

# City of Chicago

## Domestic Violence Help Line

### 2010 Report Highlights

#### Synopsis of a call from June 2010:

A victim wanted an order of protection but her employer would not allow her the time off to go to the courthouse. She inquired about obtaining one by mail. The victim was given information on laws protecting domestic violence victims in the workplace (VESSA). She said she would share it with her supervisor.

#### Domestic Violence Help Line

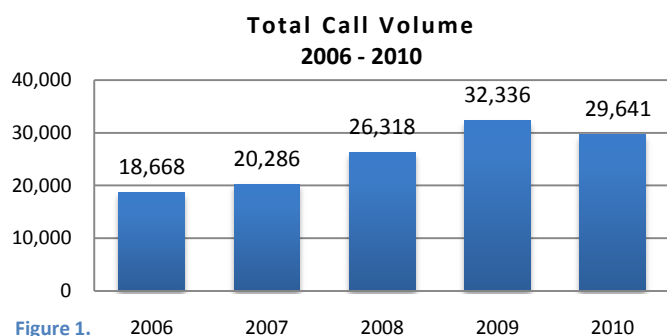
The City of Chicago, Domestic Violence Help Line is a 24 hour, 7 days a week, toll-free telephone service that is a clearinghouse to domestic violence (DV) services in Chicago and throughout Illinois. The service is confidential and multi-lingual.

Established in 1998, the Help Line is a service of the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Division on Domestic Violence and is a partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network.

Help Line advocates provide callers with information, safety planning, and transfers to domestic violence agencies. Advocates have access to over 400 agencies that provide domestic violence services in Chicago and throughout Illinois.

The annual Domestic Violence Help Line Report summarizes information collected for all calls. This highlight presents key findings published in the 2010 Help Line Report.

#### Call Volume



In 2010, the Help Line answered 29,641 calls (see Figure 1). Nearly 2,500 calls were answered monthly. Since inception in 1998, the Help Line answered over 250,000 calls and call volume increased by 4%, on average.

Of the total callers, 78% were from Chicago, 8% were from Cook County (excluding Chicago), 13% were from Illinois (excluding Cook), and 1% were out of state callers. Callers identified the police (45%) or a domestic violence or social service agency (26%) as their referral source to the Help Line.

#### Classification of Calls 2010

Calls to the Help Line were classified to describe the type of service provided to callers. As shown in Figure 2, 72% of callers sought domestic violence related support that included, calls for victim services, information only, or transfers to service

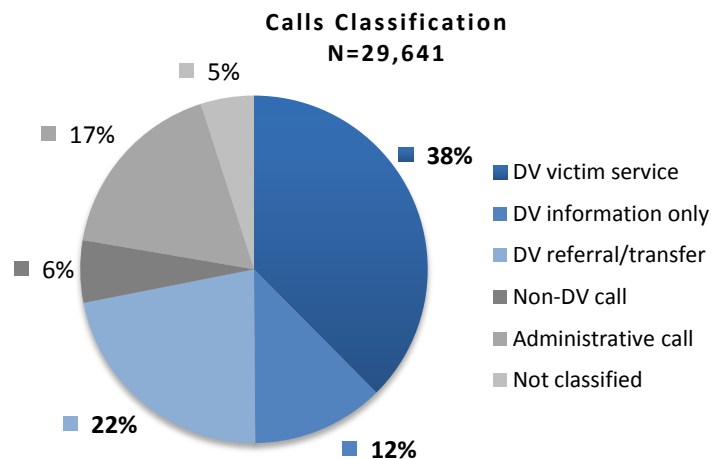


Figure 2. providers for repeat victim callers. Most calls were victim related (60%) calls for service or transfers.

#### Victim Calls for Service

Victim service calls were most often placed by victims themselves (85%), although anyone can call the Help Line on behalf of a victim. Table 1 summarizes selected characteristics and experiences of victim service calls from Chicago, Cook County (excluding Chicago), and Illinois (excluding Cook). It depicts subtle, but notable differences across the state.

#### Victim Information

Table 1.

Victim	Chicago	Cook	Illinois
Female	92%	94%	95%
Median age	31	34	34
Race	58% Black	41% Black	53% White
Have child 0-18	46%	53%	46%
English speaker	89%	89%	92%
Physical abuse	90%	92%	89%
Shelter requested	36%	46%	45%
Referred by police	60%	49%	51%

\*See full report for complete description of victim characteristics and experiences.

In summary, Chicago victims were younger, more often Black, requested shelter less, and referred by the police more than Cook and Illinois victims. Cook and Illinois victims were older, more White and less Black, and requested shelter more than Chicago victims. Cook victims had more children and were physically abused slightly more than Chicago and Illinois victims.