

Growing

Season

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From the Director’s Desk



If 2024 was the year of change for this coalition—a new name, a new logo, a new executive director—2025 was the year that we hit the ground running. We called this year’s annual report “Growing Season” because it summed up 2025 perfectly; our team has grown, and so has our impact. We hosted more trainings, provided more technical assistance, advocated for more state funding, provided more legal assistance, and reached more people than ever through our awareness efforts. And while this growth was positive, it was in response to a growing need. Victims and survivors’ calls for help have also never been greater.

In recent years, we’ve seen record numbers of victims and survivors reaching out to advocacy programs for life-saving services. On a positive note, this means advocacy programs are well-known, and funding increases have allowed them to reach more survivors. On a less positive note, this year’s statistics also indicate that domestic and sexual violence are ever-present in North Dakota. But progress is not always linear, and I believe this year’s growth still has us on an upward slope.

To our supporters, thank you for cheering us on as we work toward our goal of building a violence-free North Dakota. To our members, the work you do is not easy. Being on the front lines and supporting survivors who have experienced violence and trauma at unimaginable levels requires incredible strength and resilience. You are the foundation of our coalition. To our board of directors, your support and belief in the strength of the coalition has made all this new growth possible. To victims and survivors in North Dakota, you are at the heart of everything we do. We stand with you. And finally, to the NDDSVS team, I am incredibly proud of all that we accomplished in 2025. If our coalition is a patchwork quilt of different people, communities, and ideas, you are the thread—often unseen, but uniting us all together nonetheless.

As you read this report, I hope that you, like me, are left feeling energized about what we can accomplish in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Seth O’Neill
Executive Director

Our Team

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Attorney

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Darci Boechler
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Tania Barnhart
Board Member

Marie Collins
Board Member

Jolene Crosswhite
Board Member

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Gourneau**
Board Member

Chad Litton
Board Member

Sheila Morris
Board Member

Susan Rittenour
Board Member



Our Mission

Ending domestic and sexual
violence in North Dakota

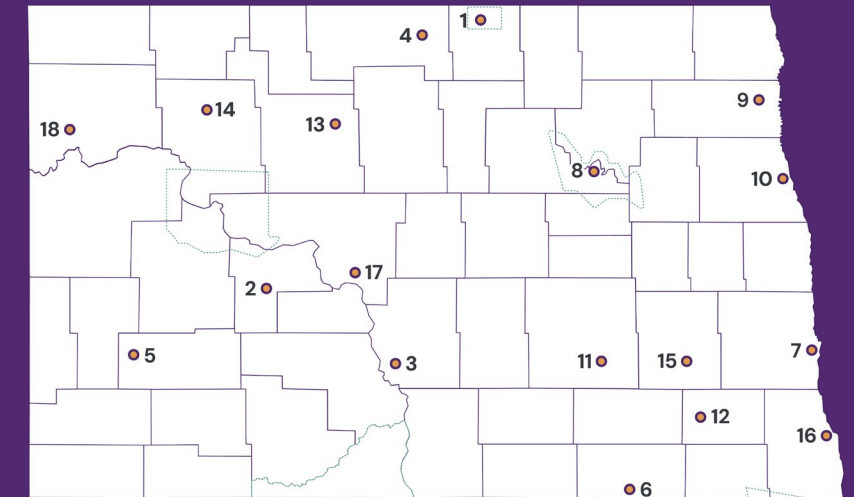


Our Vision

A violence-free North Dakota

Our Member Organizations

The North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition (NDD SVC) works alongside our member organizations—18 domestic violence/sexual assault victim advocacy centers located across the state—to create a unified support network for survivors.



NDD SVC does not provide direct services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence, but our member organizations do. While our members provide crisis hotlines, emergency shelter, counseling, and other vital services, we provide our members and their community partners with training, resources, and technical assistance on providing quality, trauma-informed services.

Together, we create a statewide support network of professionals dedicated to improving the safety and well-being of victims and survivors.

- Hearts of Hope**
Belcourt - Turtle Mountain
Band of Chippewa
- Women's Action &
Resource Center**
Beulah
- Abused Adult
Resource Center**
Bismarck
- Family Crisis Center**
Bottineau
- Domestic Violence &
Rape Crisis Center**
Dickinson
- Kedish House**
Ellendale
- Rape & Abuse
Crisis Center**
Fargo
- Spirit Lake Victim
Assistance**
Fort Totten - Spirit
Lake Nation
- Domestic Violence &
Abuse Center Inc.**
Grafton
- Community Violence
Intervention Center**
Grand Forks
- Safe Shelter**
Jamestown
- Abuse Resource
Network**
Lisbon
- Domestic Violence
Crisis Center**
Minot
- Domestic Violence
Program NW ND**
Stanley
- Abused Persons
Outreach Center**
Valley City
- Three Rivers Crisis
Center**
Wahpeton
- McLean Family
Resource Center**
Washburn
- Family Crisis Shelter**
Williston



Snapshot: Domestic & Sexual Violence in 2025

Nationwide Impact

Nationally, about 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner and reported an intimate partner violence-related impact during their lifetime (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

North Dakota Impact

In 2025, NDDSV's 18 member organizations served 7,527 victims of domestic and sexual violence. This is a 2.2% decrease in total victims served from 2024. Although there was a slight decline from the previous year, advocacy programs are still serving an unprecedented number of victims in their communities. The average number of victims served in the five years post-COVID-19 pandemic (2021-2025) is about 18% higher than the average number of victims served in the five years before the pandemic (2015-2019). But increased state funding has helped domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy centers meet the growing need for services. So while it's disheartening to see such high numbers of new victims, it also means more victims and survivors are being connected to life-saving support than ever before. It means that safety, hope, and healing are at an all-time high too.

6,218 new victims

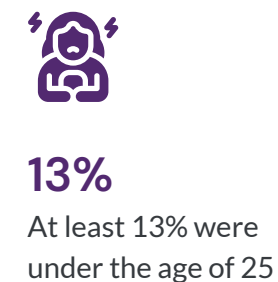
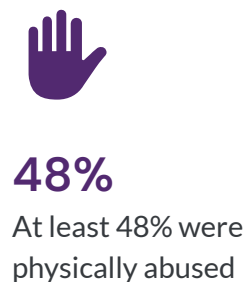
of domestic violence were served by 18 domestic violence/sexual assault advocacy centers across North Dakota.

1,309 primary victims

and 202 secondary victims of sexual assault were served by 18 domestic violence/sexual assault advocacy centers across North Dakota.

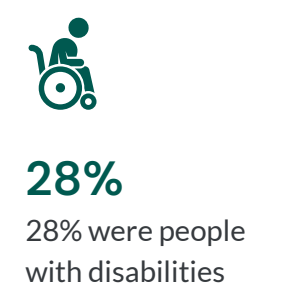
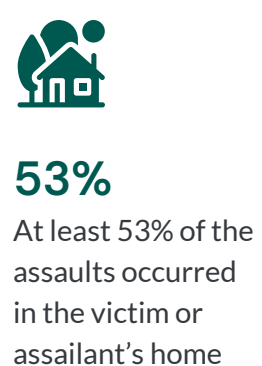
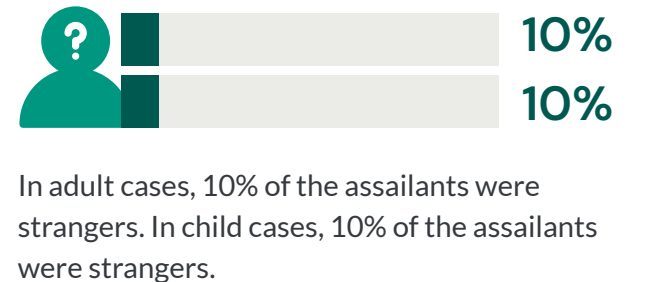
Domestic Violence

Of the 6,218 new victims of domestic violence in 2025:



Sexual Assault

Of the 1,309 new primary victims of sexual assault in 2025:



Find more annual statistics at nddsv.org/get-information/statistics

**Statistics represent new victims served in 2025. New = unduplicated for calendar year. Primary victims refers to the victim/survivor whom the sexual assault and/or child sexual abuse was directed at. Secondary victims refers to those who are indirectly affected by the sexual assault—i.e., children, siblings, spouses or intimate partners, grandparents, other affected relatives, friends, neighbors, etc. The victim or assailant's gender was not identified in some cases. Statistics include data from 18 domestic violence/sexual assault advocacy organizations.*

Training

33 Trainings

Some trainings held multiple sessions and covered a variety of topics.

293 Hours of Training

Some networking meetings also included training. Those hours are counted here. 293 hours is equal to over 12 straight days of training, or more than 36 eight-hour work days.

1,049 Training Participants

Training participant count includes duplicates since many participants attended multiple training sessions.

NDDSVSVC encourages communities to start talking about domestic and sexual violence—how to identify it, how to help those affected by it, and how to prevent it. Our trainings cover a wide range of topics, including both foundational advocacy work as well as other relevant or “trending” topics as they emerge. Training topics for 2025 included: legal advocacy for survivors who are minors, nonprofit fiscal management, LGBTQ+ domestic violence, strangulation, alcohol-facilitated sexual assault, recognizing brain injuries in survivors, and many more.

Who Does NDDSVSVC Train?

NDDSVSVC provides training for our member organizations and their multidisciplinary community partners.



Advocates



Attorneys and Judges



Law Enforcement



Medical Professionals



Social Service Providers



TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

Strangulation: The Last Warning Shot

Strangulation is a serious and immediate warning sign for a potential homicide. It's one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence and can make you lose consciousness within 5-10 seconds. If a victim is strangled even one time, she is 750% more likely to be killed by her partner. This 2-day training, presented by Gael Strack and Nate Griesse from Alliance for HOPE International, brought together advocates, prosecutors, law enforcement, and forensic nurse examiners to help them improve our state's response to strangulation crimes in domestic violence and sexual assault cases.

From training participants:

“Thank you for a great training and for making it comfortable to talk, agree or disagree and learn all at the same time. Keep being a rockstar—you matter and you made me (us) feel as though our work is appreciated.”

— Training Participant

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

Advanced Legal Issues Training

The 2025 legislative session brought several changes to North Dakota's civil protection order statute. On day one of this 2-day training, Seth O'Neill, NDDSVSVC's Executive Director, educated advocates on the changes to the law and how it will affect victims, advocates, and the legal system. Day two of this training brought in global domestic violence expert Melissa (Petrangelo) Scaia to train advocates on identifying the predominant aggressor in domestic violence cases. This information helps ensure advocates are providing supportive services to victims and not abusers posing as victims.



“I already have promoted this training and its content to many other agencies. Great information!”

— Training Participant

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance (TA) is a broad term used to describe providing support on a particular issue or need. NDDSVCS provides TA through problem-solving, sharing best practices, and providing resources. Providing TA is like consulting, or as we like to say, we “help the helpers.”

Most commonly, we’re providing TA to staff at our 18 member organizations, but we also provide support to state agencies, legislators, media professionals, and the general public.

Top TA Topics

Members most often reached out for technical assistance on managing grants, standards of domestic violence intervention programs, and securely collecting and storing program service data.



Funding Sources/Grants



Domestic Violence Offender Intervention Programs



Data Collection



Civil Protection Orders



Publication

Provided TA on 353 Topics

The NDDSVCS team provided TA on 353 topics over the course of 2025.

Most TA was provided over email, with video conference and telephone being the second and third most common methods of providing TA.

333 Hours of TA Provided

This equates to nearly 14 days worth of technical assistance.

“NDDSVCS’s training, technical assistance, legal assistance, grant management, and advocacy and prevention support services are vital to crisis centers. These services allow crisis centers to focus on survivor safety, prevention services, and community collaboration.”

—North Dakota DV/SA Advocate

Strength in Numbers

Training and technical assistance are at the core of what we *do*, but strengthening connections and building relationships are at the core of who we *are*. In 1978, our work began as an informal gathering of advocates from across the state. Over the years, that informal gathering turned into an organized network of change-makers fighting to end violence against women in North Dakota. For many advocates, this work wasn’t just a job; it was a sisterhood of women who helped one another, learned from each other, and faced obstacles as a team. Today, we create spaces (both in-person and online) for networking and collaboration between advocates to uphold that legacy. As a united, connected coalition, we are stronger and greater than any of our individual efforts.

49 Networking & Collaboration Meetings Held

75.25 Hours of Networking Created

Some networking meetings also included training. Those hours are counted on the training page.



GOING ROGUE

NDDSVCS Hits the Road

Thanks to a generous donation from Farm Credit Services of Mandan, our team now has a reliable vehicle to help us provide in-person training and technical assistance. In just a few months of having our Nissan Rogue, our team made 12 trips and traveled 3,330 miles.

With travel made easier, our staff attorney has been able to support victims in-person at protection order hearings, and our team has been able to meet with DV/SA programs locally to provide technical assistance and resources tailored to each program’s unique needs.

3,330 Miles Traveled

Throughout 12 trips across North Dakota

Bridging the Gap

During the 2025 legislative session, significant progress was made in strengthening support for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Most notably, state funding for DV/SA services increased substantially from \$7.5 million to \$11.7 million. On top of that, a \$7 million supplemental appropriation was secured to address gaps in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, ensuring victims continued access to legal services, advocacy, crisis response, civil protection orders (CPOs), and more.

Lawmakers also enacted comprehensive updates to the civil protection order statute. All CPOs (DVPOs, SAROs, and DCROs) are now consolidated under one section of the North Dakota Century Code. Other key improvements included clearer requirements for the surrender of weapons and allowing minors to petition for protection orders independently.

All of this was accomplished through the tireless advocacy of NDDSV, our members, our supporters, and the victims and survivors we serve.

STANDING UNITED

Advocacy Day at the Capitol

On February 14, 2025, NDDSV and our members gathered in Memorial Hall at the Capitol to connect with legislators and provide information on domestic violence and sexual assault victim services. The event featured the Clothesline Project and Silent Witness Exhibit, two NDDSV sponsored displays that bear witness to violence against women and children. We also hosted "In Her Shoes," an interactive simulation that walks participants through the experiences of domestic violence victims. The activity helped legislators and the public alike understand the complex challenges and situations that victims face.



In addition to our state-level efforts, we advocate for federal funding and legislation to address the needs of victims. NDDSV prioritizes the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), and the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in our federal advocacy work.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY

The Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act

Our team traveled to Washington D.C. to advocate for the bipartisan Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act (CVFSA). The CVFSA will help stave off devastating VOCA funding cuts and give domestic violence and sexual assault programs the resources they need to stay open. Thank you to Senator Cramer, Senator Hoeven, and Congresswoman Fedorchak for meeting with us on this important issue.



2025 Legislative Session

A LEGISLATIVE CHAMPION

Representative Emily O'Brien

NDDSV would like to give special thanks to Representative Emily O'Brien of Grand Forks for her outstanding advocacy for victims and survivors during the 2025 legislative session. Representative O'Brien played a key role in increasing the amount of state funding for domestic and sexual violence services. Her efforts will help local domestic and sexual violence programs connect more victims with life-saving crisis and healing services.



Photo provided by the North Dakota Legislative Assembly



ALL ND Victims

A Legal Line for North Dakota Victims (ALL ND Victims) is NDDSV's civil legal project. Through ALL ND Victims, we provide legal information, resources, and referrals to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other related crimes.

In 2025, our legal team represented 26 survivors in court and answered 145 calls and emails to our legal line. Of the 26 cases where we provided representation, two of them were defended against appeals at the state Supreme Court level. Lindsey, our Civil Legal Project Attorney, also argued in front of the state Supreme Court for the first time, and she established some important case law regarding protection orders. The case law reaffirms that a respondent does not have to be present at protection or restraining order hearings, and they do not have the same 6th Amendment right to confront accusers as they do in criminal cases.

We also partnered with Legal Services of North Dakota (LSND) to provide family law office hours for survivors. These office hours gave survivors the opportunity to ask attorneys legal questions and get legal information related to their situation, free of charge.



Our ALL ND Victims team partnered with Heather Krumm from Revive Law Group to provide legal representation for survivors. Heather also led a training for attorneys on navigating domestic violence and parental rights cases.



26 Survivors Represented in Court



145 Calls & Emails to the Legal Line



2 Cases Defended at the Supreme Court Level

Women's Opportunity Scholarship

NDDSV's Women's Opportunity Scholarship provides financial assistance to low-income women pursuing higher education in North Dakota. The scholarship aims to break the bonds of poverty and empower women to enhance their lives and the lives of their families both economically and intellectually.

The fund was established in 1986 by a generous donor who believed in creating opportunities for women through higher education. Since the scholarship's inception, over \$323,344 has been awarded to 280 scholarship recipients.

This year, we awarded a total of \$13,500 to 7 women attending 5 different North Dakota colleges.



2025 Women's Opportunity Scholarship Recipients

Mina Afrasiabi
Nicelette Blowers
Jenna Brave Bull
Jennifer Grohs
Jaylee Jay
Damaris Ortega Rivera
Lataya Seminole



\$323,344 in Scholarships Awarded Since Inception



280 Scholarship Recipients Since 1986



37+ News Stories, Media Interviews, & Publications

In April and October 2025, NDD SVC and our members generated at least 37 pieces of media. This includes news articles, podcasts, community proclamations, radio interviews, blog posts, and more.



13,500 Stickers Shared

During Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we shared 13,500 little reminders to actively combat sexual violence and harassment.



3200 Air Fresheners Distributed

Air fresheners had QR codes on the back to direct survivors and their loved ones to advocacy services in their area.



32,600+ People Reached Online

NDD SVC's social media pages reached over 32,600 people in just April and October 2025.



8,000 Coffee Sleeves Shared

Our members collaborated with coffee shops, restaurants, bakeries, and shake shops to share "Cups of Support" during April.



Awareness Work Highlights

SAAM & DVAM 2025

Awareness Leads to Action

Each year, NDD SVC brings together advocates, political leaders, and everyday supporters through awareness campaigns.

This year, in our spiciest campaign yet, we created custom bottles of "Consent is Hot" Sauce for Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in April. NDD SVC and our members distributed 1,044 hot sauce bottles throughout the state, spreading the idea that not only is consent essential, but it is something to be celebrated and championed by the people of North Dakota. We also distributed 8,000 of our own custom-made coffee sleeves to help share "cups of support" throughout the state.

For Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) in October, we collaborated with our member organizations to share 3,200 custom air fresheners across the state. The air fresheners promoted "A Fresh Start," a nod to what many victims are looking for when they contact an advocacy center.

With greater online reach, more awareness events, and more media attention than ever before, 2025 rallied an unprecedented number of North Dakotans against domestic and sexual violence.



1,044 Hot Sauce Bottles Distributed

The hot sauce bottles had a QR code to connect victims and survivors of sexual violence with supportive services in their area.



147+ Events, Activities, and Fundraisers

NDD SVC and our members coordinated at least 147 awareness activities during April and October 2025.

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