



NEWS RELEASE

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National Survey Reveals Urgent Need for Increased Funding for Domestic Violence Service Providers

More than 66,000 victims helped on a single day, but almost 10,000 requests went unanswered

HARRISBURG, Pa., March 6, 2014 – The National Network to End Domestic Violence today released a new research report that found that, in a single 24-hour period, more than 66,000 victims of domestic violence received help and support from service organizations in the United States, yet nearly 10,000 more who needed assistance could not be helped due to a lack of adequate resources.

In Pennsylvania, 2,424 victims received services in that 24-hour period, but 364 could not be helped because local programs in the commonwealth lacked sufficient resources.

“These numbers illustrate how hard our programs work with limited resources and how much greater the demand is for these lifesaving services,” said Peg Dierkers, executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. “It’s disturbing that 364 people who found the courage to seek assistance had to be turned away because a shelter was full or there wasn’t enough money to provide the services they needed.”

The report, “Domestic Violence Counts 2013: A 24-hour Census of Domestic Violence Shelters and Services,” examined a random day, Sept. 17, 2013, and collected information from 1,649 domestic violence programs throughout the United States from midnight to midnight on that day. It identified needs that were met and unmet on that day and provided a snapshot of how budget cuts are affecting the staffing and resources of these organizations.

Key findings in Pennsylvania during this 24-hour period were:

- 2,424 domestic violence victims and their children received services in just one day.
- 787 calls to domestic violence hotlines were answered.
- 1,224 individuals were trained to help domestic violence victims by local programs.

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- 364 requests for services from domestic violence victims were turned down because programs did not have the resources to provide them, including requests for emergency shelter, housing, transportation, child care and legal representation.
- The majority of unmet requests were from victims who had chosen to flee their abusers, and were seeking safe emergency or transitional housing.

“Every day in this country, victims of domestic violence are bravely reaching out for help, and it’s essential that they have somewhere safe to go,” said Kim Gandy, NNEDV’s president and chief executive officer. “We have made so much progress toward ending violence and giving survivors avenues for safety. But continued program cuts jeopardize that progress and jeopardize the lives of victims.”

When nationwide program providers were asked what most likely happens when services are not available, 60 percent said the most likely outcome was that victims returned to their abusers, 27 percent said the victims become homeless, and 11 percent said that victims end up living in their cars.

The research also showed initial impacts of the new guidelines in the Affordable Care Act, which requires healthcare providers to screen patients for domestic violence and refer victims to services. Data collected for this study showed that since these guidelines have been in effect, there has been an 18.5 percent increase in referrals received nationwide by domestic violence programs -- a number that experts predict will only increase as the ACA takes full effect.

The number of unmet needs is related to the financial resources of these programs. Nationally, 1,696 staff positions were cut last year due to funding reductions, an average of 1.2 staff per program. Of the 2013 staff cuts, 70 percent were direct service positions, such as case managers, advocates, shelter staff, and child advocates. In Pennsylvania, 75 staff were cut in 2013, an average of 1.3 per program.

Download the full “Domestic Violence Counts 2013” census report at www.nnedv.org/census.

About the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Founded in 1976, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the oldest statewide domestic violence coalition in the nation. Each year it provides free and confidential assistance to nearly 100,000 victims of domestic violence, through a network of 60 community-based programs serving all 67 counties in the commonwealth. PCADV also promotes public awareness of domestic violence-related issues through its PA SAYS NO MORE campaign, which it operates in partnership with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. For more information, visit www.pcadv.org or www.pasaysnomore.com; or follow PCADV on Twitter @pcadvorg and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pennsylvania-Coalition-Against-Domestic-Violence/479697025386367>.

About NNEDV

The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), a 501(c)(3) social change organization, is dedicated to creating a social, political and economic environment in which domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking no longer exist. As the leading voice for domestic violence victims and their allies, NNEDV members include all 56 of the state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence, including over 2,000 local programs. NNEDV has been a premiere national organization advancing the movement against domestic violence for almost 25 years, having led efforts among domestic violence advocates and survivors in urging Congress to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994. To learn more about NNEDV, please visit www.nnedv.org.