

FLORIDA VOICE

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Year In Review

As we begin a new year, we utilize this issue of the *Florida Voice* to provide our readers with a review of the past year and share some highlights, accomplishments, and new programs and initiatives. The following highlights are certainly not inclusive of every Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence activity, but are designed to share a snapshot of some of FCADV's programs, initiatives and trainings.

FCADV serves as the statewide professional association for Florida's certified domestic violence centers. In this role, the Coalition is the primary voice of survivors of domestic violence and their children in the public policy arena; in addition, FCADV provides training, technical assistance, and education to our membership, partners, advocates and professionals to improve services, practices and policies. In 2004, FCADV was statutorily mandated to serve as the administrator of state and federal funding earmarked for domestic violence services in Florida. As the administrator of these funds, FCADV subcontracts with Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers, a multitude of law enforcement agencies, state prosecutor's offices, and community based organizations dedicated to ending domestic violence. FCADV ensures compliance with both administrative and programmatic requirements of each of the subcontracts through engaging in a stringent monitoring process. This unique role affords FCADV the opportunity to assist with the creation of cutting edge programming and leads to a seamless coordination among agencies whose services impact survivors and their children. In addition, FCADV operates the Florida Domestic Violence hotline, providing multilingual services 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Trained hotline advocates provide support, advocacy, information, and referral services for domestic violence survivors, their children, family and friends, as well as to community members, program partners and others seeking information.

Created with the founding principles of cooperation and unity among domestic violence centers, FCADV constantly advocates for programs, policies and funding that benefit all 42 certified domestic violence centers, and more importantly the survivors and children they serve. By speaking with a single, unified voice, Florida aims to ensure that high quality services and programming exist for survivors and their children regardless of where they are located in the state.



FCADV Programs, Initiatives and Trainings

FCADV works closely with Florida's certified domestic violence centers, collaborative community partners and service providers to create and implement programs and initiatives designed to ensure quality services, maximize safety for domestic violence survivors and their children, and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. In addition, thousands of hours of technical assistance and training are provided each year to increase knowledge of issues, enhance efficiencies and standards, and build capacity to best serve domestic violence survivors and their children. Trainings are tailored to the unique needs of each certified domestic violence center, training participants, organizations, local communities, and partners. For more specific information regarding the availability of training programs, please email: info_fcadv@fcadv.org.

Following the trainings, programs and initiatives listed on the following pages are highlights about several new, expanded and/or existing FCADV programs and initiatives. While certainly not an exhaustive list of all programs and accomplishments, these are examples of the many exciting, innovative and groundbreaking initiatives designed to serve domestic violence survivors and their children and hold perpetrators accountable.

During fiscal year 2014-2015 FCADV:

- Responded to 14,150 technical assistance requests from domestic violence centers, collaborative partners and other agencies
- Conducted 218 onsite technical assistance visits and trainings for certified domestic violence center staff and/or Board of Directors, collaborative partners and other agencies
- Conducted 131 webinars
- Conducted 62 regional and statewide training events and/or conferences
- Administered and managed 168 contracts
- Conducted 102 monitoring visits and/or desk reviews

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Sample of Available Trainings

All trainings are tailored to the needs of the training participants and their local communities.

- Advanced Domestic Violence Training for Law Enforcement Advocacy, Technology, and Safety
- Advocating for LGBT Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Adult Protective Services and Later in Life Intimate Partner Violence
- Batterer Accountability in the Child Welfare System
- Batterer Accountability in the Criminal Justice System
- Battering and Chemical Dependency
- Battering and Mental Health Complexities
- Building Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Collaborations
- Cognitive Disability, Mental Health and Domestic Violence
- Community Collaboration to Prevent Domestic Violence Homicide
- Compassion Fatigue and Advocate Self-Care
- Domestic Violence Core Competency Trainings
- Domestic Violence and Disabilities
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review
- Domestic Violence in Later Life
- Domestic Violence in the Military
- Dynamics of Sexual Violence and Substance Abuse
- Economic Justice: Survivor-Centered Advocacy
- Effective Communication: Advocating for Survivors Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Effects of Domestic Violence on Children and Youth
- Emergency Preparedness as it Relates to Survivors with a Disability
- Empowerment-Based Advocacy
- Empowerment-Based Documentation and Service Management
- Ethical Communication
- Evidence-Based Prosecution in Domestic Violence Cases
- Financial Exploitation in Later Life
- Herstory of the Battered Women’s Movement
- Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Improving Access to Justice for Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Lethality Assessment and Safety Planning
- Medical Advocacy Projects: Tools and Training Methods
- Organizing in Rural Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence
- Primary Prevention of Domestic Violence
- Providing Outreach to Incarcerated Survivors
- Relationship Abuse – Runaway and Homeless Youth
- Sexual Violence in the Context of Domestic Violence
- Shelter Rules, Ethics and Empowerment
- Social Media and Advocacy in the Digital Age
- Teen Dating Violence and Technology
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and Service Animals
- Train the Trainer on Core Competency
- Trauma Informed Care and Service Provision

List of Programs and Initiatives

- Burn and Trauma Medical Advocacy Project
- Domestic Violence and Disabilities Program
- Domestic Violence in Later Life Program
- Peace of Mind Florida: Domestic Violence and Traumatic Brain Injury
- Child Protection Investigation Project
- Child Welfare Initiative
- Clearinghouse Project
- Economic Justice Initiatives
- Florida Domestic Violence Hotline and Legal Hotline
- Core Competency Based Trainings
- Healthy Advocate Initiative
- Domestic Violence and Home Visitors Project
- DELTA FOCUS Initiative
- Primary Prevention Initiative
- Empowerment-Based Service Provision Project
- Engaging Men and Boys Prevention Project
- Intimate Violence Enhanced Service Team (InVEST)
- Law Enforcement Enhanced Response to Violence Against Women
- Law Enforcement Training Initiative
- Rural Statewide Initiative
- Survivor Listening Project
- Linguistically and Culturally Specific Victim Services Project
- Legal Assistance for Victims
- Legal Initiative
- Sexual Violence in the Context of Domestic Violence Project
- Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team
- Technology and Safety Program
- Community Collaborative Projects
- Rural and Underserved Projects

Child Protection Investigation Project

FCADV's CPI Project is designed to provide a coordinated community response for families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse by co-locating domestic violence advocates within CPI Units. These co-located advocates provide consultation to child welfare professionals, support and referral services to survivors, and coordinate with community partners to develop strategies to improve collaboration and resolve barriers that arise during project implementation. This immediate intervention, sometimes within hours of a child abuse report, helps to stabilize the crisis and increase safety in the home. The CPI Project was originally implemented in 2009 with seven pilot sites. Four additional sites were added in 2011, three of which focused on providing linguistically and culturally specific services. In 2014, FCADV expanded the project to an additional 33 counties and in 2015, because of the generosity of the Florida Legislature, funding was provided to expand this innovative initiative statewide.

Active engagement of community leadership at every level is a critical component of the CPI Project. Therefore, each site is required to develop a Leadership Team that includes the local certified domestic violence center, CPI unit, CBC lead agency, batterers' intervention program, law enforcement agency, and the state attorney's office. These local leadership teams ensure coordination of services and identify opportunities to improve the community-wide response to survivors of domestic violence and their children, while increasing perpetrator accountability measures and strategies.

In fiscal year 2014-15, these projects collectively utilized a seamless system of wrap around services which allowed 7,611 children, whose families were involved in the child welfare system, to remain in the home with the non-offending parent. During this time, co-located advocates received and followed up on a total of 5,117 CPI Project referrals from child welfare professionals; participated in 3,028 child welfare case staffings; and, provided 5,233 case consultation services to child welfare professionals. Services provided by the co-located advocates, along with the systems change efforts of the leadership teams, significantly reduced the need for foster care services and produced *a potential cost savings of \$19,590,714 by keeping the children out of the foster care system.*

Intimate Violence Enhanced Service Team (InVEST)

InVEST was created specifically to reduce and prevent domestic violence homicides in the State of Florida. FCADV and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) identified 11 communities with the highest rates of domestic violence homicides to implement the InVEST program. InVEST utilizes a coordinated community response model designed to reduce the number of domestic violence homicides by simultaneously increasing domestic violence services

available to and offered for survivors identified as experiencing high lethality domestic violence situations while increasing perpetrator accountability throughout the criminal justice process. Preventing domestic violence homicides requires a comprehensive, multifaceted, and community-based response in which law enforcement, other criminal justice partners and domestic violence centers work together to hold perpetrators accountable while providing enhanced advocacy for survivors. The InVEST Program is comprised of members from law enforcement, domestic violence centers, child welfare agencies, courts, and other partners who move beyond traditional approaches to advocacy and response by identifying high risk cases and ensuring that all systems specifically tailor their response to address the unique needs of each survivor.

Funding provided by the OAG and DCF is utilized to hire advocates at certified domestic violence centers and detectives at law enforcement agencies to work collaboratively on conducting thorough investigations while providing enhanced safety and services for survivors. Partners engage in the daily review of police reports in an effort to identify potentially high-risk domestic violence cases, and subsequently, contact those survivors to inquire whether they are interested in participating in the program. InVEST partnerships have implemented batterer accountability measures and provided enhanced advocacy and safety for more than 3,000 survivors per year who are at high risk of being murdered by their intimate partner.

Since the program's inception in 2009, no InVEST participants were murdered by the abuser. This is particularly notable since InVEST participants enter the program based on the dangerous and high-risk behaviors that were perpetrated against them.

Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives

Florida's Top Financial Officer Promotes Financial Freedom: Your L.I.F.E.

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater and FCADV partnered to create a new web-based financial education initiative called *Your L.I.F.E.* (Learn Individual Financial Empowerment) to provide survivors with financial resources and information to gain a better understanding of money management and how to achieve financial security.

Whether an abuser manipulates finances as a form of abuse or a survivor feels incapable of escaping an abusive situation because of financial struggles, finances often create a barrier to creating a life free from abuse. While financial abuse is a common tactic used by perpetrators, it is not widely understood, making it one of the most powerful methods of trapping a survivor in an abusive relationship. The lack of financial independence may reduce the likelihood of a survivor remaining safe should they decide to leave.

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Statewide Economic Justice Initiatives *(Continued from page 3)*

The effects of financial abuse can be devastating, and the financial impact of domestic violence can last for 10-20 years while the survivor rebuilds credit and secures housing, childcare, and transportation. The *Your L.I.F.E.* initiative provides online assistance and education for survivors to assist them in achieving financial independence. The educational program includes topics such as budgeting and saving, repairing credit while reducing debt, and information on the different types of accounts offered by various financial institutions. Online tools offer information and resources on life events such as purchasing or leasing a car, buying or renting a home, and/or securing various types of insurance. In addition, the website has designated calculators available to assist survivors when budgeting for housing, childcare, repairs, and other expenses. Survivors can also download a resource guide that includes activities and worksheets to help implement the information secured through the *Your L.I.F.E.* program.

Economic Empowerment Saves Lives: Allstate's Guide to Financial Independence

FCADV's Statewide Economic Justice Initiative includes a critical partnership with The Allstate Foundation, a national foundation focused on financially empowering domestic violence survivors through resources and education. The Allstate Foundation and Allstate Florida provides funding to FCADV to advance financial independence for survivors of domestic violence and their children by coordinating grants for selected certified domestic violence centers to implement economic empowerment projects. Collectively, these projects help survivors learn about financial abuse while providing them the necessary skills to build a secure and stable financial future for their family. Grantees utilize The Allstate Foundation's "Moving Ahead Through Financial Management" curriculum to assist more than 1,500 survivors with budgeting, investing, retirement planning, debt reduction, completing job readiness programs, gaining new employment and participating in microloan or microenterprises, and other financial literacy components based on each survivors' unique situation and needs.

During the past year, three of the economic empowerment projects enhanced their existing programming by partnering with ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation. ProLiteracy works with adult new readers and learners to help them gain skills that will assist them, such as preparing a resume, learning interview skills for a new job, or strengthening math skills to take the GED. By incorporating the ProLiteracy component into existing economic empowerment programs, survivors are provided additional skills as they work to gain safety, economic security and independence. Essential skills survivors may gain from adult literacy include, but are not limited to, instruction in English, math, writing, and reading comprehension, computer training, job coaching and GED preparation.

Team Allstate Florida: Agents and Centers Changing Lives

Another component of FCADV's Statewide Economic Justice Initiative is the *Allstate Agents and Domestic Violence Centers Changing Lives* Program. An integral part of this collaborative is the formation of the Statewide Advisory Team (SAT) which is comprised of local Allstate agents and certified domestic violence center executive directors. The SAT focuses on two primary goals: increasing financial resources available for economic opportunities for domestic violence survivors in Florida and establishing community driven partnerships between the local Allstate agents and their certified domestic violence centers. FCADV convenes meetings annually with the SAT to identify potential funding and training opportunities that support the expansion of Florida's Allstate Economic Justice Project. With input from Allstate Economic Empowerment grantees and representatives of the FCADV Economic Justice Workgroup, the SAT will assist FCADV with the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for next year's Allstate Foundation funding to ensure priority areas and best practices are reflective of economic empowerment programming. In an effort to increase partnerships between the local Allstate agents and certified domestic violence centers, the SAT convenes meetings to identify press strategies, awareness activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and other related project activities. The SAT also serves as the entity responsible for providing leadership and guidance to FCADV regarding the unique opportunities associated with partnering certified centers with local Allstate agents in their respective communities.

FCADV and Allstate Florida partner annually to coordinate statewide donation drives among local agents and the domestic violence center in their area. This collection effort directly benefits survivors and their children living in emergency shelter by securing donated school uniforms for children returning to school. During the Legislative Session, FCADV and Allstate Florida held a statewide press conference with Florida's Attorney General, House and Senate Leadership, representatives from the Office of Florida's CFO, Allstate Florida Senior Vice President, and FCADV CEO. The press conference highlighted the importance of creating programming for survivors that focuses on the interconnection of financial literacy, financial freedom, and domestic violence. The event generated considerable local and statewide press through electronic, print, and social media avenues.

This groundbreaking partnership among FCADV, The Allstate Foundation, Allstate Florida, local certified centers and Allstate agents has led to enhanced awareness among agents regarding understanding and recognizing the initial signs of domestic violence, referring survivors to services, and educating their community on the impact of domestic violence on the economy. Local agents also share their financial literacy expertise with survivors by joining domestic violence advocates to conduct training elements of The Allstate Foundation's curriculum.

Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams

Florida's commitment to preventing domestic violence is evidenced by the existence of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and 24 active local teams. Since 2009, the Attorney General's Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team has conducted comprehensive reviews of domestic violence fatalities with the ultimate goal of preventing domestic violence homicides. The team identifies gaps in the service delivery system and renders policy and practical recommendations that will strengthen safety factors and reduce risk factors which contribute to these deaths. The statewide team is co-chaired by Attorney General Pam Bondi and FCADV. The team is comprised of representatives from a variety of state and local entities that interact with survivors, their children, and perpetrators of domestic violence. Members represent the court system, probation, parole, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, certified domestic violence centers, legal providers, health care providers, and the defense bar.

During fiscal year 2014-2015, the statewide team produced the 2015 *Faces of Fatality* report that includes descriptive statistics of domestic violence homicides based on data collected by local fatality review teams. The deaths reviewed occurred between 2002 and 2013, with the majority between 2011 and 2013. In total, local teams across the state submitted 29 reviews of fatal or near-fatal domestic violence homicides in Florida. The *Faces of Fatality* report includes a status report of the previous year's recommendations, as well as recommendations for the current year.

Community Collaborative Efforts to Enhance Safety

FCADV's *Community Collaborative Response to Increase Access to Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking* program creates a unique opportunity for select Florida communities to increase the resources, services, and advocacy available to survivors. Collaborative efforts between nonprofit community-based organizations, governmental agencies and mental health organizations ensure that survivors identified are referred to appropriate services and receive the assistance they request. Project partners establish and strengthen multidisciplinary collaborative relationships; increase organizational capacity to provide safe, accessible, and responsive services to survivors; identify needs and strengths within their respective service areas; and develop and implement plans to address those specific needs.

This past year, one of the anti-stalking projects focused on developing policies and procedures to better serve victims of stalking. Specifically, gaps in services were identified through a needs assessment that resulted in the creation of resources to meet the identified gaps. Materials created for the project included community-specific resources such as brochures and an Anti-Stalking Toolkit. The toolkit

provides practical guidance for working with survivors of stalking including, but not limited to, law enforcement's response to victims of stalking; evidence gathering and criminal justice intervention in stalking cases; and, best practices in victim advocacy.

In addition to anti-stalking, collaborative projects focus on building strong relationships at the community level between certified domestic violence centers and their local mental health service providers. It is important to note that not all survivors of domestic violence experience post-traumatic stress disorder or any other major mental health complexities; however, it is important that advocates are well prepared to support those survivors where such issue exists to ensure services are provided from an empowerment-based perspective. It is critical for advocates to refer survivors when necessary to local mental health providers that understand the certified domestic violence center's trauma-informed approach to working with battered women and their children. During the initial year of a selected mental health centered project, the domestic violence center and mental health provider completed a policy scan to cross review each organization's policies and procedures relevant to serving survivors of domestic violence. The collaborative identified that documentation policies of the mental health partnering agency could be enhanced to mitigate unintended consequences related to survivor safety. As a result of learning exchanges and collaborative team meetings, partners developed a documentation policy which has been replicated by communities that are focused on addressing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and mental health issues.

A component of all of the community collaborative projects is cross training of each partners' organizations in order to build capacity and gain a baseline understanding of each agencies work. Training conducted by the mental health providers has increased domestic violence center advocates' understanding of the complexity of providing services to survivors experiencing the co-occurrence of trauma symptoms and major mental illnesses. Additionally, these projects have strengthened the referral procedure and increased the number of referrals to the collaborating mental health provider. Further, survivors are able to successfully remain in shelter, safe from their abusive partner, while concurrently receiving mental health services from the community.

Last year, another grantee implementing a similar community collaborative project expanded the scope of the training developed through this grant program by including law enforcement, child welfare and the military. This grantee conducted a listening session with program participants regarding their experiences when seeking services in their community as survivors of domestic violence living with mental health challenges. Survivors reported they believed community partners would benefit from training on trauma and mental health. As a result, a specialized institute was held in each of the two counties the center serves to address the need to provide trauma-informed services and to coordinate these efforts among community partners. A total of 196 participants attended the institutes,

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**Domestic Violence does not go away
by looking away.**

It stops when we stand up together.

**It stops when we say it must,
and not just one of us, but all of us.**



Sponsored by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence
and the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families.

Community Collaborative Efforts to Enhance Safety *(Continued from page 5)*

representing law enforcement, DCF, local mental health providers and local military personnel. The training agenda included trauma-informed interviewing techniques, best practices in assisting survivors of domestic violence with mental health as a co-occurring issue, and working with survivors involved with the dependency system from a trauma-informed perspective. Since the institute, law enforcement expressed the need for a tool officers could use on trauma-informed interviewing. Currently, the community collaborative, including representatives from law enforcement, are working on a palm card for officers to utilize in the field when responding to a domestic violence call. This opportunity not only provided law enforcement

with training on the interconnection of trauma and domestic violence, but it also strengthened the relationships between the local law enforcement agency, the mental health provider and the local certified domestic violence center.

Coordinated community responses such as these benefit survivors long-term by increasing safety, increasing batterer accountability, coordinating services, and identifying available community resources.

Additional information may be found in *Enhancing Safety – A Pathway to Saving Lives*, the 2014–2015 Annual Report to the Florida Legislature. Available at: <http://fcadv.org/publications/enhancing-safety-pathway-saving-lives-2014-2015-annual-report>

Together We Can End Domestic Violence

The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a grassroots nonprofit organization whose membership is comprised of individuals, centers, and advocacy groups sharing the goal of eliminating domestic violence.