



**OFFICE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Department of Children & Families  
Office of Domestic Violence

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## Overview

The mission of the Department of Children and Families (Department) is to work in partnership with local communities to protect the vulnerable, promote strong and economically self-sufficient families, and advance personal and family recovery and resiliency. The Department's strong focus on creating a culture of intentional collaboration and integration has postured all programs to improve effectiveness that allows individuals and families to emerge stronger. This includes building a system of accountability, transparency, and alignment within the Department and among providers to maximize moments of impact with those served. Combined with the renewed focus on culture, program effectiveness, and accountability, the Department has significantly enhanced relationships with providers, and will continue to develop innovative initiatives to better support statewide domestic violence projects and drive positive outcomes for survivors.

The Department of Children and Families' Office of Child and Family Well-Being's Domestic Violence Program has been fully integrated to support the Department's overall mission to work in partnership with local communities to protect the vulnerable, promote strong and economically self-sufficient families, and advance personal and family recovery and resiliency. The Office of Domestic Violence (ODV) has aligned service provision, integration efforts, and partnerships with the Department's goals to leverage key moments of impact with survivors, perpetrators, and their children that will aid in the prevention of violence. An increase of intentional engagement and collaboration with local and statewide partners, ongoing focus on improved program effectiveness, and an enhanced system of accountability and transparency have laid the foundation for maximizing the State's resources to efficiently support survivors of domestic violence. Ensuring that families emerge stronger remains at the core of the work; this will be accomplished by a trauma-responsive approach to decision-making aimed at preventing the revictimization of survivors and holding perpetrators accountable for violent behavior.

The ODV operates as the central clearinghouse and administrator of state and federal funding initiatives for prevention and intervention of domestic violence. These duties include the monitoring and funding of Florida's 41 certified domestic violence centers, as authorized in section 39.903, Florida Statutes (F.S.). The operation of prevention and intervention services are achieved through multi-disciplinary coordination and focus on the improvement of the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking crimes.

In November 2021, Women in Distress of Broward County, Inc., along with its subcontractors, collectively referred to as the Florida Domestic Violence Collaborative (FLDVC), was awarded funding through a competitive Invitation to Negotiate to implement operations of the 24/7 Florida Domestic Violence Hotline, provide training and technical assistance to certified domestic violence centers and community partners, and oversee legal services through designated projects. Other critical partners involved in expanding the State's domestic violence service array are the Office of State Courts Administrator, Office of the Attorney General, Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association and local State Attorney's offices, Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, local law enforcement agencies and numerous community-based victim and legal service agencies. In September 2022, the Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence was approved for

federal designation as Florida's new domestic violence coalition. Ultimately, the intentional approach of moving all efforts further upstream led in tandem with statewide and local partners will continue to aid in the prevention of domestic violence in Florida.

## Introduction

This year's annual legislative report provides an update of ODV's current service array, trends, and achievements for the FY 2021-2022. During this foundational year, ODV was successful in staffing all 24 positions awarded to support the Office of Domestic Violence. The Department was restructured functionally in March 2022, which integrated ODV within the Office of Child and Family Well-Being. This change brought a recalibration of the Department's lens of enhancing family safety through providing domestic violence-informed services and addressing intergenerational and systemic trauma.

The ODV prioritized the alignment of its programmatic initiatives to optimize every moment of impact that Department staff and providers have with Floridians to identify support needs more efficiently, which is critical for those experiencing violence. The team has fully integrated to provide training and technical assistance to staff, and improve the effectiveness, partnerships and coordination of service delivery offered by the State's network of domestic violence providers. A major intention of the team has been to expand data available for domestic violence programming to ensure that all decision-making is data-informed with various sources.

The ODV also prioritized the increase of accountability and transparency with the focus of internal and partner performance to ensure optimal provision of services. This effort continues to evolve as data is expanded and contracted services are fashioned to drive positive outcomes for Florida families. Since the development of the ODV, the governing authority for the certified domestic violence centers has been promulgated; thus, improving day-to-day operational standards under the Department. As of September 4, 2022, the ODV has also begun certifying and monitoring Batterers' Intervention programs (BIP), per Florida Administrative Code 65H-2 and section 741.281, F.S., section 741.32, F.S., section 741.325, F.S, and section 741.327, F.S.

During FY 2021-2022, the ODV began a competitive solicitation process to distribute Services Training Officers Prosecution (STOP) funding intended to improve criminal justice response throughout the state. Some contracts were extended through this process to ensure that services went uninterrupted. A new, four-year implementation plan was developed to include focus on strategies for engaging culturally diverse organizations and underserved communities. A multi-disciplinary STOP Steering Committee was initiated to identify gaps in services and configure the State's approach for the next four years. New center contracts were developed to align with State and Departmental guidelines, and are currently being executed for a two-year period. The ODV plans to continue its efforts to increase programmatic effectiveness and intentional collaboration to improve the State's approach to domestic violence in Florida.

## Federal and State Funding

### Domestic Violence Trust Fund (DVTF) and General Revenue

The primary source of state funding for domestic violence emergency shelters, services, programs, and training is from state general revenue. The amount allocated to local centers was \$12,100,114. These funds

are distributed to Florida's 41 certified domestic violence centers to provide critical, life-saving programs and services to domestic violence survivors and their children. The DVTF receives funds from a portion of fees for both marriage licenses and filing for dissolution of marriage, and fines for domestic violence crime convictions. As a separate project, the Department administered funds for the Child Protection Investigation Project to create programming to address the complexities associated with the needs of families in the child welfare system experiencing domestic violence. The amount allocated to local centers was \$3,909,235.

### **Domestic Violence Diversion Program**

Recognizing that survivors of domestic violence may need temporary economic assistance to escape a violent partner, federal and state lawmakers created the Domestic Violence Diversion Program. Florida's program provides support services to survivors unable to temporarily participate in training or work requirements due to safety considerations or the residual effects of domestic violence. The amount allocated to local centers was \$7,750,000.

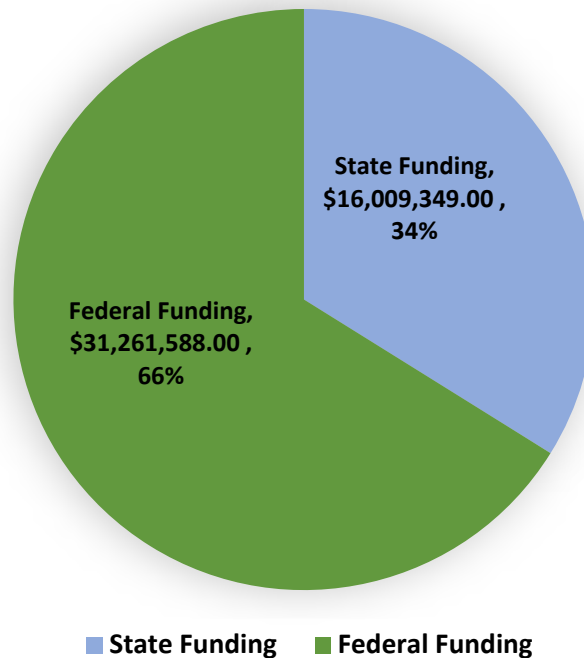
### **Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) Grant Program**

FVPSA is the only federal funding dedicated specifically for domestic violence centers for the operation of emergency shelter and other critical services. The amount allocated to local centers was \$14,015,603. The grant program also provides funding to state coalitions for the provision of training and technical assistance to member programs to ensure quality of service provision to survivors and their children.

### **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Program**

The Department administered an annual formula grant, VAWA Services\*Training\*Officers\*Prosecution (STOP), provided by the United States Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women. The amount allocated to local centers was \$9,495,985. The STOP grant promotes a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to enhancing advocacy and improving the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women. Federal regulations require the funding to be allocated geographically based on identified needs and availability of resources.

## Current Funding Sources



### What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors, violence, or threats of violence, that one person uses to establish power and control over a current or former intimate partner. It is not a disagreement, a marital spat, or an anger management problem. Domestic violence is abusive, disrespectful, and dangerous, and may include abuse that is physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, or economic. The use of threats, intimidation, isolation, pet abuse, and using children as pawns are also examples of domestic violence.

### Domestic Violence Defined in Statute

Florida law defines domestic violence as any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household member by another family or household member.<sup>1</sup>

### Identifying Trends to Inform Domestic Violence Responses

#### Domestic Violence Crimes in Florida

Domestic violence incidences in Florida are identified through several means. Often, victims of domestic violence, or friends and family on their behalf, seek support through community-based advocacy services, such as certified domestic violence centers and other providers. Law enforcement are often the first responders to violence in the home, and, in many cases, are the first to assist. Florida's child welfare services completes investigations into family violence when children are injured or have witnessed the

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<sup>1</sup> Section. 741.28, Florida Statutes

violence. Despite the robust system Florida has in place, many cases of domestic violence go unreported. As a result, the true number of victims and domestic violence related crimes are difficult to determine.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement 2021 Uniform Crime Report is still in development. The 2020 crime statistics are as follows:

January – December 2020<sup>2</sup>

- Overall crime in Florida decreased by 14.1 percent, while reported domestic violence offenses increased by 1.16 percent.
- 106,515 domestic violence offenses were reported to law enforcement.
- 217 individuals died as a result of domestic violence, representing approximately 20 percent of all homicides in Florida.
- Law enforcement made 63,217 arrests for domestic violence related crimes.
- The top ten counties with the most reported domestic violence offenses (by percentage of the population) were Levy, Dixie, Marion, Taylor, DeSoto, Hardee, Duval, Pasco, Leon, and Holmes Counties.

## The Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline

During FY 2021-2022 the Office of Domestic Violence and Florida Domestic Violence Collaborative (FLDVC) operated and managed Florida's Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline, which provides 24/7 multilingual services. Hotline advocates provide support, advocacy, information, and referral services for survivors of domestic violence, their children, families, and friends residing in Florida's 67 counties.

Florida Legal Services, Inc., administers the Statewide Domestic Violence Legal Hotline, which provides comprehensive legal advice, information, and referrals to survivors of domestic violence. During FY 2021-2022, the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline received 19,731 calls, with 6,624 being answered by the legal hotline. Callers to the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline primarily requested assistance related to receiving shelter, support services, information regarding the civil and criminal justice system, and economic empowerment services that help survivors gain financial independence. Survivors also requested legal information related to divorce and child custody issues, parenting rights, and interstate jurisdiction.

## Statewide Training and Technical Assistance

During FY 2021-2022, training, technical assistance, and education was provided to certified domestic violence centers, collaborative community partners, agencies, and service providers throughout the state. Over 430 hours of training and technical assistance were provided to these entities to strengthen knowledge, enhance standards, and build capacity to provide quality services to domestic violence survivors and their children. Each training is created to address the specific needs identified by the center and/or local community organization.

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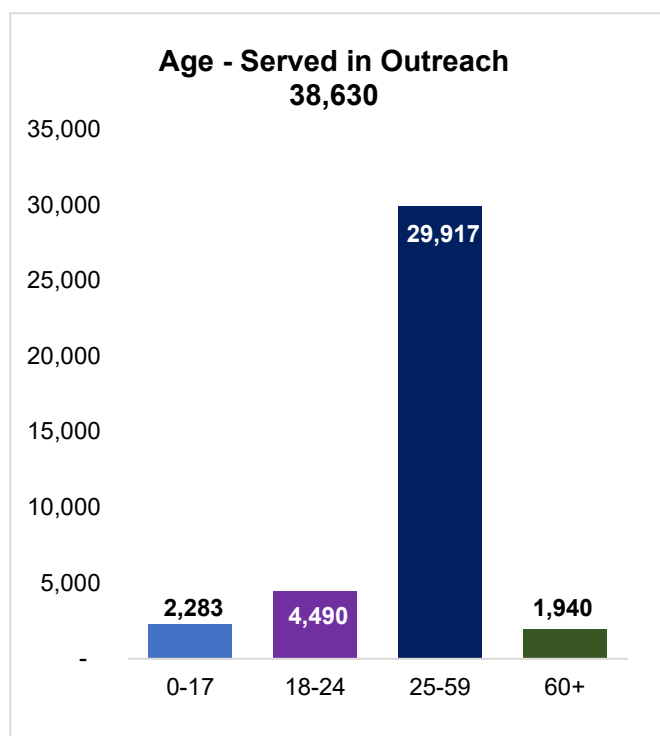
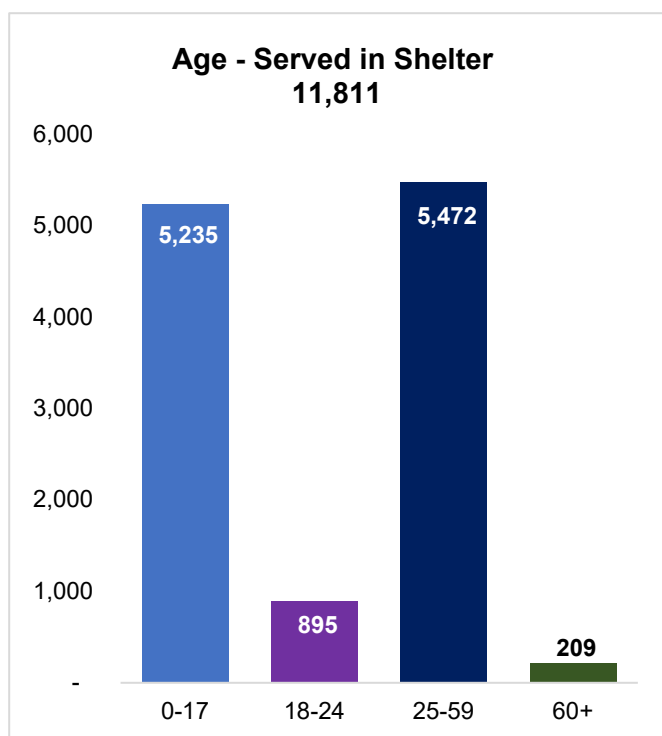
<sup>2</sup> Information from FDLE's 2020 Annual Uniform Crime Report:

[https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC/Documents/Annual/Domestic-Violence/DV\\_Jurisdiction\\_Offenses\\_2020-\(3\).aspx](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC/Documents/Annual/Domestic-Violence/DV_Jurisdiction_Offenses_2020-(3).aspx)

From July 2021 to November 2021, the Office of Domestic Violence and the Florida Domestic Violence Collaborative (FLDVC) provided training and technical assistance for the remainder of the year. Collectively, 78 trainings and webinars, 211 technical assistance visits and calls, and 2,814 units of electronic technical assistance were provided to community partners, agencies, and service providers throughout the state.

### Florida's Certified Domestic Violence Centers

There are currently 41 certified domestic violence centers that serve Florida's 67 counties and are responsible for providing critical, life-saving emergency shelter, services and programming to survivors and their children. In Florida, centers are on the front lines of responding to domestic violence by providing a place of safety, security, and empowerment to survivors of domestic violence and their children fleeing violent homes. Certified domestic violence centers are the only state-designated organizations responsible for the provision of a continuum of services to survivors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, as they begin to achieve safety and independence. Certified domestic violence centers are statutorily required to provide specific services that include: information and referrals; counseling and case management; temporary emergency shelter; a 24-hour crisis hotline; training for law enforcement personnel; assessment and appropriate referral of residential children; and community educational training related to the incidence of domestic violence, the prevention of such violence, and the services available for persons engaged in or subject to domestic violence.<sup>3</sup>



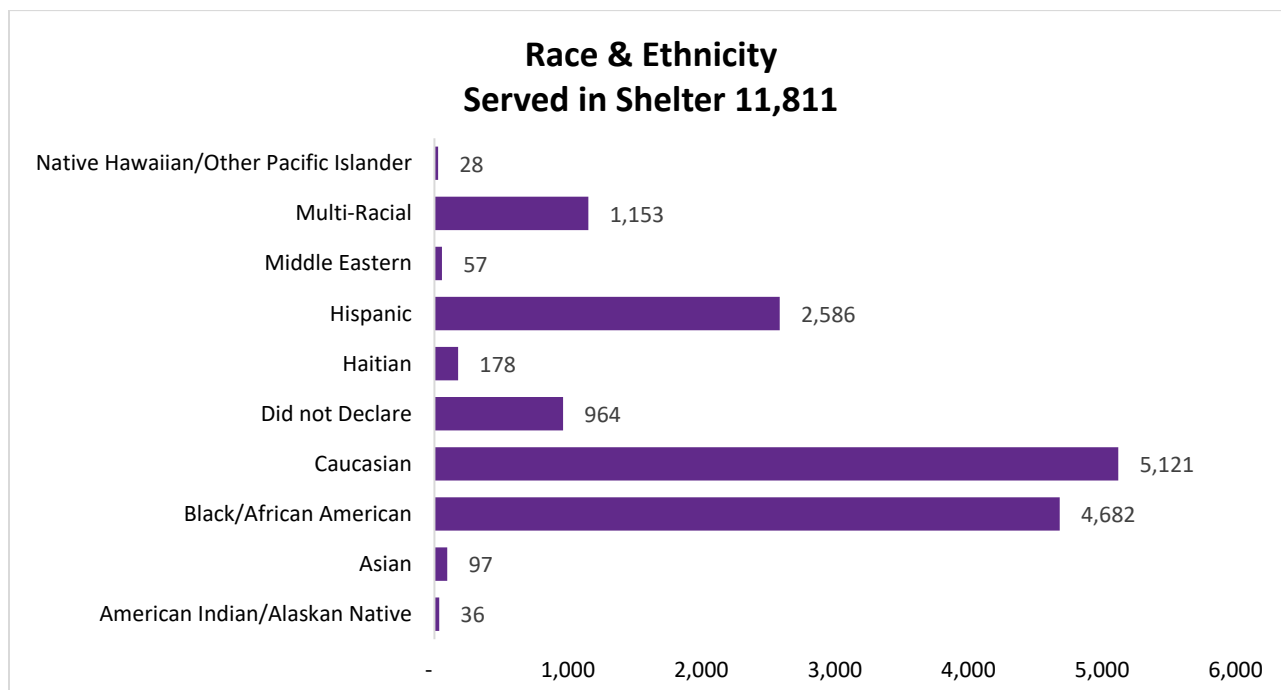
During FY 2021-22, certified centers provided 532,825 nights of emergency shelter to 11,811 women, men, and children. Many survivors fled violent homes with their children, who represented 44 percent of those

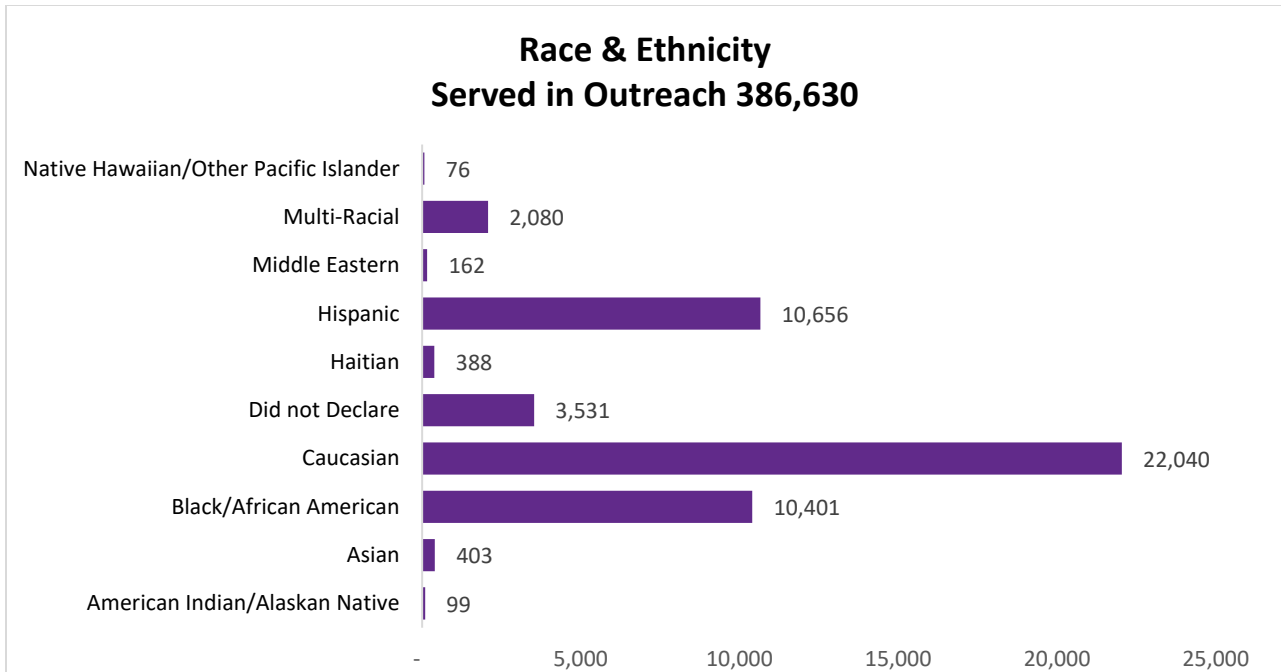
<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to s. 39.905, Florida Statutes



served in emergency shelter. In addition to the services required by Florida Statutes, most of our certified centers supplement their programs with important ancillary services, such as transportation, rent and utility assistance, transitional housing, legal and court advocacy, work skills and job-readiness training and placement, financial literacy, and other training and education programs. Collectively, Florida certified domestic violence centers provided the following services:

- 11,811 individuals received emergency shelter at a certified domestic violence center.
- 4,256 requests for emergency shelter went unmet due to lack of capacity and resources (Unmet requests for shelter are counted when program shelter, safe homes, or sponsored hotel rooms are at capacity or unavailable.)
- 81,357 crisis hotline calls.
- 38,630 individuals received outreach services.
- 171,008 safety plans were completed with survivors.
- 23,832 service management goal plans were completed with survivors.
- 380,040 direct service information and referrals to survivors, family members and individuals seeking services.
- 206,093 hours of supportive counseling and advocacy.
- 43,762 hours facilitating child and youth-specific activities.
- training and education events for 40,656 individuals.
- youth targeted community education for 9,970 youth.





\*Race and ethnicity are separate categories for data collection purposes; thus, the totals from the above lists are greater than the overall total of survivors served.

## Florida Domestic Violence Counts

In September 2021, 63 percent of domestic violence programs in Florida participated in a national count of domestic violence services conducted by the National Network to End Domestic Violence.<sup>4</sup> The figures below represent services participating programs provided in a single day



### IN A SINGLE DAY<sup>5</sup>

Received 371 hotline calls

Sheltered 1,110 individuals in emergency shelter

Provided 475 individuals outreach and counseling

<sup>4</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (2022). 16th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: [NNEDV.org/DVCounts](https://nnedv.org/DVCounts).

<sup>5</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (2022). 16th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: [NNEDV.org/DVCounts](https://nnedv.org/DVCounts).



#### **IN A SINGLE YEAR**

Received 81,357 hotline calls

Sheltered 11,811 individuals in emergency shelter

Provided 38,630 individuals outreach and counseling

### **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors (STOP) Formula Grants**

The Florida Department of Children and Families' Office of Domestic Violence is the administering agency for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors (STOP) Formula Grant Program. The STOP grant program is the primary source of VAWA funding to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking for States and Territories. STOP grants are intended to improve and enhance responses to the four crime areas by law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and victim services.

#### **Law Enforcement: INVEST and Enhanced Response**

In FY 2021-2022, the VAWA/STOP grant funded 10 law enforcement projects to utilize a coordinated community response model designed to reduce the number of domestic violence homicides by increasing services for survivors identified in high-lethality domestic violence situations while increasing perpetrator accountability throughout the criminal justice process. Projects also provided domestic violence survivors and their children with protection and services while improving a community's capacity to hold batterers accountable. STOP funding allowed for the expansion of the INVEST Project to fund at least one detective within law enforcement agencies to collaborate with certified domestic violence centers to reduce DV homicides. According to the most recent annual Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Uniform Crime abstract data, domestic violence related deaths decreased from 221 in 2019 to 217 in 2020.

Preventing domestic violence homicides requires a comprehensive, multifaceted, and community-based response in which law enforcement, other criminal justice partners, and domestic violence centers work together to hold perpetrators accountable and provide enhanced advocacy for survivors. The law enforcement organizations participated in local CCR meetings and fatality review teams, where applicable.

#### **Services Initiated by Law Enforcement Agencies participating in INVEST programs**

Fiscal Year	Domestic Violence Reports Initiated	Perpetrator Arrests	Prosecution Filings
2021-2022	9119	5118	5067

## **Rural and Underserved Programs**

During FY 2021-2022, funded programs provided 65 trainings and public awareness events, 69 support groups and 14,031 supportive counseling and advocacy services to survivors in rural communities. Through these projects, centers created or strengthened 44 partnerships with community or system stakeholders. Projects reviewed and revised Limited English proficiency Plans (LEP) or updated strategic plans to identify and address barriers that survivors in rural communities face to include navigating legal systems, lack of transportation, and language barriers.

## **Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)**

The VAWA/STOP grant funded GCJFCS to increase its capacity to address domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Liaison is responsible for identifying the needs of victims of domestic violence who are engaged in services through assessment and training. GCJFCS utilized this opportunity to increase the agency's ability to assess domestic violence, implement workplace policies against domestic violence, and increase community partnership. GCJFCS is also a child welfare case management agency that works in coordination with Florida's child welfare system and the certified domestic violence centers with the goal of enhancing partnership between agencies to improve outcomes for victims and their children. In 2021, GCJFCS, in collaboration with local certified domestic violence centers, conducted 10 trainings for staff employed in the Family Reunification, Safe at Home, and Refugee Programs on domestic violence screening, resources, and considerations for safety. Staff surveys and client focus groups assessed the policies, procedures, and practices in key agency programs. As a result, GCJFCS continues to identify and address gaps in current policies related to family violence in GCJFCS programs. The Domestic Violence Liaison, in conjunction with technical assistance providers, developed a case management procedure for the Refugee program to increase survivor safety. The implementation of virtual support groups met the needs of survivors living across a wide geographical area.

## **Trauma-Informed Projects**

The Trauma-informed Services Pilot Project was a three-year program designed to enhance the delivery of services and advocacy available to survivors of domestic violence through an assessment of current empowerment-based and trauma-informed practices. The goal of the project was to support certified DV centers in becoming more accessible, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed. The pilot funded three certified domestic violence centers—Help Now of Osceola in Kissimmee, Hubbard House in Jacksonville, and SafeSpace, Inc. in Port St. Lucie—to enhance the delivery of services and advocacy available to survivors of domestic violence through an assessment of current empowerment-based and trauma-informed practices. Sites were chosen through a Request for Proposal process and are representative of large and mid-sized centers in the state.

These centers conducted a thorough review of their current policies and practices to identify strengths in current procedures and enhance policies and practices to better reflect a trauma-informed approach to service delivery. The review included the centers' policies, procedures, practices, materials, environments, and partnerships. The pilot sites updated participant handbooks and intake enrollment processes and forms to foster more accessible, culturally-responsive and trauma-informed practices. Centers also developed processes to work through secondary traumatization for frontline staff and project evaluation measures. Each project conducted surveys/focus groups to assess the impact of the project on survivors'

experiences with center services. Most respondents reported that they feel safe, heard, and validated during the intake process, and that staff are responsive to their needs.

### **Batterer Accountability Projects**

The Department administers the Justice for Families Grant (JFF) project, which has been funded by the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women for seven years. The project funds two Batterer Accountability Specialists (Specialists) at Betty Griffin Center and Lee Conlee House, certified domestic violence centers in St. Johns County and Putnam County, respectively. The role of the Specialists is to assist child welfare professionals with developing effective case plans to hold batterers accountable, and to provide information to dependency court judges regarding a batterer's compliance with dependency case plans and court orders in other cases involving the batterer. The Center for Court Innovation has recognized Florida's JFF project nationally as a best practice for batterer accountability. Florida funded a STOP project titled, *Dependency Court Batterer Accountability Project*, which supports a certified domestic violence center to employ a full-time Batterer Accountability Specialist to work in conjunction with the existing CPI Project co-located advocate to increase batterer accountability in dependency proceedings to help prevent a reoccurrence of violence that may result in the removal of children from the non-offending survivor. The duties of the Batterer Accountability Specialist include:

- Developing child welfare safety plans based on the individual safety needs of survivors and their children throughout the dependency process.
- Attending child welfare caseworker meetings with batterers to assess risks posed by individual batterers and modify safety plans when necessary to further increase survivor safety.
- Providing training to help child welfare professionals assess the risks posed by perpetrators to reduce perpetrator-generated danger threats to survivors and their children, including seeking Chapter 39 injunctions against perpetrators.
- Reviewing and helping to tailor dependency case plans to hold perpetrators accountable in ways that promote safety and compliance with orders.
- Evaluating treatment options to enhance perpetrators' capacity to change to ensure that child welfare agencies present dependency case plans to the court that focus on batterer accountability.
- Monitoring criminal court, Chapter 741 injunctions and other cases involving the perpetrator, communicating with prosecutors regarding the status of criminal cases, monitoring perpetrator compliance with orders in these cases (including firearm surrender orders) and informing the dependency judge about the status and orders entered in other cases to enhance the dependency judge's decision-making on batterer accountability issues.

The availability of Batterer Accountability Specialists increases the opportunity for the state to enhance perpetrator accountability in the child welfare system and ultimately increases the safety of survivors of domestic violence and their children. Having a single point of contact has been a significant benefit to enhance the collaborative effectiveness between system partners. The ODV is exploring opportunities to expand this project and its outcomes due to the programs' identified need.

## Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team<sup>6</sup>

The mission of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team is to identify statewide trends, systemic gaps, and potential solutions that increase safety and justice for survivors and their children, hold perpetrators accountable for their violence through coordinated community response efforts, and prevent the likelihood of domestic violence fatalities in the future. The statewide and local fatality review teams operate based on sections 741.316 and 741.3165, F.S.,<sup>7</sup> and create a timeline of events leading up to the fatal incident in order to examine agency/system involvement and the degree of coordination to craft recommendations for improved future response. All teams comply with Florida statutory mandates to maintain confidentiality and public records exemptions when reviewing fatality-related information. These statutory mandates ensure that team members may freely discuss the circumstances and issues relating to the fatalities.

An innovative way to view the provision of services is through a lens that integrates awareness of high-risk indicators for lethality and primary and secondary prevention strategies. Utilizing knowledge about coercive control and recognizing the presence of high risk-indicators for lethality can shift how we respond to the needs of the people we serve by increasing perpetrator accountability and safety measures for survivors and their children. Every interaction or moment of impact with families presents an opportunity to provide trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and accessible services that could help prevent future homicides.

The figures in this report present an overview of cases selected by the fatality review teams of fatal or near-fatal domestic violence incidents across Florida. The teams reviewed the deaths in 2020-2021; the data from 2021-2022 will be included in the next annual report.

It is important to note that the existing research related to known risk factors is based on cases of intimate partner femicide, which are male perpetrated homicides on their female partners. Therefore, information on the breakdown of known risk factors contains data related to 38 deaths that teams identified as resulting from intimate partner homicide.

### 2020-2021 Local Fatality Review Data Analysis

<b>Intimate partner femicide risk factors (N=38)</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Perpetrator owns a firearm or can get one easily	29	76.3%
Perpetrator has prior history of domestic violence	28	73.7%
Perpetrator exhibits extreme and/or violent jealousy toward partner	22	57.9%
Perpetrator has prior non-domestic violence related criminal history	21	55.3%
Perpetrator has recently been separated from partner (up to 1 year)	18	47.4%
Perpetrator abuses illegal drugs or is drug dependent	15	39.5%

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<sup>6</sup> For more information about the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team:

<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/domestic-violence/ag-statewide-domestic-violence-fatality-review-team.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> See s.741.316 and s. 741.3156, F.S.

Perpetrator abuses or is dependent on alcohol	14	36.8%
Perpetrator is stalking, making threats, destroying partner's property	13	34.2%
Perpetrator has recently escalated the intimate partner violence (IPV)	13	34.2%
Perpetrator has threatened to kill partner	13	34.2%
Perpetrator is unemployed	12	31.6%
Perpetrator has attempted or threatened suicide	11	28.9%
Perpetrator exhibits obsessive possessiveness toward partner	10	26.3%
Perpetrator controls all/most of partner's daily activities	10	26.3%
Perpetrator's partner has expressed fear of a re-assault/homicide	9	23.7%
Perpetrator has used a weapon to threaten partner	9	23.7%
Perpetrator avoided arrest for intimate partner violence (IPV)	6	15.8%
Perpetrator is living in a home with children who have a biological parent other than the perpetrator	5	13.2%
Perpetrator threatened to harm children	2	5.3%
Perpetrator attempted to strangle the decedent	2	5.3%
Perpetrator has sexually assaulted partner or forced sex in the past	2	5.3%
Perpetrator has assaulted partner while she was pregnant	2	5.3%

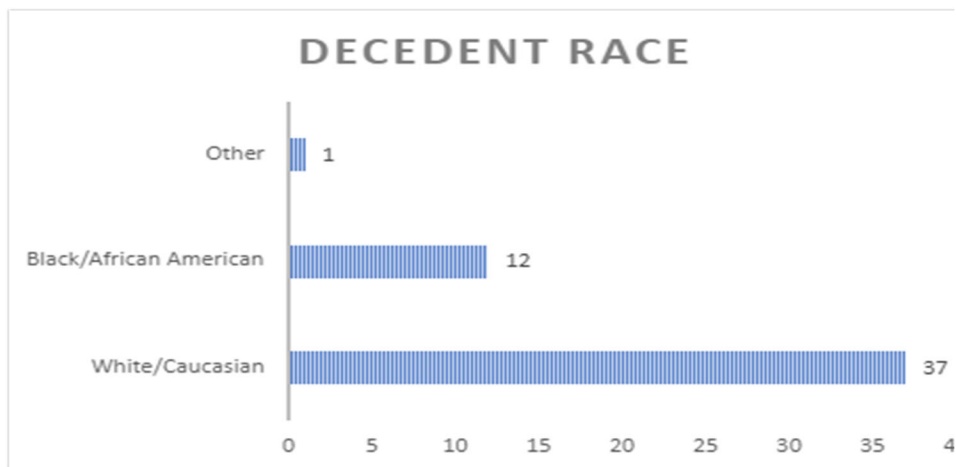
## DESCRIPTION OF FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics in the 2020 report are based on information that local teams obtained from reviewing domestic violence homicides in their communities. The reviews may include both intimate partner homicides and other domestic violence-related deaths. When possible, the data points are based on information collected from 50 reviews submitted by local teams. In some instances, however, statistics are based on different totals. This is either due to non-applicability or to missing information for any given review. Therefore, the totals may not always equal the total sum of 100. The total number of cases used to calculate each statistic is provided in parentheses.

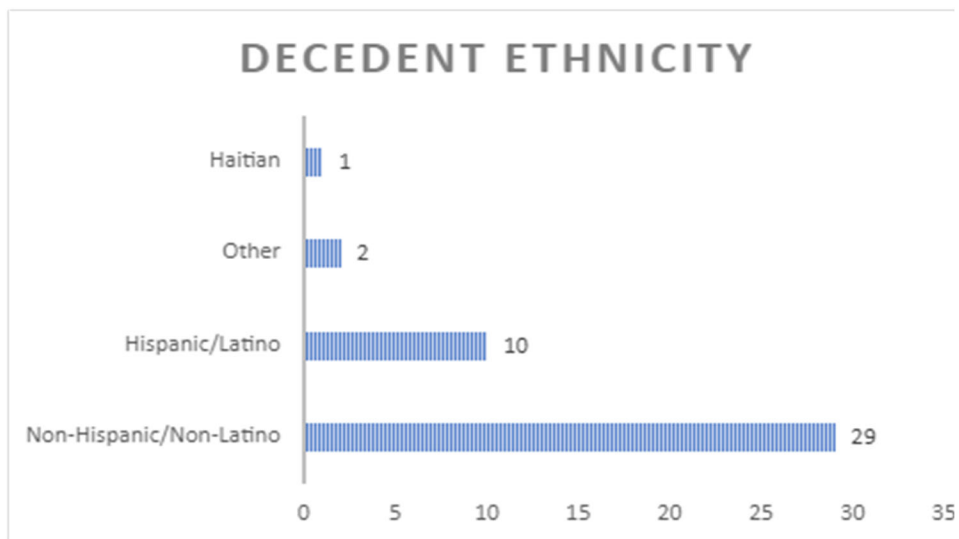
### Decedent Demographics

- Gender: Female 90 % (N=45), Male 10% (N = 5)\*
  - \*Note: With regards to the male fatalities, perpetrator gender: three male, two female.
- Average age: 41 (min: 17, max: 86)
  - On average, perpetrators were four years older than decedents

<b>Decedent Race</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
White/Caucasian	37	74.0%
Black/African American	12	24.0%
Other	1	2.0%
TOTAL	50	



Decedent Ethnicity	#	%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	29	69.0%
Hispanic/Latino	10	23.8%
Haitian	1	2.4%
Other	2	4.8%
TOTAL	42	



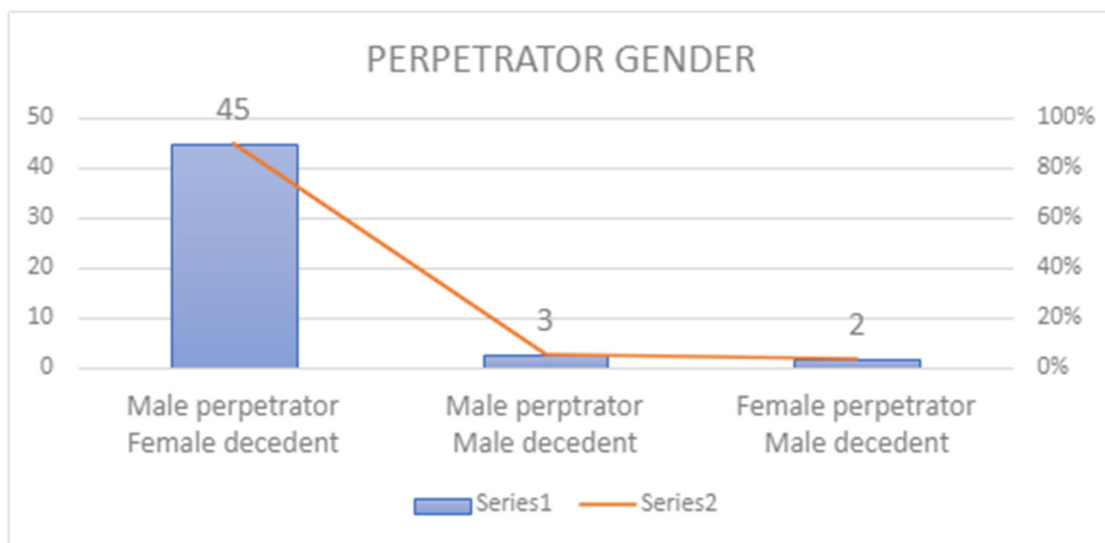


### Perpetrator Demographics

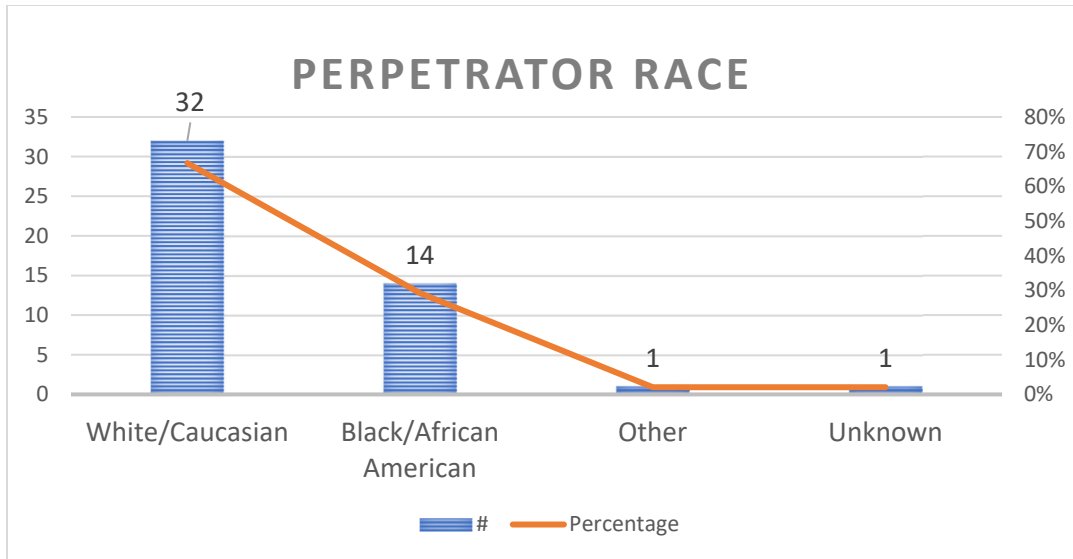
Gender: 96% male (48 of 50), 4% female (2 of 50)

Average age: 45 (median: 47, min: 18, max: 81)

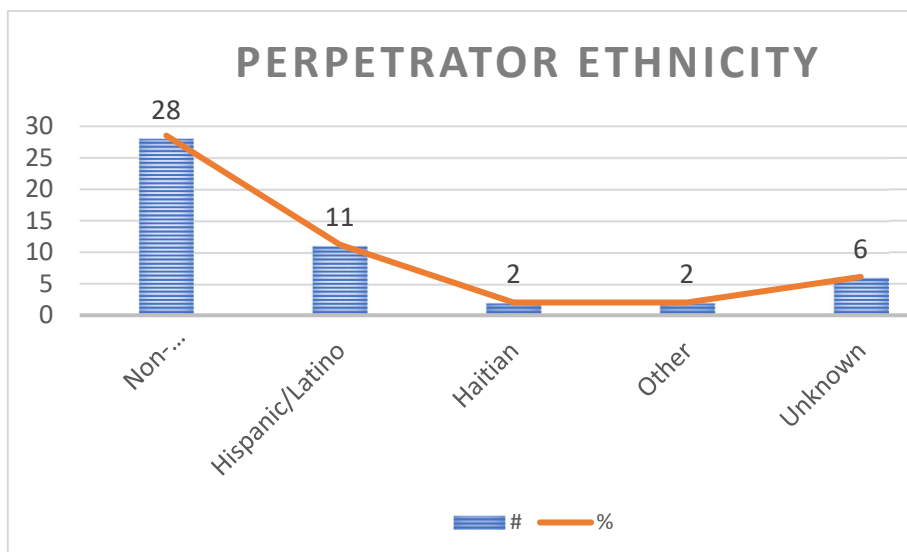
Perpetrator Gender	#	%
Male perpetrator/female decedent	45	90.0%
Male perpetrator/male decedent	3	6.0%
Female perpetrator/male decedent	2	4.0%
TOTAL	50	



Perpetrator Race	#	%
White/Caucasian	32	66.7%
Black/African American	14	29.2%
Other	1	2.1%
Unknown	1	2.1%
TOTAL	48	



Perpetrator Ethnicity	#	%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	28	57.1%
Hispanic/Latino	11	22.4%
Haitian	2	4.1%
Other	2	4.1%
Unknown	6	12.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	



## **Perpetrator Characteristics**

### **Mental Health**

- 45 percent (17 of 38) of perpetrators were thought to have a mental health condition and/or received mental health treatment (based on various sources, e.g., police records, court documents and personal narratives from self, family members or friends).

### **Suicidality**

- 53 percent (25 of 47) of perpetrators died by suicide and an additional 19 percent (7 of 36) previously attempted but did not die by suicide.
- 32 percent (12 of 37) of perpetrators were known to have made threats of suicide prior to the fatality.

### **Substance Abuse**

- 69 percent (27 of 39) of perpetrators had a history of substance abuse (based on various sources, e.g., police records, court documents, and personal narratives from family members, or friends).

### **Possession of Weapons**

- 41 percent (15 of 36) of perpetrators were known to carry or possess a weapon in such a way that it was used as a means of power and control.

## **Criminal and Domestic Violence History**

### **Criminal History**

- 66 percent (30 of 45) of perpetrators had a known history of domestic violence against the decedent based on criminal records and narrative reports.
- 41 percent (16 of 39) of perpetrators had a known history of domestic violence toward other survivors/victims.
- 53 percent (22 of 41) of perpetrators had a known non-domestic violence related criminal history.

### **Criminal Charges**

- 31 percent (9 of 29) of perpetrators had a known criminal order of no contact issued against them.
- 82 percent (23 of 28) of family members reported knowing about prior incidents or prior threats of domestic violence by the perpetrator toward the decedent.
- 84 percent (22 of 26) of perpetrators were arrested for the homicide/attempted homicide of the decedent/survivor\*

\*The total number does not include homicides in which the perpetrator died by suicide.

### **Stalking and Orders of Protection**

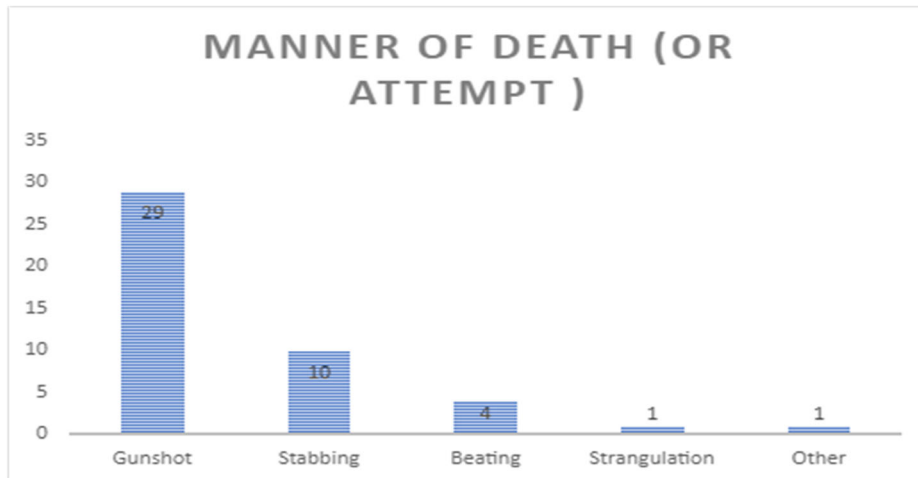
- 20 percent (8 of 40) of perpetrators exhibited alleged stalking behavior as defined by section 784.08, F.S.
- 19 percent (8 of 41) of perpetrators exhibited alleged stalking behavior that did not meet the statutory requirements of 748.08.
- 12 percent (3 of 24) of perpetrators had harassed, threatened, or battered the decedent at or on the way to their workplace.
- 25 percent (11 of 44) of perpetrators had a known criminal order of no-contact for any domestic violence cases issued against them.
- 22 percent (10 of 44) of perpetrators had a known civil order of protection filed against them by the decedent
  - When an injunction was filed, 30 percent (3 of 10) of perpetrators had a permanent injunction issued against them by the court.
- 21 percent (8 of 37) of perpetrators had a known petition for a civil order of protection filed against them by an individual other than the decedent.
- 9 percent (2 of 21) of perpetrators had evidence of an arrest connected to a violation of an injunction for protection by the decedent.

### **Threats**

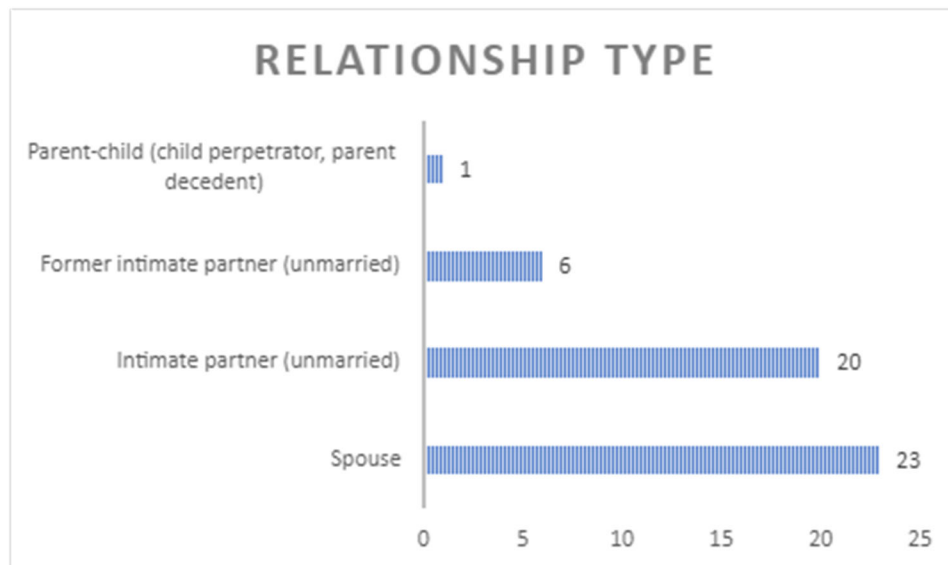
- 38 percent (13 of 34) of perpetrators made death threats to the decedent prior to the fatality.
- 12 percent (5 of 42) of perpetrators were known to have previously attempted to kill the decedent prior to the fatality.

### **Characteristics of the Fatality**

<b>Manner of death (or attempt)</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Gunshot	29	64.4%
Stabbing	10	22.2%
Beating	4	8.9%
Strangulation	1	2.2%
Other	1	2.2%
TOTAL	45	

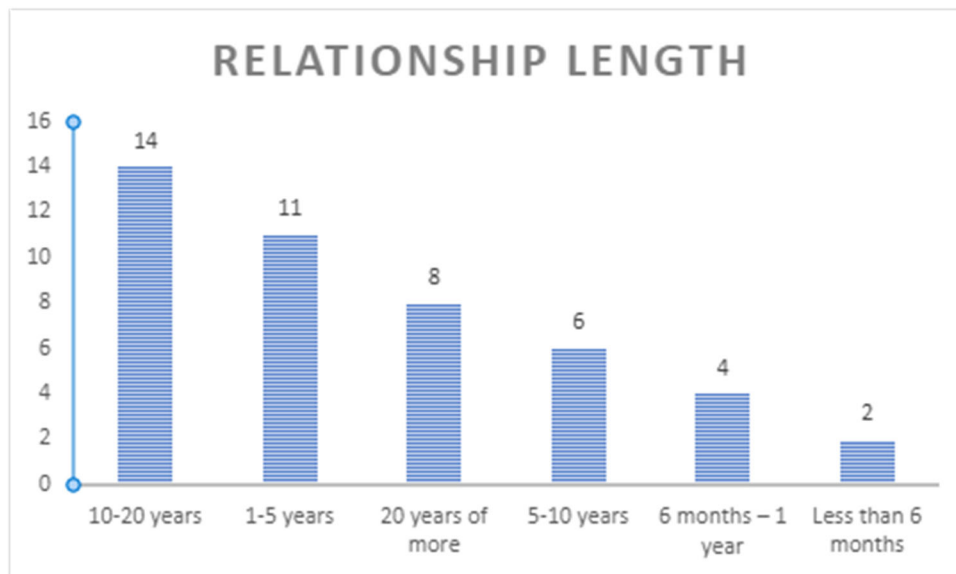


Relationship Type	#	%
Spouse	23	46.0%
Intimate partner (unmarried)	20	40.0%
Former intimate partner (unmarried)	6	12.0%
Parent-child (child perpetrator, parent decedent)	1	2.0%
TOTAL	50	



Relationship Length	#	%
10-20 years	14	31.1%
1-5 years	11	24.4%

20 years of more	8	17.8%
5-10 years	6	13.3%
6 months – 1 year	4	8.9%
Less than 6 months	2	4.4%
TOTAL	45	



- 61 percent (24 of 39) of decedents expressed an intention to leave the perpetrator
- 46 percent (19 of 41) of decedents and perpetrators were in the process of ending their relationship at the time of the fatality.
- 43 percent (18 of 42) of decedent and perpetrators were known to have ended (i.e., they were separated or divorced). The length of separation in those instances:

	#	%
Less than 3 months	13	65.0%
3 months to less than 6 months	3	15.0%
More than 2 years	3	15.0%
6 months to less than 1 year	1	5.0%
TOTAL	20	

- At the time of the fatality, 18 percent (7 of 39) of decedents were known to be in a new relationship.
- At the time of the fatality, 5 percent (2 of 38) of perpetrators were known to be in a new relationship.

## **Impact on Children**

### **Children in the Home**

- 46 percent (22 of 47) of decedents had children living in the home.
- When children were living in the decedent's home, the breakdown is as follows:
  - 54.5 percent one child (12 of 22)
  - 27.3 percent two children (6 of 22)
  - 13.6 percent three children (3 of 22)
  - 4.5 percent five children (1 of 22)

### **Relationship to Children**

- 100 percent (19 of 19) of decedents were known to be the parent to at least one of these children.
- 84 percent (16 of 16) of perpetrators were known to be the parent to at least one of these children.

### **Children as Witnesses**

- There were known surviving minor children who witnessed or were present in 50 percent (11 of 22) of the fatalities where there were known children reported.
- 4.5 percent (2 of 44) of decedents were known to be pregnant at the time of the fatality.
  - The length of the two pregnancies were four months and seven months, and the perpetrators were the fathers in both fatalities.

### **Impacts on Children**

- Out of 12 reviews reporting child placement, 16 percent were placed with the Department (2 of 12).
- 83 percent of reviews including placements involved children placed in the home of relatives of the decedent or perpetrator (based on various sources, e.g., police records, court documents, personal narratives from family members or friends).
  - 90 percent relative of decedent (9 of 10)
  - 10 percent relative of perpetrator (1 of 10)

### **Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Recommendations**

It was recommended that local coordinated community response (CCR) teams, including partners such as certified domestic violence centers, law enforcement, the civil and criminal court system, state attorneys and other criminal justice professionals, social service organizations, and healthcare providers collaborate to further align the state with F.S. 790.233. Additionally, it was recommended that local law enforcement agencies collaborate whenever possible with applicable jurisdictions or law enforcement agencies for relevant background or previously known weapons/firearms offenses when perpetrators are known to have out of state domestic violence or other violent offense histories.

The Statewide Team recommended that the Department of Children and Families' Office of Domestic Violence develop a training curriculum for prosecutors, Children's Legal Services (CLS) and child welfare workers on Batterers' Intervention Programs (BIPs), including how they differ from anger management classes, and coordinate their training efforts with the Office of the State Court Administrator's current training programs. BIPs are specifically designed to address the tactics of domestic violence utilized by domestic violence perpetrators and assist in the safety of the victim through screening for high-risk indicators for homicide, access to weapons, and other identified concerns. Anger management courses do not encompass the specialized training or programming required to hold domestic violence perpetrators accountable for their violence. Florida courts are required by statute to order batterers to complete BIPs in certain circumstances, and criminal and civil injunction courts often order batterers to complete BIPs, even when not required by statute. Providing additional trainings for judges, prosecutors, and other stakeholders on BIPs will promote an increased understanding of the complexities of domestic violence, enhance the court response to domestic violence charges and increase appropriate services for batterers.

## Enhancing Family Safety

### Child Protection Investigation (CPI) Project

The primary goal of the statewide CPI Project is to strengthen collaboration between child welfare professionals and domestic violence providers to enhance family safety and create permanency for children by focusing on keeping the child safe in the home with the non-offending parent while increasing perpetrator accountability. Each region in Florida has a Child Protection Investigation (CPI) Project that is provided funding through the state Domestic Violence Trust Fund for Co-Located Advocates, at 39 of the 41 certified domestic violence centers.

The purpose of the CPI Project Co-Located Advocates is to collaborate with their local Office of Child and Family Well-Being, primarily engaging child protection investigations involving cases in which the intimate partner violence (IPV) maltreatment has been identified or where IPV may be present. By increasing the capacity of child welfare professionals through subject matter expert (SME) consultations which identify when power and control are present, the perpetrator's coercive and controlling behaviors, risk factors, and enhanced safety planning and referral needs, this resource has proven exceptionally helpful to Child Protective Investigations in determining the impacts of IPV and the needs of survivors and their children. The CPI Project has shown success in enhancing family safety, creating family permanence, and increasing perpetrator accountability.

Survivors who are involved with the child welfare system benefit from the support of co-located advocates including, but not limited to, a clear and thorough explanation of CPI Project services, comprehensive and ongoing safety planning, referral services, child welfare-involved accompaniment, advocacy, and informed consent disclosure of the benefits and potential repercussions associated with the survivor's level of participation within the child welfare system.

In FY 2021-22 the CPI projects collectively utilized a seamless system of wraparound services, which allowed 22,159 children, whose families were involved in the child welfare system, to remain in the home with the non-offending parent. During this time, co-located advocates:



- Received and followed up on a total of 11,695 CPI Project referrals from child welfare professionals.
- Participated in 7,133 child welfare case staffings.
- Provided 18,468 case consultation services to child welfare professionals.
- Provided 28,091 services to child welfare involved survivors referred to local certified domestic violence centers. Services included shelter and housing, criminal and civil justice system assistance, personal advocacy and accompaniment, emotional support, and safety services, as well as assistance with the State of Florida's Victim Compensation application and information and referrals.

#### **Better Together: A Guided Discussion to Help Families Succeed**

The ODV hosted a series of 12 workshops, "Better Together: A Guided Discussion to Help Families Succeed", developed and facilitated in collaborations with a CPI Training Specialist and Florida Domestic Violence Collaborative Training staff. This collaborative facilitator approach modeled the working relationship between professionals involved in the project, and provided expertise from each point of view.

The goal of the workshops was to engage CPI Supervisors, CPIs, and co-located domestic violence advocates in a half-day guided discussion emphasizing mutual goals for family safety, protective factors for non-offending parents, and perpetrator accountability. The workshops focused on strengthening relationships between investigators and CPI Project-funded advocates, cultivating a "culture of we." The agenda was developed on a conflict resolution framework, embodying the integrative aspects of the CPI Project, including specific opportunities for improvement guided by the following topics of discussion:

- Enhancing program effectiveness to deliver positive outcomes for families.
- Systemic and perpetrator accountability.
- Increased family well-being.
- Improving collaboration between child welfare and co-located advocates.

The workshops outlined the ideal engagement between agencies and certified domestic violence centers considering existing barriers resulting from varying use of language, need for role clarification, differing policies, procedures, and mandates, including state and federal confidentiality and privilege laws. Throughout the workshops, additional barriers were identified and resolved in real-time when possible. The Office of Domestic Violence has worked with regional staff and centers to develop an action plan to address all barriers that impact the statewide initiative. While some of the barriers identified were specific to the location/region, the majority were shared statewide. These were resolved through further role clarification, training and technical assistance, and contract revisions. Following the conclusion of the workshops, reports have shown improved collaboration within the project.

#### **Child Protective Investigations Career Ladder - Domestic Violence Track**

The Office of Domestic Violence developed a series of training tracks for the Child Protective Investigations Career Ladder. The curriculum was piloted in the spring of 2022 and launched in the summer of 2022, offering promotion and advancement opportunities for CPIs and CPI Supervisors who meet specific

experience, training, and performance requirements within the track. The series is comprised of seven domestic violence-focused trainings built to increase the capacity of child welfare professionals.

- Understanding Domestic Violence Part 1
- Understanding Domestic Violence Part 2
- High-Risk Factors for Family Violence
- Offender Accountability in Family Violence Cases
- Smart and Safe Interviewing
- Enhancing Family Safety for Domestic Violence Cases Part 1
- Enhancing Family Safety for Domestic Violence Cases Part 2

## Economic Empowerment

The Statewide Economic Empowerment Program was created to directly respond to financial control exercised by perpetrators. Lack of financial knowledge and resources is the number one indicator of whether a domestic violence victim will stay, leave, or return to an abusive relationship. Financial abuse occurs in 98% of all domestic violence cases. Survivors report that abusers utilize a multitude of economically related tactics to gain and maintain power and control over them, such as creating large amounts of debt in joint accounts, withholding funds from the survivor or children to obtain basic needs such as food and medicine, prohibiting the survivor from working, and not allowing the survivor to access bank accounts.

During FY 2021-2022, certified domestic violence centers reported the following:

- 4,097 survivors of domestic violence participated in financial empowerment services using the Allstate Moving Ahead Curriculum.
- 6,166 survivors of domestic violence received financial empowerment services through the local domestic violence center Economic Empowerment Programs.
- 1,021 survivors participated in the certified domestic violence centers' Literacy Programs.
- 81 meetings were conducted with financial institutions or agencies that assist in developing programs related to micro-loans, micro-enterprises, matched savings accounts, and/or individual development accounts for survivors.
- 2,583 survivors of domestic violence were assisted with identifying and securing affordable housing and 1,955 survivors received assistance with identifying and securing employment goals.
- 206 survivors of domestic violence completed educational courses, job training programs, or certificate programs.
- 144 survivors of domestic violence participated in the micro-loan program, while 91 participated in the micro-enterprise program.
- Participating programs throughout the state provided 25,610 information and referral services, advocacy, and accompaniment in 23,052 instances, and 43,917 emotional support and safety services.
- While Economic Empowerment programs have assisted 2,220 survivors with filing Victim's Compensation applications, they have also provided shelter and housing services in 12,932

instances. Shelter and housing services include emergency shelter, safehouses, transitional housing and relocation assistance.

The ODV partnered with the Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency to develop a domestic violence integration plan focused on providing training and technical assistance to the HOPE Florida program. Training was provided to all 6 Florida regions on the following topics:

- Introduction to Domestic Violence (DV 101)
- DV 102
- Introduction to Safety Planning and Risk Assessment
- Financial Safety Planning and Economic Abuse
- Secondary Trauma and Compassion Fatigue
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse

The training series led to ongoing technical assistance provided to Hope Florida Navigators as they serve survivors of domestic violence throughout the state. A Subject Matter Liaison (SML) role has been developed for each of the regions to support and assist the navigators in meeting the unique needs of survivors accessing services through HOPE Florida. The role of the SML's is to act as a point of reference or additional support to the Hope Florida teams where domestic violence has been disclosed or abuse-related barriers have been presented. The technical assistance efforts included in-person training along with successful coordination between local certified domestic violence centers to increase community resources offered to survivors locally.

The ODV has successfully engaged with the Office of Homelessness to develop regional learning exchange efforts between certified domestic violence centers and the local Continuum of Care offices (CoC). The goal of the learning exchange opportunities will be to identify gaps in services, areas of needed collaborative efforts, and best practices for survivors at the intersection of homelessness and domestic violence. The ODV will look to develop standardized practices to prioritize domestic violence housing first models around the state.

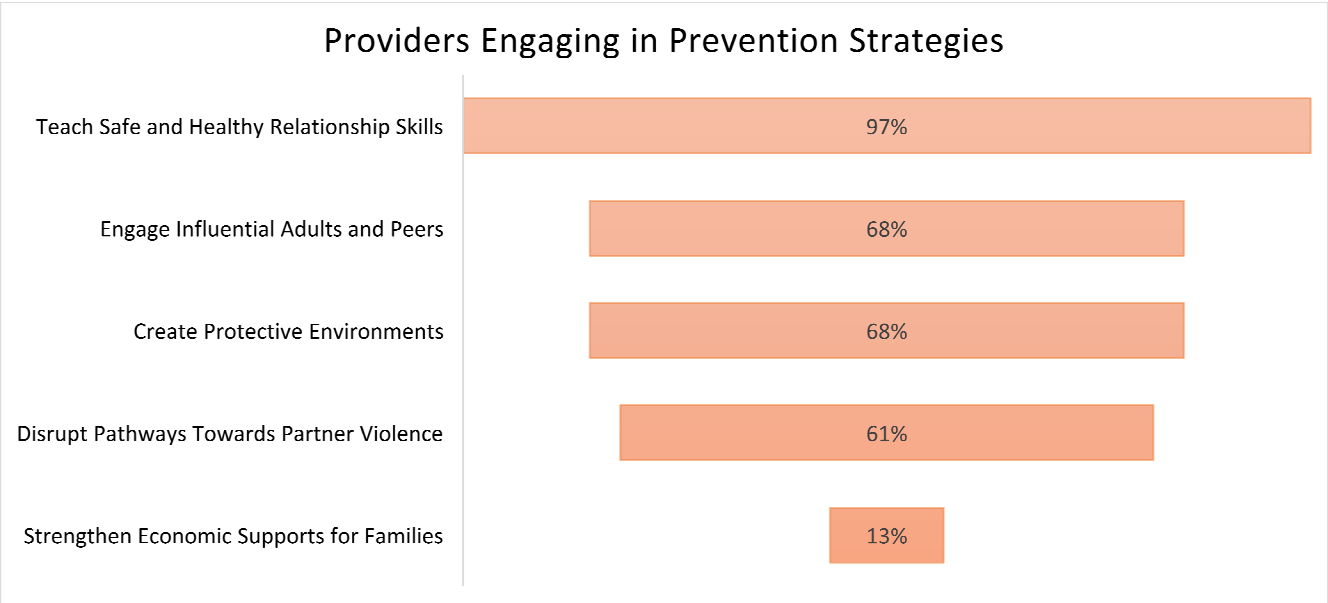
## **Prevention Initiative**

Aligned with the Department's priorities, the Office of Domestic Violence seeks to reduce incidences of domestic violence by moving upstream to optimize early moments of impact. Primary prevention initiatives seek to obviate perpetration and victimization by addressing risk and protective factors across the social-ecological model and lifespan. By utilizing evidence-based strategies statewide and locally, conditions are being created to make violence less likely to occur and to be perpetuated.

During FY 2021-2022, ODV prevention initiatives focused on statewide capacity to enable successful strategies to flourish. Concentrating on the efforts made locally, the ODV has engaged with other agencies to strengthen supports and services for families in Florida.

At the local level, providers have prioritized youth leadership, community partnerships, and social change efforts to develop programming to support change. Centers are funded to develop, implement, and

evaluate prevention strategies that incorporate planning with Community Action Teams, conducting local trainings, and meeting with key stakeholders. Each center develops its own unique strategic plan, based on the needs of the local community, centered on the elements of enhancing community partnerships, engaging with young people, and creating social change.



\*Data is based on the percentage of centers engaging in the strategies overall, therefore does not total 100%.