



City and County of San Francisco

# Department on the Status of Women

Mayor Gavin Newsom  
Executive Director Emily M. Murase, PhD

## **FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNCIL**

*Addressing Violence throughout the Lifespan*

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### **First Comprehensive Report on Family Violence in San Francisco**

*June 2009*

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The San Francisco Family Violence Council is administered by the Department on the Status of Women, and the *First Comprehensive Report on Family Violence in San Francisco* was produced and maintained by this Department. Visit [www.sfgov.org/dosw](http://www.sfgov.org/dosw) for more information about the Family Violence Council and to download a copy of this report.

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## INTRODUCTION

Family violence affects thousands of San Francisco residents each year. Family violence is a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to isolate, neglect, or gain and maintain power and control over an intimate partner, child, elder, and/or a dependent adult. Child abuse, domestic violence, and elder/dependent adult abuse may be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological. **The behaviors of family violence have serious and traumatizing affects on individuals and on communities.**

In 1995, the Attorney General mandated the establishment of a Family Violence Council for each county. **The purpose of the Council is to increase the awareness and understanding of domestic and family violence and its consequences; and to recommend programs, policies and coordination of City services that may reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence on San Francisco.** The San Francisco Family Violence Council, an interdisciplinary body made up of City and community representatives, seeks to address the epidemic of all forms of family violence through collaboration, coordination of resources, and promotion of policy measures. No other county addresses family violence with as wide and encompassing a lens as San Francisco has implemented.

This innovation is in line with San Francisco's other trend-setting policies. In 1998, San Francisco became the first city in the world to adopt a local ordinance reflecting the principles of the U.N. Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). **Freedom from violence is a key principle contained in the U.N. Convention and the San Francisco ordinance.** Through the collaborative efforts of the Family Violence Council, the Department on the Status of Women continues to push for policy changes to achieve freedom from violence for all women and their families.

Since the 2007 re-authorization of the San Francisco Family Violence Council, the unique spirit of collaboration inherent in the format and structure of this group has contributed to a number of successful ventures between the various family violence response communities. For example, in its short tenure, the Council has produced the **Family Violence Resource Card** (in English, Spanish, and Cantonese), and the **Mandated Reporting Fact Sheet**. The Council has addressed violence throughout the lifespan by examining the 3 types of death review teams, creating a summary of their various missions, make-ups, and objectives. Additionally, the Council has created a committee to explore avenues of intervention, drawing best practices and evidence from batterer intervention programs and parenting courses to improve upon the collective aim of ending violence in the community.

In addition to these community resources, the authorizing legislation for the Family Violence Council asks the Council to prepare an annual report of family violence trends in San Francisco. This report collects data from a variety of sources, attempting to gauge the full scope of family violence in the City. The majority of the data represents Fiscal Year 2007-2008. The report begins with criminal justice statistics, including calls to 911, cases investigated by the San Francisco Police Department, and prosecutions by the District Attorney's Office. Reports from City and County agencies are also analyzed, including Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services. Because many individuals seek community resources in place of City or criminal justice services, selected statistics from community-based organizations are also included in this report.

Like the Council itself, this report is the **first of its kind** which takes a wider view of the issue. This examination would not have been possible without the full cooperation of the San Francisco Police Department, Department of Emergency Management, Adult Probation Department, Office of the District Attorney, Human Services Agency, Department of Public Health, and a number of community partners.

Through an analysis of the data in this report, the Council has drawn a number of conclusions, and suggested key recommendations to address this epidemic of violence. The Family Violence Council hopes that this annual report will focus additional attention on the deleterious impact of family violence on society as a whole. **Through education, activism, and systems change, we aspire to end family violence once and for all.**

### **San Francisco Family Violence Council Members**

*(San Francisco Administrative Code Article XIX SEC. 5.190-3)*

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- Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
  - Mayor
  - President of the Board of Supervisors
  - District Attorney
  - Public Defender
  - Chief of Police
  - Sheriff
  - President of the Commission on the Status of Women
  - Chief of the Adult Probation Department
  - Chief of the Department of Emergency Management
  - Director of the Department of Animal Care and Control
  - Director of the Department of Public Health
  - Director of the Human Services Agency
  - Director of the Department of Aging and Adult Services
  - Director of the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families
  - Director of Child Support Services
  - Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District
  - Director of the Domestic Violence Consortium
  - Director of the Consortium for Elder Abuse Prevention
  - Director of the San Francisco Child Abuse Council
  - Chair of the Batterer's Intervention Programs Subcommittee

*\*Members may be represented by an official designee.*

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES**

**Department of Emergency Management**

Dispatchers at the Department of Emergency Management’s (DEM) Emergency Communications Division assigns a code to each call made to 911. There are 13 call types related to domestic violence, with the individual codes indicating whether weapons were used, the type of weapon used, the type of unarmed incident (i.e. assault, threats, break-in), and other requests for assistance. Dispatchers use scripts to determine how calls should be coded. For example, a preliminary question to callers asks the identity and relationship of the perpetrator. If the caller indicates a spouse or partner is involved, the dispatcher uses domestic violence codes. Additional questions clarify the type of domestic violence incident happening.

In Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (FY07-08), 911 dispatchers fielded 6,583 domestic violence calls. Dispatchers labeled over half of these calls (52%) with the 418DV code, indicating a fight or dispute with no weapons involved. Another 35% of domestic violence calls received the 240DV code, indicating an assault of some type occurred. The remaining 9% of calls (525) were dispersed across the remaining 11 domestic violence call types, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: 911 Calls Coded for Domestic Violence by Call Type, FY07-08**

<b>Call Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>FY07-08 Amount</b>	<b>Percent of Total DV Calls</b>
418DV	Fight or Dispute – No Weapons Used	3,430	52%
240DV	Assault (includes battery or any unwanted physical contact)	2,129	32%
	Miscellaneous (untracked domestic violence call types)	499	8%
650DV	Threats (includes written, verbal, or recorded)	230	3%
245DV	Aggravated Assault (severe injuries or objects used to injure)	68	1%
594DV	Vandalism or Malicious Mischief (property damage only)	63	1%
602DV	Break-In	43	0.7%
416DV	Civil Standby (officer requested to accompany person to retrieve belongings, for example)	29	0.4%
910DV	Well-Being Check (often at the request of another individual)	26	0.4%
419DV	Fight or Dispute – Weapons Used	17	0.3%
100DV	DV Alarm (a push-button alarm given to a victim to alert 911)	16	0.2%
222DV	Armed Assailant – Knife	15	0.2%
219DV	Stabbing	13	0.2%
221DV	Armed Assailant – Gun	5	0.0%
	<b>TOTAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS</b>	<b>6,583</b>	<b>100%</b>

In September 2008, DEM and the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) worked collaboratively to create a premise warning flag in the computer aided dispatch system. This flag warns call takers and field units of potential stalking or domestic violence cases associated with the address. In October 2008, DEM again worked with SFPD to establish and implement a new code for domestic violence stalking, 646DV. Preceding the implementation of these new tools, all DEM staff received training in identifying stalking cases and the use of the premise warning flag. Due to the implementation date,

statistics were not included in this report. There are no 911 call codes specific to child abuse or elder abuse.

DEM also tracks the number of calls that are dispatched to police stations for response. Table 2 shows that the Ingleside Station, closely followed by the Bayview Station, responded to the most domestic violence calls.

**Table 2: 911 Calls Coded for Domestic Violence by District, FY07-08**

District	FY07-08 Amount	Percent of Total DV Calls
Ingleside (Includes Bernal Heights, Excelsior, Visitacion Valley, and Sunnydale)	1,040	16%
Bayview	1,019	15%
Mission	831	13%
Northern (Includes Marina, Pacific Heights, and Western Addition)	825	13%
Southern (Includes South of Market, Embarcadero, and China Basin)	709	11%
Taraval (Includes Sunset, West Portal, SFSU)	586	9%
Central (Includes Chinatown, North Beach, Nob Hill, and Financial District)	467	7%
Tenderloin	413	6%
Richmond (Includes the Presidio)	354	5%
Park (Includes Cole Valley, Haight, Castro, Twin Peaks and Western Addition)	334	5%
Daly City (Includes events that happened in San Francisco but require the support of a Daly City dispatch)	5	0%
<b>TOTAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS</b>	<b>6,583</b>	<b>100%</b>

**San Francisco Police Department**

Two divisions within the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) review and investigate felony family violence crimes. Felony child abuse cases are referred to the Juvenile Division, and felony domestic violence and elder abuse cases are referred to the Domestic Violence Response Unit (DVRU). Misdemeanor incidents resulting in an arrest, including citations issued by patrol officers, are referred to the misdemeanor division of the District Attorney’s Office for follow-up and prosecution, and the SFPD does not keep statistics about misdemeanor family violence crimes. Police reports for misdemeanor incidents where the suspect is gone on the arrival of officers are filed with the DVRU. Felony sexual assaults committed against juveniles ages 14 to 17 by adult strangers and non-family members are investigated by the Sexual Assault Unit. Felony physical assaults committed against juveniles by adult strangers are investigated by the General Work Unit. The statistics for these 2 units are not included in this report. Both the Juvenile Division and the DVRU are supervised by the Captain of the SFPD Juvenile and Family Services Division.

**The Juvenile Division received 513 felony child abuse cases in FY07-08.** Of these, 380 (74%) merited investigation. Also in FY07-08, **the DVRU received 4,588 domestic violence cases** for review, either through the felony arrest of a suspect, a victim’s report, or some other type of report.



The DVRU typically investigates about 35% of the cases received. The remaining 65% may have one of several outcomes. They may be referred to the Adult Probation Department or the State Parole Office, as appropriate, for follow-up. Barring victim involvement in the cases, they may not warrant further investigation.

The DVRU also reviews and investigates cases of elder abuse and neglect involving a caregiver. Fraud, robbery, and non-caregiver crimes against the elderly are reviewed and investigated by the Fraud, Robbery or General Detail Units, respectively. **The DVRU receives approximately 150 to 180 cases of elder abuse to review each year** (the DVRU does not record specific statistics about cases reviewed for elder abuse). Of the cases reviewed in FY07-08, the DVRU investigated 24 elder abuse arrest cases (i.e. an individual was arrested for elder abuse, and the case was sent to the DVRU for review). The DVRU also investigated 14 cases where no arrest was made, but an individual was listed as a suspect in an elder abuse case, for a total of 38 elder abuse cases investigated during FY07-08.

**Table 3: Overview of Police Statistics for Family Violence, FY07-08**

	<b>Juvenile Division</b>	<b>Domestic Violence Response Unit</b>	
	<i>Child Abuse</i>	<i>Domestic Violence</i>	<i>Elder Abuse</i>
<b>Cases Received</b>	513	4,576	150 – 180
<b>Cases Investigated</b>	380	1,653	38
<b>Percent Investigated</b>	74%	36%	21 – 25%
<b>Staffing Levels</b>	10	15	

The Special Victims Unit (SVU) has 9 inspectors and sergeants to investigate sexual and physical abuse cases. An additional inspector reviews all child abuse referral reports and is the liaison with various agencies that also investigate or provide services for these cases. The Juvenile Division also has 2 Juvenile Offender Program inspectors who investigate juvenile domestic violence cases. A Lieutenant oversees the work of the Juvenile Division.

A considerable amount of investigative time and coordinated effort is involved in the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse cases. They are complicated cases involving victims who have often been intimidated, threatened or manipulated by an abuser who is a family member or a person in a position of trust in relationship to the victim. These factors cause victims to be reluctant to disclose their ongoing or past abuse. Many victims are also unable to communicate their abuse because of their age. The amount of time a Juvenile Inspector spends on a case varies depending upon the severity of the crimes, how complicated the case is, the number and age of victims, the timeframe of when the crime was committed versus when it was reported, the cooperation of the involved parties, and other unexpected variables. Simply put, child abuse cases are not “slam dunk” cases, and while some may be quickly investigated the vast majority of cases are time consuming.<sup>1</sup>

The DVRU has a staff of 15 Inspectors. Of these, the assignment officer is responsible for reviewing 450 to 550 incident reports each month, compiling statistics for the unit, running background searches on all suspects involved in the cases received, referring appropriate cases to Probation or Parole, if applicable, and assigning both felony arrest and non-arrest cases for investigation. The assignment officer also calls every victim listed in non-arrest reports to explain the warrant process and the types

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<sup>1</sup> Personal communication, Lt. Valarie Agard, San Francisco Police Department, February 4, 2009.

of resources and support services that are available, and to refer these victims to the in-house La Casa de las Madres victim advocates.

One inspector reviews physical elder abuse and elder neglect cases, meeting weekly with the Forensic Center to discuss progress in the criminal investigations. Another inspector oversees the U-Visa program for the entire police department. All inspectors in the unit are cross-trained in these various duties. In addition to their daily caseload, 3 DVRU inspectors teach Continued Professional Training at the San Francisco Police Academy twice each week, as well as providing training at hospitals, schools, businesses, and advocacy groups. The remaining 9 DVRU inspectors handled the unit's domestic violence, stalking, and elder abuse cases. The Lieutenant of the DVRU oversees the work of inspectors, as well as working with community groups and City agencies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, to improve protocols and ensure the safety of victims.<sup>2</sup>

### **Office of the District Attorney**

The Office of the District Attorney (DA) has 3 units to oversee the prosecution of family violence crimes: a Child Assault Unit, a Domestic Violence Unit, and an Elder Abuse Unit. In FY07-08, the Child Assault Unit received 93 cases, the Domestic Violence Unit received 1,553 cases, and the Elder Abuse Unit received 17 cases. Once received, a case is generally filed for prosecution, referred for probation revocation or parole violation, or declined. Cases might be declined in order to do further investigation, because a witness is uncooperative, for insufficient evidence, or some other reason. This is consistent with other counties, depending on whether the cases submitted are screened prior to submission to the DA.

Table 4 highlights a variety of statistics from the 3 family violence units. **The statistics refer to FY07-08 actions rather than following specific cases through the process.** For example, cases reflected in the number of cases pled in FY07-08 may or may not have been initially received in FY07-08. Similarly, the number of cases taken to trial does not necessarily correlate with the number of convictions, as some of the convictions may be in cases with trial start dates in previous fiscal years.

As Table 4 below shows, the Domestic Violence Unit receives a much greater number of cases than the other units, and this unit also declined a high proportion (80%). **The large number of cases received is a result of an increase in felony arrests.** When responding to domestic disturbances, police often utilize extra diligence and arrest, ensuring the conflict is interrupted. This results in a higher number of felony arrests than may be seen in other types of cases. **The percentage of declined cases has increased since the 2004 Crawford Supreme Court ruling that prohibits victim statements from being used in court without the victim present for cross-examination.** Victims are frequently reluctant to testify in domestic violence cases, leading to the DA declining to prosecute. The effect of this ruling also leads to a high proportion of dismissed cases, as a victim may decide to withdraw from the case at any point in the proceedings.

The majority of child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse cases that are filed for prosecution do not go to trial. The DA reached a guilty verdict by way of a plea bargain in 10 child abuse cases, 444 domestic violence cases, and 10 elder abuse cases. The Elder Abuse Unit did not take any cases to trial in FY07-08.

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<sup>2</sup> Personal communication, Lieutenant Molly Pengel, San Francisco Police Department, April 2, 2009.

**Table 4: Overview of District Attorney Statistics for Family Violence, FY07-08<sup>3</sup>**

	<b>Child Assault Unit</b>	<b>Domestic Violence Unit</b>	<b>Elder Abuse Unit<sup>4</sup></b>
<b>Cases Received<sup>5</sup></b>	93	1,553	17
<b>Cases Filed</b>	57 <sup>6</sup>	472	16
<b>Cases Referred</b>	2	76	0
<b>Cases Declined</b>	34	1,238	1
<b>Cases Pled</b>	10	444	10
<b>Cases to Trial</b>	1	23	0
<b>Trial Convictions</b>	1	15	0
<b>Cases Dismissed</b>	2	188	2
<b>Attorneys in Unit</b>	4	7	3
<b>DA Investigators in Unit</b>	1	2	0

**Office of the District Attorney - Victim Services Division**

The Victim Services Division of the DA’s Office helps victims of crimes navigate the criminal justice system by offering advocacy and support. Nine victim advocates assist clients, 3 of whom specialize in family violence cases. The advocates handle 480-600 cases each year, some cases requiring little time to orient the client to the criminal justice system and assist with victim compensation, while others can require many hours of support. Victim Services offers services not only to victims whose cases have been charged, but also to victims whose cases have not and will not be charged, providing access to services regardless of whether the criminal case is strong enough for prosecution.

In FY07-08, Victim Services served a total of 1,045 child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse victims. Victim Services supported 200 child abuse survivors. Of these, **151 (75%) experienced sexual abuse, and 49 (25%) experienced physical abuse.** Advocates provided services to 649 survivors of domestic violence. **Of those, 585 (88%) were victims of domestic violence, 46 (5%) were child witnesses to domestic violence, and 18 (4%) were domestic violence stalking victims.** The Elder Abuse Advocate provided services to 196 elder survivors of abuse. The table below highlights some demographic data about the clients served by Victim Services.

<sup>3</sup> Office of the District Attorney Statistics for FY07-08, received January 8, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> These numbers reflect only the violence/assault cases against elders handled by the Elder Abuse Unit, though most cases prosecuted are of a financial nature.

<sup>5</sup> Child Assault Unit cases include both misdemeanors and felonies. Cases received by the Domestic Violence Unit and the Elder Abuse Unit include only felonies. Misdemeanor cases are directed to the Misdemeanor Unit of the DA’s Office.

<sup>6</sup> Child assault cases often involve multiple victims. Also, the vast majority of child assault cases are “life cases” requiring intensive investigation, preparation and resources.

**Table 5: Victim Services Client Demographics, FY07-08<sup>7</sup>**

Client Demographics		Child Abuse	Domestic Violence	Elder Abuse	Total
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	166	522	122	810
	Male	34	126	74	234
	Transgender	0	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1,045</b>
<b>RACE</b>	Black	Data Not Available	211	33	244
	White		150	58	208
	Latino		176	23	199
	Asian		104	31	135
	Unknown		0	39	39
	Other		8	12	20
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>649</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>845</b>
<b>AGE</b>	0-17	200	84	0	284
	18-64	0	544	0	544
	65+	0	5	196	201
	Unknown	0	16	0	16
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1,045</b>

Victim Services operates the Victim Compensation Program, a state program that provides financial compensation to victims of violent crimes to cover medical bills, lost wages, job retraining, funeral burial, support loss, relocation, home security, crime scene cleanup, and mental health services. Though full data is not available at this time, Victim Services submitted 520 claims for victims of violence during July to December 2008, and offered claims assistance to 1,073 victims during that same time period.

**Adult Probation Department**

The Adult Probation Department’s Domestic Violence Unit has 9 deputy probation officers, 1 court officer, and 2 supervising probation officers. The average caseload in the Domestic Violence Unit is 62 cases per officer. In Calendar Year (CY) 2008, the Domestic Violence Unit conducted 256 intakes, or new cases referred for probation. These intakes, joined by ongoing cases, meant there were 556 total probationers in supervision during CY2008.

<sup>7</sup> Personal Communication, Jackie Ortiz, Victim Services Unit, Office of the District Attorney, February 2, 2009.

**Table 6: Adult Probation Department Domestic Violence Unit Statistics, CY2008**

	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Total Cases</b>	556
<b>New Intakes</b>	256
<b>Completions</b>	160
<b>Probation Revocations</b>	85
<b>Certified Batterer Intervention Programs</b>	8
<b>Staffing Levels</b>	12

When a person convicted of domestic violence is referred to the Adult Probation Department, that person is automatically referred to a batterer intervention program, a 52-week program run by a community agency and certified by the Adult Probation Department. If a probationer fails to attend the batterer intervention program, or if the probationer commits a crime that violates his or her probation, leading to the issuance of a bench warrant, the Adult Probation Department will begin a procedure called a Motion to Revoke Probation (MTR). In CY2008, 85 probationers had their probation revoked and were sentenced to jail time. In the same time period, 160 individuals completed the requirements of their probation.

No dedicated units exist for child abuse, elder abuse, or stalking cases. Instead, these are referred for general supervision. **In CY2008, the Adult Probation Department received 19 new stalking cases, 12 new child abuse cases, and 0 new elder abuse cases.**

## CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

### Child Welfare Reports

San Francisco Child Protective Services investigates reports of child abuse and neglect, provides services for parents with open cases, and administers foster care placements for children removed from their homes.

In CY2007, San Francisco had a child population (0-17 years) of 108,371. Of those, 5,058 children had documented child welfare referrals, an incidence rate of 46.7 per 1,000. The statewide referral incidence rate was 50.1 per 1,000 for the same time period.<sup>8</sup>

Referral rates in San Francisco differ widely by zip code. Table 7 shows the number of children with child welfare referrals for CY2007 by San Francisco neighborhood. **A total of 9 of the 25 zip codes have an incidence rate higher than the City average of 46.7, with the Bayview seeing the highest incidence at 94.8 per 1,000 children.** The Marina/Cow Hollow neighborhood shows the lowest rate at 9.2 referrals per 1,000 children.

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<sup>8</sup> Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Zimmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Winn, A., Lou, C., & Peng, C. (2008). Child Welfare Services Reports for California. Retrieved October 28, 2008, from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website: [http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare).

**Table 7: Children with Child Welfare Referrals by San Francisco Zip Code, CY2007.<sup>9</sup>**

Zip Code	Neighborhood	Child Population	Children with Referrals	Incidence per 1,000 Children
94124	Bayview	9,104	863	94.8
94102	Hayes Valley/Tenderloin	3,093	275	88.9
94103	SOMA	2,758	221	80.1
94104	Financial District	13	1	76.9
94105	Embarcadero/SOMA	108	8	74.1
94107	Potrero Hill	2,178	157	72.1
94134	Visitacion Valley	8,460	543	64.2
94115	Pacific Heights/Western Addition/Japantown	3,639	191	52.5
94117	Haight Ashbury/Cole Valley	3,013	141	46.8
94110	Mission	12,841	533	41.5
94112	Ingleside/Excelsior	14,806	555	37.5
94133	North Beach/Fisherman's Wharf	2,714	84	31.0
94111	Embarcadero	165	5	30.3
94108	Chinatown	1,208	34	28.1
94132	Lake Merced	3,852	107	27.8
94109	Nob Hill/Russian Hill	3,876	102	26.3
94131	Twin Peaks/Glen Park	3,572	87	24.4
94116	Outer Sunset	6,525	132	20.2
94127	St. Francis Wood/West Portal	3,035	60	19.8
94122	Inner Sunset	7,481	146	19.5
94114	Castro/Noe Valley	2,476	48	19.4
94121	Outer Richmond	5,653	104	18.4
94129	Presidio	464	7	15.1
94118	Inner Richmond	5,103	57	11.2
94123	Marina/Cow Hollow	2,063	19	9.2
<b>SAN FRANCISCO TOTAL</b>		<b>108,371</b>	<b>5,058</b>	<b>46.7</b>
<b>CALIFORNIA TOTAL</b>		<b>9,833,827</b>	<b>492,810</b>	<b>50.1</b>

In CY2007, there were 107,372 children with substantiations of child maltreatment in California, an incidence rate of 10.7 per 1,000. In San Francisco, there were 1,071, with an incidence rate of 9.3 per 1,000. **This number has steadily declined in the past 5 years from 1,449 children with substantiations of maltreatment in 2003, a trend mirroring the state as a whole.**<sup>10</sup> Table 8 shows that the majority of referrals are due to either general neglect (28%) or physical abuse (26%).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

**Table 8: San Francisco County Child Welfare Referrals and Findings, CY2007**

Allegation Type	Substantiated	Inconclusive	Unfounded	Assessment Only	Total Referrals
General Neglect	360	177	391	511	<b>1,439</b>
Physical Abuse	187	185	476	472	<b>1,320</b>
At Risk, Sibling Abused	63	75	303	161	<b>602</b>
Sexual Abuse	68	45	123	333	<b>569</b>
Emotional Abuse	86	84	66	175	<b>411</b>
Caretaker Absence/ Incapacity	162	25	78	97	<b>362</b>
Substantial Risk	136	26	61	106	<b>329</b>
Severe Neglect	8	1	5	2	<b>16</b>
Exploitation	1	1	5	3	<b>10</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>1,508</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>5,058</b>

**Adult Protective Services**

There are 110,028 seniors age 65 and older living in San Francisco, over 14% of San Francisco’s population.<sup>11</sup> This is a growing population, with growing needs. Ensuring the safety of this protected class is one such need. National data suggests that just 1 in 5 cases of elder abuse and neglect are officially reported. **Abuse of the “oldest old” is believed to occur at a higher rate than other elders, and family members are the most common abusers.**<sup>12</sup> According to the San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Needs Assessment 2006, self-neglect is the most commonly reported type of elder abuse, making up about half of the total reports.

Adult Protective Services (APS) is administered by DAAS, and is charged with responding to allegations of abuse for seniors and adults 18 to 64 who are dependent or have disabilities. APS receives approximately 6,000 calls to the reporting hotline in a year.<sup>13</sup> In FY07-08, a review of the 6,000 calls received led to investigations of a total of 4,893 of the reports.<sup>14</sup> Table 9 shows that the majority of these reports were verified. Considering the issue of underreporting, we can surmise from national data that, in addition to the 3,278 substantiated reports of elder abuse and neglect, an estimated 16,390 cases never came to light.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey, retrieved December 29, 2008 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/>.

<sup>12</sup> SafeState (n.d.). Elder Abuse Facts. Retrieved January 5, 2009 from <http://www.safestate.org/index.cfm?navId=58>.

<sup>13</sup> Specific statistics were not available for FY07-08. The 6,000 figure is an estimate based upon call volume during September – November 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Personal communication, Mary Counihan, Department of Adult and Aging Services, December 11, 2008.

**Table 9: APS Reports for FY07-08**

	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Substantiated Reports	3,278	67%
Inconclusive Reports	1,272	26%
Unfounded Reports	343	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,893</b>	<b>100%</b>

APS employed 32 case workers, 4 case aides, and 7 supervisors in FY07-08, with 8 open positions to investigate the reports and provide services to victims of elder and dependent adult abuse.<sup>15</sup>

## **MEDICAL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

### **Department of Public Health Services**

The San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) Emergency Department created a model program to address intimate partner violence and the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) Primary Care clinics adopted a routine domestic violence screening protocol that was endorsed by the Health Commission in 1998. However, there has not been funding to develop a digital tracking system for cases of family violence in the healthcare setting. The logistics of recording family violence-related diagnoses in an electronic medical record in a way that protects the safety and privacy of victims are complicated and protocols for this are still under construction.

Several DPH programs do collect relevant statistics to give a small sense of individuals served for family violence. In FY07-08, **the Trauma Recovery Program served 657 victims of interpersonal violence:** 331 seen for sexual assaults, and 326 seen for either domestic violence or other assaults. The Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Resource Center (CASARC) had 273 telephone contacts, performed 168 forensic interviews, and conducted 67 medical exams during this time frame. **The Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Committee, a multidisciplinary committee chaired by the SFGH Pediatric Department to review child abuse cases, reviewed approximately 150 cases last year.**

### **Child Abuse Prevention and Support Services**

The San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Center (SFCAPC) operates the TALK Line, a 24-hour support hotline for parents to help them cope with the stress of parenting in healthy ways. This prevention measure seeks to stop child abuse before it happens. **In FY07-08, the TALK Line had a call volume of 11,398 calls, supporting a total of 1,250 unduplicated individuals.**

SFCAPC also operates the San Francisco SafeStart Initiative, a program aimed at reducing the incidence and impact of violence on young children, including witnessing domestic violence. The 14 SafeStart providers are located at 6 agencies, including Family Resource Centers, Family Court, the San Francisco Police Department, and other locations where children exposed to violence can be reached. **In FY07-08, SafeStart served 153 families, with approximately 200 children exposed to violence receiving supportive services.**

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



**Domestic Violence Prevention and Support Services**

**There are 3 emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence and their children in San Francisco, with a combined total of approximately 75 beds.** Through the Violence Against Women Prevention and Intervention (VAW) Grants Program, the Department on the Status of Women distributes City funding to these shelters and collects statistics about the services provided.<sup>16</sup> In FY07-08, Department funding supported 5,927 bednights at the 3 emergency shelters. These bednights were used by 117 women and 111 children. **The 3 shelters turned 630 women and children away, often for lack of space.**

In addition to emergency shelter, the Department supported 1 permanent supportive housing program and 2 transitional housing programs for victims of domestic violence in FY07-08. These programs provided 9,748 bednights, offering long-term shelter and housing to 95 women and 23 children. The 3 programs turned away 23 women and children during FY07-08.

Survivors of violence require a significant amount of support in addition to shelter. In FY07-08, the Department funded 25 community programs to provide prevention and intervention services in San Francisco, including advocacy, legal assistance, case management, counseling, education, and crisis intervention. **The 25 programs funded in FY07-08 provided over 38,000 hours of service to nearly 23,000 individuals.**

**Table 10: VAW Grants Program Services for FY07-08<sup>17</sup>**

Services	Hours	Bednights	Crisis Calls
Legal Services	14,521		
Educational Activities	6,331		
Counseling - Individual	4,627		
Case Management	3,757		
Advocacy	2,788		
Accompaniment	2,528		
Outreach	1,649		
Counseling - Group	1,095		
Crisis Intervention	1,051		
Information and Referrals	174		
<b>TOTAL SERVICE HOURS</b>	<b>38,521</b>		
Transitional Housing Bednights		9,748	
Emergency Shelter Bednights		5,927	
<b>TOTAL BEDNIGHTS</b>		<b>15,675</b>	
Domestic Violence Crisis Calls			13,997
Sexual Assault Crisis Calls			840
<b>TOTAL CRISIS CALLS</b>			<b>14,837</b>

<sup>16</sup> Several other City departments, including the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families and the Mayors Office of Community Investment, also support certain services provided by San Francisco's domestic violence programs. The numbers reported here only reflect the investment made through the Department on the Status of Women's VAW Grants Program.

<sup>17</sup> Department on the Status of Women, VAW Grants Program Annual Service Report, FY07-08.

These numbers are limited in that they only capture the services funded by the VAW Grants Program. For example, the Department funded W.O.M.A.N., Inc. to respond to 14,000 crisis calls in FY07-08. However, several other domestic violence service providers answered hotline calls during that period. **The 3 domestic violence shelters and the W.O.M.A.N., Inc. domestic violence crisis line responded to a total of 24,632 hotline calls during FY07-08**, as shown in the table below. Additionally, victims may use other access points for services not specific to domestic violence. Many victims never access services at all.

**Table 11: Crisis Line Calls for FY07-08<sup>18</sup>**

Provider	Crisis Calls	Information Calls	Other or Unspecified	Total Calls
Asian Women’s Shelter	1,016	845	0	1,861
La Casa de las Madres	2,859	1,650	0	4,509
Riley Center	562	195	5	762
W.O.M.A.N., Inc.	0	0	17,500	17,500
<b>TOTAL CALLS</b>	<b>4,437</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>17,500</b>	<b>24,632</b>

**Elder Abuse Prevention and Support Services**

In 1997, the Consortium for Elder Abuse Prevention, through its lead coordinating agency the Institute on Aging, collaborated with APS to establish the ElderShelter to help meet the growing need for emergency housing for elder abuse victims in San Francisco. Many abusers live with their elderly victims, and there are times when elders require temporary housing to protect them from abusive or neglectful situations.

The ElderShelter is housed in a confidential location, and has 2 beds available at any given time. To make a referral or self-referral to the ElderShelter, an individual must lodge a complaint of suspected or actual abuse or neglect of an elder or dependent adult with APS. All actual placements in the ElderShelter are then determined and made through APS.

**Table 12: ElderShelter Statistics, FY03-08**

Fiscal Year	Total Shelter Residents <sup>19</sup>	Gender (F / M)	Total Bednights	Average Bednights per Resident
2003 - 04	10	5 / 5	168	17 days
2004 - 05	8	4 / 4	136	17 days
2005 - 06	4	2 / 2	225	56 days
2006 - 07	5	3 / 2	222	44 days
2007 -08	5	3 / 2	187	37 days
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17 / 15</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>29 days</b>

<sup>18</sup> For the purposes of certain federal and state funding reporting requirements, the shelter programs differentiate between calls for information or referrals and those made by individuals in crisis. W.O.M.A.N., Inc. does not receive this funding and does not track data in this way. The 17,500 calls made to W.O.M.A.N., Inc. include both crisis and informational calls.

<sup>19</sup> These figures include some instances when a caregiver resided with an elder at the ElderShelter. Dependent adults housed at the ElderShelter are also included in the statistics.

Elders and dependent adults are often admitted to the ElderShelter for physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, neglect, or harassment or threats by a caregiver. Additionally, the elder or dependent adult's housing may be in need of repair or cleaning in cases of self-neglect or hoarding.

## MISSING PIECES

**Victims access services in innumerable ways beyond the scope of this report.** The multiple sections of this report highlight the true scope of the issue of family violence. Other sources of data have been considered, but were not included in this report due to time constraints. In future annual reports, the Council hopes to include information from these sources. **For example, there are many other legal avenues for family violence cases in addition to the criminal proceedings.** Probate Court records cases of financial abuse of elders. Family Court issues restraining orders in domestic violence cases. Dependency Court witnesses numerous cases of child abuse. While the Civil Court statistics may overlap with those of the Criminal Court, there are many victims that choose to only pursue civil remedies, and this data should be included.

**Medical professionals in all areas of the Department of Public Health serve as first responders to victims of family violence,** whether it is an individual receiving counseling at the Trauma Recovery Center, a child being examined by CASARC, an elder victim admitted to the Emergency Department for his or her injuries, or a patient reporting to a Healthy San Francisco primary care clinic for a routine check-up. There are innumerable medical access points for victims of family violence throughout the healthcare systems in the City and County, and the Council will make every effort to include this data in future reports. However, the first step is advocating for a centralized reporting structure. As previously reported, SFGH has a model program for addressing cases of intimate partner violence, and we must ensure we capture the full range of data available from this and other programs for the purpose of sharing best practices, as well as ascertaining ongoing gaps.

Family Resource Centers and other family-focused programs in the community, especially programs serving families with children, may not be specifically designed to provide services to victims of family violence, but advocates, in their roles building trusting relationships with individuals, are likely to be access points and providing services on an ad hoc basis. It is crucial that we identify sites and agencies that can intervene in families where children are exposed to parental intimate partner violence, as exposed children are at increased risk for becoming involved in future violent relationships.

The purpose in detailing the areas of missing information shows the pervasiveness of the problem, as well as the value of the Family Violence Council. **This report, by simply showing the problem in all its facets, is the first step in helping policy makers and advocates see how much family violence truly occurs in San Francisco.**

**Table 13: Selected Annual Family Violence Statistics in Summary**

	<b>Child Abuse</b>	<b>Domestic Violence</b>	<b>Elder Abuse</b>
Calls Received by Community Providers <sup>20</sup>	11,398	24,632	N/A
Calls Received by CPS, 911, and APS, Respectively	5,058	6,084	6,000
Cases Investigated by CPS or APS	3,198	N/A	4,893
Cases Referred to Police (Juvenile Division and DVRU)	513	4,576	150 – 180
Cases Investigated by Police (Juvenile Division and DVRU)	380	1,653	38
Cases Referred to District Attorney's Office <sup>21</sup>	93	1,553	17
Cases Pled	10	444	10
Cases Brought to Trial	1	23	0
Convictions after Trial	1	15	0

<sup>20</sup> Call volumes provided by TALK Line and domestic violence providers noted in Table 11 above. There is no dedicated hotline for elder abuse.

<sup>21</sup> Child abuse cases include felonies and misdemeanors. Domestic violence and elder abuse cases include only felonies.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The statistics and information provided in this report makes it clear that family violence is a significant and pervasive problem affecting thousands of San Francisco residents. It is important to view these statistics as a continuum of the same system, as child abuse, domestic violence, and elder and dependent adult abuse have numerous intersections. **Family violence is a “gateway crime.”** Children exposed to domestic violence experience significant trauma, and child abuse is often an indicator for future victimization or perpetration of violence, including community or gang violence. Seniors are not exempt from experiencing domestic violence in addition to other forms of abuse. Thus, we must view these systems of support and intervention as a whole, and attempt to strengthen the system to help keep the home safe for all San Franciscans.

**CONCLUSION: An efficient system for tracking data is critical.** Without real-time information on suspects and victims, all San Franciscans and visitors are at risk.

**RECOMMENDATION: The Family Violence Council urges the completion of JUSTIS, the City and County’s complex Information Technology system.**

- Within the next 3 months, the City and County of San Francisco must develop a plan to fund the completion of JUSTIS.
- By December 2009, all San Francisco Police Department data must be input into the hub, a step that will allow all criminal justice departments to begin to connect to the system and share critical information. Quality assurance measurements will be reported weekly on the lag time for input of dangerous felonies, restraining orders, warrants, and other criminal justice system actions.
- By June 2010, JUSTIS shall be entirely live, with complete data input and usage by all criminal justice departments.

**Context:** Gathering the data for this report required extensive support and time of numerous individuals at each of the agencies represented. A centralized data tracking system for the criminal justice agencies would streamline this process, an efficiency that would allow more time for investigating cases and supporting victims, and less time counting cases by hand. JUSTIS links the Department of Emergency Management, the Police Department, the Adult Probation Department, the Office of the District Attorney, and the Sheriff’s Department, providing each with current information about cases moving through the criminal justice system.

In the same spirit of data gathering, the Department of Emergency Management should work with the San Francisco Police Department and the child abuse and elder abuse communities **to develop dispatch codes for child abuse and elder abuse.** Currently, all family violence calls are coded as “domestic violence,” and not until the police report is written does it become clear what type of violence has occurred. Though the majority of reports for these crimes go to Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services, 911 does receive calls for child and elder abuse, and they should be coded and tracked. This will support statistical data gathering, as well as better inform officers in the field responding to crisis calls.

**CONCLUSION: Family violence can be seen as a precursor to future violence,** and current research suggests that integrated and coordinated responses should address both the manifestations and root causes of the interrelated forms of violence against women and other violence within families.

**RECOMMENDATION: The Family Violence Council urges the San Francisco Violence Prevention Advisory Committee (VPAC) identified in the 2008 Violence Prevention Plan to make family violence a priority issue and recognize the role of family violence as predictor of future community violence and other crimes and victimization.**

- At a meeting within the next 3 months, the VPAC should approve a representative(s) of the Family Violence Council as an official member.
- Within the next 6 months, the VPAC must identify and implement plans for family violence prevention.

**RECOMMENDATION: Because training is a critical component of prevention, during FY09-10, City-wide training efforts should be expanded and coordinated.**

- Within FY09-10, elder abuse content should be integrated into the Alzheimer's trainings to be conducted by the Department of Public Health in the coming year.
- Within FY09-10, the Family Violence Council should coordinate family violence training of 911 dispatchers to maximize time and understanding of this complex issue.

**Context:** The large scope of family violence requires City-wide and multi-dimensional solutions. Both media and City policymakers have focused primarily on street and community violence over the past several years, with little acknowledgement of the role that family violence, in all its forms, plays in perpetuating and normalizing those more blatant and newsworthy images of violence in our society. The recently released *Violence Prevention Plan, 2008-2013*, a result of collaborative analyses of violence patterns in San Francisco, is a critical step forward for the City, since it includes the varied voices of those whose lives have been most affected by violence, along with the point of view of criminal justice, health, education, jobs, and housing experts. The Family Violence Council enthusiastically supports San Francisco's efforts to address violence in a comprehensive way, which will most certainly lead to improved services to those whose lives have been affected by violence, and which we all hope will eventually lead to a significant reduction in violence.

However, while the Council lauds the effort that went into developing the new plan, we urge that, as the process goes forward, **the issue of family violence take a much more central role in plans for prevention, victim assistance, case management, and related issues.** One of the essential premises of the approach proposed in the Violence Prevention Plan is described as follows: "Because street violence and youth violence often lead to homicide and thus captures almost daily media attention, **there is a greater sense of urgency around addressing this type of violence** over other forms."<sup>22</sup>

Last year, WOMAN, Inc. documented over 14,000 domestic violence crisis calls, and SFPD received over 5,000 family violence cases, demonstrating the magnitude of intimate partner and family violence in San Francisco, as well as its relationship to street and youth violence. The Violence Policy Center reports that "an analysis of female domestic homicides (a woman murdered by a spouse, intimate

<sup>22</sup> City and County of San Francisco Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (2008). *2008-13 San Francisco Violence Prevention Plan*. Pg.19.

acquaintance, or close relative) showed that prior domestic violence in the household made a woman 14.6 times more likely...to be the victim of such a homicide.”<sup>23</sup>

The violence prevention efforts of San Francisco will not succeed if we fail to make the connection between the violence that occurs inside the home with the violence that occurs on the street. **The City must recognize the intertwining of family and street violence, and view family violence with the same sense of urgency**—particularly when the data suggests that it is plaguing the very same communities the Violence Prevention Plan proposes to target, as well as a significantly broader community as well. **Studies show that abused and neglected children are more likely to have adult criminal records than those reared without abuse or neglect, and the offenses of these children are also more likely to be violent.**<sup>24</sup> It behooves us all to address violence before it starts, and to address it in the home.

**CONCLUSION: Collaboration between community and City agencies is critical to the success of prevention and intervention efforts.**

**RECOMMENDATION: The County budget must reflect family violence as a priority and that the majority of victims utilize community support services in addition to or in lieu of a criminal justice response.**

- In the next 3 months, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors shall consider the long-ranging impacts and implications of family violence, prioritizing prevention and intervention services provided by the community.
- During FY09-10, the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors should work with the Family Violence Council to seek ongoing, sustainable sources of funding for such services to supplement the general fund allocation including funding through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009.

**RECOMMENDATION: To improve the outcome of cases, the City’s response must be coordinated with community providers.**

- The response to child abuse requires the intervention and coordination of social services, law enforcement, and medical treatment, a response currently operating on an ad hoc basis in the basement of San Francisco General Hospital. To speed the system’s response, better coordinate services, and improve accountability in cases of abuse, the Family Violence Council recommends that the City supports and funds the Child Advocacy Center, a proposed 1-stop shop for the intervention in child abuse and neglect cases. Plans for this center have been developed, and FY09-10 funding would allow the City to improve its child abuse intervention and accountability track record.
- The Elder Abuse Forensic Center is a new program operating on a similar principle as the Child Advocacy Center, but its budget is in danger due to the current financial crisis. The intervention and prevention of family violence must be prioritized, and the Family Violence Council urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to maintain this critical program.

<sup>23</sup> Violence Policy Center (2008). Facts on firearms and domestic violence. Retrieved on August 18, 2008 from [www.vpc.org/fact\\_sht/cdomviofs.htm](http://www.vpc.org/fact_sht/cdomviofs.htm).

<sup>24</sup> Widom, C. (1994). Child abuse, neglect, and violent criminal behavior in a midwest metropolitan area of the United States, 1967-1988 [Computer file]. Compiled by Depts. of Criminal Justice and Psychology, Indiana University. ICPSR ed. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [producer and distributor]. doi:10.3886/ICPSR09480.

**Context:** Community intervention services are a vital component to family violence intervention and prevention. This is easily seen by the number of calls made each year to just one of the domestic violence crisis lines as compared to the number of reports made to government entities (i.e. 911 or the police department). **Criminal justice agencies, child and adult protective agencies, public health providers, and community-based service providers must work together closely, and must be adequately resourced, to meet the need for prevention and intervention services.**

Violent crime, including family violence, has tremendous societal costs, both tangible and intangible. In 1996, the National Institute of Justice studied the cost of violent crime, and the numbers are startling. Tangible costs include medical care, police response and investigation, property damage, mental health care, victim services, and lost wages and productivity. Intangible costs include reduced quality of life, pain, and suffering. **The study found that domestic crime against adults accounted for nearly 15% of the total costs associated with violent crime, \$67 billion annually.** This included \$1.8 billion in medical costs, \$7 billion in other tangible costs, and \$58 billion in quality of life costs. **Child abuse, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, accounted for over \$164 billion annually.** As much as 20% of mental health care costs could be attributed to crime, with about half of those expenditures for adult survivors of child abuse.<sup>25</sup> Note that the costs cited reflect the worth of the dollar in 1993, and have not been adjusted for inflation. Also, none of the costs include criminal justice system operational costs.

City government absorbs many of these costs. Crisis services responding to these crimes are critical. However, prevention efforts cannot be ignored. Though current fiscal realities make adequate resources difficult to come by for all populations in need, prevention and intervention services for victims of family violence must be a priority for San Francisco. Safety in one's home is a basic human need that we, as a community, must strive to fulfill.

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<sup>25</sup> Miller, T.R., Cohen, M.A., Wiesema, B. (1996). Victim costs and consequences: a new look. National Institute of Justice Research Report, NCJ 155282. Retrieved February 2, 2009 from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/victcost.pdf>.