



**The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act
Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund - Rape Crisis Services in Florida**

**Report Issued by the Division of Community Health Promotion
Sexual Violence Prevention Program**

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**Report to the Florida Legislature:
*The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act,
The Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund, and
Rape Crisis Services in Florida***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Health, Sexual Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) is honored to provide the Florida Legislature the 2012-2013 Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund legislative report, as mandated by section 794.055, *Florida Statutes*. In 2003, the Florida Legislature created "The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act" and the Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund (RCPTF) within the Department of Health. The Act created a funding system for distribution of monies generated by a \$151 fine assessed on offenders convicted of sexual battery and other offenses. While the clerk of the court retains \$1 of the fine as a service fee, \$150 goes to the RCPTF. This Act also requires the department to contract with a statewide, nonprofit association to distribute these funds for the provision of sexual battery recovery services. The department contracts with the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, Inc. (FCASV), a statewide nonprofit organization committed to victims and survivors of sexual violence and the rape crisis centers who serve them. FCASV subcontracts with certified rape crisis centers throughout the state to serve victims and enhance services.

From September 2003 to June 2013, county clerks deposited \$13,208,993 into the RCPTF. In 2011-2012, the FCASV received \$267,660 to provide statewide initiatives in support of victims, while 30 certified rape crisis centers received \$1,070,638, for a total annual contract amount of \$1,338,298. Certified rape crisis centers are funded based on an allocation formula that takes into account each county's population and rural density. These funds served 7,560 new primary victims (the victim of sexual assault) and secondary victims (an individual impacted by the sexual assault of a primary victim); as well as continuing services to 7,743 victims who were first seen prior to July 2012 (but are not included in the count for new victims). These victims received 30,997 sexual battery recovery services.

In 2012, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement reported 10,145 forcible sex offenses and 2,711 arrests. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS, 2011), approximately 17 percent or one out of every six women in Florida has been the victim of rape or attempted rape while 42 percent of women in Florida have experienced other forms of sexual violence.

THE RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE: RAPE CRISIS SERVICES

During the 2012-2013 fiscal year, advocates in 30 certified rape crisis centers across the state of Florida, provided immediate and ongoing response to sexual violence. Rape crisis centers' staff provide in-person crisis intervention and/or hotline services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for rape victims as well as adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Below are examples of the many services provided by the certified rape centers:

Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services

Two minors, who were victims of ongoing sexual assault at the hands of their stepfather, were reluctant to disclose the sexual abuse they had been subject to for years. An advocate from Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services was available to offer crisis counseling and support through the reporting process. The family was in need of many services because of the crime, and the advocate was available to assist them in accessing resources such as individual and family counseling, food, victims' compensation, and extra surveillance at the home and school.

Because the offenses were on two separate victims, the offender decided to have the charges split into two trials. This caused additional trauma to both victims having to relive the victimization not only for themselves but for their siblings as well. An advocate was available to assist the victims in preparing and becoming comfortable with the court process as well as provide crisis counseling during the three-day trial. Because of the victims' sound testimonies and self-confidence during the first trial, the offender was convicted and sentenced to three life sentences.

Creative Services, Inc.

Creative Services' Sexual Assault Group Recovery meets every week, providing counseling for women who would not have received it otherwise. Women who were referred to the group have come back later to express how much it has helped them. One woman, who had extreme anger issues, implemented a coping skill she learned from the support group that she said has worked every time. Another victim said by hearing the other victims tell their stories she has learned so many things about the effects of sexual assault. As a result, she is able to cope with her trauma. Group participants have learned that talking about what happened to them is a part of the healing process.

Mujeres Unidas en Justicia, Educación y Reforma (M.U.J.E.R.), Incorporated (Women United in Justice, Education, and Reform)

MUJER provided services for a mother and daughter. The daughter disclosed that she was being sexually abused by the boyfriend of her older sibling and received services, while her mother received counseling as a secondary victim. In therapy, the mother revealed that she was having flashbacks of her own sexual abuse by a relative when she was a child. MUJER's therapist worked with the daughter to process her trauma as well as the possibility of testifying in a trial of her perpetrator. The mother has been able to deal with her own past abuse, triggered by her daughter's sexual assault, and the family has met in therapy to address the feelings and issues resulting from the sexual abuse.

SEXUAL BATTERY SERVICES

In 2012-2013, 7,560 primary and secondary victims, received services. During this time, 7,743 ongoing victims that received services prior to 2012 continued to receive services. The following sexual battery recovery services are provided:

<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>Number of Services</u>
Advocacy and Accompaniment	6,131
Crisis Intervention	3,367
Hotline calls	14,679
Information and Referrals	2,773
Forensic Exams	386
Support Group	233
Therapy	1,575
<u>Other</u>	<u>1,853</u>
Total	30,997

Source: Florida Department of Health Sexual Violence Data Registry.

**RCPTF ALLOCATIONS BY PROGRAM
7/1/12-6/30/13**

Certified Rape Crisis Centers in Florida	Counties Served	Total Award
Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Incorporated (Fort Myers)	Lee, Hendry, Glades	\$44,468
Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center (Gainesville)	Alachua, Bradford, Union	\$34,608
Another Way, Incorporated (Bronson)	Levy, Gilchrist, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee, Columbia	\$71,421
Bridgeway Center (Fort Walton Beach)	Okaloosa	\$13,615
Broward County Sexual Assault Treatment Center (Fort Lauderdale)	Broward	\$56,390
Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (Punta Gorda)	Charlotte	\$12,651
Creative Services, Incorporated (Ocala)	Marion	\$17,749
Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (Tampa)	Hillsborough	\$41,675
Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties, Incorporated (Leesburg)	Lake, Sumter	\$39,340
Lakeview Center Rape Crisis and Rape Awareness Programs (Pensacola)	Escambia, Santa Rosa	\$28,398
Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services (Bradenton)	Manatee	\$16,479
Mujeres Unidas en Justicia, Educación y	South Miami-Dade	\$22,954

Certified Rape Crisis Centers in Florida	Counties Served	Total Award
Reforma (M.U.J.E.R.), Incorporated (Women United in Justice, Education, and Reform) (Homestead)		
Palm Beach County Victim Services (West Palm Beach)	Palm Beach	\$44,538
Peace River Rape Recovery and Resource Center (Lakeland)	Hardee, Highlands, Polk	\$46,828
Project Help, Incorporated (Naples)	Collier	\$18,065
Putnam County Health Department Sexual and Physical Violence Intervention Program (Palatka)	Putnam	\$12,112
Quigley House, Incorporated (Orange Park)	Clay	\$13,080
Refuge House, Incorporated (Tallahassee)	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla	\$84,345
Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center/Jackson Memorial Hospital (Miami-Dade)	Miami-Dade	\$55,511
Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (Sarasota)	DeSoto, Sarasota	\$27,992
Safety Shelter of St. Johns County, Incorporated (Saint Augustine)	St. Johns	\$13,054
Salvare, Incorporated dba Dawn Center of Hernando County (Spring Hill)	Hernando	\$12,387
Salvation Army Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Program (Panama City)	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Washington	\$62,843
Sexual Assault Assistance Program State Attorney's Office, 19th Circuit (Fort Pierce)	Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, St. Lucie	\$47,825
Sexual Assault Victim Services (Viera)	Brevard, Seminole	\$40,511
Suncoast Center, Incorporated dba Family Service Centers (Clearwater)	Pinellas	\$32,552
Sunrise of Pasco County, Incorporated (Dade City)	Pasco	\$20,230
The Children's Advocacy Center of Volusia and Flagler Counties Sexual Assault Response Team (Daytona Beach)	Volusia, Flagler	\$31,761
Victim Service Center of Central Florida (Orlando)	Orange	\$54,580

Certified Rape Crisis Centers in Florida	Counties Served	Total Award
Women's Center of Jacksonville Rape Recovery Team (Jacksonville)	Baker, Duval, Nassau	\$52,676
TOTAL		\$1,070,638

EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES FOR FLORIDA'S RAPE CRISIS CENTERS

Victims of Crime Act (Federal): The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), passed in 1986, supports many direct service programs at rape crisis centers. This fine-based funding is from the United States Department of Justice and administered through the Office of the Attorney General of Florida.

Violence Against Women Act (Federal): The Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act (VAWA), has improved the systemic response to sexual violence victims by funding intervention services. FCASV receives Services-Training-Officers-Prosecutors (STOP) funds so that FCASV staff can provide training and technical assistance to first responders at rape crisis centers, law enforcement agencies and allied professionals to improve the provision of the sexual battery recovery services for sexual assault victims.

Violence Against Women Act (Federal): The Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program is designated for the provision of services to victims of sexual violence. The Florida Department of Health passes this funding through to the FCASV for distribution to certified rape crisis centers and the provision of intervention services.

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (Federal): The CDC funds the Rape Prevention Education Program through the Florida Department of Health, SVPP. This source supports many of Florida's rape crisis hotlines and primary rape prevention education.

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (Federal): The Florida Department of Health's SVPP funds nine rape crisis centers to provide sexual battery recovery services through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

General Revenue: In 2013, the Florida legislature appropriated \$2,500,000 of recurring general revenue funds to FCASV for certified rape crisis centers to provide services to victims of sexual battery.

SERVICE STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION OF RAPE CRISIS CENTERS

FCASV is responsible for service standards and the certification process for Florida's rape crisis centers. Service standards and certification are based on the following:

- A broad array of high quality sexual violence services must exist in every community.
- Sexual violence services provided in the context of a coordinated, collaborative, and multidisciplinary approach including medical/forensic providers, advocates, criminal justice professionals, and social service providers.
- All service providers must have victim empowerment as the cornerstone of service delivery.

In December 2007, FCASV updated and printed the *Certification Standards* manual, which describes rape crisis center eligibility and certification requirements. The manual was distributed to rape crisis centers and programs interested in becoming certified.

In January 2008, FCASV initiated on-site certification monitoring of currently certified and applicant programs. All certified rape crisis centers are reviewed by an independent agency every other year to ensure compliance with the *Certification Standards*. It is critical that centers continue to demonstrate their ability to effectively operate and provide quality services to primary and secondary victims of sexual assault.

The Sexual Violence Prevention Program

The SVPP receives funding from the CDC for Rape Prevention Education (RPE). The CDC funding provides a statewide-integrated system of primary rape prevention education for citizens in Florida to create social change and prevent sexual violence. In order for Florida to achieve a statewide-integrated system of primary rape prevention education, the SVPP facilitates prevention activities conducted by the State Prevention Team (SPT) on the state level and funds the Community Mobilization Teams (CMT) at the local level. The SPT and CMT membership is comprised of multi-disciplinary representation from state agencies, victim service sites, funded hotline sites, community based organizations and universities.

The SVPP, SPT and CMT have developed, implemented, and are evaluating the Rape Prevention 2012 – 2017 Strategic Plan.

SVPP prevention activities and accomplishments in FY 12/13:

- Provided technical assistance to funded sites to optimize organizational and community capacity building
- Conducted 14,589 public and professional presentations (a 14 percent decrease from FY 11/12)
- Approximately 160,235 public and professional persons attended primary rape prevention presentations (greater than 90 percent of attendees reported gaining an increase in awareness, as well as, having a change in attitude and actions regarding sexual violence)
- Approximately 141,294 educational items were distributed in the community by funded sites
- Florida schools implemented policies to address bullying and teen dating violence prevention
- Twenty-eight community agencies were funded to strengthen prevention efforts and enhance systems operations at the community level
- Ensured contracted sites' program staff educators received 30 hours of primary prevention topics and a six-hour, annual update
- Maintained and regularly updated the Sexual Violence Prevention Program resource data web page
- Ensured sexual violence prevention curricula is theory based or, at a minimum, a promising practice
- Acknowledged the complexity in changing social norms and behaviors and therefore, required funded sites to provide 50-minute, education sessions five times to the same audience
- Conducted four webinars with experts sharing best practices and relevant data
- Required all funded agencies to participate in strategic planning efforts
- Ensured sexual violence prevention Community Action Teams (community members joining with funded programs to end sexual violence) cover 47 of 67 counties

- Ensured that 100 percent of the state has access to hotline services and advertisement of the toll-free numbers through various media

Prevention and the provision of sexual battery recovery services is critical in keeping with Florida's vision to be the healthiest state in the nation and end sexual violence in Florida. *Prevention* is the key to being able to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

CONCLUSION

Each victim of sexual violence has suffered terrible trauma. The RCPTF funding helps to ensure sexual violence victims have access to basic services including 24/7 hotlines, crisis intervention, advocacy, counseling services, therapy, medical/forensic intervention, service coordination, and community awareness. Victim advocates in rape crisis centers throughout the state diligently work to provide professional, compassionate services to all who have experienced this terrible trauma.

The Department of Health and SVPP joined state and community partners to develop the second five-year strategic plan to prevent sexual violence in Florida. With funding, guidance, and support from the CDC, the SVPP, along with state and community partners, created a common vision statement, mission statement, and six important goals. Through the year 2013 and beyond, statewide partners will work together on preventing sexual violence in their communities by addressing each community's unique needs, cultures, and resources.

The Department of Health and SVPP, in partnership with the FCASV and Florida's rape crisis centers, continues to ensure each victim has an opportunity to receive vital services necessary for the healing process. The Florida Department of Health remains committed to funding the 29 certified rape crisis centers and FCASV to ensure sexual assault victims are served.

REFERENCE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2011:
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/>