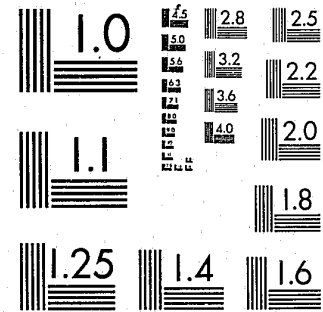


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~~SURVEY OF AGENCIES PROVIDING SERVICES TO~~
~~VICTIMS OF SEXUAL AND SPOUSAL ASSAULT IN CALIFORNIA~~

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APR 20 1981

ACQUISITIONS

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This survey is designed to determine what services are provided to victims of sexual assault by rape crisis centers, domestic violence centers, centers for sexually abused children and other service organizations operating in California. Specifically, the survey sought information on the agency's location, the population served, the services provided to the individuals, the problems facing the agency in its delivery of services, and the agency's funding.

METHODOLOGY

A list of rape crisis centers, domestic violence centers, centers for sexually abused children, and other service organizations operating in California was compiled. A total of 129 questionnaires were mailed to the agencies on the list. Of the questionnaires sent out, 77 or 59.7 percent were completed: 54 as a result of a telephone interview; 23 were returned by mail.

Thirty-three or 25.6 percent of the questionnaires were not completed because the agencies could not be contacted by either mail or telephone. Nineteen or 14.7 percent of the questionnaires reached an agency which was operating, but we were unable to obtain a response.

OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY DATA

Of the agencies that did complete the questionnaire, 43 or 55.8 percent were rape crisis centers, five or 6.5 percent were centers for sexually abused children, 23 or 29.9 percent were domestic violence

centers, and six or 7.8 percent were other service organizations that provide assistance to victims of sexual assault, though their primary function is other than providing assistance to these victims (see Table 1).

Most of the centers surveyed are located in densely-populated, urban counties (e.g., Alameda, San Francisco, Los Angeles). Those counties with few or no centers are predominately rural and sparsely populated (e.g., Alpine, Glenn, Imperial).

The amount of funding for these agencies extends from those which operate with no money to those which operate with up to \$400,000. As Table 2 indicates, while 32.9 percent of the agencies operate with less than \$10,000, 24.3 percent operate with between \$10,000 and \$30,000; 14.3 percent operate with between \$30,000 and \$50,000; and 25.8 percent operate with more than \$50,000.

Most of the respondents indicated that they obtained their funds from government sources. As shown in Table 3, 39.6 percent of the agencies receive monies from the federal government (e.g., Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act); 21.7 percent receive local funds (e.g., revenue sharing); and 13.4 percent receive state funds (e.g., Department of Social Services). About one-fourth of the agencies (25.3 percent) receive funds from private sources, including but not limited to, service organizations, corporations and foundations (e.g., Salvation Army, Young Women's Christian Association, International Business Machines Corporation).

SERVICES PROVIDED

Victims of sexual assault must deal with the emotional and physical trauma resulting from such incidents. Organizations such as rape crisis centers have been created to assist victims in coping with this trauma.

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Table 1
 Number of Rape Crisis Centers, Domestic Violence Centers,
 Centers for Sexually Abused Children and Other Centers Operating
 in California by County, November 1979

County	Rape Crisis Centers (43)	Domestic Violence Shelters (23)	Centers for Sexually Abused Children (5)	Other Centers (5)
Alameda		3	1	1
Butte	1			
Contra Costa	4			
El Dorado	1	1		
Fresno	1			
Humboldt	1	1		
Los Angeles	7	4	1	
Marin	1			
Mendocino	1	2		
Merced	1			
Monterey	1	1		
Napa		1		
Orange	3	1		1
Placer	1			
Riverside	1			
Sacramento	1	1		
San Bernardino	1			1
San Diego	1	2	1	
San Francisco	2	1	1	1
San Joaquin	1			
San Luis Obispo	1			
San Mateo	1			
Santa Barbara	3			
Santa Clara	1			
Santa Cruz	1	2	1	1
Shasta		1		
Solano	1			
Sonoma	1			
Stanislaus	1	1		
Tulare	1			
Ventura	1			
Yolo	1			

TABLE 2
 Amount of Funding for 70 Selected Agencies
 in California Providing Services to Victims of
 Sexual and Spousal Assault During Fiscal Year 1978-79

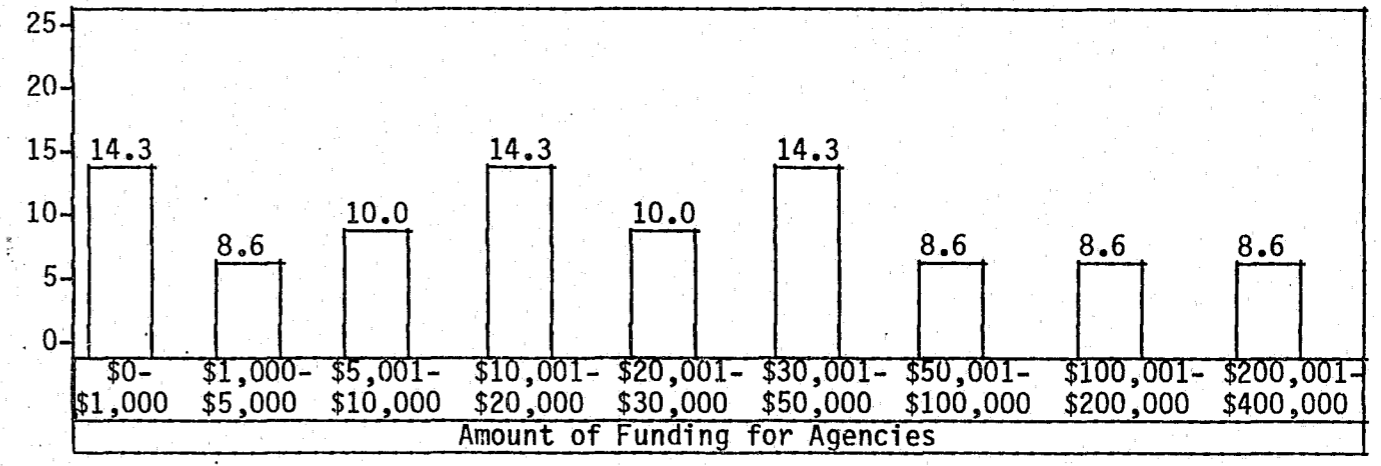
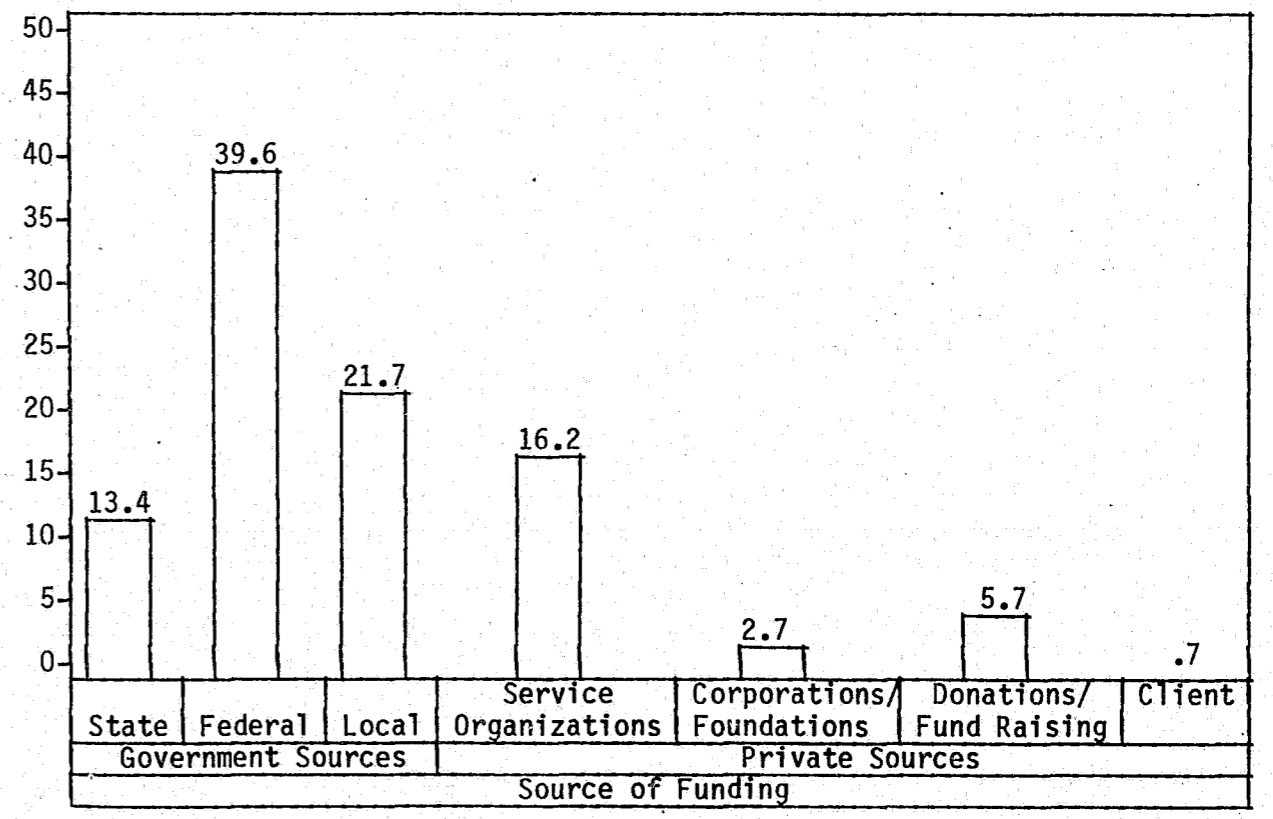


TABLE 3
 Source and Percent of Funding for 65 Selected
 Agencies in California Providing Services to Victims
 of Sexual and Spousal Assault During Fiscal Year 1978-79



All surveyed agencies indicated that they provided some type of service to victims. Table 4 shows the types of services provided by rape crisis centers, domestic violence centers, centers for sexually abused children and other service organizations operating in California by level of funding for fiscal year 1978-79. The data indicate that: 1) a majority of the agencies provide referral services as opposed to direct services or community education; 2) of the ten most frequently offered services, four were referral services, four were direct services to individuals and two were community education (see Table 5); 3) the type of service provided did not appear to be dependent on the level of funding (e.g., agencies receiving less than \$1,000 were just as likely to provide a 24-hour hotline or counseling to victim as agencies operating with more than \$100,000; and 4) there were specific patterns in the types of services provided by agencies (e.g., if an agency has a 24-hour hotline, it usually provides face-to-face crisis counseling and ongoing counseling to the victim and the victim's family).

The agencies surveyed were asked to rank order the five services which they provided most frequently. This question was interpreted, however, as asking them to rank order the five most important services they provided to victims and the community. As Table 6 indicates, 45 (69 percent) of the 70 agencies that responded to this question stated that the most important service offered was the 24-hour hotline. Ongoing counseling along with face-to-face crisis intervention were cited as two services of secondary importance. The third most important service offered by these agencies was community education (i.e., lectures to the community).

TABLE 4
Types of Services Provided by Rape Crisis Centers, Domestic Violence Centers, Centers for Sexually Abused Children and Other Services Organizations in California by Level of Funding for Fiscal Year 1978-79

SERVICES	Funding Level							a/ Other	Did not state fund	Total	
	\$ 0- 1,000	1,001- 20,000	20,001- 50,000	50,001- 100,000	100,001- 200,000	200,000- 400,000	400,000+			No.	%
Number of Agencies in Category	10	25	17	6	6	6	4	3	77	100.0	
A. Direct services to individuals:											
1) 24-hour hotline	10	24	15	4	4	5	3	2	67	87.0	
2) Family counseling	8	13	16	4	5	6	4	1	57	74.0	
3) On-going counseling for victim	10	19	17	5	4	6	4	2	67	87.0	
4) Legal assistance	8	14	11	3	2	4	3	3	48	62.3	
5) Medical assistance	7	13	11	3	1	2	4	3	44	57.1	
6) Assistance with police interrogation	8	19	16	2	1	3	3	2	54	70.1	
7) Expert witnesses for court proceedings	1	12	5	2	1	2	2	1	26	33.8	
8) Group therapy for victim	5	10	8	3	2	5	4	1	38	49.3	
9) Counseling to persons concerned with becoming sexual abusers or batterers	5	9	8	1	2	2	2	1	30	39.0	
10) Counseling to persons concerned with becoming child abusers	3	8	5	2	2	3	4	1	28	36.4	
11) Counseling to runaways	3	9	3	2	1	1	3	0	22	28.6	
12) Anonymous reporting procedures (to police)	9	15	12	4	2	1	2	1	46	59.7	
13) Transportation for victim	8	18	11	2	4	4	2	1	50	64.9	
14) Face to face crisis intervention (going out on call)	9	21	14	4	2	4	3	1	58	75.3	
15) Drop-in counseling	4	12	15	4	3	4	4	1	47	61.0	
16) Financial assistance	1	6	3	2	0	1	1	2	16	20.8	
17) Other	1	1	3	3	3	3	0	1	15	19.5	
a) Shelter	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	6	7.8	
b) Child care	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4	5.1	
B. Referral services:											
1) Shelter	9	24	16	6	6	5	4	3	73	94.8	
2) Counseling that goes beyond what center can provide	10	24	16	6	6	5	4	3	74	96.1	
3) Legal services	10	23	12	6	5	5	4	3	68	88.3	
4) State agencies that may provide assistance	9	23	14	5	5	4	4	2	66	85.7	
5) Other: a) Financial	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	6.5	
b) Medical	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	13	16.9	
c) Other	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.3	
C. Community education:											
1) Lectures to the community at high schools, colleges, etc.	10	25	13	6	5	5	3	2	69	89.6	
2) Pamphlets containing information about your center	10	21	13	6	6	5	4	2	67	87.0	
3) Self defense classes	3	14	5	3	3	3	1	0	32	41.5	
4) Information on pregnancy	7	16	9	3	3	2	2	1	43	55.8	
5) Information on birth control	6	15	8	3	3	2	2	1	40	51.9	
6) Information on venereal disease	7	16	9	4	3	2	2	0	43	55.8	
7) Other information services:											
a) Consultation to police	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	8	10.4	
b) Consultation to medical facilities	1	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	8	10.4	
c) Other	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2.6	

^a/Agencies whose primary function is not that of rape crisis, domestic violence or centers for sexually abused children (e.g., Salvation Army).

TABLE 5

The Ten Services Provided Most Often By Rape Crisis Centers, Domestic Violence Centers, Centers for Sexually Abused Children, and Other Service Organizations Operating in California

Services	Number of Agencies	
	Number (77)	Percent (100.0%)
1) Counseling that goes beyond what the center can provide	77	96.1
2) Referral to shelter of emergency housing	73	94.8
3) Lectures to the community at high schools, churches, colleges, etc.	69	89.6
4) Legal services	68	88.3
5) 24-hour hotline	67	87.0
6) Ongoing counseling to the victim	67	87.0
7) Referral to state agencies that may provide assistance	66	85.7
8) Referral to legal assistance	66	85.7
9) Face-to-face crisis intervention counseling	58	75.3
10) Family counseling	57	74.0

TABLE 6
The Five Most Frequently Provided (Important) Services by 70 Selected Agencies Serving Victims of Sexual and Spousal Abuse*

	Number of Agencies				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
A. Direct services to individuals:					
1) 24-hour hotline	45	6	5	6	1
2) Family counseling	1	7	10	7	1
3) On-going counseling for victim	2	12	8	8	6
4) Legal assistance		2	3	5	3
5) Medical assistance		1	3	3	4
6) Assistance with police interrogation			1	2	1
7) Expert witnesses for court proceedings			1		
8) Group therapy for victim		2		3	4
9) Counseling to persons concerned with becoming sexual abusers or batterers	1	1	2	1	
10) Counseling to persons concerned with becoming child abusers		1		2	1
11) Counseling to runaways			1		2
12) Anonymous reporting procedures (to police)				1	
13) Transportation for victim		1	3	2	2
14) Face to face crisis intervention (going out on call)	4	11	8	2	3
15) Drop-in counseling		1	1	3	3
16) Financial assistance					1
17) Other, shelter child care	6	6		2	1
B. Referral services:					
1) Shelter	2	2	1	1	2
2) Counseling that goes beyond what center can provide		2	3	3	6
3) Legal services		1		2	1
4) State agencies that may provide assistance	1	1	1	1	4
5) Other referrals Medical referral		1	1	1	
C. Community education:					
1) Lectures to the community at high schools, colleges, ect.	2	9	13	4	8
2) Pamphlets containing information about your center		1	1	1	3
3) Self defense classes			2	2	1
4) Information on pregnancy		1		1	
5) Information on birth control					1
6) Information on venereal disease					
7) Other information services					
8) Education of police & hospital staffs	3	1	1	1	2
9) Other	2		1		
TOTAL	70	70	70	63	62

*7 of the 77 agencies did not rank their services.

PERSONS SERVED

Respondents were asked several questions dealing with the numbers and types of persons served during the period of July 1, 1978 through June 30, 1979 (see Table 7). Most individuals served by the various agencies (e.g., rape crisis centers) were provided assistance under the information and group services component. These services included lectures, workshops, distribution of pamphlets and other community education activities. Agencies generally provide most of their services under this component rather than the individualized services component because they can reach more people through lectures and demonstration than they can by providing direct services. In addition, a majority of the persons provided with individualized services were over 14 years of age and an equal number were victims of domestic violence and non-victims.

The 31 rape crisis centers indicated that they served a total of 108,885 persons: 89,177 or 81.9 percent through information and group services; and 19,708 or 18.1 percent through individualized services. Under the individualized services component, the majority of persons served were over 14 years of age and either a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence. Approximately seven percent of the persons served were under 14 years of age.

The 21 domestic violence centers were evenly distributed in terms of the numbers of persons served under the information and group services component and the individualized services component. A large percentage of those persons served under the individualized service component were over 14 years of age and victims of domestic violence,

TABLE 7
Number of Persons Served by Type of Service
and Agency for Fiscal Year 1978-79

Categories of Services	Type of Agency									
	Rape Crisis Center (31 Agencies)		Domestic Violence Center (21 Agencies)		Centers for Sexually Abused Children (3 Agencies)		Miscellaneous Agencies Providing Assistance (4 Agencies)		TOTAL* (59 Agencies)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total persons served	108,885	100.0	70,278	100.0	5,610	100.0	117,637	100.0	302,410	100.0
Information and group services	89,177	81.9	32,254	43.3	4,314	76.9	100,555	85.5	227,300	75.1
Individualized services	19,708	18.1	38,024	52.7	1,296	23.1	17,082	14.5	75,110	24.8
Individualized services to persons age 14 and over	16,620	100.0	24,989	100.0	849	100.0	12,491	100.0	54,949	100.0
Victims of sexual assault	11,174	67.2	1,495	6.0	110	13.0	282	2.2	13,061	23.8
Victims of domestic violence	3,620	21.8	16,061	64.3	9	1.1	355	2.8	20,407	37.1
Non-victims	1,826	11.0	7,433		730	86.0	11,854	94.9	21,481	39.0
Individualized services to children under 14	966	100.0	6,147	100.0	448	100.0	4,069	100.0	11,630	100.0
Victims of sexual abuse	715	74.0	321	5.2	206	46.0	51	1.2	1,343	11.5
Non-victims of sexual abuse	251	26.0	5,826	94.8	242	54.0	4,018	98.8	10,287	88.5

Note: Discrepancies in numbers are due to inaccuracies in information received from centers. For example: theoretically, when "individualized services to persons over 14" is added to "individualized services to persons under 14" the total should equal "individualized services." However, because of inaccurate figures, this cannot be achieved.

*Only 59 of the 77 agencies who completed the questionnaire provided answers to the series of questions dealing with numbers and types of persons served.

with approximately six percent victims of sexual assault. The majority of persons served under 14 years of age were not victims of sexual abuse.

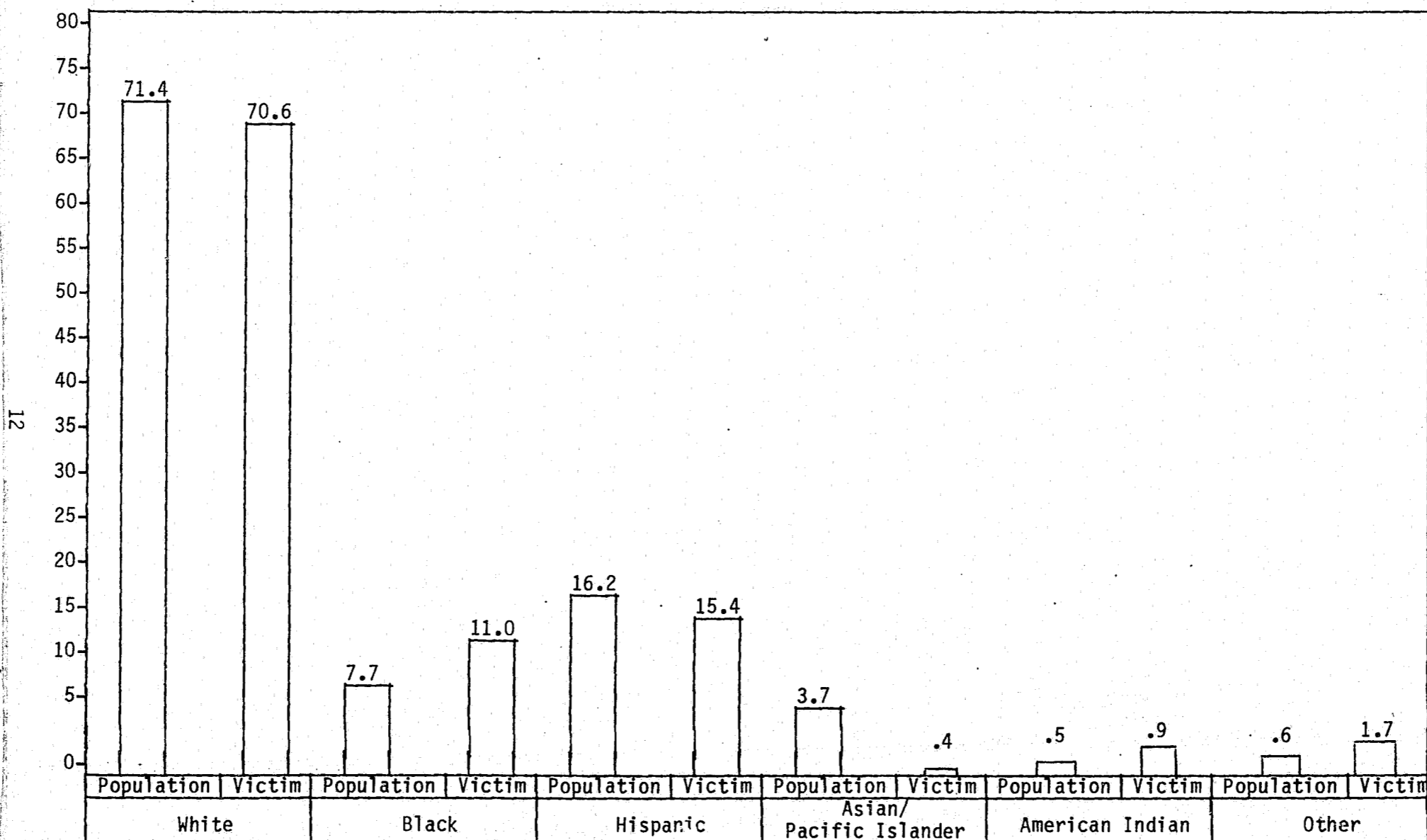
The three centers for sexually abused children served 5,610 persons: 4,314 or 76.9 percent through their information and services component and 1,296 or 23.1 percent through their individualized services component. About two-thirds of the persons receiving individualized services were over 14 years of age and primarily non-victims. Of the 448 persons under 14 years of age who received individualized services, 46 percent were victims of sexual abuse and 54 percent were non-victims.

There were four other agencies which provided services to victims or community education in the area of sexual assaults. Most of the persons were served under the information and group services component through services such as lectures and workshops. Almost all persons provided with individualized services were non-victims.

ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS SERVED BY 25 SELECTED RAPE CRISIS AND SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILDREN CENTERS

Table 8 illustrates the relationship between the ethnicity of victims served by sexual assault centers and the corresponding distribution of that race in California. The table was compiled with information received from the 25 sexual assault agencies that answered this section. The ethnic distribution of victims served by agencies generally reflects the ethnic distribution of the community in which they are located. For example, an agency surveyed in East Los Angeles (an area with a predominantly Hispanic population) served over 80 percent Hispanic victims; an agency in Fort Bragg, an area with a large white population, served over

TABLE 8
 Ethnic Distribution of Sexual Assault Victims Served by 24
 Selected Rape Crisis Centers and Centers for Sexually Abused Children as Compared
 to Their Distribution in the Total Population of California in 1976



*This table includes the ethnic distribution of 25 rape crisis and sexually abused children centers. The ethnic distribution from one center was omitted because it served solely Asian clients. The inclusion of such information would have skewed the percentage of Asian clients to an artificially high level.

served over 95 percent white victims; an agency in one of Los Angeles' Asian communities only served Asian victims. (This last agency was excluded from Table 8 because the figure artificially inflated the percent of victims that were Asian.)

Table 8 indicates that whites, who make up 71.4 percent of California's population, account for 70.6 percent of the victims served by the rape crisis and sexually abused children centers. This figure indicates services to white victims correspond to their ethnic distribution in the state. It should be noted, however, that more than 70.6 percent of the clients of rape crisis centers are probably white. Many of the agencies that did not maintain statistics on race (therefore not included in this table) were in areas with a predominantly white population. Some agencies indicated that their clientele was over 90 percent white. If these agencies had been included, the data would indicate that crisis centers serve a higher percentage of white victims.

Blacks, who make up 7.7 percent of the state's population, accounted for 11 percent of the victims served by sexual assault agencies. The number of victims is 42 percent higher than the ethnic representation in the state. This figure can be interpreted to mean that 1) the agencies which reported happened to serve more blacks because blacks, in fact, are sexually assaulted more often than other ethnic groups, or 2) black women report rape more often to rape crisis centers than other ethnic groups. Rape crisis centers stated that because few of their counselors are minorities, minority women are hesitant to use their services. It is, therefore, not likely that black women report rape more often than other ethnic groups. Although there

is no accurate statistical information to indicate that minority women are raped more often than white women, some centers expressed the belief that minority women are more prone to attack.

Hispanics, who make up 16.2 percent of California's population, account for 15.4 percent of the clients of rape crisis centers. Rape crisis centers stated that the lack of Spanish-speaking and Hispanic counselors, discourages Hispanics from using their services.

Asians make up 3.7 percent of the state's population and 0.4 percent of the persons served by rape crisis agencies. Centers stated that services to Asian women are particularly low because Asian women rarely report sexual assaults to a rape crisis agency or a police station. There is also a lack of counselors that are both ethnically and culturally Asian. The majority of Asian women that do staff such agencies are the second or third generation in this country and are culturally American. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that most of these women are not fluent in any Asian/Pacific Islander language.

It should be noted that data relating to the number of sexual assault victims by race is almost nonexistent. The information that does exist is not statistically reliable. One reason for this is underreporting. Although the incidence of rape is underreported by all ethnic groups, it is underreported much more by the minority community. Several reasons are given for this:

1) Insensitivity and skeptical treatment by the police, judiciary and hospitals is a major reason why women of all races do not report rape. This fear is magnified in minority communities and is attributed to the belief that law enforcement has traditionally treated crime

in minority communities less seriously than in white communities. Minority women believe that police skepticism and insensitivity of their complaints is greater than that shown to white women.

2) Language barriers of Asian and Hispanic women who do not speak English intensifies underreporting among those ethnic groups. If there is no one at the police station that speaks her language, a victim of sexual assault feels all the more isolated and alone. The difficulty and embarrassment of having to relate her account of the attack through an interpreter to police and the courts discourages reporting.

3) Although myths regarding sexual assault victims are prevalent among people of all races, those beliefs are intensified in many minority groups. Many minority women fear that their culture will reject or treat them as suspect if they have been sexually victimized and, therefore, they do not report the crime.

LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT WITH VICTIMS SERVED

Victims of sexual assault are often reluctant to report the incident because of the trauma associated with retelling the story, the gathering of evidence, and the perceived feeling that the accused will probably be released by the criminal justice system. The survey asked whether those victims who received direct services also reported their case to the police and, of these reported incidents, how many resulted in arrests. Table 9 indicates that for the 59 agencies responding to this question, 34,660 victims were served. Of these 34,660 victims, 28,532 or 82.3 percent did not report the crime to the police or it was not known if a

TABLE 9

Law Enforcement Involvement with Victims^a
 Receiving Agency Services by General Type of Crime
 Fiscal Year 1978-79

Law Enforcement Involvement	General Type of Crime							
	Total All Offenses		Sexual Assault		Domestic Violence		Sexually Abused Children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total victim served	34,660	100.0	12,987	100.0	20,350	100.0	2,323	100.0
Crime not reported to police or not known if reported	28,532	82.3	9,477	73.0	18,296	89.9	759	57.4
Crime reported to police	6,128	17.7 (100.0)	3,510	27.0 (100.0)	2,054	10.1 (100.0)	1,564	42.6 (100.0)
Arrests by police	1,185	3.4 (19.3)	857	6.6 (24.4)	240	1.2 (11.7)	88	6.6 (15.6)
Unknown	4,943	14.3 (80.7)	2,653	20.4 (76.6)	1,814	8.9 (88.3)	476	36.0 (84.4)

^aThis table includes material from 59 of the centers served.

crime was reported. A total of 17.7 percent of the victims reported the crime to the police, 3.4 percent of these led to an arrest by the police, and the results of 14.3 percent were unknown.

More cases of domestic violence were not reported to the police or, it was not known if they were reported, than cases of sexual assault or sexually abused children (89.9, 73.0 and 57.4 percent respectively).

Table 9 also indicates that: 1) of the 12,987 incidents of sexual assault, 27 percent of the victims reported the crime to law enforcement; and 24.4 percent of these resulted in an arrest; 2) of the 20,350 incidents of domestic violence, 10.1 percent were reported and 11.7 percent resulted in an arrest; 3) of the 2,323 incidents of child sexual abuse, 42.6 percent were reported and 15.6 percent resulted in an arrest.

PROBLEMS

The agencies were asked to identify the five major problems confronting them, and, from the perspective of their agency, the five major problems now confronting victims of sex crimes in California.

The majority of the respondents indicated that the level of funding for their centers was their major problem. Other problems identified were lack of education within the community with respect to sexual assaults and lack of support for victims of sexual assault by law enforcement, hospitals and the judicial system.

Lack of Funding and Other Related Problems

As was noted earlier, a large proportion of the agencies surveyed are poorly funded, especially in light of the services they provide.

Sixty-three of the 77 agencies responding to the questionnaire cited lack of funding as one of their major problems.

Coupled with this lack of funding are inconsistent sources of funding. A source of funding that an agency derived monies from one year may not be available the next. This results in a great deal of personnel hours spent locating new funding sources. Fifteen agencies cited frustration with the lack of a consistent funding source.

The problem of funding also affects the agencies' ability to attract and hire professional, well-trained staff persons and to maintain a low attrition rate. Thirty-five agencies reported that the lack of funds resulted in their inability to pay and hire a well-trained, professional staff. Twenty agencies reported that high turnover in personnel was directly related to lack of funding.

Several agencies noted that the size of their budgets prevented them from providing some needed services: temporary housing and emergency funds for victims of sexual assault.

Community Education

Problems directly associated to the community's education relating to victims of sexual assault were cited by numerous agencies.

Thirty-two agencies cited the primary problem to be that of society's misconceptions about the crime of sexual assault. The basic misconceptions centering around rape as a crime of passion as opposed to a crime of violence are that the victim could have prevented the incident if she or he wanted to, and that the after effects are temporary as opposed to long term. The result of these myths is that the victim is

held suspect by the community, police, family, spouse, the judiciary and ultimately himself or herself. Agencies view these myths as the underlying source of most of the problems encountered by victims of sexual assault.

Twelve agencies noted that many individuals do not know what to do or where to go if they are the victims of a sexual assault. The knowledge of the general public, specifically women, of the steps that are taken once a sexual assault is reported is limited. The agencies perceive the need to focus some of their resources on public education through lectures, workshops and classes.

Several respondents stated that health care professionals and community persons, such as teachers and parents are often unwilling to acknowledge the problem of sexually abused children and provide the necessary treatment. In many situations where a child is sexually abused, the child feels guilty and takes much of the blame for the act.

Another problem cited by seven agencies was the lack of community awareness surrounding the problems of male rape victims and the sexual abuse of male children. Male victims are usually molested by other males. Since the frequency and visibility of sexual assaults on males is less than that for sexual assaults on females, there is a concomitant lack of adequate community support, understanding and services to assist these victims.

Hospitals

Concern has been expressed that the medical personnel who examine the rape victim display a certain degree of insensitivity towards the

victim and the resulting trauma from the act. Some personnel often collect, handle or store evidence improperly so that it cannot be used later in the courtroom.

Fourteen agencies cited this insensitive treatment as one of the five major problems confronting the sexual assault victim. This problem is manifested in several ways: 1) lack of immediate attention to the victim; 2) lack of an efficient evidence collecting procedure; 3) skepticism of victim's claims; 4) refusing to treat victims of sexual assault; and 5) general disregard for the mental and physical comfort of the victim.

Law Enforcement and Courts

There is a continuing concern regarding the adequacy of the criminal justice system's response to the victim of sexual assaults. Of particular concern is the treatment the victims receive by the police and courts after a report is filed and the case proceeds to trial.

Twenty-five agencies noted a lack of sensitivity on the part of law enforcement personnel to the victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, while 23 agencies responded that judges, district attorneys and defense attorneys were insensitive to the rape victims.

This insensitivity is manifested in several ways: 1) the manner in which the victim is treated is often harsh and rough, e.g., victim may be seen as the offender; 2) victims of domestic violence are often not informed about alternative courses of action available to them, e.g., obtaining a restraining order against the perpetrator, making a citizens arrest.

While this insensitivity is not exhibited by all the criminal justice agents, and recognizing that there has been great improvement in recent years, the fact still remains that police and court personnel need to be educated and trained with respect to the problems victims of sexual assault may encounter.

Several other problems cited were: 1) at times, district attorneys do not file a case even when there is sufficient evidence to warrant trial; 2) defendants are allowed to plea to a lesser included offense; 3) the court delays have a traumatic effect on the victim; 4) there are few convictions; and 5) penalties for convictions are not harsh enough. This latter comment should be qualified in light of the passage of SB 13 (Richardson) which increased penalties for various sex crimes, including rape.

There were several concerns expressed by some of the respondents with respect to the effect of the trial process on the victim: 1) in some cases, the defense attorney may call the rape crisis counselor as a witness for the defense thus excluding her presence and support for the victim at other points in the trial; 2) there is a question as to the confidential nature of the discussions between the counselor and the victim; one center noted that they did not keep detailed information about conversations with victims for fear that it would be used later against the victim.

Other Problems

One concern of several of the agencies was their inability to reach and serve the state's minority population. This is in part due to the small number of minority counselors. There was also concern expressed

that persons in rural counties were not provided with the necessary services. There is often a great distance to travel to reach a center; because of time, staff, and money limitations, centers are not able to go to the victim to provide crisis counseling.

Eleven agencies stated that fear of retaliation by the offender is a major reason why women do not report the crime. This fear is exacerbated by the fact that some offenders are released on bail and thus are not removed from society pending disposition of the case by the courts.

Several respondents noted that victims have difficulties obtaining funds or assistance from the Victims of Crime Compensation Program. Other respondents noted that there is a need for low cost housing or temporary housing for victims to relocate after an attack.

Some of the major problems include the long-term psychological effect on the victim, the reluctance of victims to report the crime to law enforcement, and failure of families of sexually abused children to follow through with treatment.

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