

Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program

The Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program (Disability Program) recognizes the need to focus on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking against individuals who are Deaf and/or disabled.

THESE CHALLENGES SIGNIFICANTLY COMPOUND PROBLEMS FACING those seeking support to end the violence in their lives. They also complicate the criminal justice system's ability to investigate and prosecute cases, and create difficulties for victim service providers to assist victims.

43 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 43 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Disability Program.

7,289 People Trained

Grantees trained a total of 7,289 people.

22 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 22 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

The Disability Program enhances the safety of victims of domestic/sexual violence by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent these crimes against individuals with disabilities.

People with disabilities may be even more susceptible to domestic/sexual violence, due to key risk factors, such as lower socioeconomic status (e.g., more poverty, less education and income), increased isolation, and increased dependency on others.³¹⁶



WA • Grantee Perspective

The Disability grant is enabling us to develop tools for advocates, attorneys, therapists, and victims that we believe will make the legal system more equitable for victims with mental health concerns, and result in greater safety for victims and their children. We have already seen that the funding has had a transformative impact on our partner agencies and in our community. We are very grateful that we have been entrusted with these resources and are able to make a critical difference.

KING COUNTY COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WASHINGTON



NE • Grantee Perspective

Many of the staff involved in the Open Door Initiative have commented that they have a much greater knowledge of the other partner agencies and their services, and there are more personal connections with staff at partner agencies due to the grant. The genuine desire to continue collaboration during the post-grant period is evident in the commitment of partner agency staff to continue meeting quarterly without being supported by grant funds. These quarterly meetings will encourage sustained connection and potential opportunities for ongoing collaborative projects that will benefit victims receiving services at each partner agency.

FRIENDSHIP HOME OF LINCOLN, INC., NEBRASKA

Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Provide personnel, training, technical assistance, advocacy, intervention, risk reduction, treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance;
- Conduct outreach activities to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive appropriate assistance;
- Conduct cross-training for victim service organizations about risk reduction, intervention, and prevention;
- Provide technical assistance to help with modifications to policies, protocols, and procedures to ensure equal access to services;
- Provide training and technical assistance on the requirements of shelters and victim services organizations under federal anti-discrimination laws;
- Modify facilities, purchase equipment, and fund personnel so that shelters and victim service organizations can accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities;
- Provide advocacy and intervention services for individuals with disabilities; and
- Develop model programs providing advocacy and intervention services within organizations.

In addition, VAWA 2013 clarified that victim services and legal assistance include services and assistance to **victims of domestic/sexual violence who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.**

General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **43** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- **2** (5%) grantees reported that their grants specifically addressed tribal populations.

Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:

- Provided personnel, training, technical assistance, advocacy, intervention, risk reduction, treatment, counseling, advocacy, and other assistance;
- Conducted cross-training for victim service organizations about risk reduction, intervention, and prevention; and
- Provided technical assistance to help with modifications to policies, protocols, and procedures to ensure equal access to services.

Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, consultation, and information to service providers about responding to violence against women with disabilities. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **43** (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **54** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and administrators.

Table 1 Staff supported with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups		
Staff funded	6-month average	
Total FTE staff funded	54	
Program coordinators	27	50%
Administrators	7	13%
Victim advocates	5	9%
Disability advocates	4	7%
Support staff	4	7%
Trainers	3	5%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

Training

Grantees train professionals in the service-delivery system to respond more effectively to victims with disabilities by providing information on the unique needs of these individuals and the special challenges they face when they become victims of violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **27** (63%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **279** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **7,289** people.
- Most often these trainings reached domestic violence program staff (**20%**), disability organization staff (**19%**), and attorneys/law students (**11%**).



WA • Grantee Perspective

Without funding from the Disability grant, it would not be possible for the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence to dedicate a full-time staff person to lead the Domestic Violence and Mental Health Collaboration Project, and it would not have been possible for us to create the transformational changes that we have been able to make through this project. Work group members shared that having a full-time project manager has helped with the continuity of the project and the sustainability of our initiatives over time, even as staff at the partner agencies have changed. We are very grateful that we have been entrusted with these resources and are able to make a critical difference.

KING COUNTY COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WASHINGTON



OH • Grantee Perspective

Training was provided to Solon, OH city employees, including law enforcement, fire, EMS, and other administrative staff, regarding effective response to individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. This included a review of ADA, assistive technology, Deaf culture, use of sign language interpreters, and a live demonstration of available technology. The training was successful in providing information to city employees, and they feel better prepared to respond effectively. Additionally, this training was used as a pilot for training curriculum.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER, OHIO



FL • Grantee Perspective

As a result of Disability Program funding, the Project Coordinator attended the Brain Injury Association of Florida Camp TBI. The Project Coordinator engaged in meaningful interactions with victims living with disabilities as a result of a traumatic brain injury; she gained hands-on experience and knowledge regarding day-to-day challenges and obstacles faced by individuals living with disabilities as a result of a traumatic brain injury. Information gained regarding challenges and obstacles faced by individuals living with disabilities was shared with collaborative team members, and will continuously inform the process of creating best practices when working at the intersection of domestic violence and traumatic brain injury.

FLORIDA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



WA • Grantee Perspective

A video was developed to explain the Disability grant-funded project and highlight the need for effective access to advocates in long-term care for resident victims. Participants from the Resident Advisory Workgroup participated in the filming and were interviewed to give their input and thoughts about the project. Partner agency representatives were also interviewed. The OWW-approved video was shown to all participants at the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs' annual conference, to raise awareness of sexual violence in long-term care and promote the 101 training. The video is also available on partner agency websites.

DISABILITY RIGHTS WASHINGTON



SD • Grantee Perspective

Our Disability Project Coordinator has received contacts to provide information to various professionals on topics surrounding violence towards individuals with disabilities. One of the presentations to local criminal justice students resulted in the professor asking her to be a permanent trainer each Spring semester. The Network's membership has continued to reach out to our Disability Project Coordinator for disability-related needs and we expect this to greatly increase as the project moves into implementation.

SOUTH DAKOTA NETWORK AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Community Education

Grant-funded staff provide general information to the community to increase awareness of domestic/sexual violence. **Community education can be used as a tool to connect people who have a common goal of building safe, supportive, and accountable communities.**ⁱ

- **12** (28%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **603** education events.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **8,303** people.

Table 2 People educated with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: Selected groups	
Community members educated	2-year total
Total community members educated	8,303
Deaf individuals	4,637 56%
People with disabilities	2,994 36%

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).

Technical Assistance

In addition to training, grantees provide technical assistance to service providers to enable them to improve services to individuals with disabilities who are victims of domestic/sexual violence. Technical assistance may be provided through site visits, consultations, information responses, referrals, or other collaboration, and may include guidance on collaboration and cross-training for responding to victims with disabilities; responding to violence against women with mental illness; accessible communication (ASL interpreters/communication devices); and managing disclosure, confidentiality, and safety.

- **17** (40%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees provided a total of **1,463** technical assistance activities.

ⁱ Community education involves providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Community education is not the same as training. Training involves providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that enables a professional to improve their response to victims as it relates to their role in the system.

Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims. All victims receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **3** (7%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **22** victims during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

During each 6-month period, on average, grantees provided:

- Counseling/support group services to **18** victims;
- Peer support services to **12** victims;
- Case management to **4** victims;
- Employment to **4** victims;
- Personal planning to **4** victims;
- Crisis intervention to **3** victims; and
- Transportation to **3** victims.

Other services:

- Grantees received a total of **68** hotline calls; and
 - One-third (**34%**) of these calls came from victims.

Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (97%).

Figure 1 | Provision of victim services by Disability Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

Victims served by type of victimization (6-month average)

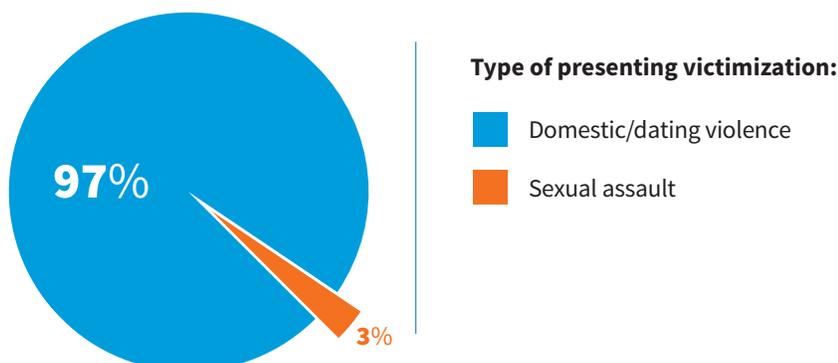


Table 3 | Victims seeking services with Disability grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

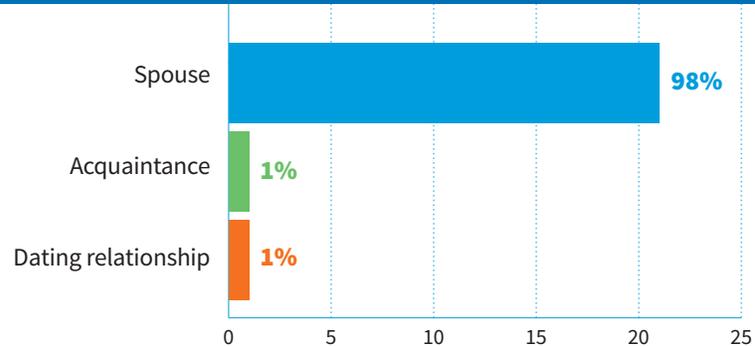
Victims seeking services	6-month average	
Total victims seeking services	22	
Victims served	21	98%
Victims partially served	1	2%
Victims not served	0	0%

NOTE: "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Disability Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those services were funded under the Disability Program grant.

Victims' Relationship to Offender

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner** (94%).
- The remaining victims were victimized by an **acquaintance** (2%) or a **stranger** (2%).

Figure 2 | Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**

NOTE: Numbers for relationship to offender were too small to compute for sexual assault victimization.

Reasons Victims Were Not Served or Were Partially Served

During each reporting period, grantees noted the following barriers as reasons why victims were not served or were only partially served:

- Program rules not acceptable to victim; or
- Transportation.

Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **22** victims during each 6-month period. The majority of those victims were **Hispanic or Latina** (35%), **female** (100%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (60%).

Figure 3 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)

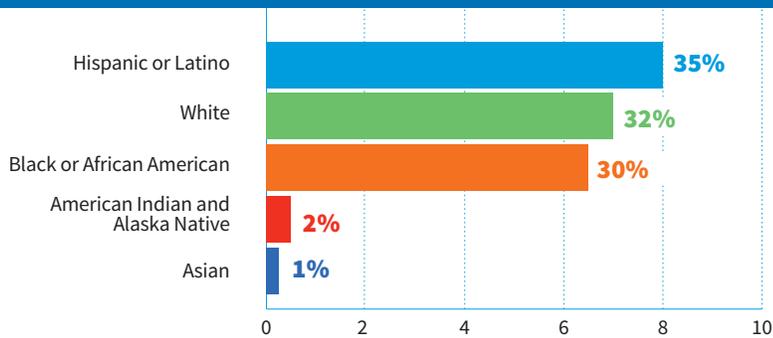


Figure 4 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)

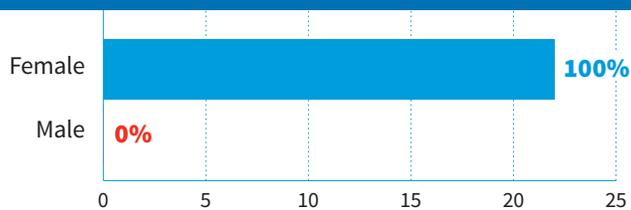


Figure 5 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)

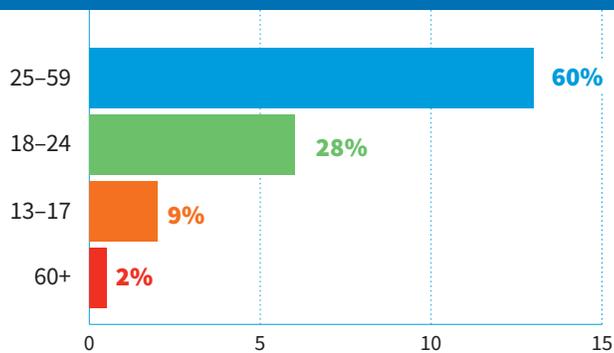
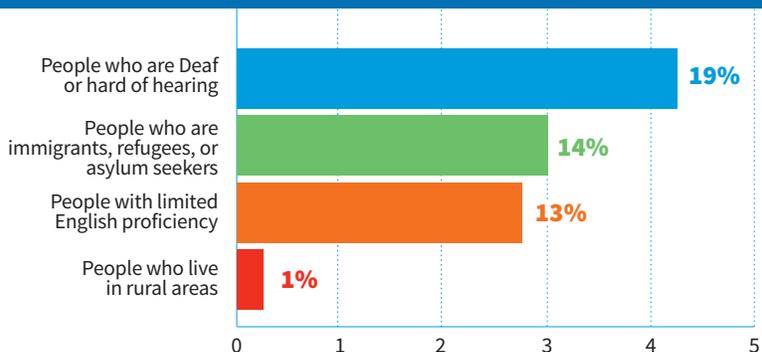


Figure 6 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)**MN • Grantee Perspective**

Victims with disabilities lack access to services that are person-centered, empowering, and trauma-informed. For example, the Sexual Violence Center (SVC) is unable to make safe referrals for victims with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) to other agencies, as SVC does not know which agencies can appropriately serve people with I/DD. There is lack of access to specific groups for victims with I/DD and a lack of welcoming and understanding in all groups that may serve people with I/DD.

THE ARC GREATER TWIN CITIES, MINNESOTA

**MI • Grantee Perspective**

Better communication needs to happen across interconnecting systems, such as hospitals/ doctors, law enforcement and the criminal justice system. While education and training is certainly a good place to address the gaps in knowledge and understanding of victims with disabilities, we need much more than that, including a common language base, greater awareness of resources, electronically accessible resources, and better collaboration between systems and other community organizations/agencies.

YWCA WEST CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited **access to victim services** as the biggest unmet need for victims with disabilities. Grantees attributed this to a **lack of specialized support services** and a **dearth of service providers who understand the unique needs of victims with disabilities**. These needs included:

- Safe and reliable transportation;
- Safe and accessible emergency shelter and long-term housing;
- Employment;
- Interpretation services for Deaf or hard of hearing victims; and
- Healthcare.

Grantees cited a need to **provide more training to service providers and the criminal justice system** on:

- The use of appropriate language and terminology when working with victims with disabilities;
- Accommodating the unique needs of clients with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities; and
- Trauma-informed practices for working with victims with disabilities.

Grantees also noted the need to engage in **education and outreach to victims about their rights**, noting that people with disabilities often lack knowledge about the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Grantees reported the **need for community education** in order to:

- Raise awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault against people with disabilities; and
- Combat social stigmas and discrimination against people with disabilities, which prevent victims from getting the help they need.

Finally, grantees pointed to the need to **ensure better collaboration between providers** serving victims with disabilities.



WA • Grantee Perspective

Disability and sexual assault advocates do not understand the complex long-term care system and how to access victims. Advocates do not have information on the rights of people living in long-term care facilities. Victims of sexual assault have limited or no access to sexual assault advocates. Stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities may impede victim access to services. Sexual assault advocates see the long-term care system as a “closed” system, meaning they do not have access to victims. Disability advocates and long-term care ombudsmen have limited experience supporting victims in a trauma-informed manner.

DISABILITY RIGHTS WASHINGTON



TX • Grantee Perspective

People with I/DD lack access to information, services, and places. People with I/DD often do not receive the same sexual health education, including education on sexual violence and consent, as those without disabilities. They are often seen as asexual beings.

TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER