



ENHANCING  
SAFETY

*a pathway  
to saving lives*



*Domestic Violence does not go  
away by looking away.*

*It stops when we stand up together.*

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



*"The safety of our families and communities is a top priority in our state, and 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 stand against domestic violence. Florida is on the path to a 45-year crime low, and we will continue to work together to prevent domestic violence and ensure survivors and their children have all the support they need."*

—Governor Rick Scott

*"Domestic violence is a crime that affects far too many families in our state. The Office of the Attorney General is proud to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers, our statewide law enforcement agencies and our great community partners as we work together to enhance safety for survivors and their children by reducing domestic violence, providing services, and holding batterers accountable for their violence."*

—Attorney General Pam Bondi



*"I am proud of our partnership with the Coalition and our work together to protect children and strengthen families. Our integrated approach to prevention and safety provides victims and their families the right support and services to heal, overcome, and begin new lives, and that is the core of our department's mission."*

— DCF Secretary Mike Carroll



## Dismantling and Disrupting Terrorism In Our Homes:

# Enhancing Safety and Security

On November 13th, Paris, France endured an unthinkable act of terrorism on its citizens and its city. With the exception of the months following September 11, 2001, in my lifetime I cannot remember when the world was more concerned about our personal safety and the safety of our families than right now. The goal of any act of terrorism is, in large part, designed to catapult each of us into living in a state of fear through the use of threats, intimidation, and violence. In other words, to strip away our sense of safety and security.

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines "safety" as a place that is free from harm or danger; a safe place. And as we experience a rush of uncertainty about traveling abroad or attending outdoor events where large crowds are in attendance, a majority of us are still able to escape the uncertainty and instability by seeking refuge, peace, and safety in our homes.

Now, imagine living in a home devastated by domestic violence, a home where threats, intimidation, and acts of violence are the norm. Home then becomes a place where safety, security and well-being no longer exist – where fear is the predominant emotion and being terrorized becomes the expectation. Like all of us, survivors of domestic violence and their children long to live free from acts of violence in their cities, states, and most importantly their homes.

Combating both violence in the world and domestic violence in our homes requires that we create a coalition of allies with a singular shared goal – to join in unity and dismantle and destroy the infrastructure that allows these horrific crimes to exist in our world. We must partner with allies and collaborate on creating an environment that dis-

mantles violence while increasing and enhancing security measures.

Florida is recognized as a national leader in the creation and implementation of groundbreaking programming, services and public policies that are designed to enhance safety and change and save the lives of domestic violence survivors and their children. The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) works side-by-side with our statewide partnering allies and agencies to disrupt and dismantle the conditions that allow domestic violence to exist in our State. And Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers epitomize the definition of "safety" for tens of thousands of survivors and their children each year. Our domestic violence advocates work tirelessly to create a peaceful environment where survivors and their children are provided the necessary tools and resources to rebuild their lives.

This message is not intended to create a comparison between global terrorism and domestic violence but instead to increase awareness about the fear and violence that occurs in homes where domestic violence is the norm. So, today I am calling upon each of you to partner with our Legislature, Governor, Attorney General, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court systems, child welfare agencies, healthcare organizations, certified domestic violence centers and other allied organizations to fight the terror that exists in homes plagued by domestic violence. With your leadership, Florida can work towards ensuring that every home is a peaceful home - that every home is a place of refuge and safety. We live in one of the most amazing states in this country, and working together, we can end domestic violence in this great State.

## 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>1</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 Department of Children and Families (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 work collaboratively to revise policy and training programs to address the complexities associated with meeting the needs of families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse.

## 2014-2015 Annual Report

Florida law requires that FCADV create a statewide status report on domestic violence and distribute it to the Florida Legislature.<sup>2</sup> Information contained in this report includes the statistical data prescribed by statute, a description of 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.

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<sup>1</sup>Pursuant to Florida Statute 39.9035

<sup>2</sup>Pursuant to Florida Statute 39.904

## 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 also examples of 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>

## Why Safety is Important

### Domestic Violence Crime in Florida<sup>4</sup> January – December 2014

- Overall crime decreased by 3.6%, while reported domestic violence offenses decreased by only 1%
- 106,882 domestic violence offenses were reported to law enforcement
- 205 individuals died as a result of domestic violence homicide, representing approximately 20.9% of all homicides in Florida
- Domestic violence murder and manslaughter increased 10.2%
- Law enforcement made 64,460 arrests for domestic violence related crimes

### Individuals Seeking Services Fiscal Year 2014-2015

- 15,397 individuals received emergency shelter at a certified domestic violence center
- Domestic violence survivors and their children spent 546,658 nights in emergency shelter
- Advocates received 130,776 hotline calls
- 109,045 safety plans were completed with survivors
- 33,297 women, children and men received outreach services
- 4,208 requests for emergency shelter went unmet due to lack of capacity and resources

## Prioritizing the Needs of Domestic Violence Survivors and their Children

### Appropriations

The Legislature allocated and the Governor approved an additional two million dollars to expand the highly successful Child Protection Investigation (CPI) Project throughout all 67 counties in Florida. The CPI Project is a collaborative effort between FCADV, DCF, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), local certified domestic violence centers, community-based care organizations (CBC), and criminal justice system partners to provide an optimal coordinated community response to families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse. For additional information, please see: Child Protection Investigation Project on page 14.

2015  
Legislative  
Session

### No Contact Orders

The Legislature passed a bill sponsored by Senator David Simmons (Seminole County) and Representative Holly Raschein (Monroe County) designed to ensure consistency throughout the state as it relates to the interpretation of “No Contact Orders”. Specifically, the law stipulates that when a judge issues a “No Contact Order”, it will be effective immediately. Additionally, the bill clarified baseline conditions of a “No Contact Order” for the perpetrator, the victim, law enforcement and the judiciary.<sup>5</sup>

### GPS Tracking Devices or Applications

Prior to the passage of legislation by Senator Dorothy Hukill, (Volusia County) and Representative Larry Metz (Lake County) it was technically legal for an individual to install a tracking device or application on another person’s property. Their legislation made it a violation of law to install a tracking device without consent. This is an important safety enhancement for survivors of domestic violence as batterers will often install or hide a GPS tracking device on their phone or car to stalk, harass, threaten and/or perpetuate violence against them.<sup>6</sup>

### Body Cameras Worn by Law Enforcement

With increased use of body cameras by law enforcement, the Legislature recognized that a public records exemption was necessary and passed a bill sponsored by Senator Chris Smith (Broward County) that created such an exemption for an audio and/or video recording made by law enforcement in specific circumstances. The bill created the framework for when a law enforcement agency *may* disclose a confidential and exempt body camera recording, and conversely stipulated circumstances in which the agency *must* disclose the recording. Survivors of domestic violence are provided an enhanced sense of security as a result of the inclusion of prescriptive circumstances under which the audio/video may be acquired.<sup>7</sup>

For more information about the 2015 Legislative Session, please visit:

<http://fcadv.org/publications/2015-legislative-briefing-0>

<sup>3</sup>Pursuant to Florida Statute 741.28

<sup>4</sup>Information from FDLE’s 2014 Annual Uniform Crime Report: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSAC/UCR/2014/CIF\\_annual14.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSAC/UCR/2014/CIF_annual14.aspx)

<sup>5</sup>For additional information: <http://fcadv.org/publications/2015-legislative-briefing-0>

<sup>6</sup>Ibid

<sup>7</sup>Ibid



Florida's certified domestic violence centers are the first line of defense in providing for the safety and needs of survivors and their children as they begin to rebuild their lives and live free from violence.

## Florida's Certified Domestic Violence Centers

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. These centers provide a place of safety, security, healing and empowerment to survivors of domestic violence and their children fleeing their 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, but are not limited to: information and referral, counseling and case management, temporary emergency shelter for more than 24 hours, 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>8</sup>

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, certified centers provided 546,658 nights of life-saving emergency shelter to 15,397 women, children and men. Many survivors fled violent homes with their children, who represented 46.2% of those served in emergency shelter. Many nights centers operate at or above

capacity; however, as a result of funding appropriated by the 2013 Legislature for capital improvements, an additional 278 new beds were available on July 1, 2015 to reduce the number of survivors and their children turned away due to lack of bed space. Because of the Florida Legislature and Governor's commitment, there will be a significant increase in the number of lives saved by our 42 certified domestic violence centers.

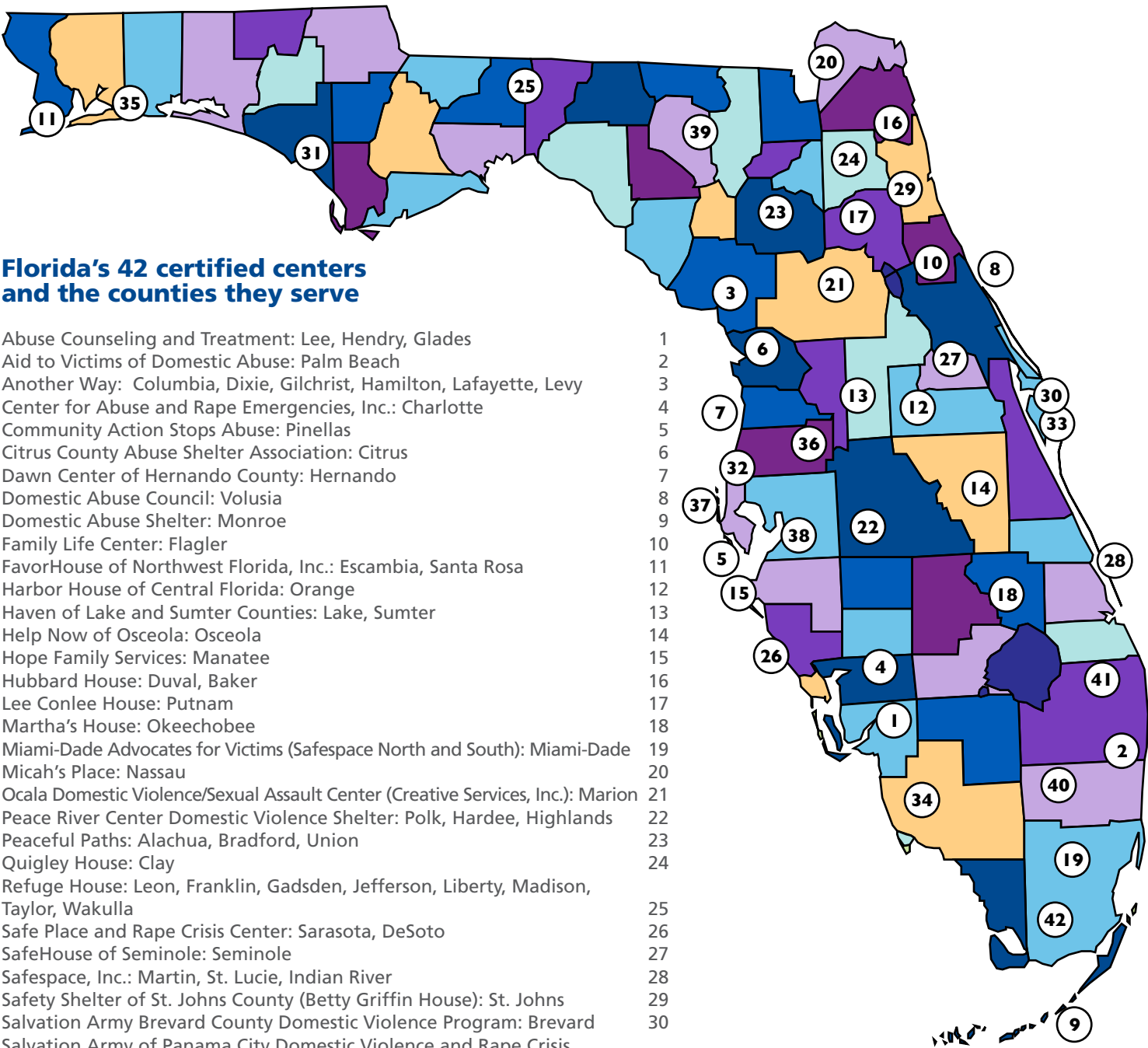
In addition to the services required by Florida Statutes, many certified centers supplement their programs with important ancillary services such as transportation, rent and utility assistance, transitional housing, legal and court advocacy, work skills and job readiness training and placement, financial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

### Advocates in certified centers:

- Completed 109,045 survivor-focused safety plans
- Provided 446,462 hours of counseling and advocacy
- Offered 587,559 direct service information and referrals to survivors, family members, and individuals seeking assistance
- Spent 131,216 hours on child and youth-specific activities
- Provided youth-targeted community education to 118,441 participants
- Provided education and training programs to 66,188 adults

<sup>8</sup>Pursuant to Florida Statute 39.905





## 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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## In a single day<sup>9</sup>

RECEIVED	857 hotline calls
SHELTERED	2,026 in emergency shelter or transitional housing
PROVIDED	1,524 adults and children outreach and counseling

## In a single year

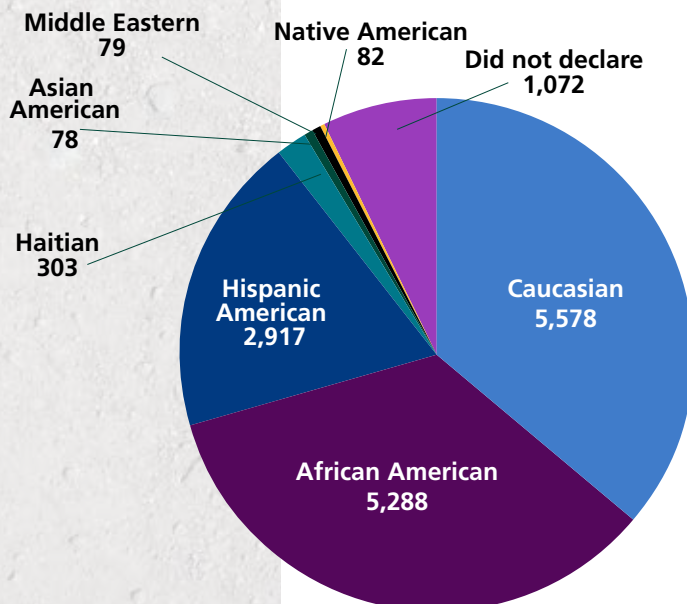
RECEIVED	130,776 <sup>10</sup> hotline calls
SHELTERED	15,397 in emergency shelter
PROVIDED	33,297 adults and children outreach services

## Individuals Served

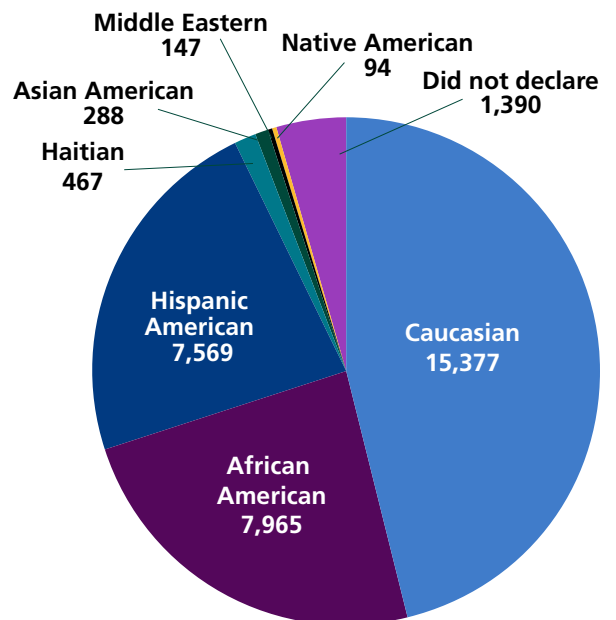
Domestic violence does not discriminate. It occurs regardless of ethnicity, age, religion, culture, or socioeconomic status. FCADV and certified domestic violence centers recognize the diversity of Florida's unique population and provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services tailored to the specific needs of each individual and/or family seeking center services. With safety being the primary objective, the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline includes a feature that allows advocates to quickly and effectively provide assistance in multiple languages. Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers possess a national reputation of providing culturally specific services to a diverse population.

Shelter: 15,397  
 Outreach: 33,297  
 Total: 48,694

SERVED IN SHELTER



SERVED IN OUTREACH



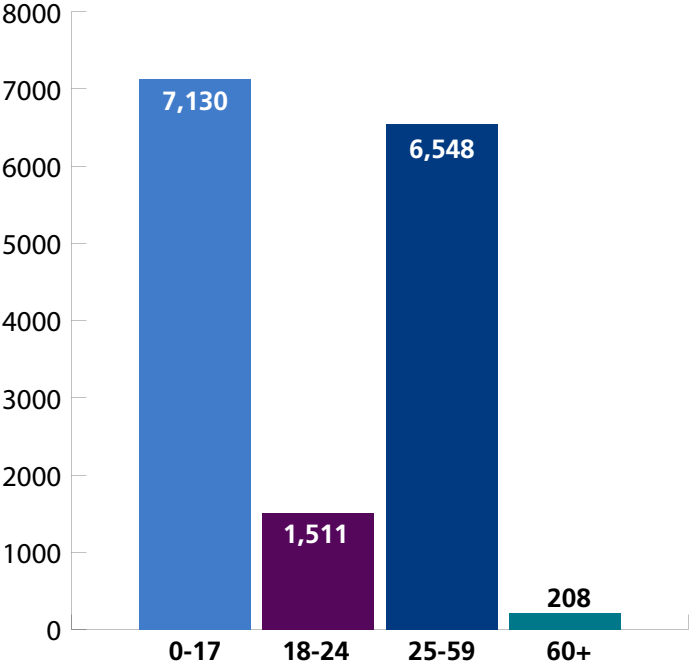


# Working with Community Partners

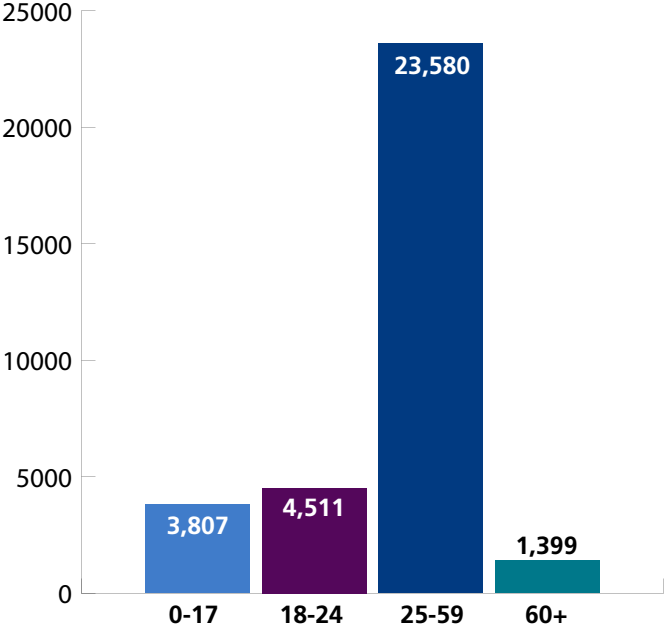
Preventing, reducing, and ending domestic violence while simultaneously focusing on keeping survivors and their children safe from violent perpetrators requires the leadership from all community stakeholders and partners. Certified domestic violence centers are engaged with countless organizations, agencies, and individuals within their respective communities that share the vision of a community where there is peace in every home. 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, but are not limited to: faith-based community organizations, health care and legal service providers, K-12 school systems, colleges and universities, domestic violence task forces, CBC lead agencies, affordable housing organizations, batterers' intervention programs, law enforcement, prosecutors and judicial offices, and private corporations. By working together with community partners and leaders, Florida's 42 certified centers are able to effectively maximize and leverage local resources on behalf of domestic violence survivors and their children.

**SERVED IN SHELTER**  
15,397



**SERVED IN OUTREACH**  
33,297



<sup>9</sup><http://nnedv.org/downloads/Census/DVCounts2014/FL.pdf>

<sup>10</sup>Includes calls received by the FCADV Florida Domestic Violence Hotline

# Taking Action for a Safer Community: Domestic Violence Center Programs

Florida's certified domestic violence centers possess a long history of working with their community partners to create and implement important programming that strengthens safety for survivors while also increasing perpetrator accountability. Florida is considered a leader in understanding the circumstances that necessitate providing intervention services while simultaneously focusing on prevention efforts through the implementation of projects that promote the importance of healthy relationships by engaging youth. The following are selected examples of the unique programs certified domestic violence centers have created in their communities.

## The Chobee Courage Project

The *Chobee Courage Project* is a partnership between FCADV, Martha's House in Okeechobee, and six local community-based churches. This primary prevention project focuses on the prevention of violence in the African American and Hispanic communities in Okeechobee County by engaging and building youth leadership within these underserved populations. This is achieved through producing linguistically and culturally specific educational materials, youth mentoring programs, and ongoing community engagement.

Each of the six partnering churches designate male mentors, known as the Men Against Violence (MAV) group, to work with Hispanic and African American males ages 12 to 17 as they participate in the *Chobee Courage Project*. Martha's House and FCADV conducted a modified core competency training with the MAV as well as other trainings to prepare them as they engage the youth within these communities.

Primary prevention programming can only be successful when the intended population provides input and leadership during the development of the program. Therefore, FCADV and Martha's House launched a local Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to provide assistance and guidance related to the development and implementation of the *Chobee Courage Project's* activities and materials. Along with FCADV and Martha's House, both the MAV and YAB were integral to the creation and implementation of the mentoring curriculum and social media campaign, "Stand Up: Be the Solution!" to preventing violence against women and girls.

## Know Your Peace

Sunrise Domestic and Sexual Violence Center (Sunrise of Pasco) has a long history of engaging and training youth leaders to impact positive change in their community. Their Youth Community Action Team (YCAT)

is comprised of passionate young leaders that speak out against dating and domestic violence by training and mentoring younger youth on promoting healthy relationships. Sunrise of Pasco's coordinated community response team, which includes youth leaders, designed a website titled: *Peace, Acceptance, Respect, and Knowledge* (PARK). This website was created as a part of Sunrise of Pasco's *Know Your Peace Public Awareness and Education Campaign* that focuses on creating social change by promoting healthy relationships and gender equality. Information about this campaign may be found at [www.knowyourpeace.org](http://www.knowyourpeace.org).

## Later Life Services

"Isolation can be a difficult challenge in an older victim's life. The abuser may have systematically worked to isolate the victim from family and friends, possibly using the real or perceived vulnerabilities that come with aging. A victim may be dependent on the abuser for transportation and the abuser may limit the victim's access to friends, activities and social circles. Friends and relatives may have died, leaving the victim more isolated. Advocates need to consider ways to safely visit elder survivors where they are, whether in an assisted living center, visiting a senior center, or living in a nursing home."<sup>11</sup>

Offering face-to-face contact from an advocate or volunteer that is connected with social networks of individuals in later life is a critical component of outreach to elder survivors of abuse. Help Now of Osceola, Inc. recognized this need and expanded their abuse in later life services through extensive outreach in the community to places where elders are likely to visit or interact

## Safety Matters ...

Florida's population includes 4.4 million residents that are age 60 and older and ranks first in the nation in the percentage of citizens who are elders, according to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, data suggests that only 1 in 14 incidences of elder abuse in domestic settings are brought to the attention of authorities.

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/resources/publication/docs/finalstatistics050331.pdf>



with others their age such as community senior centers, health clinics, and faith-based organizations. The center has built a strong partnership with the Osceola Council on Aging and as a result, Help Now and the Council work together to provide information on abuse in later life to their allied partners and elders living in the community. Through the expanded program, Help Now served 236 later in life survivors during the past fiscal year.

As a direct result of this initiative, a survivor in her 70s disclosed to a Help Now advocate that she wanted to leave her abusive husband, but did not have any money or work experience that would enable her to live independently. Because her husband would not allow her to work outside of the home, she felt trapped in the abusive relationship. Through the partnership between Help Now and the Osceola Council on Aging, the survivor received assistance in finding a job, has safely relocated, and is currently living independent and free from abuse.

### **The Nexus between Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse: Providing Safety for Survivors and their Pets**

Many people have a strong bond with their household pet(s) and consider the animal an important family member. According to the American Humane Association, 25 to 40 percent of women will delay leaving abusive situations because they fear for the safety of their pets. Further, the AHA indicated that 71 percent of women entering emergency shelter reported the abuser had injured, maimed, killed or threatened family pets for revenge or to psychologically control the victim.<sup>12</sup> And the Humane Society of the United States reports that approximately 62 percent of U.S. households include a pet and when domestic violence is present, the animal is often also abused.

Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers are committed to mitigating and eliminating all barriers that prevent survivors from leaving abusive relationships. In an effort to ensure the safety of the survivor's pets, a majority of the centers either built onsite kennel facilities or engaged in partnerships with local veterinarians or privately owned

kennels to temporarily foster their animals while they reside in emergency shelter. The veterinarian and/or kennel will often donate their services for a minimum of 30 days depending on the needs of the survivor.

FCADV and the 42 certified domestic violence centers share a philosophy that domestic violence survivors' well-being should not be mutually exclusive to the safety of their children and/or pets. To that end, the FCADV Foundation launched the first in the nation public awareness campaign, *Darby Against Domestic Violence*, focused on increasing the public's understanding about the interconnection of domestic violence, animal and child abuse. Darby, a gorgeous golden retriever, serves as the spokesperson for this unique campaign. For more information visit: [www.fcadv.org/darby](http://www.fcadv.org/darby).

*"I would never have left if the shelter did not have a kennel. It was truly a life saver."*

### **Safety Matters ...**

The American Humane Association reports that 71% of women entering emergency shelter reported that the abuser had injured, maimed, killed or threatened family pets for revenge or to psychologically control victims.

<sup>11</sup>Safety Planning with Older Survivors by Ann Turner, NCALL. Available at: [http://www.ncall.us/sites/ncall.us/files/resources/CoalitionChronicles\\_Oct2010%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.ncall.us/sites/ncall.us/files/resources/CoalitionChronicles_Oct2010%5B1%5D.pdf)

<sup>12</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.americanhumane.org/children/stop-child-abuse/factsheets/animal-abuse-domestic-violence.html>

# FCADV: On a Mission To End Domestic Violence

Created with the founding principles of cooperation and unity among domestic violence centers, FCADV advocates for programs, policies, and funding that benefit all 42 certified domestic violence centers, and most importantly, the survivors and children they serve. By speaking with a single, unified voice, FCADV aims to ensure that high quality services and programming exist for survivors and their children regardless of where they are located in the state.

In 2004, FCADV was statutorily designated by the Florida 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 prosecutor's offices, statewide associations, and community-based organizations dedicated to saving lives, holding perpetrators accountable, and ultimately ending domestic violence in Florida.

FCADV ensures compliance with administrative, programmatic, and fiscal accountability requirements of each provider by engaging in a stringent monitoring process. This overarching role leads to seamless coordination among agencies whose services impact survivors of domestic violence and their children.

In addition to the programs and initiatives on the preceding pages, FCADV also provides training, technical assistance, and education to certified domestic violence centers, collaborative community partners, agencies, and service providers throughout the state. Thousands of hours of training and technical assistance are provided annually to effectively increase knowledge, enhance standards, and build capacity to best serve domestic violence survivors and their children. FCADV trainings are tailored to the unique needs of the requesting center, training participants, organizations, and the local community.

## During fiscal year 2014-2015, FCADV:

- Responded to 14,150 technical assistance requests from domestic violence centers, collaborative partners and other agencies
- Conducted 218 onsite technical assistance visits and trainings for certified domestic violence center staff and/or Board of Directors, collaborative partners and other agencies
- Conducted 131 webinars
- Conducted 62 regional and statewide training events and/or conferences
- Administered and managed 168 contracts
- Conducted 102 monitoring visits and/or desk reviews

## FCADV Programs and Services: Enhancing Safety, Saving Lives

The following FCADV programs and initiatives are highlighted as examples of programming designed to maximize the safety 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 provided by the organization, but represents a snapshot of select activities. For a complete list and/or additional information, please visit the FCADV website at: [www.fcadv.org](http://www.fcadv.org).

## Enhancing Child Safety

### Child Protection Investigation Project

FCADV's CPI Project is designed to provide a coordinated community response for families experi-



encing 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 coordinate with community partners to develop strategies to improve collaboration and resolve barriers that arise during project implementation. This immediate intervention, sometimes within hours of a child abuse report, helps to stabilize the crisis and increase safety in the home. The CPI Project was originally implemented in 2009 with seven pilot sites. Four additional sites were added in 2011, three of which focused on providing linguistically and culturally specific services. In 2014, FCADV expanded the project to an additional 33 counties and in 2015, because of the generosity of the Florida Legislature, funding was provided to expand this innovative initiative statewide.

Active engagement of community leadership at every level is a critical component of the CPI Project. Therefore, each site is required to develop a Leadership Team that includes the local certified domestic violence center, CPI unit, CBC lead agency, batterers' intervention program, law enforcement agency, and the state attorney's office. These local leadership teams ensure coordination of services and identify opportunities to improve the community-wide response to survivors of domestic violence and their children, while increasing perpetrator accountability measures and strategies.

In fiscal year 2014-15, these projects collectively utilized a seamless system of wrap around services which allowed 7,611 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 5,117 CPI Project referrals from child welfare professionals; participated in

3,028 child welfare case staffings; and, provided 5,233 case consultation services to child welfare professionals. Services provided by the co-located advocates, along with the systems change efforts of the leadership teams, significantly reduced the need for foster care services and **produced a potential cost savings of \$19,590,714 by keeping the children out of the foster care system.**

## Safety Matters ...

In fiscal year 2014-2015, 7,611 children, whose families were involved in the child welfare system as a result of domestic violence, remained safely in the home with the non-offending parent. As a result of these efforts, Florida experienced a potential savings of \$19,590,714 by keeping children with the non-offending parent and out of foster care.

## Enhancing Financial Safety and Security

### Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives

In an effort to dismantle the financial control exhibited by perpetrators, FCADV created a Statewide Economic Justice Initiative that focuses on statewide policy development and the implementation of critical programming to assist survivors with gaining financial freedom for themselves and their children.

Lacking 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>13</sup> In fact, financial abuse occurs in 98 percent of all domestic violence cases.<sup>14</sup> Domestic violence perpetrators often use financial abuse as a

<sup>13</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), as referenced at: [https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic\\_violence\\_facts.html](https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic_violence_facts.html)

<sup>14</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, as referenced at: [https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic\\_violence\\_facts.html](https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic_violence_facts.html)

tactic to gain and maintain power and control over their partners. Survivors report that abusers utilize a multitude of economically-related tactics such as: creating large amounts of debt on joint accounts, withholding funds from the survivor or children to obtain basic needs such as food and medicine, prohibiting the survivor from working, controlling how all of the money is spent, and not allowing the survivor to access bank accounts.<sup>15</sup>

FCADV conducts annual listening sessions with domestic violence survivors to garner input regarding the barriers they experience that may contribute to their inability to live a violence free life. Each year, survivors participating in the Listening Groups report that financial instability is one of the most debilitating obstacles for survivors seeking safety and one of the primary reasons survivors give for why they stay or have returned to an abusive partner. In an effort to address economic abuse and help survivors gain financial independence, FCADV launched the following programs as part of the agency's Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives.

### **Florida's Top Financial Officer Promotes Financial Freedom: Your L.I.F.E.**

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater and FCADV partnered to create a new web-based financial education initiative called *Your L.I.F.E.* (Learn Individual Financial Empowerment) to provide survivors with financial resources and information to gain a better understanding of money management and how to achieve financial security.

Whether an abuser manipulates finances as a form of abuse or a survivor feels incapable of escaping an abusive situation because of financial struggles, finances often create a barrier to creating a life free from abuse. While financial abuse is a common tactic used by perpetrators, it is not widely understood, making it one of the most powerful methods of trapping a survivor in an abusive relationship. The lack of financial independence may reduce the likelihood of a survivor remaining safe should they decide to leave.

The effects of financial abuse can be devastating, and the financial impact of domestic violence can last for 10-20 years while the survivor rebuilds

credit and secures housing, childcare, and transportation.<sup>16</sup> The *Your L.I.F.E.* initiative provides online assistance and education for survivors to assist them in achieving financial independence. The educational program includes topics such as budgeting and saving, repairing credit while reducing debt, and information on the different types of accounts offered by various financial institutions. Online tools offer information and resources on life events such as purchasing or leasing a car, buying or renting a home, and/or securing various types of insurance. In addition, the website has designated calculators available to assist survivors when budgeting for housing, childcare, repairs, and other expenses. Survivors can also download a resource guide that includes activities and worksheets to help implement the information secured through the *Your L.I.F.E.* program.

**"As a husband and father, it pains me to know of the many occurrences of domestic violence and financial abuse, one of the most powerful tactics abusers use to keep a victim trapped in an abusive relationship. I am committed to empowering survivors, and *Your L.I.F.E.* strives to do just that. The initiative is a step in the right direction and will offer tools, resources and educational materials to help survivors seeking financial independence gain a better understanding of money management which may ultimately help them prepare for their financial future."**

*Florida Chief Financial Officer  
Jeff Atwater*

### **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 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 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 family. Grantees utilize The Allstate Foundation's "Moving Ahead Through Financial Management" curriculum to assist more than 1,500 survivors, with budgeting, investing, retirement planning, debt reduction, completing job readiness programs, gaining new employment and participating in microloan or microenterprises, and other financial literacy components based on each survivor's unique situation and needs.

During the past year, three of the economic empowerment projects enhanced their existing programming by partnering with ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation. ProLiteracy works with adult new readers and learners to help them gain skills that will assist them, such as preparing a resume, learning interview skills for a new job, or strengthening math skills to take the GED. By incorporating the ProLiteracy component into existing economic empowerment programs, survivors are provided additional skills as they work to gain safety, economic security and independence. Essential skills survivors may gain from adult literacy include, but are not limited to, instruction in English, math, writing, and reading comprehension, computer training, job coaching and GED preparation.

### **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 collaborative is the formation of the Statewide Advisory Team (SAT) which is comprised of local Allstate agents and certified domestic violence center executive directors. The SAT focuses on two primary goals: increasing

## **Safety Matters ...**

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 fact, in 98% of domestic violence cases, financial abuse keeps survivors trapped in abusive relationships.

financial resources available for economic opportunities for domestic violence survivors in Florida and establishing community driven partnerships between the 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. With input from Allstate Economic Empowerment grantees and representatives of the FCADV Economic Justice Workgroup, the SAT will assist FCADV with the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for next year's Allstate Foundation funding to ensure priority areas and best practices are reflective of economic empowerment programming. In an effort to increase partnerships between the local Allstate agents and certified domestic violence centers, the SAT convenes meetings to identify press strategies, awareness activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and other related project activities. The SAT also serves as the entity responsible for providing 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 partner annually to coordinate statewide donation drives among local agents and the domestic violence center in their area. This collection effort directly benefits survivors and their children living in emergency shelter by securing donated school uniforms for children returning to school. During the Legislative Session, FCADV and Allstate Florida held a statewide press

<sup>15</sup>Additional information available at: <http://nnedv.org/resources/ejresources/about-financial-abuse.html>

<sup>16</sup>The Allstate Foundation "Crisis: Economics and Domestic Violence" poll, May 2009, as referenced at: [https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic\\_violence\\_facts.html](https://www.allstatefoundation.org/domestic_violence_facts.html)



conference with Florida's Attorney General, House and Senate Leadership, representatives from the Office of Florida's CFO, Allstate Florida Senior Vice President, and FCADV CEO. The press conference highlighted the importance of creating programming for survivors that focuses on the interconnection of financial literacy, financial freedom, and domestic violence. The event generated considerable local and statewide press through electronic, print, and social media avenues.

This groundbreaking partnership among FCADV, The Allstate Foundation, Allstate Florida, local certified centers and Allstate agents has led to enhanced awareness among agents regarding understanding and recognizing the initial signs of domestic violence, referring survivors to services, and educating their community on the impact of domestic violence on the economy. Local agents also share their financial literacy expertise with survivors by joining domestic violence advocates to conduct training elements of The Allstate Foundation's curriculum.

## Perpetrator Accountability Creates Safety for Survivors

### 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 creation and implementation of appropriate protocols for responding to domestic violence calls, maintaining the confidentiality of survivor information, and effectively assessing the risk for potential domestic violence homicides. In addition, FCADV provides education related to understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and how that informs decisions by both survivors and perpetrators.

**During fiscal year 2014-15, FCADV conducted eight advanced law enforcement trainings to more than 30 law enforcement agencies statewide, including the U.S. military.**

### 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 creating and/or enhancing their response to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. The program challenges the community to listen, communicate, identify problems and share ideas that will result in new responses to ensure survivor safety and offender accountability. The goals of the program are to help provide survivors and their children with the protection and services necessary to experience safety from abuse, while improving the community's capacity to hold offenders accountable for their crimes. As a result of the program, during the past fiscal year, FCADV assisted the law enforcement grantees with revising their policies and procedures to specifically increase survivor safety and offender accountability. These changes include, but are not limited to, the creation of policies that require frontline patrol officers to perform risk assessments and screening for indicators that would suggest a lethal domestic violence situation exists; 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 in the State of Florida. FCADV and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) identified 11 communities with the highest rates of domestic violence homicides to implement the InVEST program. InVEST utilizes a coordinated community response model designed to reduce the number of domestic violence homicides by simultaneously increasing domestic violence services available to and offered for survivors identified as experiencing high lethality domestic violence situations while increasing perpetrator accountability throughout the criminal justice process. Preventing domestic violence homicides requires a comprehensive, mul-

## Safety Matters ...

Since the program's inception in 2009, no InVEST participants were murdered by the abuser. This is particularly notable since InVEST participants enter the program based on the dangerous and high-risk behaviors that were perpetrated against them.

tifaceted, 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 is comprised of members from law enforcement, domestic violence centers, child welfare agencies, courts, and other partners who move beyond traditional approaches to advocacy and response by identifying high risk cases and ensuring that all systems specifically tailor their response to address the unique needs of each survivor.

Funding provided by the OAG and DCF is utilized to hire advocates at certified domestic violence centers and detectives at law enforcement agencies to work collaboratively on conducting thorough investigations while providing enhanced safety and services for survivors. Partners engage in the daily review of police reports in an effort to identify potentially high-risk domestic violence cases, and subsequently, contact those survivors to inquire whether they are interested in participating in the program. InVEST partnerships have implemented batterer accountability measures and provided enhanced advocacy and safety for more than 3,000 survivors per year who are at high risk of being murdered by their intimate partner.

## Safety Services for Survivors from Underserved Populations

### Rural Statewide Initiative and Underserved Communities Projects

To enhance the safety of the most geographically isolated domestic violence survivors in Florida's rural areas, the Rural Statewide Initiative and Rural/

Underserved Projects utilize a community organizing model designed to address the unique needs and challenges experienced by these survivors. In 1996, FCADV established domestic violence and sexual assault outreach services in 19 rural counties where none previously existed. Currently, FCADV provides funding for eight certified domestic violence centers providing services in some of Florida's most isolated rural communities where increasing access to appropriate and safe programs and services are imperative. Services provided in rural communities are culturally and linguistically appropriate and informed by the voices of local community members through active community engagement opportunities.

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

FCADV supports certified domestic violence centers in creating accessible services, complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and effectively serving survivors living with a disability. FCADV's Domestic Violence and Disabilities program offers training and technical assistance on increasing disability awareness, creating holistic safety plans for persons living with a disability, 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 learn how to provide tailored services specifically for survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or experience low-vision, and/or are living with cognitive and emotional disabilities.

## Safety Matters ...

A survey of adult women living with a disability indicated that 67% had experienced physical abuse and 53% experienced sexual abuse. Another study found that approximately one in 10 elders report experiencing some form of elder mistreatment.



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, but are not limited to, successfully addressing barriers to services for elder survivors living with a disability and utilizing intervention tools to increase outreach to this underserved population. FCADV provides comprehensive training to domestic violence center staff regarding Florida's statutory mandated reporting requirements especially since many abuse in later life survivors accessing services in Florida have lived in other states with different vulnerable adult mandated reporting requirements.

Last year, FCADV conducted three regional trainings for law enforcement on the dynamics of abuse in later life, financial exploitation, and technology in later life for 35 officers. In addition, 27 finance professionals received training on financial exploitation in later life as well as how to partner with, and refer to, their local certified domestic violence center.

This past year's Abuse in Later Life Institute focused on technology in later life and financial exploitation. The topic of undue influence was included on the Institute's agenda and expert attorneys on the issue presented for attendees representing state attorney's offices, adult protective services, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the Aging Network, and law enforcement. According to the Center for Elders and the Court, "undue influence is the misuse of one's role and power to exploit the trust, dependence, and fear of another to deceptively gain control over that person's decision in a particular matter. Along with capacity and consent, undue influence is a key concept in elder law."<sup>17</sup>

## Safety and Justice

### Legal Initiative

Survivors of domestic violence continue to identify legal assistance as a priority service so they can achieve safety, permanently remain independent and live free from violence. The cornerstone of the Statewide Legal Initiative is the "Clearinghouse Proj-

ect" in which 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, but not limited to, referral for pro bono representation by other legal counsel, consultation in dissolution and custody cases, paternity, injunctions for protection not paid for with funds under this agreement, child support, immigration, public benefits, housing, dependency or any other civil action. During fiscal year 2014-15, Clearinghouse Project attorneys provided 2,657 consultations and represented 929 survivors of domestic violence in securing injunctions for protection. Of those, 21 were for sexual violence, 25 for dating violence, 29 for stalking, and 854 for domestic violence injunctions. FCADV provides training on trending issues for lawyers participating in the Clearinghouse Project as well as state attorneys that prosecute domestic violence crimes.

### Safety Matters ...

Survivors participating in FCADV's listening groups consistently named civil legal representation as one of their top three unmet needs. Many survivors do not have the financial resources to hire a private attorney and as such are placed on long waiting lists for free legal aid attorneys, sometimes for over a year. Such delays pose significant safety risks for survivors who want to remain safely separated from the abuser.

### 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



## Safety Matters ...

- 7.5 million people are stalked annually in the U.S., most by someone they know
- 76% of women killed by their intimate partners had been stalked by that partner
- 79% of women experiencing domestic violence also reported being stalked during the same period

### A cyberstalking survey of 72 domestic violence shelters in the U.S revealed:

- 85% of survivors had been tracked by the abuser using GPS
- 75% of abusers had eavesdropped by using remote tools
- 54% of survivors requested assistance to disable GPS on their devices

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.

## Community Collaborative Efforts to Enhance Safety

*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, governmental 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 focused on developing policies and procedures to better serve victims of stalking. Specifically, gaps in services were identified through a needs assessment that resulted in the creation of resources to meet the identified gaps. Materials created for the project included community-specific resources such as brochures and an Anti-Stalking Toolkit. The toolkit provides practical guidance for working with survivors of stalking including, but not limited to, law enforcement's response to victims of stalking; evidence gathering and criminal justice intervention in stalking cases; and, best practices in victim advocacy.

In addition to anti-stalking, 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 complexities; however, it is important that advocates are well prepared to support those survivors where such issue exists to ensure services are provided from an empowerment-based perspective. It is critical for advocates to refer survivors when necessary to local mental health providers that understand the certified domestic violence center's trauma-informed approach to working with battered women and their children. During the initial year of a selected mental health centered project, the domestic violence center and mental health provider completed a policy scan to cross review each organization's policies and procedures relevant to serving survivors of domestic violence. The collaborative identified that documentation policies of the mental health partnering agency could be enhanced to mitigate unintended consequences related to survivor safety. As a result of learning exchanges and collaborative team meetings, partners developed a documentation policy which has been replicated by communities that are

<sup>17</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.eldersandcourts.org/Aging/Key-Legal-Issues/Undue-Influence.aspx>

focused on addressing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and mental health issues.

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

Last year, another grantee implementing a similar community collaborative project expanded the scope of the training developed through this grant program by including law enforcement, child welfare and the military. This grantee conducted a listening session with program participants regarding their experiences when seeking services in their community as survivors of domestic violence living with mental health challenges. Survivors reported they believed community partners would benefit from training on trauma and mental health. As a result, a specialized institute was held in each of the two counties the center serves to address the need to provide trauma-informed services and to coordinate these efforts among community partners. A total of 196 participants attended the institutes, representing law enforcement, DCF, local mental health providers and local military personnel. The training agenda included trauma-informed interviewing techniques, best practices in assisting survivors of domestic violence with mental health as a co-occurring issue, and working with survivors involved with the dependency system from a trauma-informed perspective. Since the institute, law enforcement expressed the need for a tool officers could use on trauma-informed interviewing. Currently, the community collaborative, including representatives from law enforcement, are working on a palm card for officers to utilize in the field when responding to a domestic violence call. This opportunity not only pro-

vided law enforcement with training on the interconnection of trauma and domestic violence, but it also strengthened the relationships between the local law enforcement agency, the mental health provider and the local certified domestic violence center.

Coordinated community responses such as these benefit survivors long-term by increasing safety, increasing batterer accountability, coordinating services, and identifying available community resources.

## Safety for Future Generations

### **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 initially occurring by creating conditions that make first-time perpetration and first-time victimization less likely to occur.

In an effort 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 expanded 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 put people at risk for, or protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence.<sup>18</sup>

In an effort to expand prevention efforts and engage a more 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 to enhance the safety and



well-being of Florida's citizens. This multi-disciplinary Leadership Team is currently focused on implementing and evaluating strategies in which 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, but are not limited to, the incorporation of teen dating violence related questions into the statewide Healthy School District Self-Assessment Instrument, data collection and analysis regarding certified domestic violence centers' understanding and capacity as it relates to the social determinants of health, and integrating primary prevention principles into statewide training for home visitors from various 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-traditional 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 (CAT), which include community stakeholders who partner to prevent violence and promote healthy relationships in their communities.

This past year, domestic violence centers developed a Social Marketing Plan to promote messaging related to promoting healthy relationships throughout their communities; conducted primary prevention programming sessions with youth; conducted CAT meetings; and, attended primary prevention webinars conducted by FCADV.

FCADV modeled the Statewide Primary Preven-

tion Initiative utilizing the framework created by the national DELTA programs and has continued to prioritize and fund these groundbreaking initiatives throughout the state.

## **Are You Safe?**

### **The Florida Domestic Violence Hotline**

The first question an advocate answering a call on the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline asks is "Are you safe to talk?" The answer will dictate how the advocate proceeds to ensure the safety of the survivor calling. 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 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline received 31,646 calls, 4,091 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 how to prepare 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.

<sup>18</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html>



“Our law enforcement officers place their lives on the line every day to keep our citizens safe. We share their grief when they lose one of their own, such as Deputy Bill Myers who was shot while serving a domestic violence injunction. We also mourn the loss of the women, children and men that were killed as a result of domestic violence.

I am disheartened at the increase in domestic violence related crimes reflected in the 2015 semi-annual UCR. We must recommit to partnering with our criminal justice partners to dismantle this crime that permeates our state. Our communities must work toward increasing accountability of perpetrators while ensuring the safety of survivors and their children.”

Tiffany Carr, President/CEO FCADV

## Domestic Violence Crime in Florida

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Uniform Crime Report (UCR) system provides for the publication of standardized reports on crime statistics based on data gathered from across the state. Reports that include both summary and detail information are issued semi-annually and annually and offer an indication of crime and criminal activities known to, and reported by, law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

Domestic violence crimes and arrests are specifically segregated in the UCR and in 2014 the report reflected a total of 106,882 reported domestic violence offenses with 64,460 arrests. Overall, 33 Florida counties reported increases in domestic violence crimes, while 34 counties experienced reductions.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that the data in the UCR represents only domestic violence offenses reported to Florida’s law enforcement agencies; it is widely recognized that domestic violence is a significantly underreported crime. In fact, 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>20</sup>

In November, FDLE released the 2015 semi-annual UCR<sup>21</sup>; the report reflected increases in most every domestic violence offense. While overall reported domestic violence incidences increased a total of 1.7%, domestic violence homicides increased 8.7% in the first six months of 2015, this is in addition to the 10.2% increase in 2014. In the past 18 months, a shocking 304 women, children and men have died as a result of domestic violence.

## Headlines Around our State

### Tampa Bay Times

July 19, 2015

#### Two die in murder-suicide at Tampa hotel

Two people were found dead late Saturday at the Westin Tampa Harbour Island hotel in what Tampa police said was a murder-suicide. According to authorities, Jay

Gordon Stevens shot and killed Lindsey Marie Price, 23, before shooting himself Saturday was Price's

### Orlando Sentinel

August 13, 2015

#### Man accused of killing ex-girlfriend had threatened her life

A 33-year-old man accused of shooting his ex-girlfriend to death in front of their child threatened to kill the woman months earlier. Linda Lake was found shot to death in the street just

outside of her vehicle, the couple's 3-year-old was in the car during the shooting, but was unharmed. The child told witnesses and deputies, "Daddy shot Mommy."

### Northwest Florida Daily News

September 22, 2015

#### Shooting claims much-loved member of Sheriff's Office

Deputy Bill Myers was shot Tuesday morning while serving a domestic violence injunction. Joel Dixon Smith shot Myers outside the law offices where he was to surrender

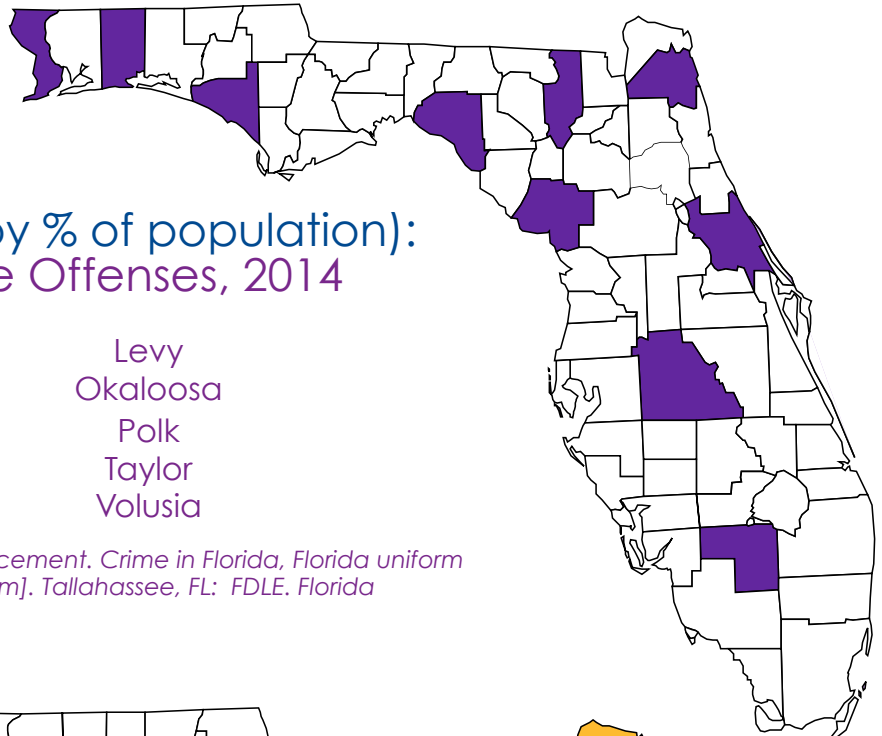
his weapons, as required by the injunction. Smith pulled out a weapon, which he used to fire multiple rounds, hitting Myers in the back of the head.

Excerpted from newspaper articles

TOP 10 Counties (by % of population):  
Domestic Violence Offenses, 2014

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Bay      | Levy     |
| Columbia | Okaloosa |
| Duval    | Polk     |
| Escambia | Taylor   |
| Hendry   | Volusia  |

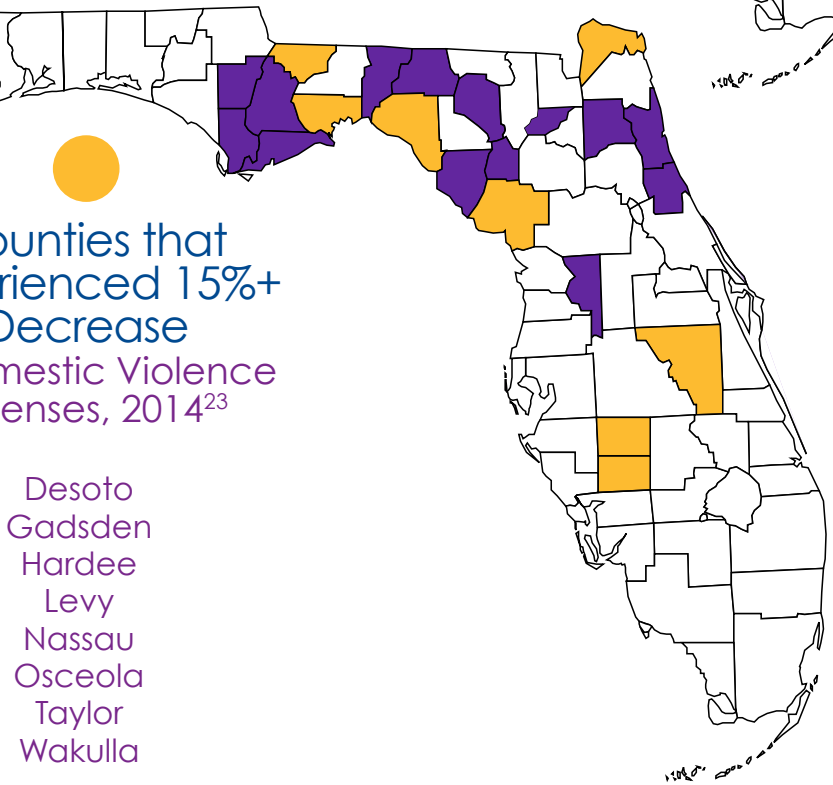
SOURCE: Florida Department of Law Enforcement. *Crime in Florida, Florida uniform crime report, 2014* [Computer program]. Tallahassee, FL: FDLE. Florida



●  
Counties that  
experienced  
15%+ Increase  
in Domestic Violence  
Offenses, 2014<sup>22</sup>

- Calhoun
- Clay
- Dixie
- Flagler
- Franklin
- Gilchrist
- Gulf
- Jefferson
- Liberty
- Madison
- St. Johns
- Sumter
- Suwannee
- Union

●  
Counties that  
experienced 15%+  
Decrease  
in Domestic Violence  
Offenses, 2014<sup>23</sup>



- Desoto
- Gadsden
- Hardee
- Levy
- Nassau
- Osceola
- Taylor
- Wakulla

\*Percent changes should be interpreted with caution. In small counties with low numbers of crime, a small increase may produce a large percent change.

<sup>19</sup>Information from FDLE's 2014 Uniform Crime Report: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/UCR/2014/CIF\\_annual14.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/UCR/2014/CIF_annual14.aspx)

<sup>20</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)

<sup>21</sup>Retrieved from: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/UCR/2015/2015SA\\_CIF.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/UCR/2015/2015SA_CIF.aspx)

<sup>22</sup>Retrieved from: [http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/Menu/Data---Statistics-\(1\)/UCR-Domestic-Violence-Data.aspx](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/FSACI/Menu/Data---Statistics-(1)/UCR-Domestic-Violence-Data.aspx), Total Reported Domestic Violence Offenses by County, 2014

<sup>23</sup>Ibid



# Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams

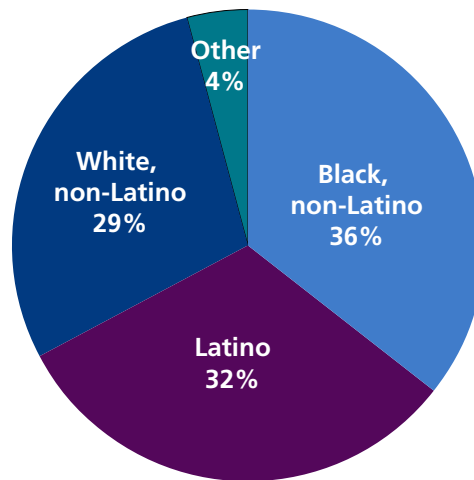
“The importance of domestic violence fatality review in understanding these tragic homicides and improving the safety of the citizens of Florida should not be overlooked. By reviewing domestic violence homicides the statewide and local fatality review teams identify systemic challenges, make policy recommendations for holding perpetrators of these crimes accountable, and increase the safety for victims of domestic violence and their children. These teams honor the lives that were lost by providing information that may help prevent future deaths. I am pleased to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence in co-chairing the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and commend our great law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and team members who play such a critical role in the fight against domestic violence.”

*Attorney General Pam Bondi*

Florida’s commitment to preventing domestic violence is evidenced by the existence of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and 24 active local teams. Since 2009, the Attorney General’s Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team has conducted comprehensive reviews of domestic violence fatalities with the ultimate goal of preventing domestic violence homicides. The team identifies gaps in the service delivery system and renders policy and practical recommendations that will strengthen safety factors and reduce risk factors which contribute to these deaths. The statewide team is co-chaired by Attorney General Pam Bondi and FCADV. The team is comprised of 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 fiscal year 2014-2015, the statewide team produced the 2015 Faces of Fatality report that includes descriptive statistics of domestic violence homicides based on data collected by local fatality review teams. The deaths reviewed occurred between 2002 and 2013, with the majority between 2011 and 2013. In total, local teams across the state submitted 29 reviews of fatal or near-fatal domestic violence homicides in Florida. The following represent highlights excerpted from the Faces of Fatality, Vol. V.<sup>24</sup>

## PERPETRATOR RACE/ETHNICITY

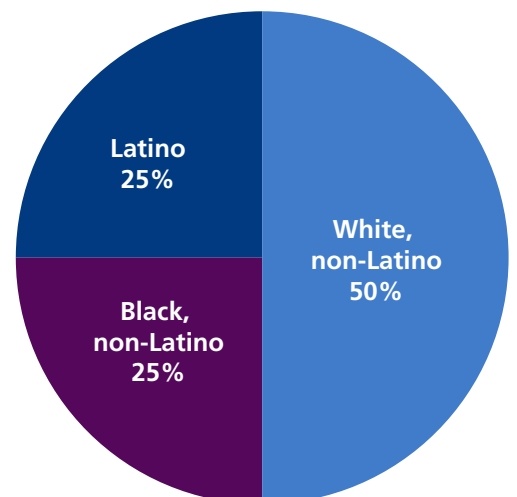


## Gender/Age

Perpetrator:  
93% male • 7% female  
Average Age: 44

Decedent:  
11% male • 89% female  
Average Age: 39

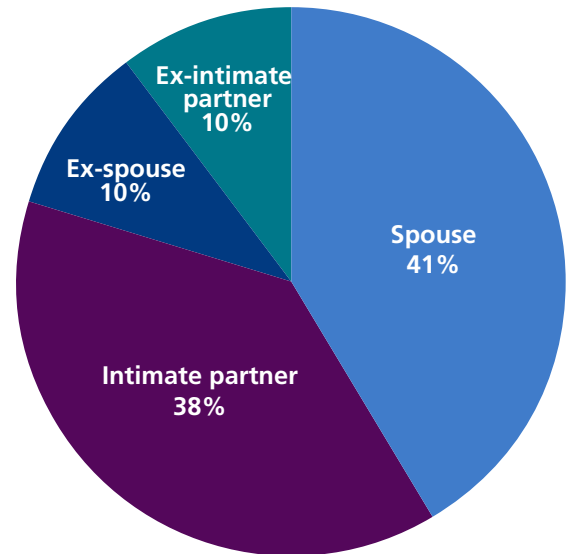
## DECEDENT RACE/ETHNICITY



## RELATIONSHIP OF PERPETRATOR TO DECEDENT

### Key Findings:

- There was evidence of separation at the time of death in 64% of the fatalities.
- Couples were known to have lived together at the time of the death in 45% of the fatalities.
- 50% of the perpetrators stalked their victims.
- 44% of perpetrators possessed a known criminal history of domestic violence and in 39% of the fatalities there were known prior reports to police by the decedent alleging domestic violence by the perpetrator.
- In 36% of the fatalities there were allegations by the decedent of death threats made by the perpetrator.
- In 33% of the 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% of the fatalities and in 29% there was a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against the perpetrator by someone other than the decedent.
- 32% of perpetrators completed suicide and an additional 7% attempted suicide that did not end in their own death.



### Key Recommendations:

- FCADV should build upon its Florida Domestic Violence Enhancements and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) Project to include training for school personnel on adult intimate partner violence.
- FCADV should explore additional funding opportunities to enhance FCADV's Violence Against Women STOP (Services-Training-Officers-Prosecutors) funded Legal Clearinghouse Project to provide assistance to pro se survivors seeking injunctions for protection.
- FCADV should convene a workgroup to develop a plan for increasing outreach to immigrant communities and increase access to interpreters for survivors.
- Florida's child welfare agencies should improve collaboration with community partners when there are surviving children to ensure these children receive referrals for services.
- FCADV's Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) Workgroup should make formal recommendations to establish a system to monitor BIPs to ensure that the courts refer perpetrators to BIPs that comply with Florida statutes.

<sup>24</sup>For more information about the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team: <http://www.fcadv.org/StatewideFatalityReview>

## Responding to Domestic Violence

### **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 both marriage license and dissolution of marriage fees, 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**

Federal and state legislators recognized that survivors of domestic violence may need temporary economic assistance to escape a violent partner and thus created the Domestic Violence Diversion Program. Florida's program is modeled after 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 that, 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>25</sup> As a result of funding appropriated by the 2013 Legislature through the Capital Improvement Grant Program, certified domestic violence centers added 278 new beds to increase the number of survivors and their children receiving immediate emergency shelter.



## **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. The 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.

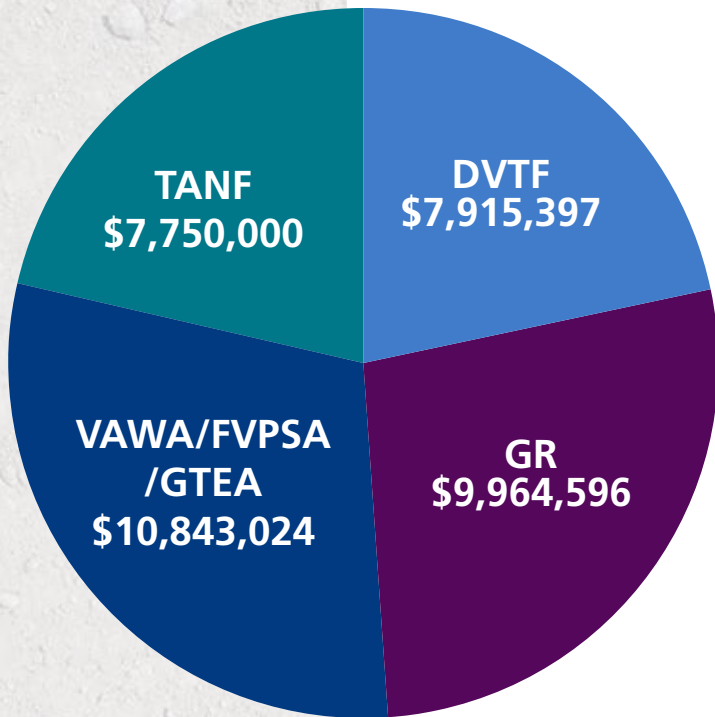
The Grants to Encourage Arrest is competitive nationally and designed to encourage governments to treat domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as serious violations of criminal law that require a coordinated response from the entire criminal justice system. The program works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

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<sup>25</sup>Pursuant to Florida Statute 39.9055

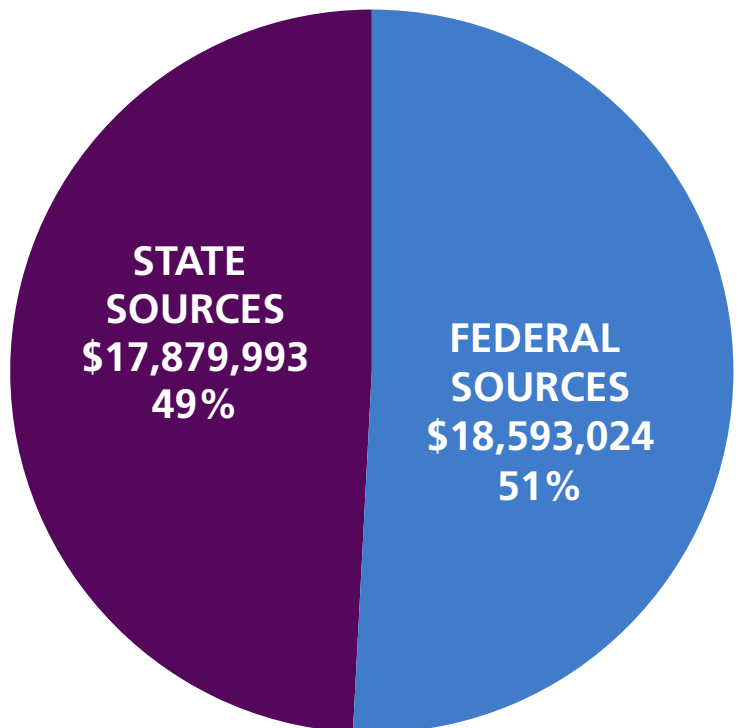
\*The reauthorization of VAWA in 2013 resulted in a requirement that funding be redirected from all programming into specific program areas. Specifically, VAWA requires that 20 percent of funding is directed to sexual assault programs and services.

## Responding to Domestic Violence



**TOTAL: \$36,473,017**

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



**TOTAL: \$36,473,017**



# *Together we can end domestic violence*

"In the past 18 months in Florida 304 women, children and men died as a result of domestic violence. They were killed by someone they once trusted and loved. Each of these individuals left behind family and friends that are grieving the loss of their loved one and wondering what more they could have done to prevent these deaths. While the responsibility for these murders lies completely with the perpetrator of these violent crimes, it is incumbent upon us to employ every policy, partnership, community collaboration, in essence, every possible resource to enhance the safety and save the lives of survivors of domestic violence and their children. Only together can we ultimately end domestic violence."

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



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



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