

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)

Why it Matters

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is the single largest funding source for emergency services for domestic violence victims and their children. FVPSA funds life-saving emergency shelters, crisis lines, counselling, and victim assistance. These programs also promote coordination between different community resources, making the response to violence more effective. In 2004 over a quarter of a million victims were turned away from local programs for lack of available services. Therefore, **full funding of FVPSA is critical to the growing need for these critical services and violence prevention programs.**

BACKGROUND

- The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act was enacted in the Child Abuse Amendments of 1984, and was reauthorized and amended most recently by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003.
- FVPSA is administered from within the Family and Youth Services Bureau of the US Department of Health and Human Services.
- Congress has authorized \$175 million a year for FVPSA programs. However, programs for children have not been enacted, because FVPSA has been funded below \$130 million for the past several years.

IMMEDIATE and EMERGENCY SERVICES

- There are more than 2,000 domestic violence shelters and safe-houses in the United States that use FVPSA funding to provide emergency shelter and intervention services for victims of domestic violence and their children.
- Domestic violence shelters provide a core set of services that include: physical shelter for the protection and safety of the victim and children; crisis intervention hotline services; individual and group counseling and legal assistance and referrals to other community services.
- FVPSA discretionary funding supports public agencies and nonprofit organizations in establishing, maintaining, and expanding programs and projects to provide immediate services to domestic violence victims and their families.

PREVENTION and PUBLIC AWARENESS

- The FVPSA State and Tribal grant program serves as the primary federal mechanism for encouraging state, Tribal, and local support for implementing, maintaining, and expanding programs and projects to prevent family violence and increase public awareness of domestic violence issues.
- 10% of FVPSA funding is awarded to state coalitions to provide technical assistance to state agencies and organizations on policy and practice related to domestic violence intervention and prevention, as well as training and support to local domestic violence programs.
- State coalitions also conduct needs assessments and planning activities that are designed to document gaps in current response and prevention efforts and help guide future endeavors.
- 5% of appropriated funds go to national resource and special issue centers which offer collaboration and training resources to government agencies, service providers and other relevant domestic violence programs.

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The Public Policy Office of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is a national leader in the effort to create and influence Federal legislation that positively affects the lives of domestic violence victims and children. We work closely with advocates at the local, state and national level to identify the issues facing domestic violence victims, their children and the people who serve them and to develop a legislative agenda to address these issues. NCADV welcomes you to join us in our effort to end domestic violence.

COOPERATION/INTEGRATED APPROACH

- FVPSA funds may also be provided to States, other public agencies, and private nonprofit organizations to carry out coordination, research, training, technical assistance, and clearinghouse activities.
- Coordination and collaboration of law enforcement, legal, social services, and health care professionals at the local level facilitates a more responsive network of protection and support for families dealing with domestic violence.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED IN FVPSA

UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES/UNDER-REPORTING

- In response to findings that rates of reported intimate partner violence vary among women and men of diverse racial backgrounds, several initiatives have been implemented through FVPSA to facilitate and improve its outreach, information gathering, and service response to under-served communities. This includes mobilizing researchers, academicians, and practitioners to focus on issues of family violence that affect these communities.
- These efforts resulted in the creation of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, the National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Family Violence (Allianz), the Women of Color Network, and the Asian American Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence.

EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

- This violence takes a devastating toll on children who are exposed to its cruelty. Three to four million children witness parental violence every year. **Children whose mothers are victims of violence are twice as likely to be abused as those children whose mothers are not victims of abuse.** When children witness violence in the home, they have been found to suffer many of the same symptoms experienced by children who are directly abused.
- In 2003, FVPSA was amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act to provide a portion of all appropriations above \$130 million to programs serving children who witness domestic violence.

FUNDING FOR FVPSA

- The success of anti-violence education and outreach programs has increased the number of victims who seek help. Therefore the demand for FVPSA programs has risen.
- However, current funding for FVPSA stands at \$126 million, which is \$49 million below the authorized amount of \$175 million.
- The President's FY 07 Budget proposes a \$1 million dollar cut from FY '06, which will severely cripple this key program.
- **We ask Congress to follow through on its commitment to victims of domestic violence and children by fully funding FVPSA at \$175 million in FY 2007.**

