



Data Update of A Profile of Family Violence In Alameda County: A Call For Action

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- Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative members
- Alameda County Board of Supervisors
- Alameda County Public Health Department staff
- MCAH State partners

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Executive Summary

In an attempt to better document the extent of domestic violence (DV) and understand the gaps in services, the Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Section of Alameda County Public Health Department has been actively gathering local data from the criminal justice system, hospitals, shelters, and legal services.

This report gives an overview of differing levels of violence ranging from DV-related calls to police to the most severe form of violence resulting in death. The data presented for Alameda County is the most recent data available. The report covers trends in DV over time, the magnitude of the problem, and disparities by race, age, and sex, whenever possible. Information on related risk factors (e.g., conflict in relationships, poverty) are not available. Although the report is limited by the availability of the local data and does not present a comprehensive picture of domestic violence in Alameda County, our efforts are intended to demonstrate the extent of the problem.

Overall Trends

It is hard to tell in what direction the picture of DV is changing because while some indicators seem to suggest that the severity is decreasing, others suggest the opposite. The good news is that the number of DV-related deaths has declined in the last ten years. There were seven DV-related deaths in 2005, the lowest number in ten years. Although the number of DV-related calls to law enforcement jurisdictions in 2005 was lower than it was in the 1990s, the number of calls has started to increase since 2002. In 2005, there were 7,887 domestic violence-related calls, the highest number since 2000. These data do not tell us whether an increase in number indicates an increase in the occurrence of domestic violence, or an increase in the willingness to report a DV incident to the police.

During the fiscal year July 2005 - June 2006, the five domestic violence shelters in Alameda County received 13,584 crisis calls. Five percent of the women who called received shelter, many of them with their children. Just under 33,000 bed nights were provided by the five shelters in a year. Compared to two years ago, many of the services provided by domestic violence shelters increased: the number of calls increased from 11,899 to 13,586, and the number of women and children sheltered increased from 1,129 to 1,305. The number of clients who received emergency food and clothing increased from 972 to 1,248. It is hard to tell from these data if the increase in these services are a result of an increase in awareness of DV or an increase in need. The number of bed nights provided and the number of clients who received legal assistance decreased slightly during this period.

According to the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, 3,055 temporary restraining orders (TRO) were filed for domestic violence in 2006, down from 3,572 in the previous year. A TRO for domestic violence is an order of the civil court that can require the abuser to stay away from the person, their family and their home.

Profile of Perpetrators and Victims

There were 67 DV-related deaths between 2001 and 2005. Over half of the victims were ages 25-44 years. Five percent of the victims (or three victims) were under 18 years old. By far the most common manner of death involved the use of a gun (39%) followed by stabbing (28%) and blunt trauma/hitting (22%). The vast majority of deaths occurred in the home (73%).

Domestic violence victims were most likely to be killed by their husband (14%), boyfriend (14%), or son (14%). Ten percent of victims were killed by their wife. An ex-husband or ex-boyfriend accounted for another 14% of the deaths.

The most common type of relationship implicated in a DV-related death in Alameda County between 2001 and 2005 was a current or previous sexual relationship. About 42% of domestic violence victims were killed by their partner (i.e., husband, boyfriend, wife, or girlfriend) and 14% by an ex-partner (i.e., ex-husband or ex-boyfriend). During this period, no woman killed an ex-partner; that is, no ex-girlfriend or ex-wife was responsible for a DV killing.

Twelve cases were murder/suicides. Twenty percent of victims were killed by a close relative: son, grandson, father or daughter. A substantial proportion of domestic violence deaths were due to a son killing a parent (14%).

In intimate or formerly intimate relationships, most of the victims were female (72%). Male victims slightly outnumbered females (52% versus 48%) when including all types of relationships, such as suicides, bystanders, and close relatives. Of the murder/suicides, all but one of the suicides were male (92%). The breakdown of suspects to victims was as follows: male assaulting female (43%), male assaulting male (38%), female assaulting males (16%) and female assaulting female (3%). In the vast majority of the deaths, the suspect was male (81%).

Introduction

The report “A Profile of Family Violence In Alameda County: A Call for Action” published in May 2003 elicited a lot of interest and resulted in many requests to update the information. This report will be updated approximately every other year. The first data update was published in December 2005 and this current one was published in August 2007. All three versions of the report can be downloaded free of charge from the Alameda County Public Health Department at <http://www.acphd.org> under Data and Reports, Domestic Violence.

The purpose of the report is to provide the latest domestic violence statistics in Alameda County. Domestic violence (DV) may include physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, psychological abuse, and/or economic control used by a current or former intimate partner in an attempt to exercise power and authority. This has a destructive, harmful effect on individuals, the family and the community. Family violence is a broader term which includes violent acts by any member of a family or household against another member of the family or household.

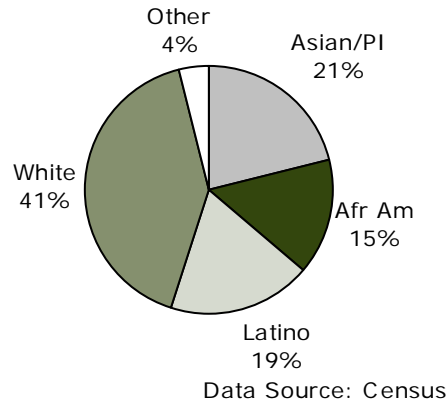
Data for this report was collected by the Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Section of the Alameda County Public Health Department from hospitals, shelters, legal services and police departments. Selected indicators include information on unemployment rates, racial/ethnic distribution of the population, DV-related deaths, DV temporary restraining orders, DV calls to law enforcement, and clients served at women’s shelters.

While this report includes as much DV data as possible, we recognize that the data does not represent the full picture of domestic violence. There is no systematic data collection for domestic violence in Alameda County. Many burning questions concerning DV cannot be answered because the data is not being collected in a coordinated and standardized way. For the first time, this report includes a list of partners and a short description of the work they do, which was provided by the Alameda County Family Justice Center, a one-stop assistance center for victims of domestic violence/sexual assault and their children.

We hope the information in this report galvanizes all sectors of Alameda County to work together in preventing domestic violence in Alameda County. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future reports.

Socio-Demographics of Alameda County

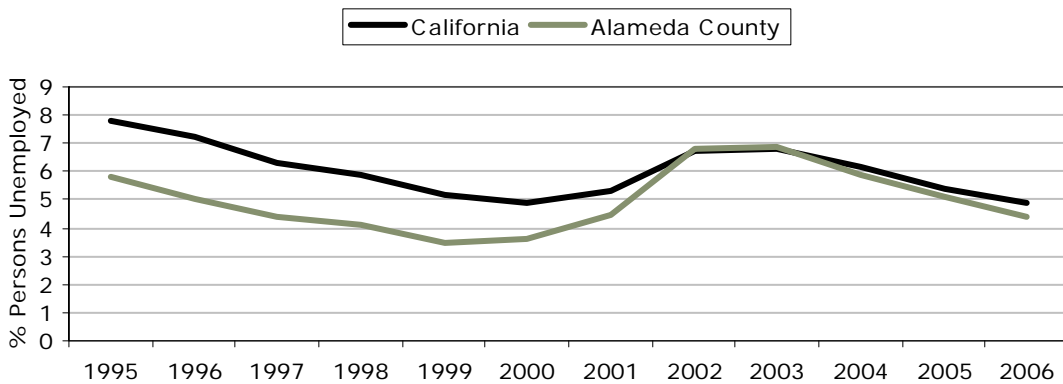
Figure 1: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Total Population, Alameda County, 2000



In 2000, Alameda County had a population of 1.4 million. African Americans made up 15% of the county's population; Asians/Pacific Islanders, 21%; Whites, 41%; and Latinos, 19%.

In 2000, unemployment rates started climbing in Alameda County and California. By 2003, these rates started to decline. In 2006, the unemployment rate was 4.4% in Alameda County and 4.9% in California. Historically, California had higher rates of unemployment than Alameda County; in recent years, the two rates have been similar. While women of all economic backgrounds experience domestic violence, there is a significant link between poverty and an increased incidence of domestic violence (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000). In addition, it has been shown that women who had experienced male-perpetrated domestic violence were more likely to experience spells of unemployment, have health problems and be welfare recipients (Lloyd and Taluc, 1999).

Figure 2: Average Annual Unemployment Rate by Year, Alameda County and California



Data source: Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information

Deaths Related to Domestic Violence

The annual number of domestic violence deaths has declined in the last ten years. The highest number of deaths was 31 in 1997 and the lowest was seven in 2005.

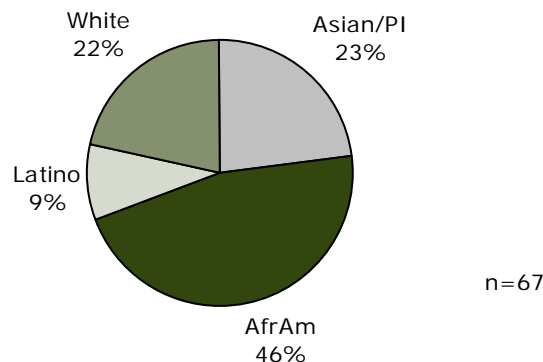
Figure 3: Number of Deaths Attributed to Domestic Violence by Year, Alameda County



Data source: Alameda County Death Review Team

Almost half (46%) of the 67 DV-related death victims in Alameda County from 2001 to 2005 were African American; about one in five were Asian/Pacific Islander (23%), White (22%) and less than one in ten (9%) were Latino. The number of DV-related deaths has decreased for every racial/ethnic group over the last decade. However, the proportion of overall deaths among African Americans has increased from 37% in 1996-2000 to 46% in 2001-2005.

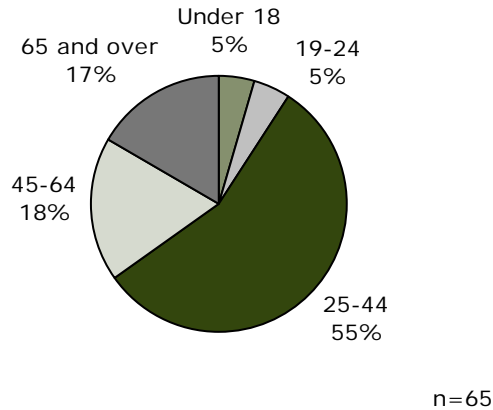
Figure 4: Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Domestic Violence-Related Deaths, Alameda County, 2001-2005



Data source: Alameda County Death Review Team

Two of the 67 DV-related deaths between 2001 and 2005 did not have their age or manner of death recorded. Over half of the victims were ages 25-44 years. Five percent or three cases were under 18 years old. The year 2005 was the first year since 1997 that a teenager was a victim of a DV-related killing. The three youths who were killed were ages 17-19 years.

Figure 5: Age Distribution of Domestic Violence-Related Deaths, Alameda County, 2001-2005

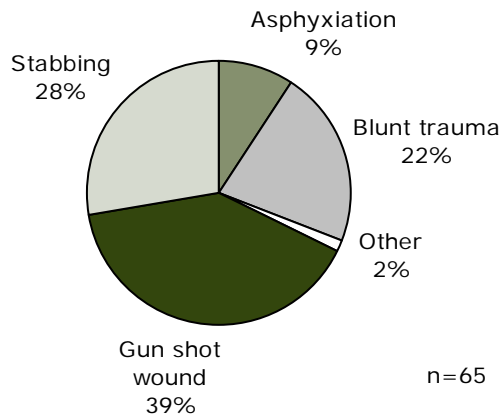


Data source: Alameda County Death Review Team

For deaths between 2001 and 2005, by far the most common manner of death involved a use of a gun (39%) followed by stabbing (28%) and blunt trauma/hitting (22%). Asphyxiation by strangling or hanging, in the case of suicide, was the cause of death in 9% of cases.

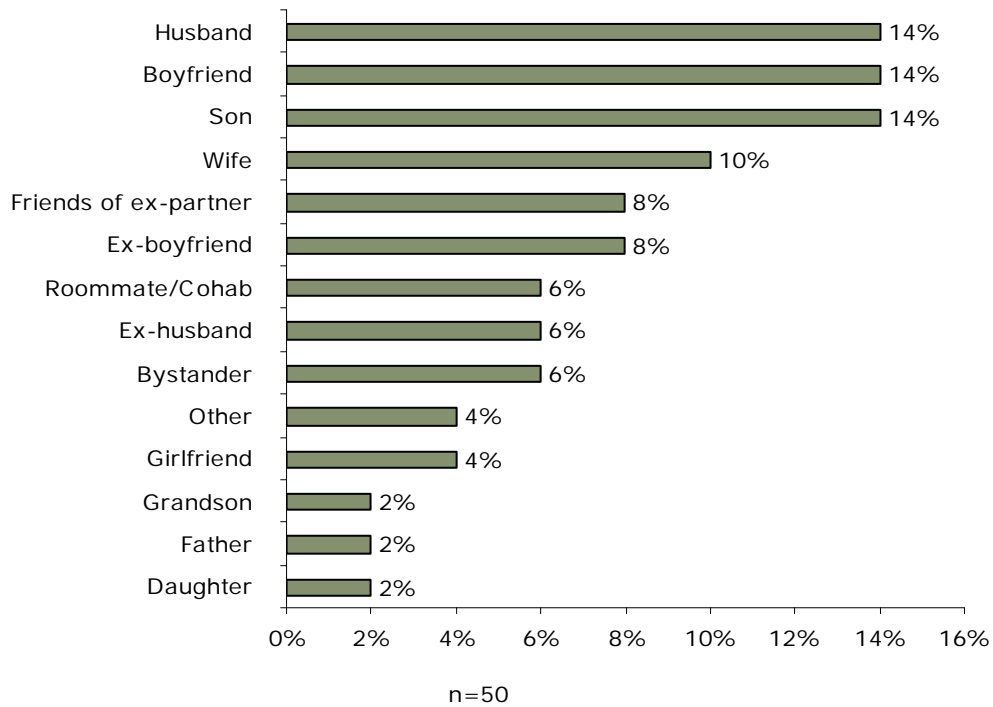
The vast majority of deaths continue to occur in the home (73%). The percentage that occur in public increased from 14% in 1996-2000 to 22% in 2001-05.

Figure 6: Manner of Domestic Violence Death, Alameda County, 2001-2005



Data source: Alameda County Death Review Team

Figure 7: Relationship of Perpetrator to Victim, Domestic Violence-Related Deaths, Alameda County, 2001-2005



Data source: Alameda County Death Review Team

Domestic violence victims were most likely to be killed by their husband (14%), boyfriend (14%), or son (14%). Ten percent of victims were killed by their wife. An ex-husband or ex-boyfriend accounted for another 14% of the deaths.

The most common type of relationship implicated in a DV-related death in Alameda County between 2001 and 2005 was a current or previous sexual relationship. About 42% of domestic violence victims were killed by their partner (i.e., husband, boyfriend, wife, or girlfriend) and 14% by an ex-partner (i.e., ex-husband or ex-boyfriend). All these ex-partner perpetrators were male; that is, no ex-girlfriend or ex-wife was responsible for a DV killing. Twelve cases were murder/suicides. (The suicides are not included in the above chart)

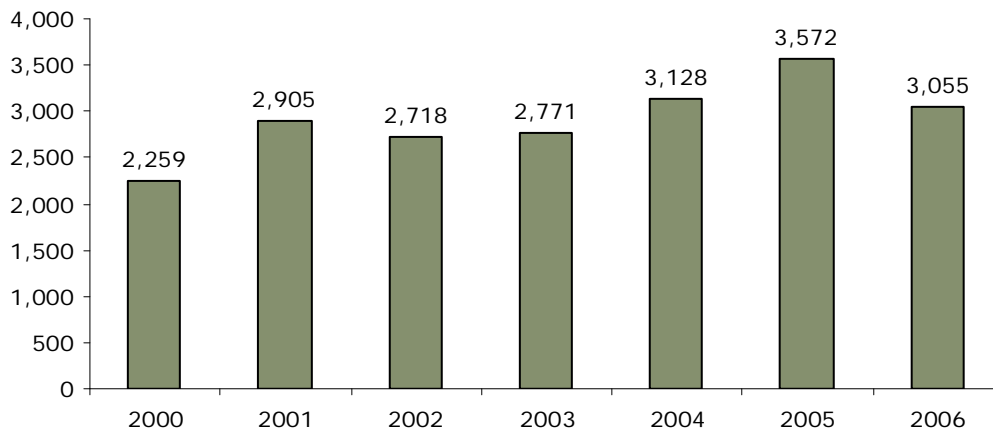
Twenty percent of victims were killed by a close relative: son, grandson, father, or daughter. A substantial proportion of domestic violence deaths were due to a son killing his parent (14%). In these seven cases, the sons were adults at the time of the homicide. In two cases, a history of mental illness was noted and in one case the killing was ruled a justifiable homicide in self-defense.

In intimate or formerly intimate relationships, most of the victims were female (72%). Male victims slightly outnumbered females (52% versus 48%) when including all types of relationships, such as suicides, bystanders, and close relatives. Of the murder/suicides, all but one of the suicides were male (92%). The breakdown of suspects to victims was as follows: male assaulting female (43%), male assaulting male (38%), female assaulting males (16%) and female assaulting female (3%). In the vast majority of the deaths, the suspect was male (81%).

Temporary Restraining Orders

A temporary restraining order (TRO) for domestic violence is an order of the civil court that can require the abuser to stay away from the person, their family and their home. According to the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, 3,055 TROs were filed for domestic violence in 2006, down from 3,572 in the previous year.

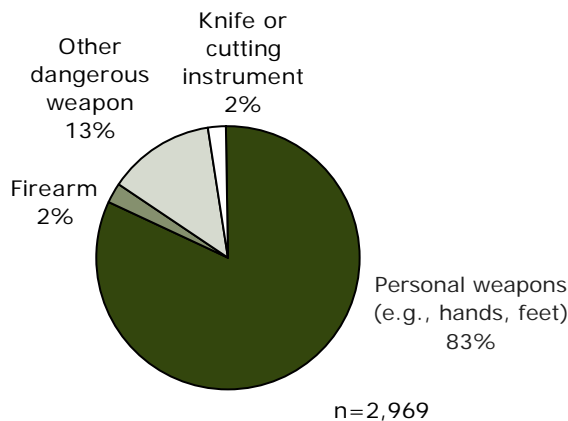
Figure 8: The Number of TRO Filed for Domestic Violence Cases by Year, Alameda County



Data source: Alameda County District Attorney's Office

Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Law Enforcement

Figure 9: Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance by Type of Weapon Involved, Alameda County 2005



In 2005, 38% of the 7,887 domestic violence-related calls to law enforcement involved a weapon. The weapon used in the majority of calls (83%) were hands, feet, or fists. Two percent involved a firearm, 2% a knife, and 13% were classified as other dangerous weapons.

Data source: Criminal Justice Statistics Center

Though the number of domestic violence-related calls to law enforcement jurisdictions in 2005 was lower than it was in the 1990s, the number of calls has started to increase since 2002. In 2005, there were 7,887 domestic violence-related calls, the highest number since 2000. Law enforcement includes police, sheriff, BART police, and other law enforcement agencies. The data do not tell us whether an increase in calls means an increase in the occurrence of domestic violence or an increase in the willingness to report a domestic violence incident to police.

Table 1. Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance by Year, Alameda County

Year	Total	# with Weapons	% with Weapons ¹
1990	10,634	7,159	67.3%
1991	10,365	7,173	69.2%
1992	11,580	8,180	70.6%
1993	10,733	8,374	78.0%
1994	10,487	8,024	76.5%
1995 ²	5,020	4,173	83.1%
1996	8,880	4,701	52.9%
1997	10,917	5,047	46.2%
1998	10,884	5,038	46.3%
1999	9,194	3,729	40.6%
2000	6,283	3,191	50.8%
2001	5,743	2,814	49.0%
2002 ³	6,997	2,612	37.3%
2003	6,491	2,341	36.1%
2004	7,521	2,587	34.4%
2005	7,887	2,969	37.6%

¹ Weapons include hands, feet, fist, firearms, knives/cutting instrument or other dangerous weapons.

² Oakland Police Department was unable to provide complete data for 1995.

³ In April 2002, the Criminal Justice Statistics Center modified the definition of personal weapon to include only those assaults that were aggravated. This corresponds to a notable decrease in the number of personal weapons reported.

Data source: Criminal Justice Statistics Center

In 2005, Oakland and Hayward received the highest number of domestic-violence calls for assistance (2,563 and 1,621, respectively) of all cities in the county. In Oakland, the number of calls is proportional to its population. That is, Oakland makes up 28% of the population in the county and receives 32% of the calls. In Hayward, the number of calls is higher than what would be expected: Hayward is home to 10% of the population of the county but accounts for 21% of the calls. There was a large variation between cities of whether the call reported the use or the threat to use a weapon. Just over a third of the calls for the county involved a weapon.

Table 2. Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance by Jurisdiction, Alameda County 2005

Jurisdiction	Total	# with Weapons ¹	% with Weapons
Alameda	174	37	21.3%
Albany	30	12	40.0%
Berkeley	207	194	93.7%
Dublin	26	26	100.0%
Emeryville	39	39	100.0%
Fremont	557	244	43.8%
Hayward	1,621	399	24.6%
Livermore	197	8	4.1%
Newark	180	161	89.4%
Oakland	2,563	878	34.3%
Piedmont	4	1	25.0%
Pleasanton	130	11	8.5%
San Leandro	254	252	99.2%
Union City	208	43	20.7%
Unincorporated	1,681	659	39.2%
Other ²	16	5	31.3%
Alameda County	7,887	2,969	37.6%

¹ Weapons include hands, feet, fist, firearms, knives/cutting instrument or other dangerous weapons.

² E. Bay Muni. Util Dist, E. Bay Regional Park Dist., BART, Union Pacific Railroad and CA Highway Patrol.

Data source: Criminal Justice Statistics Center

Battered Women's Shelter Services

Data was obtained from five domestic violence shelters that are located in Alameda County. These shelters are Shelter Against Violent Environments (SAVE), Tri-Valley Haven, Building Futures with Women and Children (BFWC), Emergency Shelter Program (ESP), and A Safe Place. Data was collected for the three-year period of July 2003 to June 2006.

According to shelter providers, due to a limited number of bed spaces, not all women and children who are in need of shelter are able to access these services. Many domestic violence shelters provide services other than emergency shelter including counseling, food and clothing, legal assistance (e.g., temporary restraining orders), emergency transportation, and housing support.

Between July 2005 and June 2006, the five domestic violence shelters in Alameda County received 13,586 crisis calls (see Table 4). About 9.6% of the women who called received shelter, many of them with their children. These calls include repeat callers. Just under 33,000 bed nights were provided by the five shelters during the year. A bed night is the equivalent of shelter and services for one night for one person. The average length of stay was 25 days.

Compared to two years ago, many of the services provided increased: the number of calls increased from 11,899 to 13,586, and the number of women and children sheltered increased from 1,129 to 1,305. The number of clients who received emergency food and clothing increased from 972 to 1,248. It is hard to tell from these data if the increase in these services are a result of an increase in awareness of DV or an increase in need. The number of bed nights provided and the number of clients who received legal assistance decreased slightly during this period.

Table 3. Services Provided by Alameda County Battered Women Shelter Programs by Year

Services Provided	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
# of calls received by 24-hour crisis line	11,899	12,500	13,586
# of women and children sheltered ¹	1,129	1,071	1,305
# of bed nights provided	35,006	34,467	32,841

¹ Bed nights: 1 bed night is shelter and services for 1 night for 1 person.

Table 4. Services Provided by Alameda County Battered Women Shelter Programs, July 2005 - June 2006

Services Provided	SAVE	Tri-Valley Haven	BFWC	A SAFE Place	ESP	Estimated Totals
# of calls received by 24-hour crisis line	2,494	3,171	4,663	1,671	1,587	13,586
# of clients received individual counseling	839	337	67	62	119	1,424
# of clients served at the administrative office	587	887	220	143	14	1,851
# of women sheltered	156	131	128	172	134	721
# of children sheltered	133	80	118	152	101	584
# of children received counseling	94	80	113 ²	28	44	359
# of bed nights provided ¹	9,757	7,740	6,890	3,202	5,252	32,841
# of clients who received emergency food and clothing	223	220	246	324	235	1,248
# of clients who received legal assistance with TRO's, other protective and/or custody orders	559	155	248 ²	30	58	1,050
# clients who received emergency transportation	22	214	128	48	141 ⁴	553
# of clients who received household establishment assistance	63	220	58	10	118 ⁴	469
# of clients who received transitional housing assistance	44	113	45 ³	n/a	94 ⁴	296

¹ Bed nights: 1 bed night is shelter and services for 1 night for 1 person.

² BFWC works in collaboration with agencies and refer their clients to these agencies.

³ This number is for the period of July 2004 - June 2005 because July 2005– June 2006 was not available at the time this report was published.

⁴ This number is an estimate.

Acronyms: Shelter Against Violent Environments (SAVE), Building Futures with Women and Children (BFWC), Emergency Shelter Program (ESP)

Note: n/a not available

Data source: Data provided by individual shelters

What We Are Doing

Chief Assistant District Attorney Nancy O'Malley and Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker, with partnerships between the City of Oakland, the County of Alameda, and more than 50 community partners, spearheaded an initiative to create the Alameda County Family Justice Center (ACFJC). The ACFJC and its partner organizations provide a gateway to safety, healing, and self-reliance for victims of domestic violence through easily accessible, coordinated, and comprehensive services in one location. It was created on a simple premise: if all services for victims are located in one place, survivors will more readily access and receive the critical help they need in a timely fashion. The ACFJC on-site partners that enable the provision of comprehensive, coordinated services to victims and their families include:

Alameda County Department of Probation

The Probation Department, as a partner in the criminal justice system, protects and serves our diverse community, offers services to victims, and provides rehabilitative opportunities to offenders in compliance with state law.

Alameda County District Attorney's Office

The District Attorney's Office (DA) has a long and consistent history in Alameda County of working to bring together local government, law enforcement, healthcare agencies and community-based nonprofit organizations to increase safety for victims and accountability for offenders in domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases. The DA works in close collaboration with local law enforcement and victim advocates, and prosecutes all misdemeanor and felony domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and stalking cases within the County of Alameda and the City of Oakland.

Alameda County DA's Victim/Witness Program

The Victim/Witness Assistance program in the United States is a division within the DA's Office. The program provides advocacy to victims of all crimes. These services encompass crisis intervention, court escort and support, orientation to the criminal justice system, emergency assistance, and follow up contact. Advocates also specialize in working with the elderly and dependent adults who have been victimized, domestic violence victims, and those victims and witnesses who have been subpoenaed to attend a parole revocation hearing.

Alameda County DA's Victim/Claims Unit

The Victim/Claims Unit assists victims of crime in applying for restitution and resources from the Victims of Crime Fund administered through the California Victims' Compensation and Government Claims Board.

Alameda County Public Health Department/The Purple Ribbon

The Purple Ribbon (TPR) program assists domestic violence survivors with their Medi-Cal, CHDP, and CMSP applications, enrolling parents and children into various health insurance programs in an expedited, confidential, and safe fashion. The program also assists with referrals regarding legal, dental, housing, mental, family planning, counseling, and substance abuse issues.

Alameda County Public Health Clinic—Northside:

The Northside Clinic offers immunization services to infants, children and teens up to 19 years of age; and comprehensive sexually transmitted disease (STD) services including examination, testing, counseling and treatment. Clients are assisted with accessing other medical and social services.

Alameda County Medical Center/Highland Hospital Emergency Department

The Alameda County Medical Center Emergency Department is an urban county emergency department and regional trauma center serving all of Alameda County. The emergency department treats over 350 domestic violence victims and 250 sexual assault victims each year.

Alameda County Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office provides security for the Family Justice Center during the hours of operation to insure that perpetrators are not allowed to enter. The deputies insure a safe and secure environment so that victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking can receive services without the fear of retribution.

ACFJC Interfaith Chaplaincy Program

The Interfaith Chaplaincy program provides safe, confidential, effective, and appropriate interfaith spiritual care for persons who have been affected by intimate partner violence and their children, while respecting diverse cultures, religious traditions, and faith commitments and maintaining professional behavior and boundaries.

Bay Area Legal Aid

Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA) is the largest provider of free civil legal services in the Bay Area. Seven regional offices work together to provide high quality legal assistance to low-income people regardless of their location, language, or disability. BALA assists people in the areas of housing, public benefits, health access, and domestic violence.

Bay Area Women Against Rape

The Bay Area Women Against Rape provides free in-person counseling to survivors of sexual assault and their significant others. They also offer accompaniment to police, courts and hospitals, a 24-hour hotline, support groups, and community education.

Building Futures with Women and Children

Building Futures with Women and Children (BFWC) works to build communities with underserved women and children where they are safely and supportively housed, free from homelessness and family violence. BFWC provides weekly drop-in domestic violence support groups, emergency shelter for homeless clients and clients who are fleeing from domestic violence, and transitional housing facility.

CALICO Center

The CALICO Center conducts forensic interviews in a child-friendly setting with children, ages 2-17, and developmentally delayed adults who were abused in Alameda County and provides information, referrals, and support to their caregivers. The center coordinates with detectives, child welfare workers, and prosecutors to respond collaboratively to allegations, hear children's testimonies, and link children and families with community-based services. They conduct an annual training on best practices in child abuse investigations and are available to facilitate trainings for professionals and community organizations.

Children's Hospital & Research Center at Oakland — The DOVES Project

The DOVES Project is a domestic violence program operated by the Center for Child Protection at Children's Hospital & Research Center at Oakland since 1998. The DOVES Project provides crisis intervention, assessment, and therapeutic intervention services for children exposed to domestic violence and their battered caregivers, as well as, training on children's exposure to domestic violence.

DeafHope

The DeafHope's mission is to end domestic violence and sexual assault against Deaf women and children through empowerment, education and services. Services provided include advocacy, support groups, children's art therapy, youth outreach and systems, legal advocacy, training and technical assistance.

Family Violence Law Center

Family Violence Law Center (FVLC) is a non-profit organization serving family violence victims and their children throughout Alameda County. FVLC is a co-recipient of Legal Assistance for Victims funding from the Department of Justice and as such, is responsible for coordinating civil legal assistance services for victims served at the ACFJC.

Girls Justice Initiative

The Girl Justice Initiative (GJI) provides individual and group therapeutic services for boys and girls with victimization histories. GJI also facilitates weekly self sufficiency classes at ACFJC for young women who are at risk for or involved in the juvenile justice system.

Highland Hospital Domestic Violence Program & Sexual Assault Center

The Highland Hospital Domestic Violence Program & Sexual Assault Center provides services to sexually abused clients 14 years and older as well as services to victims of domestic violence. Services include advocacy, counseling, medical support, and a 24-hour crisis line.

International Institute of the Bay Area (Formerly International Institute of the East Bay)

The mission of the International Institute of the Bay Area is to act as a resource for immigrants and refugees, enabling them to achieve self-sufficiency; and to promote mutual appreciation and understanding within the community.

ICPC – SACEY SPA Program

ICPC – SACEY SPA Program addresses the needs of sexually abused and commercially exploited youth through advocacy, assessment, education and specialized service linkage. The SACEY SPA runs a drop-in transition and recovery center for sexually exploited children in the City of Oakland.

M.I.S.S.S.E.Y.

M.I.S.S.S.E.Y. was created to respond to the specialized and complex needs of sexually exploited children through advocacy, specialized treatment and recovery services, professional training, and data reporting. M.I.S.S.S.E.Y. specializes in working with youth who are sexually exploited in the form of child and teen prostitution.

Jewish Family & Children Services of the East Bay

Jewish Family & Children Services of the East Bay (JFCS/East Bay) provides parent/child therapy and intensive case management services to children and families. Children from birth to five years old can receive home-based or child-care based services. JFCS/East Bay also provides mental health consultation at several preschool sites.

Oakland Police Department

Oakland Police Department's (OPD) domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and child abuse cases are currently all centralized within one unit at OPD, known as the Special Victims Section (SVS). OPD moved the entire SVS team from OPD's main office to the Family Justice Center in order to enhance victim safety and coordination of victim services.

Safe Passages

Safe Passages serves as the vehicle for the City of Oakland, Oakland Unified School District, Alameda County and the East Bay Community Foundation to work together with the broader community to improve the quality of life for children and families in Oakland. A Safe Passages Intake Coordinator provides centralized intake for children exposed to violence. Duties include maintenance of a centralized database for children exposed to violence and intake and referrals for families with children exposed to violence.

The Link to Children

The Link to Children (TLC) provides on-site prevention and early intervention mental health services to child development programs serving children from birth to five years old and their families. TLC's mission is to support the emotional health of young children within a cultural context so they will be able to learn even in difficult times and under difficult circumstances.

Technical Notes

This is the second update of the report “A Profile of Family Violence In Alameda County: A Call for Action” originally published in 2003 and updated in 2005 and 2007. All three reports can be downloaded for free from the Alameda County Public Health Department at <http://www.acphd.org> under Data and Reports, Domestic Violence.

Data Sources

Socio-Demographic Data

The distribution of race/ethnicity was obtained from US Census 2000 and can be downloaded from www.census.gov. Unemployment rates were obtained from the Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

Deaths Related to Domestic Violence

Domestic violence-related deaths from each year are compiled and reviewed by the Alameda County Death Review Team. Data analysis was done by Janet Brown, CAPE Unit, ACPHD.

Temporary Restraining Orders

Data were provided by the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office.

Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Law Enforcement

Data were obtained from the Criminal Justice Statistics Center at http://stats.doj.ca.gov/cjsc_stats/prof05/index.htm

Shelter Data

Shelter data was obtained in aggregate (Table 3) for the three-year period of July 2003 to June 2006 through partnerships with the shelters. Note that all data provided was confidential, anonymous and analyzed in aggregate.

Limitations of the Data

The information presented is highly limited in terms of content, severity of the issue, the populations it affects, and the extent of the problem. Moreover, domestic violence is a very highly sensitive issue that many battered women do not ever report. It is documented that about half of all female victims of intimate partner violence report an injury of some sort, and about 20% seek medical assistance.

Another limitation of this report is that the same victim may access different resources in the county. For instance, she may call the police department to report the abuse, a shelter hotline to seek help about it, and a legal services agency to obtain a restraining order. This may duplicate counts and may slightly overestimate the number of victims of domestic violence at a population-level. However, it is a more accurate reflection of the use of community resources.

References

Lloyd S, Taluc N. The effects of male violence on female employment. *Violence Against Women* 1999;5:370–92.

U.S. Department of Justice, *Intimate Partner Violence*, May 2000.

