



Alaska's Council on
Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault

2023

Annual Report

Strengthening Our Communities

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Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Our Purpose: To empower Alaska communities to create a future free of domestic violence and sexual assault.

CDVSA Board of Directors

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Blaze Bell, Vice Chair, Public Member
Lydia Heyward, Public Member
Ryon Turley, Public Member
Jennifer Winkelman, Department of Corrections
James Cockrell, Department of Public Safety
John Skidmore, Department of Law
Laurel Shoop, Department of Education
Kim Koval, Department of Family and Community Services
Steve Williams, CEO Alaska Mental Health Trust

CDVSA Staff

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MaryBeth Gagnon, Criminal Justice Planner
Meggie Stogner, Program Coordinator 2
Morgan Stonecipher, Program Coordinator 1
Catherine Mohn, Research Analyst 3
Ella Nierra, Grants Administrator 3
Chris Hardin, Grants Administrator 1
Kay Riley, Administrative Assistant 2
Elaine Bell, Administrative Officer 2

A Letter From Our Leadership

This year, the annual leadership letter is being written by myself, the newly appointed Executive Director for CDVSA. This is due to the retirement of our previous Director, L. Diane Casto, and the resignation of Board Chair Angela Garay. While each of these events occurred in State Fiscal Year 2024, it seemed pertinent to mention. However, in State Fiscal Year 2023 (SFY2023), I was with the CDVSA in the criminal justice planner position and can reflect on SFY2023 from that perspective.

For this year's theme, the CDVSA staff chose "Strengthening Our Communities" to summarize the work done in SFY2023. As noted in last year's report, the pandemic brought upon us a "new normal" regarding changes to work structures and the way in which daily business is conducted. While previously this was seen as challenging, we found this shift increased connectedness through online forums, bringing together additional partners that enhanced our input into the work we do.

Key projects in SFY2023 included:

- Finalization of the Victim Services Regulations Project by CDVSA staff, with submission to the Department of Law.

- Completion of the Language Access Plan website project, increasing access for those with Limited English Proficiency across the state by translating provider information into the eight most-common spoken languages in Alaska.
- Conclusion of the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup, which brought voices together to outline necessary components for Battering Intervention Programs as CDVSA works to redefine programming and standards.
- Utilizations of FVPSA ARPA funds to distribute 15 Corteflo units to rural communities to assist local medical providers in conducting sexual assault exams that are both trauma-informed and admissible as evidence.
- The addition of two new sub-grantees to expand Victim Service resources across the state: MyHouse and RurAL CAP.

These are just a few examples of the important work achieved in SFY2023 that moved us forward in strengthening our community response to domestic and sexual violence across the state.

MaryBeth Gagnon

MaryBeth Gagnon
Executive Director (SFY2024)

SFY2023

Key Initiatives, Successes, & Challenges

SFY2023 was a year filled with significant change and transitions while maintaining full funding for 34 community-based sub-grantees. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) continues to support four community-based grant programs including victim services, enhanced victim services, prevention, and battering intervention programs. These programs are offered in urban and rural communities from Unalaska to Utqiagvik.

Creating New Approaches to Serve Those Who Cause Harm

The perpetrator rehabilitation workgroup revised and improved approaches to serve those who use abuse in their relationships. The CDVSA goal is to end all DV, not just reduce the recidivism rate. To assist in this overhaul of Battering Intervention Programs, CDVSA received a new Program Coordinator 2 position in SFY2023. This position will lead the change and expansion of services to end domestic violence, and has created significant synergy to move this initiative forward.



Improving Data Collection – VELA

Federal funding requires CDVSA to collect and submit annual demographic and service delivery reports, and was challenged to meet these requirements with an outdated victim service tracking system. To improve the reliability of data and streamline processes for advocates, CDVSA partnered with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) to identify a secure data collection and reporting software specifically developed for domestic and sexual violence programs. The new database will reduce administrative staff hours spent reporting, improve the quality of data CDVSA receives, and reduce the time spent by advocates on reporting.

FVPSA/ARPA

Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) passed in March 2021, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) program awarded CDVSA three one-time grants to help Alaska communities mitigate and respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. CDVSA has used these funds to implement three projects to improve safety and services for individuals who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault and anticipate completion by the end of SFY2024.

With the first funding stream, ANDVSA began to recruit for a Safety and Technology position to assist domestic violence organizations in providing remote services in a safe and confidential manner.

The second funding stream allowed ANDVSA to provide opportunities for domestic violence service providers to request emergency funding for COVID-19-related costs. The additional \$1 million will be sub-awarded to domestic violence organizations in SFY24.

The final FVPSA ARPA funding stream, designated to improve sexual assault services, was identified to help Alaska improve its ability to provide rural sexual assault examinations by purchasing 15 Corteflo colposcope units for 15 rural communities throughout the state. These state-of-the-art digital forensic tools developed by Fernico, Inc. allow for the ability of a trained sexual assault nurse and/or forensic examiners (SANEs/SAFEs) to connect remotely to villages for the examination.

CDVSA Language Access Plan

CDVSA is required by the Federal Civil Rights Act to develop and implement a plan for outreach and services to all Alaskans who are limited-English speakers or those who do not speak or read English. Alaska is a very diverse state; 16% of people in Alaska do not speak English at home, and 31.4% of those people do not speak English “very well.” This creates a significant barrier to equal and equitable access to services for all Alaskans. In partnership with the Alaska Institute of Justice, CDVSA created a Language Access Plan. CDVSA identified key information for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence (DV/SA) for translation into the top eight languages most often spoken in Alaska: Spanish, Tagalog, Korean, Russian, Hmong, Samoan, Yup’ik, and Chinese. Information related to all DV/SA services offered with CDVSA funding has been translated into these eight languages and is available on our website.

Media Messaging to Educate Alaskans About DVSA

Each year, CDVSA contracts with Walsh|Sheppard, a strategy and communications agency in Anchorage, to support social marketing campaigns on topics related to domestic violence and sexual assault. These campaigns are intended to spread awareness about the dynamics of DV/SA and the resources that are available to support victims of these crimes. The campaigns and resources provided are important tools for reaching out to victims in younger demographics and rural communities that do not have local shelter or prevention programs, in addition to the larger communities we serve.

Workforce

There continues to be an ongoing struggle to fill vacant staff positions. One of the critical impacts of not having a full staff is that the work of regulating and monitoring 35 community-based agencies with over 100 separate grant awards (Victim Services, Enhances Services, Prevention, and Battering Intervention) is extremely time intensive—requiring monitoring, technical assistance, site visits, financial desk reviews, and many other special conditions related to our federal grant funding.



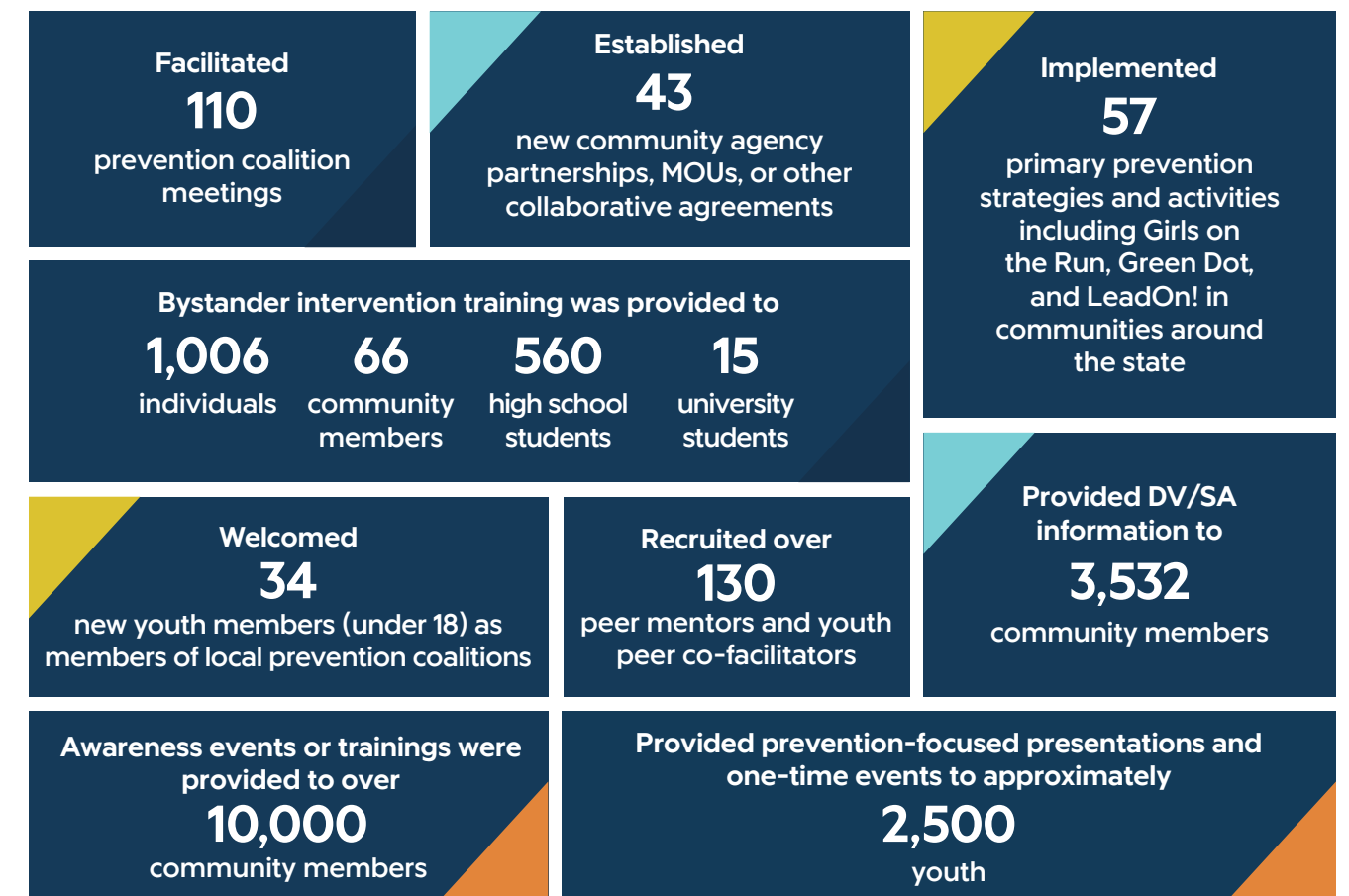
Services Provided by

Community-Based Prevention Grantees

Alaska has some of the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in the country. About 58% of Alaska women experience DV/SA in their lifetime. This translates to economic costs of over \$7 billion. Primary prevention stops violence before it occurs, but it takes long-term effort in local communities.

Overall, prevention programs across the state deepened their work in SFY2023, which you can see through the increases in new agency partnerships, new youth coalition members, and new youth peer mentors. Programs reported increased support from community members around primary prevention as a result of heightened awareness about the issue. **In other words, it's working!**

In SFY2023, CDVSA Prevention Funding:



Leveraging Resources

Many of the risk factors for domestic violence and sexual assault also put people at risk for mental health struggles, substance use, and suicide. CDVSA Prevention programs participate in statewide coalitions that include tribes, non-profits, universities, school districts, law enforcement, and medical institutions across Alaska.

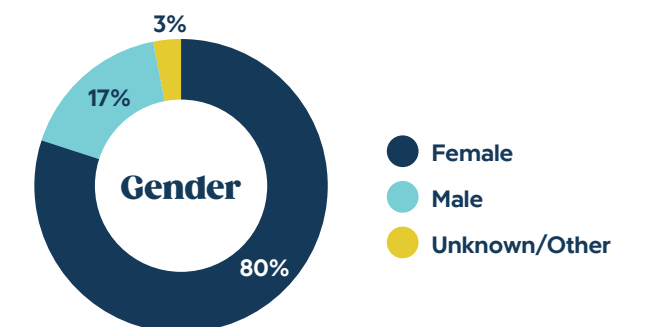
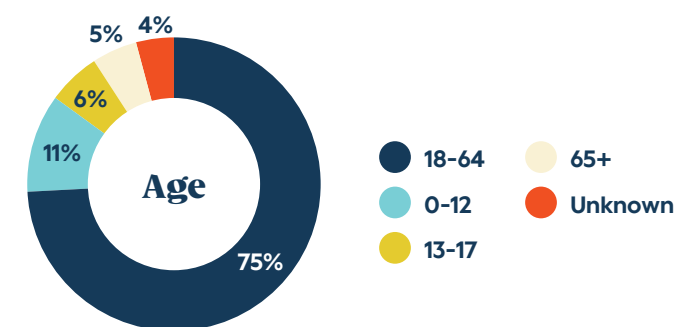
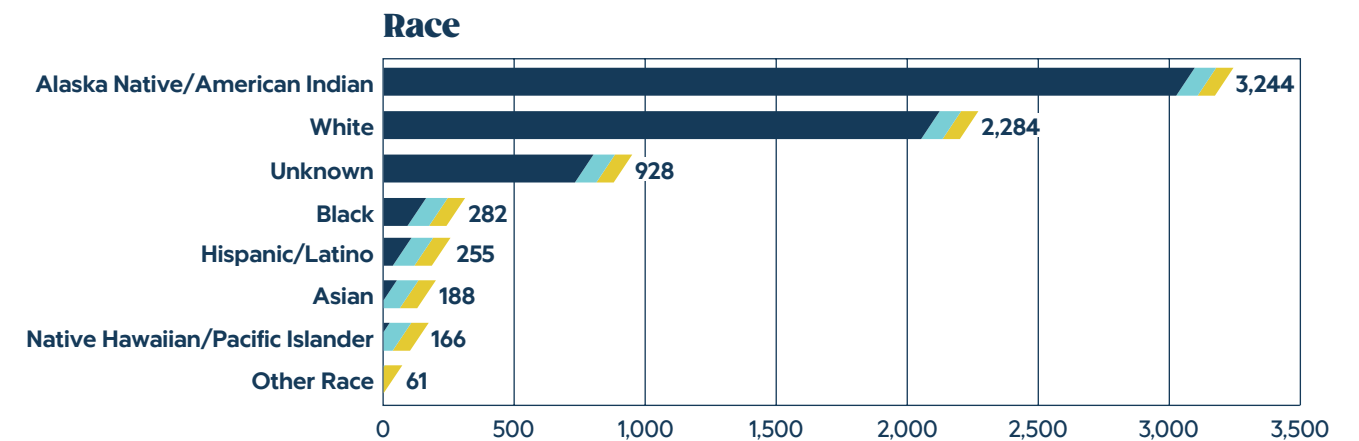
Creating Safety for Victims

of Domestic and Sexual Violence

Victim Services

Project Data SFY 2023

Total Served: 7,160



Services Provided—Top 5 Categories

Shelter Nights	93,205
Individual Advocacy	81,244
Individual Counseling	30,003
Hotline Counseling	20,079
Emergency Financial	18,446

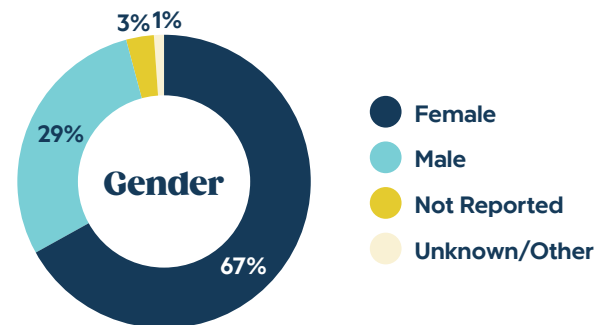
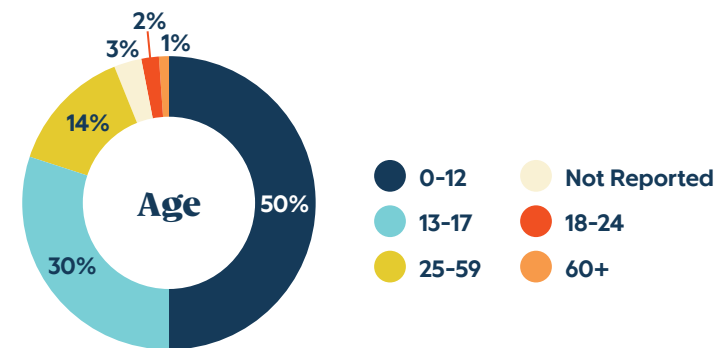
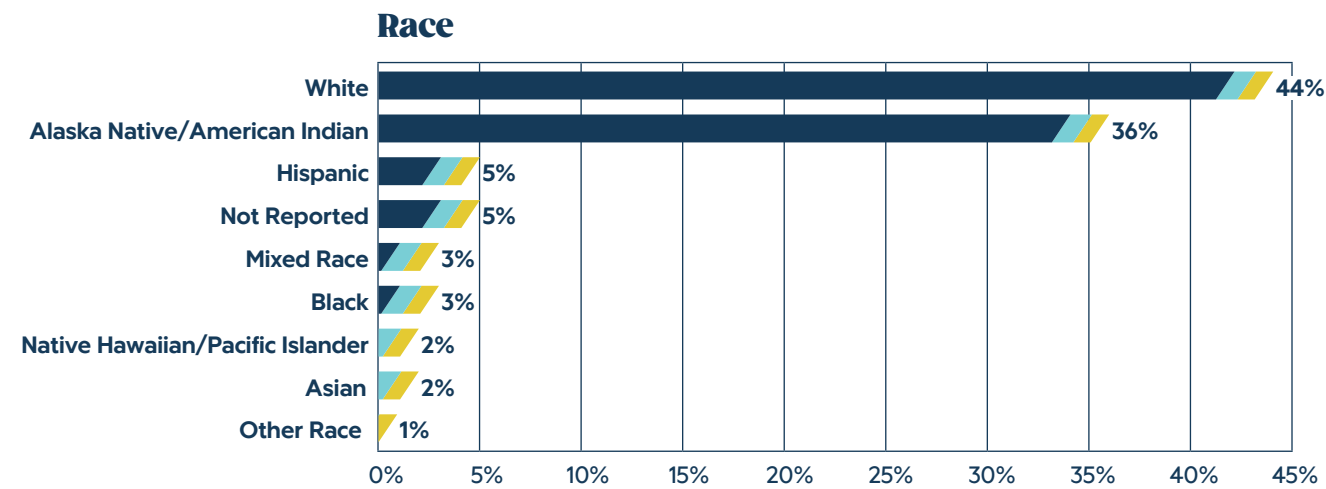
Victimization—Top 5 Categories

Family Violence/Domestic Violence	4,281
Adult Sexual Assault	1,041
Adult Physical Assault	875
Stalking Harassment	533
Bullying	411

Enhanced Service Projects

Child Advocacy Centers

Total Served: 1,999



Services Provided—Top 5 Categories

Individual Advocacy	1,669
Performance/medical/nonmedical forensic exam/interview/medical evidence collection	1,133
Crisis Intervention	977
Individual Counseling	943
Information about victim rights, how to obtain notifications, etc.	807

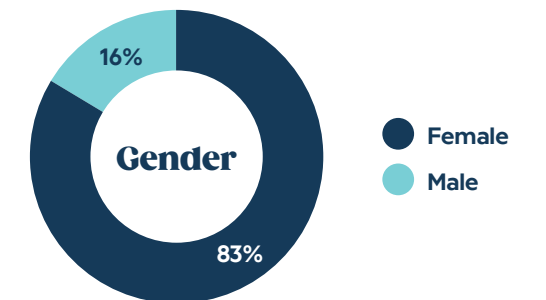
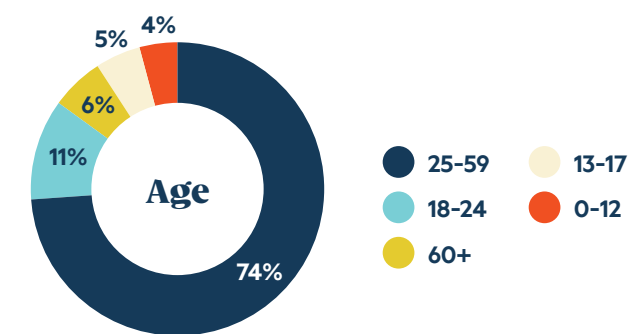
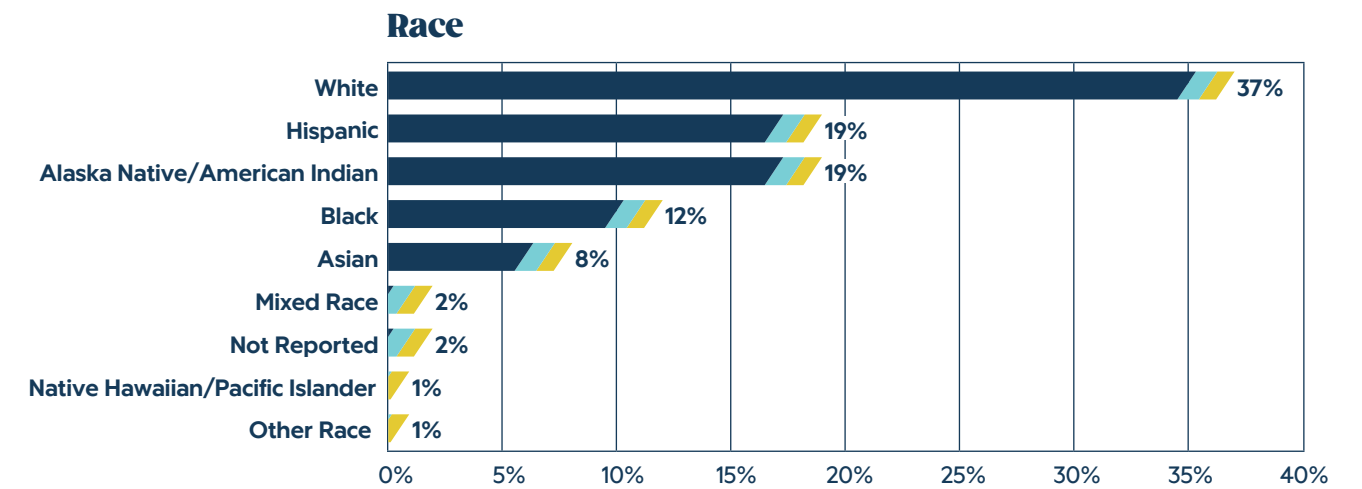
Victimization—Top 5 Categories

Child Sexual Abuse	1,120
Child Physical Abuse/Neglect	675
Domestic Violence/Family Violence	228
Adult Child Sexual Assault	30
DUI/DWI	29

Enhanced Service Projects

Legal Assistance

Total Served: 545



Services Provided—Top 5 Categories

Civil legal assistance with family law issues	3,501
Immigration Assistance	1,923
Civil legal assistance in obtaining protection or restraining order	1,065
Individual Advocacy	283
Crisis Intervention	276

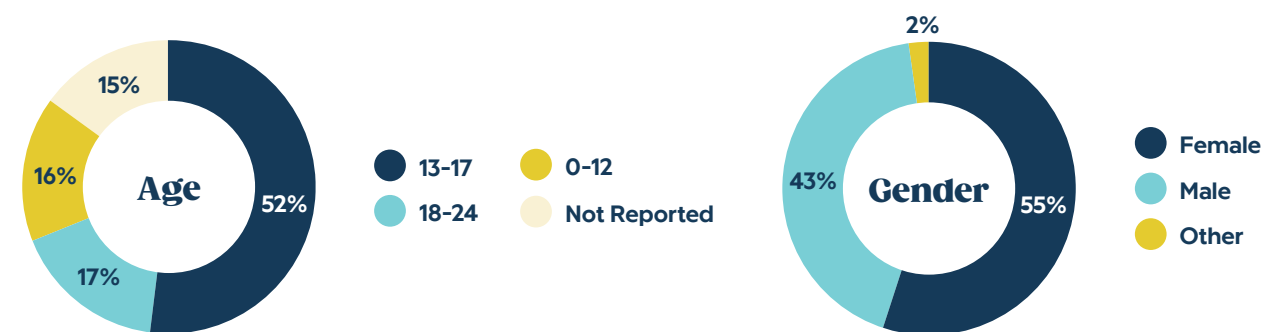
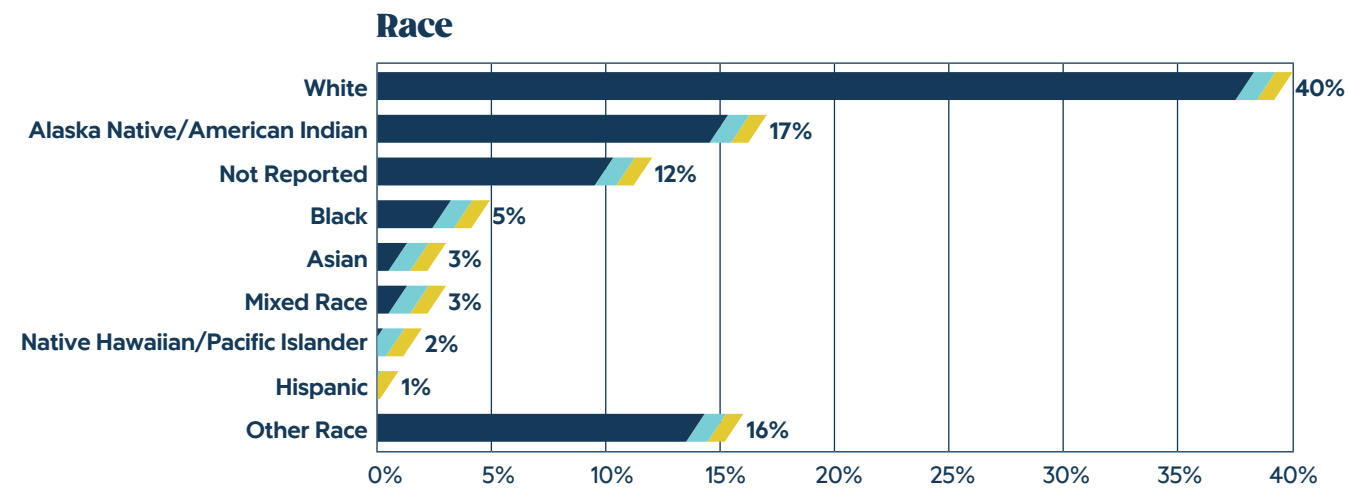
Victimization—Top 5 Categories

Domestic Violence/Family Violence	1,052
Bullying	234
Adult Physical Assault	218
Stalking	182
Adult Sexual Assault	174

Enhanced Service Projects

Mental Health

Total Served: 467

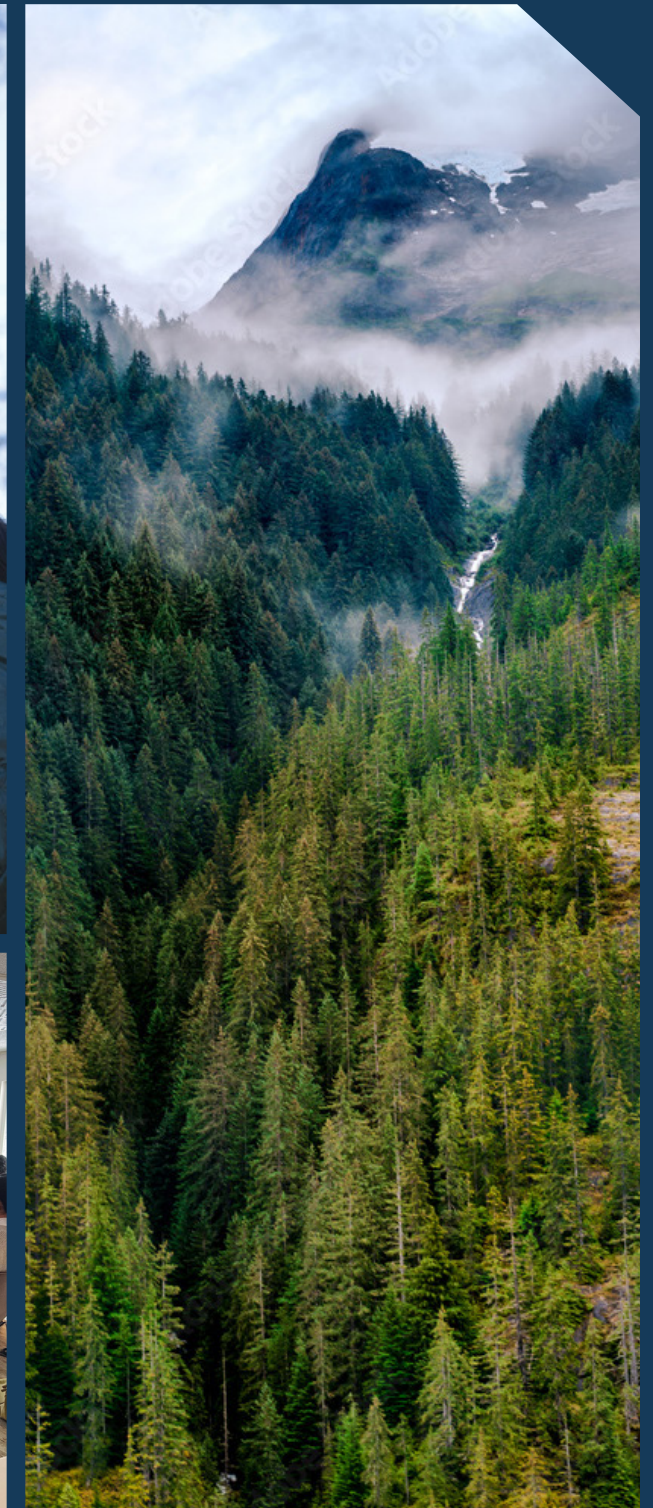


Services Provided—Top 5 Categories

Individual Counseling	2,146
Other Therapy (traditional, cultural, or alternative healing; art, writing, or play therapy, etc.)	1,313
Support Groups	556
Crisis Intervention	123
Information about victim rights, how to obtain notifications, etc.	61

Victimization—Top 5 Categories

Domestic Violence/Family Violence	451
Child Physical Abuse/Neglect	393
Bullying	244
Child Sexual Abuse	188
Adult Child Sexual Assault	23



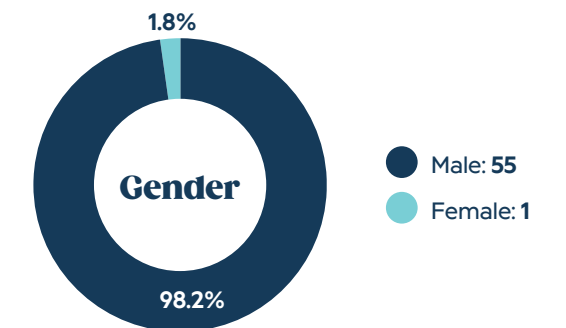
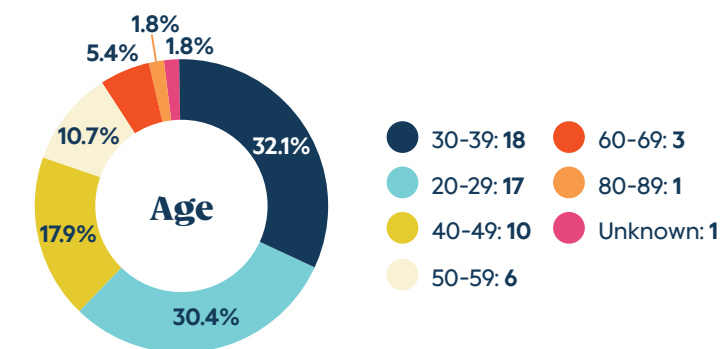
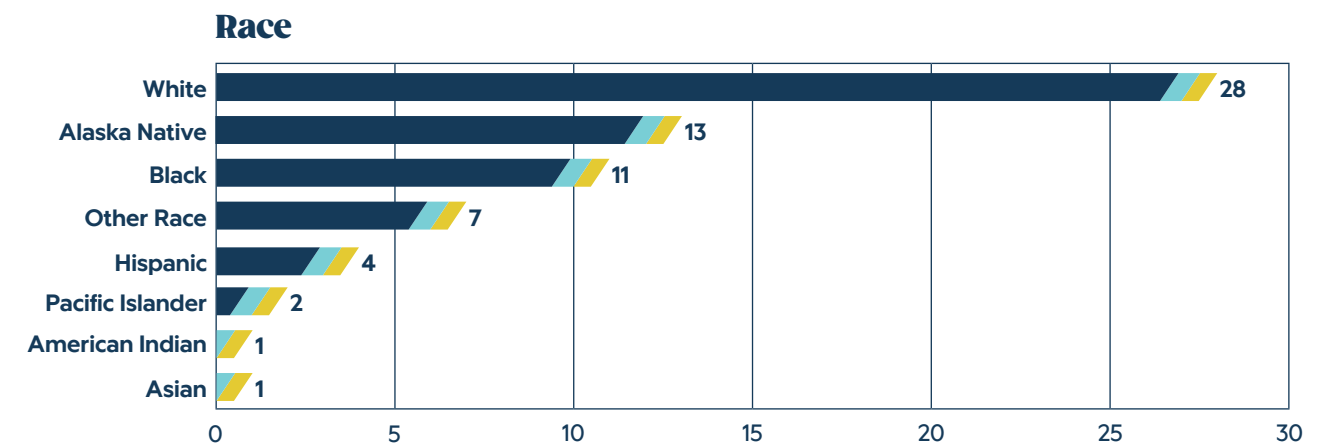
Accountability and Healing

for Perpetrators of Violence

Battering Intervention Programs

Prisons

Total Served: 56



Trauma History

No Past Abuse	24
Physically Abused as a Child	21
Parents in Abuse Relationship	12
Sexually Abused as a Child	4
Past Abuse, Type Unknown	1
Other Abuse	1
Unknown	9

“

It is the belief of *** that offering a BIP service within the Alaska Prison System serves to reduce the rate of recidivism through our education classes. Those offenders that actively participate, engage, and practice the skills taught in the class will have changed thinking. This changed thinking will reduce the offenders desire to re-offend. This will reduce recidivism, reduce domestic violence while providing safety to partners, and ensure the offender can successfully re-establish themselves within the community as a productive citizen. -Battering Intervention Provider

”

Relationship to Victim

Ex-Romantic Partner	16
Romantic Partner/Dating	9
Spouse	7
Ex-Spouse	6
Minor Child	5
Parent/Guardian	4
Friend	3
Other Relative	3
Other Non-Relative	3
Sibling	1
Left Blank	1

Violence Type

Physical Force/Violence	37
Threats of Violence	14
Destruction Pets/Property	12
Weapons Used	12
No Prior Violence	6
Sex Abuse Minor	3
Sexual Assault Adult	3
Other	1
Unknown	2
Left Blank	1

Discharges

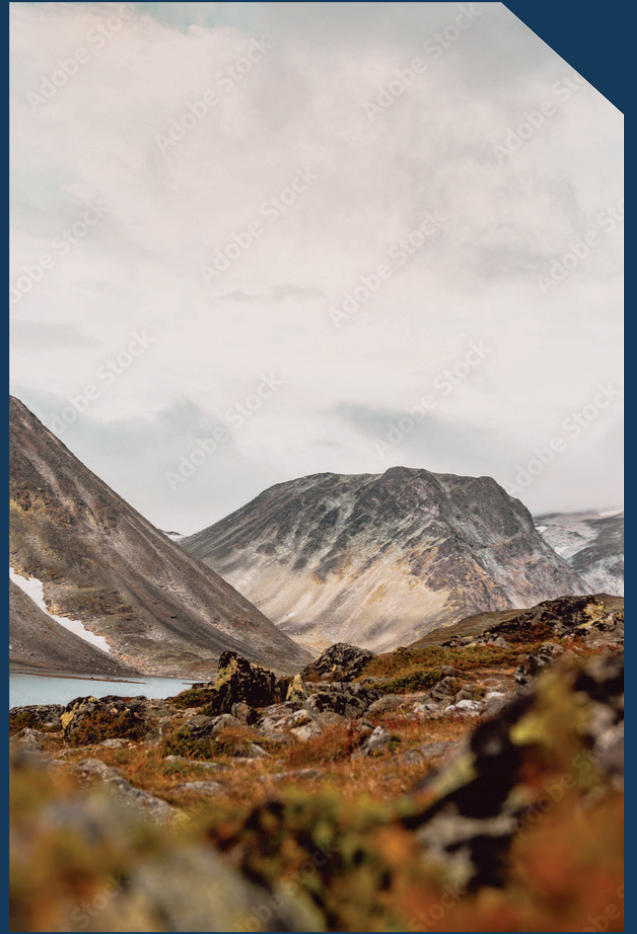
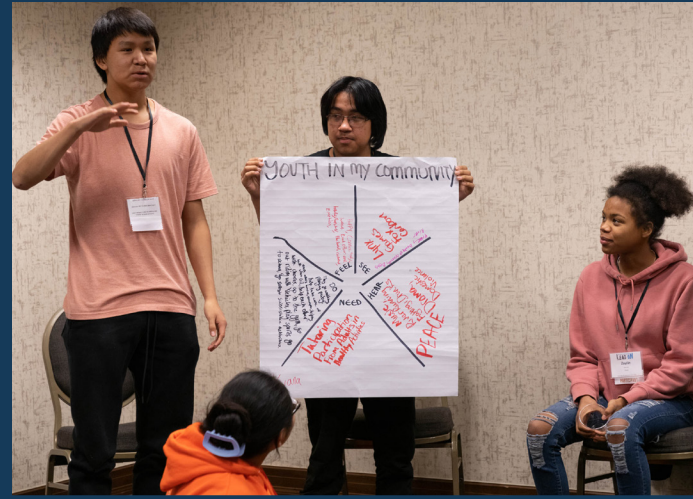
Program Completed	8
Other	7
Moved	2
Non-Compliant	1

Referral Source

Court	26
Self	7
OCS	2
Other	20
Left Blank	1

Substance Involvement

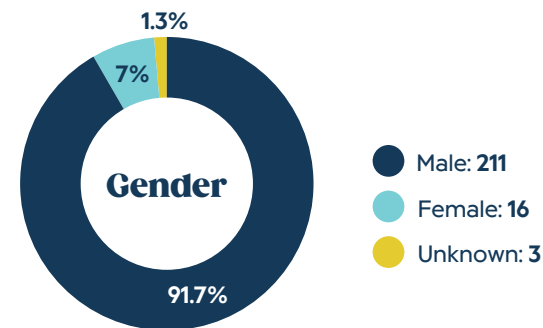
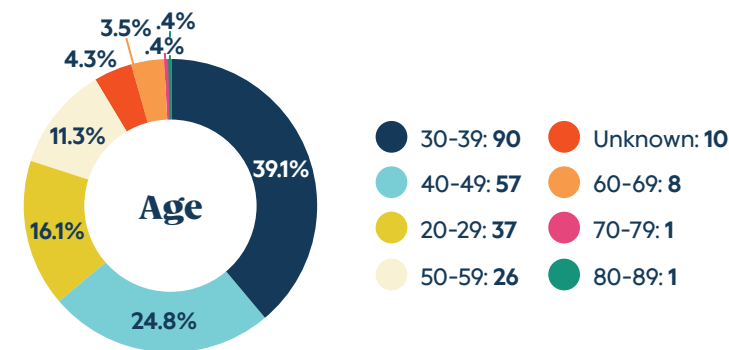
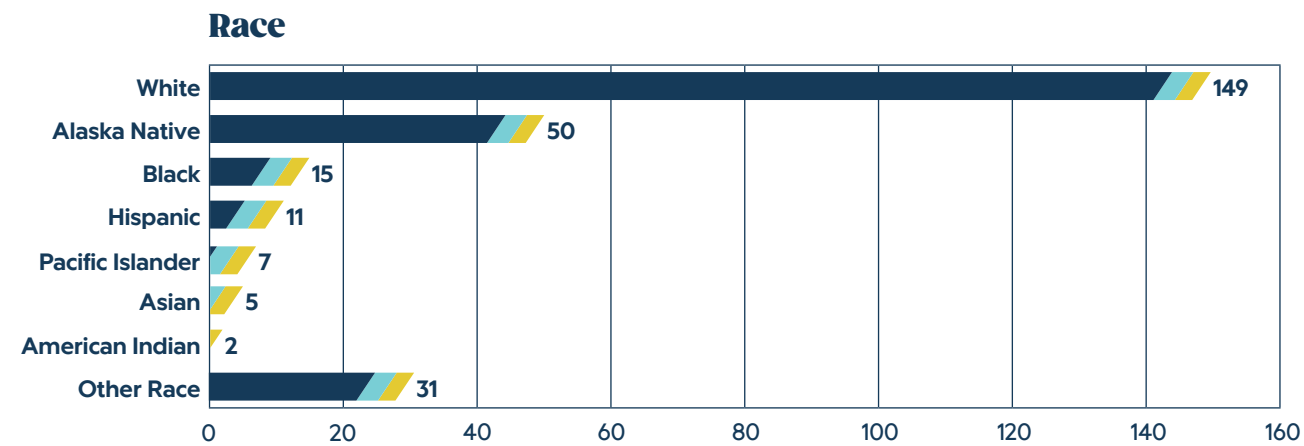
Alcohol	18
Drugs	8



Battering Intervention Programs

Community

Total Served: 230



Trauma History

No Past Abuse	88
Physically Abused as a Child	60
Parents in Abuse Relationship	35
Sexually Abused as a Child	9
Past Abuse, Type Unknown	4
Other Abuse	11
Unknown	62
Left Blank	1

“ Our program accepts fish and other cultural local foods to pay for group fees. This helps to provide for our elder’s lunch program. This helps offenders find a sense of community knowing they can provide and contribute to their elders. This also helps to alleviate the financial barrier to entering group while still maintaining the vested interest of the participant. **-Battering Intervention Provider** ”

“ This is to say that most of the men in our program have meaningful intimate or familial relationships, and those participants have opportunities to put strategies, beliefs, and what they’re learning about themselves into action. It’s meaningful for all participants to see a man recognize a pattern of his abuse in a new light, or for older men to tell a young adult to not make the same mistakes we did and end up here in 20 or 30 years. The opportunities for learning and growth are plentiful, and when one man embraces them, it invites other men to do the same, with an impact reaching far beyond our Zoom class. **-Battering Intervention Provider** ”

Relationship to Victim

Ex-Romantic Partner	59
Romantic Partner/Dating	54
Spouse	52
Ex-Spouse	37
Minor Child	10
Parent/Guardian	10
Other Non-Relative	8
Other Relative	5
Friend	3
Sibling	2
Left Blank	13

Referral Source

Court	124
OCS	18
Self	18
No New Referral	3
Other	58
Left Blank	12

“ Offenders take the tools we taught them and then utilize the tools in groups and also hold each other accountable during groups. One example of this is: one offender was arrested on another charge while participating in the community group. When the offender returned to the group the offender used thinking distortions to minimize and justify the reasons for his arrest. The group asked permission to deconstruct his thinking report which helped hold that offender accountable for their arrest. **-Battering Intervention Provider** ”

Violence Type

Physical Force/Violence	127
Threats of Violence	60
No Prior Violence	32
Weapons Used	27
Destruction Pets/Property	25
Sex Abuse Minor	2
Sexual Assault Adult	2
Other	22
Unknown	18
Left Blank	12

Discharges

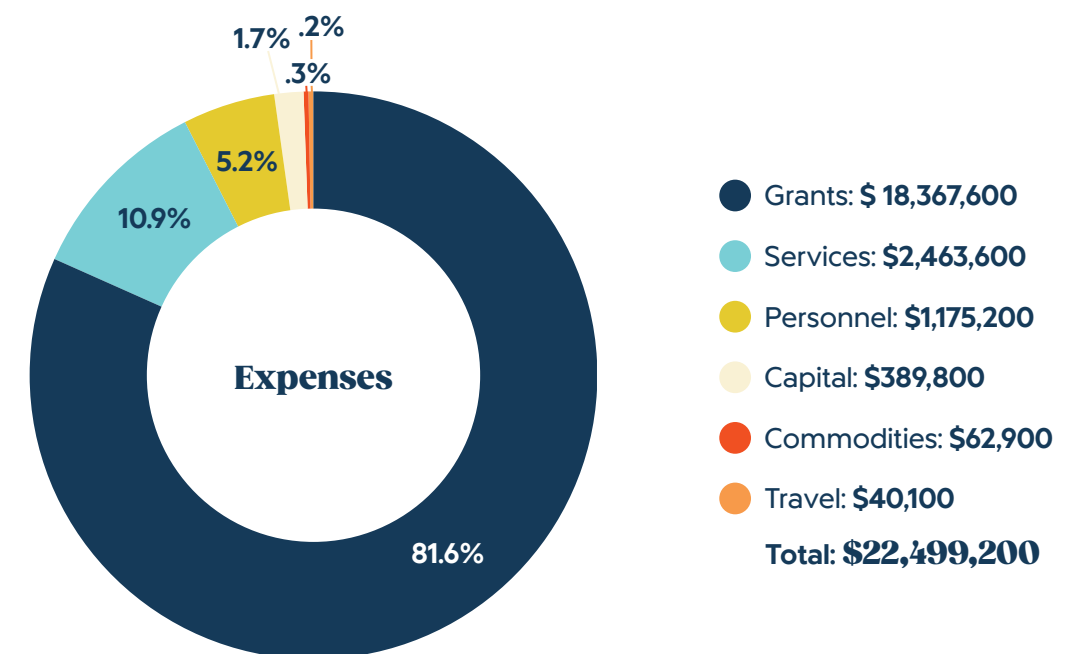
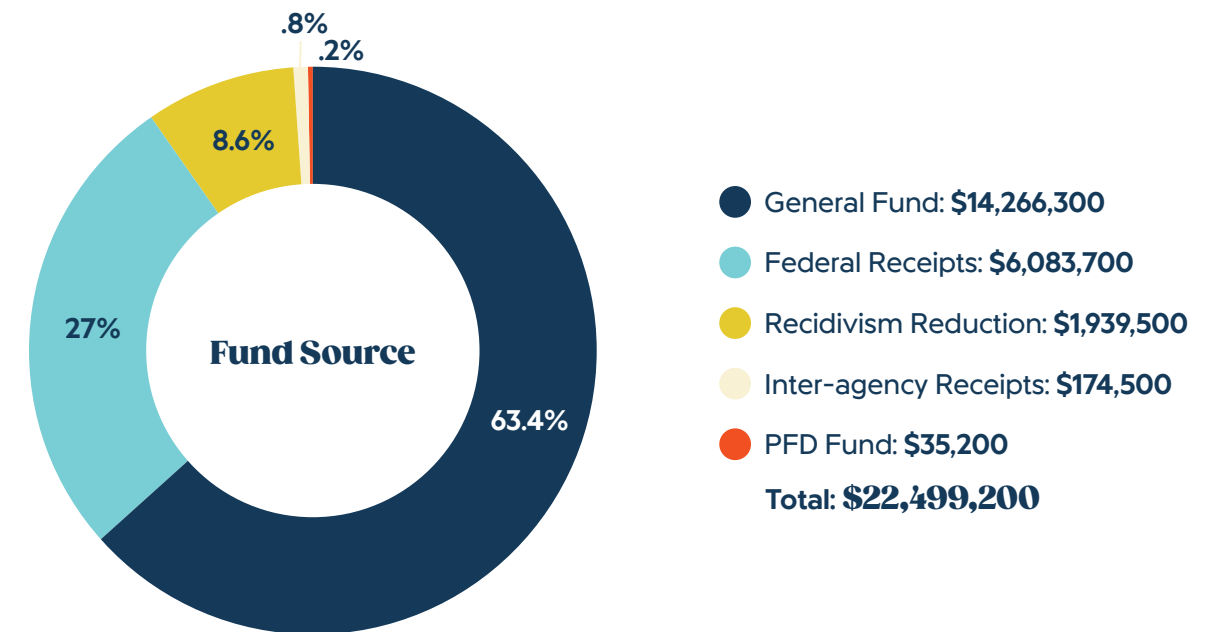
Program Completed	42
Non-Compliant	19
Moved	1
Deceased	1
Other	5

Substance Involvement

Alcohol	56
Drugs	19

Managing Public Funds Responsibly

SFY2023 CDVSA Financials



SFY2023

CDVSA Sub-Grantees

CDVSA provides funding to 34 community-based programs serving individuals, families, and communities impacted by domestic and sexual violence. Services include emergency and safe shelter, advocacy, legal services, temporary safe housing, support, services for children and adults, programs for those who use violence in relationships, and community prevention programming.

Of the total number of sub-grantees, 24 receive Victim Service grants, providing direct support, advocacy, emergency housing, and other services— they are represented with asterisks. Other agencies represent Prevention Programs, BIP Services, Child Advocacy Centers, Youth Mental Health Services, and Legal Advocacy Services.

More detail is available at: dps.alaska.gov/CDVSA/Services/VictimServices

Advocates for Victims of Violence* - **Valdez**
Abused Women's Aid in Crisis* - **Anchorage**
Aiding Women in Abuse and Rape Emergencies - **Juneau**
Alaska Behavioral Health - **Anchorage**
Alaska Family Services* - **Palmer**
Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault - **Juneau**
Arctic Women in Crisis* - **Utqiagvik**
Bering Sea Women's Group* - **Nome**
Bristol Bay Area Health Corp. - **Dillingham**
Catholic Community Services SAFE - **Juneau**
Copper River Basin CAC - **Gakona**
Cordova Family Resource Center* - **Cordova**
Emmonak Women's Shelter* - **Emmonak**
Helping Ourselves Prevent Emergencies* - **Craig**
Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living* - **Fairbanks**
Kenaitze Indian Tribe* - **Kenai**
Ketchikan Indian Community - **Ketchikan**
Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center* - **Kodiak**
The Lee Shore Center* - **Kenai**
Maniilaq Family Crisis Center* - **Kotzebue**
Providence Alaska Medical Center - **Anchorage**
Resource Center for Parents and Children Stevie's Place - **Fairbanks**
Safe and Fear Free Environment* - **Dillingham**
Sitkans Against Family Violence* - **Sitka**
Seaview Community Services* - **Seward**
South Peninsula Haven House* - **Homer**
Standing Together Against Rape* - **Anchorage**
The Children's Place - **Wasilla**
Tundra Women's Coalition* - **Bethel**
Unalaskans Against Sexual Assault & Family Violence* - **Unalaska**
Victims for Justice* - **Anchorage**
Working Against Violence for Everyone* - **Petersburg**
Women in Safe Homes* - **Ketchikan**
Volunteers of America Alaska - **Anchorage**

For more information

Contact CDVSA

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