

"MORE PEOPLE TO LISTEN"

Legal and Social Service Needs of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence



A Report of the
Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable
and Bronx Legal Services

Bronx
Legal
Services

Legal
Services NYC



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- 140 survey participants
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Executive Summary

“We need more people to listen and guide people to get the help they need.”

-Bronx resident impacted by intimate partner violence

We are proud to release this comprehensive report on the needs of low-income Bronx communities impacted by intimate partner violence: “More People to Listen.”

In 2015 and 2016, the Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable and Bronx Legal Services conducted and analyzed data from the **“Legal and Social Services Needs Assessment of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence.”** Our primary goal is to give voice to those whom legal and social services are designed to serve, but who are not always listened to when programs are designed. The needs assessment included a detailed community survey, translated into Spanish and French and distributed online and on paper, and twenty in-person interviews with Bronx residents and advocates, covering a wide range of topics. The resulting report centers the voices of women, LGBTQ people, immigrants, people of color, speakers of languages other than English, and other marginalized groups deeply affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx. By taking the time to listen to Bronx residents about what they need before designing and deploying further resources, we hope to shift the paradigm of service provision in this borough.

Here is some of the most striking data from our analysis of 140 survey responses:

64% experienced physical or emotional abuse by a partner or ex-partner

75% turn to their friends or family for help; only **16%** turn to the police

65% need food stamps (SNAP)

64% reported incomes below the federal poverty level

55% cannot afford their rent; **26%** are living in shelter

42% would like help finding housing

38% would like help finding a job; **27%** would like job training

34% would like a divorce

25% were undocumented and wanted to speak to a lawyer about their options

Several recurring themes and patterns emerged during the assessment:

- People primarily seek help through informal systems or do not seek help at all, oftentimes because formal systems are insufficient or inattentive to their needs
- Access to affordable housing and stable sources of income are the greatest needs
- Immigration status has profound consequences for people who live in fear of deportation and indefinite separation from their families
- People with limited English proficiency who experience abuse are gravely isolated and mistreated
- People with mental and physical disabilities face additional barriers to accessing formal or informal help when impacted by violence
- People want community organizations, public officials, and funders to work together, to know what resources exist, and to help them navigate complicated and unintuitive systems

The body of this report consists of twelve sections: 1) patterns of abuse and where people seek help; 2) LGBTQ Bronx residents; 3) structural racism and bias; 4) language access; 5) housing; 6) immigration; 7) employment, child care, and education; 8) health care and mental health; 9) law enforcement; 10) courts, family law, and legal services; 11) public benefits; and 12) case management. Each section contains its own key conclusions and recommendations.

Much work remains. The data in this report relaying what legal and social services Bronx residents want and need for their families and communities will help set the agenda for that work. Let's get started.

September 2016

I. How and Why the Bronx DV Roundtable Conducted the Needs Assessment

A. Background

1. Intimate Partner Violence – By the Numbers

Intimate partner violence in the Bronx is staggering. In 2015, 75,299 domestic violence reports were recorded in the Bronx.¹ In 2015, the Bronx had ten intimate partner homicides, the highest number of intimate partner homicide in all five boroughs.² In 2015, intimate partner homicides accounted for 10.4% of all homicides in New York State.³ People who have died from intimate partner violence are overwhelmingly women and people of color. Of the 26 intimate partner homicide victims in New York City in 2015, 13 were Black, nine were Hispanic and one was White.⁴

In 2015, the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline received over 85,000 calls and over 6,000 requests for shelter.⁵ The New York City Family Justice Centers, a program of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence that provides criminal justice, civil legal, and social services for people affected by domestic violence, saw an increase in people coming to their centers for assistance.⁶ In 2015, the Centers, located in all five boroughs, had 58,989 client visits, an 8% increase, and 19,773 new client visits, a 6.5% increase from 2014.⁷

These numbers do not account for individuals, who for many reasons, choose not to report the crimes against them to police or seek help from social services.



2. Key Issues Impacting People Affected by Intimate Partner Violence

When living in **poverty**, people affected by intimate partner violence are even further limited in their ability to secure stable housing, health care, and economic opportunities. The Bronx is one of the poorest counties in the United States. It is home to 1.4 million residents, 29.8% of whom live below the poverty level,⁸ a rate that is twice that of New York and the United States.⁹

The Bronx has experienced the second highest population increase among the boroughs, and is home to emerging immigrant communities with diverse languages and dialects.¹⁰ The proportion of Bronx residents who are foreign born is 33.8%, a 22.1% increase since 2000. In recognition of the growing number of New Yorkers who speak languages other than English, **language access** legislation such as New York City's Local Law 73, the Equal Access to Human Services Act, and Executive Order 120 were issued to ensure that those with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to vital services.

Homelessness is a complex and growing problem among people affected by intimate partner violence.¹¹ Abusive partners often isolate their partners socially, limit their access to jobs and training, and control household finances, creating a situation in which the other partner has limited options when seeking freedom from abuse.¹² In New York City, at least one third of families in shelter are homeless due to domestic violence.¹³ Less than 1% of supportive housing in New York City is designated for people affected by intimate partner violence.¹⁴ Only 28% of domestic violence emergency shelter residents are eligible for the New York City Housing Authority's Domestic Violence priority for placement in public housing.¹⁵

Those affected by intimate partner violence may suffer from **mental health** issues, such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, low self-esteem, emotional detachment, sleep disturbances, and flashbacks.¹⁶ People affected by intimate partner violence may also engage in self-harming behaviors.¹⁷ The stigma of intimate partner violence and mental health illness may limit someone's access to resources, while ongoing abuse may further deteriorate their mental health.¹⁸

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ)¹⁹ and HIV-affected people affected by intimate partner violence suffer distinct disadvantages in

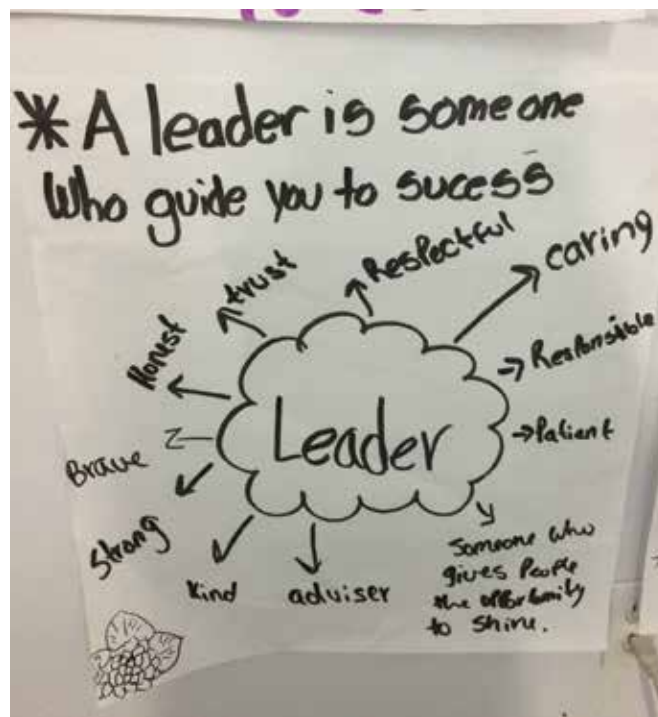
finding and receiving assistance.²⁰ This disproportionality can be attributed to the unique discrimination and invisibility they experience in the Bronx community. Transgender people are nearly twice as likely to experience intimate partner violence in public areas, and 3.39 times more likely to experience discrimination.²¹

There is growing attention to the dangers of intimate partner violence for **youth**.²² According to the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet, in 2011, 10.4% of male and female high school students reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend/girlfriend within the past year.²³ Further, reports show that one in three teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships, including verbal and emotional abuse.²⁴ Stalking and harassment via social

media and technological abuse are common among youth. One in four teens in a relationship says they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner via cell phones and texting.²⁵

The prevalence of intimate partner violence in the elder population cannot be overlooked. As a result of limited mobility and discrimination, the **elderly** have fewer access points to expert service provision and the courts. Abuse among the elderly can have devastating effects, including sleep disturbances, anxiety, PTSD, and a greater risk of premature death.²⁶ According to the 2010 US Census, New York City's 60+ population has grown to 1,407,635 from 1,252,206, a 155,429 increase since 2000. This trend is expected to continue until 2030, with the continued aging of baby boomers.

Immigration status and **limited English proficiency** may also complicate someone's ability to effectively and consistently meet their needs. These factors compound



the challenges for people affected by intimate partner violence as they fear receiving assistance from government personnel or providers who do not speak their native language or who may expose them to risk of deportation.

The purpose of this report is to present more data on intimate partner violence in the Bronx, to give voice to the people behind the numbers, and to hear their recommendations for improvements to systems and services in the Bronx.

B. Objectives

The Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable is comprised of New York City Council members, government officials, legal services organizations, social services organizations, and anti-violence advocates. In May 2015, the Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable and Bronx Legal Services launched the **“Legal and Social Services Needs Assessment of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence”** to better understand the legal and social services needs of people experiencing intimate partner violence in the Bronx. The goal of this report is to help inform policy decisions and funding allocations, and to guide elected officials and stakeholders with the expressed needs of the most vulnerable members of the Bronx community.



What We Can do

Economic Empowerment

STEPS ↓

- (1) resumes of intern (VIP) program → send to all Refer/link for paid employment
- (2) Work force Development Mayors Ofc → Revamp to incl. dv victims
- (3) Lobbying for New \$ from NYCC

Areas of Expertise

- 1) com needs assess
- 2) Intern capacity
- 3) outreach
 - materials
 - community
 - culture/comp.
 - Business
- 4) legal
 - Education
 - Immigration
- 5) Policy/legislation
 - PSC
 - FATH
 - DDC set
 - all others
 - HHC
- 6) Training
 - 1199

Treatment & Presentation
 City & State > what Δ is possible

Housing

- affordable
- safe
- homeless vs dv
- problem: reconnecting w/ batterer safety in neighborhood ongoing

Policy Advocacy

- Oversight
- Action
- Act.

Education

- ongoing safety planning
- healthy vs unhealthy
- lack of discussion
- issue & undocumented when family impacted
- program men
- engage

What We Can do

Economic Empowerment

STEPS ↓

- (1) resumes of intern (VIP) program → send to all Refer/link for paid employment
- (2) Work force Development Mayors Ofc → Revamp to incl. dv victims
- (3) Lobbying for New \$ from NYCC

Community Based Response

- Community Organizing
- Reach together
- Awareness Increase

C. Methodology

The “**Legal and Social Services Needs Assessment of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence**” consisted of three rounds of data collection: (1) an online and paper survey distributed to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence; (2) individual interviews with Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence; and (3) interviews with service providers and community-based organizations that work directly with Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence.

1. Online and Paper Surveys

In 2015, the Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable and Bronx Legal Services designed, translated, and disseminated a survey in English, Spanish, and French to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence. The online and paper surveys were distributed and responses were collected over the course of five months in 2015, and yielded 140 responses. Postcards bearing the website for the online survey, along with paper copies of the survey, were handed out at legal and social service offices and at community events.²⁷ The survey is available in the Appendix.

2. Individual Interviews

After the survey was closed, students from Columbia University and University of North Carolina, with supervision from Bronx Legal Services, interviewed Bronx residents. The interviews were conducted either in person or over the phone, depending on the participants’ availabilities and locations. In total, nine people affected by intimate partner violence were interviewed individually. An interpreter was used to speak with individuals with limited English proficiency. The interview period ran from March 2016 to July 2016.





3. Stakeholder Interviews

In March 2016, students from Columbia University began interviewing community stakeholders, including public health organizations, mental health treatment centers, legal service providers, and social service organizations that directly work with people affected by intimate partner violence. Staff members of 11 organizations were interviewed.

4. A Note about the Data

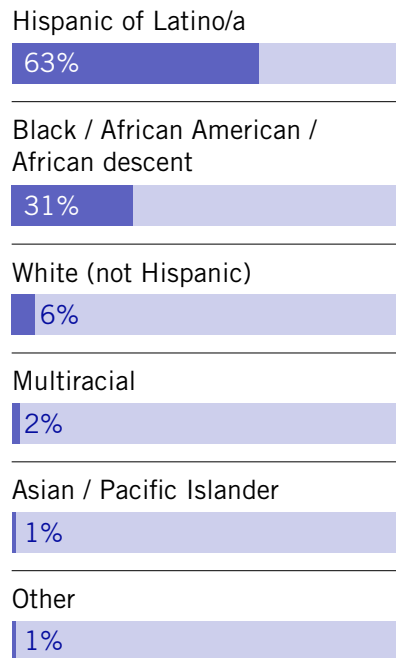
Every participant answered the first and second questions about race and gender. But after those questions, not every participant answered every question. The online survey did not require participants to answer questions before moving on, to encourage participation and allow respondents to answer questions they felt most comfortable answering. When presenting the data, this report provides percentages based on the total number of people who answered each question, rather than a percentage of the total number of survey participants. The total number of responses per question is provided in the Notes section below. All comments by survey participants, interviewees, and providers are anonymous to encourage people to be open with their concerns and observations about services in the Bronx.



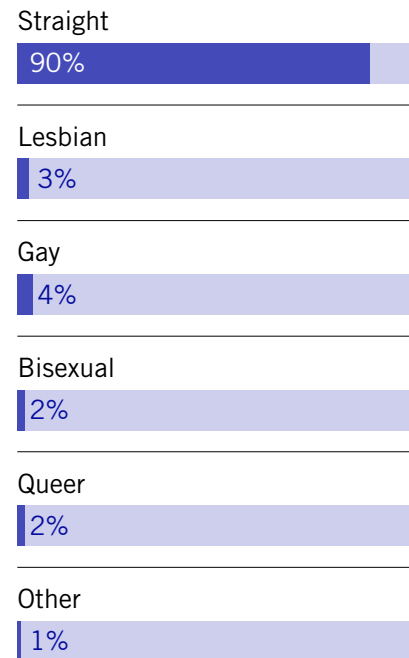
D. Demographics of Survey Participants

This report analyzes responses from 140 participants who agreed to take the **Legal and Social Services Needs Assessment of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence**. Notably, 64% reported income below the federal poverty level, and 94% identified as people of color. The following charts illustrate the demographics of the survey participants.

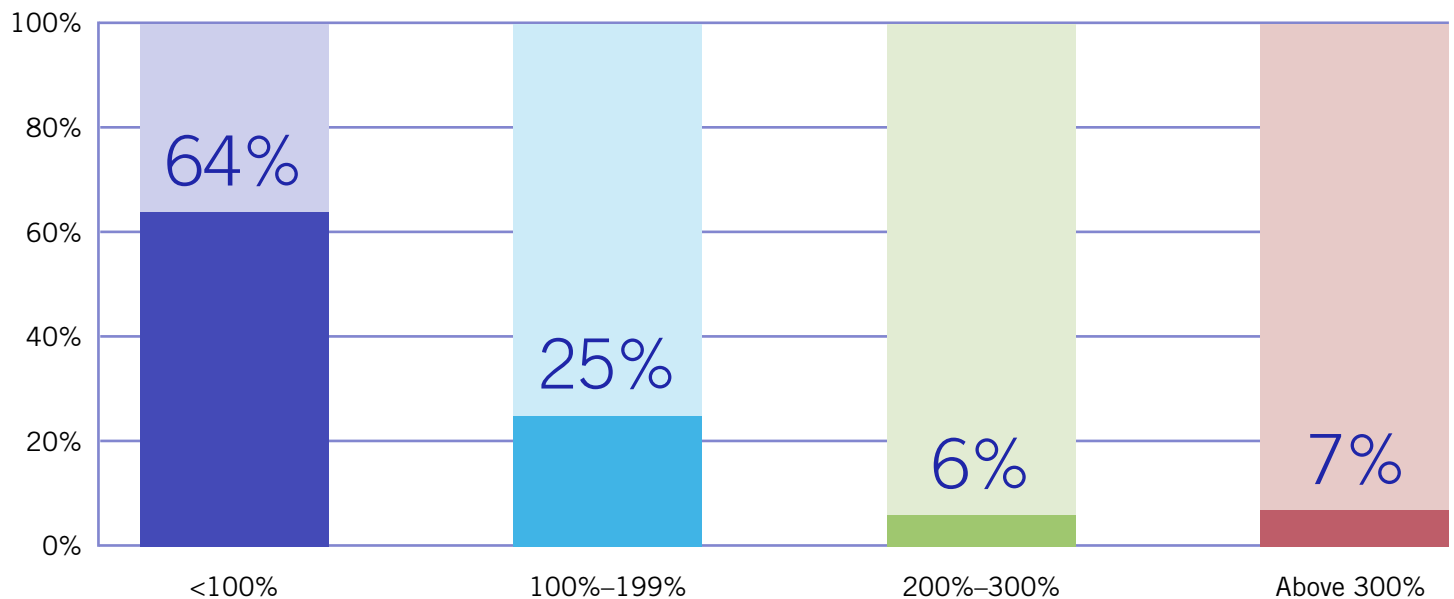
Race of Participants who Answered Question



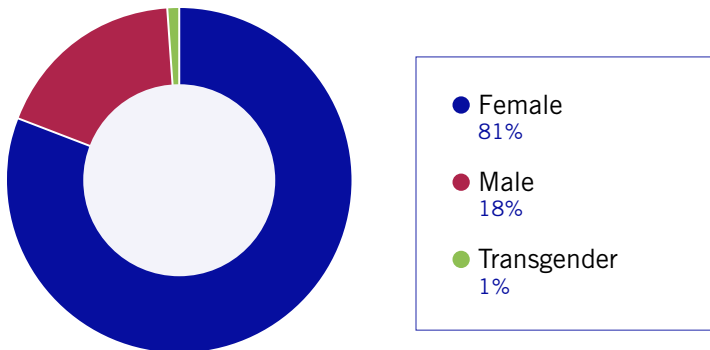
Sexual Orientation of Participants who Answered Question



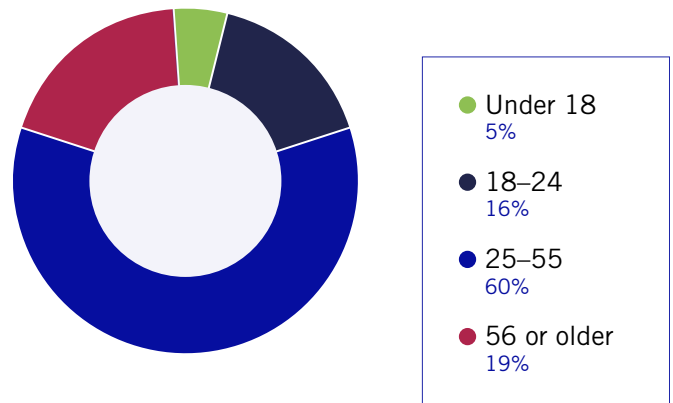
Household Income of Participants as a Percentage of Poverty



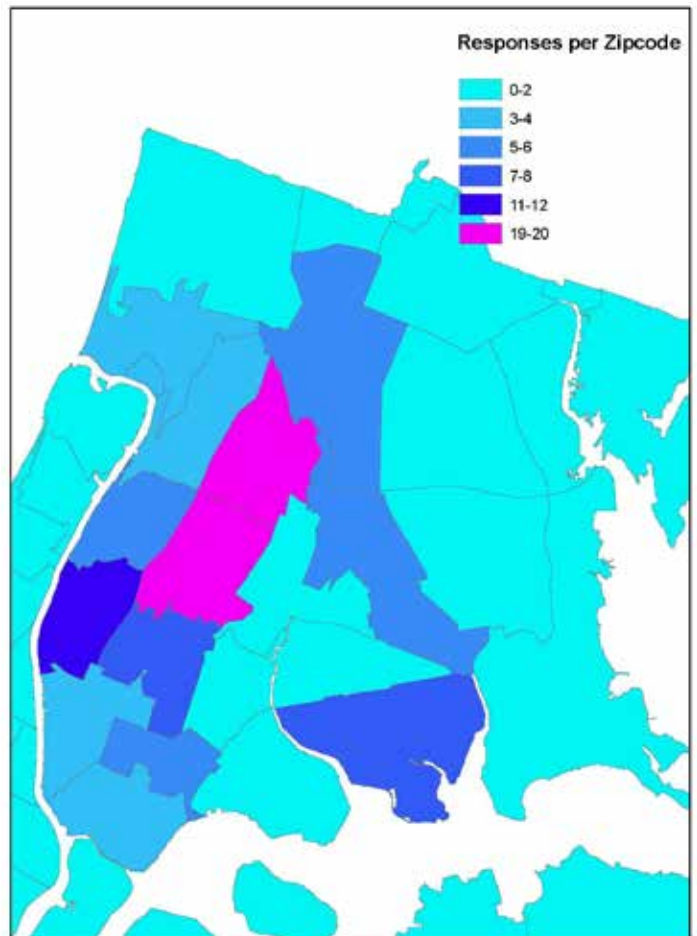
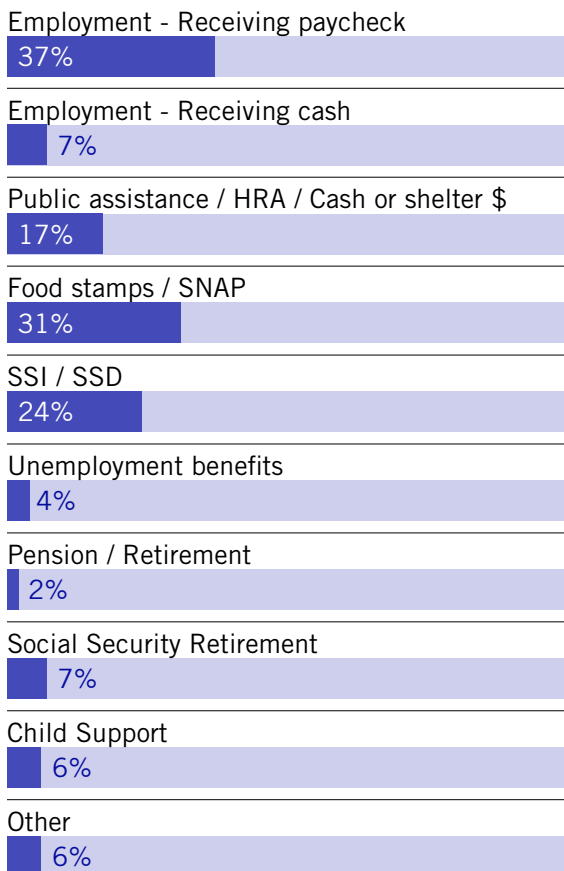
Gender of Participants who Answered Question



Age of Participants who Answered Question



Sources of Income of Participants who Answered Question



Immigration Status of Participants who Answered Question

U.S. Citizen

71%

Lawful Permanent Resident

14%

Conditional Permanent Resident

1%

Foreign National

5%

U or T nonimmigrant Status

3%

Deferred Action or Withholding of Removal

1%

Asylee

1%

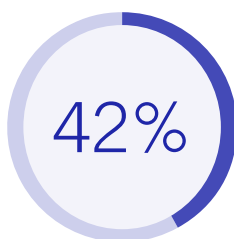
Other

6%

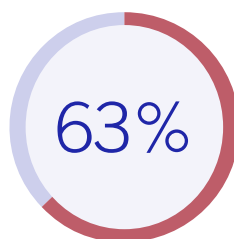
Did Not Answer

5%

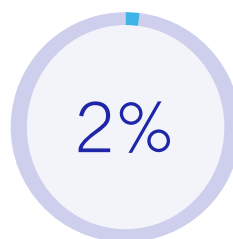
Primary Language of Participants who Answered Question



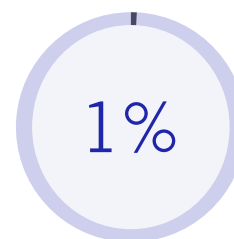
Spanish



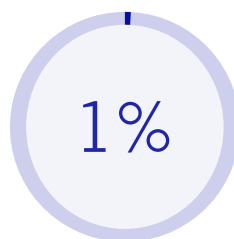
English



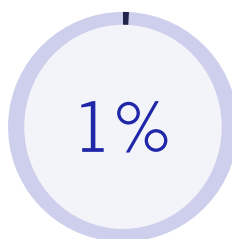
French



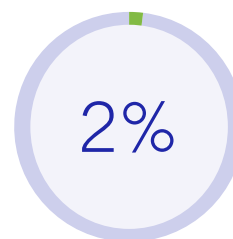
Bambara



Albanian



Korean



Other

II. Findings on the Needs of Bronx Residents Affected by Intimate Partner Violence

A. Definitions and Terminology

This report uses the term “intimate partner violence” or “IPV”, as it is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:²⁸

The term “intimate partner violence” describes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive acts) by a current or former intimate partner. An intimate partner is a person with whom one has a close personal relationship that can be characterized by the following:

- Emotional connectedness
- Regular contact
- Ongoing physical contact and/or sexual behavior
- Identity as a couple
- Familiarity and knowledge about each other’s lives

Examples of intimate partners include current or former spouses, boyfriends or girlfriends, dating partners, or sexual partners. IPV can occur between heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy. IPV can vary in frequency and severity. It occurs on a continuum, ranging from one episode that might or might not have lasting impact to chronic and severe episodes over a period of years.

This report does not refer to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence as “victims” or “survivors” because the people interviewed and surveyed did not refer to themselves with those terms. Labeling someone with a term that they do not use themselves is a choice that this report avoids in the spirit of honoring the words and insights offered by Bronx residents.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognize four main types of intimate partner violence:²⁹

- Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm.
- Sexual violence is divided into five categories. Any of these acts constitute sexual violence, whether attempted or completed. Additionally all of these acts occur without the victim's freely given consent, including cases in which the victim is unable to consent due to being too intoxicated (e.g., incapacitation, lack of consciousness, or lack of awareness) through their voluntary or involuntary use of alcohol or drugs.
 - Rape or penetration of victim
 - Victim was made to penetrate someone else
 - Non-physically pressured unwanted penetration
 - Unwanted sexual contact
 - Non-contact unwanted sexual experiences
- Stalking is a pattern of repeated, unwanted, attention and contact that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone else (e.g., family member or friend).
- Psychological Aggression is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm another person mentally or emotionally, and/or to exert control over another person. Psychological aggression can include expressive aggression (e.g., name-calling, humiliating); coercive control (e.g., limiting access to transportation, money, friends, and family; excessive monitoring of whereabouts); threats of physical or sexual violence; control of reproductive or sexual health (e.g., refusal to use birth control; coerced pregnancy termination); exploitation of victim's vulnerability (e.g., immigration status, disability); exploitation of perpetrator's vulnerability; and presenting false information to the victim with the intent of making them doubt their own memory or perception (e.g., mind games).

B. Patterns of Abuse and Where People Turn for Help

Participants reported devastating levels of abuse and violence from intimate partners. This violence took several different forms. In particular:

64% experienced physical or emotional abuse by a partner or ex-partner

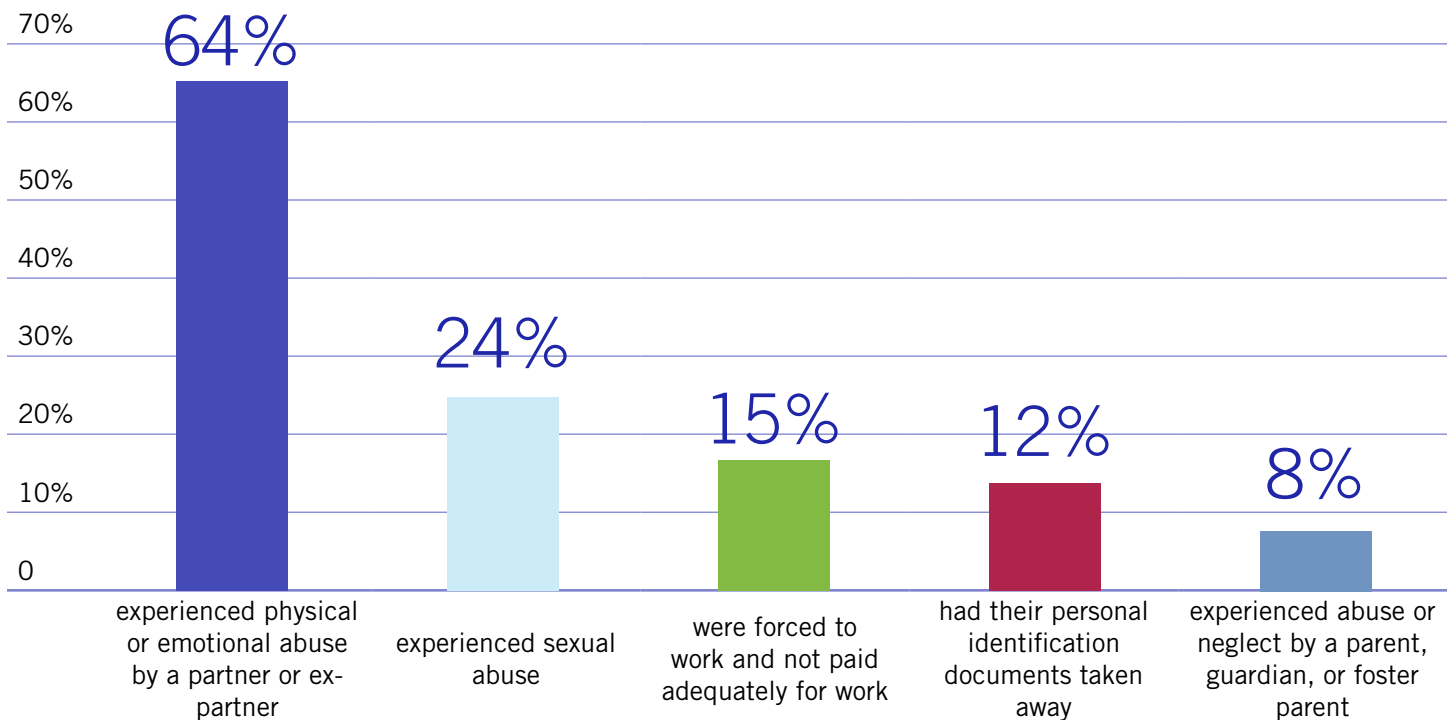
24% experienced sexual abuse

15% were forced to work and not paid adequately for work

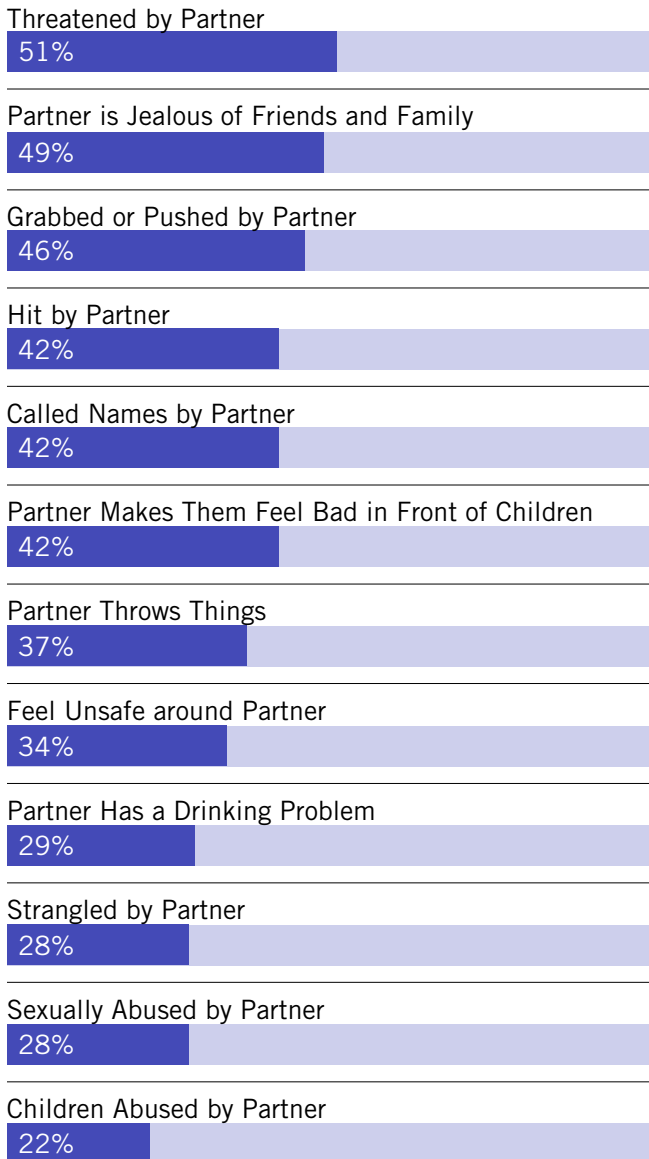
12% had their personal identification documents taken away

8% experienced abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, or foster parent

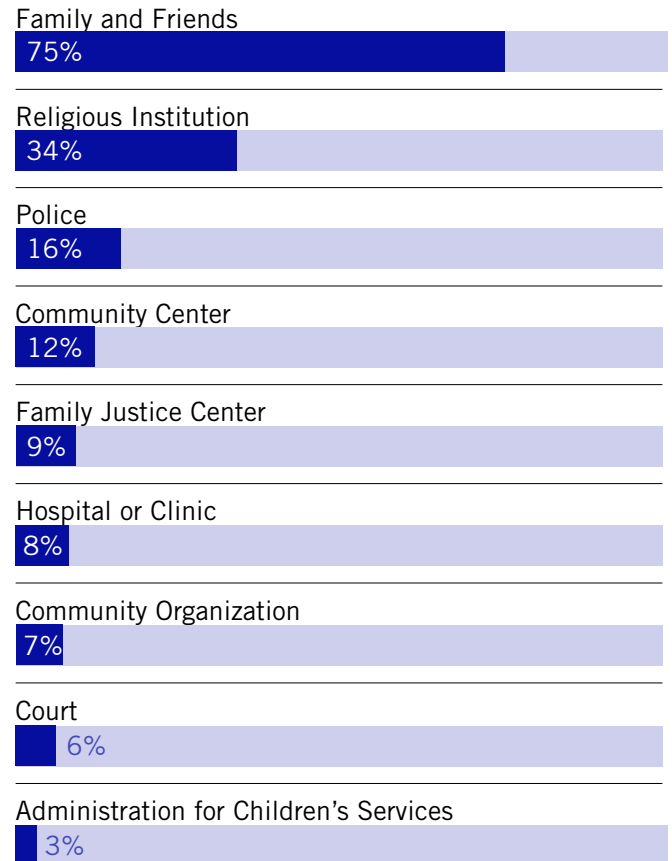
Patterns of Abuse and Where People Turn for Help



Participants answered questions about the forms of abuse they experience:



Where Participants Turn for Help



Participants also provided the following comments when asked, “When you are in need of help, where do you go?:”³⁰

“Nobody”

“No one can’t trust anyone to help”

“Keep Quiet”

“Nowhere, I take care of myself by myself”

“me quedaba en la casa”

“VIP”

“My school help services (DOVE)”

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence reported being unable to leave the city without the permission of their child’s parent, if that person was granted visitation.

“I’m in a lost position. You can’t be here but can’t leave cuz of father. Can’t leave without father’s permission.”

Providers explained that their clients often have a severe history of complex trauma and that **“intimate partner violence may only be part of a longer narrative of trauma.”** Providers who serve African clients explained that intimate partner violence is just one of many forms of violence that their clients may face. Their clients may also seek help related to experiences fleeing torture, governmental persecution, armed conflict, rape, female genital cutting, early and forced marriage, and persecution by family members. For many providers, sensitivity to all the ways in which their clients may be traumatized is key to being able to provide effective and meaningful assistance.

Providers spoke about the challenges facing young people affected by intimate partner violence in their homes:

“Kids who have been abused or seen abuse often don’t recognize it, and feel like reporting it may be betraying their parent.”

Providers reported seeing more forms of abusive behavior and control, such as stalking through the use of electronic devices.

Providers also spoke about some reasons their clients, many of whom are immigrants, choose not to leave abusive partners:

“Some women don’t want to go because they don’t want to raise children without a father.”



Legal and social services providers also spoke about the need to dig deeper to understand the motivations of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence:

“[Some women] are in relationships because they have to be, for the financial resources. [In these cases] it is clear that the man has significant control and power over the woman, so there is a high risk.”

“The loss of trust itself is a barrier to moving on. People may stay with someone that they trust will be there, even if they are abusive, rather than moving on.”

Providers talked about the need to have a comprehensive community response to intimate partner violence in the Bronx:

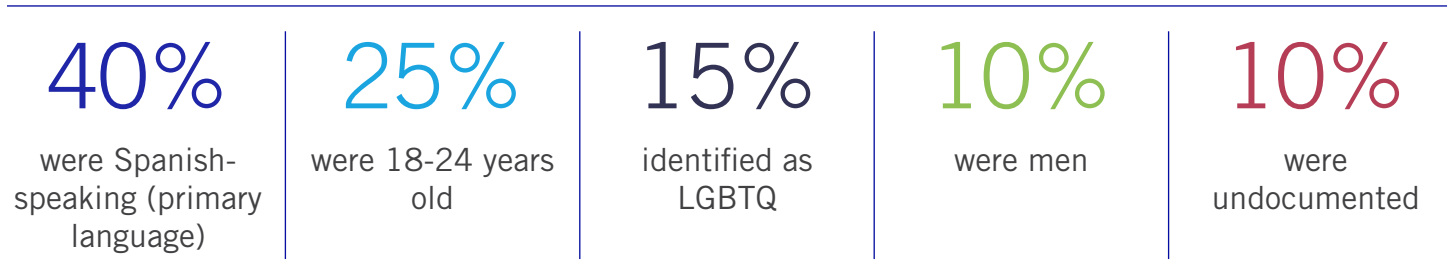
“No one is talking about the issues that brought you to the point where self-esteem and worth are so low that you did not look outside of what is going on to say, ‘I deserve better than this. I can do better than this.’”

“To make that change a lot of areas need to get involved, from schools – and I’m talking about elementary schools. This needs to be discussed early in their childhood, in an age-appropriate way. It needs to be reinforced in the homes, as best as possible, through the churches and religious institutions. We need to reinforce this message. That really has to come from the community and different organizations. The message must be consistent and come from everywhere.”

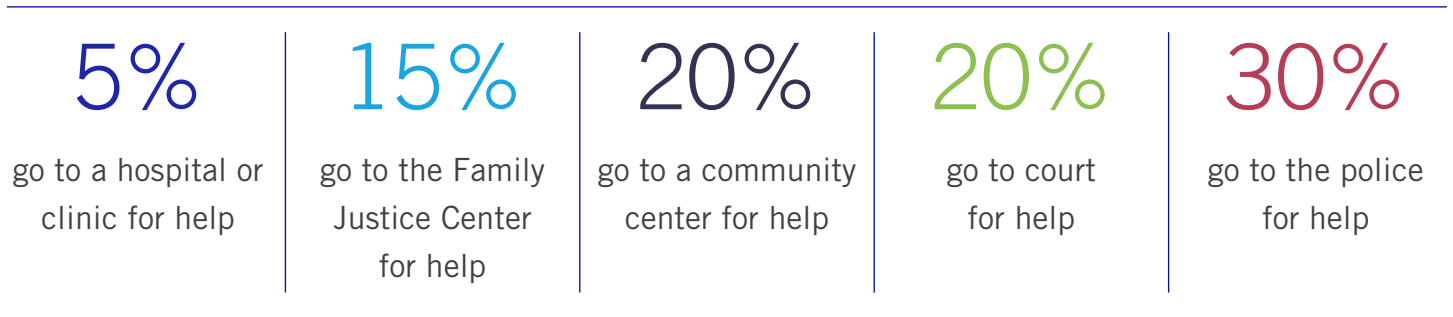
A Closer Look at Sexual Violence in the Bronx

A closer look at the responses of participants who said they have been forced to engage in sexual intercourse or engage in sexual acts, a group that is often invisible, revealed the following:

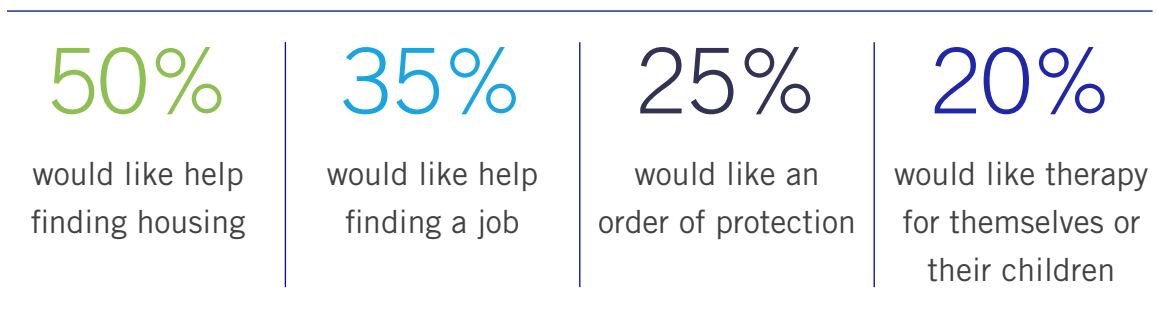
Demographics



Where they turn for help



Needs of participants who experienced sexual violence



Key Conclusions

- Two-thirds of participants experienced physical or emotional abuse.
- One quarter of participants experienced sexual abuse.
- Abuse is predominantly verbal and emotional – threats, jealousy, name-calling, being degraded in front of children.
- Many Bronx residents experience physical and sexual abuse by their intimate partners – hitting, grabbing, pushing, strangulation, sexual abuse, and child abuse.
- Technological abuse is on an upward trend in the Bronx.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence primarily turn to their family and friends for help, then to their religious institutions, and do not report turning for help to community resources in large numbers.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence feel they cannot go anywhere for help and prefer to keep to themselves or to take care of themselves.
- Inability to relocate because of custody or visitation orders feels like another form of abuse for some Bronx residents.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- More advocacy, outreach campaigns, and educational programs in the Bronx geared towards people affected by intimate partner violence and sexual violence.
- More education about intimate partner violence and sexual violence in Bronx schools, parks, places of worship, businesses, and family-related events to bring awareness.
- Increased education of Bronx residents and service providers regarding technological abuse.
- Encourage more conversations about healthy relationships at all age-levels, with as much education in schools as possible.
- Expand “relationship building” workshops in the Bronx that address dynamics of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, yet marketed to everyone to reduce stigma.
- Expand hiring and training of local and multilingual community advocates to serve Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence and sexual violence.
- Increase coordination between hospitals and legal services providers in the Bronx.
- Improve training of Administration of Children Services (ACS) case workers on intimate partner violence and sexual violence and the skills required when working with immigrants.



Essentials of Asylum Law

The U Visa

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

and Other Immigration Options for Children and Youth

Hyattsville, Maryland

Immigration and Naturalization Service

Regulations, CFR Title 8, Aliens & Nationality

Titles 6, 20, 22, 28, 42, 45

AILA

AILA

Immigration and Naturalization Service

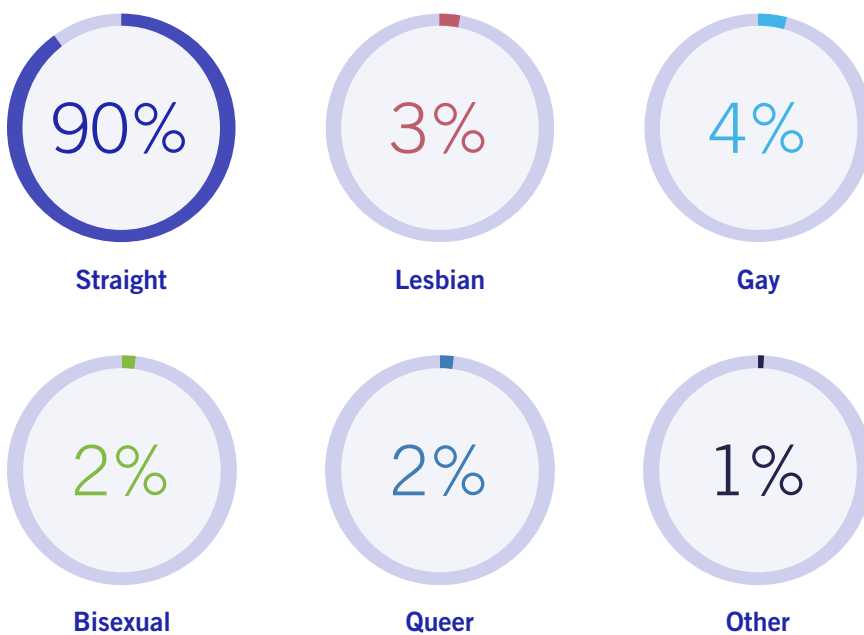
Immigration and Naturalization Service

Immigration and Naturalization Service

C. LGBTQ Bronx Residents Affected by Intimate Partner Violence

Eleven percent of survey participants identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, or other. One percent of the survey participants identified as Transgender.

Sexual Orientation of Participants who Answered Question



One transgender woman living in the Bronx with her abusive partner described her experiences:

“Bronx is so judgmental ... I’ve got spat on.”

“No supportive or safe places for me. Bronx sucks. It’s crazy there aren’t LGBTQ specific places because there are so many trans people here.”

“I plan on leaving [my partner]. I feel like he’s like my pimp at this point.”

“I’m so sick of the Bronx”

LGBTQ Bronx residents and providers said that there are not enough LGBTQ services in the Bronx and that people are often referred to Manhattan for services. Providers also reported that **LGBTQ clients may not feel safe seeking resources from places where they might experience discrimination, homophobia, and transphobia.**

Providers reported that there are **no safe LGBTQ shelters for Bronx residents**, a problem that is particularly acute for transgender women, and that clients have been assaulted in Bronx shelters.

Providers explained that LGBTQ clients are vulnerable to intimate partner violence because many clients fear going public with the abuse:

“Because of the stigma and discrimination that’s already attracted to LGBTQ, they’re not going to come out and say they’re being abused by their partner, or my partner is speaking to me incorrectly or abusing me financially. They’re not going to do it.”

Providers observed a high correlation between substance abuse and the violence that LGBTQ clients experience, and suggested that substance abuse may have deeper roots in the LGBTQ client’s history of trauma:

“We find that part of the reasons for alcohol abuse and drug usage is the trauma they experienced at a younger age [that] has never been addressed, and they are using as a way to silence the pain.”

Providers explained that the problem of intimate partner violence is particularly acute for transgender women in the Bronx:

“Trans women are always being abused. No one is talking about it.”

Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and/or Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ) face particular challenges when they experience intimate partner violence.
- Rates of intimate partner violence among LGBTQ Bronx residents are underreported.
- There are insufficient LGBTQ-specific services for people affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx.
- Transgender Bronx residents, particularly transgender women, experience high rates of intimate partner and transphobic violence, isolation, and discrimination.
- LGBTQ Bronx residents may not feel safe accessing services at agencies without LGBTQ-specific services.
- Shelters can be a dangerous place for LGBTQ Bronx residents, especially for transgender women.



Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Greater outreach to LGBTQ Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand LGBTQ-specific services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Create more safe spaces for transgender Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- LGBTQ-inclusive revision of intake procedures and outreach materials by service providers and government officials serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Train current LGBTQ providers to screen for intimate partner violence and provide intervention services
- Create LGBTQ units in all organizations serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence



D. Structural Racism, Bias, and the Need for Culturally Appropriate Services

Because the survey did not ask Bronx residents to report their experiences with structural racism and implicit and explicit bias, the needs assessment explored these issues and their impact on services related to intimate partner violence during interviews.

One African American Bronx resident affected by intimate partner violence said:

“I faced discrimination based on race - not just in the Bronx but everywhere in the city.”

Intersectionality³¹ and its impact on people affected by intimate partner violence was discussed by service providers. One provider explained some history of the movement against intimate partner violence and advocacy by people of color:

“We had to do real organizing as women of color because our needs were not addressed at all. In the past, what you were facing, in addition to violence, we dealt with racism, oppression, lack of employment, and other ‘isms, classism – that we as women of color face that [others] don’t face.”

One legal services provider explained how their clients may be less likely to discuss racism with them for various reasons:

“Racism and discrimination definitely factor into their experiences, but it’s not something they bring into their discussions with us. It’s unspoken, implicit, and not something articulated. We have limited time with our clients and we don’t always have the bandwidth to talk about the different ways they have been discriminated against.”

Bronx clients told providers that their **partners with lighter skin colors, who are white, or who come from more privileged backgrounds received preferential treatment by law enforcement officers.**

Bias against Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence was also reflected in stories about **landlords refusing to accept rent subsidies provided to people affected by intimate partner violence.**

Other Bronx residents expressed feeling **uncomfortable asking for help from someone who did not share their cultural, racial, or ethnic heritage:**

“Those with longer roots or the same experiences should be given the right tools and opportunities to reach out to their communities as spokespeople... This may be difficult because people may not want to relive this level of trauma and difficulty. But you only need one or two champions who are bilingual, bicultural, and are in the same community... This can often be more meaningful than having someone who does not speak their language, literally and symbolically, telling them what they should do.”

Providers explained that more funding is needed for programs that serve African communities, a growing population in the Bronx. One provider spoke about the need for **more resources for African communities in the Bronx:**

“African communities need a lot of help. And they have been marginalized because many current services don’t pertain to Africans. Many Africans here have degrees but are not able to use them. Africans should be part of more communities, in leadership positions, on board to advocate for African communities.”

Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents feel uncomfortable asking for help from someone who does not share their cultural, racial, or ethnic heritage.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence experience race-based discrimination that impacts their ability to get help and access services.
- Providers recognize that racism and discrimination are factors in their clients' experiences but there is a lack of resources and opportunity to further explore these issues.
- There is a need for more services and funding culturally appropriate services, particularly for African community members affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence experience bias by landlords when using rent subsidies as people who experience intimate partner violence.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Cultural sensitivity and implicit bias trainings for providers and government officials.
- Increase funding for community based organizations providing culturally and linguistically specific services to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Host “listening tours” by the Office of Court Administration to visit community-based organizations, places of worship, schools, and other community spaces to hear about issues that people are having with the court system.
- Train and hire community members to be courtroom and city agency advocates for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Publish an online and print directory of landlords who accept and/or reject rent subsidies from people who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- Implement a complaint system against landlords who deny rent subsidies from people who have experienced intimate partner violence.

E. Lack of Language Access

Bronx residents with limited English proficiency reported again and again how hard it is to find help in their language and that they are hesitant to seek help, out of fear that no one will understand them. Individuals described a lack of language access at HRA offices, police precincts, legal services, medical services, and social service agencies. As Bronx residents explained:

“It is very hard to attain help in Spanish. It should be easily accessible”

“very hard finding a Spanish speaker”

“When I didn’t speak English, I never went to go ask for help because I felt that nobody was going to understand me and I don’t feel comfortable asking for help when they don’t understand your own language.”

“hard to find help in Spanish so I take my daughter with me everywhere to serve as an interpreter, even at the hospital.”



Although lack of services in Spanish is a serious problem, providers report that **Bronx residents who speak French, Bengali, Arabic, or one of the hundreds of languages spoken on the African continent or in Latin America are the most underserved.** Providers have had to refer Bronx residents with limited English proficiency to organizations outside of the Bronx in order to receive services in their language. The inability to serve Bronx residents in their native language undermines an organization's ability to serve the whole Bronx. As one provider put it:

“The language barrier is major. Because how can I tell you I’m in an abusive relationship when you don’t even speak my language? ... Because this is New York City, a lot of folks have learned Spanish. But that’s not Korean, Japanese, Bengali, etc. so immigrants are coming in and being IPV survivors and going for services and not being able to speak one on one with the intake person.”

The dangers resulting from a lack of language access are particularly acute when residents interact with the police. Providers and Bronx residents with limited English proficiency said that police officers have communicated with abusive partners or whoever speaks English, instead of the one being abused, and have not used interpreters. In other cases, providers reported that their clients were arrested along with, or instead of, the abusive partner when their clients could not communicate with the officers.

Providers and Bronx residents explained that court officials do not take time to fully explain how to navigate the legal process for those with limited English proficiency. Although the Office of Court Administration has worked to better accommodate litigants with limited English proficiency, much room for improvement remains.

Language barriers present significant obstacles for Bronx residents seeking access to health services. As one provider explained:

“The entire process is even more overwhelming and confusing if you cannot speak the language, and there are also more opportunities for misunderstanding.”

Key Conclusions

- Limited English proficient people who experience intimate partner violence hesitate to seek help because of fears that no one will understand them.
- Bronx residents face repeated problems finding someone who speaks their language.
- Obstacles presented by lack of interpreters or translated materials are significant barriers for people accessing health, legal, and social services.
- The migration of more ethnic communities to the Bronx creates the need for more interpreters who speak languages such as French, Bengali, Arabic, indigenous languages, and languages from Africa.
- Although the Office of Court Administration has worked to better accommodate litigants with limited English proficiency, there remains much room for improvement.



Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Provide more trainings to governments officials, law enforcement, and court officials on language access
- Create a specific complaint system for people to report language access problems with HRA, NYCHA, NYPD, and ACS
- Hire more interpreters for languages other than Spanish for all providers and agencies serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Have a court advocate located at Help Centers inside courthouses who can specifically address language access issues
- Hire more multilingual court staff and court officers
- Translate court documents into multiple languages, particularly orders of protection, service of process instructions, summons, pleadings, and court notices
- Create an online and phone mechanism for litigants and attorneys to request a court interpreter in advance of a court appearance

F. Housing

The need for safe affordable housing for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence is a major finding of this assessment. As one individual interview said, **“Housing is key.”** Survey results revealed that **55% of participants cannot afford their rent.** Other troubling results included:

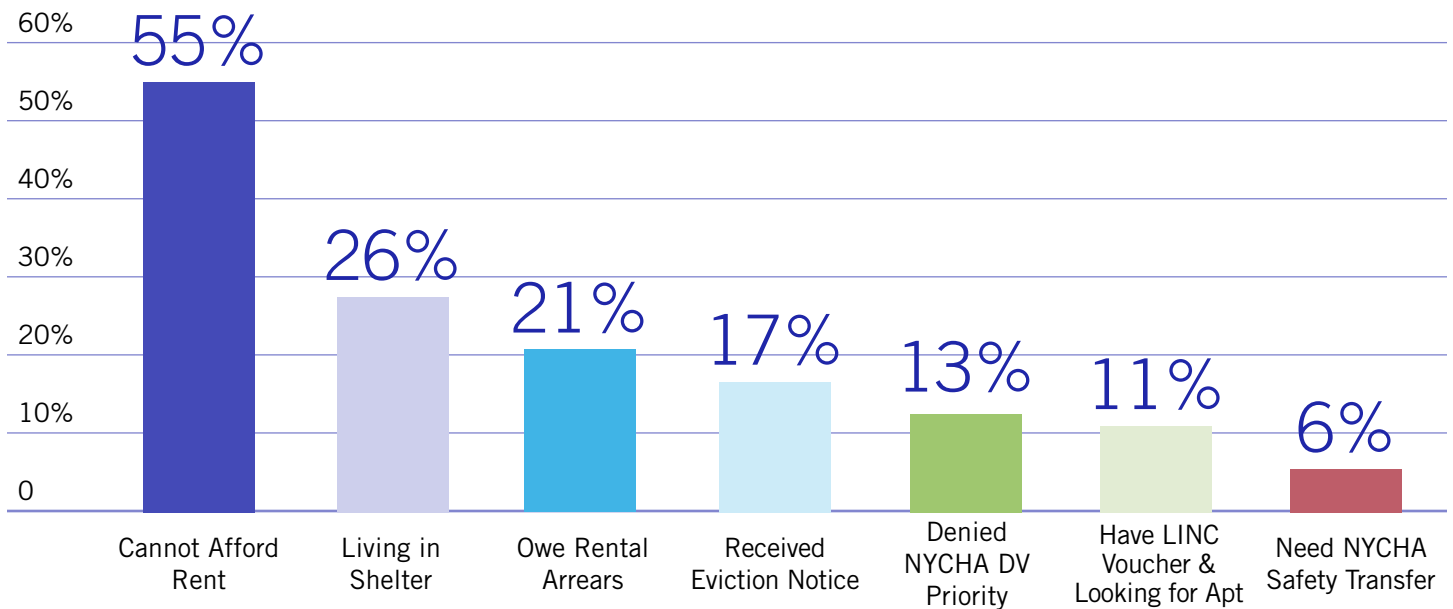
26% living in a shelter

21% owe rental arrears

17% received an eviction notice

13% denied NYCHA domestic violence priority

Housing Challenges



Other survey responses revealed the following:

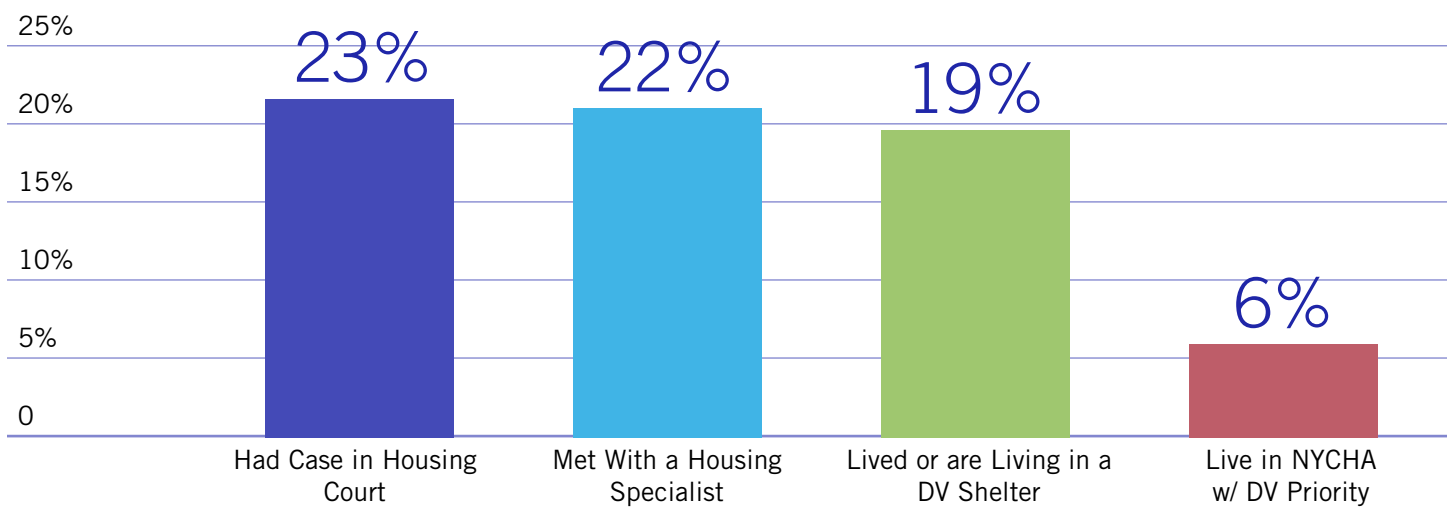
23% had a case in Housing Court

22% met with a housing specialist

19% lived or are living in a domestic violence shelter

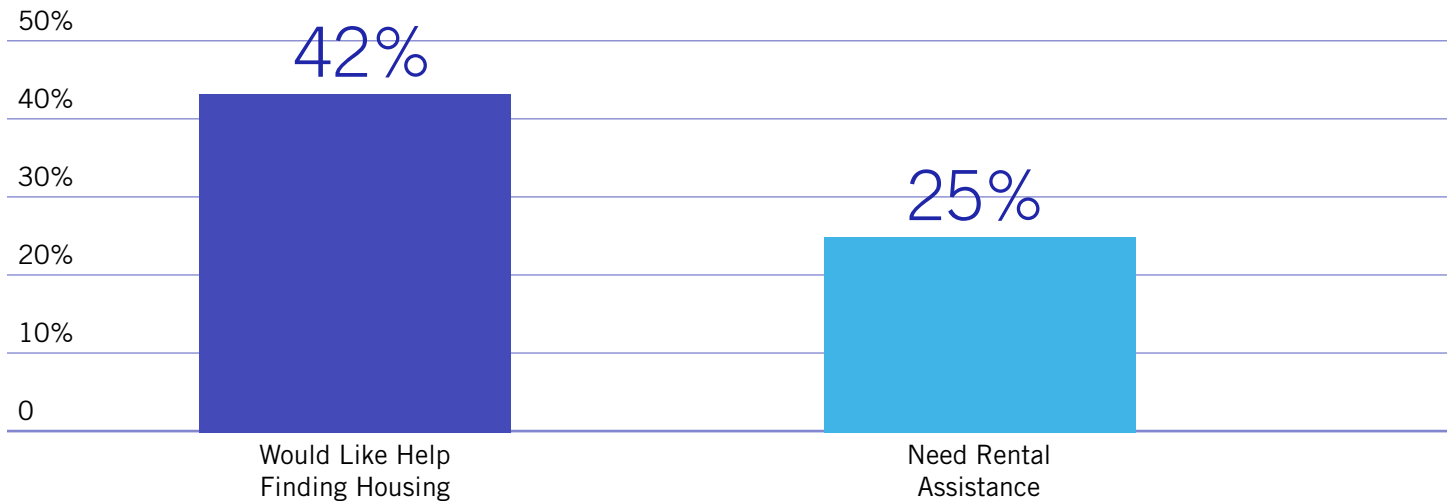
6% live in NYCHA housing with the domestic violence priority

Housing Experiences



When responding to questions about their housing needs, **42% of participants said they would like some help finding housing** and **25% said they need rental assistance.**

Housing Needs



One Bronx resident (female, straight, U.S. citizen, public benefits recipient) indicated on the survey:

- I have experienced physical or emotional abuse by my partner or ex-partner
- I have met with a housing specialist
- I have had a case in Housing Court
- I have lived or am living in a domestic violence shelter
- I owe rental arrears
- I am living in a shelter
- I have a LINC voucher and am looking for an apartment
- I have applied for the NYCHA domestic violence priority but have been denied
- “I would like to go to school and get GED or some kind of school. Get better on my read and writing n spelling.”

The boxes checked and comments written on the survey illustrate only part of the story of the housing needs gathered by the assessment. During interviews, individuals provided more details about how they struggled to find safe and affordable housing. They described the problems they experienced in the New York City homeless system known as “PATH”. In the words of one woman talking about her experience at PATH, it was **“really hard to get connected and when you get there, most of them have a nasty attitude.”** She felt that PATH staff **“see you as a number.”**

Some of those interviewed had a more positive view of their experiences at domestic violence shelters. As one woman said, **“they are more compassionate.”**

However, the time limits on stays at domestic violence shelters and the requirements imposed by NYCHA make it difficult for Bronx residents to feel supported in the long term. As one woman explained:

“Housing has funny ways of giving people help. Like I was in a DV shelter for 9 months and I was dealing with the court and I was a single mother with four kids. I met all the criteria that [NYCHA] asked for and they didn’t give me any help or the apartment. [The] wait list is unbelievably long. You don’t have hope of getting public housing anymore. You must be dying to get it and I don’t even know if you’d get it if you are dying. It’s not better for anyone who faces DV or those with HIV. I can’t describe the feeling when I think about housing. Public housing made me fill out many papers and didn’t pay attention to [the] people they should. I don’t understand why I was denied. I was living in shelter for 9 months, then got out because I didn’t qualify for DV anymore because they give you 90 days or 5 months to find new place and it all depends on the shelter manager. But after that, you have to go back to PATH and get relocated... Public housing is not really doing its work in helping people.”

Individuals shed light on problems with affordable housing units in the Bronx. As one interviewee explained:

“[the] application for affordable housing is so strict – so many strict guidelines – that’s not affordable! If I can make as much [as] the criteria requires, then I wouldn’t need public housing.”

Bronx residents described problems they experienced with landlords once they found housing. One woman explained that landlords **“take so long to fix things”** and that **“and if you call a social worker, then landlord will get more upset because you called on him.”** She described that her strategy is to **“keep yourself quiet or else landlord will give you more of a hard time.”**

Providers reported that after experiencing intimate partner violence, many clients become homeless and live in time-limited shelters. The process of getting into the shelter system is extensive and complicated. For their male clients, it is **“next to impossible to get shelter”** in a domestic violence shelter. One service provider explained problems facing other clients trying to access shelter:

“If you have a male child who is over 14-15 years old, not many DV shelters are open to you. At least three women have showed up at our agency with that situation. If you’re talking about ending violence, it doesn’t matter if the male child is 2 or 15 years old. He still is witnessing the same violence.”

Because domestic violence shelters require relocation to other boroughs, providers said the lives of their clients, children, and their families are disrupted. By being forced to relocate outside of the Bronx, providers explained that their **clients lose their relationships and a sense of belonging to their community.**

Providers spoke about the problems in shelters, from vermin to violence in shelters, particularly for LGBTQ Bronx residents. They have observed problems with shelter staff providing legal advice to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, and prefer that shelter staff refrain from sending clients to court without consulting an attorney. Others explained that **“Many African (Muslim) clients don’t like food at the shelter, and that shelters may not always be accommodating to the cultural and religious needs of their residents.”**

Legal and social services providers who work with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence reported that housing in the Bronx is extremely competitive and expensive due to gentrification.

“Gentrification is making it almost impossible to find housing, even if you’re a survivor. Out of ten cases, at least four go back or stay in the first place.”

Providers reported that their clients were **denied housing by landlords who did not want to take their rent subsidies**. Providers explained unique challenges facing undocumented clients with U.S. citizen children. They explained that while the client may be issued a rent subsidy, landlords and brokers are refusing subsidies when an undocumented person does not have a social security number.

Providers reported that the lack of new affordable housing developments exacerbate housing issues for their clients. The lack of permanent supportive housing in the Bronx is particularly acute for residents affected by intimate partner violence. As one provider explained:

“Building supportive housing is key to helping IPV survivors, because then they get all the resources they need in one place.”

Providers said that supportive housing benefits both short and long-term residents affected by intimate partner violence:

“Some people have more problems than others. Those that move on have fewer barriers, but those that cannot may have mental health barriers, substance abuse, or other programs. IPV affects everyone, but some have more barriers to leaving.”

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence cannot afford their rent, owe rental arrears, face eviction, or live in shelter.
- Low numbers of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are able to access landlords who accept rent subsidies, NYCHA DV priority apartments, NYCHA safety transfers, and “affordable housing” units.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from interactions with compassionate domestic violence shelter staff.
- Time-limits on domestic violence shelters and the difficulties of navigating PATH pose additional burdens on Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need rental assistance and help finding stable permanent housing.



Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Improve screening for domestic violence-related housing
- Allocate more affordable housing and supportive housing units for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand housing options and vouchers for undocumented Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Improve outreach to and increase collaboration with landlords regarding rent subsidies for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Allow advocates to accompany people affected by intimate partner violence to PATH interviews
- Hire more multilingual (languages in addition to Spanish) shelter staff in the Bronx
- Provide more cultural sensitivity training for shelter staff for working with Bronx residents from backgrounds different from their own
- Expand housing options in the Bronx to accommodate larger families where there are three or more children
- Improve PATH intake processes to allow Bronx residents to apply online or through community-based organizations with cultural and language capacities
- Revisit shelter policies that always require Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to move to another borough

G. Immigration

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence face daunting challenges associated with their immigration status. **27% of participants reported some immigration status other than U.S. citizenship** and 5% of all survey participants did not answer the question about their immigration status. When answering questions about their immigration needs, participants said:

32% have a green card and would like to become a U.S. citizen

25% are undocumented and would like to speak to a lawyer about their legal options

21% would like to learn more about U and T visas

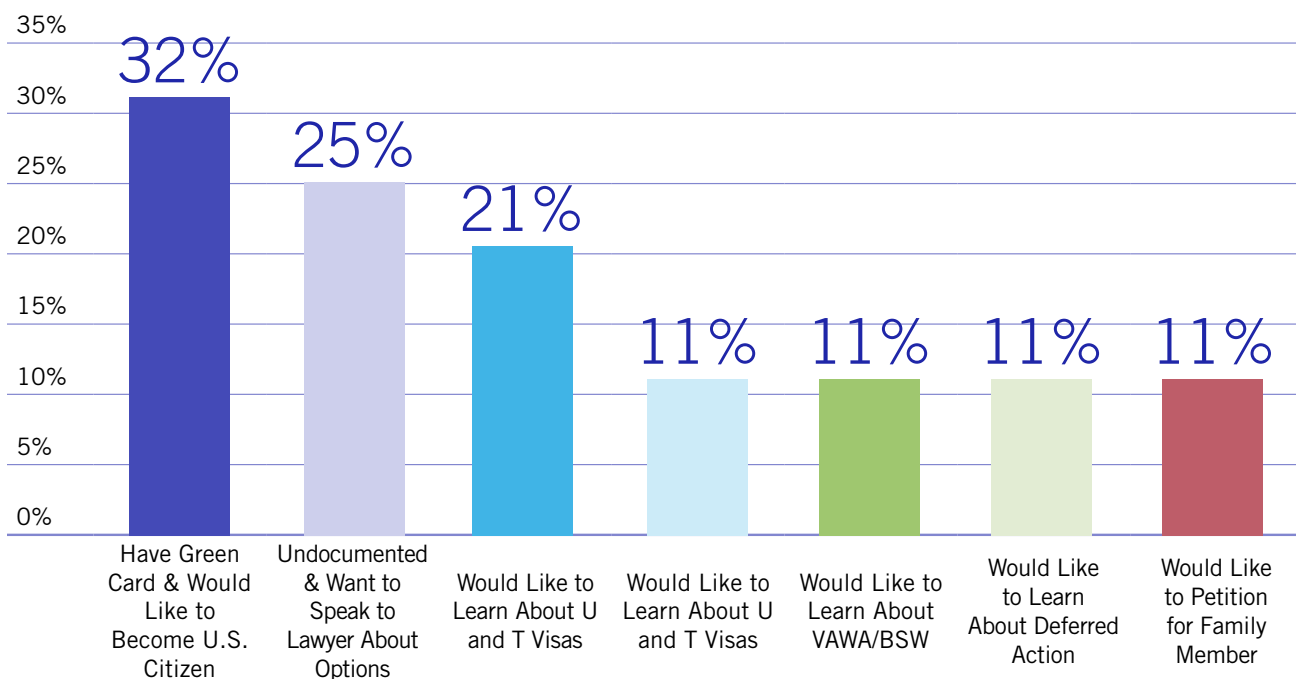
11% would like to learn more about VAWA self-petitions and Battered Spouse Waivers

11% received a notice in immigration court and would like to speak to a lawyer

11% would like to learn about deferred action

11% would like to petition for a family member

Immigration Needs



During her interview, one undocumented mother gave the following insights:

“Parents who have children who are citizens are trapped. I’m supposed to be able to support myself and not be counting on food pantries and stuff. [It’s been a] slow process ... trying to get [a] visa. Years of waiting and you don’t know what will happen at the end.”

Another woman interviewed said:

“There are more and more people flowing into the community, some from shelter system, some from other neighborhoods because getting priced out, some from other countries where DV is a normal way of life.”

One Bronx resident interviewed explained what free legal immigration assistance meant to her:

“I was treated with respect, compassion, and understanding [by my attorneys]. They were on my side and made no judgment. They went the extra mile to help me get my stuff together. They helped me get my papers [but] a lot of women do not know about this.”

Providers reported that their clients experience **acute fear of deportation**. Providers said that undocumented Bronx residents receive misinformation or lack of information on their rights from their abusive partner, leading them to remain in violent situations.

“Folks stay in violence because of the threat of deportation, because the abuser said if you leave me, I’m going to tell ICE that you’re undocumented. So they stay.”

Providers reported that many people, social services staff, and attorneys are not familiar with the legal complexities of immigration and give advice that may compromise a person’s immigration options. Other providers explained that attorneys who don’t practice both family and criminal cases and immigrants are confused by the systems. One provider explained that many of her clients come from countries with corrupt legal systems, and subsequently have difficulty trusting and understanding Bronx courts.



Providers report that more immigrant communities have emerged in the Bronx, including from Central and South American, African, Bengali, and Arab communities. Providers explained that their **immigrant clients experience a lot of discrimination**. Providers spoke about the wave of women with young children fleeing intimate partner violence in Honduras (many of whom are Garifuna), Guatemala, and El Salvador (a.k.a. the Northern Triangle) and relocating to the Bronx:

“Most of these women are fleeing intimate partner violence. There is often no protection in these countries and so the women flee, even though these situations usually should not require international transit. The programs either don’t exist or are not robust enough for these women, so this mass migration is quite new.”

Providers explained that their Central American clients who flee intimate partner violence face additional struggles when caught at the border:

“Immigrants also face problems with immigration officers, such as sexual assault or rape by customs officers. Enforcement and removal officers also aggravate the stigma. Adults with children who cross the border are put in jail, then forced to wear ankle monitors. They come to this country looking for refuge, but are treated like convicted criminals. That may explain their fear of accessing the legal systems here.”

Providers added that undocumented Bronx residents who work off the books are vulnerable to exploitation, and that many workforce programs are limited to U.S. citizens. Providers explained that their clients are eager to work:

“Many African women don’t like getting food stamps because they feel like they’re not fulfilling their duties. They don’t like getting government assistance. They say, ‘I have my hands. I can work. I don’t want to go every day and ask the government for money when I have the ability to work.’ They are very resistant to that. But it is very hard to help them find employment without a work permit.”

Key Conclusions

- The communities of immigrants in the Bronx are growing and changing.
- Undocumented Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence are vulnerable to misinformation about their immigration options by abusive partners, service providers, attorneys, and others.
- The fear of deportation compounds the stress and trauma affecting Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- The complexities of U.S. immigration laws, courts, and agencies are difficult to maneuver for Bronx immigrants who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- Many Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence are undocumented and would like to speak to a lawyer about their immigration options.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Frequent, multilingual “Know Your Rights” workshops for Bronx immigrants, with a focus on options available for those experiencing intimate partner violence
- Multilingual and visual handouts for Bronx residents on immigration options and guidance for how to interact with law enforcement and immigration officers
- Expand free legal immigration assistance in the Bronx
- Ongoing communication with Bronx communities on the changing immigration legal landscape
- Educate professionals working in the Bronx regarding the complexities of immigration law and policy
- More free legal clinics in community spaces such as places of worship, schools, shelters, hospitals and NYCHA housing communities

H. Employment, Child Care, and Education

Employment, child care, and education were enormous needs identified by survey participants. Participants reported particular **barriers to employment posed by current or former abusive partners:**

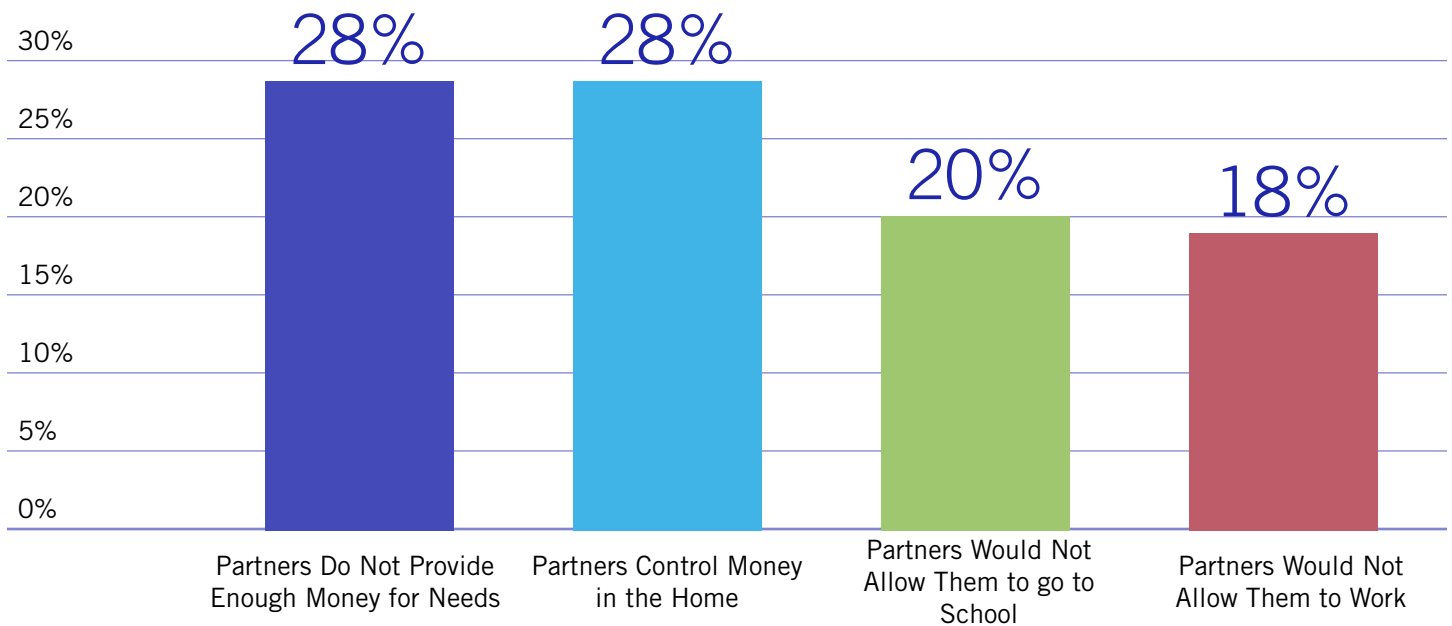
28% said partners do not provide them with enough money to take care of themselves or their children

28% said partners control the money in their home

20% said partners would not allow them to go to school

18% said partners would not allow them to work

Employment and Income Challenges of Bronx Residents Affected by Intimate Partner Violence



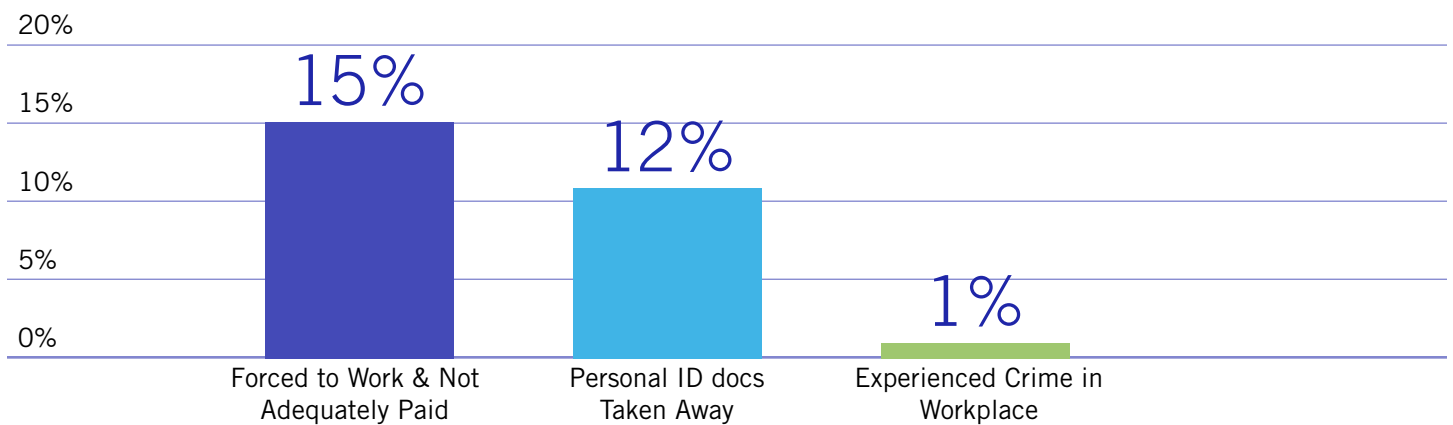
Other employment challenges reported by participants included:

15% have been forced to work and have not been adequately paid for their work

12% have had their personal identification documents taken away

1% have experienced a crime in their workplace

Employment Challenges of Survey Participants



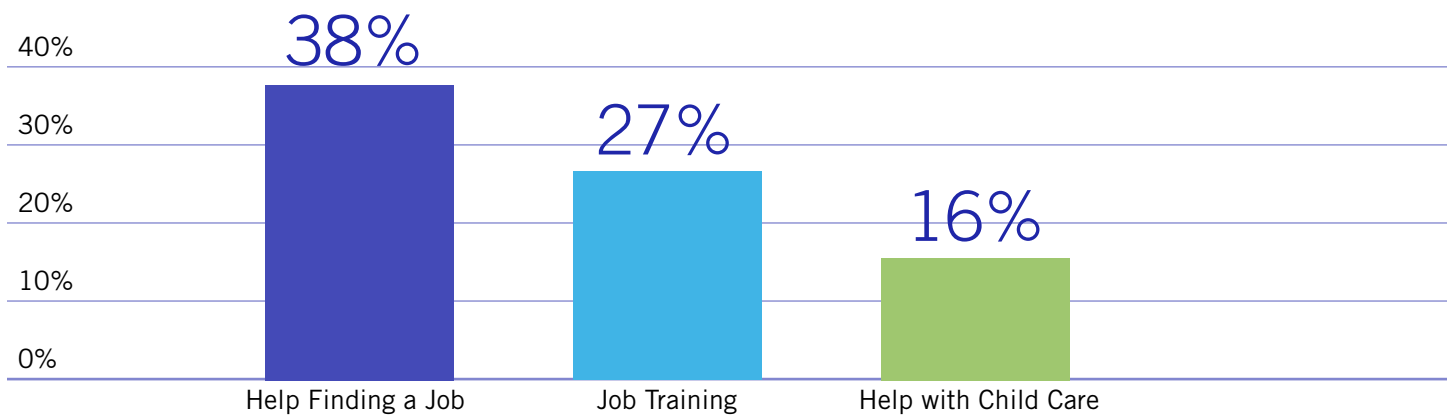
Participants articulated these employment-related needs:

38% would like help finding a job

27% would like to receive job training

16% would like some help with child care

Employment Needs



Participants elaborated on their employment and education needs in their survey comments:³²

"I would like to start working now that I received my degree"

"I would like to go to school"

"Conseguir empleo en su especialidad"

"Better Jobs"

"Free schooling for GED programs within the community"



Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence provided more details on their struggles related to employment. As one mother explained:

“Searching for work was very hard. Especially as a mother. It was so hard to try to look for work and be there for my kids. It was impossible, and I needed recommendations from people. People who don’t know English are especially disadvantaged. I just wanted to work, to do anything to support my family. But it was so hard... So many people said I was not qualified, and I had such a difficult time looking for work.”

Another mother explained:

“I’m a single mother with four kids, and I can’t find job to pay for a two-bedroom apartment for family of five. I could only get a one-bedroom apartment. I had two part-time [jobs] and wasn’t getting any help for rent. So it was very difficult for me. I felt helpless. It’s not fair.”

Parents reported the stress inherent to seeking work while caring for children. As one mother explained, it was **“hard to balance looking for work and taking care of my kids”** and that **“sometimes I wasn’t able to do everything I wanted for my kids because I had to look for work or work a lot.”**

The scarcity of jobs and adult educational opportunities in the Bronx was a recurrent theme:

“You go for a lot of interviews but there is no guarantee that a job is available.”

“Job was horrible because I was in retail and only one store owner understood”

Providers explained that their clients face limited income-generating opportunities due to prior **financial control by the abusive partner** who may have inhibited their ability to gain job skills and work experience. Consequently, providers said that their clients need more job-related programs and services. One provider described other employment challenges facing Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence:

“Folks are not working when in IPV. If they are working, then they have been covering marks and bruises or not talking to anyone about their struggles. So they can’t go to a job and say, ‘I’m living in a shelter now and I can’t come to work on time.’ Or ‘I’m not functioning on my job well because of all the trauma I’m experiencing at home, so I’m not focused.’”

Providers reported a **lack of affordable child care services in the Bronx**. Providers explained that when their clients have young children to look after, they may be unable to attend appointments or continually utilize services. Some providers said that their clients from other countries do not trust child care services offered in the Bronx.

Providers reported that **employed clients with open court cases risk losing their jobs**, as employers of low-wage workers have varying degrees of understanding or flexibility. Some attorneys explained that their clients have dropped their legal cases due to the need to attend multiple court dates out of fear of losing their jobs. Clients have expressed to their attorneys that they feel more comfortable dropping the case than risking their job.

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents are unable to work or go to school because their partners or ex-partners prevent them from doing so.
- Many Bronx residents who are experiencing intimate partner violence do not have enough money and do not have financial control in their homes.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have been forced to work, have not been adequately paid for their work, and have had their personal identification documents taken away.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help finding a job, job training, and child care.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence struggle with searching for employment while taking care of children, and feel hopeless and desperate during their job searches.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence want to work, but some lack work authorization and have limited opportunities to work off the books.
- The additional burdens of court appearances, appointments with service providers, and agency interactions strain Bronx residents' ability to stay employed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Expand employment opportunities for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase communication with employers to encourage hiring and retention of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Community mentorship programs for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence who are struggling in the job market
- Expand child care options for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, including options for children to be cared for by members of the same ethnic or racial community
- More job fairs in the Bronx
- Advertise Bronx job fair announcements on ethnic radio stations and in print media, in different languages
- Situate job training opportunities at Bronx schools so parents can learn while children attend after school programs
- More free high school equivalency exam prep courses in the Bronx on weekends and after 5PM
- More free ESL classes on weekends and after 5PM

I. Health Care and Mental Health Services

Without adequate health care and mental health services, Bronx residents traumatized by intimate partner violence cannot recover. Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are utilizing mental health services:

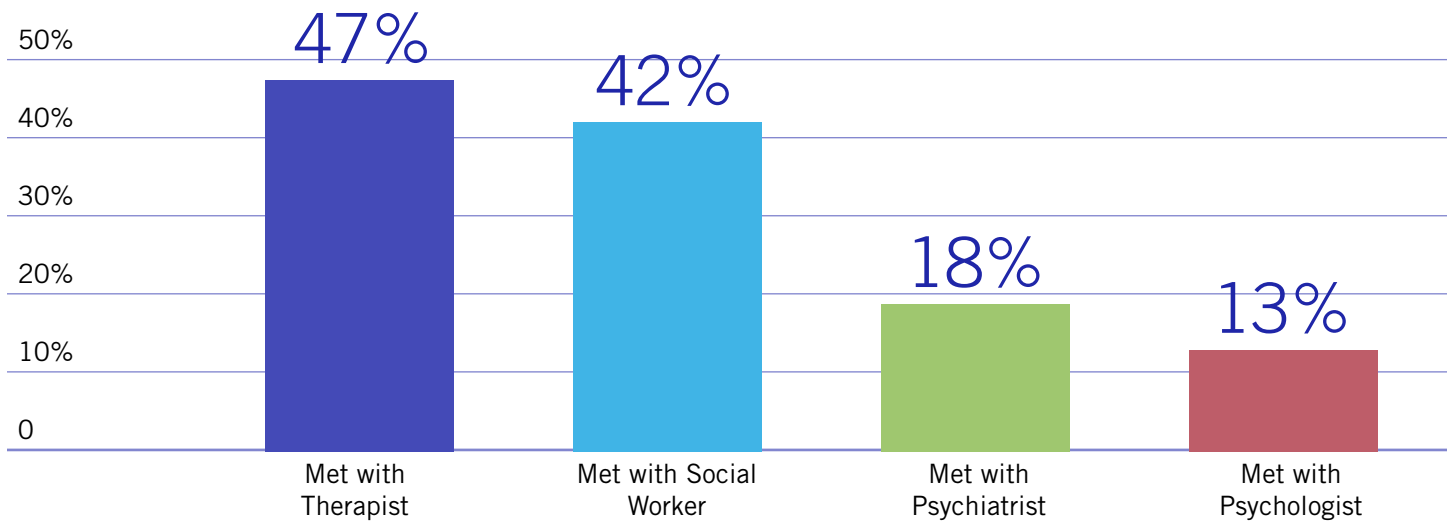
47% met with a therapist

42% met with a social worker

18% met with a psychiatrist

13% met with a psychologist

Mental Health Experiences



Only 8% reported that they go to a hospital or clinic when they are in need of help.

Survey participants provided information about their medical and mental health needs:

10% would like to see a doctor

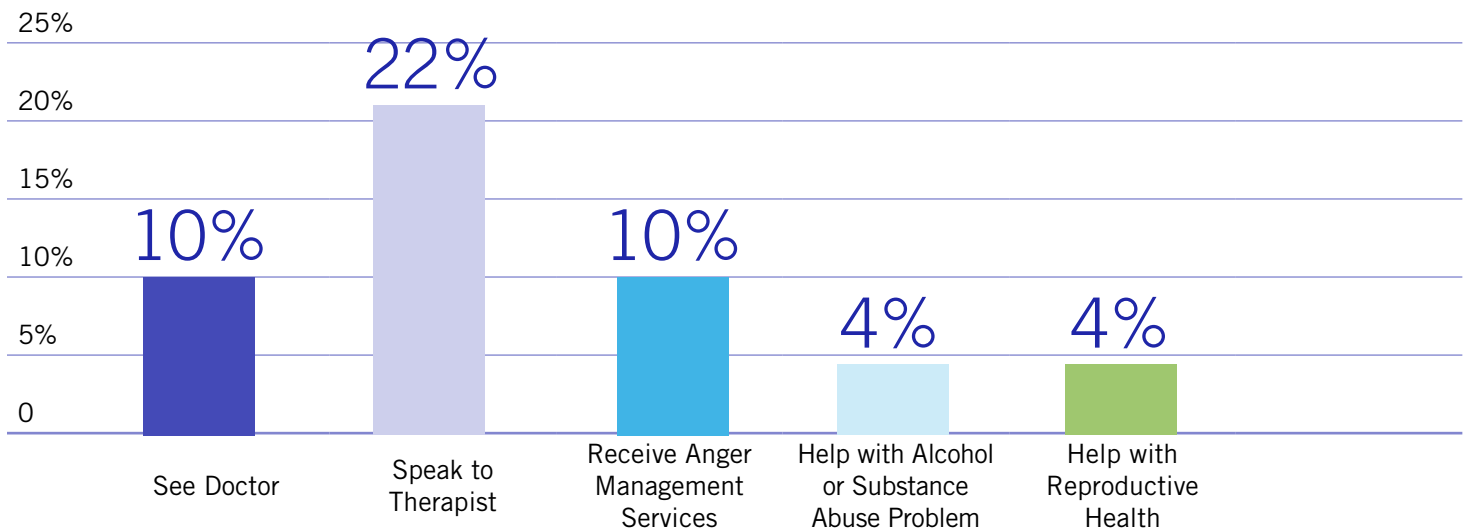
22% would like to speak to therapist

10% would like to receive anger management services

4% would like help with alcohol or substance abuse problem

4% would like help with reproductive health

Health Needs



Participants also provided information about their children’s and partners’ needs:

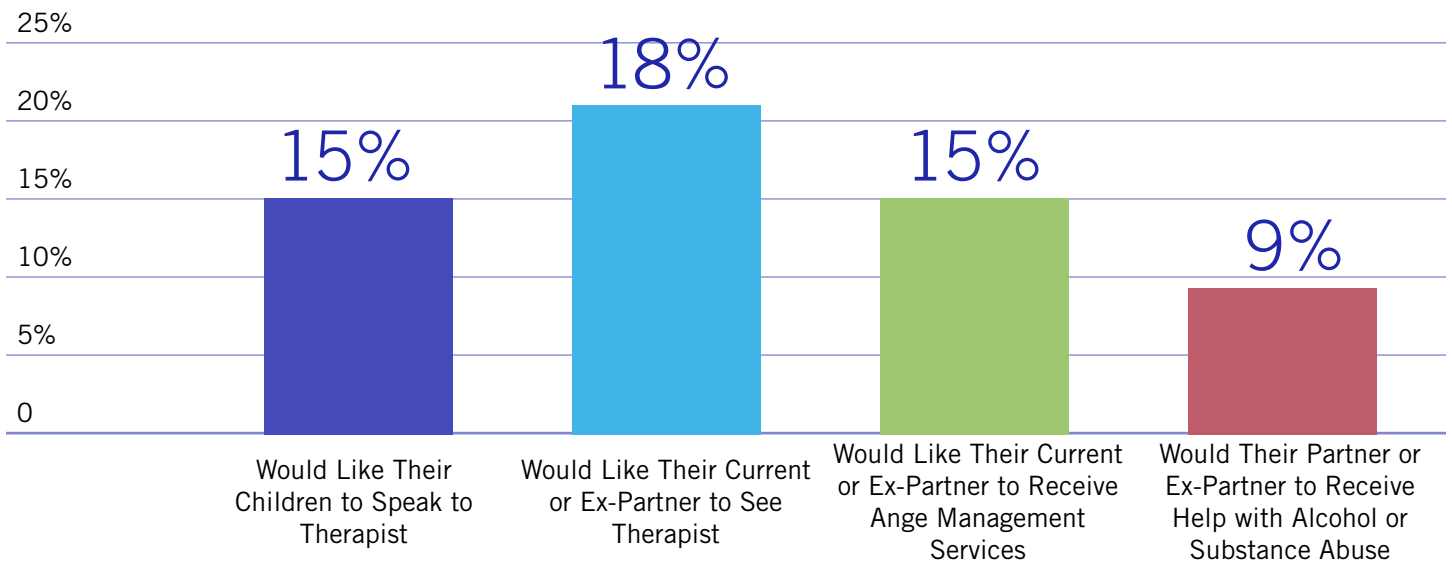
15% would like their children to speak to therapist

18% would like their current or ex-partner to see therapist

15% would like their current or ex-partner to receive anger management services

9% would like their partner or ex-partner to receive help with alcohol or substance abuse

Mental Health Needs of Children & Partners



Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence explained what helped them:

“The counselor listened, was understanding, empathetic, and was very helpful.”

“The therapist was helpful. She was very empathizing.”

“I suffer from depression and I was depressed before I became HIV positive and after it got worse. But I learned to live with HIV so it’s not my priority in my mind. I’m glad I have support right now with therapy and medicine.”

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence shared some of their struggles with accessing adequate care:

“When I went to the hospital, they took a report. But they never seemed to do anything with the case. They never called me or updated me or let me know anything.”

“The thing was most [counselors] had too many clients. If I miss the time or am late, then the appointment is cancelled. And the time offered is not enough - 35 minutes.”

“Budgeting is so bad that the therapist is only part time. I’ve been on waitlist there for a while.”

One survey participant asked for:

“group sessions for family or just [] one on one sessions for self ... near to home better after work or weekends.”

Individuals reported that they were either on **long waitlists** or found therapy to be ineffective because their **therapists changed frequently**. They expressed frustration due to having to re-tell their stories multiple times to various people. Subsequently, Bronx residents felt discouraged from utilizing counseling services.

Providers shared many concerns regarding the insufficiency of mental health services in the Bronx:

“Mental health is undervalued in helping people recover.”

“Behavioral health intervention in the Bronx is hard to come by.”

“You can get someone out of immediate danger, but helping someone heal after the trauma – physical and psychological – is very important. There should be more of these resources.”

Providers reported that they see many Bronx residents with histories of suicidal ideation and attempts, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Many of their **clients lack access to quality, long-term mental health treatment**. One provider shared this about the need to balance quantity of Bronx residents served with the quality of the mental health services offered:

“Initially, we were very eager to help as many people as we could, but we provide better care when we are closed to new referrals.”

Some providers have seen success with support groups for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, saying:

“Sisterhood, community, knowing they’re not alone. Hearing other people’s stories is very powerful for participants of the group.”

Providers reported that **many clients are uninsured due to their undocumented status and unable to receive medical treatment.** When their undocumented and uninsured clients did receive emergency medical services, they faced large bills they were unable to cover.

Providers also shared concerns that not enough mental health services are available for abusive partners in the Bronx:

“Many times there are children in common, and they will most likely have to live with each other as the child grows older. And you know, we can’t just turn our backs on the batterers and say, you know we put you in jail overnight and you’ll never do this again. That’s not the reality. The reality is that the victim may want to get back with them. What are we doing with that batterer? We’re not rehabilitating the batterer; we’re not treating that batterer; we’re not getting to the core of why that person is being abusive to the victim. I know some folks don’t agree with that, but I believe we have to address that core issue. I’ve seen it happen time and time again, where it erupts again, even with the order of protection, even with all the mechanisms in place. Nothing seems to work. We need to work on more treatment for the batterers, more mandated treatment.”

“Let’s get batterer services going. How about that? No one is dealing with the abusive person . . . Address power and control with abusers. It may go back to when they were younger and witnessing violence themselves.”

Key Conclusions

- Nearly half of survey participants had met with a therapist.
- Mental health services are in high demand by Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- The process of seeking therapy, the limited duration of therapy, and the rotation of therapists all discourage Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence from engaging in treatment.
- Listening, empathy, understanding, and offering support were characteristics highly valued by Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- More work needs to be done to understand the other health needs of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, including abusive partners.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence seek therapy not just for themselves and their children, but also for their partners and ex-partners.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are interested in anger management and alcohol and substance abuse treatment for themselves and their partners and ex-partners.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Expand resources for long-term trauma-informed mental health services in the Bronx
- Greater continuity of mental health services, with increased focus on minimizing disruptions, for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase access to mental health services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence who speak languages other than English
- Develop programs to better support the mental health needs of abusive partners, with input from Bronx residents on what services are most needed
- Conduct further needs assessments focused on medical and other health care needs of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence

J. Law Enforcement Responses

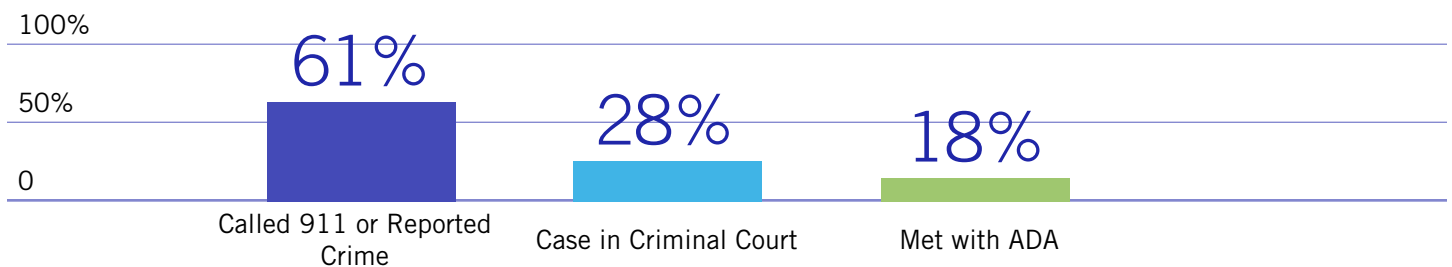
Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence reported major problems with law enforcement. Only **16% of participants said they go to the police when in need of help**, but many more participants have had contact with law enforcement:

61% called 911 or otherwise reported a crime

28% had a case in criminal court

18% met with an assistant district attorney

Contact with Law Enforcement



Survey participants provided further data regarding their contact with law enforcement:

55% said police helped them

28% said police were responsive to their needs

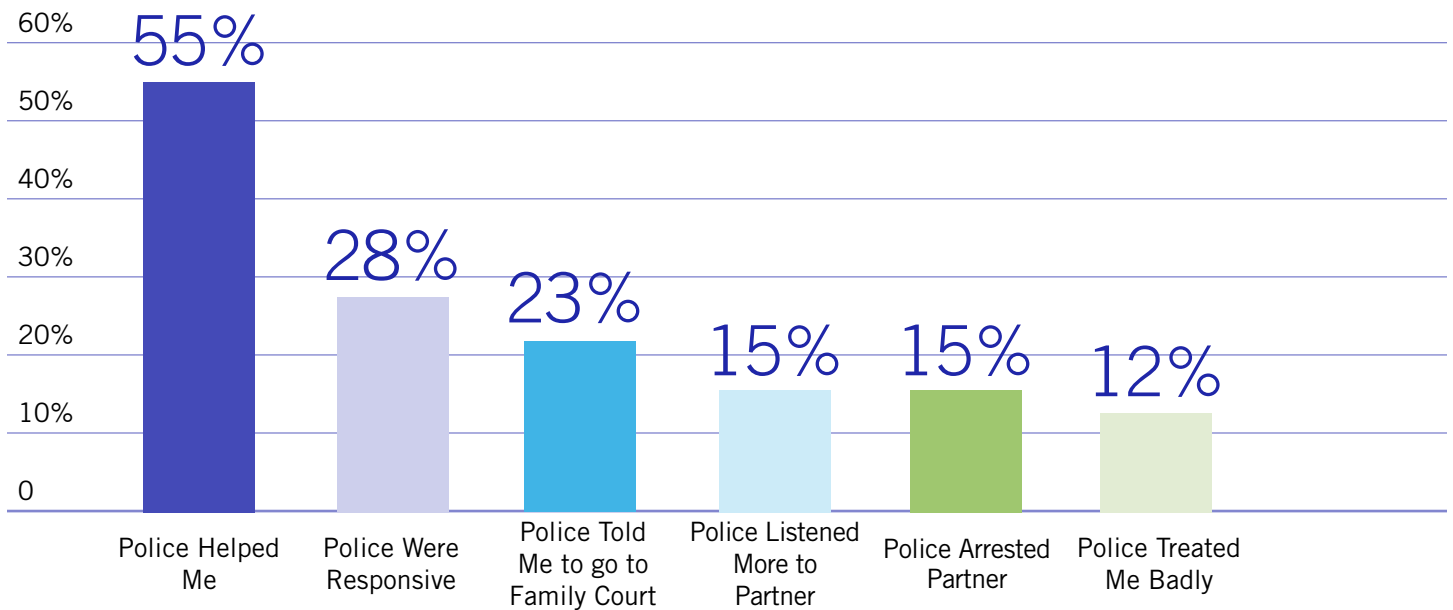
23% said police told them to go to Family Court

15% said police listened more to their partner

15% said police arrested their partner

12% said police treated them badly

Experiences with Police



Participants provided the following survey comments:

“police are not responsive”

“I’ve been physically abused by Police and Dept. of Corrections” [Spanish-speaking, gay, male]

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence reported that **some police officers did not respond to them with sensitivity when seeking help.** As one individual reported:

“I went to the police many times, and they said they couldn’t do anything. It was insulting. I felt terrible, and scared. It was not a good experience at all. They didn’t seem to care about me.”

Individuals reported being dismissed for various reasons, including lack of interpreters and presumed guilt. Multiple interviewees reported that they were either arrested along with, or instead of, their abusive partner because police officers took the statement of the abusive partner over the one abused.

“They listened to my ex-husband’s side of the story and I was falsely arrested based on what he said. I was later discharged. But they didn’t believe me even though I was the victim, I had to see the judge. My ex-husband had a bruise and I didn’t, so they arrested me even though he was beating me.”

“When violence escalated, I was arrested because of the way my ex-husband explained that I attacked him when I was defending myself.”

“Some are not trained to deal with DV”

“Really mean bad attitudes.”

“they’re not protecting anyone.”

“Police said they can’t do anything without court order. They said they can’t go with me to get my clothes even though I was scared of my ex-husband. So I just didn’t get my stuff. I thought I would be supported because it was abuse and I was afraid to go into my own house but they didn’t care or do anything.”

Despite these negative experiences by law enforcement, some individuals described **more positive interactions with domestic violence officers:**

“DV officers are more understanding and helpful now than before.”

“Some precincts have groups of police that are trained to deal with DV.”

Providers explained that their clients are hesitant to disclose information to the police, either because the police have spoken to them disrespectfully, have dismissed them, or have arrested them. Providers affirmed that their clients have not been allowed to make a domestic incident report or have been turned away at precincts. The lack of response has dissuaded their clients from seeking help a second or third time. For their clients, when police officers did not take a report, either at the scene or at the precinct, the abusive partner's warning that no one will help them in the future rang true. Providers say that **the indifference clients often experience from law enforcement officers is dangerous because it puts them at further risk of harm.**

Providers also observed changes over time in the police force serving the Bronx:

“One time going to a precinct and not getting the right services – that leads to them not wanting to seek help again. There are some great local precincts who handle those issues really well, but when they have an experience that’s not, well, they don’t come back again.”

“An indifferent police officer is a dangerous police officer. If they are not properly responding to people who are at risk of harm, then they might be putting a person in further risk of harm.”

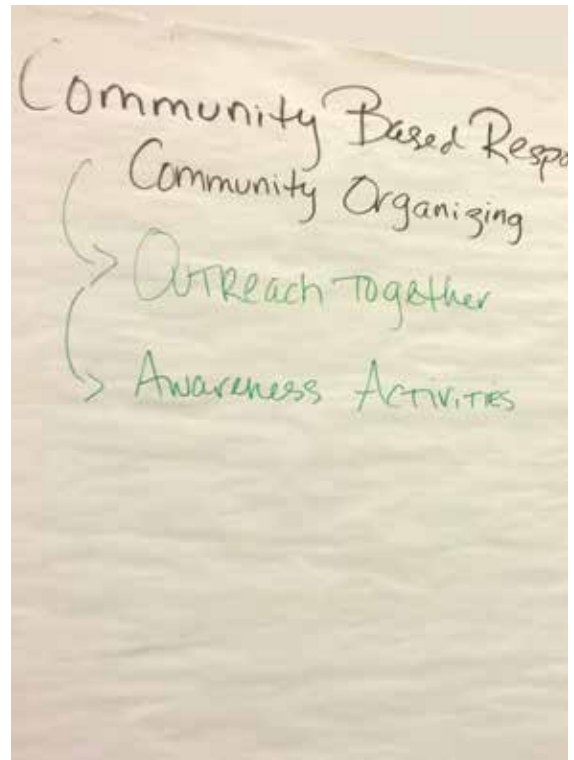
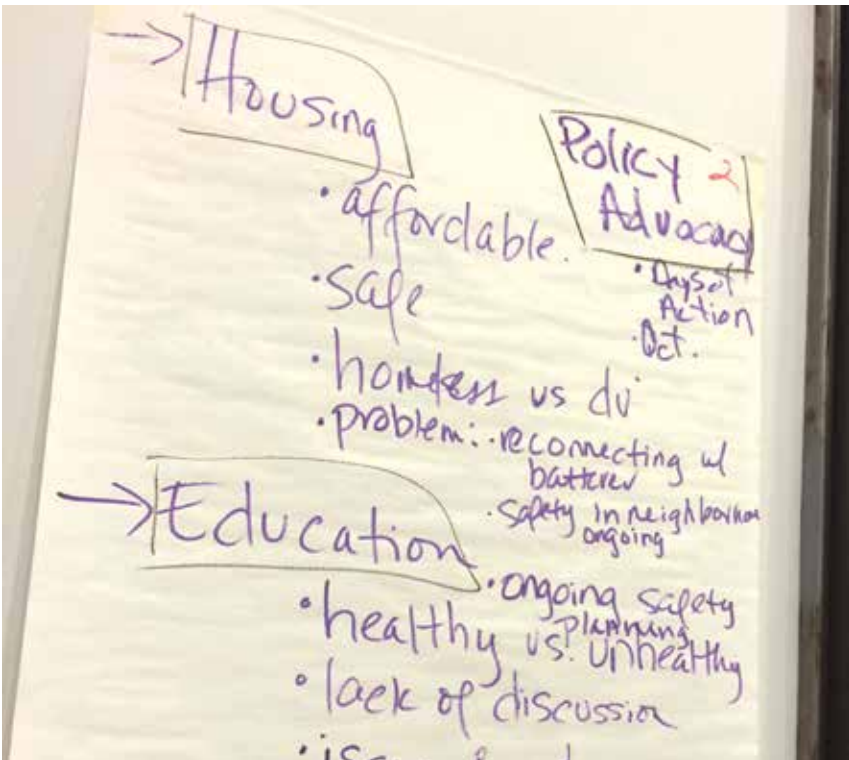
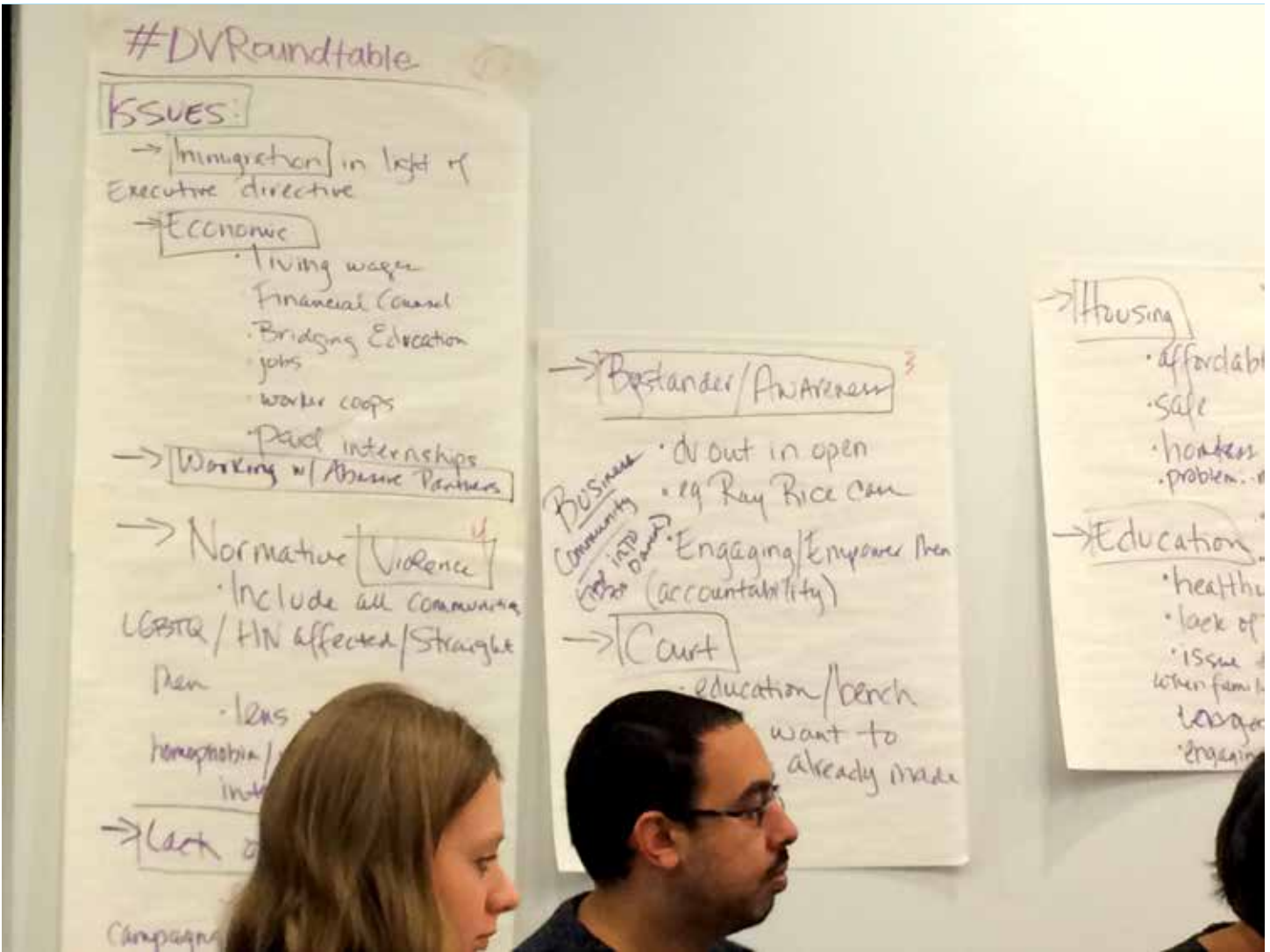
Some providers said that **too much reliance on law enforcement and criminal legal interventions exposes people of color impacted by intimate partner violence, both U.S. citizens and undocumented immigrants, to increased danger**, posing acute risks to individuals and communities.

Providers also observed changes over time in the police force serving the Bronx:

“Back in the day, community officers got assigned to the community they lived in, so they knew children on a one-on-one basis. They knew family members. We now have officers who come to the projects who are from Long Island, Poughkeepsie [and] have no idea of community culture. [Police] should have an address in New York City or the Bronx, so you don’t have outsiders coming in and dictating, because that’s how it comes across.”

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence call 911 or report crimes against them, but few said that they go to the police when they need help.
- Many Bronx residents felt that the police helped them, but far fewer said that the police were responsive to their needs.
- There is a vast difference between the number of people who contacted the police and those who said they met with an assistant district attorney.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence were referred to the Family Court by the police.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt more supported by domestic violence officers than other police officers.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence were arrested when they believed their partner should have been the one arrested.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence report dismissive, disrespectful, and apathetic attitudes of police officers when seeking help.



- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt that they were not heard by police officers, either because an interpreter was not provided or because the officer only listened to their partner’s version of events.
- Police officers from the Bronx community may be a better fit when responding to incidents of intimate partner violence than officers from outside the community.
- Failure to respond to intimate partner violence endangers Bronx residents.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Improve and make publicly available protocols and scripts to guide police officer interactions with people affected by intimate partner violence
- Frequent and diverse trainings for police officers on trauma-informed responses to people affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand use of interpretation and translation services by the police and assistant district attorneys to communicate with Bronx residents with limited English proficiency
- Improve collaboration between police officers, community members, and advocates
- Increase development and research of restorative and transformative justice models of accountability, with thoughtful consideration of emergency response components
- Hire Bronx residents in the NYPD to patrol Bronx communities

K. Courts, Family Law Needs, and Legal Services

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have extensive experience with the courts, need free high-quality legal representation, and have many different types of family law needs, most notably divorce:

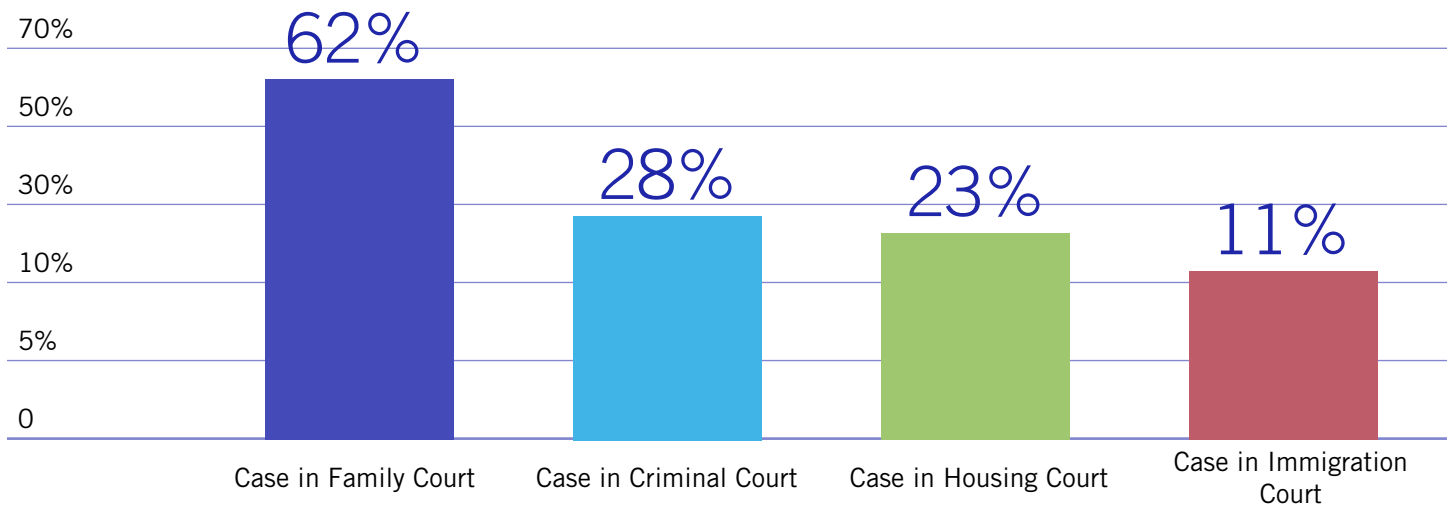
62% had a case in Family Court

28% had a case in Criminal Court

23% had a case in Housing Court

11% had a case in Immigration Court

Court Experiences



Survey participants indicated the following family law needs:

34% would like a divorce

26% would like an order of protection

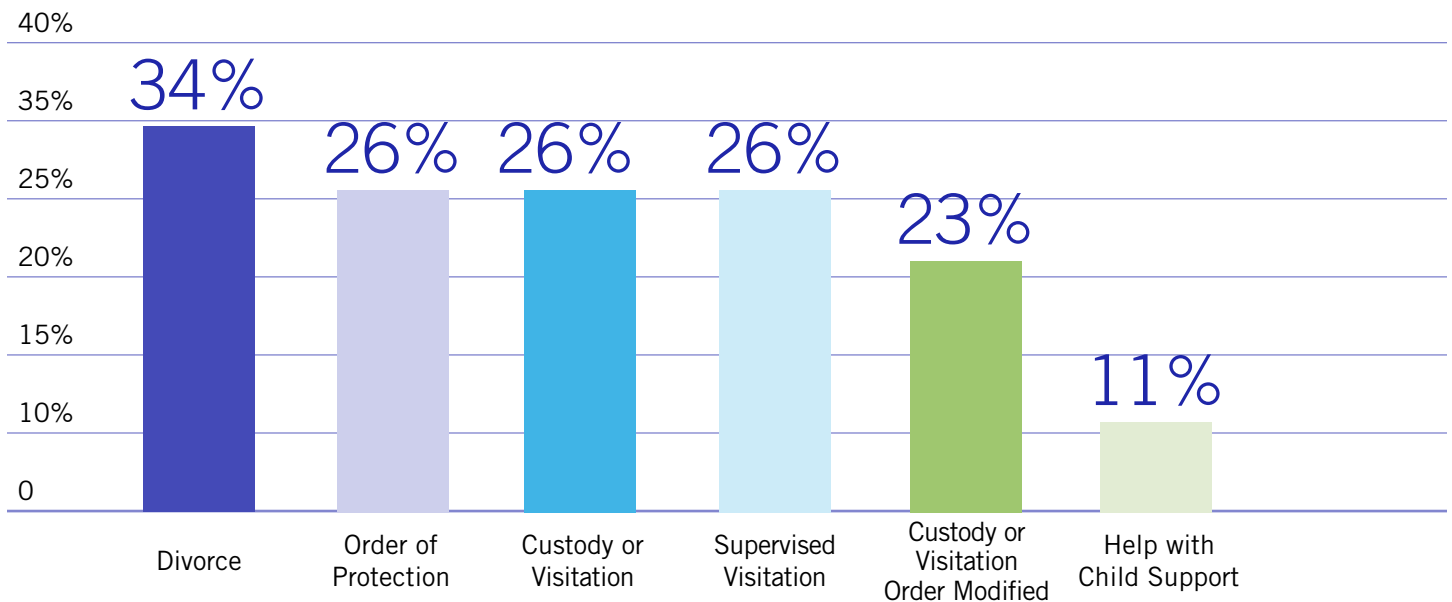
26% would like custody or visitation

26% would like supervised visitation

23% would like a custody or visitation order modified

11% would like help with child support

Family Law Needs



26% reported that their family had been involved in an investigation by the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) or Child Protective Services. Providers observed that abusive partners use ACS investigations as a tool against their clients:

“One patient has an abuser who is not allowed to contact their child, and is a felon, and yet he can call in and make false ACS claims, and she has to go through all these tests to prove that she is a fit parent – harassed and degraded by the system.”

Others explained how ACS case workers may unnecessarily push their clients to accept preventative services and further monitoring by ACS, which can feel intrusive.

About their needs, survey participants said:

64% represented by court-appointed lawyer

19% had to pay for lawyer

17% represented by non-profit lawyer

31% represented by lawyer who spoke their language

29% happy with lawyer's representation

24% not happy with lawyer's representation

17% did not feel lawyer understood needs

14% spoke to lawyer through interpreter

Experiences with Legal Representation



In their comments, survey participants shared:

"I had a court order to gain my and my children belong[ings]. [D]ate and time and was not able to follow thr[ough]. had to modify 3 times. to get belongs. taken 2 months."

"but the court judge was not fair in my case!"

"I lost my case because of the lawyer"

"my lawyer seem to work on vis[ita]tion cust[od]y of children well but does not me[n]tion anything about the domestic v[i]olence"

"wish had lawyers that specialize in domestic violence appointed to me. thr[ough] court or able to meet with lawyer more often not just 5-10 minutes before meeting a judge. due to income i can't pay for one!"

"see a judge for a year only talks about visit[a]tions and custody but not about the dom[esti]c violen[c]e or how it has made an impact on children or help that is need for both parties"

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence reported not knowing how to navigate the court system and felt overwhelmed by numerous court dates.

Having an advocate throughout the whole process made a difference for them:

“I had contact with Family Court. I had a really excellent lawyer. [She] was really helpful, and she made sure I knew what was going on and she handled all of my cases and helped me through it. It’s very difficult to do it alone. The judge and everyone who works there just does their job and doesn’t know if the people know what’s happening. I had to spend a lot of time there, and it’s hard to know what’s going on. There are a lot of people, and it’s overwhelming. Especially when you don’t know the language, you don’t know what to do. They should make it easier for people.”

“I was treated with respect in the courts and they gave me justice. It was based in part on his criminal background.”

“It was really good. I found help and felt supported and I don’t know what I would have done without the legal help I received. After I got out of the case and divorce, I still felt like I could come here if I had any problems. I became a citizen through Legal Services, and it helped me with domestic violence and housing.”

“I was in family court for three years for divorce and had [legal services attorneys] by my side so it wasn’t as bad of an experience. I felt like I got what I wanted - I got out of an abusive relationship and got legal service, and no fee for divorce or legal help. I felt that the judge was understanding and supportive.”

Other Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence explained how their needs were not met by court-appointed counsel or the courts:

“Total mess. It was against my son’s father, who was absent for five years, and I was trying to get full custody. But they didn’t give it to me. They gave us joint custody. He had his own lawyer, and judge did everything against us ... I got a court-appointed lawyer. I was all by myself. No one helped me navigate the system. If someone was to explain to me what everything means, it was always different, because the meaning of things is always different from what it appears to be. Like, my lawyer told me I will be able to make decisions about my son’s life and our future, but that wasn’t the case.”

“[Court-appointed lawyer] said that I will get joint custody and I will still be able to make decisions about son but I had no decisions. Court never listened. His attitude was whatever, didn’t really care.”

“Never explained to me – my rights, how to navigate the court, and no one prepared me for how incredibly crazy it’s going to get - that I might lose custody because I don’t have a roof over my head. Especially since you have to move to another borough, custody is always brought up. ... He was the one at fault but he might get custody. They can get the custody of your child. All these court dates. For custody, court asks: what are you doing, what are you making, where are you working, etc. They interrogate victims.”

According to providers, the **court does not take time to fully explain how to navigate the legal process to Bronx residents with limited English proficiency**. They say the Office of Court Administration has made significant strides to better accommodate litigants with limited English proficiency, but they still lack parity with English speaking litigants.

Providers also expressed concern that courts and ACS stigmatize Bronx residents who receive mental health services:

“[They are] judged to be unfit parents for relatively arbitrary reasons, such as coming for mental health treatment. [We] need broader education in the legal system to normalize depression, anxiety, etc., after being in a stressful situation like intimate partner violence.”

Regarding the availability of free quality legal representation, providers offered these insights:

“Legal agencies are full.”

“Not enough legal services.”

“Litigated divorces and child support are the biggest needs.”

“There are so many people and so few resources.”

“Entire communities in the Bronx don’t get any services just because of their geographical location. They may not be located on 161st Street.”



Providers also explained how **taking the time to explain someone's legal rights to them can make a huge difference:**

“Even though we can’t take everyone’s cases, we try to make all of our consultations meaningful. We try to make sure our clients are oriented about their rights and that they feel someone is listening to them and their needs are taken seriously. When someone comes to me, they’re usually very nervous or anxious, but after an hour of speaking about their options and rights, dispelling some fears or validating their fears, then they walk out and there’s a noticeable difference in their demeanor and outlook.”

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have contact with the Family and Supreme Courts.
- Divorce representation is the greatest unmet family law need for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help with orders of protection, custody, visitation, and child support.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need more free supervised visitation resources that accommodate work schedules and limited English proficient speakers.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt alone, unheard, and frustrated by numerous court dates and the focus on visitation over the effects of the intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are involved with investigations by the Administration for Children’s Services.
- ACS investigations can be intrusive in the lives of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, particularly when used as a weapon by abusive partners, or when required to accept unnecessary services.

- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt the most supported by lawyers and court officials who explained court procedures, listened to their concerns regarding intimate partner violence and its effects on children, and utilized interpreters when necessary.
- There are not enough free legal services in the Bronx, and legal services providers are unable to serve all Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence without more resources.
- There is a need for more training on intimate partner violence in the courts and for court-appointed counsel.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase funding for free legal services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, particularly for divorce representation
- Improve procedures and forms required for self-represented divorces in the Bronx, and allocate more resources to the Office of the Self-Represented in Bronx Supreme Court
- Train Bronx-based court officials, court-appointed counsel, and ACS case workers on intimate partner violence and trauma
- Allow litigants to appear telephonically or by video, to reduce the number of hours they have to take off from work
- Fund more free and low-cost supervised visitation resources in the Bronx
- Screen complaints by abusive partners to ACS to stop frivolous investigations
- More interpreters in Bronx Family Court and Bronx Supreme Courts, and more utilization of Language Line, when an in-person interpreter is not available

L. Public Benefits

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need access to public benefits to be able to support themselves and their families. Use of government benefits outweighs other types of income supports:

31% receive food stamps / SNAP

24% receive SSI or SSD

17% receive public assistance

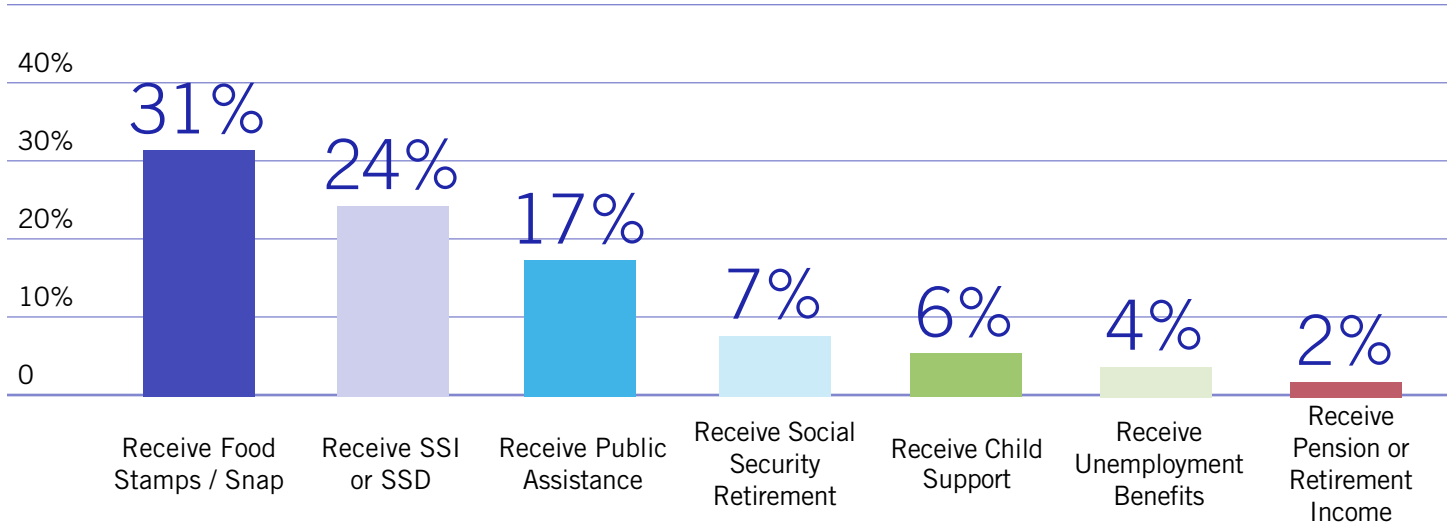
7% receive Social Security Retirement

6% receive child support

4% receive unemployment benefits

2% receive pension or retirement income

Income Supports



About their needs, participants said:

65% need food stamps (SNAP)

25% need cash assistance

25% need rental assistance

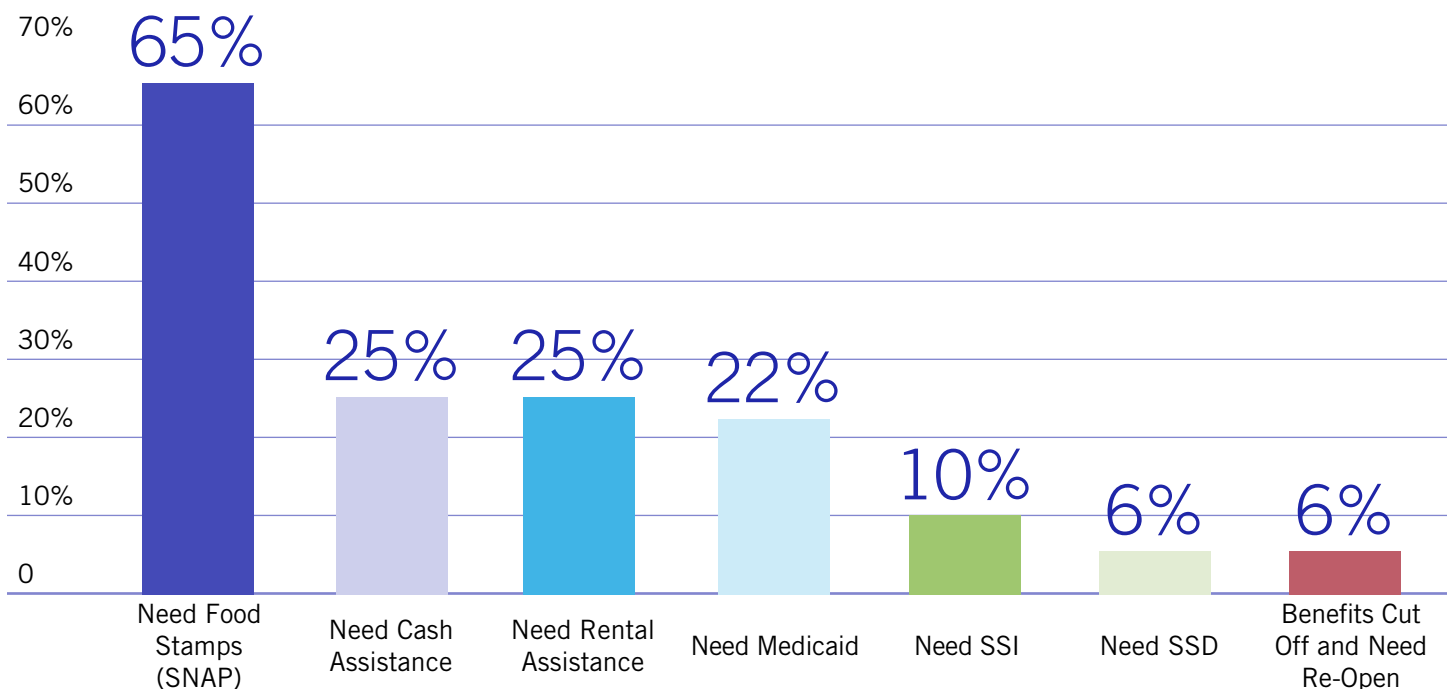
22% need Medicaid

10% need Social Security Income (SSI)

6% need Social Security Disability (SSD)

6% have had their benefits cut off and need help re-opening their cases

Benefits Needs



In comments, survey participants said:

"Food - more SNAP"

"I'm appealing my disability for the second time (SSI)"

"I just wish to be able to get a Medicaid"

"center workers are very rude and make you feel worst for being their or applying."

One Bronx resident who experienced intimate partner violence and is HIV positive struggled to navigate the process of applying for benefits.

"I thought someone in the system would help me, but no one did, so I knew I had to find it by myself. I felt helpless. I had to go by myself and google what programs are available for HIV positive people. That's how I found out about HASA. My application was first denied because my case worker didn't know how to fill it out and all the criteria to qualify for HASA. So I asked the clinic at Montefiore who specializes in HIV. I googled it and found that Montefiore had a whole unit for HIV+ patients. I sought it out because I wanted to feel more comfortable and supported than in the regular clinic. ... The social worker there at Montefiore immediately helped me be approved for HASA."

Providers shared that their **immigrant clients who have a status other than U.S. citizenship or lawful permanent residency have been incorrectly denied benefits from HRA centers in the Bronx.** Providers report that their clients are treated poorly and misinformed by HRA staff.

One individual offered this experience with her local job center:

“If you don’t go there, you don’t know if you’re qualified or not. You need to be your own advocate.”

Key Conclusions

- There is an enormous need for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, aka “food stamps”) amongst Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need cash and rental assistance, Medicaid, Social Security Income, and Social Security Disability.
- Low numbers of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are receiving child support, unemployment, and retirement income.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have been treated poorly by HRA staff.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence feel alone and stymied when navigating the process of applying for benefits.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase Bronx-based HRA staff trainings on working with people affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase Bronx-based HRA staff trainings on benefits available to immigrants
- Expand access to Supplemental Needs Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase food resources for people ineligible for SNAP benefits
- Expand funding for case manager accompaniment to HRA centers for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Post HRA staff on-site at community-based organizations
- Hire more multilingual and culturally diverse HRA staff in the Bronx
- More “Know Your Rights” presentations about public benefits and how to appeal denials all around the Bronx
- Online accessibility of HRA applications, budget letters, and notices
- Distribute hotline phone number or email address where Bronx residents can submit complaints about HRA staff

M. Case Management, Social Services, and Intersecting Needs

Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have an incredible range of **intersecting needs**, and they turn to case managers and social workers to help them navigate **a confusing labyrinth of resources**. Survey participants indicated that:

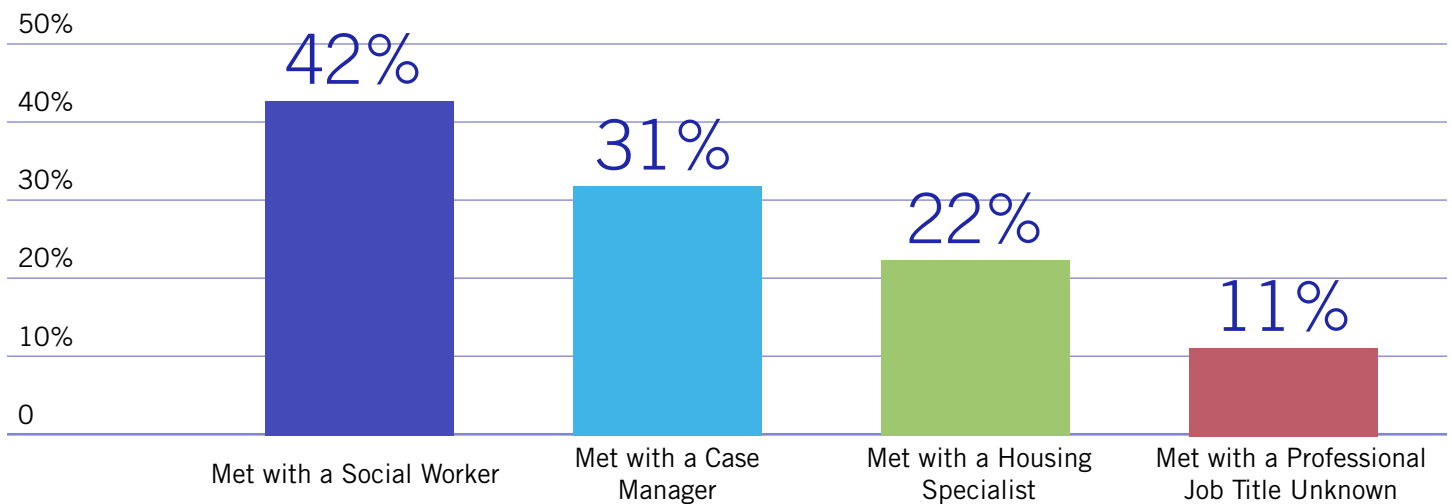
42% met with a social worker

31% met with a case manager

22% met with a housing specialist

11% met with a professional but didn't know their job title

Interactions with Professionals



About their needs, survey participants said:

42% would like help finding housing

38% would like help finding a job

27% would like job training

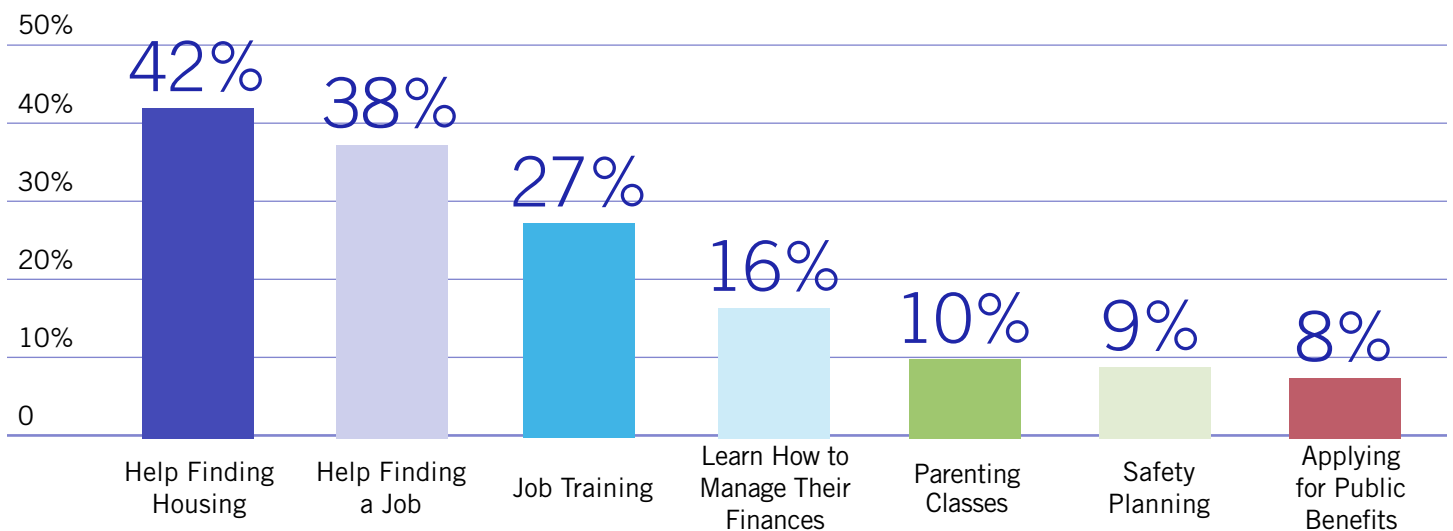
16% would like to learn more about how to manage their finances

10% would like parenting classes

9% would like to speak with someone about keeping themselves or their children safe

8% would like help applying for public benefits

Case Management Needs



19% of participants reported going to a Family Justice Center (FJC). One Bronx resident affected by intimate partner violence explained how much the FJC made a difference for her:

“FJC treated me with respect. I thank God every day for those people. Now I am employed, making money, I have my own apartment, car, going to school to become a therapist for troubled teens. FJC helped me get to that place so that I can take care of my family.”

Bronx residents explained how hard it was to get connected with services initially:

*“People should pay more attention, and there needs to be easier access. It was hard for me in the beginning. People aren’t always prepared for what we need, especially in reality. **There is a difference between what they think and what we really need day to day.** It seemed like some people didn’t care, and they didn’t even know how to help us. So people should provide more services that can help us daily.”*

“It was very hard to get connected to services in the beginning, but eventually I got help.”

“didn’t really connect me to services or give me information I needed”

Bronx residents said that when they sought out community resources, they were not always directed to available, relevant resources in the community, either because people did not know or invest enough time to connect them. Some people explained that some providers were not helpful with navigating systems.

Bronx residents shared the following **frustrations when presenting intersecting needs to professionals**:

“People who are serving people need better skills to deal with them and [be] psychologically prepared for the job. Trying to investigate more if possible.”

“Everything is supposed to be connected”

“I still had to figure out everything by myself”

“No cooperation [by] agencies. They say they don’t know about other services, like food stamps don’t know about any other thing. It’s very narrow whatever their job is. They are not open-minded to understand others. They don’t really want to help you. They are just doing their jobs. Everybody is for themselves. ‘I don’t know’ [is] always the answer.”

Providers reported that their **clients face long waitlists to access services, particularly legal and counseling services**. When clients do arrive at an appointment, they may not be served immediately or they may be rescheduled multiple times. Providers also expressed concern that their clients may have to tell their stories multiple times to receive services, risking re-traumatization.

Providers noted the **value provided by case management and social work** and noted that organizations are thinly staffed with high turnover rates:

“We need more agencies that provide case management and counseling services.”

“Another big problem is also a high turnover rate for staff. It makes the client feel they have to relive the trauma, and it takes a few sessions to get the relationship to the same stage.”

“Case management follows and supports people throughout their case, allowing someone to feel that someone is looking out for them. Case management and social workers can connect people to lifesaving services – shelters, food. Case managers can explain things accurately. Case managers are key to helping people move on with their lives and become self-sufficient.”

Providers praised the Bronx Family Justice Center for its ability to serve many needs at once, but explained the need for satellite sites to reach people in other parts of the Bronx.

“The FJC’s success lies in providing information and helping coordination for clients working with multiple organizations, by keeping multiple resources under one roof. It also saves money and time for clients.”

“The Bronx has some of the most incidents of IPV and homicides. It may be difficult for clients to get there, especially if they have financial problems traveling, or children. It often takes hours for clients. The key might be finding community organizations to put all these satellite services in.”

Providers said they would like to see **more communication and coordination between organizations:**

“There is also a lack of communication. There are services but they do not communicate with each other.”

“Systems operate in silos, not a fluid system or flowchart.”

“When people are in silos, there is not enough conversation and dialogue. On a larger level, encouraging dialogue is good because it connects organizations.”

“Mental health services should be based in or brought into the fold of legal teams, or at least part of medical services. But the ideal should be a holistic team working together, because of the synergy that is created.”



Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help with housing, employment, safety planning, financial literacy, public benefits, and accessing mental health services.
- Case management and social services are key vehicles for helping Bronx residents access help with housing, employment, safety planning, financial literacy, public benefits, and mental health services.
- Insufficient resources for case management and social services make it difficult for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to stabilize their lives.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from meeting with social workers and case managers, especially when they feel heard and respected.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence value being able to form a relationship with one case manager, rather than being rotated through different case managers.
- There are not enough case managers and social workers in the Bronx for low-income residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Not all Bronx organizations or agencies are aware of case management and social work services available in the Bronx, and may not direct residents to the most relevant services.
- It can be difficult for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to get connected to services when they first seek help.
- High turnover rates for case managers and social workers can negatively impact the ability of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to seek and receive help.
- More communication and collaboration between organizations that provide case management and social work services would create a stronger safety net for all Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from collaborative and coordinated models, such as the Bronx Family Justice Center. This resource is not always accessible throughout the Bronx and has only one location.



Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase funding for case managers working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase funding for social workers working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Focus on retention of case managers and social workers, by improving salaries, assigning realistic caseloads, and addressing secondary trauma
- More outreach and publication of available social services throughout the Bronx
- Improve communication and collaboration between organizations and agencies working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- More collaboration between faith-based organizations and legal and social services organizations serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Replicate collaborative models of service delivery throughout the Bronx

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The key conclusions and recommendations contained within this report are repeated below to help policymakers, funders, advocates, and community members understand and respond to the needs of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence:

Patterns of Abuse and Where People Turn for Help

Key Conclusions

- Two-thirds of participants experienced physical or emotional abuse.
- One quarter of participants experienced sexual abuse.
- Abuse is predominantly verbal and emotional – threats, jealousy, name-calling, being degraded in front of children.
- Many Bronx residents experience physical and sexual abuse by their intimate partners – hitting, grabbing, pushing, strangulation, sexual abuse, and child abuse.
- Technological abuse is on an upward trend in the Bronx.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence primarily turn to their family and friends for help, then to their religious institutions, and do not report turning for help to community resources in large numbers.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence feel they cannot go anywhere for help and prefer to keep to themselves or to take care of themselves.
- Inability to relocate because of custody or visitation orders feels like another form of abuse for some Bronx residents.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- More advocacy, outreach campaigns, and educational programs in the Bronx geared towards people affected by intimate partner violence and sexual violence
- More education about intimate partner violence and sexual violence in Bronx schools, parks, places of worship, businesses, and family-related events to bring awareness
- Increased education of Bronx residents and service providers regarding technological abuse
- Encourage more conversations about healthy relationships at all age-levels, with as much education in schools as possible
- Expand “relationship building” workshops in the Bronx that address dynamics of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, yet marketed to everyone to reduce stigma
- Expand hiring and training of local and multilingual community advocates to serve Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence and sexual violence
- Increase coordination between hospitals and legal services providers in the Bronx
- Improve training of Administration of Children Services (ACS) case workers on intimate partner violence and sexual violence and the skills required when working with immigrants

LGBTQ Bronx Residents Affected by Intimate Partner Violence

Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and/or Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) face particular challenges when they experience intimate partner violence.
- Rates of intimate partner violence among LGBTQ Bronx residents are underreported.
- There are insufficient LGBTQ-specific services for people affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx.
- Transgender Bronx residents, particularly transgender women, experience high rates of intimate partner and transphobic violence, isolation, and discrimination.
- LGBTQ Bronx residents may not feel safe accessing services at agencies without LGBTQ-specific services.
- Shelters can be a dangerous place for LGBTQ Bronx residents, especially for transgender women.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Greater outreach to LGBTQ Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand LGBTQ-specific services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Create more safe spaces for transgender Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- LGBTQ-inclusive revision of intake procedures and outreach materials by service providers and government officials serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Train current LGBTQ providers to screen for intimate partner violence and provide intervention services
- Create LGBTQ units in all organizations serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence

Structural Racism, Bias, and the Need for Culturally Appropriate Services

Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents feel uncomfortable asking for help from someone who does not share their cultural, racial, or ethnic heritage.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence experience race-based discrimination that impacts their ability to get help and access services.
- Providers recognize that racism and discrimination are factors in their clients' experiences but there is a lack of resources and opportunity to further explore these issues.
- There is a need for more services and funding culturally appropriate services, particularly for African community members affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence experience bias by landlords when using rent subsidies as people who experience intimate partner violence.



Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Cultural sensitivity and implicit bias trainings for providers and government officials
- Increase funding for community based organizations providing culturally and linguistically specific services to Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Host “listening tours” by the Office of Court Administration to visit community-based organizations, places of worship, schools, and other community spaces to hear about issues that people are having with the court system
- Train and hire community members to be courtroom and city agency advocates for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Publish an online and print directory of landlords who accept and/or reject rent subsidies from people who have experienced intimate partner violence
- Implement a complaint system against landlords who deny rent subsidies from people who have experienced intimate partner violence

Lack of Language Access

Key Conclusions

- Limited English proficient people who experience intimate partner violence hesitate to seek help because of fears that no one will understand them.
- Bronx residents face repeated problems finding someone who speaks their language.
- Obstacles presented by lack of interpreters or translated materials are significant barriers for people accessing health, legal, and social services.
- The migration of more ethnic communities to the Bronx creates the need for more interpreters who speak languages such as French, Bengali, Arabic, indigenous languages, and languages from Africa.
- Although the Office of Court Administration has worked to better accommodate litigants with limited English proficiency, there remains much room for improvement.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Provide more trainings to governments officials, law enforcement, and court officials on language access
- Create a specific complaint system for people to report language access problems with HRA, NYCHA, NYPD, and ACS
- Hire more interpreters for languages other than Spanish for all providers and agencies serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Have a court advocate located at Help Centers inside courthouses who can specifically address language access issues
- Hire more multilingual court staff and court officers
- Translate court documents into multiple languages, particularly orders of protection, service of process instructions, summons, pleadings, and court notices
- Create an online and phone mechanism for litigants and attorneys to request a court interpreter in advance of a court appearance

Housing

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence cannot afford their rent, owe rental arrears, face eviction, or live in shelter.
- Low numbers of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are able to access landlords who accept rent subsidies, NYCHA DV priority apartments, NYCHA safety transfers, and “affordable housing” units.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from interactions with compassionate domestic violence shelter staff.
- Time-limits on domestic violence shelters and the difficulties of navigating PATH pose additional burdens on Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need rental assistance and help finding stable permanent housing.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Improve screening for domestic violence-related housing
- Allocate more affordable housing and supportive housing units for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand housing options and vouchers for undocumented Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Improve outreach to and increase collaboration with landlords regarding rent subsidies for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Allow advocates to accompany people affected by intimate partner violence to PATH interviews

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- Hire more multilingual (languages in addition to Spanish) shelter staff in the Bronx
 - Provide more cultural sensitivity training for shelter staff for working with Bronx residents from backgrounds different from their own
 - Expand housing options in the Bronx to accommodate larger families where there are three or more children
 - Improve PATH intake processes to allow Bronx residents to apply online or through community-based organizations with cultural and language capacities
 - Revisit shelter policies that always require Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to move to another borough

Immigration

Key Conclusions

- The communities of immigrants in the Bronx are growing and changing.
- Undocumented Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence are vulnerable to misinformation about their immigration options by abusive partners, service providers, attorneys, and others.
- The fear of deportation compounds the stress and trauma affecting Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- The complexities of U.S. immigration laws, courts, and agencies are difficult to maneuver for Bronx immigrants who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- Many Bronx residents who have experienced intimate partner violence are undocumented and would like to speak to a lawyer about their immigration options.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Frequent, multilingual “Know Your Rights” workshops for Bronx immigrants, with a focus on options available for those experiencing intimate partner violence
- Multilingual and visual handouts for Bronx residents on immigration options and guidance for how to interact with law enforcement and immigration officers
- Expand free legal immigration assistance in the Bronx
- Ongoing communication with Bronx communities on the changing immigration legal landscape
- Educate professionals working in the Bronx regarding the complexities of immigration law and policy
- More free legal clinics in community spaces such as places of worship, schools, shelters, hospitals and NYCHA housing communities

Employment, Child Care, and Education

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents are unable to work or go to school because their partners or ex-partners prevent them from doing so.
- Many Bronx residents who are experiencing intimate partner violence do not have enough money and do not have financial control in their homes.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have been forced to work, have not been adequately paid for their work, and have had their personal identification documents taken away.
- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help finding a job, job training, and child care.

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- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence struggle with searching for employment while taking care of children, and feel hopeless and desperate during their job searches.
 - Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence want to work, but some lack work authorization and have limited opportunities to work off the books.
 - The additional burdens of court appearances, appointments with service providers, and agency interactions strain Bronx residents' ability to stay employed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Expand employment opportunities for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase communication with employers to encourage hiring and retention of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Community mentorship programs for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence who are struggling in the job market
- Expand child care options for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, including options for children to be cared for by members of the same ethnic or racial community
- More job fairs in the Bronx
- Advertise Bronx job fair announcements on ethnic radio stations and in print media, in different languages
- Situate job training opportunities at Bronx schools so parents can learn while children attend after school programs
- More free high school equivalency exam prep courses in the Bronx on weekends and after 5PM
- More free ESL classes on weekends and after 5PM

Health Care and Mental Health Services

Key Conclusions

- Nearly half of survey participants had met with a therapist.
- Mental health services are in high demand by Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- The process of seeking therapy, the limited duration of therapy, and the rotation of therapists all discourage Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence from engaging in treatment.
- Listening, empathy, understanding, and offering support were characteristics highly valued by Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- More work needs to be done to understand the other health needs of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, including abusive partners.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence seek therapy not just for themselves and their children, but also for their partners and ex-partners.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are interested in anger management and alcohol and substance abuse treatment for themselves and their partners and ex-partners.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Expand resources for long-term trauma-informed mental health services in the Bronx
- Greater continuity of mental health services, with increased focus on minimizing disruptions, for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase access to mental health services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence who speak languages other than English

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- Develop programs to better support the mental health needs of abusive partners, with input from Bronx residents on what services are most needed
 - Conduct further needs assessments focused on medical and other health care needs of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence

Law Enforcement Responses

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence call 911 or report crimes against them, but few said that they go to the police when they need help.
- Many Bronx residents felt that the police helped them, but far fewer said that the police were responsive to their needs.
- There is a vast difference between the number of people who contacted the police and those who said they met with an assistant district attorney.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence were referred to the Family Court by the police.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt more supported by domestic violence officers than other police officers.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence were arrested when they believed their partner should have been the one arrested.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence report dismissive, disrespectful, and apathetic attitudes of police officers when seeking help.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt that they were not heard by police officers, either because an interpreter was not provided or because the officer only listened to their partner's version of events.
- Police officers from the Bronx community may be a better fit when responding to incidents of intimate partner violence than officers from outside the community.
- Failure to respond to intimate partner violence endangers Bronx residents.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Improve and make publicly available protocols and scripts to guide police officer interactions with people affected by intimate partner violence
- Frequent and diverse trainings for police officers on trauma-informed responses to people affected by intimate partner violence
- Expand use of interpretation and translation services by the police and assistant district attorneys to communicate with Bronx residents with limited English proficiency
- Improve collaboration between police officers, community members, and advocates
- Increase development and research of restorative and transformative justice models of accountability, with thoughtful consideration of emergency response components
- Hire Bronx residents in the NYPD to patrol Bronx communities

Courts, Family Law Needs, and Legal Services

Key Conclusions

- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have contact with the Family and Supreme Courts.
- Divorce representation is the greatest unmet family law need for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help with orders of protection, custody, visitation, and child support.

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- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need more free supervised visitation resources that accommodate work schedules and limited English proficient speakers.
 - Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt alone, unheard, and frustrated by numerous court dates and the focus on visitation over the effects of the intimate partner violence.
 - Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are involved with investigations by the Administration for Children’s Services.
 - ACS investigations can be intrusive in the lives of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, particularly when used as a weapon by abusive partners, or when required to accept unnecessary services.
 - Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence felt the most supported by lawyers and court officials who explained court procedures, listened to their concerns regarding intimate partner violence and its effects on children, and utilized interpreters when necessary.
 - There are not enough free legal services in the Bronx, and legal services providers are unable to serve all Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence without more resources.
 - There is a need for more training on intimate partner violence in the courts and for court-appointed counsel.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase funding for free legal services for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence, particularly for divorce representation
- Improve procedures and forms required for self-represented divorces in the Bronx, and allocate more resources to the Office of the Self-Represented in Bronx Supreme Court
- Train Bronx-based court officials, court-appointed counsel, and ACS case workers on intimate partner violence and trauma
- Allow litigants to appear telephonically or by video, to reduce the number of hours they have to take off from work
- Fund more free and low-cost supervised visitation resources in the Bronx
- Screen complaints by abusive partners to ACS to stop frivolous investigations
- More interpreters in Bronx Family Court and Bronx Supreme Courts, and more utilization of Language Line, when an in-person interpreter is not available

Public Benefits

Key Conclusions

- There is an enormous need for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, aka “food stamps”) amongst Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need cash and rental assistance, Medicaid, Social Security Income, and Social Security Disability.
- Low numbers of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence are receiving child support, unemployment, and retirement income.

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- Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence have been treated poorly by HRA staff.
 - Many Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence feel alone and stymied when navigating the process of applying for benefits.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase Bronx-based HRA staff trainings on working with people affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase Bronx-based HRA staff trainings on benefits available to immigrants
- Expand access to Supplemental Needs Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase food resources for people ineligible for SNAP benefits
- Expand funding for case manager accompaniment to HRA centers for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Post HRA staff on-site at community-based organizations
- Hire more multilingual and culturally diverse HRA staff in the Bronx
- More “Know Your Rights” presentations about public benefits and how to appeal denials all around the Bronx
- Online accessibility of HRA applications, budget letters, and notices
- Distribute hotline phone number or email address where Bronx residents can submit complaints about HRA staff

Case Management, Social Services, and Intersecting Needs

Key Conclusions

- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence need help with housing, employment, safety planning, financial literacy, public benefits, and accessing mental health services.
- Case management and social services are key vehicles for helping Bronx residents access help with housing, employment, safety planning, financial literacy, public benefits, and mental health services.
- Insufficient resources for case management and social services make it difficult for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to stabilize their lives.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from meeting with social workers and case managers, especially when they feel heard and respected.
- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence value being able to form a relationship with one case manager, rather than being rotated through different case managers.
- There are not enough case managers and social workers in the Bronx for low-income residents affected by intimate partner violence.
- Not all Bronx organizations or agencies are aware of case management and social work services available in the Bronx, and may not direct residents to the most relevant services.
- It can be difficult for Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to get connected to services when they first seek help.
- High turnover rates for case managers and social workers can negatively impact the ability of Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence to seek and receive help.
- More communication and collaboration between organizations that provide case management and social work services would create a stronger safety net for all Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence.

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- Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence benefit from collaborative and coordinated models, such as the Bronx Family Justice Center. This resource is not always accessible throughout the Bronx and has only one location.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered by participants, interviewees, and/or stakeholders:

- Increase funding for case managers working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Increase funding for social workers working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Focus on retention of case managers and social workers, by improving salaries, assigning realistic caseloads, and addressing secondary trauma
- More outreach and publication of available social services throughout the Bronx
- Improve communication and collaboration between organizations and agencies working with Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- More collaboration between faith-based organizations and legal and social services organizations serving Bronx residents affected by intimate partner violence
- Replicate collaborative models of service delivery throughout the Bronx



Notes

Service Providers Interviewed:

- BOOM!Health
- Bronx Legal Services
- Columbia University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry, Domestic Violence Initiative
- Her Justice
- HOSTOS Community College
- Nazareth Housing
- New Sanctuary Coalition
- Legal Services NYC
- Safe Horizon
- Sauti Yetu Center for African Women & Families
- Terra Firma

- Question 8 – 125
- Question 9 – 124
- Question 10 – 138
- Question 11 – 119
- Question 12 – 139
- Question 13 – 138
- Question 14 – 133
- Question 15 – 85
- Question 16 – 65
- Question 17 – 125
- Question 18 – 88
- Question 19 – 53
- Question 20 – 72
- Question 21 – 35
- Question 22 – 53
- Question 23 – 51
- Question 24 – 28
- Question 25 – 79
- Question 26 – 60
- Question 27 – 42
- Question 28 – 15
- Question 29 – 31
- Question 30 – 25

The total number of responses per survey question were:

- Question 1 – 140
- Question 2 – 140
- Question 3 – 133
- Question 4 – 136
- Question 5 – 133
- Question 6 – 137
- Question 7 – 126

Endnotes

- ¹Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence: 2015 Fact Sheet, available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/downloads/pdf/Statistics_Annual_Fact_Sheet_2015.pdf.
- ²A Familiar Pattern in a Spouse's Final Act, The New York Times, April 9, 2016, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/10/nyregion/murder-40-bronx-new-york.html?_r=1.
- ³Domestic Homicide in New York State 2015, New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (July 2016), available at <http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/domestic-homicide-2015.pdf>.
- ⁴*Id.*
- ⁵Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence: 2015 Fact Sheet, available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/downloads/pdf/Statistics_Annual_Fact_Sheet_2015.pdf.
- ⁶NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, NYC Family Justice Centers, available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/html/help/fjc.shtml>.
- ⁷Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence: 2015 Fact Sheet, available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/downloads/pdf/Statistics_Annual_Fact_Sheet_2015.pdf.
- ⁸United States Census Bureau, QuickFacts, Bronx County, available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/36005.html>.
- ⁹A Bronx Tale: The Doorway to Homelessness in New York City, Institute for Children, Poverty, & Homelessness (February 2012), available at http://www.icphusa.org/PDF/reports/ICPH_brief_ABronxTale.pdf.
- ¹⁰Borough Trends & Insights: Analyzing New York City's Local Economies, The Bronx Update (July 2013), available at http://www.nycedc.com/sites/default/files/filemanager/Resources/Economic_Data/borough_update/BronxBoroUpdate_July2013.pdf.
- ¹¹Homelessness and Domestic Violence in New York City: An Overview, New Destiny Housing, available at [http://www.newdestinyhousing.org/userfiles/file/New%20Destiny%20Handouts%208%2028%2013%20FINAL%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.newdestinyhousing.org/userfiles/file/New%20Destiny%20Handouts%208%2028%2013%20FINAL%20(2).pdf).
- ¹²Power and Control Wheel, National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, available at <http://www.ncdsv.org/images/powercontrolwheelnoshading.pdf>; Power & Control in Lesbian, Gay, Transgender & Bisexual Relationships, The Anti-Violence Project, available at http://www.ncavp.org/backup/document_files/DVWheel.pdf.
- ¹³Homelessness and Domestic Violence in New York City: An Overview, New Destiny Housing, available at [http://www.newdestinyhousing.org/userfiles/file/New%20Destiny%20Handouts%208%2028%2013%20FINAL%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.newdestinyhousing.org/userfiles/file/New%20Destiny%20Handouts%208%2028%2013%20FINAL%20(2).pdf).
- ¹⁴*Id.*
- ¹⁵*Id.*
- ¹⁶Intimate Partner Violence: Consequences, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Injury Prevention & Control: Division of Violence Prevention, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>.
- ¹⁷Dillon, Gina, Rafat Hussain, Deborah Loxton, and Sifur Rahman, *Mental and Physical Health and Intimate Partner Violence: A Review of the Literature*. International Journal of Family Medicine Volume 2013 (2013), available at <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ijfm/2013/313909/>.

¹⁸Intimate Partner Violence and Lifetime Trauma, National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (May 2011), available at <http://nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Warshaw-IPV-and-Lifetime-Trauma.pdf>.

¹⁹All About LGBTQ at a Glance, Planned Parenthood, available at <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/teens/lgbtq/all-about-lgbtq>; HRC Officially Adopts Use of “LGBTQ” to Reflect Diversity of Own Community, Human Rights Campaign (June 2016), available at http://www.hrc.org/blog/hrc-officially-adopts-use-of-lgbtq-to-reflect-diversity-of-own-community?gclid=C-j0KEQjwpZO_BRDym6K_nMye7cEBEiQAVA7RaEqoX4tQ4XLU8vGoF99Bf7ehNu7h4vRs6pD2NWj2GegaAtpO8P8HAQ.

²⁰2015 Report On Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, And HIV-Affected Hate Violence, New York City Anti-Violence Project (June 2016), available at <http://www.avp.org/resources/avp-resources/520>; Leigh Goodmark, *Transgender People, Intimate Partner Abuse, and the Legal System*, 48 Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Review 51 (2013), available at http://harvardcrcl.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Goodmark_51-104.pdf.

²¹Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-Affected Intimate Partner Violence in 2014, National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (2015), available at http://www.avp.org/storage/documents/2014_IPV_Report_Final_w-Bookmarks_10_28.pdf.

²²NYC Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy, available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/html/prevention/relationship.shtml>.

²³Id.; Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet 2013, available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/downloads/pdf/Statistics_Teen_Dating_Violence_Fact_Sheet_2013.pdf.

²⁴About Dating Abuse, Day One, available at http://www.dayoneny.org/statistics/#_ftn2.

²⁵Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet 2013, available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/downloads/pdf/Statistics_Teen_Dating_Violence_Fact_Sheet_2013.pdf.

²⁶Elder Abuse: Consequences, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Injury Prevention & Control: Division of Violence Prevention, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/elderabuse/consequences.html>.

²⁷The sign “One survey = one cookie / Una galleta = una encuesta” was used solely for getting people’s attention. Cookies were given out freely regardless of whether people took the survey.

²⁸Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Intimate Partner Violence: Definitions (2016) <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/definitions.html>.

²⁹Id.

³⁰Translation: “I stayed in my house.”

³¹Crenshaw, Kimberle, *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color*, Stanford Law Review, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 1241-1299 (July 1991), available at http://socialdifference.columbia.edu/files/socialdiff/projects/Article__Mapping_the_Margins_by_Kimblere_Crenshaw.pdf.

³²Translation: “To get work in your specialty.”

Appendix: The Survey

Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable Intimate Partner Violence Needs Assessment

This summer, the Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable wants to hear from Bronx residents about their experiences, their needs, and what we can do better for the Bronx community. It only takes 10 minutes to tell us how to help you and your community.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bronxIPVneeds> (English)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bronxIPVesp> (Spanish)



Necesidades de Servicios Legales y Sociales de Comunidades Del Bronx Afectadas por la Violencia Doméstica

Este verano, la Mesa Redonda de Violencia Doméstica del Bronx quiere oír de los residentes de sus experiencias, sus necesidades, y que podemos hacer por la comunidad del Bronx. Solo toma 10 minutos para decirnos que podemos hacer para ayudar usted y su comunidad.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bronxIPVesp> (Español)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bronxIPVneeds> (Inglés)



Legal and Social Services Needs of Bronx Communities Affected by Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to better understand the needs and experiences of those affected by intimate partner violence in the Bronx. This survey is anonymous and does not ask for your name or identifying information.

1. How do you identify your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender (trans*, MTF, FTM, genderqueer)
- Intersex

Other

2. How do you identify your race/ethnicity?

- Hispanic or Latino/a
- Black / African American / African descent
- South Asian
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Native American / American Indian
- White (not Hispanic)
- Multiracial

Other

3. What is your sexual orientation?

- Straight
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Queer

Other

4. How old are you?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-55
- 56 or older

5. What is your immigration status? (Optional)

- U.S. Citizen
- Lawful Permanent Resident (10 year green card)
- Conditional Permanent Resident (2 year green card)
- Foreign National
- U or T Nonimmigrant Status
- DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)
- Other Deferred Action or Withholding of Removal
- Asylee
- Other (please specify)

6. What is your primary language?

- Spanish
- English
- French
- Wolof
- Bambara
- Igbo
- Mixteco
- Bengali
- Albanian
- Arabic
- Mandarin

- Cantonese
- Cambodian
- Korean
- Other

7. What is your zip code?

8. What is your source of income? (Mark all that apply)

- Employment - Receiving paycheck
- Employment - Receiving cash
- Public assistance / HRA/ Welfare - Cash or shelter payments
- Food stamps / SNAP
- SSI / SSD
- Unemployment benefits
- Pension / Retirement investment income
- Social Security Retirement
- Veteran's benefits
- Child Support

Other

9. What is your monthly gross (before taxes) income? (include all sources of income)

- Under \$1000
- \$1000-\$2999
- \$3000-\$4999
- \$5000-\$6999
- \$7000-\$8999
- Over \$9000

Comments

10. What is your current relationship status? (Mark all that apply)

- Single
- In a relationship
- Legally Married
- Domestic Partnership
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

Other

11. What is your religious affiliation (if any)?

- Christian
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Jewish
- Other

12. How many people are in your household, including yourself?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 or more

13. How many dependent children live with you?

- 0
- 1

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- More than 6

Comments

14. How many children do you have that don't live with you?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- More than 6

Comments

15. Are any of the following true for you? (Mark all that apply)

- I have been the victim of a crime
- I have experienced physical or emotional abuse by my partner or ex-partner
- I have been forced to have sexual intercourse or engage in sexual acts
- I have been forced to work and have not been paid adequately for my work
- I have experienced crime in my workplace
- Someone has taken away my personal identification documents (passport, ID cards, social security cards)
- I have experienced abuse or neglect by my parent / guardian / foster parent

Comments

16. Are any of the following true for you? (Mark all that apply)

- I have been having trouble at home
- I feel unsafe around my partner or ex-partner
- My partner or ex-partner calls me names
- My partner or ex-partner throws things
- My partner or ex-partner makes me feel bad in front of my children
- My partner or ex-partner makes me do things I don't want to do
- My partner or ex-partner is jealous of my friends and family
- My partner or ex-partner does not allow me to speak with my friends or family
- My partner or ex-partner has hit me
- My partner or ex-partner has strangled me
- My partner or ex-partner makes me have sex when I don't want to
- My partner or ex-partner has grabbed or pushed me
- My partner or ex-partner has threatened me
- I have been threatened or hurt by the family members of my partner or ex-partner
- My partner or ex-partner has abused me while I was pregnant
- My partner or ex-partner has a drinking problem
- My partner or ex-partner has a gun
- My partner or ex-partner controls the money in our home
- My partner or ex-partner does not provide me with enough money to take care of myself or my children
- My partner or ex-partner will not allow me to work
- My partner or ex-partner will not allow me to go to school
- My partner or ex-partner has abused my children
- My partner or ex-partner has abused my animals

Comments

17. When you are in need of help, where do you go? (Mark all that apply)

- Family and Friends
- Church
- Mosque
- Temple

- Community Center
- Hospital or Clinic
- Court
- Police
- Family Justice Center
- Politician (City Council Member, Assembly Member, Senator, Representative, Mayor)
- Community Organization
- Administration for Children's Services (ACS)

Other (please specify)

18. Are any of the following true for you? (Mark all that apply)

- I have met with a therapist
- I have met with a social worker
- I have met with a psychologist
- I have met with a psychiatrist
- I have met with a housing specialist
- I have met with a case manager
- I have met with a lawyer
- I have spoken with a professional about my problems but I don't know their job title

Comments

19. Are any of the following true for you? (Mark all that apply)

- I have had or currently have a case in Family Court
- I have had or currently have a case in Criminal Court
- I have had a case in Supreme Court
- I have had a case in Housing Court
- My family has been involved in an investigation by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) or Child Protective Services (CPS)

Comments

20. Are any of the following true for you? (Mark all that apply)

- I have called 911 or otherwise reported a crime to the police
- I have met with an assistant district attorney
- I have lived or am living in a domestic violence shelter
- I have received or am receiving counseling for survivors of abuse
- I am living in NYCHA housing with the domestic violence priority
- I have been to a Family Justice Center
- I have met with someone from the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) or Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Other

21. Do you have any of the following family law needs?

- I want custody or visitation with a child or children
- I would like to modify a custody or visitation order
- I would like my children's visitation to be supervised
- I need to get or change a child support order
- I need an order of protection
- I want a divorce
- I need help dealing with the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) or Child Protective Services (CPS)

Other (please specify)

22. Do you currently have any of the following housing needs? (mark all that apply)

- I cannot afford my rent
- I owe rental arrears
- I have received an eviction notice
- I am living in a shelter
- I have a LINC voucher and am looking for an apartment
- I need a safety transfer from my current NYCHA apartment
- I have applied for the NYCHA domestic violence priority but have been denied

My home is in foreclosure

Other (please specify)

23. Do you have any of the following public benefits needs?

My children or I need food stamps (SNAP)

My children or I need cash assistance

My children or I need rental assistance

My children or I need Medicaid

My children or I need SSI (Supplemental Security Income)

My children or I need SSD (Social Security Disability)

My public benefits have been cut off and I need to re-open my case

Other (please specify)

24. Do you have any of the following immigration needs? (Mark all that apply)

I received a notice to appear in Immigration Court (for removal/deportation) and I want to speak to a lawyer

I am undocumented and would like to speak to a lawyer about my legal options

I would like to learn more about U and T visas

I would like to learn more about VAWA Self-Petitions and Battered Spouse Waivers

I would like to learn more about Deferred Action for Parents (DAPA)

I would like to learn more about Deferred Action for Children (DACA)

I would like to learn more about Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

I would like to learn more about Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)

I am seeking asylum

I have a green card and would like to become a U.S. Citizen

I have a green card or am a U.S. citizen and would like to petition for a family member

I have been denied an immigration benefit and would like to speak to a lawyer

I am married to a U.S. citizen or green card holder but I am unsure of my immigration status

Other (please specify)

25. Do you have any of the following social services needs? (mark all that apply)

- I would like to speak with a therapist
- I would like my children to speak with a therapist
- I would like some help finding a job
- I would like to receive job training
- I would like some help finding housing
- I would like some help with child care
- I would like my partner or my ex-partner to see a therapist
- I would like my partner or ex-partner to receive anger management services
- I would like to receive anger management services
- I would like some help with an alcohol or substance abuse problem
- My partner or ex-partner needs help with an alcohol or substance abuse problem
- I would like some help applying for public benefits
- I would like to speak to someone about how I can keep myself or my children safe
- I would like my partner or ex-partner to attend parenting classes
- I would like to attend parenting classes
- I would like to learn more about how to manage my money and expenses
- I would like to speak with someone about my reproductive health
- I would like to speak with someone about contraception
- I would like to see a doctor
- Other (please specify)

26. If you have had contact with the police before, which of the following were true for you? (mark all that apply)

- The police helped me
- The police were responsive to my needs
- The police did not help me
- The police were not responsive to my needs
- The police listened more to my partner or ex-partner than they listened to me
- The police treated me badly
- The police arrested my partner or ex-partner

-
- The police told me about the Family Justice Center
 - The police told me to go to Family Court
 - Although my partner was arrested, my case was dropped because I did not get to court quickly enough

Comments

27. If you have worked with a lawyer before, please mark all of the following that are true for you.

- My lawyer was appointed by the court
- I had to pay for my lawyer
- My lawyer used an interpreter to speak with me
- My lawyer spoke to me in a language that I speak
- My lawyer worked with a non-profit organization
- I was happy with my lawyer's representation
- I was not happy with my lawyer's representation
- I did not feel like my lawyer understood my needs

Comments

28. If you or your children have other needs, please describe below.

29. What types of events would you attend if they were held in your neighborhood?

30. If you have a friend or a neighbor who needs help, what kind of help do they need?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. By answering these questions, you have helped make legal and social services more responsive to you and the Bronx community.

If you would like to speak with someone about any of the issues raised here, you may call 311 or 800.621.HOPE (4673).

Done

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Bronx
Legal
Services



Legal
Services NYC

Bronx Domestic Violence Roundtable

NYC Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-621-HOPE (4673)

Bronx Legal Services

349 East 149th Street, 10th Floor
Bronx, NY 10451

Hotline: 917-661-4500
www.legalservicesnyc.org