



90 Pitkin Street
East Hartford, CT 06108
(860) 282-7899
(860) 282-7892 Fax
(800) 281-1481 (CT only)

Member Shelter Programs

The Umbrella
Ansonia, CT

The Center for Women & Families
Bridgeport, CT

Women's Center
Danbury, CT

United Services, Inc.
Domestic Violence Programs
Dayville, CT

Network Against Domestic Abuse
Enfield, CT

Greenwich YWCA
Domestic Abuse Service
Greenwich, CT

Interval House
Hartford, CT

Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis
Meriden, CT

New Horizons
Middletown, CT

Prudence Crandall Center
New Britain, CT

Domestic Violence Services
New Haven, CT

Women's Center of SE CT
New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services
Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Stamford, CT

Susan B. Anthony Project
Torrington, CT

Safe Haven
Waterbury, CT

United Services, Inc.
Domestic Violence Programs
Willimantic, CT

To: Appropriations Committee

From: Erika Tindill, Esq.

Date: March 4, 2011

Re: Appropriations for Domestic Violence Agencies

Good evening, Senator Prague, Representative Hamm, Representative Villano and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Erika Tindill and I am the executive director of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV). CCADV is a statewide coalition of 18 domestic violence agencies located throughout the state. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to share this organization's views on the critical role that funding from the Department of Social Services plays in the provision of services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

In response to domestic violence in our state, the General Assembly has passed legislation and proposed bills that appropriately address offender behavior and keep victims safe. Since the inception of the Speaker's Task Force on Domestic

Violence, CCADV has been actively involved. We are grateful for Representative Flexer's leadership and encouraged by the commitment of task force members to effectuate change. It is wonderful that the work of the task force continues. The method by which the task force informs its work and its contributions to date are evidence that the political will to effectively address domestic violence exists.

There are significant obstacles a victim of domestic violence must overcome when they choose to eliminate abuse and control by a loved one from their lives. Sustainable safety, financial security, and emotional well-being for themselves and their children are always the goals. Experiencing domestic violence creates a downward spiral, resulting in, among other things, loss of employment, educational opportunity, childcare, and housing. Often, victims are faced with the impossible choice of remaining in an abusive or violent situation, becoming homeless or living in poverty. It is often at this point that they turn to domestic violence agencies for support and shelter.

Our Department of Social Services (DSS) funded programs focus on responding to the immediate intervention needs of victims. On any given day in Connecticut, nearly 300 domestic violence victims find refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs. When a victim of domestic violence and their child(ren) come to a shelter, *the cycle of violence is interrupted*. When that cycle is interrupted, police are not responding to calls, emergency medical care is not required, fewer state benefits - such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) are accessed and employers do not lose productivity because victims are able to work.

With the loss of Recovery Act funds this year, our member programs will, once again, have to perform the magic act of making a dollar stretch into two to sustain the level and quality of round-the-clock services. I urge you to support Governor Malloy's proposed budget recommendations of level funding to domestic violence shelter programs. This recommendation exhibits an understanding that the comprehensive crisis intervention services provided by CCADV member programs save our state money. Thank you in advance for your support of emergency shelter and support services available for victims of domestic violence.

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Domestic Violence Counts

Connecticut Summary

On September 15, 2010, 15 out of 16, or 94%, of identified local domestic violence programs in Connecticut participated in the 2010 National Census of Domestic Violence Services. The following figures represent the information provided by 15 participating programs about services provided during the 24-hour survey period.

1,125 Victims Served in One Day

294 domestic violence victims found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs.

831 adults and children received non-residential assistance and services, including individual counseling, legal advocacy, and children's support groups.

This chart shows the percentage of programs that provided the following services on the Census Day.

Services Provided by Local Programs:	Sept. 15
Emergency Shelter (including hotels/safe houses)	87%
Court/Legal Accompaniment/Advocacy	87%
Children's Support or Advocacy	73%
Advocacy Related to Housing Office/Landlord	67%
Translation/Interpretation Services (3rd party translator with advocate)	53%
Advocacy/Support to Teen Victims of Dating Violence	47%
Advocacy Related to Disability Issues	33%
Advocacy Related to Technology Use (e.g., cyberstalking)	13%

203 Hotline Calls Answered

Domestic violence hotlines are a lifeline for victims in danger, providing support, information, safety planning, and resources. In the 24-hour survey period, domestic violence programs answered more than 8 hotline calls every hour.

47 Unmet Requests for Services

Many programs reported a critical shortage of funds and staff to assist victims in need of services, such as emergency shelter, housing, transportation, childcare, and legal representation. Of these unmet requests, 35 (74%) were from victims seeking emergency shelter or transitional housing.

Programs were unable to provide services for many reasons:

-  53% reported no available beds or funding for hotels.
-  33% reported not enough staff.
-  27% reported not enough funding for needed programs and services.
-  20% reported not enough specialized services.
-  20% reported limited funding for translators, bilingual staff, or accessible equipment.

93% of Programs Reported Higher Demand for Services

As communities continue to experience job loss and decreased community resources, 93% of programs reported a rise in demand for services, while at the same time 73% of programs reported a decrease in funding.

"We helped two women get protection orders today. We also helped one of them change her locks, registered her protective order with police, and referred her to our counseling services."

"Through a private donation, we were able to help a survivor repaint her car to a less noticeable color and change the vehicle registration to help prevent her abuser from finding her."

