

# Family Violence Program

## Service Description

Through the Family Violence program (Section 51, Human Resources Code), DHS provides financial assistance to local, non-profit shelter centers to offer immediate protection and aid to adult victims of family violence, their children, and other

household members. Violent family members may receive crisis telephone counseling and information and referral services.

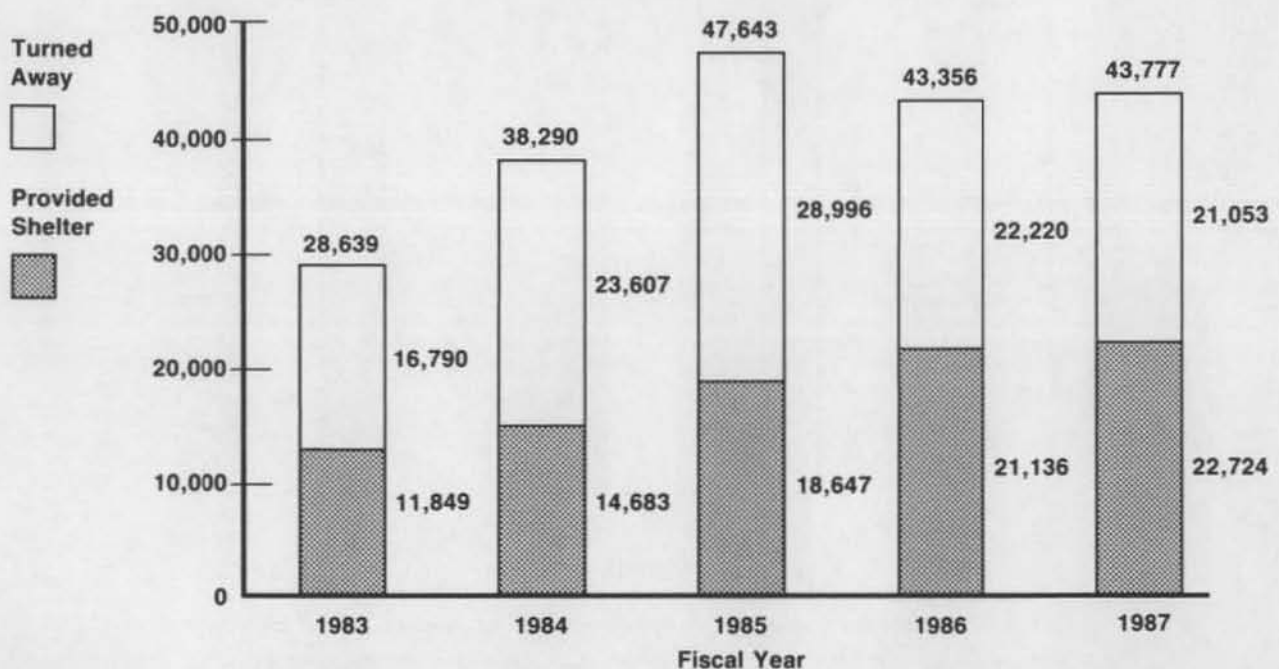
Shelter centers contracting with the department must provide the following services:

- 24-hour shelter;
- 24-hour hotline;

- emergency medical care and transportation;
- counseling;
- children's services;
- information and referral services;
- legal assistance;
- employment services; and
- services to violent family members and

Figure 35

## Victims of Family Violence Requesting Shelter vs. Those Actually Served



non-residents or former residents.

The pie charts in Figure 36 depict the percentage of these services used by shelter residents and non-resident clients.

Shelter centers must also provide community education, solicit volunteers, and work with law enforcement and criminal justice officials.

**Note:** A table containing specific data for individual shelter centers is on Page 31.

## Program Objectives

The Family Violence program helps reduce or prevent domestic violence by providing services to battered women and their families with an emphasis on the safety of the victim.

Although most family violence victims served by shelter centers are battered women and their children, the program acknowledges that all family violence victims have a right to services as they are available.

The program:

- helps families create and maintain violence-free lives;
- provides temporary shelter and support services to victims of family violence; and
- increases understanding of the dynamics of family violence.

## Program Resources

DHS contracted with 50 centers in fiscal year 1987. Although legislation allows up to 75 percent financial participation, DHS funds accounted for only 23 percent of the operating costs of the average shelter center. Shelter centers raised the remainder of their budgets from local sources such as United Way, city and county governments, private foundations, and fund-raising activities.

To spread financial resources as far as possible, shelter centers rely heavily on

volunteers. In 1987, volunteers worked 369,384 hours in family violence shelter centers. This is equal to an additional 177 full-time staff. At \$3.35 an hour, these volunteers contributed more than \$1.2 million in time and service to family violence shelter centers. Shelter centers also welcome and use a wide variety of in-kind contributions.

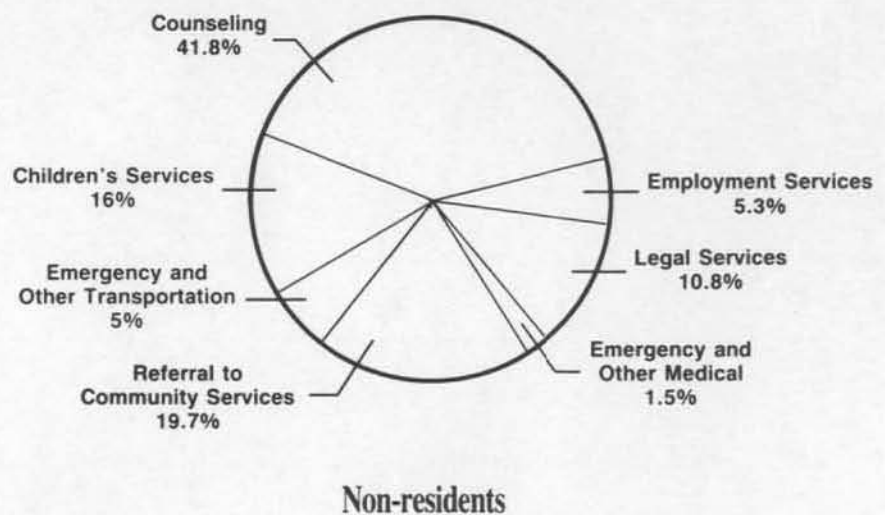
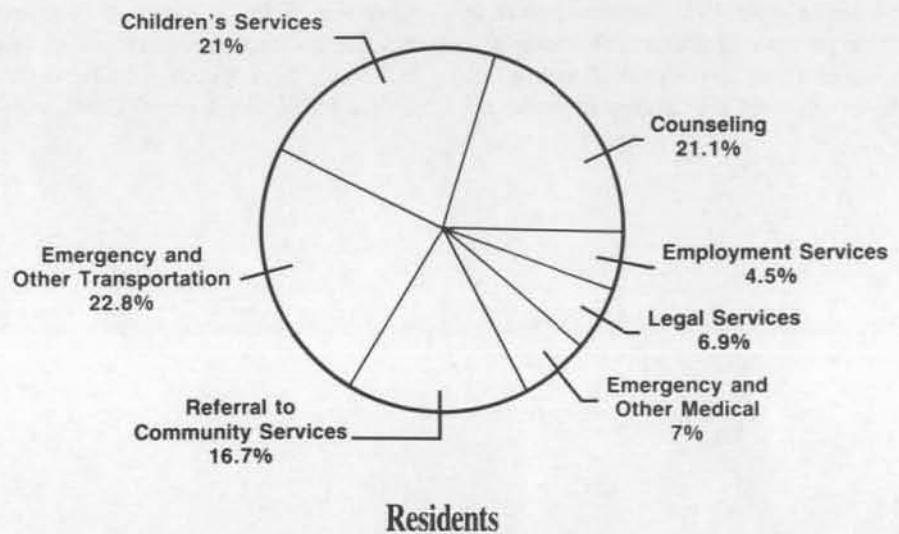
## Client Characteristics

Of the women who resided in a family violence shelter in 1987:

- 41 percent had been battered for one to five years;

Figure 36

### Family Violence Support Services Used FY 1987



- 24 percent had been battered for more than five years;
- 88 percent had children (an average of two); and
- 28 percent said at least one of her children had also been physically or sexually abused.

Sixty-six percent of the victims said the violence was related to the batterer's alcohol abuse.

## Current Performance

Family Violence shelter centers offer crisis intervention services that allow the victim client to leave a dangerous situation and help families prevent further violence.

In fiscal year 1987, shelter centers in Texas provided shelter to 764 women and 1,129 children each month. However, as Figure II shows, they denied shelter to ap-

proximately 48 percent of the victims requesting services, primarily because of a lack of space.

The need for additional family violence services is documented in a 1983 survey that revealed in Texas:

- 8.5 percent of women over 18 have been physically abused within the last 12 months by men with whom they live; and
- more than 19 percent of abused women are victimized at least once a week.

## Training and Technical Assistance

Chapter 51.003 of the Human Resources Code directs the department to contract for training and technical assistance to family violence shelter centers. The Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) was the

successful bidder for the contract to help providers:

- maintain a clearinghouse on family violence;
- respond to telephone requests for information and immediate technical assistance;
- conduct consultation visits to shelter centers;
- conduct workshops on criminal justice, fund-raising, shelter administration, board development, and working with volunteers;
- produce a quarterly directory of family violence service programs to enhance networking between shelter centers and other social service agencies; and
- produce a bimonthly newsletter.

## Biennial Report

The Family Violence program publishes a separate report each biennium listing more detailed information on its services.