



National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

2013 Rape Crisis Center Survey

Sexual assault is widespread and devastating.

According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey/NISVS (CDC, 2011), nearly 1 in 5 women have been the victim of an attempted or completed rape and over 1.3 million women were raped in the U.S. in one year. Over 80% of women who were victimized experienced significant impacts such as PTSD, injury (42%) and missed time at work or school (28%).

Advocates help the criminal justice system respond more effectively and help victims heal. A 2006 study found that when victims receive advocate-assisted services, they receive more helpful information, referrals and services and fare better in both short- and long-term recovery.

2013 Survey Results*

Almost 75% of rape crisis centers lost funding in the past year through a combination of local, state and federal cuts resulting in layoffs, reduced services and program closures:

- **A number of programs have closed or are facing program closure due to sequestration.** Others are closing outreach offices and reducing services.
- **Over half of programs experienced a reduction in staffing** in the past year with many programs leaving positions unfilled and scores of additional lay-offs.

Advocates at rape crisis centers provide the nation's frontline response to sexual assault at no cost to victims: meeting victims at emergency rooms at all hours; answering 24 hour hotlines; providing crisis intervention; running support groups for both recent

victims and survivors of childhood abuse; mentoring volunteers; and providing awareness and prevention programs to their communities. Many rape crisis centers serve broad geographic areas or dense population centers. Unfortunately:

- **Over 1/3 of rape crisis centers have a waiting list for services** with victims waiting most often for counseling services and support groups.
- Waiting lists were reported as high as 53 survivors with waiting times, in some cases, exceeding 2 months.
- 35% of rape crisis centers said that survivors in their service area were unable to receive the full range of services they need to resolve their experience of sexual violence.

Impact of Sequestration

Rape crisis centers are beginning to tell their stories of the impact of sequestration while many programs are bracing for future budget cuts:

- "Our agency is closing because of cuts at the state and federal levels over the past several years."
- "Sequestration will possibly result in the closing of the Dove Center's Outreach office, which is a vital part of service provision in our rural area."
- "The result of eliminating 3 direct service staff positions will be the elimination of a licensed professional counselor position and two caseworkers."
- "The staff has worked tirelessly on behalf of victims and survivors without a salary increase for more than 4 years. It is sad that all of this hard work we have built for survivors and to

hold offenders accountable will suffer with these huge cut backs of funding.”

- “Through attrition, we have reduced staff by almost 1/2. This has resulted in waiting time for clients, decreased time for advocates to spend with clients, decreased time for us to train and mentor volunteer advocates who might help in providing direct services.”
- “We have had to cut positions and programs, such as outreach to over 8 schools.”
- “The biggest impact has been that advocates need to help multiple victims at one time, this means that nobody really gets your full 100% attention. The office is often left uncovered while staff attends to victims elsewhere.”
- “Our Center which provides sexual violence programs for an entire county has gone from 3 full-time staff to 2. We have lost the ability to provide any bilingual services at all in a county that is 40% Spanish speaking. In order to maintain immediate crisis intervention services, we have had to decrease individual counseling and group counseling availability.”
- “We had to lay off our therapist who specializes in teens and young adults at our sexual assault center. This means, for the coming 12 months, I have no one to see victims from the most vulnerable 15-24 age range...”

- “We will have 40-50 clients not served through long-term counseling. We do not have a waiting list because people have just stopped making referrals, knowing that our capacity for providing individual and family counseling is greatly reduced.”
- “The result of the funding cuts is the loss of three staff members, all of them bilingual, two whose focus was serving children who experienced sexual and physical abuse and their parents.”

Congress must act to prevent further rape crisis center closures, assist victims who are left to fend for themselves, and ensure prevention is occurring in all of our communities.

** These results are based on a 2013 internet survey conducted by NAESV and completed by rape crisis centers across the United States.*

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