



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

# Domestic Abuse Program Report Federal Fiscal Year 2019

(October 1, 2018—September 30, 2019)

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) Domestic Abuse Program administers state and federal funding dedicated to providing emergency shelter and support services for victims of domestic violence and their families. The goals of the DCF Domestic Abuse Program are:

- Provide accessible, trauma-sensitive, culturally-responsive crisis, safety and support services for victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their children
- Educate the community about issues related to domestic abuse
- Promote a coordinated community response to domestic abuse
- Promote the social change necessary to end domestic abuse

DCF administers nearly \$13 million annually to local programs provide for core support services (described on page 2) and as well as services to children and underrepresented groups including immigrants and refugees. Nearly \$1.9 million is also administered for prevention, training, and technical assistance.

DCF contracts with:

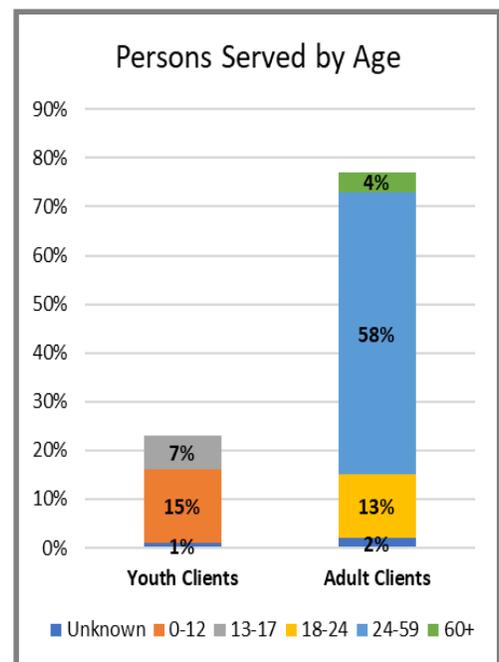
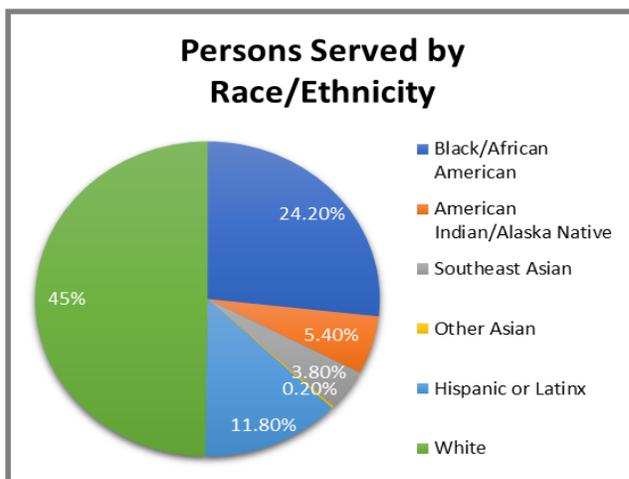
- 61 nonprofit agencies
- 11 federally-recognized tribes

Domestic abuse services are available in all 72 counties and 11 federally-recognized tribes in Wisconsin.

## Domestic Violence Impacts All of Wisconsin

Local domestic violence programs provide lifesaving services to survivors and their children. The majority of individuals and families served receive community-based services such as advocacy, counseling, and legal support. An additional 6% receive those services along with shelter services.

**People of all ages are impacted by domestic violence. In fact, almost 1 in 4 of clients served by Wisconsin’s Domestic Violence Programs are under the age of 18.**



## Services of Domestic Abuse Programs

All domestic abuse programs that receive a Basic Services grant provide the below core services. Services are completely confidential, voluntary, and free of cost.

 **24-Hour Crisis Line:** Programs provide or contract for immediate, live access to trained staff or volunteers on a crisis hotline so that victims have access to assistance any day, any time.

 **Information, Referral and Follow-up Services:** Programs have linkages and provide information and referral to community resources for those services which are needed and requested by victims, but not provided directly by the program.

 **Advocacy and Counseling:** Programs provide survivor-driven information, support, assistance, accompaniment, and intervention. These services may include individual support and safety planning, support groups, legal advocacy, and/or individual therapy.

 **Community Education:** Programs educate individuals and organizations about issues surrounding domestic abuse. Many programs provide education to youth of all ages through programming in schools. Community education may include information about available services, information about abuse, prevention of domestic abuse, and the need for social change.

<u>People Served in FFY 2019</u>	
People Served.....	43,570
Crisis Line Calls.....	119,838
Shelter Services.....	6,900
Counseling/Advocacy.....	36,670
Legal Advocacy.....	18,605
Community Education.....	7,374
<b>Presentations reached</b>	
.....	<b>85,200 Youth</b>
.....	<b>71,389 Adults</b>

## Domestic Abuse Shelter Services

Wisconsin's 43 domestic abuse shelters are located throughout the state and provide residential and support services for survivors and their children fleeing violent homes. Shelter programs also provide emergency transportation to shelter and arrange for the education of school-aged children.

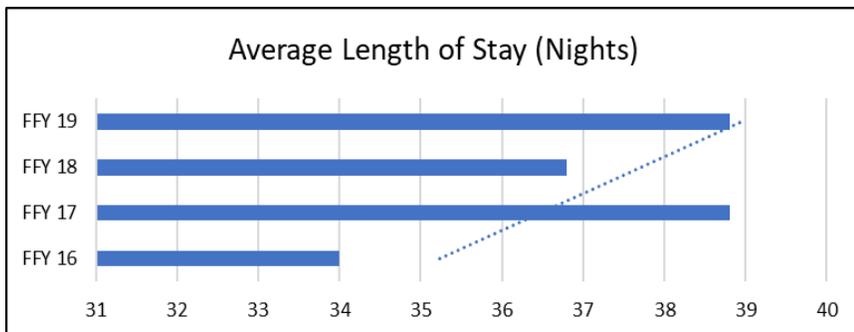
 6,900 people received safe shelter in FFY 2019. Over 46% of those people were children and youth, most of which are under the age of 12.

**In FFY 2019, 22,904 requests for shelter went unfulfilled because the shelter was full.** This number reflects *adults only*.

Thirty-four shelter programs had to turn people away because shelter was full.

As safe, affordable housing becomes more difficult to obtain, shelter stays are becoming longer.

With the length of stay increasing, there are less available beds for victims in crisis.



## Domestic Abuse Prevention

The Domestic Abuse Program advances primary prevention to promote healthy, respectful, nonviolent relationships and reduce the likelihood that anyone will become a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence. In partnership with End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, DCF supports prevention strategies including local youth programming, a Teen Ambassador Program, and a statewide media campaign.



- Youth-based primary prevention programs are offered by local domestic violence programs and address topics such as: root causes, culture shifts, healthy relationships, and leadership.
- Teen Ambassador Program (TAP). TAP builds a strong community of teens that support one another in the movement to end teen dating violence. There are currently 86 participating youth from across the state.
- Dare 2 Know: A statewide media/social-marketing campaign that incorporates robust messages about the prevention of domestic and dating violence and the promotion of healthy, non-violent relationships.

*“Throughout my entire life, I have had tumultuous relationships with people around me; people in my family, friends and even myself. For many years, I felt like I was stuck in an endless cycle of never being able to have something healthy, stable and fulfilling in my life. Last year, I began my journey in the fight for social justice and ended up joining [TAP]. From that point on, everything began to click...I am forever grateful for the opportunity to be in this program.”*

- Wisconsin Teen Ambassador

## Evaluating Program Impact

Domestic abuse programs measure outcomes of services through confidential feedback surveys completed by survivors.

In response to two questions answered by 15,938 survivors in the reporting period:

- 15,023 (94.2%) survivors responded that as a result of receiving services, they know more ways to plan for their safety.
- 14,195 (89%) survivors responded that as a result of receiving services, they know more about community resources.

**Research has demonstrated that increasing survivors’ knowledge of safety planning and community resources leads to their increased safety and well-being over time.**

Programs may also evaluate effectiveness by collecting information from survivors on achieving personal goals, having a better understanding of their rights and options, satisfaction with services, and feeling more hopeful about the future.

Focus groups, advisory councils, and structured interviews are other ways programs connect directly with survivors to get feedback.

*“Thank you for helping me get on my feet and find safety for my children.”*

- Wisconsin Domestic Violence Survivor

## Innovative Practices

In an effort to end the cycle of violence, domestic violence programs, along with the communities they serve, identify and implement innovative and promising practices. Below outline some of the practices implemented in Wisconsin that have proven to assist survivors towards safety.



### Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)

The Lethality Assessment Program is an evidence-based domestic violence homicide prevention strategy. It involves two components: 1) law enforcement's identification of victims at the greatest risk of homicide through an 11-question research-based lethality assessment tool while on the scene of intimate partner-related incidents; and 2) providing an immediate referral via telephone to a trained domestic violence advocate.

Over 125 communities across Wisconsin have been trained in the LAP. Domestic abuse programs in those communities report promising outcomes: 1) serving a population of survivors that they may not have been able to reach previously; 2) law enforcement is more knowledgeable about the services provided by domestic abuse programs; and 3) overall collaboration between law enforcement and domestic abuse programs have improved.



### Memorandum of Understanding Development

There is well-established overlap (30-60%) between violence against children and violence against women in the same family. In an effort to improve the collaboration amongst systems that work with both populations, DCF collaborates with End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin to provide technical assistance to local Child Protective Service (CPS) Agencies and Domestic Abuse Programs in the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU).

The process of developing the MOU creates the opportunity for CPS and domestic abuse programs to become deeply knowledgeable about their processes and services while also building a relationship and agreement on how to appropriately collaborate to increase safety and end the cycle of violence.

*"Since establishing the MOU, a leadership team has been developed that meets monthly for ongoing updates and case reviews that include both successes and challenges encountered. Both programs have also cross-trained the other with an ongoing schedule for this to occur regularly and planned a collaborative awareness event for domestic violence awareness month. We have seen not only an increase in the number of referrals from CPS but also an increase in communication with the case workers."* - Local Domestic Violence Program Staff Feedback on MOU Process

For more information on the DCF Domestic Abuse Program, please go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/Find> a listing of local programs at End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin at <https://www.endabusewi.org>

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