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# Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA): Background and Funding

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# Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA): Background and Funding

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), provides federal funding for shelter and direct services for victims of domestic violence and their families. While the law's name references family violence, FVPSA focuses on violence committed by a spouse or other intimate partner (domestic violence or intimate partner violence); other federal programs address child abuse and elder abuse. A related law, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA) (administered by the U.S. Department of Justice) focuses on the criminal justice response to domestic violence and additional services for victims.

Estimates of the population impacted by domestic violence tend to be limited due to sensitivity around collecting data from victims. The most recent nationally representative estimate by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that roughly 7% of both women and men experienced intimate partner violence in 2016-2017 (representing approximately 9 million women and 8 million men). When asked about domestic violence over their lifetimes, 47% of women and 44% of men reported experiencing intimate partner violence. Women were more likely than men to report an impact from such violence, including having injuries, being fearful, being concerned for their safety, missing work or school, needing medical care, or needing help from law enforcement.

Throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, domestic violence remained a hidden problem. Victims, or survivors, of this abuse often endured physical and emotional abuse in silence out of fear of retaliation by their spouses or partners. In the 1970s, women with personal experiences of abuse, civic organizations, and professionals began to open shelters and provide services to abused women and their children. As a result of these efforts and greater national attention to domestic violence, Congress conducted a series of hearings in the early 1980s to understand the scope of domestic violence and explore possible responses. FVPSA was enacted in 1984 (Title III of P.L. 98-457), and has been reauthorized seven times since—most recently by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-320).

FVPSA authorizes three primary sets of activities (described below). The first two activities are administered by HHS's Administration for Children and Families and the third activity is administered by CDC. They are authorized through FY2015, per the 2010 reauthorization, and funds (which are discretionary) have continually been appropriated in each subsequent year. Total available funding for FVPSA was approximately \$268 million in FY2025, consistent with FY2024.

- *Shelter and direct services:* The bulk of FVPSA funding supports shelter and direct services for victims and their families, including victims in underserved communities and children exposed to domestic violence. Most of this funding is awarded via grants to states, territories, and tribes, which then distribute the funds to local domestic violence service organizations. These organizations provide shelter and a number of services—counseling, referrals, development of safety plans, advocacy, legal advocacy, and other services. This funding also supports state domestic violence coalitions that provide training and support for service providers, and national resource centers that provide training and technical assistance on various domestic violence issues for a variety of stakeholders.
- *Domestic violence hotlines:* The second major FVPSA activity is a national domestic violence hotline that receives calls for assistance related to domestic violence, as well as hotlines that focus on subpopulations such as a youth hotline and Native American hotline. The hotlines provide crisis intervention and counseling, maintain a database of service providers throughout the United States and the territories, and provide referrals for victims and others affected by domestic violence.
- *Prevention:* FVPSA funds prevention efforts through a program known as Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA). The program supports efforts in selected communities to prevent domestic violence.

FVPSA was the first federal law to address domestic violence. Since the law was enacted, it has retained a primary focus on providing shelter and services for survivors and has increasingly provided support to children exposed to domestic violence and teen dating violence. With the enactment of VAWA, the federal response to domestic violence expanded to include investigating and prosecuting crimes and providing additional services to victims and abusers. VAWA activities are primarily administered by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women.

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## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Background .....	2
Definitions.....	2
Risk Factors for Domestic Violence.....	4
Profiles of Survivors .....	4
National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey .....	5
National Crime Victimization Survey.....	8
Effects of Domestic Violence.....	8
Domestic Violence: Development of the Issue.....	9
Congressional Response.....	10
FVPSA Overview .....	11
Funding.....	12
Shelter, Victim Services, and Program Support .....	13
Formula Grants to States, Territories, and Tribes.....	14
Selected Grant Conditions Pertaining to Use and Distribution of Funds.....	15
Selected Grant Conditions Pertaining to Victims.....	17
State Domestic Violence Coalitions .....	17
Resource Centers.....	19
Services for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence .....	19
Funding for Specialized Services for Abused Parents and Their Children .....	20
National Domestic Violence Hotline .....	21
National Domestic Violence Hotline Study .....	23
Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA).....	24
Original DELTA .....	24
DELTA Prep .....	25
DELTA FOCUS.....	25
DELTA Impact .....	26
DELTA AHEAD.....	26
Demonstration Projects .....	27
Teen Dating Violence .....	27
Background .....	27
FVPSA Interaction with Other Federal Laws.....	28
Child Abuse and Neglect.....	28
Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).....	30
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).....	31
Federal Coordination .....	31

## Figures

Figure 1. Lifetime Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence Among U.S. Women and Men, by Type of Violence .....	6
Figure 2. Lifetime Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence. by Gender and Race/Ethnicity .....	7

Figure 3. Summary of FVPSA Activities and the Funding Allocation Formula for Shelter, Services, and Supports .....	12
Figure 4. FVPSA Funding (Budget Authority) by Activity, FY2010-FY2025.....	13
Figure 5. Actual Allocations for Activities Funded under Shelters, Victim Services, and Program Support, FY2024 .....	14

## Tables

Table 1. Individuals Served by FVPSA-Funded Programs and Unmet Requests for Shelter: FY2024 .....	15
Table A-1. Definitions of Domestic Violence and Related Terms in Federal Statute.....	33
Table B-1. Lifetime and 12-Month Prevalence of Violence Committed by an Intimate Partner and Related Impacts .....	34
Table B-2. Lifetime Prevalence of Contact Sexual Violence, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking by an Intimate Partner by State of Residence .....	34
Table C-1. Actual Funding for FVPSA Activities, FY1986-FY2025 .....	37
Table D-1. FVPSA Formula Grant Funding for Shelter and Supportive Services for States and Territories, FY2025.....	39

## Appendices

Appendix A. Definitions.....	33
Appendix B. Prevalence and Effects of Domestic Violence .....	34
Appendix C. FVPSA Funding FY1986-FY2025.....	37
Appendix D. FVPSA Funding for State and Territory Formula Grants, FY2025 .....	39

## Contacts

Author Information.....	41
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## Introduction

This report provides an overview of the federal response to domestic violence—defined broadly to include acts of physical and nonphysical violence against spouses and other intimate partners—through the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).<sup>1</sup> FVPSA programs are carried out by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS’s) Administration for Children and Families (ACF)—under the Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services (OFVPS)—and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

ACF administers most FVPSA programming, including grants to states,<sup>2</sup> territories, and Indian tribes to support local organizations that provide immediate shelter and related assistance for victims of domestic violence and their children. ACF also provides funding for a privately operated national domestic violence hotline that responds to calls, texts, and web-based chats from individuals seeking assistance. The funding for ACF also supports state domestic violence coalitions that provide training for and advocacy on behalf of domestic violence providers within each state, as well as multiple resource centers that provide training and technical assistance on various domestic violence issues for a variety of stakeholders. The CDC funds efforts to prevent domestic violence through a program known as Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA). The House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee have exercised jurisdiction over FVPSA.

The report begins with background on the definitions of domestic violence and related terms. This background section also describes the risk factors for domestic violence and estimates of the number of victims. The next section of the report addresses the history leading up to the enactment of FVPSA, and the major components of the act: support for domestic violence shelters and nonresidential services, a national domestic violence hotline, and community-based responses to prevent domestic violence. The report then discusses efforts under FVPSA to assist children and youth exposed to domestic violence, including teen dating violence.

Finally, the report provides an overview of FVPSA’s interaction with other federal laws, including the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA, P.L. 103-322). FVPSA was the first federal law to address domestic violence, with a focus on providing shelter and services for survivors. Since the enactment of VAWA in 1994, the federal response to domestic violence has expanded to involve multiple departments and activities that include investigating and prosecuting crimes and providing additional services to victims and abusers. FVPSA also includes provisions that encourage or require program administrators to coordinate FVPSA programs with related programs and research carried out by other federal agencies. The appendices provide further detail about FVPSA-related definitions and funding and statistics related to domestic violence victimization.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The law is codified at 42 U.S.C. §10401 et seq. The regulations for the program are at 45 C.F.R. Part 1370. A final rule from 2016 amended the regulations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families [ACF], “Family Violence Prevention and Services,” 81 *Federal Register* 76471, November 2, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, the term “states” includes the District of Columbia.

<sup>3</sup> For other CRS products about domestic violence, see CRS Report R45410, *The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): Historical Overview, Funding, and Reauthorization*, and CRS In Focus IF11592, *Federal Support for Providing Housing to Individuals Experiencing Domestic Violence*.

### **Federal Support for Domestic Violence in the Context of COVID-19**

Empirical research and anecdotal information from organizations that serve domestic violence victims indicate that disasters and emergencies can heighten the frequency and severity of abuse.<sup>4</sup> In the context of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, some abusers may have been able to exert further power and control over their partners because of the stress caused by economic and other uncertainties surrounding the pandemic.<sup>5</sup> Victims may be less likely to use crisis hotlines with their abusers close by, and may face repercussions if they reach out for help.<sup>6</sup>

Federal lawmakers addressed domestic violence in multiple COVID-19 response laws. Enacted in March 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act; P.L. 116-136) provided additional FY2020 funding of \$2 million for the national domestic violence hotline and \$45 million for FVPSA formula grants—both available through September 30, 2021. The law specified that FVPSA subgrantees were not required to provide a match as they usually would be with regular appropriations. Also enacted in March 2020, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-123) provided general funding to the CDC to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19—available through September 30, 2022—and the agency used \$1.6 million of such funds for Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) grants.<sup>7</sup>

Subsequently, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA; P.L. 117-2), enacted in March 2021, provided additional funding for FVPSA activities in FY2021—\$198 million for shelter, services, and support and \$2 million for the hotline. It also authorized and provided funding for two new grant programs to support survivors of sexual assault (\$198 million) and “culturally specific populations” (\$49.5 million) and \$2.5 million for HHS’s administrative costs associated with the new grants. In October 2021, ACF issued guidance implementing the grants. Funding to support survivors of sexual assault was allocated to states, territories, and tribes on a noncompetitive basis using the FVPSA funding allocation formula (funding available through September 30, 2025), to be used to help rape crisis centers and other sexual assault program operators transition to virtual services and meet the emergency needs of survivors.<sup>8</sup> Funding for culturally specific populations (available through September 30, 2025) was awarded competitively to multiple resource centers<sup>9</sup> to oversee and make subawards to community-based organizations providing culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate services to victims from racial and ethnic minority groups and underserved populations.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to distributing additional funding, during the COVID-19 pandemic, ACF issued guidance that advised how FVPSA funds can be expended, including for staff, food, toiletries, and supplies at shelters, among other items.<sup>11</sup> Per an existing requirement, funds may not be given directly to victims.<sup>12</sup> ACF also issued other guidance that provided flexibilities for applicants and grantees in programs conducting human service activities related to COVID-19.<sup>13</sup>

## **Background**

### **Definitions**

The FVPSA statute focuses on *family violence*, *domestic violence*, and *dating violence*. Family violence can involve many types of family relationships and forms of violence. FVPSA defines

<sup>4</sup> Julie A. Schumacher et al., “Intimate partner violence and Hurricane Katrina: Predictors and Associated Mental Health Outcomes,” *Violence and Victims*, vol. 25, no. 5 (2010), pp. 588-603; Alisha Haridasani Gupta and Aviva Stahl, “For Abused Women, a Pandemic Lockdown Holds Dangers of Its Own,” *New York Times* March 24, 2020; National Domestic Violence Hotline, “Staying Safe During COVID-19,” March 13, 2020, <https://www.thehotline.org/2020/03/13/staying-safe-during-covid-19>.

<sup>5</sup> National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, “Power and Control Wheel,” <https://www.ncdsv.org/wheels-adapted-from-power-and-control-wheel-model.html>.

<sup>6</sup> MJ Lee, “Visits to New York City’s domestic violence website surged amid coronavirus pandemic,” *CNN.com*, April 7, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/07/us/nyc-domestic-violence-website-surging/index.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Based on correspondence with HHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), September 2020.

<sup>8</sup> HHS, ACF, Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), “2021 FVPSA American Rescue Plan \$198 million Grants to Support Survivors of Sexual Assault Funding Program Instruction Guidance Memo,” October 29, 2021, (continued...)

the term as acts of violence or threatened acts of violence, including forced detention, that result in physical injury against individuals (including elderly individuals) who are legally related by blood or marriage and/or live in the same household.<sup>14</sup> This definition focuses on physical forms of violence and is limited to abusers and victims<sup>15</sup> who live together or are related by blood or marriage; however, researchers and others generally agree that family violence is broad enough to include nonphysical violence and physical violence that occurs outside of an intimate relationship.<sup>16</sup> This broader definition can encompass a range of scenarios—rape and other forms of sexual violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner who may or may not live in the same household; stalking by a current or former spouse or partner; abuse and neglect of elderly family members and children; and psychologically tormenting and controlling a spouse, intimate partner, or other member of the household.

While family violence can encompass child abuse and elder abuse, FVPSA programs focus on individuals abused by their spouses and other intimate partners. FVPSA references the terms “domestic violence” and “dating violence” as they are defined under VAWA, and discusses these terms alongside family violence. (FVPSA regulations also define these terms as generally consistent with VAWA, but recognize that the term “dating violence” encompasses additional acts).<sup>17</sup> The VAWA definition of “domestic violence” encompasses forms of intimate partner violence—Involving current and former spouses or individuals who are similarly situated to a spouse, cohabiting individuals, and parents of children in common—that are outlawed under state or local laws. VAWA defines “dating violence” as violence committed by a person who has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and where the existence

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<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/grant-funding/2021-fvpsa-american-rescue-plan-198-million-grants-support-survivors-sexual-0> (accessed August 2025).

<sup>9</sup> The Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence, Esperanza United/Casa de Esperanza, Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community, the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center, and the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center.

<sup>10</sup> HHS, ACF, FYSB, “2021 FVPSA \$49.5 Million American Rescue Plan Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault from Culturally Specific Populations Grants Program Instruction Guidance Memo,” October 29, 2021, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/grant-funding/2021-fvpsa-american-rescue-plan-culturally-specific-program-instruction-guidance> (accessed August 2025).

<sup>11</sup> HHS, ACF, *FAQs on Allowable Use of FVPSA Funds During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency*, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/news/faqs-allowable-use-fvpsa-funds-during-covid-19-public-health-emergency> (accessed June 2022); and HHS, ACF, *FY 2020 CARES Act Supplemental Funding Guidance for FVPSA Formula Grantees: Abbreviated Application Process Memo, Allowable Use of Funds, and Reporting Instructions*, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/fvpsa-cares-act-supplemental-award-information-formula-grantees> (accessed August 2025).

<sup>12</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10408(d)(1).

<sup>13</sup> HHS, ACF, “ACF Grant Recipient COVID-19 Guidance,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/archive/grants-funding/acf-grant-recipient-covid-19>.

<sup>14</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10402(4) (Definitions).

<sup>15</sup> This term is sometimes used interchangeably with the word *survivors*.

<sup>16</sup> Roger J.R. Levesque, *Culture and Violence: Fostering Change Through Human Rights Law* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001), p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> The 2016 final rule that amended the regulations for FVPSA notes with regard to “family violence” and “domestic violence,” “the [social service] field and Congress have used the term interchangeably for decades.” The final rule also notes that HHS sought to broaden the definition of “domestic violence,” stating that “given the continuum of behaviors constituting ‘domestic violence’ identified in FVPSA, and the broader protections embodied in State and other jurisdictional law, [HHS/JACF will interpret ‘domestic violence’ as inclusive of additional acts recognized in other Federal, State, local, and tribal laws, as well as acts in other Federal regulatory and sub-regulatory guidance.” Note that this definition is not intended to be interpreted “more restrictively than FVPSA and VAWA but rather to be inclusive of other, more expansive definitions.” HHS, Family Violence Prevention and Services,” 81 *Federal Register* 212, November 2, 2016.

of such a relationship is determined based on consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the individuals involved. (Appendix A provides a summary of these and related terms as they are defined in statute.)

The federal government responds to child abuse and elder abuse through a variety of separate programs. Federal law authorizes and funds a range of activities to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act and CAPTA.<sup>18</sup> Separately, the Older Americans Act (OAA), the major federal vehicle for the delivery of social and nutrition services for older persons, has authorized projects to address elder abuse. In addition, the OAA authorizes, and the federal government funds, the National Center on Elder Abuse. The center provides information to the public and professionals regarding elder abuse prevention activities, and provides training and technical assistance to state elder abuse agencies and to community-based organizations.<sup>19</sup> The Social Services Block Grant, as amended, also includes elder justice provisions, including several grant programs and other activities to promote the safety and well-being of older Americans.<sup>20</sup>

## Risk Factors for Domestic Violence

The evidence base on domestic violence does not point strongly to any one reason that it is perpetrated, in part because of the difficulty in measuring social conditions (e.g., status of women, gender norms, and socioeconomic status, among others) that can influence this violence. Still, the research literature has identified two underlying influences: the unequal position of women and the normalization of violence, both in society and some relationships.<sup>21</sup> Certain risk variables are often associated with—but not necessarily the causes—of domestic violence. Such factors include a pattern of problem drinking, poverty and economic conditions, and early parenthood.<sup>22</sup> For example, substance abuse often precedes incidents of domestic violence. A U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) study found that substance abuse tracked closely with homicide, attempted homicide, or the most severe violent incidents of abuse perpetrated against an intimate partner. Among men who killed or attempted to kill their intimate partners, over 80% were problem drinkers in the year preceding the incident.<sup>23</sup>

## Profiles of Survivors

Estimating the number of individuals involved in domestic violence is complicated by the varying definitions of the term and methodologies for collecting data. For example, some research counts a boyfriend or girlfriend as a family relationship while other research does not; other surveys are

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<sup>18</sup> For further information, see CRS Report R43458, *Child Welfare: An Overview of Federal Programs and Their Current Funding*.

<sup>19</sup> For further information, see CRS Report R43414, *Older Americans Act: Overview and Funding*; and HHS, Office on Women's Health, *Overview of Violence Against Women Activities 2010-2011*, June 25, 2012 (hereinafter, "HHS, Office on Women's Health, *Overview of Violence Against Women Activities 2010-2011*").

<sup>20</sup> For further information, see CRS Report 94-953, *Social Services Block Grant: Background and Funding*.

<sup>21</sup> Rachel Jewkes, "Intimate Partner Violence: Causes and Prevention," *The Lancet*, vol. 359 (April 20, 2002), pp. 1423-1429.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), National Institute of Justice (NIJ), "Causes and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence," <http://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/intimate-partner-violence/Pages/welcome.aspx>.

<sup>23</sup> Phyllis Sharps et al., "Risky Mix: Drinking, Drug Use, and Homicide," *NIJ Journal*, no. 250 (November 2003). The abused women studied were between the ages of 18 and 50 and were romantically or sexually involved with the perpetrator at some time during the past two years. A woman was categorized as abused if she had been physically assaulted, threatened with serious violence, or stalked by a current or former intimate partner.

limited to specific types of violence and whether violence is reported to police. Certain studies focus more broadly on various types of violence or more narrowly on violence committed among intimate partners. In addition, domestic violence is generally believed to be underreported. Survivors may be reluctant to disclose their victimization because of shame, embarrassment, fear, or belief that they may not receive support from law enforcement.<sup>24</sup>

Overall, two studies—the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)—show that violence involving intimate partners is not uncommon, and that both women and men are victimized sexually, physically, and psychologically.<sup>25</sup>

## National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

NISVS provides information on the prevalence of domestic violence among individuals during their lifetimes and in the past 12 months prior to the survey. The CDC conducted the study annually in each of 2010-2012, 2015, 2016-2017, and 2023-2024.<sup>26</sup> The survey examines multiple aspects of intimate partner violence—including contact sexual violence, which encompasses rape and other acts; physical violence, including slapping, kicking, and more severe acts like being burned; and stalking, which is a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics.<sup>27</sup> Select findings from the 2016-2017 study are summarized in **Table B-1** (while the 2023-2024 survey was completed, CDC's full analysis of the results are not yet available as of the cover date of this report).

Generally, the 2016-2017 survey found that women and men were victimized at similar rates over their lifetime and in the past 12 months.<sup>28</sup> An estimated 7% of both women and men in the United States experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey—representing approximately 9 million women and 8 million men. Rates were higher when looking over an individual's lifetime, with an estimated 47% of women and 44% of men experiencing intimate partner violence. Women were more likely than

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<sup>24</sup> Ruth W. Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*, HHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), October 2022 (hereinafter, “Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*”).

<sup>25</sup> Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*. See also, Jennifer L. Truman and Rachel E. Morgan, *Criminal Victimization, 2016*, Table 2, DOJ, OJP, BJS, December 2017 (hereinafter, “Jennifer L. Truman and Rachel E. Morgan, *Criminal Victimization, 2016*”).

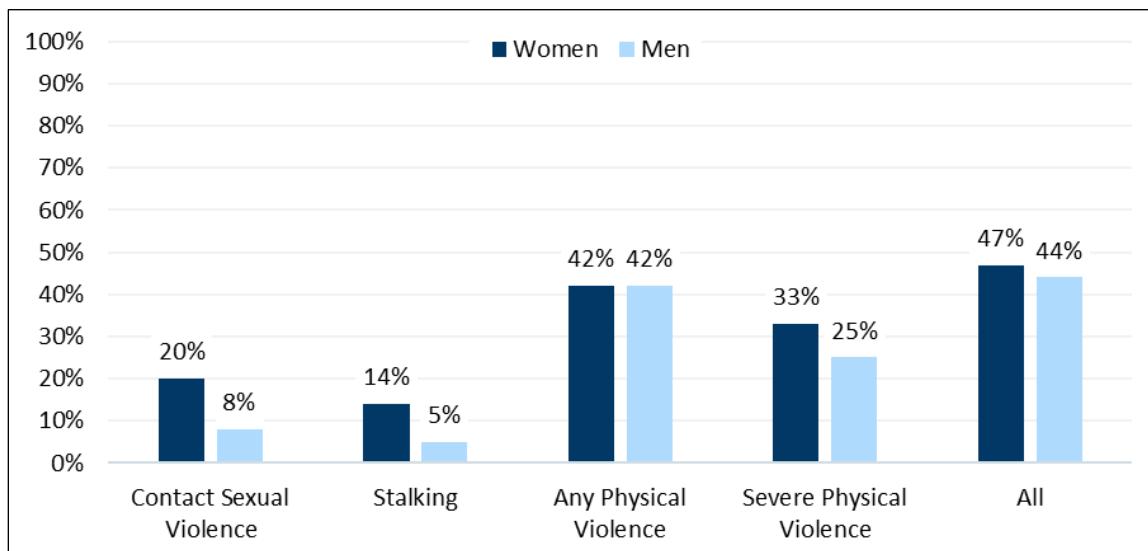
<sup>26</sup> Marcie-jo Kresnow et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Methodology Report*, HHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), January 2022. The NISVS is a national random telephone survey of the noninstitutionalized English and/or Spanish-speaking U.S. population age 18 and older. The study is coordinated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at HHS, and developed and fielded with support from DOJ and the Department of Defense (DOD). Terms such as “physical violence” and “stalking” are defined in the report. From September 2016 to May 2017, more than 27,000 interviews were completed. National estimates were derived based on statistical weights applied to the percentages of respondents who experience domestic violence.

<sup>27</sup> For full definitions, see the 2016-2017 NSVIS. “Contact sexual violence” includes rape, being made to penetrate someone else (males only), sexual coercion, and/or unwanted sexual contact perpetrated by an intimate partner. “Physical violence” is defined as a range of behaviors from slapping, pushing, or shoving to severe acts such as being beaten, burned, or choked. “Stalking” is defined as a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics used by a perpetrator that is both unwanted and causes fear of safety concerns in the victim. The NISVS report separately reported findings of “psychological aggression,” which are not reflected in this report. This includes expressive aggression such as insulting, humiliating, or making fun of an intimate partner in front of others; and coercive control, which includes behaviors that are intended to monitor, control, or threaten an intimate partner.

<sup>28</sup> Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*.

men to experience certain types of intimate partner violence, including contact sexual violence, severe physical violence, and stalking (shown in **Figure 1**). Women were also more likely than men to report an impact related to partner violence, such as having injuries, being fearful, being concerned for their safety, missing work or school, needing medical care, or needing help from law enforcement.<sup>29</sup> Approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 5 men were first victimized before age 18.<sup>30</sup>

**Figure 1. Lifetime Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence Among U.S. Women and Men, by Type of Violence**



**Source:** Figure created by CRS using data from the CDC 2016-2017 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/index.html>.

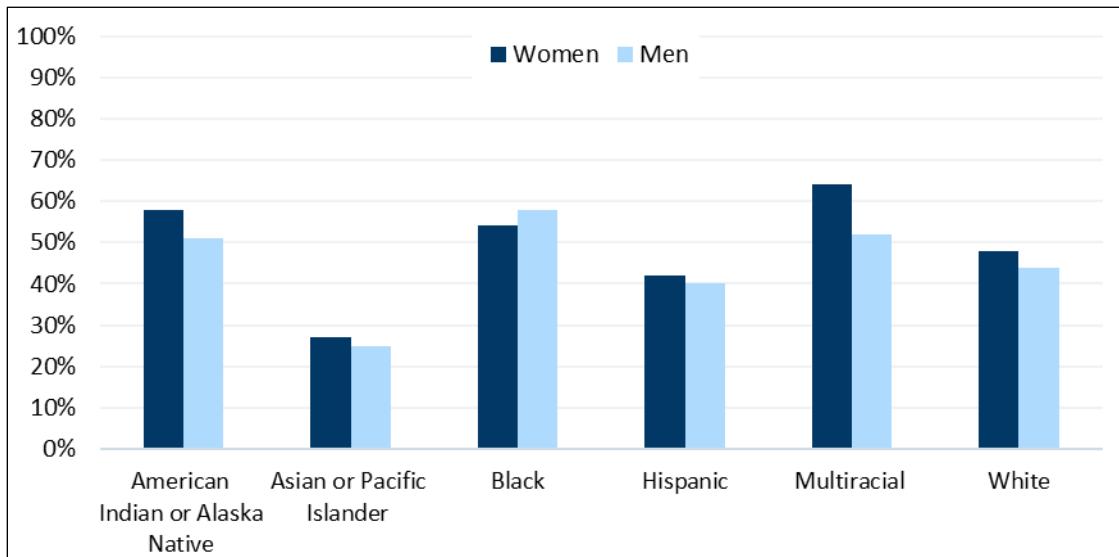
**Notes:** “Intimate partner violence” refers to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking. See 2016-2017 NISVS for further definitions.

The prevalence of intimate partner violence varied across racial and ethnic groups. As shown in **Figure 2**, men and women who identified as Asian or Pacific Islander reported the lowest rates (25% and 27%, respectively) of contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime, while multiracial women reported the highest rate of intimate partner violence (64%). Higher lifetime rates of intimate partner violence (above 50%) were also reported by women and men who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, or multiracial.

<sup>29</sup> Intimate partner violence (IPV)-related impact includes experiencing any of the following: being fearful, being concerned for safety, any post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms, injury, need for medical care, need for help from law enforcement, missing at least one day of work, or missing at least one day of school. The following impacts were also included in the lifetime estimate only: specific types of physical or mental injuries, a need for housing services, a need for victim advocate services, a need for legal services, and contacting a crisis hotline. By definition, all stalking victimizations result in impact because the definition of stalking requires the experience of fear or concern for safety.

<sup>30</sup> Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*.

**Figure 2. Lifetime Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity**



**Source:** Figure created by CRS using data from the CDC 2016/2017 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/index.html>.

**Notes:** “Intimate partner violence” refers to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking. See 2016-2017 NISVS for further definitions.

### Special Populations

NISVS has also been used to examine intimate partner violence within special populations. CDC’s analysis of the 2016-2017 survey, for example, examined the prevalence of intimate partner violence based on how adult respondents identified their sexual orientation (heterosexual or straight, gay or lesbian, or bisexual). The study found that overall, bisexual women had a significantly higher lifetime prevalence of sexual violence, physical violence, and stalking by an intimate partner when compared to heterosexual women.<sup>31</sup> Differences between other groups were not statistically significant. The NISVS did not examine outcomes by gender identity due to sample size limitations. However, a 2015 survey by the National Center for Transgender Equality, a private-sector advocacy organization, found that 42% of respondents (who identified as transgender) reported experiencing some form of physical violence by an intimate partner violence over their lifetime.<sup>32</sup>

The 2016-2017 NISVS also measured intimate partner violence among individuals affiliated with the military through a collaboration with the Department of Defense.<sup>33</sup> Among other findings, the study found that women affiliated with the military were less likely to report being victims of intimate partner violence compared to women in the general population, with 51% of women in

<sup>31</sup> Jieru Chen et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Victimization by Sexual Identity*, HHS, CDC, October 2023. For some types of violence, prevalence estimates for particular groups (e.g., gay or bisexual men and lifetime prevalence of rape by any perpetrator) were too small to produce reliable estimates and were not reported.

<sup>32</sup> S. E. James et al., *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*, (Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality, 2016), pp. 206-209.

<sup>33</sup> The Department of Defense is “using a secondary Department of War designation” under Executive Order 14347 dated September 5, 2025.

the general population reporting intimate partner violence in their lifetime compared to 40% of active duty women and 41% of women married to active duty men.<sup>34</sup>

Other research has focused on individuals with disabilities. Using the 2010 NISVS, researchers examined intimate partner violence among individuals with and without a disability.<sup>35</sup> The report found that women with a disability had a higher prevalence of each type of violence than women without a disability. Men with disabilities were significantly more likely than those without a disability to report specific types of violence, including stalking and psychological aggression.

## National Crime Victimization Survey

The National Crime Victimization Survey is a survey coordinated by DOJ's Bureau of Justice Statistics within the Office of Justice Programs.<sup>36</sup> NCVS surveys a nationally representative sample of households. It is the primary source of information on the characteristics of criminal nonfatal victimization and on the number and types of crimes that may or may not be reported to law enforcement authorities. NCVS surveyed respondents about whether they have been victims of a violent crime, including rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault; and for victims, the relationship to the perpetrator.<sup>37</sup> The survey reports the share of crimes that are committed by an intimate partner (current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends), other family members, friends/acquaintances, or strangers. In 2024, the survey found there were over 782,000 violent victimizations—rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault—by an intimate partner.<sup>38</sup> An earlier NCVS study examined changes in the rate of intimate partner violence over time. The study found that the number of female victims of domestic violence declined from 1.8 million in 1994 to about 621,000 in 2011, mirroring similar declines in violent crimes over this period.<sup>39</sup> Over this period, the rate of serious intimate partner violence—rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault—declined by 72% for females and 64% for males. Approximately 4% of females and 8% of males who were victimized by intimate partners were shot at, stabbed, or hit with a weapon over the period from 2002 through 2011.<sup>40</sup>

## Effects of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is associated with multiple negative outcomes for victims, ranging from mental and emotional distress, to health effects, to death. The 2016-2017 NISVS study found that these effects appeared to be greater for women. About 2 in 5 women (41.0%) and 1 in 4 men (26.3%) who experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate

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<sup>34</sup> May S. Chen, Marcie-jo Kresnow, and Sharon G. Smith, et al., *Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Violence Among Active Duty Women and Men and Wives of Active Duty Men—Comparisons with the U.S. General Population, 2016/2017*, Technical Report, HHS, CDC, December 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Matthew J. Brieding and Brian S. Armour, “The association between disability and intimate partner violence in the United States,” *Annals of Epidemiology*, vol. 25, no. 6 (June 2015), pp. 455-457.

<sup>36</sup> Jennifer L. Truman and Rachel E. Morgan, *Criminal Victimization, 2016*.

<sup>37</sup> These terms are defined at DOJ, OJP, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), “Glossary,” <https://bjs.ojp.gov/glossary>.

<sup>38</sup> DOJ, OJP, BJS, *National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2024*, <https://ncvs.bjs.ojp.gov/multi-year-trends/crimeType>.

<sup>39</sup> Shannan Catalano, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2010*, DOJ, OJP, BJS, September 2015.

<sup>40</sup> Shannan Catalano, *Intimate Partner Violence: Attributes of Victimization, 1993-2011*, DOJ, OJP, BJS, November 2013. See also a study of the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Reports: James Alan Fox and Emma E. Fridel, “Gender Differences in Patterns and Trends in U.S. Homicide,” 1976-2015, *Violence and Gender*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2017. The study found that nearly half of all female homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner, compared to 5% of male homicide victims. Intimate partner homicides decreased over the period from 1976 to 2015.

partner in their lifetime reported at least one impact as a result of this violence, including being fearful; being concerned for their safety or having an injury or need for medical care; needing help from law enforcement; missing at least one day of work; or missing at least one day of school.<sup>41</sup>

## Domestic Violence: Development of the Issue

Early marriage laws in the United States permitted men to hit their wives, and throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century family violence remained a hidden problem.<sup>42</sup> Victims, mostly women, often endured physical and emotional abuse in silence. These victims were hesitant to seek help because of fear of retaliation by their spouses/partners and concerns about leaving their homes, children, and neighborhoods behind. Women were worried that they would be perceived as deviant or mentally unstable or would be unable to get by financially. In addition, victims were often blamed for their abuse, based on stereotypical notions of women (e.g., demanding, aggressive, and frigid, among other characteristics).<sup>43</sup>

In the 1960s, shelters and services for victims of domestic violence became available on a limited basis; however, these services were not always targeted specifically to victims per se. Social service and religious organizations provided temporary housing for displaced persons generally, which could include homeless and abused women. In addition, a small number of organizations provided services to abused women who were married to alcoholic men. Beginning in the 1970s, the “battered women’s movement” began to emerge; it sought to heighten awareness of women who were abused by spouses and partners. The movement developed from influences both abroad and within the United States. In England, the first battered women’s shelter, Chiswick Women’s Aid, galvanized support to establish similar types of services. In addition, the feminist movement in the United States increasingly brought greater national attention to the issue.<sup>44</sup>

As part of the battered women’s movement, former battered women, civic organizations, and professionals opened shelters and began to provide services to victims, primarily abused women and their children.<sup>45</sup> Shelters were most often located in old homes, at Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) centers, or housed in institutional settings, such as motels or abandoned orphanages.

In addition to providing shelter, groups in the battered women’s movement organized coalitions to combine resources for public education on the issue, support groups for victims, and services that were lacking. For example, the YWCA and Women in Crisis Can Act formed a hotline for abused women in Chicago. These and other groups convened the Chicago Abused Women’s Coalition to address concerns about services for battered women. The coalition spoke to hundreds of community groups and professional agencies about battered women’s stories, explained the significance of violence, detailed how violence becomes sanctioned, dispelled common myths, and challenged community members to provide funding and other support to assist abused

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<sup>41</sup> Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*.

<sup>42</sup> Ola W. Barnett et al., *Family Violence Across the Life Span*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011), pp. 14-15 (hereinafter, “Ola W. Barnett et al., *Family Violence Across the Life Span*”).

<sup>43</sup> Susan Schechter, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women’s Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1982), pp. 12-20 (hereinafter, “Susan Schechter, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women’s Movement*”).

<sup>44</sup> Ola W. Barnett et al., *Family Violence Across the Life Span*, p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> Susan Schechter, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women’s Movement*.

women. The coalition mobilized around passage of a state law to protect women and require police training on domestic violence, among other accomplishments.<sup>46</sup>

Based on a survey in the late 1970s, 111 shelters were believed to be operating across all states and in urban, suburban, and rural communities. These shelters generally reported that they provided a safe and secure environment for abused women and their children, emotional support and counseling for abused women, and information on legal rights and assistance with housing, among other supports. Approximately 90 of these shelters fielded over 110,000 calls for assistance in a given year.<sup>47</sup>

Around this same time, the public became increasingly aware of domestic violence. In 1983, *Time* magazine published an article, “Wife Beating: The Silent Crime,” as part of a series of articles on violence in the United States. The article stated: “There is nothing new about wife beating.... What is new is that in the U.S. wife beating is no longer widely accepted as an inevitable and private matter. The change in attitude, while far from complete, has come about in the past 10 to 15 years as part of the profound transformation of ideas about the roles and rights of women in society.”<sup>48</sup> In 1984, then-U.S. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti established the Department of Justice Task Force on Family Violence, which issued a report examining the scope and impact of domestic violence in America. The report also provided recommendations to improve the nation’s law enforcement, criminal justice, and community response to offenses that were previously considered “family matters.”<sup>49</sup>

## Congressional Response

Largely as a result of efforts by advocates and the Justice Department, Congress began to take an interest in domestic violence issues. The House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families conducted a series of hearings in 1983 and 1984 on child abuse and family violence throughout the country, to understand the scope of family violence better and explore possible federal responses to the problem. The committee heard from victims, domestic violence service providers, researchers, law enforcement officials, and other stakeholders about the possible number of victims and the need for additional victim services. In 1984, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) was enacted as Title III of the Child Abuse Amendments of 1984 (P.L. 98-457). Title I of that law amended the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and most of the seven subsequent reauthorizations of FVPSA have occurred as part of legislation that reauthorized CAPTA.<sup>50</sup> This includes the most recent reauthorization (P.L. 111-320), which extended funding authority for FVPSA through FY2015. As discussed later in this report, Congress subsequently broadened the federal response to domestic violence with the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Albert B. Roberts, *Sheltering Battered Women: A National Study and Service Guide* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 7-11.

<sup>48</sup> Jane O'Reilly et al., “Wife Beating: The Silent Crime,” *Time*, September 5, 1983.

<sup>49</sup> DOJ, OJP, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), *The History of the Violence Against Women Act* and William Hart et al., *Family Violence. Attorney General's Task Force Final Report*, DOJ, September 1984, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED251762.pdf>.

<sup>50</sup> CAPTA was originally enacted in 1974 (P.L. 93-247) to create a federal focus for responding to child abuse and neglect and authorizing support for training and technical assistance to improve child protective services.

## FVPSA Overview

As originally enacted, FVPSA included both a social service and law enforcement response to preventing and responding to domestic violence. Grants were authorized for states, territories, and Indian tribes to establish and expand programs to prevent domestic violence and provide shelter for victims. In addition, the law authorized grants to provide training and technical assistance to law enforcement personnel, and this funding was ultimately used to train law enforcement personnel throughout the country. From FY1986 through FY1994, funding for the law enforcement-oriented grants was transferred from HHS to DOJ, which carried out the grants under the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). DOJ used the funding for 23 projects to train law enforcement officers on domestic violence policies and response procedures, with approximately 16,000 law enforcement officers and other justice system personnel from 25 states receiving this training. The training emphasized officers as participants working with other agencies, victims, and community groups in a coordinated response to domestic violence.<sup>51</sup>

Over time, FVPSA was expanded to include support of other activities, including state domestic violence coalitions and grants that focus on prevention activities; however, authorization of funding for FVPSA law enforcement training grants was discontinued in 1992, just before the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 authorized similar activities. Specifically, VAWA authorizes training and support of law enforcement officials under the Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors (STOP) Grant program.

FVPSA currently authorizes three major sets of activities: domestic violence shelters, services, and program support; the national domestic violence hotline; and domestic violence prevention activities under a program known as DELTA. The CDC administers the DELTA program. The Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services in HHS/ACF administers funding for the hotline and shelters, victim services, and program support.

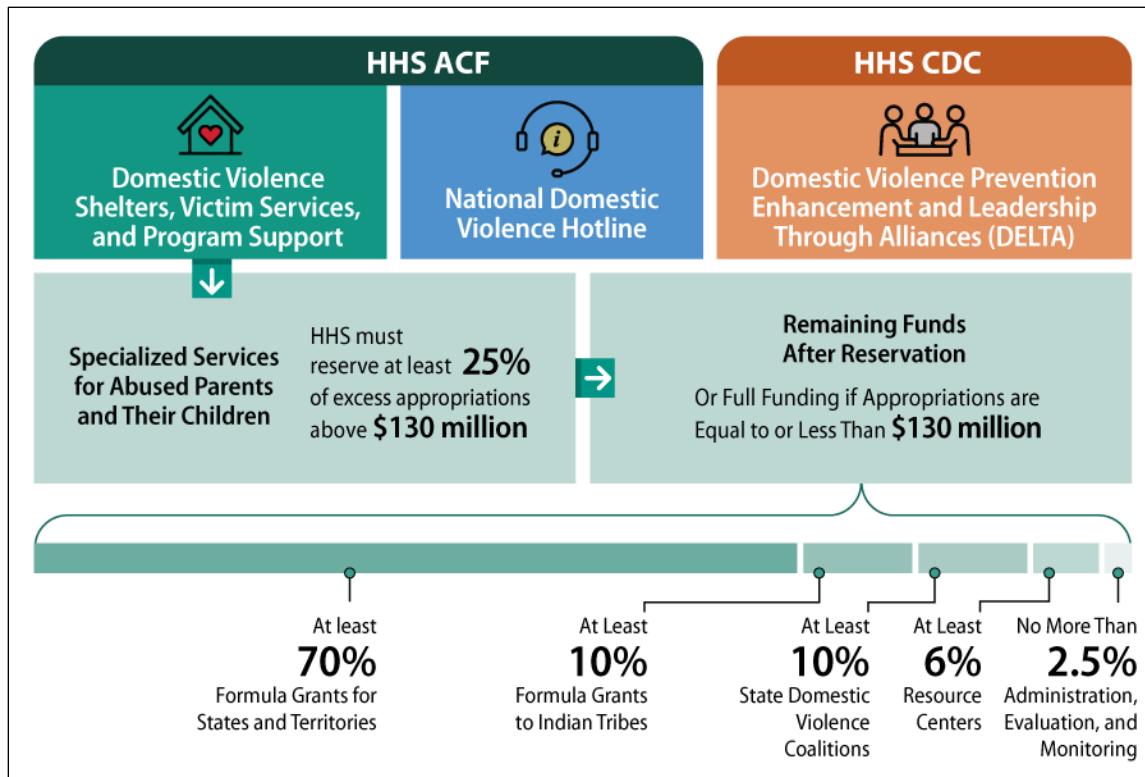
**Figure 3** displays the three primary activities funded under FVPSA along with the funding allocation formula for shelters, victim services, and program support (described further in the “Shelter, Victim Services, and Program Support” section).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> DOJ, OJP, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), *Report to Congress*, July 1996; and Lisa C. Newmark et al., *Evaluation of Police Training Conducted Under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act*, Urban Institute, June 26, 1995.

<sup>52</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10403 (Authorization of appropriations).

**Figure 3. Summary of FVPSA Activities and the Funding Allocation Formula for Shelter, Services, and Supports**



**Source:** Congressional Research Service (CRS), based on the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), as amended (codified at 42 U.S.C. §§10401 et seq.).

**Notes:** HHS = U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; ACF = Administration for Children and Families; CDC = Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Funding

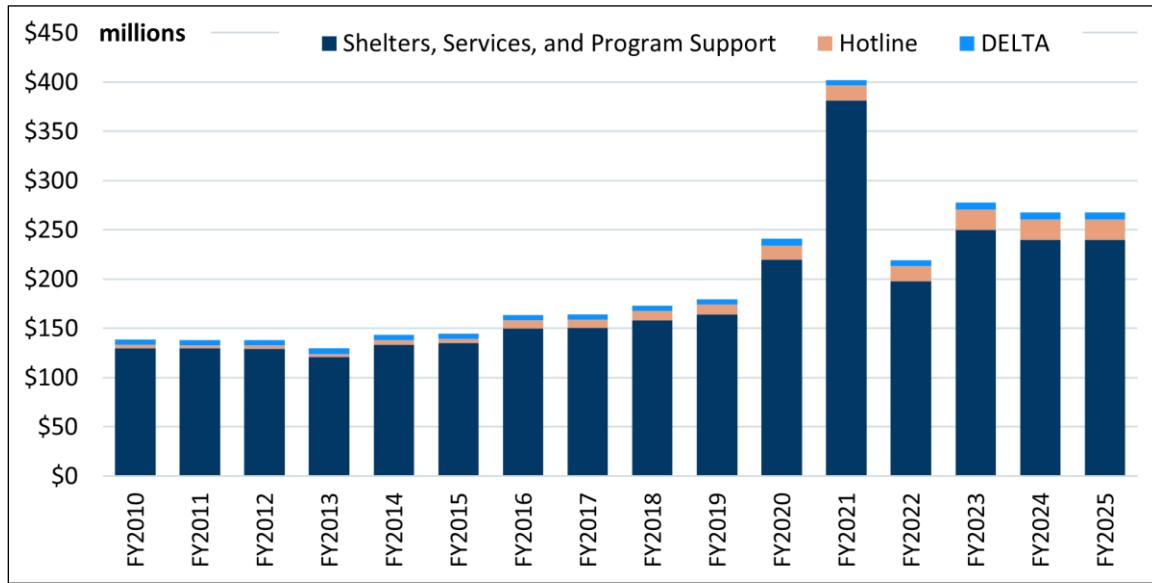
FVPSA funding is discretionary, meaning that it is subject to the annual appropriations process. Authorization of funding under FVPSA has been extended multiple times, most recently through FY2015 by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-320). For each of FY2011–FY2015, the law authorized funding of \$175 million for domestic violence shelters, victim services, and program support; \$3.5 million for the national domestic violence hotline; and \$6 million for DELTA. Congress may appropriate funding for programs with an expired authorization of appropriations, which has been the case for FVPSA activities in subsequent years.

As of the cover date of this report, FY2026 appropriations for FVPSA were not finalized. For FY2025, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4) generally provided funding for projects and activities in the same amounts and under the same authorities and conditions as provided in the FY2024 law. According to HHS, \$240 million was available for FVPSA shelter, victim services, and program support grants, \$20.5 million was

available for the hotline, and \$7.5 million was available for DELTA in FY2025—consistent with FY2024 levels.<sup>53</sup>

**Figure 4** shows available funding over the past 15 years for the three FVPSA activities, which has generally increased over time but includes reductions in some years. Appendix **Table C-1** provides funding levels since FY1986, the first year in which FVPSA grants were awarded.

**Figure 4. FVPSA Funding (Budget Authority) by Activity, FY2010-FY2025**



**Source:** Annual appropriations acts, committee reports, and CRS communication with the U.S. Department of Health Human Services.

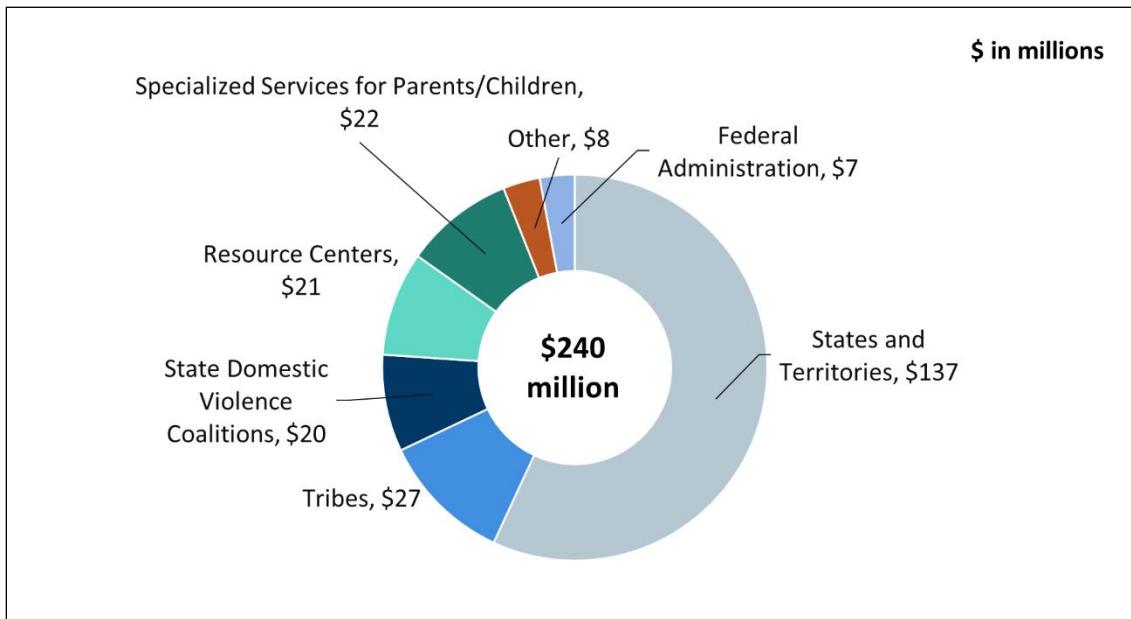
**Notes:** FY2020 and FY2021 include supplemental appropriations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for further discussion, see “Federal Support for Domestic Violence in the Context of COVID-19”). Appendix **Table C-1** includes additional years and notes.

## **Shelter, Victim Services, and Program Support**

Funding for domestic violence shelters, victim services, and program support (hereinafter, “shelter and services”) encompasses multiple activities: formula grants to states and territories, grants to tribes, formula grants to state domestic violence coalitions, grants to national and special issue resource centers, including those that provide technical assistance, grants for specialized services for abused parents and their children exposed to domestic violence, and program support and administration. **Figure 5** shows FY2024 allocations for activities included as part of shelter and services.

<sup>53</sup> CRS communication with HHS ACF in June 2025.

**Figure 5. Actual Allocations for Activities Funded under Shelters, Victim Services, and Program Support, FY2024**



**Source:** CRS correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, June 2025.

**Notes:** Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

## Formula Grants to States, Territories, and Tribes

No less than 70% of FVPSA appropriations for shelter and services must be awarded to states and territories through a formula grant. The formula grant supports the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of programs and projects to prevent incidents of domestic violence and to provide shelter and supportive services to victims of domestic violence. Four territories—Guam, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands—each receive no less than one-eighth of 1% of the appropriation, or, in combination, about one-half of 1% of the total amount appropriated. Of the remaining funds, states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico each receive a base allotment of \$600,000 and additional funding based on their relative share of the U.S. population.<sup>54</sup> **Table D-1** provides formula funding for FY2025 by state and territory.

In addition, no less than 10% of FVPSA appropriations for shelter and services are awarded to Indian tribes. On top of this amount, recent appropriations acts (in FY2018–FY2024) have included a set-aside for tribes from the overall shelter, services, and support appropriation.<sup>55</sup> Indian tribes have the option to authorize a tribal organization or a nonprofit private organization to submit an application for and to administer FVPSA funds.

<sup>54</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10405 (Allotment of funds). The FVPSA law defines a “state” to include each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and except as otherwise provided, Guam, America Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. 42 U.S.C. §10410(10) (Definitions).

<sup>55</sup> For example, enacted FY2024 appropriations (P.L. 118-47) reserved \$7 million for tribes from the shelter, victim services, and program support appropriation. For FY2025, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4) generally provided funding for projects and activities in the same amounts and under the same authorities and conditions as provided in the FY2024 law.

In applying for grant funding, states and territories (hereinafter, “states”) must make certain assurances pertaining to the use and distribution of funds and to victims. Nearly all of the same requirements that pertain to states and territories also pertain to tribes.

**Table 1** displays the estimated number of individuals served by FVPSA-funded domestic violence service providers over the course of the year in FY2024. It also shows the number of unmet requests for shelter (which can include multiple requests made by a single individual). Relatedly, a 2024 census count of domestic violence programs and shelters by the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) found that on the date of the survey (September 4, 2024), just over 79,000 individuals received shelter or services from a domestic violence service provider. There were an additional 14,095 requests for shelter that went unmet due to insufficient resources.<sup>56</sup>

**Table 1. Individuals Served by FVPSA-Funded Programs and Unmet Requests for Shelter: FY2024**

	<b>FY2024</b>
Individuals served	
Nonresidential settings	887,263
Shelters/residential settings	211,626
Unmet requests for shelter	218,034

**Source:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, FY2026 *Justification of Estimates*.

**Notes:** Numbers rounded to the nearest hundred. FVPSA = Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

### **Selected Grant Conditions Pertaining to Use and Distribution of Funds<sup>57</sup>**

States may use up to 5% of their grant funding for state administrative costs. The remainder of the funds are used to make subgrants to eligible entities for community-based projects (hereinafter, “subgrantees”) that meet the goals of the grant program. No less than 70% of subgrant funding is to be used to provide temporary shelter and related supportive services, which include the physical space in which victims reside as well as the expenses of running shelter facilities.<sup>58</sup> No less than 25% of subgrant funding is to be used for the following supportive services and prevention services:<sup>59</sup>

- assisting in the development of safety plans, and supporting efforts of victims to make decisions about their ongoing safety and well-being;
- providing individual and group counseling, peer support groups, and referrals to community-based services to assist victims and their dependents in recovering from the effects of domestic violence;
- providing services, training, technical assistance, and outreach to increase awareness of domestic violence and increase the accessibility of these services;

<sup>56</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), *19<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Census Report*, May 2025, pp. 5-18.

<sup>57</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10407 (State application).

<sup>58</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10408(b) (Subgrants and uses of funds).

<sup>59</sup> For example, of the 70% set-aside for shelter and related supportive services, all of it could be used for shelter; however, an additional 25% must be used for supportive services.

- providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services;
- providing services for children exposed to domestic violence, including age-appropriate counseling, supportive services, and services for the nonabusing parent that support that parent's role as caregiver (which may include services that work with the nonabusing parent and child together);
- providing case management, information, and referral services for victims concerning issues related to domestic violence intervention and prevention, including providing assistance in accessing federal and state financial assistance programs; legal assistance; medical advocacy, including provision of referrals for appropriate health care services (but not reimbursement for any health care services); assistance in locating and securing safe and affordable permanent housing and homelessness prevention services; and transportation, child care, respite care, job training and employment services, financial literacy services and education, financial planning, and related economic empowerment services;
- providing parenting and other educational services for victims and their dependents; and
- providing prevention services, including outreach to underserved populations.

Subgrantees that receive funding must provide a nonfederal match—of not less than \$1 for every \$5 of federal funding—directly from the state or through donations from public or private entities.<sup>60</sup> The matching funds can be in cash or in kind. Further, federal funds made available to a state must supplement, and not supplant, other federal, state, and local public funds expended on services for victims of domestic violence.

**What are eligible entities that can receive subgrant funding from states?**

A local public agency, or nonprofit private organization—including faith-based and charitable organizations, community-based organizations, tribal organizations, and voluntary associations—that assists victims of domestic violence and their dependents and has a documented history of effective work on this type of violence; or a partnership of two or more agencies or organizations that includes an agency or organization described above and an agency or organization that has a demonstrated history of serving populations in their communities, including providing culturally appropriate services.

**Source:** 42 U.S.C. §10408(c).

States must provide assurances that they will consult with and facilitate the participation of state domestic violence coalitions in planning and monitoring the distribution of grants and administering the grants (the role of state domestic violence coalitions is subsequently discussed further).<sup>61</sup> States must also describe how they will involve community-based organizations, whose primary purpose is to provide culturally appropriate services to underserved populations, including how such organizations can assist states in meeting the needs of these populations. States must further provide assurances that they have laws or procedures in place to bar an abuser from a shared household or a household of the abused persons, which may include eviction laws

<sup>60</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10406(c) (Formula grants to states—grant conditions).

<sup>61</sup> Tribes do not necessarily have domestic violence coalitions and therefore related provisions do not apply; however, state domestic violence coalitions must collaborate with Indian tribes and tribal organizations (and corresponding Native Hawaiian groups or communities) to address the needs of Indian (including Alaska Native) and Native Hawaiian victims of domestic violence. 42 U.S.C. §10411(d)(8). The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 authorizes funding for tribal domestic violence coalitions under Tribal Coalition Grants (34 U.S.C. §10441(d)). The program is funded by statutory set-asides from the VAWA-authorized STOP program and Sexual Assault Services program.

or procedures, where appropriate. Such laws or procedures are generally enforced by civil protection orders or restraining orders to limit the perpetrators' physical proximity to the victim.

In funding subgrantees, states must give priority to supporting community-based projects of "demonstrated effectiveness" carried out by nonprofit organizations that operate shelters for victims of domestic violence and their dependents; or that provide counseling, advocacy, and self-help services to victims. States have discretion in how they allocate their funding, so long as they provide assurances that grant funding will be distributed equitably within the state and between urban and rural areas of the state.

States have two years to spend funds. For example, funds allotted for FY2025 may be spent in FY2025 or FY2026. The HHS Secretary is authorized to reallocate the funds of a state by the end of the sixth month of a fiscal year that funds are appropriated if the state fails to meet the requirements of the grant. The Secretary must notify the state if its application for funds has not met these requirements. State domestic violence coalitions are permitted to help determine whether states are in compliance with these provisions. States are allowed six months to correct any deficiencies in their application.

### **Selected Grant Conditions Pertaining to Victims<sup>62</sup>**

The grant for states addresses the individual characteristics and privacy of participants and shelters. Both states and subgrantees funded under FVPSA may not deny individuals from participating in support programs on the basis of disability, sex, race, color, national origin, or religion (this also applies to FVPSA-funded activities generally). In addition, states and subgrantees may not impose income eligibility requirements on individuals participating in these programs. Further, states and subgrantees must protect the confidentiality and privacy of victims and their families to help ensure their safety. These entities are prohibited from disclosing any personally identifying information collected about services requested, and from revealing personally identifying information without the consent of the individual, as specified in the law. If disclosing the identity of the individual is compelled by statutory or court mandate, states and subgrantees must make reasonable attempts to notify victims, and they must take steps to protect the privacy and safety of the individual.

States and subgrantees may share information that has been aggregated and does not identify individuals, and information that has been generated by law enforcement and/or prosecutors and courts pertaining to protective orders or law enforcement and prosecutorial purposes. In addition, the location of confidential shelters may not be made public, except with written authorization of the person(s) operating the shelter. Subgrantees may not provide direct payments to any victim of domestic violence or the dependent(s) of the victim. Further, victims must be provided shelter and services on a voluntary basis. In other words, providers cannot compel or force individuals to come to a shelter or participate in counseling or other services.

### **State Domestic Violence Coalitions<sup>63</sup>**

Since 1992, FVPSA has authorized funding for state domestic violence coalitions (SDVCs). A SDVC is defined under the act as a statewide nongovernmental, nonprofit private domestic violence organization that (1) has a membership that includes a majority of the primary-purpose

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<sup>62</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10406(c) (Formula grants to states-grant conditions) and 42 U.S.C. §10408(d) (Subgrants and use of funds-conditions).

<sup>63</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10411 (Grants to State Domestic Violence Coalitions).

domestic violence service providers in the state;<sup>64</sup> (2) has board membership that is representative of domestic violence service providers, and that may include representatives of the communities in which the services are being provided; (3) has as its purpose to provide education, support, and technical assistance to such service providers so they can maintain shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents; and (4) serves as an information clearinghouse and resource center on domestic violence for the state and supports the development of policies, protocols, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention in the state.<sup>65</sup>

Funding for SDVCs is available for each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and four territories (American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Each jurisdiction has one SDVC, and these coalitions are designated by HHS. Funding is divided evenly among participating jurisdictions.<sup>66</sup> SDVCs must use FVPSA funding for specific activities, as follows:

- working with local domestic violence service programs and providers of direct services to encourage appropriate and comprehensive responses to domestic violence against adults or youth within the state, including providing training and technical assistance to subgrantees and conducting needs assessments;
- participating in planning and monitoring the distribution of subgrants and subgrant funds within the state under the grant program for states and territories;
- working in collaboration with service providers and community-based organizations to address the needs of domestic violence victims and their dependents who are racial and ethnic minorities and underserved populations;
- collaborating with and providing information to entities in such fields as housing, health care, mental health, social welfare, or business to support the development and implementation of effective policies, protocols, and programs that address the safety and support needs of adult and youth victims of domestic violence;
- encouraging appropriate responses to cases of domestic violence against adult and youth victims, including by working with judicial and law enforcement agencies;
- working with family law judges, criminal court judges, child protective service agencies, and children's advocates to develop appropriate responses to child custody and visitation issues in cases of children exposed to domestic violence, and in cases where this violence is concurrent with child abuse;
- providing information to the public about prevention of domestic violence and dating violence, including information targeted to underserved populations; and
- collaborating with Indian tribes and tribal organizations (and Native Hawaiian groups or communities) to address the needs of Indian (including Alaska Native)

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<sup>64</sup> SDVCs may include representatives of Indian tribes and tribal organizations. See §42 U.S.C. 10411(h) (Indian representatives).

<sup>65</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10402(11) (Definitions).

<sup>66</sup> For a list of state domestic violence coalitions funded under FVPSA, see HHS, ACF, “FY25 State & Territory Domestic Violence Coalition Formula Grant Recipients,” <https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofvps/FY25-DV-Coalition-Grant-Award-Recipients.pdf>.

and Native Hawaiian victims of domestic dating violence, as applicable in the state.<sup>67</sup>

## Resource Centers

As originally enacted, FVPSA authorized a national information and research clearinghouse on the prevention of domestic violence. As part of the act's reauthorization in 1992, the language about the clearinghouse was struck and replaced with authorization for resource centers on domestic violence, including special issue resource centers to address key areas of domestic violence. Reauthorization of FVPSA in 2010 added authorization for a national resource center on American Indian women and three culturally specific resources, which HHS had previously funded on a discretionary basis.<sup>68</sup> The 2010 law also authorized special issue resource centers that provide training and technical assistance on domestic violence intervention and prevention topics and state resource centers to address disparities in domestic violence in states with high proportions of Indian (including Alaska Native) or Native Hawaiian populations.<sup>69</sup>

As of FY2025, HHS administered grants for 16 resource centers under FVPSA appropriation for domestic violence shelters, victim services, and program support.<sup>70</sup> These resource centers provided information, training, and technical assistance on domestic violence issues. This assistance is provided by nonprofit organizations and other entities to multiple stakeholders—individuals, organizations, governmental entities, and communities—and is geared toward improving their capacity for preventing and responding to domestic violence.

## Services for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

FVPSA statute and regulations reference children exposed to domestic violence, but do not define related terminology. According to the research literature, this exposure can include children who see and/or hear violent acts, are present for the aftermath (e.g., seeing bruises on a mother's body, moving to a shelter), or live in a house where domestic violence occurs, regardless of whether they see and/or hear the violence. A nationally representative survey conducted by DOJ and CDC in 2008 found that 11% of children were exposed to family violence within the past year, including 6.6% who were exposed to domestic violence. A higher percentage—more than 1 in 4 children—had been exposed to some form of family violence in their lifetime.<sup>71</sup> The literature about the impacts of exposure to domestic violence is evolving. The effects of domestic violence

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<sup>67</sup> A SDVC is not required to use funds for two purpose areas (i.e., encouraging appropriate responses to cases of domestic violence against adult and youth victims; and working with family law judges, criminal court judges, child protective service agencies, and children's advocates) if it receives funding to carry out these activities authorized under the Violence Against Women Act. These activities include grants to help states; Indian tribal governments; state, local, and tribal courts; state domestic violence coalitions; and local governments develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women and develop and strengthen victim services. See 34 U.S.C. §10441 et seq.

<sup>68</sup> CRS correspondence with HHS ACF in June 2025.

<sup>69</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10410(b)(1)(A) authorizes the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence; 42 U.S.C. §10410(b)(1)(B) authorizes the National Resource Center Addressing Domestic Violence and Safety for Indian Women; 42 U.S.C. §10410(b)(2) authorizes the special issue resource centers; and 42 U.S.C. §10410(b)(3) authorizes state centers to reduce tribal disparities (Indian, including Alaska Natives or Native Hawaiians).

<sup>70</sup> HHS, ACF, "FY25 Family Violence Prevention & Services Resource Centers, Grant Awards Recipients," <https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofvps/FY25-DV-Resource-CTR—HL-Grant-Awards.pdf>.

<sup>71</sup> Sherry Hamby et al., *Children's Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence and Other Family Violence*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, October 2011, pp. 1-5.

on children can range from little or no effect to severe psychological harm and physical effects, depending on the type and severity of abuse and protective factors, among other variables.<sup>72</sup>

Multiple FVPSA activities address children exposed to domestic and related violence:

- One of the purposes of the formula grant program for states is to provide specialized services (e.g., counseling, advocacy, and other assistance) for abused parents and their children.<sup>73</sup>
- The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence is directed to offer domestic violence programs and research that include both victims and their children exposed to domestic violence.
- The national resource center that addresses mental health and trauma issues is required to address victims of domestic violence and their children who are exposed to such violence.
- State domestic violence coalitions must, among other activities, work with the legal system, child protective services, and children's advocates to develop appropriate responses to child custody and visitation issues in cases involving children exposed to domestic violence.

In addition to these provisions, the FVPSA statute authorizes funding for specialized services for abused parents and their children (discussed subsequently). Other FVPSA activities for children exposed to domestic violence have also been funded by HHS using discretionary authorities and funding leveraged through a fundraising or semipostal stamp.<sup>74</sup>

### **Funding for Specialized Services for Abused Parents and Their Children<sup>75</sup>**

Since 2003, FVPSA has specified that funding must be set aside for specialized services to address children exposed to domestic violence if the appropriation for shelter, victim services, and program support exceeds \$130 million.<sup>76</sup> Under current law, if funding is triggered, HHS must first reserve not less than 25% of funding above \$130 million to make grants to a local agency, nonprofit organization, or tribal organization with a demonstrated record of serving victims of domestic violence and their children. These funds are intended to expand the capacity of service programs and community-based programs to prevent future domestic violence by addressing the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. Funding has exceeded \$130 million annually in FY2010 and FY2014 through FY2025.

In FY2010, funding for shelter and services was just over \$130 million. HHS reserved the excess funding as well as unallocated FVPSA funding (under shelter, victim services, and program

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<sup>72</sup> Alice Summers, *Children's Exposure to Domestic Violence: A Guide to Research and Resources*, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and DOJ, OJP, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2006, pp. 5-6.

<sup>73</sup> In a 2024 one-day census count of domestic violence shelter and service providers, 45% reported providing support and advocacy for children on that day and 76% reported providing this support and advocacy throughout the year. Nearly 26,000 children were served through shelter or temporary housing and 4,900 received other domestic violence services. National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), *Domestic Violence Counts 2024*. Not all of these providers receive funding under the formula grant program.

<sup>74</sup> A *semipostal stamp* is a stamp used to raise money for a cause. U.S. Postal Service, "Semipostal Stamps," <https://about.usps.com/what/corporate-social-responsibility/activities/semipostals.htm>.

<sup>75</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10406 (Formula Grants to States).

<sup>76</sup> This was enacted as a provision under the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-36). The 2010 reauthorization of FVPSA (P.L. 111-320) created a new section at 42 U.S.C. §10412 (Specialized Services for Abused Parents and Their Children), which has the same purpose as the original provision.

support) to fund specialized services for abused parents and their children through an initiative known as Expanding Services for Children and Youth Exposed to Domestic Violence. HHS also used unallocated funds to fund the initiative in FY2011 and FY2012. Total funding for the initiative was \$2.5 million. This funding was awarded to five grantees—four state domestic violence coalitions and one national technical assistance provider—to expand supports to children, youth, and parents exposed to domestic violence and build strategies for serving this population.<sup>77</sup> For example, the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the state domestic violence coalition for Alaska, used the funding to improve coordination between domestic violence agencies and the child welfare system. Their work involved developing an integrated training curriculum and policies, and creation of a multidisciplinary team of child welfare and domestic violence stakeholders in four communities.

Funding again exceeded \$130 million in each of FY2014 through FY2025, thereby triggering the set-aside. In FY2014 and FY2015, HHS directed the extra funding for domestic violence shelters, victim services, and program support.<sup>78</sup> For FY2016 onward, HHS has provided funding for specialized services for abused parents and their children via the Specialized Services for Abused Parents and their Children (SSPAC) grant. For FY2025 (the most recent year of awards as of the date of this report), HHS provided \$22.5 million to 56 grantees.<sup>79</sup> Grantees include domestic violence coalitions and other entities. They are working to alleviate trauma experienced by children who are exposed to domestic violence, support enhanced relationships between these children and their parents, and improve systemic responses to such families. A separate grant—known as Expanding Services to Children, Youth, and Abused Parents (ESCYAP)—has been awarded since FY2016 to the nonprofit organization Futures Without Violence to provide training and technical assistance to the grantees and facilitate coordination among them through the Promising Futures Capacity Building Center.<sup>80</sup> In FY2025 (the most recent award as of the cover date of this report), Futures Without Violence received \$3 million to operate the center.<sup>81</sup>

## National Domestic Violence Hotline<sup>82</sup>

As amended by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994, FVPSA directs the HHS Secretary to award a grant to one or more private entities to operate a 24-hour, national, toll-free hotline for domestic violence (hereinafter, “hotline”). Since 1995, HHS has entered into a cooperative agreement with a nonprofit organization to operate the National Domestic Violence Hotline, with funding that has been competitively awarded. The hotline is currently administered

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<sup>77</sup> The grantees were New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women, Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, and Family Violence Prevention Fund.

<sup>78</sup> The FY2016 budget request noted that “In previous budgets [FY2014 through FY2015] this provision was overridden in order to direct resources to shelters.” HHS, *FY2016 Administration for Children and Families Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees*, p. 212.

<sup>79</sup> For a list of grantees, see HHS, ACF, Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services (OFVPS), *2025 Specialized Services for Abused Parents and Their Children (SSAPC) Grant Recipients*, <https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofvps/FY25-DV-SSAPC-NCC-Grant-Award-Recipients.pdf>.

<sup>80</sup> Futures Without Violence, “Promising Futures: Best Practices for Serving Children, Youth, and Parents Experiencing Domestic Violence,” <https://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org>.

<sup>81</sup> HHS, Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System (TAGGS), “Recipient Information: Futures Without Violence,” FY2025.

<sup>82</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10413 (National Domestic Violence Hotline Grant).

by an organization in Texas of the same name.<sup>83</sup> The agreement was most recently awarded for a five-year period that extends from the end of FY2020 through the end of FY2025.<sup>84</sup>

FVPSA requires that the hotline provide information and assistance to adult and youth victims of domestic violence, family and household members of victims of such violence, and “persons affected by victimization.” This includes support related to domestic violence, children exposed to domestic violence, sexual assault, intervention programs for abusive partners, and related issues. As required under FVPSA, the hotline carries out multiple activities:

- It employs, trains, and supervises personnel to answer incoming calls; provides counseling and referral services; and directly connects callers to service providers.
- It maintains a database of domestic violence services for victims throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam, including information on the availability of shelter and services.
- It provides assistance to meet the needs of special populations, including underserved populations, individuals with disabilities, and youth victims of domestic violence and dating violence. The hotline provides access to personnel for callers with limited English proficiency and persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.

In FY2024, the hotline received nearly 1.1 million requests, up from approximately 500,000 in FY2019.<sup>85</sup> According to HHS, recent promotion of the hotline—including Google’s search optimization of it—and the hotline’s expanded text messaging services (launched in 2021) have contributed to unprecedented request volume.<sup>86</sup> In FY2024, the hotline responded to 54% of all calls and 38% of online chats—below its targeted response rates of 75% and 65% respectively.<sup>87</sup> However, the hotline exceeded its target on responding to texts (50%), with a response rate of 63%. HHS’s recent budget requests for the hotline have emphasized improvements to staffing and website functionality and triaging (including use of artificial intelligence).<sup>88</sup>

Since 2007, the hotline has operated a separate helpline for youth victims of domestic violence, the National Dating Abuse Helpline (known as [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org)), which is funded through the appropriation for the hotline. This helpline offers real-time support primarily from peer advocates trained to provide support, information, and advocacy to those involved in abusive dating relationships, as well as others who support victims.<sup>89</sup> In FY2024, the helpline received a monthly average of about 3,200 calls, 1,600 online chats, and 1,000 texts.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> For further information, see National Domestic Violence Hotline, “History,” <https://www.thehotline.org/about/history-of-the-hotline>.

<sup>84</sup> HHS, ACF, FYSB, “\$20.59 Million Awarded to Support Victims of Domestic Violence and their Children,” press release, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2020/millions-awarded-to-support-victims-of-domestic-violence-and-their-children>.

<sup>85</sup> HHS, ACF FY2026 *Justification of Estimates*, pp. 80-83 and HHS, ACF FY2022 *Justification of Estimates*, p. 206.

<sup>86</sup> HHS, ACF FY2024 *Justification of Estimates*, pp. 226-228.

<sup>87</sup> According to HHS (HHS, ACF FY2024 *Justification of Estimates*, p. 229), “it is not feasible for 100 percent of calls received to be answered due to unanticipated spikes resulting from media coverage promoting the Hotline phone number and increases in call volume during the rollover of state or local program crisis lines during an emergency, disaster, or a national public health emergency, such as the pandemic. In addition, some situations require a caller to disconnect before an advocate can answer (e.g., the abuser enters the room).”

<sup>88</sup> For example, see HHS, ACF FY2026 *Justification of Estimates*, p. 81.

<sup>89</sup> National Council on Family Violence, “[loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org),” <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>.

<sup>90</sup> HHS, ACF FY2026 *Justification of Estimates*, p. 83 and HHS, ACF FY2025 *Justification of Estimates*, p. 195.

In addition, since 2017 the hotline has collaborated with the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center to develop and fund the StrongHearts Native Helpline for Native American survivors of domestic abuse.<sup>91</sup> The helpline uses the technology and infrastructure of the hotline, and draws from the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center to provide Native-centered, culturally appropriate services for survivors and others. In FY2024, StrongHearts received over 15,000 requests (it did not report a response rate).<sup>92</sup> In 2025, HHS announced an expansion of the hotline under a new name, the National Indigenous Domestic Violence Hotline.<sup>93</sup>

## National Domestic Violence Hotline Study

A 2018 study of the national and youth hotlines examined a number of their features, including who contacts the lines, the needs and demographic characteristics of those individuals, how they reach the lines, and the type of support they receive. The study found that nearly half (48%) of those who called the hotline were victims/survivors and another 39% did not identify themselves. The remainder were family/friends, abusers, and service providers. According to the study, the service most commonly provided was emotional support, which recipients reportedly valued highly.<sup>94</sup>

Another study, published in 2020, evaluated the short-term outcomes of contacting the hotline.<sup>95</sup> Among those who completed a follow-up survey immediately after they made contact with the hotline, the majority (83% to 98%) reported improvements on all of the outcomes measured, including knowledge of domestic and/or dating violence, safety planning, knowledge of options and resources, confidence about making decisions, comfort asking for help, and hopefulness for the future. These self-reported outcomes were higher among domestic violence victims/survivors as compared to others (e.g., family/friends and service providers) who contacted the hotline.<sup>96</sup>

HHS published a report in 2022 reviewing trends in the hotline's contact data before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Examining contacts from March 2019 to March 2021, the report did not find substantial changes in the total contact volume. However, the number of online chats increased by 19%. There was also a 40% increase in the number of people seeking assistance with protection/restraining orders and 24% increase in the number of people seeking assistance who identified as Asian. The reported challenges faced by the hotline during the pandemic included difficulty connecting victims to service providers with limited capacity, difficulty identifying how the pandemic was affecting victims' needs, a reduced call volume due to victims

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<sup>91</sup> The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center is a nonprofit organization that serves as the FVPSA-funded National Indian Resource Center to assist tribes and tribal organizations in responding to domestic violence. See StrongHearts Native Helpline, "About StrongHearts," <https://strongheartshelpline.org/about>.

<sup>92</sup> HHS, ACF *FY2026 Justification of Estimates*, p. 81.

<sup>93</sup> HHS, ACF, "HHS Awards \$15 Million to Fund First-Ever Standalone National Indigenous Domestic Violence Hotline," September 25, 2025, <https://acf.gov/media/press/2025/hhs-awards-15-million-indigenous-hotline>.

<sup>94</sup> HHS, ACF, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), *An Evaluation of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect*, OPRE Report #2018-117, December 2018.

<sup>95</sup> HHS, ACF, OPRE, *Short-Term Outcomes for Users of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect*. OPRE Report #2020-55, April 2020. Because of safety and confidentiality concerns, the survey was only given to users who did not need an immediate referral. The study also included outcomes from a two-week follow-up survey; however, the response rates for this survey were low and not generalizable to the broader population of hotline users. Also see George Washington University, Milken Institute School of Public Health, *Short-Term Outcomes After Contacting The National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect: Comparing Survivors to Other Contactors*, for HHS, ACF, FYSB and OPRE, OPRE Report # 2020-119, p. 12, September 2, 2020.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

being unable to call for help in the presence of their abuser, and difficulty facilitating collaboration between hotline staff members.<sup>97</sup>

## Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA)<sup>98</sup>

Since 1994, FVPSA has authorized the HHS Secretary to award cooperative agreements to state domestic violence coalitions that coordinate local community projects to prevent domestic violence, including such violence involving youth. Congress first awarded funding for prevention activities in FY1996 under a pilot program carried out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The pilot program was formalized in 2002 under a program now known as the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) program. The focus of DELTA is preventing domestic violence before it occurs, rather than responding once it happens or working to prevent its recurrence.<sup>99</sup> The program has had five iterations:

- DELTA, which was funded from FY1996 through FY2012 and involved 14 states;
- DELTA Prep, which extended from FY2008 through FY2012 and involved 19 states that had not received the initial DELTA funds;
- DELTA FOCUS, which extended from FY2013 through FY2017 and involved 10 states, all of which had previously received funding under DELTA or DELTA Prep; and
- DELTA Impact, which ran from FY2018 through FY2023 and involved 9 states, all of which except one has previously received DELTA funding; and
- DELTA Achieving Health Equity through Addressing Disparities (AHEAD), which began in FY2023 and involves 13 states, most of which had previously received DELTA funding.

### Original DELTA

As originally implemented, the program provided funding and technical assistance to 14 state domestic violence coalitions to support local efforts to carry out prevention strategies and work at the state level to oversee these strategies.<sup>100</sup> Local prevention efforts were referred to as coordinated community responses (CCRs). The CCRs were led by domestic violence organizations and other stakeholders across multiple sectors, including law enforcement, public health, and faith-based organizations. For example, the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence supported two CCRs—the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services and the Lakeshore Alliance Against Domestic and Sexual Violence—that focused on

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<sup>97</sup> HHS, Office of Inspector General, *National Snapshot of Trends in the National Domestic Violence Hotline's Contact Data Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, April 2022, <https://oig.hhs.gov/documents/audit/9639/A-09-21-06000-Report%20in%20Brief.pdf>.

<sup>98</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10414 (Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA)).

<sup>99</sup> The CDC defines *primary prevention* as “stopping IPV [intimate partner violence] before it occurs.” HHS, CDC, “Violence Prevention: DELTA Focus,” <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/deltafocus/> (accessed June 2022).

<sup>100</sup> Alaska, California, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

faith-based initiatives. Both CCRs held forums that provided resources and information about the roles of faith leaders in preventing the first-time occurrence of domestic violence. The 14 state domestic violence coalitions developed five- to eight-year domestic violence prevention plans known as Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Plans. These plans were developed with multiple stakeholders, and they discuss the strategies needed to prevent first-time perpetration or victimization and to build the capacity to implement these strategies. The CDC issued a brief that summarizes the plans and identifies the successes and challenges for state domestic violence coalitions in supporting and enhancing intimate partner violence prevention efforts. Overall, the report found that states improved their capacity to respond to intimate partner violence through evidence-based planning and implementation strategies.<sup>101</sup>

## **DELTA Prep**

DELTA Prep was a project that extended from FY2008 through FY2012, and was a collaborative effort among the CDC, the CDC Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.<sup>102</sup> Through DELTA Prep, the CDC extended the DELTA program to 19 states<sup>103</sup> that did not receive the initial DELTA funds. State and community leaders in these other states received training and assistance in building prevention strategies, based on the work of the 14 state domestic violence coalitions that received DELTA funds. DELTA Prep states integrated primary prevention strategies into their work and the work of their partners, and built leadership for domestic violence prevention in their states.

## **DELTA FOCUS**

DELTA FOCUS (Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United within States) continued earlier DELTA work. From FY2013 through FY2017, DELTA FOCUS funded 10 state domestic violence coalition grantees to implement and evaluate strategies to prevent domestic violence. Funding was provided by the coalitions to 18 community response teams that engaged in carrying out these strategies.<sup>104</sup> DELTA FOCUS differed from DELTA and DELTA Prep by placing greater emphasis on implementing prevention strategies rather than building capacity for prevention. DELTA FOCUS also put more emphasis on evaluating the program to help build evidence about effective interventions.

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<sup>101</sup> HHS, CDC, *Taking Action to Prevent Intimate Partner Violence: Creating Statewide Prevention Plans*, 2013. For further information about DELTA evaluation activities from 2003 through 2010, see Pamela J. Fox et al., “Strengthening Systems for the Primary Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence: CDC’s DELTA and EMPOWER Programs,” *Journal of Family Social Work*, vol. 13, no. 4, 2013.

<sup>102</sup> The CDC Foundation is a nonprofit organization established by Congress that creates programs in partnership with the CDC for fighting threats to health. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a philanthropic organization that focuses on public health issues.

<sup>103</sup> Alabama, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Idaho, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

<sup>104</sup> Alaska, California, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, and Rhode Island. For further information, see HHS, CDC, “Funding Opportunity, DELTA (Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement Leadership Through Alliances, Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United with States) FOCUS”; and HHS, CDC, “The DELTA Focus Program: Intimate Partner Violence is Preventable,” <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/deltafocus/> (accessed June 2022).

## **DELTA Impact**

DELTA Impact, which ran from FY2018 through FY2023, provided funding to nine state domestic violence coalitions.<sup>105</sup> This grant supported community response teams that aimed to decrease domestic violence risk factors and increase protective factors by implementing prevention activities based on the best available evidence. Grantees implemented and evaluated policy efforts under three broad strategies to address domestic violence prevention: (1) engaging influential adults and peers, including by engaging men and boys as allies in prevention; (2) creating protective environments, such as improving school climates and safety; and (3) strengthening economic supports for families.

## **DELTA AHEAD**

The latest iteration of the program, DELTA AHEAD, awarded funding to 13 state domestic violence coalitions to operate projects between FY2023 and FY2025.<sup>106</sup> DELTA AHEAD continues working towards DELTA Impact’s goal of decreasing domestic violence risk factors and increasing protective factors by focusing on promoting health equity. Specifically, DELTA AHEAD aims to prevent intimate partner violence by addressing the “social determinants of health, and health equity” and “implement intimate partner violence primary prevention strategies to promote health equity at state and community levels.”<sup>107</sup> Each coalition will develop or improve state and community action plans detailing efforts to achieve this goal. Recipients will also work with rural and indigenous communities to create population-specific action plans.

State domestic violence coalitions have sought to achieve DELTA AHEAD’s goals in a variety of ways. The Ohio Domestic Violence Network is using its grant to fund programs that aim to reduce teenage alcohol consumption, expand child support access for victims of domestic violence, and engage men and boys in violence prevention activities.<sup>108</sup> The Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence intends to use DELTA AHEAD funding to continue state-level economic support policies and community-level efforts to promote green urban spaces that began under DELTA Impact.<sup>109</sup> Meanwhile, the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence is funding a range of activities, including (1) an evaluation of the impact of parental leave policies on public health, including domestic violence; (2) a conference related to improving youth and family services, including those related to domestic violence; (3) training low-income parents on

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<sup>105</sup> Alaska, California, Delaware, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Tennessee. For further information, see HHS, CDC, “Funding Opportunity, DELTA (Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement Leadership Through Alliances, Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United with States) Impact”; and HHS, CDC, “About DELTA Impact,” <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/delta/impact/index.html> (accessed June 2022).

<sup>106</sup> Alaska, California, Delaware, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Arizona, Connecticut, and New Jersey. For further information, see HHS, CDC, “Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances: Achieving Health Equity through Addressing Disparities,” <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/programs/index.html>.

<sup>107</sup> HHS, CDC, “Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances: Achieving Health Equity through Addressing Disparities,” <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/programs/index.html>.

<sup>108</sup> Ohio Domestic Violence Network, *DELTA AHEAD Leadership Team*, 2024, [https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DELTA\\_AHEAD\\_LeadershipOverview2024.pdf](https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DELTA_AHEAD_LeadershipOverview2024.pdf).

<sup>109</sup> Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence, *Building Together: 2023 Annual Report*, August 2024, <https://ricadv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/RI-Coalition-Against-Domestic-Violence-2023-Annual-Report-Web.pdf>.

how to advocate for themselves and navigate systems; and (4) prevention-focused trainings for community organizations.<sup>110</sup>

## Demonstration Projects

Using unallocated funds, in recent years (FY2019-FY2025), HHS has funded demonstration projects aimed at improving housing for domestic violence survivors.<sup>111</sup> This has included funding for the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) (selected through a competitive process<sup>112</sup>) to operate the *Safe Housing Capacity Building Center*, which conducts research on housing-related issues for survivors, provides training and technical assistance to service providers, and operates public awareness strategies to expand intervention services.<sup>113</sup> From FY2022 to FY2025, HHS also provided funding to the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (selected through a competitive process<sup>114</sup>) to operate a *Tribal Safe Housing Capacity Building Center for Domestic Violence Survivors*, which similarly aims to disseminate research and provide training and technical assistance to local organizations and tribes, with a focus on supporting the needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native survivors in seeking safe housing.<sup>115</sup>

## Teen Dating Violence

### Background

Teenagers may be exposed to violence in their dating relationships. CDC and DOJ research has reported that on an annual basis, roughly 10% of teens experienced physical dating violence involving a person who hurts or tries to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, or using another type of physical force (rates were similar among males and females).<sup>116</sup> Further, just over 9% of female teens and 3% of male teens reported experiencing sexual dating violence within a recent one-year period, which includes forcing or attempting to force a partner to take part in a sexual act, sexual touching, or a nonphysical sexual event (e.g., sexting) when the partner does not or cannot

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<sup>110</sup> Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, *Re-Centering: State of Indiana New Parent Leave Policy Evaluation*, [https://institute.incap.org/assets/ICADV%20New%20Parent%20Leave%20Report%20FINAL.pdf?blm\\_aid=290468864](https://institute.incap.org/assets/ICADV%20New%20Parent%20Leave%20Report%20FINAL.pdf?blm_aid=290468864); and Monroe Circuit Court, *2024 Annual Report*, 2024, pp. 235-236, <https://www.in.gov/counties/monroe/files/annual-report2024.pdf>.

<sup>111</sup> HHS, ACF *Justification of Estimates* for FY2021-FY2026 and HHS, TAGGS, "Recipient Information: National Resource Center on Domestic Violence."

<sup>112</sup> HHS, ACF, "Funding Opportunity Announcement: Family Violence Prevention and Services Discretionary Grants: National Capacity Building Center on Safe and Supportive Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors," HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-EV-1160, 2016, <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/283305>.

<sup>113</sup> CRS correspondence with HHS, ACF, September 2020 and July 2022; and Safe Housing Partnerships, "About the Consortium," <https://safehousingpartnerships.org/about>; and HHS, *ACF FY2025 Justification of Estimates*, p. 201.

<sup>114</sup> HHS, ACF, "Family Violence Prevention and Services Discretionary Grants: Capacity Building Center on Safe and Supportive Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors in Tribal Communities (Tribal Safe Housing Center)," HHS-2021-ACF-ACYF-EV-1945, 2021, <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/329060>.

<sup>115</sup> CRS correspondence with HHS, ACF, July 2022; HHS, *ACF FY2025 Justification of Estimates*, p. 201; and HHS, TAGGS, "Recipient Information: National Indigenous Women's Resource Center."

<sup>116</sup> For example, see DOJ, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Dating Violence Reported by High School Students*, 2023; and Heather B. Clayton et al., *Dating Violence, Sexual Violence, and Bullying Victimization Among High School Students—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States*, 2021, CDC, April 2023, 72(1): 66–74.

consent.<sup>117</sup> Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender teens tend to report higher rates of dating violence victimization compared to other teens.<sup>118</sup>

The FVPSA statute references dating violence throughout and uses the definition of “dating violence” that is in VAWA. The term is defined as violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, and where the existence of the relationship is determined based on the length, type, and frequency of interaction between the persons in it.<sup>119</sup>

Domestic violence shelters and supportive services funded by FVPSA are often geared towards adult victims and their children if they accompany the adult into shelter. The FVPSA statute does not explicitly authorize supports for youth victims of dating violence who are unaccompanied by their parents; however, the law does not limit eligibility for shelter and services based on age. Access to domestic violence shelters and supports for teen victims, including protective orders against abusers, varies by state.<sup>120</sup> The primary source of support for teen victims under FVPSA is provided via the national domestic violence hotline. The hotline includes the loveisrespect helpline and related online resources (discussed previously). Youth victims can call, chat, or text with peer advocates for support. The loveisrespect website includes a variety of materials that address signs of abuse and resources for getting help.<sup>121</sup>

## **FVPSA Interaction with Other Federal Laws**

In addition to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), FVPSA has been reauthorized with VAWA and shares some of that law’s purposes. In addition, FVPSA interacts with the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) because some FVPSA-funded programs receive VOCA funding to provide legal and other assistance to victims.<sup>122</sup> Further, FVPSA includes provisions that encourage or require HHS to coordinate FVPSA programs with related programs and research carried out by other federal agencies.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

FVPSA does not focus on child abuse per se; however, in enacting FVPSA as part of the 1984 amendments to CAPTA, some Members of Congress and other stakeholders noted that child abuse and neglect and intimate partner violence are not isolated problems, and can arise

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<sup>117</sup> DOJ, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Dating Violence Reported by High School Students*, 2023.

<sup>118</sup> CDC, “Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Data Explorer,” <http://yrbs-explorer.services.cdc.gov/> (accessed on January 12, 2026) and CDC, “Transgender Identity and Experiences of Violence Victimization, Substance Use, Suicide Risk, and Sexual Risk Behaviors Among High School Students—19 States and Large Urban School Districts, 2017,” *MMWR*, January 2019, 68(3): 67-71.

<sup>119</sup> 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(10).

<sup>120</sup> Break the Cycle, *2010 State Law Report Cards: A National Survey of Teen Dating Violence Laws*, 2010.

<sup>121</sup> National Council on Family Violence, “Love is Respect,” <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>.

<sup>122</sup> The majority of nonresidential domestic violence programs participating in a 2011 survey reported that they received FVPSA funding (65%) and other federal funding under the Victims of Crime Act (73%) or the Violence Against Women Act (76%). FVPSA funding made up 18% of the programs’ budget; VOCA funding made up 21% of the programs’ budget; and VAWA funding made up 15% of the programs’ budget. Eleanor Lynn et al., *Meeting Survivors’ Needs Through Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services & Supports: Results of a Multi-State Study*, University of Connecticut, School of Social Work and National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, prepared for DOJ, OJP, NIJ, November 2011.

simultaneously.<sup>123</sup> The research literature has focused on this association. In a national study of children in families who come into contact with a public child welfare agency through an investigation of child abuse and neglect, investigative caseworkers identified 28% of the children's households as having a history of domestic violence against the caregiver and 13% of those caregivers as being in active domestic violence situations. Further, about 1 out of 7 reported cases of child maltreatment included domestic violence.<sup>124</sup>

CAPTA provides funding to states to improve their child protective services (CPS) systems. It requires states, as a condition of receiving certain CAPTA funds, to describe their policies to enhance and promote collaboration between child protective service and domestic violence agencies, among other social service providers.<sup>125</sup> Other federal efforts also address the association between domestic violence and child abuse. For example, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports efforts to improve the outcomes of young children living in communities with concentrations of domestic violence or child maltreatment, among other factors. The program provides grants to states, territories, and tribes for the support of evidence-based early childhood home visiting programs that provide in-home visits by health or social service professionals with at-risk families.<sup>126</sup>

Separately, the Family Connection Grants<sup>127</sup> program, authorized under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, provided funding from FY2009 through FY2014 to public child welfare agencies and nonprofit private organizations to help children—whether they are in foster care or at risk of entering foster care—connect (or reconnect) with birth parents or other extended kin. The funds were used to establish or support certain activities, including family group decisionmaking meetings that enable families to develop plans that nurture children and protect them from abuse and neglect, and, when appropriate, to safely facilitate connecting children exposed to domestic violence to relevant services and reconnecting them with the abused parent.<sup>128</sup>

In addition, HHS and DOJ supported the Greenbook Initiative in the early 2000s. The Greenbook was developed from the efforts of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges,<sup>129</sup> which convened family court judges and experts on child maltreatment and domestic violence. In 1999, this group developed guidelines for child welfare agencies, domestic violence providers, and dependency courts in responding to domestic violence and child abuse in a publication that came to be known as the Greenbook. Soon after, HHS and DOJ funded efforts in six communities to address domestic violence and child maltreatment by implementing guidelines from the Greenbook.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> U.S. Congress, House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, *Violence and Abuse in American Families*, 98<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., June 14, 1984. See for example, statement of Representative David Marriott.

<sup>124</sup> Cecilia Casanueva et al., *NSCAW III Baseline Report (2017–2022): Child and Family Involvement with the Child Welfare System*, HHS, ACF, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, July 2024, pp. 19, 25. These percentages include all children without regard to whether the child was subsequently removed from the home.

<sup>125</sup> 42 U.S.C. §5106a(a)(14) (Development and operation grants).

<sup>126</sup> For further information, see CRS Report R43930, *Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program: Background and Funding*.

<sup>127</sup> For further information on CAPTA and Family Connection Grants, see CRS Report R43458, *Child Welfare: An Overview of Federal Programs and Their Current Funding*.

<sup>128</sup> 42 U.S.C. §627 (Family connection grants).

<sup>129</sup> 42 U.S.C. §627. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges is the operator of the FVPSA-funded Child Protection and Custody Resource Center.

<sup>130</sup> For further information, see National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, “The Greenbook Initiative,” <https://www.ncjfcj.org/publications/bringing-the-greenbook-to-life-a-resource-guide-for-communities/> and *Greenbook: (continued...)*

Finally, the HHS-led Federal Interagency Working Group on Child Abuse and Neglect includes a Domestic Violence Subcommittee.<sup>131</sup> The committee focuses on interagency initiatives that address children exposed to domestic violence and promoting information exchange and joint planning among federal agencies.

## **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)<sup>132</sup>**

FVPSA has twice been amended alongside VAWA.<sup>133</sup> Both FVPSA and VAWA are the primary vehicles for federal support to prevent and respond to domestic violence, including for children and youth who are exposed to this violence; however, FVPSA has a more singular focus on services for victims and prevention, while VAWA's unique contributions are more focused on law enforcement and the legal response to domestic violence.

VAWA was enacted in 1994 after Congress held a series of hearings on the causes and effects of domestic and other forms of violence against women. Some Members of Congress and others asserted that communities needed a more comprehensive response to violence against women generally—not just against intimate partners—and that perpetrators should face harsher penalties.<sup>134</sup> The shortfalls of legal responses and the need for a change in attitudes toward violence against women were reasons cited for the passage of the law. Since VAWA's enactment, the federal response to domestic violence has expanded to involve multiple departments and activities that include investigating and prosecuting crimes, providing additional services to victims and abusers, and educating the criminal justice system and other stakeholders about violence against women.

Although VAWA also addresses other forms of violence against women and provides a broader response to domestic violence, some VAWA programs have a similar purpose to those carried out under FVPSA. Congress currently funds VAWA grant programs that address the needs of victims of domestic violence. These programs also provide support to victims of sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. For example, like the FVPSA grant program for states, territories, and tribes, VAWA's STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant program provides services to victims of domestic and dating violence (and sexual assault and stalking) that include victim advocacy designed to help victims obtain needed resources or services, crisis intervention, and advocacy in navigating the criminal and/or civil legal system.<sup>135</sup>

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*The Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*, 1999.

<sup>131</sup> HHS, Office on Women's Health, *Overview of Violence Against Women Activities 2010-2011*, p. 28; and HHS, ACF, "Federal Inter-Agency Work Group on Child Abuse & Neglect," <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/fediawg>.

<sup>132</sup> For further information, see CRS Report R42499, *The Violence Against Women Act: Overview, Legislation, and Federal Funding*.

<sup>133</sup> FVPSA was amended by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-322), which authorized VAWA, and by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-386), which also reauthorized VAWA.

<sup>134</sup> In their introduction to the Violence Against Women Act, then-Senator Joseph Biden and Senator Barbara Boxer highlighted the weak legal response to violence against women by police and prosecutors. Senators Biden and Boxer, "Violence Against Women," Remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, June 21, 1994. See also Joseph Biden, "Violence Against Women: The Congressional Response," *American Psychologist*, vol. 48, no. 10 (October 1993), pp. 1059-1061; Barbara Vobejda, "Battered Women's Cry Relayed Up From Grass Roots," *Washington Post*, July 6, 1994, p. A1.

<sup>135</sup> DOJ, OVW, *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About STOP Formula Grants*, updated October 2017.

Of STOP funds appropriated, 30% must be allocated to victim services. STOP grants also support activities that are not funded under FVPSA, including for law enforcement, courts, and prosecution efforts. Another VAWA program, Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence, provides housing (either short-term emergency or transitional) for victims, with the goal of moving them into permanent housing. Likewise, through the grant program to states, territories, and tribes, FVPSA provides immediate and short-term shelter to victims of domestic violence and authorizes service providers to assist with locating and securing safe and affordable permanent housing and homelessness prevention services.

## **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)**

FVPSA requires that entities receiving funds under the grant programs for states, territories, and tribes use a certain share of funding for selected activities, including assistance in accessing other federal and state financial assistance programs.<sup>136</sup> One source of federal finance assistance for victims of domestic violence is the Crime Victims Fund (CVF), authorized under the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and administered by the Department of Justice's Office of Victims of Crime (OVC).<sup>137</sup> Within the CVF, funds are available for victims of domestic violence through the Victim Compensation Formula Grants program and Victims Assistance Formula Grants program. The Victims Compensation Grants may be used to reimburse victims of crime for out-of-pocket expenses such as medical and mental health counseling expenses, lost wages, funeral and burial costs, and other costs (except property loss) authorized in a state's compensation statute. Between FY2021 and FY2022, approximately 93% of claims paid were related to domestic and family violence.<sup>138</sup> The Victims Assistance Formula Grants program provides grants to state crime victim assistance programs to administer funds for state and community-based victim service program operations.<sup>139</sup> The grants support direct services to victims of crime including information and referral services, crisis counseling, temporary housing, criminal justice advocacy support, and other assistance needs. In FY2024, approximately 20% of victimizations that were addressed under these grants were related to domestic or family violence, which was the most common victimization type.<sup>140</sup>

## **Federal Coordination**

Both FVPSA, which is administered within HHS, and VAWA, which is largely administered within DOJ, require federal agencies to coordinate their efforts to respond to domestic violence. For example, FVPSA authorizes the HHS Secretary to coordinate programs within HHS and to “seek to coordinate” those programs “with programs administered by other federal agencies, that involve or affect efforts to prevent family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence or the provision of assistance for adults and youth victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence.”<sup>141</sup> In addition, FVPSA directs HHS to assign employees to coordinate research efforts on family and related violence within HHS and research carried out by other federal

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<sup>136</sup> 42 U.S.C. 10408(b)(G)(1) (Subgrants and uses of funds).

<sup>137</sup> Deposits to the CVF come from criminal finds, forfeited appearance bonds, penalties, and special assessments collected by U.S. Attorneys' Offices, federal courts, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, among other sources. For further information, see CRS Report R42672, *The Crime Victims Fund (CVF): Federal Support for Victims of Crime*.

<sup>138</sup> DOJ, OVC, 2023 *Report to the Nation*, <https://ovc.ojp.gov/2023-report-nation>.

<sup>139</sup> More information on this program is available in CRS Report R42672, *The Crime Victims Fund (CVF): Federal Support for Victims of Crime*.

<sup>140</sup> DOJ, OVC, *VOCA Victim Assistance Data Dashboard: Data Analyses for Fiscal Years 2021–2024*, <https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/data-analyses/voca-victim-assistance>.

<sup>141</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10404(a)(5) (Authority of Secretary—authorities).

agencies.<sup>142</sup> Similarly, VAWA requires the Attorney General to consult with stakeholders in establishing a task force—comprised of representatives from relevant federal agencies—to coordinate research on domestic violence and to report to Congress on any overlapping or duplication of efforts on domestic violence issues.<sup>143</sup>

In 1995, HHS and DOJ convened the National Advisory Council on Violence Against Women. The purpose of the council was to promote greater awareness of violence against women and to advise the federal government on domestic violence issues. In 2010, then-Attorney General Eric Holder rechartered the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women, which had previously been established in 2006 under his predecessor.<sup>144</sup> As stated in the charter, the committee is intended to provide the Attorney General and the HHS Secretary with policy advice on improving the nation’s response to violence against women and coordinating stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels in this response, with a focus on identifying and implementing successful interventions for children and teens who witness and/or are victimized by intimate partner and sexual violence.

Separately, the director for FVPSA programs and the deputy director of HHS’s Office on Women’s Health provide leadership to the HHS Steering Committee on Violence Against Women.<sup>145</sup> This committee supports collaborative efforts to address violence against women and their children, and includes representatives from the CDC and other HHS agencies. The members of the committee have established links with professional societies in the health and social service fields to increase attention on women’s health and violence issues.

In addition to these collaborative activities, multiple federal agencies have participated in the Federal Interagency Workgroup on Teen Dating Violence, which was convened in 2006 to share information and coordinate teen dating violence program, policy, and research activities to combat teen dating violence from a public health perspective. The workgroup has funded a project to incorporate adolescents in the process for developing a research agenda to address teen dating violence.<sup>146</sup>

At times, Presidents have led initiatives addressing domestic violence. For example, during the Obama Administration, the Office of the Vice President coordinated federal efforts to end violence against women, including by convening Cabinet-level officials to address issues concerning domestic and other forms of violence against women.<sup>147</sup> More recently, in 2021, the Biden Administration issued an executive order establishing a Gender Policy Council to coordinate an interagency response to gender-based violence and develop a “U.S. National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence”—including initiatives under FVPSA.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> 42 U.S.C. §10404(b)(3)(C) (Authority of Secretary—administration).

<sup>143</sup> 42 U.S.C. §14042(a) (Task Force).

<sup>144</sup> DOJ, “National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women,” <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/national-advisory-committee-violence-against-women>, and “Charge to the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women,” April 2006.

<sup>145</sup> HHS, Office on Women’s Health, *Overview of Violence Against Women Activities 2010-2011*.

<sup>146</sup> DOJ, OJP, National Institute of Justice, “Setting the Teen Dating Violence Research Agenda,” <http://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/intimate-partner-violence/teen-dating-violence/research-agenda.htm>.

<sup>147</sup> White House (Archives), “1 is 2 Many,” <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/1is2many/about> and White House (Archives), *1 is 2 Many: Twenty Years Fighting Violence Against Women and Girls*, September 2014.

<sup>148</sup> White House (Archives), “Executive Order on Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council,” March 8, 2021, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/03/08/executive-order-on-establishment-of-the-white-house-gender-policy-council/> and White House (Archives), “Release of the National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence: Strategies for Action,” May 25, 2023, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/gpc/briefing-room/2023/05/25/release-of-the-national-plan-to-end-gender-based-violence-strategies-for-action/>.

## Appendix A. Definitions

**Table A-1. Definitions of Domestic Violence and Related Terms in Federal Statute**

Term	Definition
“Domestic Violence”: The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) references the definition under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA), as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(12).	Felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by an intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabiting with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s act under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
“Family Violence”: FVPSA defines this term at 42 U.S.C. §10402(4).	Any act or threatened act of violence, including any forceful detention of an individual, that (1) results or threatens to result in physical injury; and (2) is committed by a person against another individual (including an elderly individual) to or with whom such person is related by blood, is or was related to by marriage, or was otherwise legally related to, or is or was lawfully residing with.
“Dating Violence”: FVPSA references the definition under VAWA, as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(11).	Violence committed by a person who has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and where the existence of such a relationship is determined based on consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved.
“Elder abuse”: FVPSA references this term, but does not point to a specific definition. The term is defined under VAWA, as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(14).	Any action against a person who is 50 years of age or older that constitutes the willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or cruel punishment with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish; or deprivation by a person, including a caregiver, of goods or services with intent to cause physical harm, mental anguish, or mental illness.
“Child abuse”: FVPSA references this term, but does not point to a specific definition. The term is defined under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), at 42 U.S.C. §5101 note.	At a minimum, any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm.
“Stalking”: FVPSA references this term, but does not point to a specific definition. The term is defined under VAWA, as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(36).	Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (1) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or (2) suffer substantial emotional distress.
“Sexual assault”: FVPSA references this term, but does not point to a specific definition. The term is defined under VAWA, as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(35).	Nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

**Source:** Congressional Research Service (CRS), based on current law.

## Appendix B. Prevalence and Effects of Domestic Violence

**Table B-1. Lifetime and 12-Month Prevalence of Violence Committed by an Intimate Partner and Related Impacts**

National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2016/2017

	Lifetime		Past 12 Months	
	Estimated Percentage	Estimated Number	Estimated Percentage	Estimated Number
<b>Women</b>				
Any contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking	47.3%	59,006,000	7.3%	9,054,000
Contact sexual violence	19.6%	24,462,000	3.2%	4,037,000
Physical Violence	42.0%	52,437,000	4.5%	5,649,000
Stalking	13.5%	16,859,000	2.5%	3,064,000
IPV-Related Impact	41.0%	51,205,000	4.5%	5,658,000
<b>Men</b>				
Any contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking	44.2%	52,128,000	6.8%	8,041,000
Contact sexual violence	7.6%	8,926,000	1.4%	1,667,000
Physical Violence	42.3%	49,932,000	5.5%	6,462,000
Stalking	5.2%	6,156,000	1.2%	1,447,000
IPV-Related Impact	26.3%	31,056,000	2.8%	3,253,000

**Source:** Ruth W. Leemis et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*, Tables 1 and 2, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 2022.

**Notes:** Table shows estimates derived from survey data and are subject to error. Intimate partners include cohabiting or non-cohabiting romantic or sexual partners who are opposite or same-sex couples. “Intimate partner violence” refers to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking. See 2016-2017 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey for further definitions.

**Table B-2. Lifetime Prevalence of Contact Sexual Violence, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking by an Intimate Partner by State of Residence**

National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2016/2017

State	Women		Men	
	Estimated Percentage	Estimated Number	Estimated Percentage	Estimated Number
Alabama	52.7	1,026,000	52.9	938,000
Alaska	53.8	139,000	39.6	114,000

Arizona	53.7	1,369,000	44.2	1,093,000
Arkansas	58.5	678,000	47.7	520,000
California	48.3	7,174,000	44.2	6,363,000
Colorado	49.7	1,007,000	38.7	779,000
Connecticut	35.9	524,000	40.4	546,000
Delaware	57.5	217,000	41.5	143,000
District of Columbia	47.4	136,000	43.0	108,000
Florida	53.9	4,351,000	45.2	3,407,000
Georgia	53.2	2,074,000	50.3	1,818,000
Hawaii	34.8	191,000	30.6	169,000
Idaho	58.2	347,000	35.2	208,000
Illinois	43.3	2,201,000	45.7	2,181,000
Indiana	51.0	1,306,000	46.4	1,125,000
Iowa	40.4	487,000	42.7	496,000
Kansas	37.0	406,000	42.6	456,000
Kentucky	48.4	841,000	52.5	863,000
Louisiana	50.7	922,000	55.5	940,000
Maine	43.3	239,000	41.4	214,000
Maryland	40.9	980,000	35.3	771,000
Massachusetts	35.9	996,000	43.9	1,113,000
Michigan	45.5	1,793,000	46.9	1,739,000
Minnesota	39.6	833,000	35.8	730,000
Mississippi	56.1	659,000	57.4	618,000
Missouri	45.0	1,081,000	44.1	990,000
Montana	46.8	185,000	42.6	168,000
Nebraska	49.2	351,000	30.8	213,000
Nevada	61.8	659,000	46.6	498,000
New Hampshire	44.4	239,000	48.2	248,000
New Jersey	46.6	1,666,000	36.4	1,205,000
New Mexico	43.5	350,000	40.1	311,000
New York	44.2	3,560,000	42.8	3,152,000
North Carolina	54.9	2,159,000	40.4	1,467,000
North Dakota	42.9	117,000	30.8	88,000
Ohio	50.5	2,332,000	59.5	2,559,000
Oklahoma	51.5	763,000	46.0	654,000
Oregon	42.3	665,000	39.4	594,000
Pennsylvania	48.7	2,534,000	41.9	2,033,000
Rhode Island	46.7	205,000	40.7	163,000

South Carolina	43.2	832,000	46.1	817,000
South Dakota	37.0	118,000	31.8	100,000
Tennessee	47.3	1,230,000	45.4	1,093,000
Texas	45.1	4,471,000	42.9	4,107,000
Utah	31.7	319,000	34.8	347,000
Vermont	45.4	117,000	50.7	124,000
Virginia	44.9	1,473,000	39.1	1,216,000
Washington	47.7	1,298,000	39.9	1,067,000
West Virginia	48.5	364,000	46.3	333,000
Wisconsin	40.4	911,000	46.9	1,022,000
Wyoming	52.0	113,000	48.4	109,000

**Source:** Mandy K. Cohen et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 State Report*, Tables 5.3a and 5.4a, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 2023.

**Notes:** Table shows estimates derived from survey data and are subject to error. The estimated number of victims has been rounded to the nearest thousand. “Intimate partner violence” refers to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking. See 2016-2017 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey for further definitions.

## Appendix C. FVPSA Funding FY1986-FY2025

**Table C-1. Actual Funding for FVPSA Activities, FY1986-FY2025**

	<b>Shelters, Victim Services, and Program Support</b>	<b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	<b>DELTA</b>	<b>Total</b>
FY1986 <sup>a</sup>	\$8,393,000	N/A	N/A	\$8,393,000
FY1987	\$8,500,000	N/A	N/A	\$8,500,000
FY1988	\$8,138,000	N/A	N/A	\$8,138,000
FY1989	\$8,219,000	N/A	N/A	\$8,219,000
FY1990	\$8,273,000	N/A	N/A	\$8,273,000
FY1991	\$10,734,859	N/A	N/A	\$10,734,859
FY1992	\$20,000,000	N/A	N/A	\$20,000,000
FY1993	\$24,678,619	N/A	N/A	\$24,678,619
FY1994	\$27,679,000	N/A	N/A	\$27,679,000
FY1995	\$32,645,000	\$1,000,000	N/A	\$33,645,000
FY1996	\$47,642,500	\$400,000	N/A	\$48,042,500
FY1997	\$72,800,000	\$400,000	N/A	\$73,200,000
FY1998	\$86,642,206	\$1,200,000	N/A	\$87,842,206
FY1999	\$88,778,000	\$1,200,000	\$5,998,000	\$95,976,000
FY2000	\$101,118,000	\$1,957,000	\$5,866,000	\$108,941,000
FY2001	\$116,899,000	\$2,157,000	\$5,866,000	\$124,922,000
FY2002	\$124,459,000	\$2,157,000	\$5,866,000	\$132,482,000
FY2003	\$124,459,000	\$2,157,000	\$5,828,000	\$132,444,000
FY2004	\$125,648,000	\$2,982,000	\$5,303,000	\$133,933,000
FY2005	\$125,630,000	\$3,224,000	\$5,258,000	\$134,112,000
FY2006	\$124,643,000	\$2,970,000	\$5,181,000	\$132,794,000
FY2007	\$124,731,000	\$2,970,000	\$5,110,000	\$132,811,000
FY2008	\$122,552,000	\$2,918,000	\$5,021,000	\$130,491,000
FY2009	\$127,776,000	\$3,209,000	\$5,511,000	\$136,496,000
FY2010	\$130,052,000	\$3,209,000	\$5,525,000	\$138,786,000
FY2011	\$129,792,000	\$3,202,000	\$5,423,000	\$138,417,000
FY2012	\$129,547,000	\$3,197,000	\$5,411,000	\$138,155,000
FY2013	\$121,225,000	\$2,992,000	\$5,350,000	\$129,552,000
FY2014	\$133,521,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,414,000	\$143,221,000
FY2015	\$135,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,414,000	\$144,914,000
FY2016	\$150,000,000	\$8,250,000	\$5,500,000	\$163,750,000
FY2017	\$150,517,702	\$8,223,479	\$5,487,000	\$164,210,518

<b>Shelters, Victim Services, and Program Support</b>	<b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	<b>DELTA</b>	<b>Total</b>
FY2018	\$158,398,811	\$9,250,000	\$173,148,811
FY2019	\$163,914,699	\$10,250,000	\$179,645,699
FY2020 <sup>b</sup>	\$219,985,157	\$14,000,000	\$241,085,157
FY2021 <sup>c</sup>	\$380,500,000	\$15,000,000	\$400,983,000
FY2022	\$198,000,000	\$15,500,000	\$219,000,000
FY2023 <sup>d</sup>	\$250,000,000	\$20,500,000	\$278,000,000
FY2024	\$240,000,000	\$20,500,000	\$268,000,000
FY2025 <sup>e</sup>	\$240,000,000	\$20,500,000	\$268,000,000

**Source:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees and Operating Plans* and CRS correspondence with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Notes:** Table displays budget authority. For FY2022 and earlier, figures reflect budget authority after sequestration and transfers. N/A means not applicable. FVPSA = Family Violence Prevention and Services Act; DELTA = Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances.

- a. Following the authorization of FVPSA in the Child Abuse Amendments of 1984 (P.L. 98-457), there was \$6 million appropriated for FVPSA in FY1985, available for two years. Grants were first awarded in FY1986. (HHS, ACF, *Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees: FY1990*).
- b. FY2020 includes \$45 million for shelters, services, and support and \$2 million for the hotline provided by the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136). The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-123) also provided funding to CDC, and the agency used \$1.6 million of such funds for DELTA grants, which is included in the DELTA total.
- c. FY2021 includes \$198 million for shelter, services, and support and \$2 million for the hotline provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA; P.L. 117-2). It does not include \$250 million in ARPA funding for temporary grant programs to meet the emergency needs of survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.
- d. The FY2023 shelter, services, and program support amount includes \$10 million in supplemental disaster assistance provided by Division N of P.L. 117-328.
- e. For FY2025, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4) generally provided funding in the same amounts and under the same authorities and conditions as provided in the FY2024 law. Final budget authority acquired through CRS communication with HHS in summer 2025.

## Appendix D. FVPSA Funding for State and Territory Formula Grants, FY2025

**Table D-1. FVPSA Formula Grant Funding for Shelter and Supportive Services for States and Territories, FY2025**

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Annual Funding</b>
Alaska	\$837,819
Alabama	\$2,303,286
Arkansas	\$1,623,829
Arizona	\$3,077,407
California	\$13,574,458
Colorado	\$2,552,548
Connecticut	\$1,807,060
District of Columbia	\$825,812
Delaware	\$943,654
Florida	\$8,135,359
Georgia	\$4,266,422
Hawaii	\$1,066,102
Iowa	\$1,671,525
Idaho	\$1,255,338
Illinois	\$4,787,853
Indiana	\$2,892,650
Kansas	\$1,575,757
Kentucky	\$2,106,822
Louisiana	\$2,123,410
Massachusetts	\$2,938,396
Maryland	\$2,654,750
Maine	\$1,066,162
Michigan	\$3,953,320
Minnesota	\$2,517,123
Missouri	\$2,665,519
Mississippi	\$1,578,082
Montana	\$977,417
North Carolina	\$4,187,373
North Dakota	\$859,543
Nebraska	\$1,258,916
New Hampshire	\$1,068,314
New Jersey	\$3,702,077

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Annual Funding</b>
New Mexico	\$1,302,036
Nevada	\$1,663,282
New York	\$7,133,283
Ohio	\$4,536,097
Oklahoma	\$1,948,461
Oregon	\$2,014,105
Pennsylvania	\$4,930,238
Rhode Island	\$965,027
South Carolina	\$2,382,801
South Dakota	\$906,084
Tennessee	\$2,974,743
Texas	\$10,755,207
Utah	\$1,740,554
Virginia	\$3,479,034
Vermont	\$816,301
Washington	\$3,194,372
Wisconsin	\$2,574,689
West Virginia	\$1,191,407
Wyoming	\$794,241
<b>Subtotal, States</b>	<b>\$142,156,065</b>
American Samoa	\$180,688
Guam	\$180,688
Northern Mariana Islands	\$180,688
Puerto Rico	\$1,671,183
U.S. Virgin Islands	\$180,688
<b>Subtotal, Territories</b>	<b>\$2,393,935</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$144,550,000</b>

**Source:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services, “FY2025 Family Violence Prevention and Services Act: 2025 States and Territories Grant Awards,” <https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofvps/FY25-FVPSA-State—Territories-Grant-Awards.pdf>.

**Notes:** FY2025 annual appropriations were provided by the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4). FVPSA = Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

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