

Domestic Violence in Baltimore County



BALTIMORE COUNTY
MARYLAND



2008

Annual Report

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Baltimore County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) welcomes you to our third Annual Report on the status of Domestic Violence in Baltimore County. As the economy and funding for domestic violence initiatives have declined, and the number of police reports for domestic violence continued to require a strengthened coordinated response by County Agencies and Community Providers, we are pleased to report that Baltimore County was up to the task:

- The effectiveness of home visits to domestic violence victims immediately following the serious altercation was underscored by the data gathered with the Lethality Assessment Tool piloted in Precinct 12 since November 2007.
- Thanks to the effective utilization of the Police Domestic Violence Coordinators and the provision of Advocates by the Family and Children's Services, Family Crisis Center, and Baltimore County Department of Social Services, 1,832 victims of domestic violence benefited from home visits, encouraging and guiding them to access resources.
- Our efforts to educate the community included the First Annual Domestic Violence Conference reaching more than 130 attendees.
- To strengthen prevention of violence in a younger audience the "Owning Up" program was initiated in Lansdowne Middle and Lansdowne High Schools reaching more than 150 students and training 58 professional who will continue this program.
- A Newsletter was launched to strengthen communication within the Baltimore County Domestic Violence community.

We continue to strengthen our ability to reach domestic violence victims early in the cycle of violence to prevent a near fatality or fatality. The loss of a parent, or parents, is significant in the life development of a child and has detrimental impact on the family and the larger community. In order to present a clear picture of the incidence of domestic violence we are now reporting on the number of fatalities including the victims, suicides, bystanders, and children killed in the commission of domestic violence homicides.

It is very clear that Baltimore County has the will to stop domestic violence. In the coming year the Fatality Review Team will begin to review domestic violence fatality cases, a Court Watch initiative will be implemented, and The Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee will continue to strengthen our partnerships to create healthier homes and communities.

Marci Van De Mark

Assistant Director
Baltimore County Department
of Social Services

Karen Keyser

Domestic Violence Coordinator
Baltimore County Department
of Social Services

Introduction

**Domestic Violence
Coordinating Council**

Rosalyn Branson
Executive Director
TurnAround, Inc

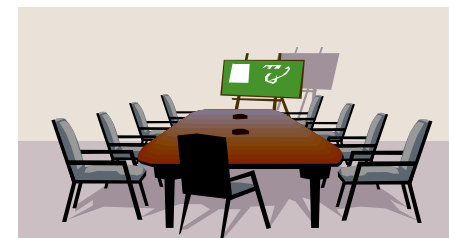
Flor Giusti
Director
Adelante Familia

Douglas Murphy
Executive/Clinical Director
Family Crisis Center

Patricia Thompson
District Director
Family & Children Services

Karen Keyser
Domestic Violence Coordinator
Baltimore County Department
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Marci Van De Mark
Assistant Director
Baltimore County Department
of Social Services



Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Overview

In 1986, Baltimore County was one of four jurisdictions nationwide to receive funding from the Department of Justice to initiate a Coordinating Council. This Council is now celebrating twenty-two years of commitment to:

- Increase awareness of Domestic Violence
- Increase partnerships within County agencies and private non-profits agencies
- Identify areas to concentrate efforts to help victims

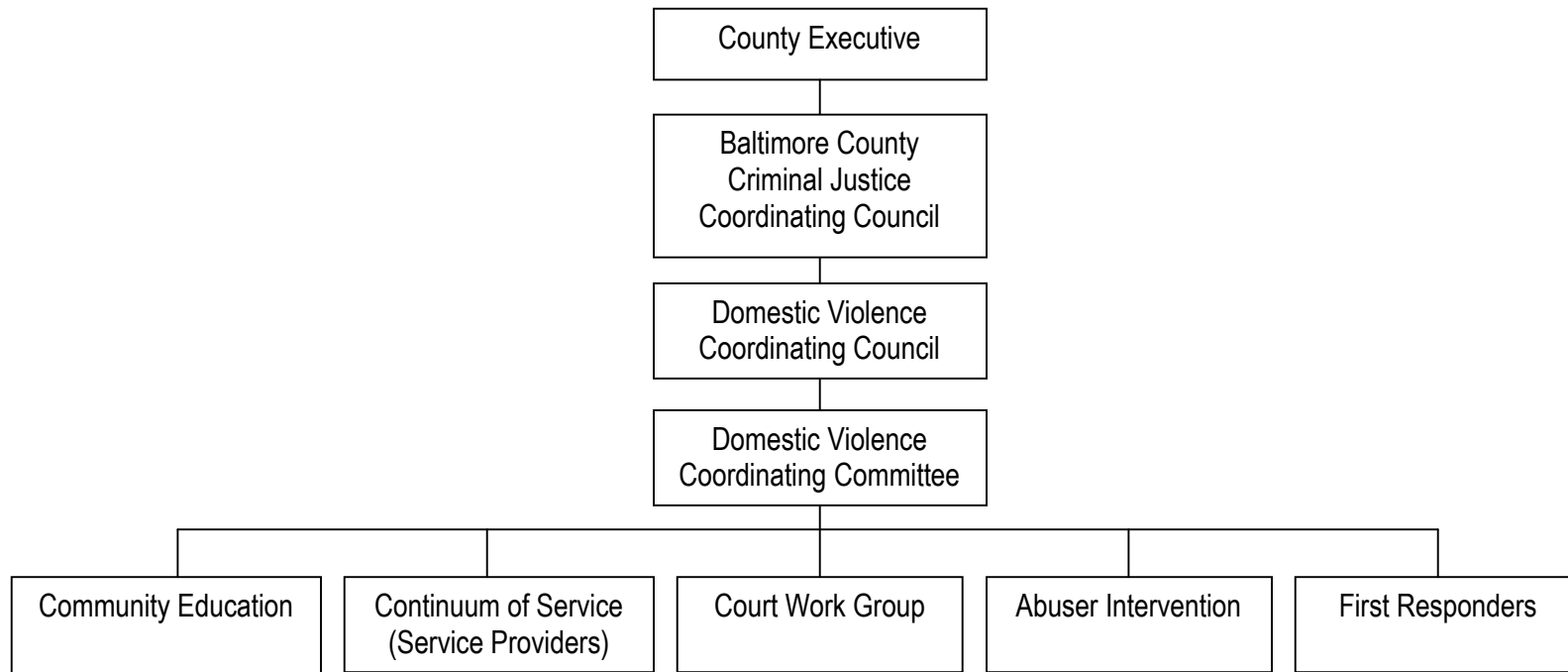
In 2005, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) was established as a Committee of the Baltimore County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). Created by the Baltimore County Executive, the mandate for the CJCC is to:

- Study the Baltimore County juvenile and criminal justice systems, identify deficiencies, and formulate policy, plans and programs for improvement
- Communicate and present planning, financial, operational, managerial and programmatic recommendations to the agencies represented on the Council
- Provide the coordinated leadership necessary to establish cohesive criminal justice strategies, policies and programs
- Collaborate to maximize resources and raise funds to support criminal justice programs

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council works to assist the CJCC in accomplishing this mandate with respect to the particular area of Domestic Violence. The DVCC's primary goals are to:

- Identify gaps in service delivery
- Coordinate services/ resources directly to those who need assistance
- Monitor the Criminal Justice system's response to Domestic Violence
- Develop a mechanism to ensure offenders comply with court ordered treatment
- Identify and recommend "best practices" to most effectively reach victims and provide services

**Baltimore County Criminal Justice
Coordinating Council**



Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee Overview

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council has 5 sub-committees staffed by volunteers that meet bi-monthly. Annually each sub-committee identifies goals that become the focus of their work. We are pleased to report on the accomplishments of each sub-committee:

Community Education/Response Team

- In an effort to educate the community the Community Education Sub-Committee hosted the First Annual Domestic Violence Conference on September 28, 2007. This Conference focused on identifying the indicators of abuse and provided resources for the community to access. This Conference was so well received, with more than 130 in attendance, that a larger venue is being sought for what will be promoted as a State Conference in 2008.

- The resource information on the “Get Help” card is updated annually. This card, providing valuable resource information to victims of domestic violence, is distributed in Baltimore County hospitals, day care centers, police precincts and libraries, supporting easy resource access for domestic violence victims.
- The Baltimore County Department of Social Services, the Student Resource Officers of the Baltimore County Police Department, and faculty of the Baltimore County School system were trained on Date Violence Prevention strategies. More than 146 students participated in this “Owning UP” program with 58 professional trained to sustain this program.
- There are plans to merge the Community Education Committee with the First Responders Committee to most effectively increase public awareness and provide increased and diverse learning opportunities.

Court Work Group Sub-Committee

- This Committee is working in conjunction with Service Providers and the Judicial System to create the most effective and accessible process to obtain protective orders.
- A Court Watch initiative is being planned for 2009

Continuum of Service: Service Provider Sub-Committee

- Joint meetings with Abuser Intervention Programs allowed for a more clear interpretation of written protocols to provide consistent response to all Domestic Violence Referral Program clients.
- The Service Providers focused their efforts on the implementation and potential expansion of the Lethality Assessment Project.

First Responders Sub-Committee

- This Committee developed and distributed a questionnaire to local hospitals to identify initiatives in place and gaps where in service.
- The State’s Attorney Office, Police Department and Northwest Hospital developed a three part training workshop to educate and inform the community to recognize the potential lethal impact of strangulation.
- The First Responder Committee is planning to merge to create the new Community Education/Response Team.

Abuser Intervention Sub-Committee

- This Committee developed partner contact protocols that are now consistent standard procedures throughout the County.
- The Abuser Intervention Sub Committee trained staff working with offenders on best practices for writing unsatisfactory terminations for domestic violence.
- This Committee meets quarterly with the Service Provider Subcommittee to ensure consistent monitoring of court ordered offenders.

Baltimore County's Coordinated Effort to Address Domestic Violence



A. Baltimore County Police Department

The Baltimore County Police Department was established in 1874 to better protect the persons and property of Baltimore County. To that end the Baltimore County Police Department will strive to reduce the level of domestic violence by improving victim services, conducting thorough investigations, and promoting safe domestic environments. Beginning in 1999 the Baltimore County Police Department, through its strategic planning process, developed a plan to improve the management of domestic violence cases. In 2000, federal grant funding enabled the Department to train and assign patrol officers to serve as precinct-level Domestic Violence Coordinators (DVC's). By the end of 2006 each of the police department's ten precincts have a Domestic Violence Coordinator dedicated to domestic violence incidents. The Department also has one Hispanic liaison/ domestic violence coordinator position assigned to the Youth and Community Resources Section.

It is the policy of the Baltimore County Police Department to provide the highest possible level of service to the citizens of Baltimore County. In this regard, we will continue to build partnerships with other agencies and service providers to offer a strong continuum of services to victims of domestic violence and enhance the prosecution of offenders. Each Domestic Violence Coordinator shall strive to:

- Significantly reduce the levels of domestic violence in Baltimore County
- Ensure a consistent response to all victims and reporting of situations
- Provide a safe, problem-solving response to domestic situations
- Increase awareness and knowledge of domestic violence

According to the 2007 Annual Report, the Baltimore County Police Department responded to 617,478 calls for service of which 11,708 were domestic related. Of these 11,708 domestic related calls for service responding officers arrested 1,025 suspects at the scene. Also, during 2007 1,832 victims of domestic violence were referred by our Domestic Violence Coordinators to our service provider partners, the Department of Social Services and other Domestic Violence Program staff from private non-profit agencies, for additional follow-up services.

Baltimore County Police Department

**Domestic Related Police Reports by Precinct
Calendar Year 2008**

Year	Wilkins 01	Woodlawn 02	Franklin 03	Pikesville 04	Towson 06	Cockeysville 07	Parkville 08	White Marsh 09	Essex 11	North Point 12	Total
2006	887	2,009	790	825	634	607	814	1,059	1,746	2,448	11,819
2007	1,048	1,820	875	811	587	606	762	1,219	1,728	2,252	11,708
2008	Available after January 2009										

* Precinct 4 opened in 2006
Data provided by Baltimore County Police Department
Crime Analysis Section

Baltimore County

Domestic Violence Related Homicides FY 2008

Fiscal Year	2006	2007	2008
Victims	11	5	5
Bystanders			2
Children		1	
Suicides		1	2
Infanticide		1	
Other		1	
Total	11	9	9

As identified in the 2007 Domestic Violence Annual Report, quantifying domestic violence homicide fatalities is a challenge. It is important to develop a clear definition so that the impact of domestic violence on the community can be consistently identified, measured and compared in the years to come.

The Baltimore County Domestic Violence Committee, after thoughtful review of the practices of other jurisdictions, has decided that all domestic violence fatalities, whether it is a victim, bystanders, children or a suicide will be identified as a domestic violence fatality. This is because all of the deaths are a result of domestic violence, whether intended or not. Effective 2007, we have identified the victims by these categories; victim, innocent bystanders or children.

Consistent with State Fatality Review protocols domestic violence occurs when abuse is between:

- Current or former spouse or cohabitant
- Persons who have a child in common
- Person currently or formerly involved in a dating relationship

As you can see from the above chart 44% of the victims are bystanders or children in 2007 and 2008.



B. State's Attorney's Office

The Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Unit was established by Sandra O'Connor in 1993. The Unit utilizes evidence based prosecution techniques and works to hold abusers accountable, helps ensure the safety of victims, and acts to interrupt the cycle of domestic violence.

This Unit has provided leadership in the implementation of numerous initiatives and strategies in the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence cases. Efforts are made to contact all of the victims of domestic violence crimes in the early part of the judicial process to help establish their confidence in the system. An open line of communication is maintained through the trial date to ensure the continued cooperation and safety of the victims.

The State's Attorney's Office provides ongoing in-service training for the Baltimore County Police Department, as well as specialized training in domestic violence investigation to all Baltimore County Police Academy recruits. This coordinated effort between the police and prosecutors has resulted in an effective partnership in the battle against domestic violence crimes,

Under the leadership of State's Attorney, Scott D. Shellenberger, the judicial intervention necessary to break the cycle of domestic violence continues to be high priority. Under the direction of the State's Attorney's Office, training opportunities addressing the issue of non-fatal strangulation assaults will continue to be offered to police, prosecutors, emergency personnel, commissioners and the bench.

C. Court System

Baltimore County Circuit and District Courts

Baltimore County has three District Courts and one Circuit Court with 16 courtrooms. The District Courts are located in Towson, Catonsville and Essex. The Circuit Court building is centrally located in Towson, Maryland. Cases of domestic violence are heard in both District and Circuit Courts.

Circuit Court hears civil cases including divorce, custody and Protective Order cases. Under some circumstances, criminal cases are also heard. The District Court hears criminal cases and also civil cases. Both Circuit and District Courts issue Protective Orders.

Protective Order cases are a two-step process in District Court. (With the exception of Protective Orders that originate at the interim stage in front of a court commissioner. These are a three-step process). First the victim files a Petition for protection from abuse. The Judge then conducts an ex-parte hearing and determines whether an order meets the necessary criteria for granting. If it does, the Judge grants the petitioner a temporary order that provides protection from the violence. A Protective Order hearing is scheduled five business days later. This is the second step of the process. At the Protective Order hearing, the Judge makes a determination, based on the evidence presented, whether a Protective Order can be granted. If the order is granted, protection may be continued through one year and can be extended for an additional (6) month period of time.

The Circuit Court is the only Court in the State that has the power to hear jury trials. Often Domestic Violence Cases that are heard at the Circuit Court are jury trials. Additionally, the Circuit Court has a Family Services Support Division to help families and make appropriate referrals.

**Domestic Violence and Peace Order Dispositions
in the
Baltimore County District Court of Maryland**

	Domestic Violence					
Baltimore County	Cases Filed	Transfers to Circuit Court	Interim Orders Granted	ExParte Orders Granted	Protective Orders Granted	Appeal
2006	5,482	8	1,418	3,081	846	52
2007	3,758	17	1,208	2,029	882	31
2008	3,724	35	1,394	2,078	920	55



**Domestic Violence Protective Order Dispositions
In the
Baltimore County Circuit Court of Maryland**

**** data collected from the Annual Report of Maryland Judiciary 2005-2006**



	Domestic Violence Cases Heard				Criminal Filings and Terminations		
	Temporary Protective Orders		Final Protective Orders		Combined Original & Reopened Cases		
Baltimore County	Hearings	Orders Granted		Hearings	Orders Granted	Filings	Terminations
2006	847	497		640	270	8,274	6,298
2007	464	258		279	91	8,125	7,343
2008	Pending						

D. Sheriff's Office



There are 83 Deputies in the Baltimore County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office is charged with the responsibility of serving domestic violence respondents with a copy of their protective orders. When an ex-parte/ protection order is obtained in Circuit Court, the clerk delivers the order to the Sheriff's Department and the Deputy on duty reviews the order, and interviews the petitioner to gather information on how best to serve the order on the respondents considering:

- Location of home
- Address of work
- Physical description of respondent
- License plate number of the respondent's vehicle

Every attempt is made to be timely in serving the order. To ensure the victim's safety, the protective order information is recorded prior to serving the order. Updated information is entered after service is made, or not, allowing other appropriate Law Enforcement agencies access to the status of these protective orders and ex-parte orders. There was a slight increase in the number of protective orders served by the Sheriff's Department.

**Protective Orders Served
By
Baltimore County Sheriff's Department**

2006	507
2007	510
2008	501



E. The Department of Social Services (DSS)

Established in 1932, the Baltimore County Department of Social Services (BCoDSS) is a public social services agency that is mandated by the State to provide protective services for children and vulnerable adults. The Department provides family and children’s services, foster care and adoption services, adult and adolescent services and includes the Housing Office, which operates the Section 8 housing program. It also administers state and federal welfare programs.

The Family Violence Unit is a criminal justice sub-agency, which operates within the BCoDSS. The Family Violence Unit was established in 1983 as part of the Criminal Justice Coordinator’s Office and was transferred to the BCoDSS in 1993. During the decade between 1983 and 1993, the Family Violence unit developed victim support services including a 24-hour crisis hotline, Victim Court Advocates, and Case Monitors who refer and track violators who have been court ordered to engage in batterer’s treatment. This unit provides domestic violence coordination and liaison among the private, non-profit treatment agencies and the criminal justice agencies in Baltimore County. The goal of the Family Violence Unit is “to improve the response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Baltimore County.”

- **24-hour Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline-** Provides 24-hour response to victims and secondary victims with information about services and sources of immediate help in crisis situations. The Hotline operates 24 hours 365 days a year and is staffed by 30 to 34 volunteers. The Hotline Coordinator recruits, trains and supports the volunteers and supervises the Hotline Manager, who is responsible for day-to-day scheduling.

Domestic Violence Hotline

Fiscal Year	2006	2007	2008
Total Calls	5,984	6,086	6,512
Domestic Violence	1,271	1,336	1,315
Shelter	666	694	685
Child Abuse	42	65	55
Rape	261	197	213
Referrals & Requests for Information	4,199	4,040	4,028

- **Court Advocate Program-** Contacts all victims whose abusers are scheduled for trial. Without providing legal advice, the Advocates explain different remedies and protection, while alerting victims to the variety of possible outcomes. They also make referrals to services and explain the resources that are available to help victims. At the trial the Court Advocates accompany victims who want their support.
- **Court Referral Program-** Interviews and refers defendants who are court-ordered to receive batterer’s treatment. The Case Monitor, who arranges the referral, also follows-up to assure that all court orders are honored. If a defendant does not complete the treatment program as ordered, the Case Monitor returns the case to the court.

a. Abuser Intervention Program (AIP)

The Abuser Intervention Program (AIP) is designed to help offenders stop using violence and other control tactics in their intimate partner relationships. The goal is to teach effective non-violent skills and show respect for one’s partner. The purpose of the AIP is to aid the criminal justice system in holding the offender accountable for his/her actions and promote safety for victims. The court orders offenders to the Domestic Violence Referral Program for placement into a state certified Abuser Intervention Program.

b. Healthy Relationships Program (HRP)

The Healthy Relationships Program is a short-term education and information program created to address the needs of first time offenders of domestic violence. The District Court of Baltimore County orders defendants to the Domestic Violence Referral program for placement in a group at Family Crisis Center, Family and Children’s Services, or TurnAround, Inc. Defendants must be first time offenders who did not use a weapon or cause serious injury to the victim.

Program Referrals

Abuser Intervention Program	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008
Baltimore County Circuit Court	66	69	89
Baltimore County District Courts	160	187	170
Other Jurisdictions	18	19	16
Total	244	275	275

Healthy Relationships Program	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008
Baltimore County District Courts	185	223	205

The referrals to the Abuser Intervention Program increased 13% between FY2006 to FY2007. Program referrals remained consistent into FY2008.

The referrals to the Healthy Relationships Program increased by 21% when comparing FY2006 to FY2007. Program referrals decreased 8% for FY2008.

Total referrals to the Domestic Violence Referral Program increased 16% when comparing FY2006 to FY2007. Program referrals showed decrease of 4% in FY2008 when compared to FY2007.

c. Abuser Intervention and Healthy Relationship Program

**Domestic Violence Referral Program
Program Completion Status Report**

Program	Satisfactory Termination	Unsatisfactory Termination
Abuser Intervention Program	106	92
Healthy Relationships Program	151	61
Total	257	153

This chart indicates that of the 410 completion reports received by the Domestic Violence Referral Program during FY2008, 63% of the clients satisfactorily completed the program.

- 53% of those attending the 26 week Abuser Intervention Program completed the full program.
- 71% of those attending the 5 week Healthy Relationship Program completed it.

F. Domestic Violence Community Providers

**Adelante Familia
3734 Eastern Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21231
410-732-2176**

The Goals of Adelante Familia (a bilingual domestic violence program of St. Vincent de Paul) are to eliminate the incidence of violence, reduce tolerance to violence, promote healthy families, and prevent another generation of victims and abusers. Adelante Familia accomplishes this goal by providing culturally competent and linguistically specific domestic violence prevention and crisis intervention services to Latino immigrant families. This includes victim support services such as crisis counseling, resource referral, legal advocacy & accompaniment, general support services, women support groups, educational workshops, financial assistance, food assistance, SafeNights as well as a 40-week abuser intervention treatment program. Adelante Familia offers comprehensive, community-based and women-centered advocacy services that recognize the “family” as a central value.

Adelante Familia	2006	2007	2008
Victims receiving support & advocacy services	134	226	218
Victims participating in support groups	81	115	187

Family & Children's Services
700 Security Blvd, Suite 302
Baltimore, MD 21244
410-281-1334

Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland (F&CS) has been dedicated to providing our communities with a full range of family support services for nearly 150 years. These services address single parent issues, relationship disruption, parent-child issues, teen pregnancy prevention, teen-parent issues, family violence, and child sexual abuse and elder care issues.

The Baltimore and Carroll County Offices of F&CS provide a comprehensive array of services to victims of domestic violence. Services include 24-hour hotline, individual and/or group counseling for women, children and men, support groups for battered women, referrals and assistance in obtaining financial help, shelter, day care, housing, food and legal services.

Weekly groups are held for batterers so they can learn non-violent methods of communication and stress reduction. Batterers may be self-referred, referred by partners, or court-ordered.

The mission of the Domestic Violence Program at Family and Children's Services is to assist victims of domestic violence and their children in maintaining their safety and providing a holistic approach to services that include the victims, child witnesses and abusers of domestic violence. F&CS offers a full range of services to families who have experienced domestic violence, including a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, legal advocacy through court accompaniment and referrals for legal consultation; case management; individual and group counseling for victims of domestic violence and their children; outreach with police accompaniment following 911 reports and to immigrant populations; abuser intervention services and anger management as a preventative tool for domestic violence. F&CS also works to increase community awareness by providing community education to the general public and targeted populations.

Description	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Sheltered			
Women	18	14	7
Children	10	8	2
Men	0	0	0
Counseling			
Domestic Violence Victims	*82	*77	61
Unable to Shelter	15	12	3

*Part of FY 06 and most of FY 07 F&CS therapist positions were vacant. This is reflected in the low numbers of people served. However, many more victims were served in the entire program totaling 740.

Family Crisis Center
P.O. Box 3909
Baltimore, MD 21222
410-285-4357

The Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County, Inc. (FCC) is a private non-profit organization founded nearly thirty years ago, with a mission to provide high quality services for people experiencing family conflict and domestic violence, and to provide education and consultation for the community at large, in an effort to prevent violence in families.

Over the past three decades, FCC has grown to become the most comprehensive family violence service agency in Baltimore County. Three hundred sixty-five days a year, the Center strives to fulfill its mission by providing a number of services including:

- A community-based FAMILY PSYCHOTHERAPY CLINIC, available to individuals, couples, children, and families.
- Baltimore County’s only on-site SAFE SHELTER for individuals fleeing their home because of violence or the threat of violence.
- TRANSITIONAL HOUSING, allowing survivors additional time and support to reestablish themselves in the community.
- LEGAL SERVICES including direct legal representation for victim of domestic violence in both the Circuit and District Courts of Baltimore County primarily in: Peace/ Protective Order hearings, Divorce, Child Custody and Support. FCC’s staff attorney also advises and guides pro se litigants, and provides referrals to other agencies and private attorneys.
- ADVOCACY SERVICES, including accompanying victims to court, extending outreach services through home visits to victims and facilitating survivor support groups.
- NEW BEHAVIOR GROUPS, helping abusers learn new non-violent ways to recognize and handle stress and conflict within their families.
- FCC administers Baltimore County’s CRISIS HOTLINE, providing trained volunteers to respond to crisis calls twenty-four hours a day.

Family Crisis Center	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Sheltered			
Women	256	152	111
Children	399	207	171
Men	8	3	3
Counseling			
Domestic Violence Victims	1,754	1,419	961
Unable to Shelter	91	71	205

Men Against Abusive Relationships (MAAR Inc.)

**P.O. Box 32
Riderwood, MD 21139
410-718-6227**

Men Against Abusive Relationships (MAAR INC.) provides group and individual counseling for male victims of domestic violence. MAAR is a 501c-3 non-profit that also provides an Advocate for court accompaniment, hospital companions, and outreach and education in our community. Victims are referred to appropriate treatment agencies. In 2008 treatment of more than 380 male victims of domestic violence in Baltimore County received services.

TurnAround, Inc.

**401 Washington Avenue, Suite 300
Towson, MD 21204
410-377-8111**

TurnAround, Inc., A private non-profit serving the Baltimore area since 1978, provides a range of services for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and child sexual abuse. Services include a highly skilled clinical department that helps children, adolescents, and adults heal from the devastating effects of violence. Clinician's offer individual and group counseling as well as on-site groups are local schools and service providers. TurnAround also helps ensure victim safety by providing a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter to victims and crisis intervention counseling to survivors in local hospitals through the ER program. In addition, TurnAround operates a Transitional Housing Program that helps domestic violence and sexual assault survivors gain independence and stability in the lives following abuse. TurAround's legal department assists victims to obtain protective orders. The Community Education and Training Department conducts presentations in local schools, community centers, and other non-profits that raise awareness about violence and teach participants how to end and prevent abuse.

TurnAround	2006	2007	2008
Sheltered			
Women	27	52	47
Men	0	0	1
Children	31	65	50
Counseling			
Domestic Violence Victims	122	171	203
Unable to Shelter	94	86	26

The Women’s Law Center of Maryland, Inc.
401 Bosley Avenue, Room 101
Towson, MD 21204
410-887-3162

The Women’s Law Center of Maryland (WLC), a non-profit organization, established in 1971, advocates for an equal playing field in the law for women and children. For more than a quarter of a century, the WLC has fought and won many battles to protect and preserve the rights of women—by educating the public and the judiciary on the effects of legal decisions affecting women, by monitoring compliance with the law, by seeking to change unjust laws and unjust lawmaking, and by implementing innovative programs to pave the way for systemic change.

The WLC’s **Protection Order Advocacy and Representation Project in Baltimore County** (POARP) represents victims of domestic violence at Protection Order Hearings in Circuit Court. The Project’s attorneys represent people who have been abused by an intimate partner (current or past boyfriend/girlfriend, current or ex spouse) in proceeding to obtain protection orders, enforce protection orders through contempt, and modify existing protection orders.

The project is open Monday through Friday and it is free to the victim. They are conveniently located in the Baltimore County Circuit Court on 401 Bosely Ave. in Towson Md. For more information, call 410-887-3162 for the Baltimore County office. The WLC also has POARP offices in Baltimore City 410-783-0377 and in Carroll County 410-386-2440.

The POARP offices have conducted follow-up surveys with the clients who received Protective Orders (PO) and found the following:

- 75% report the respondent has followed the PO
- 88% report no threats or abuse since the PO
- 99% would go to Court again because of violence
- 100% report it was easier to use POARP’s legal services because the office was located in the courthouse
- 92% would not have had an attorney without POARP’s services
- 100% were satisfied with POARP’s services and would use them again
- 98% felt safer after receiving services from POARP

G. Hospital Based Intervention

**Northwest Hospital
5401 Old Court Road
Baltimore, MD
410-496-7555**

Domestic Violence – A Public Health Epidemic: Research shows that in addition to domestic violence being the leading cause of injuries to women, abused women experience 60% overall higher health problems. Victims of domestic violence are seen in health care settings more often than shelters and legal settings. Hospitals provide a safe 24/7 setting for victims of domestic violence to receive help.

Northwest Hospital: Currently, Northwest Hospital Center has Baltimore County’s only formal hospital-based Domestic Violence Program. Established in late 2004, the program assures 24/7 crisis counseling, lethality assessment and safety planning to all victims, through program staff and TurnAround, Inc.’s ER Companion Program. Working closely with Baltimore County Police Domestic Violence Coordinators, the State’s Attorney’s Office, The Women’s Law Center, the Court Advocate Program at the Department of Social Services and the local domestic violence services, follow-up services are provided to ensure safety, legal assistance and counseling services for victims and their children.

Northwest Hospital Domestic Violence Program Statistics:

Year	# Of Victims Served	# Of Staff Trained
FY 2006	137	356
FY 2007	145	748
FY 2008	225	757

Hospital response in Baltimore County:

Northwest Hospital’s Domestic Violence program in conjunction with MD Network Against Domestic Violence and the MD Health Care Coalition Against Domestic Violence has trained over 300 staff at the other Baltimore County hospitals to respond to domestic violence and make appropriate referrals.

Highlights

- The First Annual Domestic Violence Conference providing resources and raising awareness on domestic violence and its impact on the lives of families and the community was held September 28, 2007, with more than 130 in attendance. The second Annual Domestic Violence Conference is scheduled for September 26, 2008.
- The partnership between the Baltimore County Service Providers, the Department of Social Services and Police Department supported 1,832 home visits to victims of Domestic Violence providing information, resources and referrals for counseling.
- The Lethality Assessment Tool project has been piloted since November 2007 in Precinct #12. Of the more than 200 victims of domestic violence screened by the Police Department to assess the potential for lethal consequences, 123 were identified in a high danger risk category.
- To strengthen communication within the Baltimore County Domestic Violence Community a Newsletter continues to be distributed to more than eighty organizations and individuals.
- The Baltimore County Department of Social Services initiated the curriculum "Owning Up" to train workshop facilitators. This is date violence and bullying prevention program that was implemented in Lansdowne Middle and High Schools reaching more than 150 students. More than 58 professionals agreed to be trained and provide future student workshops.
- The Fatality Review Team will be convened in the Fall.

State Legislative Initiatives

State Advocacy

Two domestic violence bills on the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) Legislative Agenda were passed by the 2008 Maryland General Assembly. **HB 182/SB 393**

- **Domestic Violence-Permanent Protective Order After Conviction and Imprisonment**
 - Allows a victim to request a permanent protective order if the respondent is convicted and serves a term of imprisonment of at least five years. **HB 183/SB 392**
- **Domestic Violence – Enforcement of Protective Order**
 - Authorizes a judge to order a law enforcement officer to use all reasonable and necessary force to enforce a temporary custody provision of a final protective order. Legislation that did not pass included bills making it a misdemeanor to violate a term of pretrial release; the surrender of firearms in temporary protective orders; the prohibition against a respondent in a final protective order from possessing any firearms; assault by burning; child custody; and inclusion of pets in protective orders

****Legislation Initiatives/State Advocacy reprinted from MNADV with permission from MNADV from 2007 -2008 Annual Report**

Bills Supported by MNADV

- **HB 181/SB 394 Criminal Procedure – Pretrial release – violation of Condition of “No Contact” – Penalty**
Makes it a misdemeanor to violate a condition of pretrial release that requires the defendant to have no contact with the victim. Requires a law enforcement officer to arrest a violator with or without a warrant if there is probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred. Penalty for conviction of a first offense would be a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 90 days or both; conviction of a second offense would be a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or imprisonment not exceeding 1 year of both.
HB 181 – Unfavorable report in House Judiciary Committee. SB394 – Unfavorable report in Senate Judicial Proceeding Committee.
- **HB 182/SB 393 Domestic Violence – Permanent Protective Order After Conviction and Imprisonment**
Provided that a protective order is permanent if a respondent is convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for a specified act of abuse. Amended to require that the respondent of the protective order be convicted and serve a term of imprisonment of at least five years, that the victim request the new protective order within a reasonable time after the release of the individual from prison, that the relief granted be the same as in the original protective order, and that the new final protective order be permanent unless terminated at the request of the victim.
HB 182 and SB 393 – PASSED both the House and the Senate. Signed by the Governor on May 13, 2008
- **HB 182/SB 392 Domestic Violence – Enforcement of Protective Order**
Authorizes a judge to order a law enforcement officer to use all reasonable and necessary force to enforce a temporary custody provision of a final protective order. **HB 183and SB 392– PASSED both the House and the Senate. Signed by the Governor on May 13, 2008**

- **SB 640/SB 42** **Family Law – Protective Orders – Surrender of Firearms**
 Authorizes a judge to order the surrender of firearms in a temporary protective order.
SB 43– Passed Senate on third reader with amendments. Unfavorable report in House Judiciary Committee.
- **HB 849/SB 586** **Public Safety – Restrictions on Possessions of Firearms – Conviction of Disqualifying Crime and Protective Order Respondent**
 Prohibited a person from possessing all firearms* if the person has been convicted of disqualifying crime or was a respondent in current final protective order. *HB 849 – Unfavorable report in House Judiciary Committee. SB 586 – Unfavorable report in Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.*
 *Not just regulated firearms defined in the code.
- **HB 980** **Criminal law – Substantive Crimes – Assault by Burning**
 Made it a felony of assault by burning to willfully and maliciously set fire to or burn another person. Established penalties and added this to the list of crimes of violence with enhanced penalties
No vote in House Judiciary Committee.
- **HB 1147** **Family Law – Child Custody Determinations**
 Provided for court determination of legal and physical custody of minor children. Gave primary consideration to the best interest of the child, including the consideration of certain factors and the prohibition of other factors. Authorized the court to modify a custody order or agreement under certain circumstances. *Unfavorable report in House Judiciary Committee.*
- **HB/SB 615** **Stalking and Domestic Violence – Cruelty Toward a Pet or Service Animal**
 Authorizes a court in an interim, temporary or final protective order to order a respondent to remain away from a specific pet or refrain from cruelty or aggravated cruelty towards a pet or service animal. Provides for specific penalties for failure to comply with relief ordered. Changes the definition of stalking to include a course of conduct that puts a person in reasonable fear that a pet or service animal may suffer cruelty.
SB 615 – Passed Senate; HB 1257 – Amended in House Judiciary Committee. No vote on either bill in House Judiciary Committee.
- **HB 1448** **Family Law – Final Protective Orders – Surrender of Firearms**
 Required the respondent in a final protective order to surrender any firearm in the respondent’s possession to law enforcement authorities for the duration of the protective order. *Unfavorable report in House Judiciary Committee.*

Key Organizations

Adelante Familia
3734 Eastern Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21231

Baltimore / Carroll Co. Sexual Assault
Domestic Violence Hotline
9101 Wise Avenue extended
Baltimore, MD 21219

Baltimore County Department of
Social Services
Drumcastle Government Center
6401 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21212

Baltimore County Police Department
Young & Community Resources
700 East Joppa Road
Towson, MD 21204

Baltimore County Sheriff Department
County Courts Building
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, MD 21204

Baltimore County States Attorney's Office
Family Violence Unit
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

Chana
Associate Kreiger Building
101 West Mt. Royal Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21201

Division of Parole / Probation
8914 Kelso Drive
Baltimore, MD 21221

Family & Children's Services
7000 Security Blvd.
Suite302
Baltimore, MD 21244

Family Crisis Center
P. O. Box 3909
Baltimore, MD 21222

Family Services
Circuit Court for Baltimore County
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, MD 21204

Domestic Violence Program
Northwest Hospital
5401 Old Court Road
Randallstown, MD 21133

Jewish Family Services
6 Park Center Court
Suite 211
Owings Mills, MD 21117

Legal Aid Bureau
29 West Susquehanna Avenue
Suite 305
Towson, MD 21204

La Programa Adelante
St. Clements Parrish
3734 Eastern Avenue
Lansdowne, MD 21224

MAAR, Inc.
P.O. Box 32
Riderwood, MD 21139

TurnAround Inc.
401 Washington Avenue
Suite 300
Towson, MD 21204

Women's Law Center of Maryland
305 West Chesapeake Avenue
Suite 201
Towson, MD 21204

Women's Law Center of Maryland
POARP
County Court House
401 Bosley Avenue room 101
Towson, MD 21204

