

# Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations

The Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations (Underserved Program) funds projects to develop and implement outreach strategies and enhanced services to adult and youth victims of domestic/sexual violence in underserved populations.

**GRANTEES DO THIS BY BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF BOTH MAINSTREAM organizations and organizations specifically serving underserved populations to provide culturally appropriate and inclusive services; and increasing training and outreach activities of organizations providing services to underserved populations.**

## 31 Grantees Reporting

Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2017, 31 unique grantees reported activities funded by the Underserved Program.

## 878 Victims Served

On average, grantees served 878 victims during each 6-month reporting period.

## 48% Served LGBT Victims

Nearly half (48%) of grantees served victims who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or intersex.

The Underserved Program responds to the needs of some underserved populations (i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) victims, the Deaf or hard of hearing community, and certain religious/ethnic minorities) that, prior to VAWA 2013, were included under the Culturally Specific Services Program (CSSP) and the Sexual Assault Services Program – Culturally Specific (SASP-CS).

*The term “underserved populations” means populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age), and any other population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate (Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013).*

*Service providers may be unprepared to offer sensitive and appropriate advocacy and shelter to LGBT victims of violence for a variety of reasons, such as limited capacity, fear of backlash, homophobia, and transphobia (Calton et al., 2016).*



#### WI • Grantee Perspective

The Underserved Program funding provides the programs we train with a foundation of understanding about the Deaf Community in general and affirms and dispels assumptions about Deaf people (e.g., whether we can lipread). This foundation also includes the historical trauma of the Deaf Community and how lifelong experiences of trauma manifest into barriers for Deaf victims trying to get help. We also train a program to respond and provide services to Deaf victims with an array of strategies that may increase a Deaf victim's safety and access to resources, services, and options. These trainings also give participants a new sense of ease in working with Deaf Unity, now that they have a new awareness of the Deaf Community, Deaf victims, and resources that we use. As a result of the trainings, programs will reach out to Deaf Unity when they have a Deaf victim at their door. They also contact us for technical assistance and problem solving. These trainings also give Deaf victims a face and voice by having the participants learn and appreciate the barriers, challenges, and lifelong experiences that they cannot fully fathom and handle by themselves without our collaboration.

DEAF UNITY, WISCONSIN

VAWA 2013 narrowed the scope of the CSSP and SASP-CS Programs to focus only on certain ethnic and racial minorities. To ensure continued support for underserved populations, Congress authorized the Underserved Program. Competitive awards were made for the first time in FY 2016. Former Abuse in Later Life Program grantees, former Disability Program grantees, and culturally specific organizations focusing on sexual assault are eligible to apply for these funds.

The Underserved Program enhances the safety of victims and their children by supporting community-based culturally specific projects to address and prevent domestic/sexual violence. Purpose areas include:

- Work with federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, agencies, and organizations to develop or enhance population specific services;
- Strengthen the capacity of underserved populations to provide population specific services;
- Strengthen the capacity of traditional victim service providers to provide population specific services;
- Strengthen the effectiveness of criminal and civil justice interventions by providing training for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other court personnel on domestic/sexual violence in underserved populations; and
- Work in cooperation with underserved populations to develop and implement outreach, education, prevention, and intervention strategies that highlight available resources and the specific issues faced by victims of domestic/sexual violence from these populations.

The Attorney General may use up to 25% of funds available under the Underserved Program to make one-time planning grants to eligible entities to support the planning and development of specially designed and targeted programs for adult and youth victims of domestic/sexual violence in one or more underserved populations.

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.**

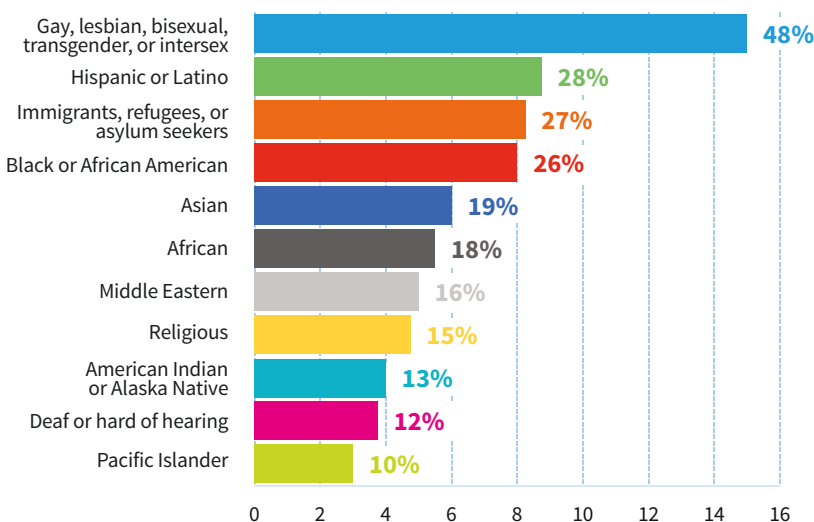
## General Grant Information

The Underserved Program was authorized by VAWA 2013. Information for this report was submitted by **31** individual grantees for the July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017 progress reporting period.

- Frequently (**48%**) grantees served victims who identified as LGBT.

**Figure 1**

Grantees serving culturally specific populations by type of population, July 2015–June 2017 (6-month average)



## Staff

Grant-funded staff provide victim services, training, outreach, advocacy, counseling, court and medical accompaniment, and community education to increase victim safety and offender accountability. **Being able to hire staff is critical to the overall function and success of programs.**

- **30** (97%) grantees used funds for staffing needs.
- Grantees funded an average of **26** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff during each 6-month period.
- Grantees most often used these staffing funds to support victim advocates and program coordinators.

**Table 1**

Staff supported with Underserved grant funds, July 2015–June 2017: **Selected groups**

Staff funded	6-month average	
<b>Total FTE staff funded</b>	<b>26</b>	
Victim advocates	7	27%
Program coordinators	6	23%
Trainers	4	15%
Administrators	3	12%
Counselors	3	12%
Outreach workers	2	8%

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



### TX • Grantee Perspective

With program funding, we can reach a population that is underserved and, for lack of words, forgotten. The community we are serving is usually only Spanish-speaking and faces many barriers when seeking help and/or services. We have been able to contract a licensed counselor to provide individual counseling for victims/survivors that would have otherwise gone without any counseling. Some of the barriers that they are facing when seeking counseling are, lack of childcare, not being able to afford missing work, not being able to afford counseling sessions, not being able to travel to where services are available for fear of being stopped (many are undocumented), amongst an endless list of other circumstances. Through the funding we received, we are providing this utterly important service to a population that would have otherwise gone without it.

MHP SALUD, TEXAS



### NJ • Grantee Perspective

Program funding has allowed us the staffing necessary to do more extensive case management. For example, the idea of navigating our Superior Court System when filing for a restraining order is a daunting task in general, but for someone who uses a walker or cannot hear very well, it can be much more difficult. Without the support of a staff member going to court with that person and assisting them through the process, our clients can get frustrated or overwhelmed to the point of not going through with the restraining order process. In addition, the pressure our clients feel to “forgive” and not go through with the final order hearing our clients feel when the perpetrator is an adult child can be too much to bear. The funding provided through this grant allows our staff to provide court accompaniments and offer support through this very difficult time.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES, DIOCESE OF TRENTON, NEW JERSEY



### OH • Grantee Perspective

The Underserved Program funding has allowed BRAVO to expand and extend our service provider training and technical assistance programming. BRAVO's SafeZone Project represents the largest and most collaborative comprehensive training and technical assistance program we have undertaken, and the largest LGBTQI training program in the state. BRAVO has been able to build capacity and reach places in Ohio that we had yet to provide services. The funding provides the ability and opportunity to travel around Ohio reaching areas not otherwise reachable.

**BUCKEYE REGION ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION, OHIO**



### NY • Grantee Perspective

Shalom Task Force (STF) made a major expansion in prevention education programs to Orthodox Jewish young adults and adults, including offering programs for Orthodox Jewish youth attending campuses of the City University of New York, partnering with several major synagogues in the New York area and other community groups, and offering programs to these new community audiences. Another innovative program that we started in mid-May was an internship program. Building on our success at piloting a small internship program last summer, the STF Women's Education Director selected four new interns for a 2016 summer internship program. They will be involved in a series of innovative programs through the end of the summer including the following: developing a young leadership initiative for high school students to be ambassadors for STF at their schools; making suggestions to update the STF Young Men's Relationship Education Curriculum and make it more appealing to youth; working on a social media plan and implementation; and planning new educational programs for parents and educators of young brides.

**SHALOM TASK FORCE, NEW YORK**

## Training

Grantees train victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court personnel, probation officers, child protection staff, mental health and other professionals how to develop an effective coordinated community response to violence. **This training improves the professional response to victims and increases offender accountability.**

- **24** (77%) grantees used funds for training.
- Grantees convened a total of **470** training events.
- Grantees trained a total of **10,369** people.
- Most often these trainings reached victim advocates (**26%**), law enforcement officers (**20%**), health professionals (**7%**), and educators (**7%**).

## Community Education

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

- **24** (77%) grantees used funds for community education.
- Grantees hosted a total of **615** education events.
- Grantees provided education to a total of **39,009** people.

**Table 2** | People educated with Underserved grant funds, July 2015–June 2017: **Selected groups**

People educated	1-year total	
<b>Total people educated</b>	<b>39,009</b>	
Victims	<b>16,955</b>	<b>43%</b>
Community members	<b>7,012</b>	<b>18%</b>
Middle/high school students	<b>4,525</b>	<b>12%</b>
University/college students	<b>4,350</b>	<b>11%</b>

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

<sup>i</sup> 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 his or her response to victims as it relates to their role in the system

## Victim Services

Underserved victims of domestic/sexual violence may face unique barriers to seeking and utilizing assistance. Supporting these victims with a wide range of services may include providing advocacy and support to a victim who is seeking a protection order; accompaniment during medical procedures, such as a sexual assault forensic examination; providing interpretation or translation services; assistance with safety planning; accompaniment to court; shelter and transitional housing assistance; or immigration assistance. **These comprehensive support services address a wide variety of needs to help victims become and remain safe from violence.**

- **24** (77%) grantees used funds for victim services.
- Grantees provided services to an average of **878** victims during each 6-month period.
- Nearly **100%** of victims who sought services received them during each 6-month period.

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

- Support group/counseling services to **597** victims;
- Victim advocacy services to **536** victims;
- Crisis intervention services to **351** victims;
- Civil legal advocacy services to **242** victims;
- Criminal justice advocacy services to **138** victims;
- Language services (i.e. interpretation or translation) to **104** victims; and
- Transportation services to **94** victims.

### Other services:

- Victim-witness notification/victim outreach services were used a total of **299** times; and
  - Grantees used English, Spanish, and American Sign Language (ASL) for these activities.
- Grantees received a total of **4,436** hotline calls;
  - The majority of these calls (**53%**) came from victims; and
  - Grantees used English, Hebrew, Russian, Spanish, Yiddish, and ASL when responding to these requests for information or assistance.

## Victims Seeking Services

Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2017:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victims of **domestic/dating violence** (76%).



### NM • Grantee Perspective

Services for Spanish-speaking survivors of SA have been minimal and might not exist in Albuquerque without this funding. We have begun to provide more comprehensive services and have a program for Spanish-speaking immigrant SA survivors backed by Spanish-speaking immigrant community members. This has not been done before in central New Mexico and this funding is a force behind our work. Services for Spanish-speaking sexual assault victims/survivors in Albuquerque and surrounding counties have grown immensely with this grant. Other than Casa Fortaleza, there were no therapy services in Spanish specifically geared to victims. Now CF has a therapist and a Clinical Director providing therapy services and has been able to provide therapy for even more survivors.

**ENLACE COMUNITARIO/CASA FORTALEZA, NEW MEXICO**



### NJ • Grantee Perspective

The resources supported by this grant allowed our client to begin free individual therapy, case management, and vocational counseling. Our director spoke to the local Orthodox Jewish school to urge them to accept her children into their school. The school administrator resisted because he found the husband so impossible to deal with. Only because we have a strong and ongoing relationship with the rabbinic administrator were we able to explain to him the situation. The therapist was able shift the principals mindset from judgmental to compassionate and he made space in his building for our client's children. Our school psychologist evaluated the children and created appropriate educational plans. The children are in therapy to help undo the damage of witnessing the psychological torture of their mother. Recently, our client has also benefited from our pro bono legal service when she met with an Orthodox Jewish family attorney whom she found very helpful and empathetic. Without grant funding, we would not have been able to assist her and her children in shifting their lives from one of continued abuse to hope and promise in the future.

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AND CHILDREN'S CENTER OF CLIFTON-PASSAIC INC., NEW JERSEY**



**WA • Grantee Perspective**

This funding is a critical source of support for our advocacy work in LGBTQ communities. It has allowed us to continue to offer meaningful support to LGBTQ survivors of sexual violence in our community. During this reporting period, funds enabled us to offer a culturally relevant sexual assault specific support group via Thriving While Healing. The support group has had a tremendous impact on our community and fills a critical community need for support and connection among LGBTQ survivors of sexual violence. [Funds have also allowed us to] maintain our capacity to respond to diverse LGBTQ Latinx survivors by having two Spanish/English Bilingual and Bicultural Community Advocates on staff.

**NW NETWORK OF BI, TRANS, LESBIAN AND GAY SURVIVORS OF ABUSE, WASHINGTON**



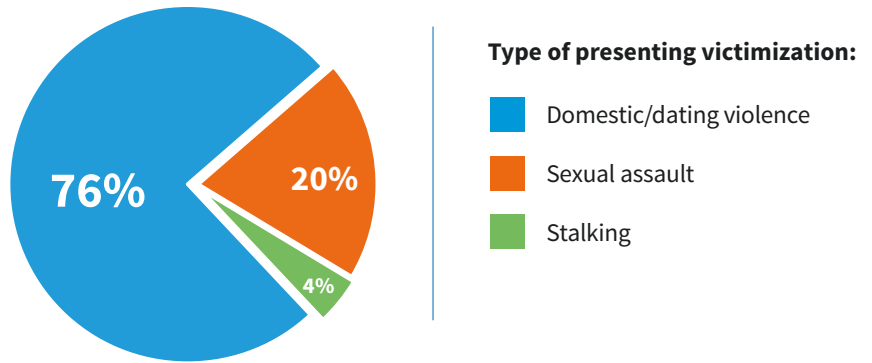
**NY • Grantee Perspective**

[One of our clients] identifies as a Latinx cisgender man who was living without status after emigrating. When A first called AVP, he was in crisis, having been physically attacked and illegally thrown out of his apartment by his abusive husband. A had no family support, because they lived in another country, but he was fortunate enough to stay with a friend. As part of his healing and recovery process, we were able to refer him to our Legal program, where he received extensive legal services, funded through our LAV grant, beginning with support to obtain a family order protection, to feel safe from his stalking ex-partner. AVP is representing A in his divorce case and we referred him to an outside attorney who took on his immigration case. AVP also worked with A around his health, specifically to help him get tested for HIV, as he was unaware of his status and frightened. His AVP counselor accompanied him to a community health center. A tested positive for HIV, and his counselor offered immediate crisis intervention and support for A and his new diagnosis, as well as connecting him with immediate treatment. In his work with AVP, A has demonstrated tremendous growth in counseling.

**NEW YORK CITY GAY AND LESBIAN ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT, NEW YORK**

**Figure 2** | Provision of victim services by Underserved Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

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



**Table 3** | Victims seeking services with Underserved grant funds, July 2015–June 2017

Victims seeking services	6-month average	
<b>Total victims seeking services</b>	<b>878</b>	
Victims served	<b>874</b>	<b>99%</b>
Victims partially served	<b>5</b>	<b>1%</b>
Victims not served	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

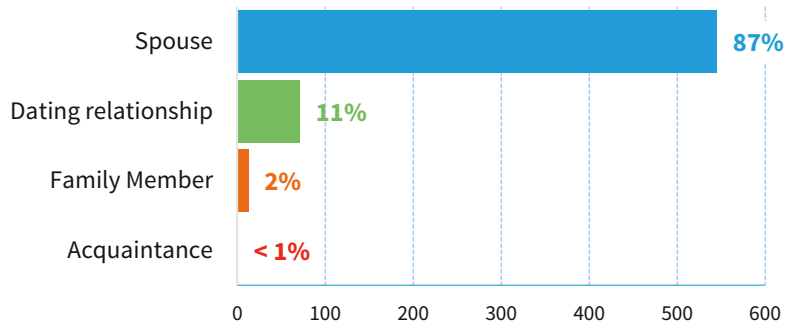
**NOTE:** "Partially served" represents victims who received some but not all of the service(s) they requested, provided those services were funded under the Underserved Program grant. "Not served" represents victims who sought services and did not receive the service(s) they were seeking, provided those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

**Victims' Relationship to Offender**

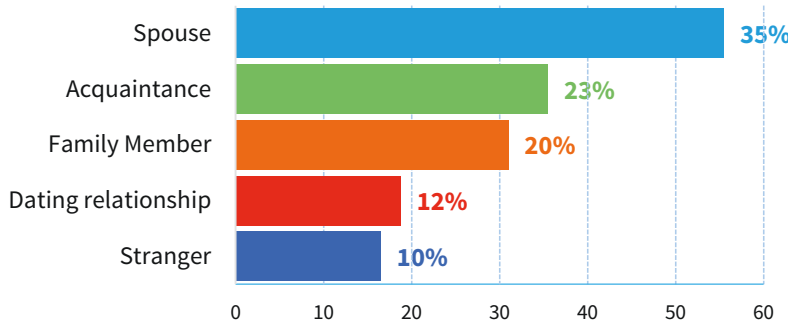
Grantees serve victims of domestic/sexual violence. Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2017:

- The majority of victims served or partially served were victimized by a **spouse or intimate partner (76%)**.
- The remaining victims were most commonly victimized in the context of a **dating relationship (12%)**, by an **acquaintance (5%)**, or by a **family or household member (5%)**.

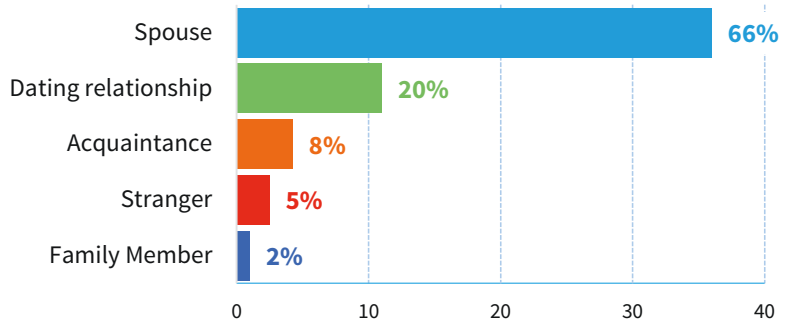
**Figure 3** | Type of victimization by relationship to offender: Domestic/dating violence (6-month average)



**Figure 4** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Sexual assault** (6-month average)



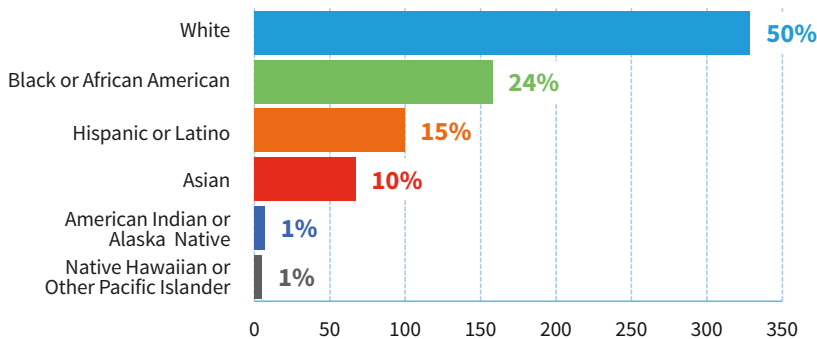
**Figure 5** Type of victimization by relationship to offender: **Stalking** (6-month average)



### Demographics of Victims Served and Partially Served

Grantees served or partially served an average of **878** victims during each 6-month period. The victims most frequently served or partially served were **white** (50%), **female** (86%), and between the ages of **25 and 59** (63%).

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



#### VT • Grantee Perspective

Primarily, this funding allows us to provide training that will enhance the ability of Vermont sexual violence assistance agencies to serve the LGBTQ and migrant worker community in a manner that addresses the lack of culturally competent services. The training we offer removes one of the most important barriers to services and that is a bias against and misunderstanding of LGBTQ people and the migrant worker community. Additionally, we are able to help service providers address issues and situations that may make LGBTQ and migrant worker clients distrustful or suspicious.

PRIDE CENTER OF VERMONT



#### VA • Grantee Perspective

Funding has allowed advocates to expand connections in diverse communities. The community advocates that have been on-boarded connect Virginia Anti-Violence Project (VAVP) to a much broader range of LGBTQ community members, because they are representatives of diverse communities and already had natural connections and collaborative relationships to add to the organization. Particularly, one staff member's deep ties to Nationz Foundation (as its founder) has allowed VAVP to foster a deep and genuine relationship with a grassroots organization that does specific work for and by trans women of color, LGBTQ people of color, and people living with HIV/AIDS. Institutionally lifting up the leadership of trans women of color, through funding of the community advocate position and institutionalizing continued and deep listening to the needs of those communities, has created a community connection that enriches and adds nuance to VAVP's work. In addition, funding an individual who identifies as a young gender fluid advocate of color has allowed for increased connections to diverse youth LGBTQ communities, in particular to create space for intensive collaboration with Side by Side (formerly ROSMY), an organization that specifically serves LGBTQ youth.

VIRGINIA ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT



**IL • Grantee Perspective**

Most importantly, these funds have allowed us to continue a growing program in the Orthodox community that raises awareness and understanding of DV and the resources and help that SHALVA can provide. This program was initially funded with our first OVW grant. We have been able to increase our programming in the Orthodox community to cover community members, personal care professionals, educators, mental health professionals and clergy. It allows us to continue our Orthodox Rabbinic task force so that Orthodox women who are afraid to call SHALVA or feel they need rabbinic approval will receive appropriate guidance and support. If a Rabbi suggests SHALVA, an Orthodox women is more likely to come to SHALVA for counseling. SHALVA would not have the capacity for our Orthodox initiative without OVW funds. We we would not be able to meet the current demand for DV counseling services in the Jewish community, including covering the need for evening hours. The grant has also helped our clients receive food, clothing and medical assistance through our MOU with the Ark.

**SHALVA, INC., ILLINOIS**

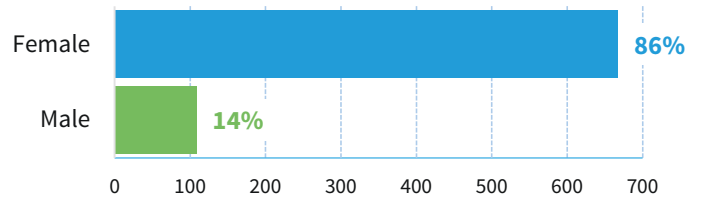


**NY • Grantee Perspective**

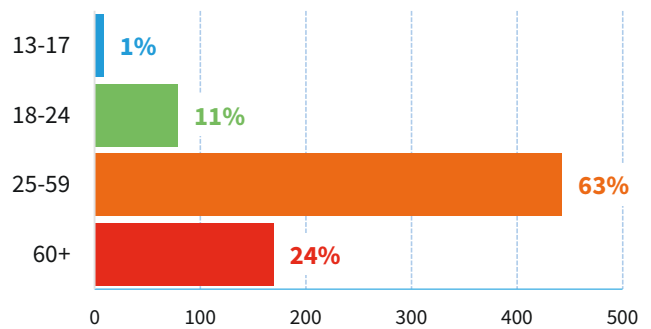
Underserved Populations funding allows In Our Own Voices (IOOV) the opportunity to continue on as the only LGBT organization that provides culturally specific crime victim services to a population that continues to be marginalized and encounter extreme challenges and barriers not only due to their victimization, but due to societal bias which includes individual and institutional cultures that present additional challenges and barriers to safety and support. Prior to receiving the funding, IOOV's reach and capacity to provide comprehensive programs/ services was extremely limited. The funding allows for individual-, group-, and community-level outreach, advocacy, and support and for IOOV to make both individual and systems level changes.

**IN OUR OWN VOICES, INC., NEW YORK**

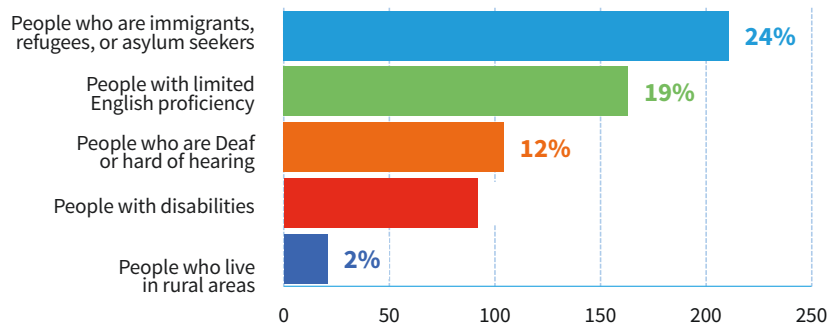
**Figure 7** | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Gender** (6-month average)



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



**Figure 9** | Demographics of victims served and partially served: **Other** (6-month average)



**Secondary Victims**

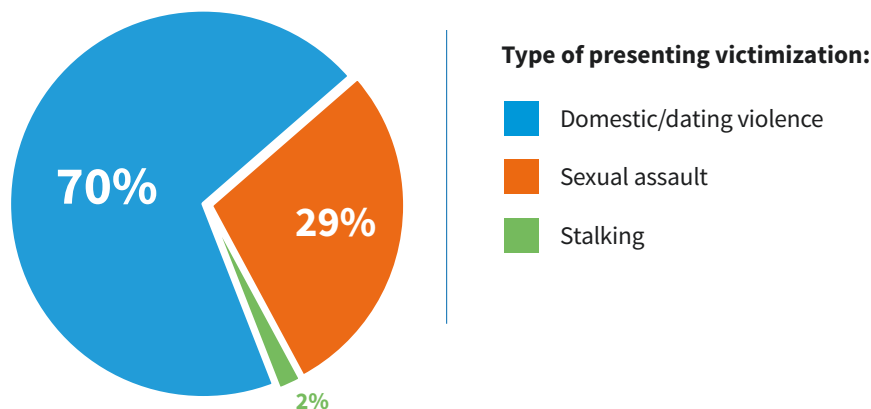
Secondary victims are individuals who are indirectly affected by domestic/ sexual violence, including children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors.

- Grantees provided services to an average of **78** secondary victims during each 6-month period.



**Figure 10** | Provision of services to secondary victims by Underserved Program grantees, by type of presenting victimization

**Secondary victims served and partially served by type of victimization (6-month average)**



## Remaining Areas of Need

Grantees cited **access to culturally and linguistically competent victim services** as their biggest area of unmet need. They noted that **mainstream victim service providers sometimes struggled to properly meet the needs of underserved groups** due to:

- A lack of training in cultural sensitivity and working with marginalized groups;
- Insufficient understanding of VAWA 2013 rules regarding access and accommodations for underserved groups;
- Individual biases and institutional discrimination against people from marginalized communities;
- Victims' fear of accessing services due to the threat of deportation, legal action, or hostility; and
- Insufficient coordination between social justice organizations and victim services providers.

Grantees highlighted the need to **help victims achieve self-sufficiency** through the provision of:

- Housing;
- Trauma-informed and culturally specific mental healthcare; and
- Legal services.



### VA • Grantee Perspective

In the work of Virginia Anti-Violence Project (VAVP), the need to develop infrastructure, partnerships, and communities that are not siloed into traditional fields of service provision has become more and more apparent. We are stronger together. Particularly, the lack of funding and support that LGBTQ survivors of violence who are also people of color, especially black/African American survivors, means that much of VAVP's work involves making connections where none may have been before. It is hard work and is particularly frustrating when organizations that have had established funding and support, who do not center the most marginalized communities, often do additional harm to individuals seeking services because they do not know the needs particular to the communities that VAVP serves. Especially in parts of Virginia that are rural and especially starved of any resources, accessing affirming, holistic care is an impossibility. Continued work needs to be done to shift resources into organizations that are rooted in mutual collaboration, rooted in on-the-ground communities, and rooted in regions that are particularly isolated.

**VIRGINIA ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT**



### IL • Grantee Perspective

A significant need of LGBTQ survivors is medical and mental health providers with competencies around sexual orientation and gender identity. This is an exceptional need for transgender and gender nonconforming patients. In our experience, even after cultural competency trainings and continuing education, providers' ability and skills to serve LGBTQ survivors is still significantly lacking. Access to queer identified or queer competent providers is necessary. Specific to mental health, a list of providers who specialize in LGBTQ needs and trauma and also operate on a sliding scale would be helpful.

**HOWARD BROWN HEALTH, ILLINOIS**



### MA • Grantee Perspective

There is still a need to think collectively and critically through what transformative justice for victims and for perpetrators of abuse might look like, beyond the prison system which is punitive and ineffective at preventing partner abuse/intimate partner violence. This includes learning about and exploring models of restorative justice approaches to interpersonal harm and the use of indigenous circle processes and models in domestic violence programs to develop more egalitarian, non-hierarchical ways of doing the work that center victims'/survivors' voices.

**FENWAY COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES, MASSACHUSETTS**

