

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### About Center for Domestic Peace

1. **Question:** What is Center for Domestic Peace's budget?

**Answer:** \$2,188,433 for FY 2012-13

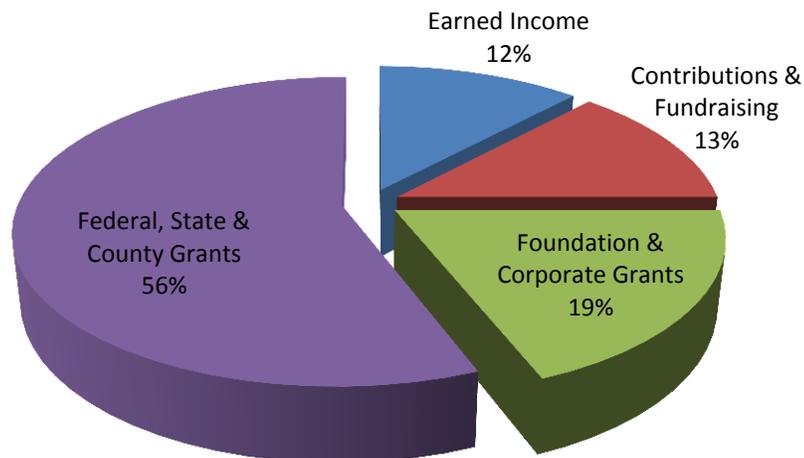
2. **Question:** How many staff work at Center for Domestic Peace?

**Answer:** 22 staff (18 full-time and 4 part-time), and nearly 100 volunteers (46 direct service)

3. **Question:** Who funds Center for Domestic Peace?

**Answer:**

### FY 2012/2013 Budget



4. **Question:** How many people does Center for Domestic Peace help each year?

**Answer:** In FY 10-11, Center for Domestic Peace provided services to 4,243 individuals:

- Hotline advocates answered 3,182 calls. The ManKind hotline answered an additional 75 calls.
- Shelter and Second Step provided housing to 248 women and children.
- The Community Advocacy Program (CAP) helped 375 participants achieve results within the legal and criminal justice systems.
- Support groups provided peer counseling to 255 participants.
- ManKind educated 92 men and WomanKind educated 16 women, teaching them skills to stop their violent behavior.

5. **Question:** How does Center for Domestic Peace engage the broader community in ending domestic violence?

**Answer:** Center for Domestic Peace advances community responsiveness to domestic violence by training and coordinating hundreds of professionals within multiple sectors and systems. We also promote social transformation through technical assistance, education, prevention (including teens and adults), and policy initiatives. In FY 10-11, we:

- Provided outreach and education on domestic violence at 27 events that reached 1,036 people.
- Conducted 24 specialized trainings, which reached 155 law enforcement and 186 members of the community from diverse fields (criminal justice system, schools, mental health, etc.).
- Helped build the capacity of 795 individuals conducting prevention work through 23 trainings and 9 webinars, with a focus on youth-serving organizations, faith leaders, and DV organizations throughout California.
- Engaged nearly 100 volunteers in in 26,541 hours of service delivery, which is the equivalent of nearly 13 full-time positions.

6. **Question:** How prevalent is the problem of domestic violence within Marin?

**Answer:** As the Marin County Grand Jury's 2010 report on domestic violence noted, domestic violence has been Marin County's number one violent crime for more than 20 years. In 2011, the District Attorney's Office received 843 domestic violence cases from law enforcement. According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, only 25% of all physical assaults are reported. This could mean there are as many as 3,372 incidents of physical assaults from domestic violence in Marin each year.

Each incident of nonfatal domestic violence costs \$27,362 per U.S. female victim, including costs related to productivity, medical and mental health care, police and fire service, social/victim services, and property damage. Applying this estimate, domestic violence could cost Marin more than \$92 million each year.

### **Center for Domestic Peace's Services for Specific Populations**

7. **Question:** What is Center for Domestic Peace doing for youth?

**Answer:** According to national statistics, young people (ages 13-24) are at an increased risk of experiencing dating violence:

- One in three adolescent girls is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009).
- Females ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to dating and domestic violence than any other age group, at a rate almost triple the national average (Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, 2001)

- Both males and females are victims, but boys and girls are abusive in different ways (i.e. boys hit and punch, whereas girls slap and push) (National Center for Victims of Crime).
- We can apply national rates of dating abuse to young people in Marin. In Marin, there are nearly 15,000 youth (13-17) and more than 22,000 young adults (18-24). Applying the 1 in 3 rate to young people (ages 13-24) in Marin would mean there could be as many as 12,350 young people experiencing dating abuse in this county.

In partnership with Huckleberry Youth Services, Center for Domestic Peace has received new funding from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to design and implement new services tailored for youth (ages 13-24) who are victims of dating violence. Over the next 3 years, this project will work to increase the safety of these victims by:

- Developing a customized, 24/7 victim response model specifically for young people who have experienced dating violence.
- Increasing outreach to locations young victims are likely to frequent, and drawing upon a youth advisory council to inform the project's services.
- Strengthening culturally, linguistically, age, and sexual orientation-appropriate services for youth.
- Providing training to other key youth services providers throughout Marin (including schools, health providers, youth programs, etc.) to improve their response to dating violence among youth.

As it relates to prevention, Center for Domestic Peace has offered comprehensive education on teen dating abuse and bullying within Marin County schools. Due to funding cutbacks, regrettably we currently only have the ability to respond to requests from schools on a case-by-case basis.

8. **Question:** What is Center for Domestic Peace doing for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) community?

**Answer:** Center For Domestic Peace's services are available to anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation. In same sex relationships, research indicates that domestic violence occurs at similar rates as domestic violence among heterosexual couples. However, victims within same sex relationships often experience additional barriers in seeking help, including extreme isolation, fear or threats of being "outed," fear that society will perceive same-sex relationships as inherently dysfunctional, and other challenges.

9. **Question:** What is Center for Domestic Peace doing for the Hispanic community?

**Answer:** Center for Domestic Peace has a 24-hour Spanish hotline, as well as bilingual advocates in the Community Advocacy Project (CAP), emergency shelter, and transitional housing programs. Support groups are also offered in Spanish. In addition, the advisory committee *Voces de Cambio* is comprised of former Spanish-speaking service users who are very active in providing training and outreach throughout their communities; these volunteers have been instrumental in increasing the help-seeking behavior of Hispanic and Latina victims.

10. **Question:** What is Center for Domestic Peace doing for men?

**Answer:** Men who are victims may and do contact Center for Domestic Peace for services. ManKind provides education classes for men who have been violent, teaching men skills not only to stop their violent behavior, but also to relate in healthy, safe, and equal ways. A 24-hour hotline is managed by trained male volunteers, helping deter men from engaging in violence. The hotline provides consultation and makes referrals to classes, which offer men concrete ways to end their violence.

### **Facts about Domestic Violence**

*For clarity, throughout this document we will refer to a victim as “she,” since national Statistics show that domestic violence primarily impacts women.*

11. **Question:** How are children affected by domestic violence?

**Answer:** Children are negatively impacted by domestic violence, even if they are not present during the violence. They may hear the violence from their rooms, witness the aftermath through physical injuries and broken possessions, be used as a tool by the abuser, or become homeless when a parent leaves. They may also suffer abuse at the hands of the abuser. Research shows that children who witness domestic violence show more anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, anger, and temperament problems than children who do not witness violence in the home. The trauma they experience can affect their development into adulthood.

Center for Domestic Peace prioritizes serving victims of domestic violence with children, and has tailored our services to help children heal from the trauma they have experienced. Our housing programs offer special services for children and their parents, including children’s play activities, art groups, parenting tips and education, DV counseling, childcare, immediate links and enrollment to local schools, and referrals for other community-based children’s services.

12. **Question:** Why does a victim of domestic violence stay?

**Answer:** A victim of domestic violence stays for a variety of complex reasons – the most important being to keep herself and her children safe. She may be terrified that her abuser will become more violent if she leaves, that he will try to take the children, and that she can’t make it on her own. He may have threatened her life if she does leave. She may believe that divorce is wrong, that the violence is her fault, that she can change his behavior, that she can stop the abuse, or that the violence is temporary. She may be experiencing pressure from her family and/or her religious or cultural community members. Since abusers often isolate victims, she might feel cut off from any social support or resources, and she may lack the financial means to support herself and her children. She may want the abuse to end, but not the relationship, or she may hold a belief system that she lacks self-worth without a relationship. But rather than focusing solely on the victim’s behavior, we should be asking, “Why does he abuse?”

It is important to note that men can also be victims of domestic violence, and that domestic violence happens in same sex relationships as well.

13. **Question:** What can I do to help someone in an abusive or violent relationship?

**Answer:** Listen to and believe the individual. Tell the individual, “The abuse is not your fault. You are not alone, and help is available.” Let the individual know that without intervention, abuse often escalates in frequency and severity over time. Seek expert assistance. Make referrals only to specialized domestic violence programs, not to couples counseling. Help the individual find a shelter, a safe home, or advocacy resources that offer protection.

14. **Question:** Aren't most domestic violence incidents caused by alcohol or drug abuse?

**Answer:** Many people have alcohol and/or drug problems but are not violent. Similarly, many abusers are not substance abusers. How people behave when they are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs depends on a complex combination of personal, social, physical, and emotional factors. And like many other kinds of behavior, alcohol or drug-affected behavior patterns are culturally learned.

However, researchers have found that drug and alcohol use often occur prior to domestic violence, and women who are substance abusers are more likely to be victimized.

In our culture, many leisure and social events involve heavy drinking, which can unfortunately contribute and/or lead to conflicts ending in violence. Furthermore, many people in troubled situations – such as domestic violence – use alcohol or drugs as a way to avoid facing their problem. It is often easier to blame an alcohol or drug abuse problem than to admit that you or your partner is openly, soberly violent. Episodes of problem drinking and incidents of domestic violence often occur separately and must be treated as two distinct issues. Neither alcoholism nor drug abuse can explain or excuse domestic violence.

15. **Question:** Doesn't most domestic violence occur in lower class or minority communities?

**Answer:** Domestic violence occurs at all levels of society, in all classes and communities, regardless of social, economic, or cultural backgrounds. Researchers and service providers have found, however, that economic and social factors can have a significant impact on how people respond to violent incidents and what kind of help they seek. Affluent people can usually afford private help – doctors, lawyers, and counselors – while people with fewer financial resources (*i.e.*, those belonging to a lower economic class or a minority group) tend to call the police or other public agencies. In addition, research has shown that individuals from minority groups are often arrested at disproportionate rates, including women who are wrongly arrested for acts of self-defense. Law enforcement and other public agencies are often the primary source of statistics on domestic violence, and consequently, lower class and

minority communities tend to be overrepresented in those figures, creating a distorted image of the problem.

16. **Question:** Aren't there just as many cases of abused men as there are of abused women, even if they aren't reported?

**Answer:** National statistics demonstrate that the majority of adult victims of domestic violence are current or former wives, girlfriends, or lovers of the abuser. The exception to these findings is in the area of spousal homicide, where victims are equally male and female. However, studies indicate that at least half of the male victims of domestic violence homicide are killed by their partners in self-defense after a history of abuse.

Over the last two years, approx. 7% of service users in our Community Advocacy Project (CAP) have been men. Men access our services in the same manner that women do (via our 24 hour hotlines, as walk-ins requesting services, through referrals from police departments, via medical sites, and through other community locations). As appropriate, men receive the same services that women do, including: legal advocacy, court accompaniment, counseling services, and crisis intervention.

17. **Question:** How does the economy affect domestic violence?

**Answer:** While an economic downturn and the accompanying stress it can raise do not cause domestic violence, they can contribute to intensifying domestic violence where it already exists. For example, there may be more opportunity for abuse when unemployed couples interact more frequently and have more challenges to resolve. National statistics cite that domestic violence is more than three times as likely to occur when couples are experiencing high levels of financial strain, as opposed to when they are experiencing low levels. Furthermore, a weak economy limits options for survivors to seek safety or escape, find a job, and become financially independent of abusers.

Center for Domestic Peace has incorporated economic empowerment activities into programs throughout the organization, and in particular at our transitional housing program Second Step, in order to help survivors become economically self-sufficient and independent. Second Step has had a high success rate in improving participants' income and ability to secure permanent housing upon exit. In FY 11-12, 100% of residents exiting Second Step saw an increase in their economic skills, with 54% exiting "safe" and 39% exiting "thriving" in the economic skills category of our evaluation tool. In addition, 93% of exiting women secured permanent housing and increased their income; 100% remained independent from their abuser.

If you have any additional questions, please email us at [administrator@c4dp.org](mailto:administrator@c4dp.org).