

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES INCREASE SAFETY, IMPROVE THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND REDUCE LONG-TERM COSTS

The SHARE study found that there were dramatic positive changes in the lives of the women and children in the study during the first 6-months of services, which persisted and/or improved over the full 18 months of the study:

- Women and children were safer
- Their housing stability improved significantly
- Women and children had better health and mental health, quality of life, and were better able to succeed in their day-to-day lives.

**Survivors sought and utilized a wide variety of supports, services and funds, depending on their specific needs:**

Women reported that the following factors made the biggest difference in their lives over the 18-months of the study:

Theme	# of times endorsed
Housing/Housing Assistance	99 or 39.4%
Support from advocate/agency	47 or 18.7%
Myself/my own decision/my own determination/faith	40 or 15.9%
Strategies to distance perpetrator (having no contact, police intervention, restraining order, etc.)	39 or 15.6%
Support from family/friends/different partner	30 or 12.0%
SHARE Project (helping others, support, seeing how far they have come with interviews, etc.)	24 or 9.6%

## Services included:

- ✓ domestic violence victim services
- ✓ housing
- ✓ public assistance
- ✓ health care, police, restraining orders
- ✓ training and education
- ✓ employment services
- ✓ parenting classes, services for their children, child care
- ✓ counseling, alcohol or drug treatment

*Women reiterated the need for housing and advocacy when asked about which aspects of the DV services were most helpful. They also valued being supported and treated with respect, and noted the importance of services that they could easily access.*

**Utilization and cost of emergency services significantly decreased over the 18-months of the study:**

***Estimated savings in the Justice System Emergency Response are \$110,000.***

Women used fewer emergency legal services and those who did, used those services less frequently in the 6 months prior to the 18-month interview compared to the 6 months prior to the baseline services.

	Baseline			18-months		
	% participants	Total times utilized	Estimated Cost	% participants	Total times utilized	Estimated Cost
Called 911	54.7%	365	\$6,471	18.1%	146	\$2,589
Police came to assist	61.2%	442	\$66,282	19.7%	136	\$20,395
Partner jailed	27.5%	116	\$48,387	2.3%	9	\$3,754
Rec'd low-cost/free legal assist for ROs, evictions	6.1%	17	\$22,340	0.1%	2	\$2,628

Women reported using fewer emergency services at the 18-month interview, compared to the baseline interview. Reduction in the use of these services resulted in an estimated savings of \$600,000.

### ***Estimated savings for Emergency Medical Care are \$100,000.***

Fewer study participants sought emergency medical care services and those who did, used those services less frequently during the 6 months prior to the 18 month interview compared to those prior to the baseline interview.

	Baseline			18-months		
	% participants	Total times utilized	Estimated Cost	% participants	Total times utilized	Estimated Cost
Rec'd ambulance and/or paramedic care	13.4%	129	\$115,068	6.5%	27	\$24,084
Went to the ED or other urgent care	50%	418	\$19,437	40.4%	243	\$11,300

### ***Estimated savings for Other Safety Net Services are \$400,000.***

Fewer women accessed emergency housing and basic needs services, such as motel vouchers, shelters, food boxes or TADVS over the course of the study. In general, there was a reduction in the number of times or extent of utilization, except for food boxes.

	Baseline			18-months		
	% participants	Mean # days/Total times utilized	Estimated Cost	% participants	Mean # days/Total times utilized	Estimated Cost
Lived in a motel/hotel via vouchers program	21.6%	10.1	\$30,300	1.9%	14	\$3,500
Stayed at homeless shelter	2.9%	41.25	\$18,259	2.7%	21.14	\$8,188
Lived at domestic violence shelter	29.1%	42.81	\$235,173	3.50%	46.22	\$28,212
Called DV crisis line	62.6%	1653	\$11,571	11.2%	90	\$630
Rec'd food boxes	52.20%	4.1	\$4,756	40.40%	5.1	\$4,284
Applied for TADVS (DV TANF)	71.20%	199	\$45,127	10.00%	26	\$5,896
Total TADVS (DV TANF) spent			\$115,675			\$9,515

## **The SHARE study findings point to important funding, policy and programmatic improvements that could be made:**

- All agencies providing basic needs (food, shelter, emergency care) should address domestic violence.
- Increasing housing assistance and stability has the potential to make large changes in clients' lives and in cost of emergency services.
- Community education to increase support by family and friends can improve safety and stability.
- Flexible services and funding should be designed to respond to the specific needs of survivors.
- Research on homelessness and housing stability can be enriched by the lessons learned from the SHARE study.
- Appropriate screening for danger and providing survivors with the opportunity to explore more deeply their experiences and situation can lead to empowerment and better outcomes.

#### **Description of SHARE Study**

The SHARE Study is a quasi-experimental, longitudinal, community-based participatory study designed to evaluate the effectiveness, including cost-effectiveness, of an existing rapid re-housing program (Volunteers of America Home Free). The evaluation examines the role of housing stability in preventing revictimization and reducing negative health outcomes of domestic violence survivors and their children.

Participants of the SHARE Study were 278 English or Spanish speaking women in the Portland, Oregon area who had experienced physical or sexual violence or threats of violence by an intimate or ex intimate partner in the previous 6 months. Participants also had housing instability as a primary concern and had sought services from a domestic violence or housing assistance agency. Over half were women of color; about ½ had a GED, high school diploma or less education; the participants had high rates of unemployment and poverty; and most had young children.

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Funding was provided by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (U49CE000520-01, 09/01/2005-08/31/2010).