

Domestic Violence Counts: A 24-Hour Census

In November 2006, 1,243 out of 2,016 local domestic violence programs across the United States participated in the National Census of Domestic Violence Services (NCDVS). The Census collected an unduplicated, non-invasive count of adults and children who received critical services from these domestic violence programs during a 24-hour period. On average, each program participating in the count served 39 individuals during the one day survey period.

Many of these programs reported a considerable unmet demand for services due to lack of resources, including limited staffing and overflowing shelters. During the 24-hour period, 5,157 requests for services were tragically unmet due to a lack of resources. It is important to note that a disproportionate number of unmet requests for service were for transitional housing.

During the survey period, participating programs reported that local and state hotline advocates answered 15,431 calls and the National Domestic Violence Hotline answered 1,213 calls. This equals more than 11 hotline calls every minute.

Florida had some of the largest numbers out of all the states that participated. Florida's programs served more than 1,629 adults and 1,084 children. This included sheltering 773 adults and children, providing transitional housing for 446 adults and children, and providing 1,494 adults and children with other forms of services. Florida domestic violence centers answered over 650 hotline calls and provided training to over 950 members of the community.

The National Census of Domestic Violence Services (NCDVS) revealed that approximately 50,000 adults and children in the United States received services and support from 1,243 local domestic violence programs during a 24-hour period in November 2006. Yet, while a great number of domestic violence victims access and receive services, a substantial unmet demand for services remains. This unmet demand highlights the need for additional funding and support. Given the dangerous and potentially lethal nature of many domestic violence victims' circumstances, insufficient funding of domestic violence programs and services should be acknowledge as a serious problem and barrier to those seeking help and safety.