



WISCONSIN COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

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## Effective, Vital & Woefully Underfunded: Sexual Assault Prevention & Victim Services in WI March 2017

Often more stable than federal funds, state funding represents how seriously our state takes sexual violence. We should take it seriously indeed. In Wisconsin:<sup>i</sup>

- **390,000** women have experienced rape
- **912,000** women have experienced sexual violence other than rape
- **507,000** men have experienced sexual violence other than rape
- In 2015, sexual assault service provider agencies had **only enough funds to serve 12,223 survivors.**<sup>ii</sup>

The Population-based Staffing Model<sup>iii</sup> shows that increasing funding for the Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) grant program from \$2.1 million to \$5.88 million annually **is necessary to provide standardized, core sexual assault prevention initiatives and victim services in every county.** This would enable providers to **address survivors' needs and to reduce the long-term costs and consequences** of sexual assault for survivors, their families, their employers, healthcare, law enforcement, and other public systems.

An additional 5% of the annual SAVS funding (\$0.294 million based on \$5.88 million) should be appropriated to support the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) in meeting the need for increased training and technical assistance to SAVS grantees. WCASA is the only state-wide membership, training and technical assistance agency in Wisconsin for sexual assault service provider agencies. WCASA receives no state and limited federal funds to provide technical assistance and training.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Budget request: \$6.174 million (\$5.88 + \$0.294 million) via General Purpose Revenue (GPR) each year, 2017-18 and 2018-19, for the sexual assault victim services grant program and related technical assistance.</li><li>• Current funding: \$2.138 million annually GPR, the highest level yet.</li></ul> |
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### The Cost Savings Are Enormous

The economic cost of sexual assault ranges from **\$87,000 to \$240,776 per assault.** This accounts for medical and victim services, loss of productivity, decreased quality of life, and law enforcement resources.<sup>iv</sup> Overall, sexual assault has the **highest annual victim costs at \$127 billion per year** (excluding child sex abuse).<sup>v</sup>

Also of concern to employers, a study found that half of survivors quit their jobs or were forced to resign in the year following their assaults because of the crime's impact on their well-being.<sup>vi</sup> Survivors of childhood sexual abuse experience significant problems later in life impacting educational attainment, job performance, and earnings.<sup>vii</sup> Individuals sexually assaulted while adolescents see a **lifetime income loss of roughly \$241,600.**<sup>viii</sup>

### Invest in What Works and Is Essential

#### **Sexual Violence Prevention Initiatives**

SAVS grantees are typically community-based nonprofit agencies that provide services, described below, and conduct outreach, education, and prevention initiatives. This includes universal school-based prevention programs. A systematic review of 53 studies of these types of programs found the following:<sup>ix</sup>

- Programs were effective in reducing violent behavior among students in all school environments, regardless of student ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or crime rate.
- By school level, the median effects on violent behavior were:
  - High school students: median relative reduction of 29.2%
  - Middle school students: median relative reduction of 7.3%
  - Elementary school students: median relative reduction of 18%
  - Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students: median relative reduction of 32.4%

Direct services aside, in 2013 SAVS grantees provided **131,044 Wisconsinites with outreach, education and prevention programming** concerning sexual violence.<sup>x</sup>

## Sexual Assault Victim Services

SAVS grantees provide sexual assault survivors free counseling, referrals, as well as guidance and information throughout the medical and criminal justice processes. A 2006 study found that sexual assault survivors assisted by an advocate during the criminal justice process were **more likely to report a crime to police, and the case was more likely to be investigated.**<sup>xi</sup> In addition, survivors assisted by advocates:<sup>xii</sup>

- experience less physical health challenges, self-blame, guilt, and depression than without advocates
- experience less secondary trauma or re-victimization in the medical and criminal justice systems
- are more likely to receive information about and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases
- are less reluctant to seek further help

Grantees' victim advocates help **ensure that survivors are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect for their privacy.** Treating survivors in this manner not only is **required under Wisconsin's Crime Victim Rights laws, but also helps other survivors feel safer to report** these drastically underreported crimes. In fact, approximately **65% of sexual assaults go unreported** annually.<sup>xiii</sup>

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The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Inc. (WCASA) is a membership agency comprised of 54 assault service provider agencies across the state working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. WCASA's mission is to create the social change necessary to end sexual violence. For more information, please contact Dominic Holt at 608-257-1516 ext. 113 or [dominich@wcasa.org](mailto:dominich@wcasa.org), or visit [www.wcasa.org](http://www.wcasa.org).

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<sup>i</sup> These are prevalence estimates using randomized, anonymous telephone surveys. Respondents did not necessarily report the crime to law enforcement. National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Email correspondence with Wisconsin Department of Justice.

<sup>iii</sup> Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault. A Population-based Staffing Model for State-Funded Sexual Assault Prevention & Victim Services. (September 2016). <https://www.wcasa.org/wysiwyg/images/WCASA%20SAVS%20Funding%20Proposal%20E2%80%93%20Population-based%20Staffing%20Model%20%28September%202016%29.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> Each study uses a slightly different methodology. The White House Council on Women and Girls. Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call to Action. (January 2014). [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/sexual\\_assault\\_report\\_1-21-14.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/sexual_assault_report_1-21-14.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> Although it is an older source, "Victim Costs and Consequences" is helpful because it compares the costs of sexual assault to that of other violent crimes. This study's data was also included in the social White House report. Miller et al. Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look (NCJ 155282). (1996). <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/victcost.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> Ellis, Atkeson, & Calhoun. An Assessment of Long Term Reaction to Rape. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*. 90, 263-266. (1993).

<sup>vii</sup> MacMillan. Adolescent Victimization and Income Deficits in Adulthood: Rethinking the Costs of Criminal Violence from a Life Course Perspective. *Criminology*. 38, 553-588. (2000). Anda et al. Childhood Abuse, Household Dysfunction, and Indicators of Impaired Worker Performance in Adulthood. *The Permanente Journal*. 8(1), 30-38. (2004). <http://xnet.kp.org/permanentejournal/winter04/childhood.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>ix</sup> Guide to Community Preventive Services. School-based Programs to Reduce Violence. (Last updated: June 2005). [www.thecommunityguide.org/violence/schoolbasedprograms.html](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/violence/schoolbasedprograms.html)

<sup>x</sup> Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau. Crime and Victim Services. Informational Paper 60. Page 9. (January 2015) [https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/informational\\_papers/january\\_2015/0060\\_crime\\_victim\\_and\\_witness\\_informational\\_paper\\_60.pdf](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/informational_papers/january_2015/0060_crime_victim_and_witness_informational_paper_60.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> Campbell. Rape Survivors' Experiences with the Legal and Medical Systems: Do Rape Victim Advocates Make a Difference? *Violence Against Women*. 12, 30-45. (2006). <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/12/1/30.abstract>

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xiii</sup> U.S. Bureau of Justice. National Crime Victimization Survey. Victimization Not Reported to the Police (2006-2010). (August 2012.)