Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program

The Grants to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program (State Coalitions Program) funds state-level coalitions to collaborate and coordinate with relevant federal, state, and local entities. Coalitions consist primarily of organizational members (e.g. sexual assault programs, domestic violence programs, tribal victim services agencies, and other victim services agencies) but may also include individual members.

State Sexual Assault Coalitions and State Domestic Violence coalitions play a critical role in advancing the goals of VAWA, serving as a collective voice to end domestic/sexual violence through collaboration with federal, state, and local organizations.

90 Grantees Reporting
Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 90 unique grantees reported activities funded by the State Coalitions Program.

120,863 People Trained
Grantees trained a total of 120,863 people.

130,679 Technical Assistance Activities
Grantees provided 126,938 consultations and 3,741 site visits.

Grantees engage in the following purpose areas:

- Coordinate state victim services activities; and
- Collaborate and coordinate with federal, state, and local entities engaged in domestic/sexual violence activities, including but not limited to:
  - Provide training and technical assistance (TA) to member agencies;
  - Expand the technological capacity of coalitions and/or member agencies; and
  - Bring local programs together to identify gaps in services and to coordinate activities.

Coalitions play a number of roles in responding to domestic/sexual violence: they serve as governing or organizing bodies for local agencies; they advocate for policy, legislation, or practice changes on behalf of their member agencies; and support collaboration between agencies building community relationships.
General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by 90 individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- 34 (38%) grantees reporting were domestic violence coalitions, 32 (36%) were sexual assault coalitions, and 24 (27%) were dual sexual assault/domestic violence coalitions.

Nearly all grantees use funds to develop or enhance standards of service for underserved populations, by identifying gaps in services and supporting member and community organizations in their provision of outreach to and services for victims.

- 84 (93%) grantees used funds to address underserved populations.

Staff

Grant-funded staff provide training, education, and technical assistance to help end domestic/sexual violence and hold offenders accountable. Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.

- 90 (100%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of 122 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and administrators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff funded</th>
<th>6-month average</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total FTE staff funded</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program coordinators</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support staff</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications specialists</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance providers</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems advocates</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Data presented for the most frequently reported categories only (≥5%).
Training
Grantees help train states, territories, and communities to develop coordinated responses to reduce domestic/sexual violence. This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.

- 86 (96%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of 4,705 training events.
- Grantees trained a total of 120,863 people.
- Most often these trainings reached victim advocates (34%), multidisciplinary staff at the same training (13%), and law enforcement officers (9%).

Technical Assistance
Grantees provide technical assistance to member programs through site visits and other consultations. Consultations may include in-person, telephone, electronic, or other types of contact with programs. The goal of technical assistance is to improve the response of professionals and organizations to victims of domestic/sexual violence, by improving organizational infrastructure; developing, revising, and implementing policies, protocols, and procedures; and providing materials on relevant issues.

- 88 (98%) grantees used funds for technical assistance.
- Grantees provided a total of 130,679 technical assistance activities.

Across the 2-year period, providers most frequently delivered the following forms of assistance:
- A total of 126,938 consultations; and
- A total of 3,741 site visits.

Remaining Areas of Need
Grantees most frequently reported the need to provide culturally informed and linguistically appropriate domestic violence and sexual assault services and outreach to underserved populations within their respective states, including:
- Immigrant communities;
- Victims with limited English proficiency;
- Victims with disabilities;
- Male victims;
- Incarcerated victims;
- Members of the Deaf and hard of hearing community;
- LGBT victims;
- Homeless victims;
- Seniors; and
- Victims in remote rural areas.
Grantees also felt that more training was needed on trauma-informed response and evidence-based practices among:

- Law enforcement and first responders;
- Prosecutors; and
- Judges and court personnel.

A majority of grantees reported difficulty in maintaining current services given budget cuts and financial constraints, as well as difficulty meeting new state and federal mandates without concurrent increases in funding.

Many grantees underscored the need to assist victims in meeting their basic needs so they can achieve economic self-sufficiency. These needs included:

- Healthcare;
- Housing;
- Employment;
- Affordable child care;
- Transportation; and
- Education and tuition assistance.

Several grantees also mentioned the need for low-cost or pro bono civil legal assistance for victims, as well as enhanced accountability for offenders, including:

- Improved standards for Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP);
- Alternatives to criminal justice BIP; and
- Increased prosecution of sex offenders.

Finally, a number of grantees noted a need for education and outreach about sexual assault and domestic violence in schools and communities in order to:

- Increase awareness of available services;
- Combat victim-blaming; and
- Encourage reporting of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**WA · Grantee Perspective**

It is exciting to see prevention education provided in the middle schools, and school staff connecting student victims with services. However, this is still highly dependent upon individual staff members and decisions of individual schools; these are not yet district-wide and systemic in their implementation. This will be our challenge for the upcoming school year – to make our changes systemic, and thus also sustainable.

FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

**FL · Grantee Perspective**

The most significant areas of remaining need for improving services to victims of sexual assault is training law enforcement and prosecutors in the neurobiology of trauma and trauma-informed investigations and prosecutions. It is imperative that law enforcement and prosecutors improve their skills in interviewing victims in a way that acknowledges how trauma affects their memories and their responses to sexual assault. They need to learn how to use the information gleaned from employing techniques like the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview to corroborate victims’ stories and hold perpetrators accountable.

FLORIDA COUNCIL AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**MN · Grantee Perspective**

Our member advocacy agencies are continuously challenged with diminishing resources and pressures to change service delivery models. Over time the number of free-standing sexual assault programs has decreased, largely due to the funding realities. Several programs have merged with domestic violence programs – some with more success at maintaining the uniqueness of their work than others. Our challenge as a coalition is to design and offer opportunities for the movement to think critically about how we weather these changes in a way that can result in more stable advocacy organizations and ones that maintain the ethical commitment to serving the breadth of sexual assault victims.

MINNESOTA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

**WV · Grantee Perspective**

Within the larger community victims are discriminated against and judged by some employers, co-workers, landlords, neighbors, faith leaders, media journalists, medical professionals, etc., to be responsible for their own victimization. This represents an evident lack of understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence. There is much work needed in educating the general public and professionals involved in responding to domestic violence about the dynamics, indicators, severity, impact, and helpful intervention and prevention strategies in dealing with domestic violence.

WEST VIRGINIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE