

Executive Summary

Family Violence Council Report

JULY 01, 2019 – JUNE 30, 2020

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



Acknowledgments

This report was written by:

Selma Osman, Public Policy Fellow, Department on the Status of Women

Elise Hansell, Policy and Grants Manager, Department on the Status of Women

This is the tenth report in a series of annual reports made possible through the Fellowship Program at the Department on the Status of Women. The report builds off of the work of previous fellows and department staff.

Editing assistance by:

Elizabeth Newman, Policy and Projects Director, Department on the Status of Women

The Family Violence Council Chairs are:

Katie Albright, Executive Director, Safe & Sound

Shawna Reeves, Director of Elder Abuse Prevention, Institute on Aging

Beverly Upton, Executive Director, San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium

The Family Violence Council is administered by the Department on the Status of Women, under the guidance of Director Kimberly Ellis.

Visit <https://sfgov.org/dosw/family-violence-reports> to download a copy of this report and reports from previous years.

Issued May 2021. Updated July 2021.

© 2021 San Francisco Department on the Status of Women

Executive Summary

Violence impacts individuals at different stages of life. Child abuse, elder or dependent adult abuse, and domestic violence (also known as intimate partner violence or IPV) are all forms of family violence that have traumatizing and far-reaching effects on individuals, families, and entire communities. Family violence can include abuse that is physical, sexual, psychological, or economic, and is characterized by behaviors that are used to isolate, neglect, or exercise power and control over a person. In 2007, the Family Violence Council was established by local ordinance to increase awareness and understanding of family violence and its consequences, and to recommend programs, policies, and coordination of City services to reduce family violence in San Francisco.

Each year, the San Francisco Family Violence Council and the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women issues a comprehensive report on family violence in San Francisco. The report presents data on the prevalence of abuse, the response from City agencies, utilization of community-based services, demographics of victims and survivors, and demographics of people using abuse. This report aims to track trends of family violence in San Francisco, identify gaps and needs in response and services, and inform policymaking and funding priorities for the City.

This report is the tenth Family Violence in San Francisco report and covers the period between July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 (fiscal year 2020). Data from more than 10 City public agencies and 27 community-based organizations has been included.

Overall Key Findings

This report elevates the following findings across all three forms of family violence in San Francisco. Key findings for each form of abuse are summarized in pages that follow.

1. There are clear racial disparities across all three forms of family violence; reported family violence disproportionately impacts Black/African American and Latinx populations:
 - 4 out of 10 substantiated child abuse cases involved Black children and 1 in 3 involved Latinx children
 - 28% of dependent adult abuse victims were Black
 - More than half of domestic violence victims were Black or Latinx
2. Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse disproportionately affect women:
 - Women made up 70% of victims in domestic violence incidents responded to by police
 - 54% of elder abuse victims were women
3. Men remain the largest users of abuse in family violence cases:
 - 68% of perpetrators in child abuse and elder and dependent adult abuse cases were men
 - 78% of perpetrators of domestic violence were men
4. There remains a significant need for shelter for survivors of family violence in San Francisco:
 - 79% clients were turned away from emergency shelter in FY 2020

COVID Impact Key Findings

The City and County of San Francisco, like communities across the world, was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis that began in late 2019. Due to this global pandemic, there were several ways in which the work of the Family Violence Council and other organizations were affected. This report elevates the following findings related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family violence in San Francisco. A full description of COVID-19 impact on family violence in San Francisco can be found in the full report.

1. It is difficult to point to the pandemic's effect on the prevalence of family violence through the quantitative data collected in this report. More quantitative data is needed to examine the impact of the pandemic on prevalence of family violence in the city.
2. Qualitative reporting from community-based organizations showed feelings of decreased safety for survivors after the shelter-in-place order took effect.
3. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of jury trials decreased sharply after early March 2020, and for many months no jury trials were conducted at all in San Francisco county.
4. Concerns were raised over the potential for under reporting of family violence due to decreased interaction with mandated reporters as a result of the pandemic.
5. City departments and community-based organizations adapted to the changing needs of survivors during the pandemic and pivoted their services to address these needs.

New Recommendations

Below are new recommendations that the Family Violence Council has prioritized for the upcoming year. The full list of five recommendations is available in the report.

1. Promote access to basic needs and integrate family violence prevention in disaster planning and recovery plans.
2. Increase access to training and expand expertise of frontline staff to provide a trauma-informed response to survivors of family violence.
3. Improve San Francisco's emergency response to vulnerable older adults with dementia and other conditions.
4. Transform the City's response to child welfare.
5. Prevent the intergenerational transmission of violence.

Key Findings: Child Abuse

Prevalence

Child abuse allegations: Family and Children's Services reported **5,230** child abuse cases.

911 Calls: There were **411** child abuse related calls to 911.

Mandated reporting: There were **1788** reports made by mandated reporters in schools during SY 2020.

Substantiated cases: Family and Children's Services substantiated **10%** of cases (533 of 5,230 total cases).

System Response

Arrests: **253** arrests made by the San Francisco Police Department.

Prosecutions: The District Attorney's Office prosecuted **33** cases out of 52 cases received, the largest share being cases involving child sexual abuse materials (**58%**).

Convictions: **Two** cases resulted in a conviction through trial on at least one count.

Demographics of Victims

Race/ethnicity: Latinx and Black/African American children were overrepresented among victims with substantiated allegations, (**39%** and **32%**, respectively).

Gender: Boys experienced child abuse at a higher rate (**52%**) than girls (**48%**). Boys more frequently experienced general neglect, physical abuse, and emotional abuse. Girls more frequently experienced sexual abuse, severe neglect, and/or exploitation.

Perpetrators

Gender: Men represented the majority of child abuse suspects (**68%**).

Relationship to victim: **91%** of perpetrators were parents or stepparents of the victim.

Key Data Points (FY 2020)

533

of 5,230 child abuse cases substantiated

411

911 calls related to child abuse

253

arrests related to child abuse

52

cases received by the District Attorney

32%

of child abuse victims were Black/African American

91%

of perpetrators were parents or stepparents of the victim

Key Findings: Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse

Prevalence

Reports of elder and dependent adult abuse: 54% of reports (3,911 of 7,204) were substantiated.

Self-neglect cases: There were a total of **2,472** substantiated elder abuse self-neglect cases.

911 Calls: There were **162** elder abuse related calls to 911.

Key Data Points (FY 2020)

7,204

elder abuse cases
reported

System Response

System response to elder physical abuse cases: **448** elder abuse incidents were reported to the Police Department.

System response to elder financial abuse cases: **38** elder financial abuse incidents were reported to the Police Department.

Arrests: **188** arrests were made in elder physical abuse cases.

54%

of 7,204 cases
substantiated

2,472

substantiated self-
neglect cases

Demographics of Victims

Race/ethnicity: The Black/African American community was overrepresented among victims of abuse by others, representing **16%** of elder abuse victims and **28%** of dependent adult abuse victims.

Gender: Women comprised a slightly larger share of total victims of elder abuse (**54%**).

188

arrests made
in elder physical
abuse cases

54%

of total elder abuse
victims were women

Perpetrators

Gender: Men represented **68%** of total elder abuse suspects.

Relationship to victim: **86%** of victims knew the perpetrator. **43%** of victims were abused by a family member.

86%

of elder abuse victims
knew the perpetrator

Key Findings: Domestic Violence

Prevalence

911 Calls: More than half of the **7,241** domestic violence related 911 calls concerned a fight or dispute where no weapons were used.

Weapons used: **2,827** domestic violence incidents reported involved a weapon. The Sheriff's Department restrained party owned firearms in 17 cases.

Homicides: **Two** domestic violence related homicides and one family violence related homicide were reported in CY 2020.

System Response

Incidents Reported: **3,379** incidents were responded to the Police Department.

Prosecutions: 543 of 1,587 total cases received by the District Attorney's Office (**34%**) were prosecuted.

Convictions: **7 of 8** cases resulted in a conviction by trial.

Restraining Orders: The Family Law Division of the San Francisco Superior Court received **825** requests for domestic violence restraining orders and granted **74%** of requests (292).

Demographics of Victims

Race/ethnicity: The Black/African American and Latinx communities were overrepresented among victims (**29%** and **27%**, respectively).

Languages Spoken: **3,689 of 14,501** individuals served by the Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Intervention Grants Program (**25%**) spoke a language other than English.

Gender: Female victims made up **70%** of Police incidents.

Age: Victims between the ages of 18 and 39 years of age represented **54%** of Police incidents.

Perpetrators

Gender: Men represented **78%** of suspects.

Age: **60%** of suspects and defendants are under the age of 40.

Key Data Points (FY 2020)

14,501

individuals served by
GBV grant-funded
programs

7,241

domestic violence
related calls to 911

3,379

incidents responded
to by police

1,587

cases received by the
District Attorney

2

domestic violence
related homicides

78%

of domestic violence
suspects were male

Family Violence Council Recommendations

For the list of recommendations and implementation plans, please see the Family Violence in San Francisco, FY 2020 Report.



Recommendation 1:

Promote access to basic needs and integrate family violence prevention in disaster planning and recovery.

trauma informed

anti-racism and cultural humility

Recommendation 2:

Increase Access to Training for Frontline Staff.

Recommendation 3:

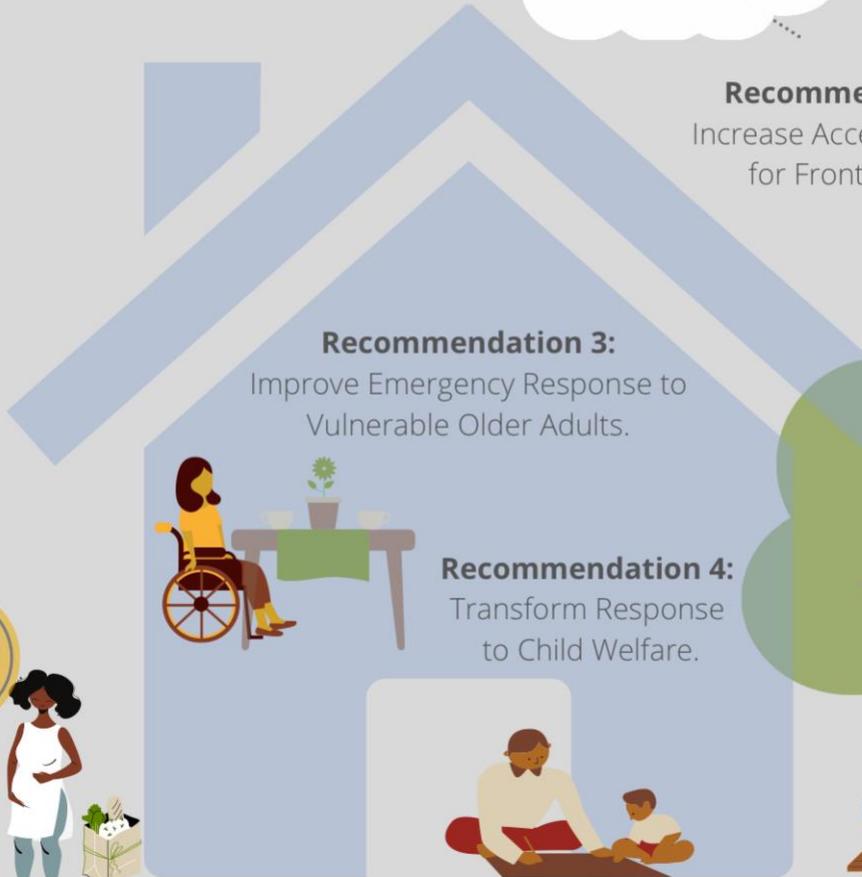
Improve Emergency Response to Vulnerable Older Adults.

Recommendation 4:

Transform Response to Child Welfare.

Recommendation 5:

Prevent the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence.



Recommendation	1. Supporting Families to Rebuild a Healthy San Francisco.
Description	<p>To prevent family violence, the Family Violence Council must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively acknowledge the role of racism and systemic oppression in contributing to economic insecurity and family violence disproportionately impacting women and girls of color in San Francisco. • Work to address the intersections of interpersonal and structural violence by centering the needs of survivors who are BIPOC. • Increase collaboration across departments and agencies to integrate family violence prevention in economic recovery efforts and disaster response planning.
Areas of Implementation	<p>Promote Access to Basic Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a representative from the Family Violence Council to the Universal Basic Income Taskforce, with the goal of inclusion of family violence survivors in the UBI priority populations. • Ensure that city rental relief extends to families that are subtenants. • Extend SFUSD’s Free Meals Program through 2022. • Extend relief funding for families that do not qualify for local, state, or federal assistance due to immigration or other status through 2022. • Increase City’s investment in shelter and housing resources for survivors of gender-based violence. • Increase awareness of financial abuse as a form of community violence perpetrated against low-income BIPOC elders. • Continue to provide broadband access, technology, and other educational supports to address learning loss issues, exacerbated by the pandemic. • Provide smartphones and unlimited smartphone data and text/talk plans for domestic violence victims and sex trafficking survivors. <p>Integrate Family Violence Prevention in Disaster Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support City Departments that are members of the Family Violence Council to create a response plan to address and prevent family violence in disaster planning. Violence prevention plans might include public education and awareness, emergency data snapshots of both quantitative and qualitative data, plans to change how services are provided in response to disasters and policy recommendations based on emerging trends.

Lead Agencies	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Department of Public Health, Department on the Status of Women, SF Domestic Violence Consortium, Institute on Aging, Mayor’s Office, Safe & Sound, San Francisco Unified School District
Recommendation	2. Increase Access to Training and Expand Expertise of Frontline Staff to Provide a Trauma-informed Response to Survivors of Family Violence.
Description	Convene a cross-disciplinary committee to map existing training resources and identify gaps for county-wide trainings on all forms of family violence. Develop a directory of the training community-based organizations can offer for distribution amongst Family Violence Council members. Identify funding to support community-based organizations to conduct trainings for member agencies and frontline staff to provide a trauma-informed response to survivors of family violence.
Areas of Implementation	<p>Conduct child abuse, domestic violence, and elder/ dependent adult abuse trainings led by community-based organizations for frontline city workers who respond to family violence. Community based agencies can offer a vital perspective on best practices for working with survivors, dynamics of abuse, cultural humility, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Francisco Police Department: train SFPD patrol officers on new Department General Order 6.09 and lethality assessment; provide SFPD with training on recognition and reporting of young people being commercially sexually exploited. • Superior Court: train Judges appointed to Family Court on family violence issues. • General Mandated Reporters, Child Welfare Protective Services Workers, Police Officers: provide training on general neglect, cultural humility & equity, anti-bias, anti-racism, and harm reduction/substance use disorders.
Lead Agencies	San Francisco Police Department, District Attorney’s Office, Superior Court, Department on the Status of Women, SF Domestic Violence Consortium, Safe & Sound, Human Services Agency, Institute on Aging, San Francisco Unified School District
Recommendation	3. Improve San Francisco’s Emergency Response to Vulnerable Older Adults with Dementia and Other Conditions.

Description	Develop plans for the creation of a Geriatric Emergency Response Unit.
Areas of Implementation	<p>Establish a 24-7 Geriatric EMS (GEMS) unit for San Francisco that would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help bridge the gaps in emergency response care for vulnerable and isolated older adults while not replacing existing services. • Provide coordinated services for elders experiencing acute and ongoing medical and/or cognitive crises, so that they can live safely in the community. <p>Partner with San Francisco’s Elder Abuse Forensic Center and the soon-to-be-created High Risk Self Neglect MDT.</p>
Lead Agencies	San Francisco Fire Department Community Paramedicine, UCSF, Department of Public Health, Adult Protective Services, Institute on Aging/San Francisco Elder Abuse Forensic Center

Recommendation	4. Transform the City’s Response to Child Welfare.
Description	Work with Family and Children’s Services (FCS) to address the overrepresentation of BIPOC families in child welfare and to increase the focus on prevention.
Areas of Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and support use of the Racial Equity Feedback Loop at the child welfare hotline to better understand which families are screened in and screened out. • Gather discrete and disaggregated data on children 0-1 that child welfare removes from their families to develop a better understanding of the disproportionate removal of BIPOC children, age 0-1, and removal in cases where birth parent has substance use disorder. • Join state and national efforts to redefine neglect, due to poverty only, so that there will no longer be FCS involvement due to poverty only. • Explore training opportunities and collaboration with domestic violence partners to understand policies regarding ‘failure to protect’ and domestic violence. • Explore best practices in cross-reporting between child welfare and law enforcement. • Join national efforts to inform parents of their rights before FCS investigations begin.
Lead Agencies	Human Services Agency, Safe & Sound, Department on the Status of Women

Recommendation	5. Prevent the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence.
----------------	---

Description	Expand on-site advocacy services for people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, interpersonal violence at San Francisco General Hospital.
Areas of Implementation	<p>ARISE (Aspire to Re-Imagine Safety and Equity) is a program designed to build multi-sector public health and healthcare (SFDPH/SFHN)-university (UCSF)-community partnerships to prevent and mitigate trauma including interpersonal violence and promote healing, health equity and social justice. The clinical components of ARISE are all currently based in the SFHN primary care and women’s clinics. ARISE co-located a domestic violence advocate from La Casa de las Madres (the ARISE IPV Advocate) on the San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) campus to respond immediately to patients from five outpatient clinics who disclose relationship stress or interpersonal violence. The ARISE IPV Advocate provides patients with on-site education, emotional support, safety planning, and expedited referrals to support groups and services, counseling, legal assistance, and shelter.</p> <p>This expansion of the ARISE IPV Advocacy to all pregnant persons seeking care at SFGH will improve the capacity of ARISE to prevent the intergenerational transmission of violence.</p>
Lead Agencies	UCSF, Department of Public Health, La Casa de las Madres

Achievements of the Family Violence Council

The Family Violence Council completed the following recommendations in FY 2020. It will be important to codify these recommendations to ensure sustainability moving forward. Plans for doing so are outlined below. To monitor the progress of all recommendations, the Family Violence Council will ask for routine updates from agencies directly involved with implementation, including the San Francisco Police Department, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department, and the San Francisco Adult Probation Department.

RECOMMENDATION	UPDATE
<p>Request emergency funding for agencies engaged in prevention of and response to child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse.</p>	<p>In partnership with the California Family Resource Association (CFRA), the San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Council advocated for and secured \$3 million in State COVID-19 relief for vulnerable families, \$169,000 of which went to San Francisco Family Resource Centers (FRCs) to support over 4,000 families with additional concrete needs. In December 2020, the FRC Alliance and First 5 worked with the Office of Early Care and Education and members of the Early Childhood Education community to obtain the release of \$3 million to support FRC COVID-19 relief efforts.</p>
<p>Increase awareness around family violence during COVID-19.</p> <p>Finalize Domestic Violence Manual for Police Department</p>	<p>The Child Abuse Prevention Council, the School Health Department of the San Francisco Unified School District, and Family and Children's Services adapted a resource for educators to support them in finding ways to talk with children, when not in-person, about concerns they might have for their health and safety and in identifying issues and indicators that might rise to the level of mandating a child abuse report.</p> <p>The Family Violence Council worked in collaboration with the Mayor's Office on creating 311 emergency alerts, holding a series of townhalls on the subject.</p> <p>The Police commission approved DGO 6.09 in January 2021.</p>
<p>Create death review teams for domestic violence and elder abuse deaths and identify best practices and share lessons between these teams and the Child Death Review Team.</p>	<p>In 2019, the Department on the Status of Women and the District Attorney's Office held a series of planning meetings with member agencies of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. The Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice provided technical assistance to this effort through the national Sentinel Event Initiative. The first case is currently under review, recommendations will be shared with the Council in 2021.</p> <p>Child Death Review Team has expanded the age range of cases it reviews from 0-25 years. This allows the Team to develop a better understanding of experiences and</p>

	<p>violence and health risks of transitional age youth, particularly related to drug usage and community violence.</p>
<p>Support educators on screening for family violence and mandated reporting.</p>	<p>The Community Education team at Safe & Sound worked with SFUSD to establish a supportive system and protocols in the situation where a student discloses sexual assault or other violence during a virtual safety lesson.</p>
<p>Create a citywide Child Abuse Prevention Council focused on child abuse prevention to reduce substantiated allegations of child maltreatment for all race/ethnicities to 3.0 per 1,000 children by 2023.</p>	<p>Over the past several months, SFCTF has met with and researched a variety of programs and initiatives to better understand gaps in services in the city and structures and policies that relate to the disproportionate impact of child welfare involvement on Black and Brown families. A variety of stakeholders provided input to inform an initial set of recommendations the SFCTF provided to the Mayor.</p>