

Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program

The Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program (STEP Program) supports middle and high schools in developing and implementing effective training, services, prevention strategies, policies, and coordinated community responses for students who are victims of, or exposed to, physical and/or sexual violence.

THE CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies (Consolidated Youth or CY Program) has received appropriations in FYs 2013 through 2016. This program, which consolidated four programs previously authorized under earlier iterations of VAWA, including the STEP Program, funds projects that support child, youth, and young adult victims through direct services, training, coordination and collaboration, effective intervention, treatment, response, and prevention strategies. The last grants made under the STEP Program were awarded in FY 2011.

9 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 9 unique grantees reported activities funded by the STEP Program.

122 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 122 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

5,484 Students Reached

Grantees reached a total of 5,484 students through prevention and education events.

The 2013 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that, among high school students who have had a dating relationship, 20.9% of female students and 10.4% of male students experienced some form of dating violence, whether physical or sexual, with all health-risk behaviors being most prevalent among students who experienced both physical and sexual abuse.⁴²⁰



OH • Grantee Perspective

STEP grant funding has allowed us to make tremendous strides toward preventing and effectively addressing physical and sexual violence within the Lakewood City School District. In previous reporting periods we discussed developing and implementing policy, training all secondary level staff, reaching thousands of students with education and awareness efforts, and working with parents and community members to encourage a deeper understanding of power-based violence. All of these aforementioned efforts were led and carried out by STEP grant-funded staff, which would otherwise not have been possible without this funding.

LAKWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO



IA • Grantee Perspective

With STEP grant funding, we have been able to implement a violence prevention program district-wide. Staff development time is hard to get in a district our size, but with the money and the commitment to the project, we were able to reserve 2 hours of staff development time this spring. That would have been less likely to happen without the grant. Besides the staff time, this project has given us the opportunity to engage a wider audience in the violence prevention dialogue and unite all our staff in one clear message: violence will not be tolerated, and we all can do our part to prevent it.

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, IOWA

The STEP Program enhances students' safety by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent physical and sexual violence in schools. Purpose areas included:

- Provide training to school administrators, faculty, counselors, coaches, healthcare providers, security personnel, and other staff on the needs and concerns of students who experience physical and/or sexual violence, and the impact of such violence on students;
- Develop and implement policies in middle and high schools regarding appropriate, safe responses to, and identification and referral procedures for, students who are experiencing or perpetrating physical and/or sexual violence;
- Provide support services for students and school personnel, such as a resource person who is either on-site or on-call;
- Provide developmentally appropriate educational programming to students regarding physical and/or sexual violence;
- Work with existing mentoring programs and develop strong mentoring programs for students, including student athletes, to help them understand and recognize violence and violent behavior, how to prevent it and how to appropriately address their feelings; and
- Conduct evaluations to assess the impact of programs and policies.

General Grant Information

Information for this report was submitted by **9** individual grantees for the July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 progress reporting period.

- Grantees most frequently addressed the following purpose areas:
 - Provided training to school administration and staff;
 - Provided support services for students and school personnel; and
 - Provided developmentally appropriate educational programming to students.

Staff

Grant-funded staff provide policy and program development, prevention education, training, and victim services to increase safety and ensure a coordinated response to violence against youth in middle and high schools. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **9** (100%) grantees used funding for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **16** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support program coordinators and victim advocates.

Table 1 | Staff supported with STEP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
Total FTE staff funded	16	
Program coordinators	6	36%
Victim advocates	4	24%
Trainers/educators	3	16%
Administrators	1	9%
Support staff	1	7%

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



SC • Grantee Perspective

Having a Victim Service Provider Advocate in the schools has proven effective, as there is a liaison available to assist with the issues of domestic and teen dating violence, thereby freeing up the Guidance Department that was getting flooded with relationship issues.

LANCASTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA



MA • Grantee Perspective

As part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, we sponsored a training for parents titled, “The Importance of the Bystander in Teen Dating Abuse: Parents Matter in Teens’ Lives.” It was facilitated by Jarrod Chin of Mentors in Violence (MVP), and 12 MVP-trained student leaders from Melrose High School. Through interactive activities, the training opened a dialogue around verbal, emotional, and physical abuse in relationships, the role of parents and other bystanders in intervening, and further resources for help. A scenario was discussed involving technology and abuse. Copies of the Teen Dating Abuse Policy were made available. Approximately 35 parents attended. A survey conducted afterwards indicated that 100% of participants rated the training as good or excellent and 100% would recommend the training to other parents.

MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MASSACHUSETTS



OR • Grantee Perspective

Our students are becoming change makers in their communities. A student who has worked in the STEP program for 2 years was invited to Washington, DC to participate in the first-ever tribal youth gathering based on her involvement with STEP and the Early College Academy. She used the opportunity to advocate for DV-related issues to politicians. We are also being requested for national speaking engagements about strategies that work to address youth and native teen dating violence issues. We also are regularly consulted around policy development within local schools.

NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTER, OREGON

Training

Grantees train school administrators, faculty, and staff on the burden and impact of physical and/or sexual violence, and the needs and concerns of students who experience these crimes. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- 9 (100%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **92** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **3,997** school personnel.
- Most often these trainings reached teachers (**63%**), coaches/athletic staff (**5%**), and school administration (**4%**).

Minimum Requirements

Grantees provide educational programs to students to increase awareness of physical and/or sexual violence, as well as indirect exposure to violence.

- Grantees held a total of **504** prevention and education events reaching a total of **5,484** students.
- Grantees trained **361** peer educators.

Grantees also develop and support youth advisory committees that shape strategies used in prevention and education efforts and programming.

- Grantees held a total of **271** committee meetings with **755** committee members.

Victim Services

Grantees provide an array of services to victims of physical and/or sexual violence, including crisis intervention, victim advocacy, counseling, and legal advocacy. Victims also receive safety planning, referrals, and information as needed. In addition, grantees provide the same services to youth indirectly exposed to these crimes. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help youth become and remain safe from violence.**

- **7** (78%) grantees used grant funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **122** 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:

- Crisis intervention services to **84** victims;
- Support group/counseling services to **67** victims; and
- Victim advocacy services to **62** victims.

Victims Seeking Services

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

- The majority of victims served were victims of **sexual assault** (36%).



OH • Grantee Perspective

As student victims came forward with disclosures of physical and sexual violence, program coordinators in partnership with administration and support staff have been able to provide a trauma-informed response in order to ensure victims were offered school-based and community options for advocacy and healing services. This grant funding has allowed a trauma-informed, victim-centered response to physical and sexual violence to be prioritized within the district in a way it had not been in the past.

LAKESIDE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO

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

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

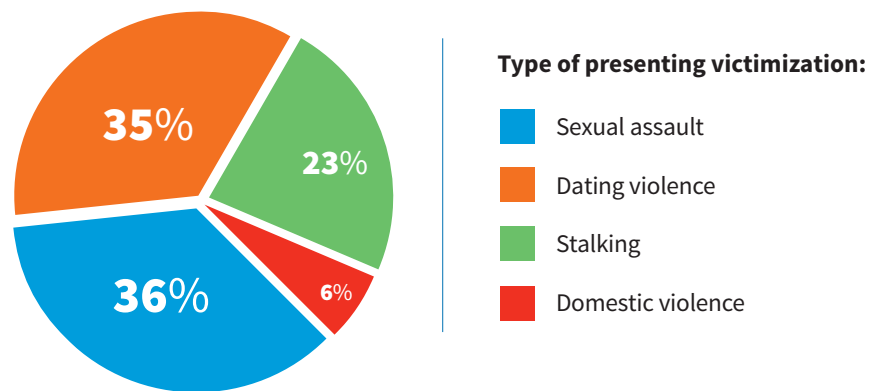


Table 2 | Victims seeking services with STEP grant funds, July 2013–June 2015

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
Total victims seeking services	122	
Victims served	122	100%
Victims partially served	0	0%
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 STEP 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 STEP Program grant.



NY • Grantee Perspective

The representatives from each partner school and advocates have truly learned that the need for victim services directed at the youth population in our community was underestimated prior to the project implementation. Without this project, the students who have been directly served may not have told anyone if the STEP Advocates were not available to them. Additionally, the staff and faculty would be less aware of the issues within their schools and in the students' lives, and the DV/SA staff would not have had the opportunity to reach an entire group of our community in need of support services.

FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

Victims' Relationship to Offender

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

- The majority of victims served were victimized in the context of a **dating relationship** (36%).
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized by another **family or household member** (23%) or by a **spouse or intimate partner** (21%).

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

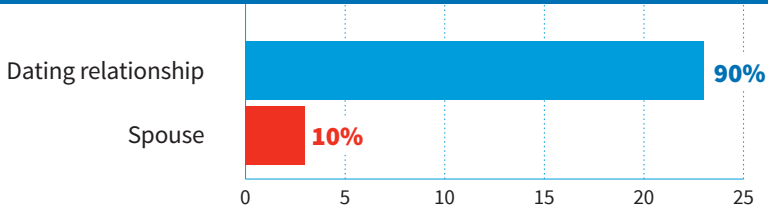


Figure 3 | Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault**

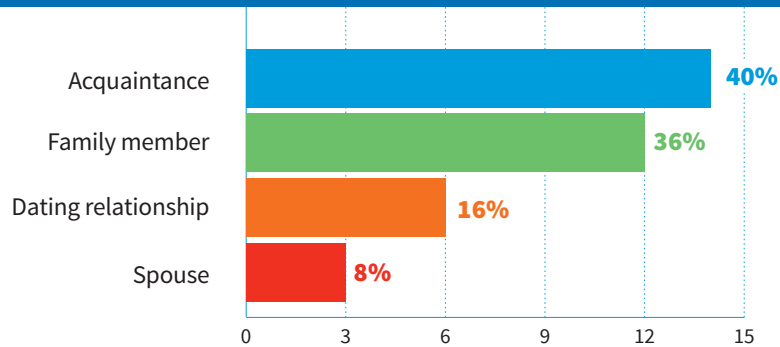
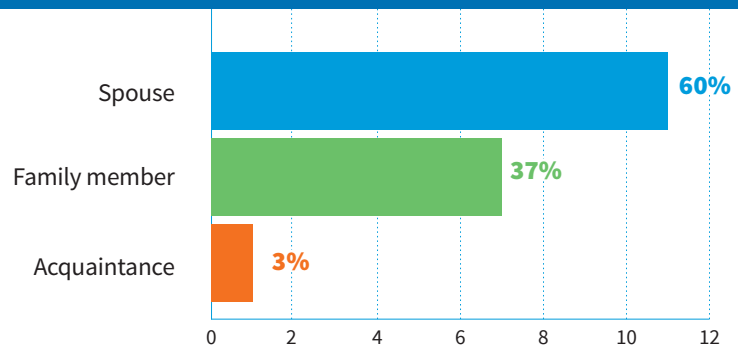


Figure 4 | Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Domestic violence**

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

Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served an average of **122** victims during each 6-month reporting period. The majority of those victims were **white** (72%), **female** (93%), and between the ages of **13 and 17** (46%).

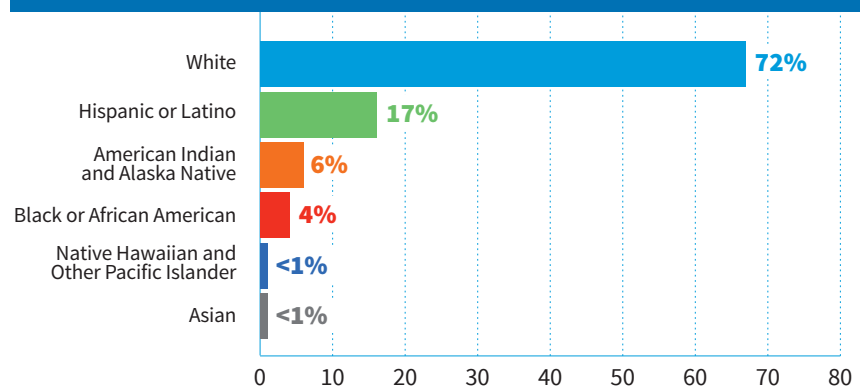
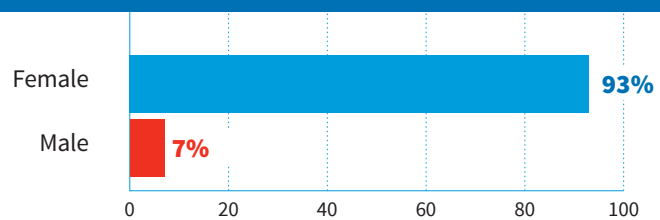
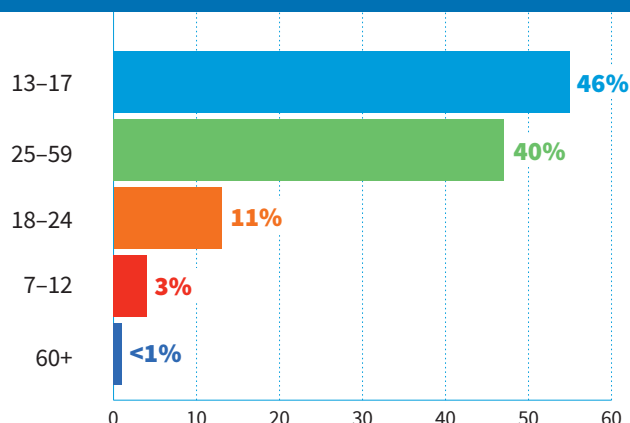
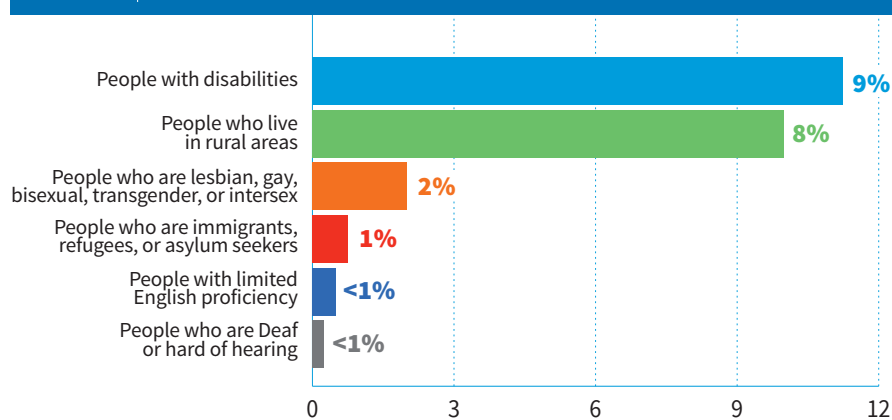
Figure 5 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Race/ethnicity** (6-month average)**Figure 6** | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)

Figure 7 | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Age** (6-month average)**Figure 8** | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)

Services for Youth Indirectly Exposed to Violence

Grantees provide services to youth indirectly exposed to domestic/sexual violence. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help youth become and remain safe from violence.**

- Grantees provided services to an average of **17** youth indirectly exposed to violence during each 6-month period.
- **100%** of youth indirectly exposed to violence who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

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

- Crisis intervention services to **16** youth indirectly exposed;
- Victim advocacy services to **15** youth indirectly exposed; and
- Civil/legal advocacy to **13** youth indirectly exposed.



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

Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees most frequently cited the need to take measures to **ensure that changes to programs are applied systemically throughout school districts, and that programs will be sustained beyond the grant period.**

Grantees felt that changes could be made to achieve **more systemic and sustainable results**, including:

- Training all staff and faculty on trauma-informed response;
- Dedicating classroom time to discussing issues of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
- Community outreach and education, especially to parents and guardians; and
- Revising and creating new district policies to support victim safety and offender accountability.

Yet, grantees noted that such changes could be difficult to implement, given the **limited budgets of many school districts, as well as time constraints faced by teachers.**

Some grantees also reported a **shortage of victim services in their communities**, especially in rural areas.



CA • Grantee Perspective

Another area of remaining need is on the school campuses with regard to the stress put on teachers to solely prioritize academic achievement. With this stress and district-wide budget cuts, it has been difficult to find time to both conduct trainings with teachers and staff, and to implement violence prevention education in the classroom with students.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA



NY • Grantee Perspective

The areas seen as having the most significant need with regard to improving services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking is the lack of services in our community to address these issues, along with the lack of understanding about victim rights within schools, law enforcement, and other agencies. The prevalence of these issues goes beyond the capacity of providing services in three districts.

FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW YORK