Recognizing that survivors of domestic violence may need temporary economic assistance to escape a violent partner, federal and state legislators created the Domestic Violence Diversion Program. Florida's program is modeled on federal law and provides support services to survivors unable to temporarily participate in training or work requirements due to safety considerations or the residual effects of domestic violence.

## **Capital Improvement Grant Program**

Legislation passed in 2000 created this first-in-the-nation program through which, pursuant to legislative appropriations, certified domestic violence centers may apply to DCF for a capital improvement grant to construct, repair, improve or upgrade systems, facilities, or equipment.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Pursuant to s. 39.9055, Florida Statutes

## **Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) Grant Program**

FVPSA is the only federal funding dedicated specifically for domestic violence centers for the operation of emergency shelter and other critical services. The grant program also provides funding to State Coalitions for the provision of training and technical assistance to member programs to ensure quality of service provision to survivors and their children.

## **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Program\***

The FCADV and DCF administer two grants provided by the federal Violence Against Women Act, an annual formula grant, STOP (Services, Training, Officers and Prosecution), and the discretionary Grants to Encourage Arrest. The STOP grant promotes a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to enhancing advocacy and improving the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women. VAWA requires that funding is distributed to each respective discipline by percentages: 30 percent to victim services, 25 percent to law enforcement, 25 percent

to prosecutors, 5 percent to courts, and 15 percent discretionary (Florida generally applies discretionary funds to victim services). Federal regulations require the funding be allocated geographically based on identified needs and availability of resources.

The Grants to Encourage Arrest are competitive nationally and designed to encourage governments to treat domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as serious violations of criminal law that require a coordinated response from the entire criminal justice system. The program works to ensure the safety of domestic violence survivors and their children and to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

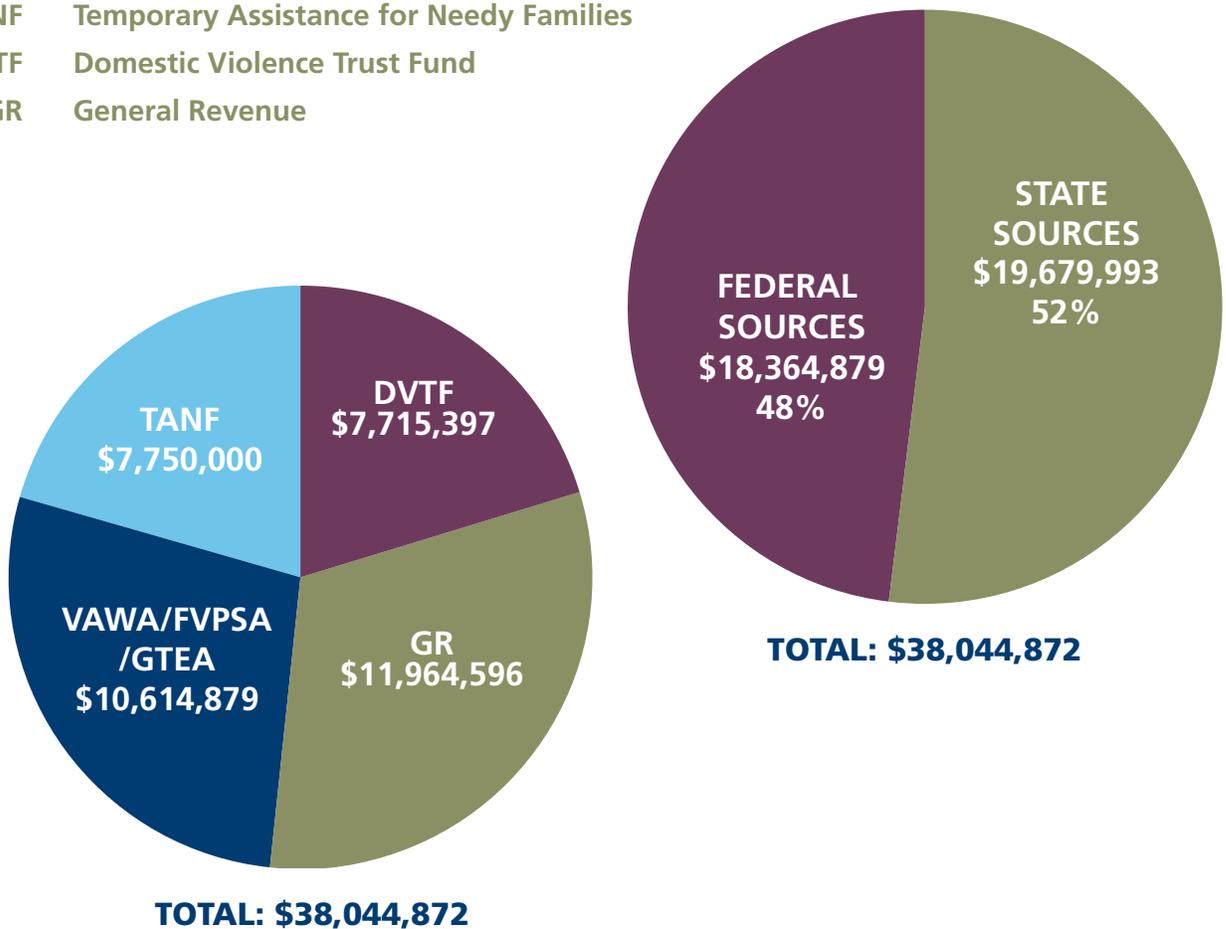
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\*The reauthorization of VAWA in 2013 resulted in a requirement that funding be redirected from all programming into specific program areas. Specifically, VAWA requires that 20 percent of funding is directed to sexual assault programs and services.

# FUNDING

## RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES

- VAWA Violence Against Women Act
- FVPSA Family Violence Prevention and Services Act
- GTEA Grants To Encourage Arrest
- TANF Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- DVTF Domestic Violence Trust Fund
- GR General Revenue



"Responding to domestic violence requires creating a coalition of allies and an environment that dismantles domestic violence while increasing and enhancing services and programs for survivors and their children. The environment must ensure the needs of survivors are prioritized and domestic violence perpetrators are held accountable for their violent crimes. The 199 women, children, and men killed as a result of domestic violence and the tens of thousands in our state who experience domestic violence each year deserve no less. Stand with us as we disrupt the culture that allows domestic violence to destroy our families."

*Tiffany Carr, President/CEO  
The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence*





**FCADV**  
Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**425 Office Plaza Drive • Tallahassee, Florida 32301  
(850) 425-2749 Fax: (850) 425-3091**

**Florida Domestic Violence Hotline:  
(800) 500-1119 • TDD (800) 621-4202 • Florida Relay: 711**

**[www.fcadv.org](http://www.fcadv.org)**

*Sponsored by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the State of Florida,  
Department of Children and Families.*