Victims of Crime Act Victim Assistance Formula Grant Program

FISCAL YEAR 2018 DATA ANALYSIS REPORT

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS
JUSTICE FOR ALL

Office for Victims of Crime
OVC

INTRODUCTION

In fiscal year (FY) 2018, over $3.3 billion was allocated to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Formula Grant program. Fifty-six grantees funded 9,961 subawards to 6,462 subgrantee organizations. These organizations provided assistance to 6,306,646 individuals, representing a 24-percent increase from FY 2017.[1] VOCA-funded service also assisted an average of 1,339,635 anonymous contacts per quarter through digital chats, hotlines, internet forums, and victim notification systems (VNS).[2]

VOCA-FUNDED VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS

In FY 2018, nonprofit organizations were the most common subgrantee organization type, followed by government agencies. Campus organizations and federally recognized tribal governments were the two organization types that increased from FY 2017, by 36 percent and 17 percent, respectively.

MOST COMMON SUBGRANTEE ORGANIZATION TYPE	MOST COMMON DESIGNATION
4,327 — Nonprofit Organizations	Child abuse service organization
1,948 — Government Agencies	Prosecutor services
104 — Federally Recognized Tribal Governments, Agencies, and Organizations	Domestic-family violence/ sexual assault service providers
83 — Campus Organizations	Campus-based victim services

STATE EDUCATION AND COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Fourteen states reported receiving 1,765 requests for education activities. These requests may come from victim service providers, allied professionals, and VOCA assistance administrative staff. In FY 2018, these states provided training and education for 9,923 individuals at 457 events. Although the training topics varied, some of the commonly mentioned trainings included victim assistance academies, victim advocacy, and grant management.

Twenty-five states engaged in coordination activities using grant funds. Twelve states reported collaborative efforts between organizations to enhance services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or human trafficking. Five states reported collaborations with their respective compensation programs.

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[1] Victim service providers do not share personally identifiable information with other providers to ensure the privacy of victims. As such, this number may include duplicates in cases where victims received services from multiple service providers.
[2] A quarter is a single three-month period during FY 2018: October–December, January–March, April–June, and July–September.

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS

Individuals who received assistance from VOCA-funded victim service providers had the option to self-report demographic information, including age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Although many victims chose to self-report their age, gender, and race/ethnicity, some victims declined to provide this information and some subgrantee organizations were unable to track some or all demographic data.[3]

Age

Age was self-reported by 66 percent of victims served.

60+	7% (306,524)
	53% (2,220,801)
25–59	
18–24	14% (566,851)
13–17	9% (373,337)
0–12	17% (692,919)
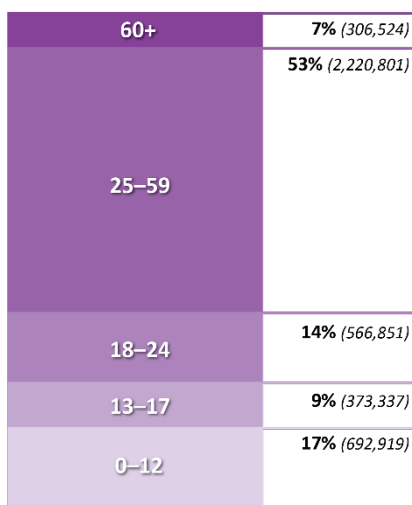
There was a 21-percent increase in the number of individuals served who self-reported their age as 13–17 years at the time of the victimization, representing the largest increase among age groups.

Gender

Gender was self-reported by 71 percent of victims served.

70.5% FEMALE (3,157,306)

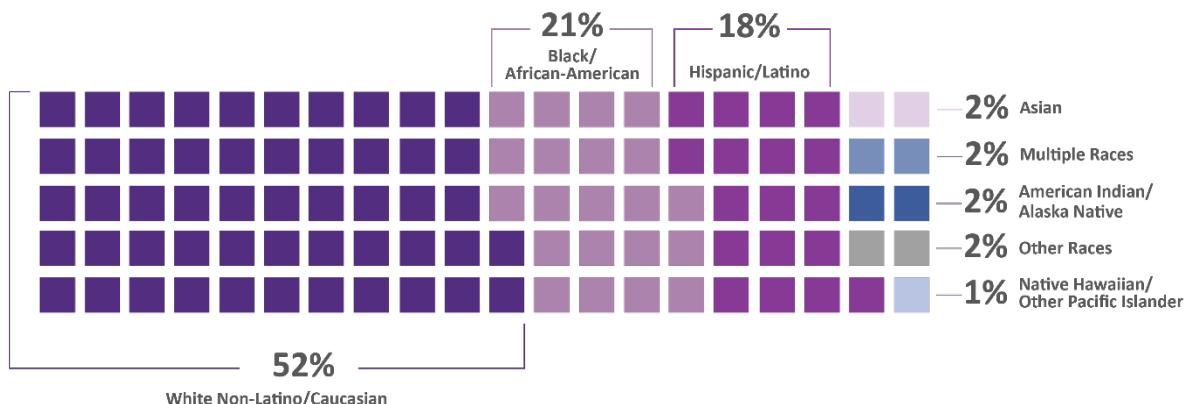**29%** MALE (1,292,576)

0.5% OTHER (20,663)
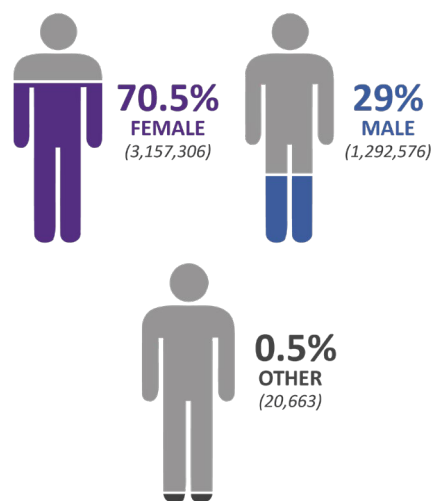
Individuals who reported other gender had the option to further describe their gender identity. Transgender was the most common response, and other responses included non-binary, non-conforming, gender fluid, and intersex.

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[3] In FY 2018, there were 1,074 organizations that did not track age, 767 organizations that did not track gender, and 1,149 organizations that did not track race/ethnicity.
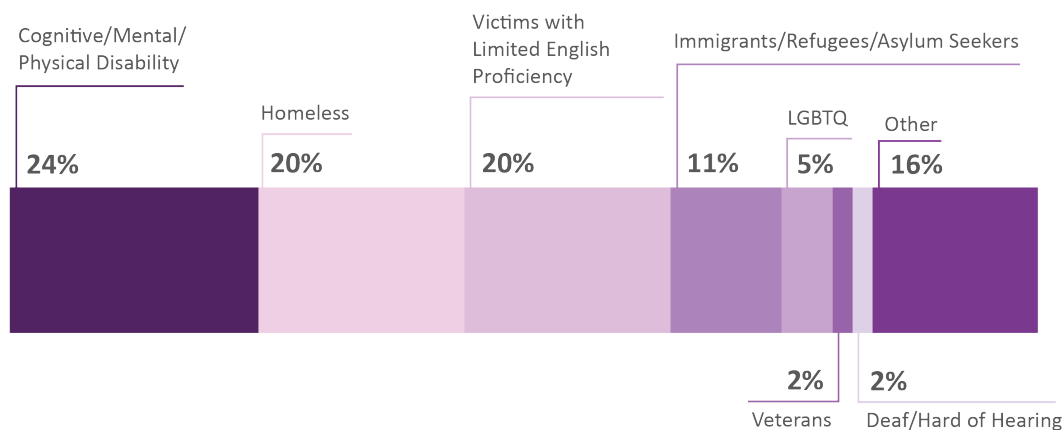
Race/Ethnicity

Race/ethnicity was self-reported by 64 percent of victims served.

21% Black/African-American

18% Hispanic/Latino

2% Asian

2% Multiple Races

2% American Indian/Alaska Native

2% Other Races

1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

52% White Non-Latino/Caucasian

Special Classifications

Some victims self-report a special classification they experience to service organizations. This information helps providers increase their knowledge about the various conditions facing victims, how these conditions may alter or affect the healing process, and the best ways to address these conditions when providing services. As these classifications are self-reported, they may not reflect all victims served with these qualities.

There were 1,526,266 victims that reported at least one special classification.

Cognitive/Mental/Physical Disability **24%**

Homeless **20%**

Victims with Limited English Proficiency **20%**

Immigrants/Refugees/Asylum Seekers **11%**

LGBTQ **5%**

Other **16%**

Veterans **2%**
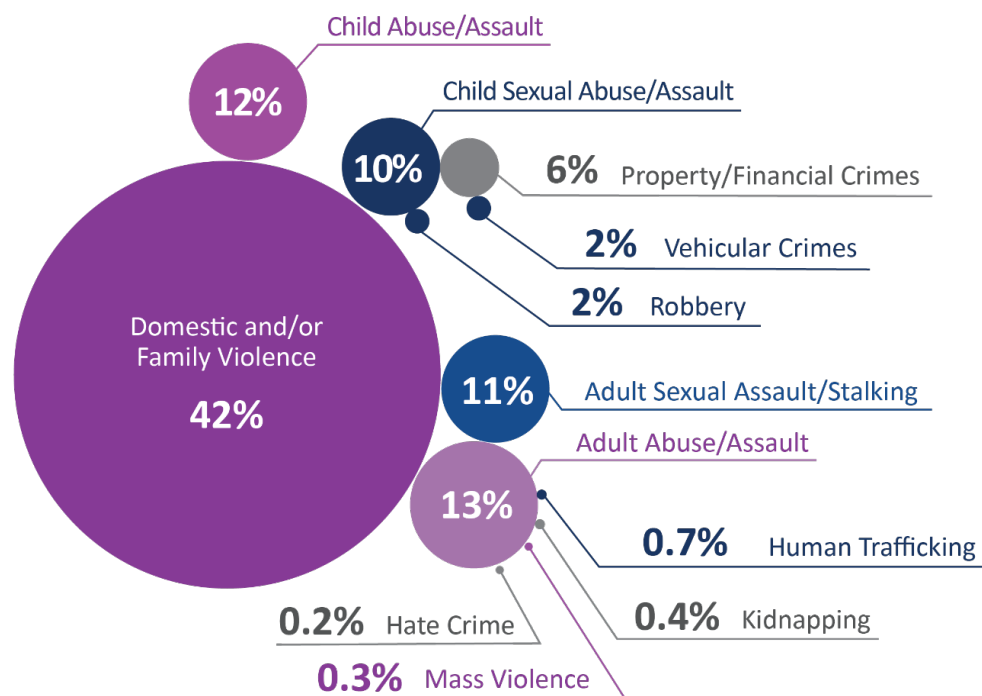
Deaf/Hard of Hearing **2%**

There were 307,361 individuals who self-reported as having limited English proficiency and 171,658 individuals who self-reported as immigrants/refugees, representing increases of 21 percent and 24 percent over FY 2017, respectively. There were 11 grantees that reported emerging issues they experienced when serving individuals from these populations. Organizations reported that they are finding it difficult to reach some immigrant populations, and language barriers were identified as a challenge. Although victim service providers are continuing to hire translators, the availability of bilingual services seems to be outpaced by the need.

Of the individuals who disclosed a special classification, 16 percent self-reported as "other." Within "other," the most commonly reported classifications included living in a rural area, substance abuse or addiction, older or dependent adults, visually impaired or blind, and incarceration.

TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION

VOCA-funded service providers reported the types of victimization experienced by the individuals served, including both primary and secondary victims of crime.[4][5] There were 1,859,591 individuals who reported experiencing multiple victimization types, representing a 67 percent increase from FY 2017.

The total number of victims served increased from FY 2017, and the number of victimizations within each category increased proportionally. This increase in victimizations parallels the violent crime victimization finding reported by the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). According to the NCVS, violent crime victimization increased 28 percent from FY 2015 to FY 2018. Similarly, violent crime victimization reported by VOCA-funded service providers increased 13 percent from FY 2017 to FY 2018. This increase in victimizations may suggest that a higher number of individuals are seeking victim services after being victimized, or that more victims sought services across several months for their victimization.

- Child Abuse/Assault 12%
- Child Sexual Abuse/Assault 10%
- Property/Financial Crimes 6%
- Vehicular Crimes 2%
- Robbery 2%
- Domestic and/or Family Violence 42%
- Adult Sexual Assault/Stalking 11%
- Adult Abuse/Assault 13%
- Human Trafficking 0.7%
- Kidnapping 0.4%
- Hate Crime 0.2%
- Mass Violence 0.3%

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[4] See appendix A for the categorizations of victimization types.
[5] A primary victim is an individual who suffered direct harm because of a crime. A secondary victim is an individual who experienced indirect consequences because of a crime.

Hate crimes represented the largest increase, increasing 62 percent in FY 2018 over FY 2017, followed by mass violence (49 percent), human trafficking (48 percent), and child abuse/assault (38 percent). The increase in mass violence victimizations parallels the data reported by VOCA Victim Compensation grantees, as the number of claims paid that were related to mass violence increased in FY 2018 over FY 2017.[6] Despite the percent increase in hate crimes, mass violence, and human trafficking, the number of individuals experiencing these types of victimization remains low compared to other types of victimization.

GREATEST VICTIMIZATION TYPE INCREASES

Victimization Type	Victims Served in FY 2018	Victims Served in FY 2017	Increase in Victims Served in FY 2018 over FY 2017
Hate crime	16,089	9,947	6,142
Mass violence	23,296	15,587	7,709
Human trafficking	52,459	35,464	16,995
Child abuse/assault	942,767	682,785	259,982

Victim service providers indicated that victims experienced other victimization types as well, including violation of a court protective order, criminal mischief, disorderly conduct, and false imprisonment. States often reported individuals who receive notification services under "other victimization." VNSs provide individuals with information pertaining to an offender or court case. As VNSs are typically automated, state agencies administering those services with VOCA funds may not know the victimization type for the individuals receiving notifications. VNS notifications accounted for more than half of the other victimizations reported.

Organizations that serviced victims of hate crimes also elaborated on the motivation of the hate crime, if known. Among the service providers that reported on motivation, race/ethnicity was the most common reason (mentioned in 31 percent of responses), followed by gender identity (22 percent), sexual orientation (10 percent), and religion (9 percent). In FY 2018, race/ethnicity as hate crime motivation increased 64 percent over FY 2017. Additionally, gender identity was reported more frequently than sexual orientation, which also differs from information reported in FY 2017. This change may reflect an increased societal awareness of the term "gender identity" and its distinct difference from "sexual orientation."

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[6] Office for Victims of Crime's (OVC) Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program also provides funding and resources to jurisdictions that have experienced incidents of mass violence and terrorism that significantly increased the burden of victim assistance and compensation for the responding jurisdiction.
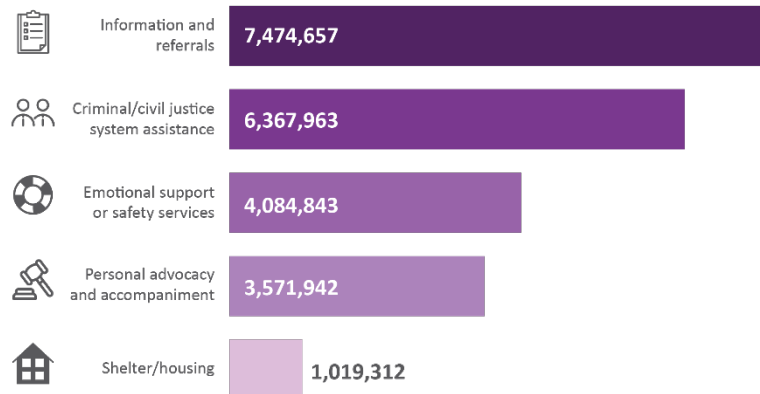
DIRECT SERVICES

As individuals may experience a range of negative outcomes because of their victimization, it is vital for victims and their families to receive trauma-informed, culturally and developmentally appropriate services to help them work through the effects they are facing. Victims and their families often have various needs that span multiple types of services. Victim experiences are never the same, so organizations tailor the services provided on an individual basis.
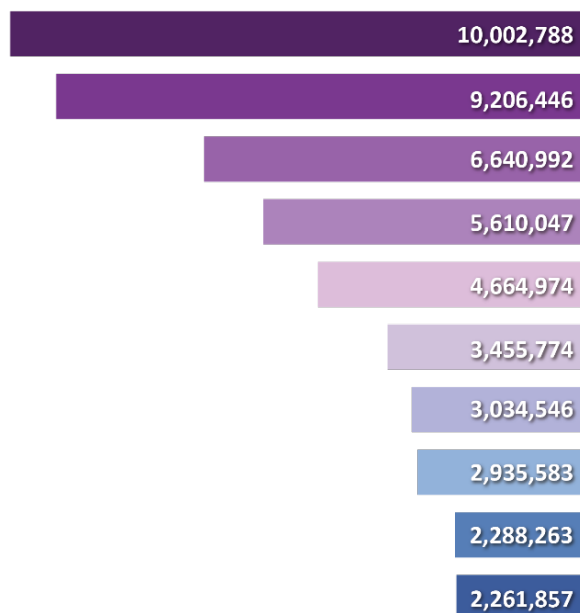
Services include, but are not limited to, physical, emotional, and psychological assistance. VOCA-funded services are reported in five main direct service categories.

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Service	
Information and referrals	7,474,657
Criminal/civil justice system assistance	6,367,963
Emotional support or safety services	4,084,843
Personal advocacy and accompaniment	3,571,942
Shelter/housing	1,019,312

Individuals may receive multiple services, or the same service multiple times as they work with a service provider to address their victimization.
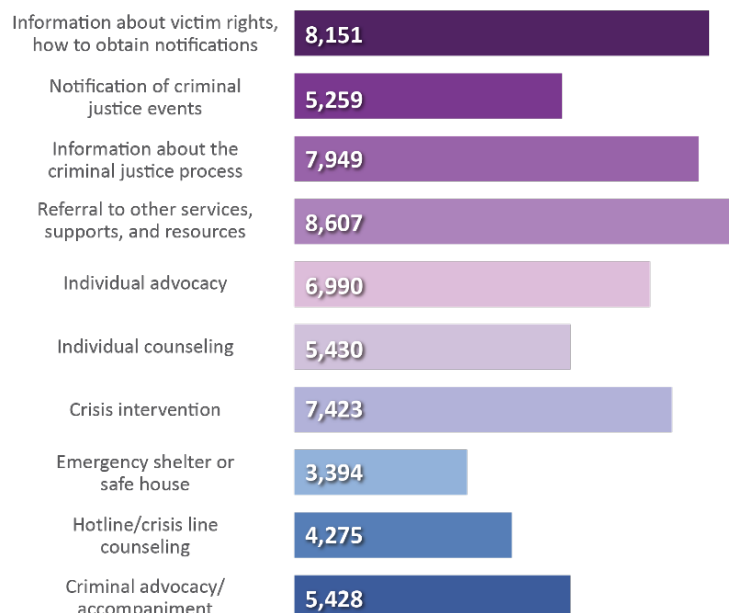
NUMBER OF TIMES SERVICES WERE PROVIDED		NUMBER OF SUBAWARDS SUPPORTING THE SERVICE
10,002,788	Information about victim rights, how to obtain notifications	8,151
9,206,446	Notification of criminal justice events	5,259
6,640,992	Information about the criminal justice process	7,949
5,610,047	Referral to other services, supports, and resources	8,607
4,664,974	Individual advocacy	6,990
3,455,774	Individual counseling	5,430
3,034,546	Crisis intervention	7,423
2,935,583	Emergency shelter or safe house	3,394
2,288,263	Hotline/crisis line counseling	4,275
2,261,857	Criminal advocacy/ accompaniment	5,428

SPOTLIGHT: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking occurs when an individual is induced to perform labor or a commercial sex act through force, fraud, or coercion. Due to the nature of this crime, victims of trafficking have a wide range of complex needs, including advocacy, crisis services, housing, legal assistance, health care, and mental health treatment.[7] VOCA-funded victim service providers are working to provide these comprehensive and specialized services.

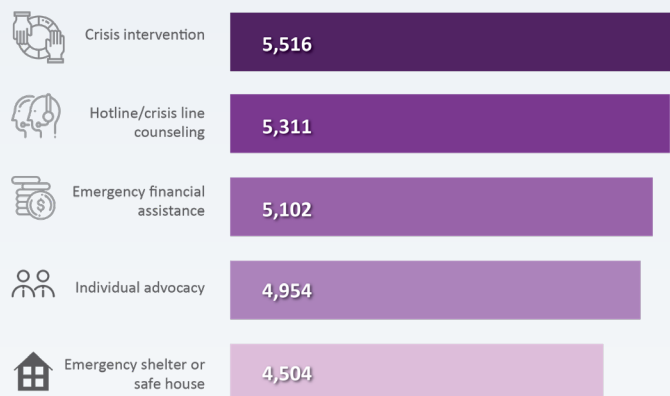| All Service Providers	Providers Serving Only Trafficking Victims
2,789 Organizations that served at least one trafficking victim	**57** Organizations that served only trafficking victims
52,459 Victimizations experienced	**5,235** Victimizations experienced
13,114 Human trafficking victims served on average per quarter	**1,309** Human trafficking victims served on average per quarter

Demographic Information

Among organizations that only provided services to victims of trafficking, 95 percent of individuals identified as female. Forty percent of individuals served were between 25–59 years of age, followed by 13–17 years of age (31 percent). The most common race/ethnicity reported was Black/African-American (37 percent) followed by White Non-Latino/Caucasian (32 percent). This differs from the race/ethnicity breakdown reported by all individuals served, in which White Non-Latino/Caucasian was 52 percent and Black/African-American was 21 percent. Victims of trafficking who self-reported as Asian represented 5 percent of individuals served among organizations that only provided services to trafficking victims. However, individuals who self-identified as Asian only represented 2 percent of the total number of individuals served.

Services Provided

In FY 2018, 3,466 subgrantee organizations indicated that they had the capacity to serve victims of trafficking. Among the organizations that only provided services to victims of trafficking, the most common types of services provided in FY 2018 were emotional support or safety services, information and referral, and personal advocacy/accompaniment.

MOST COMMON SERVICES PROVIDED TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

Service	Count
Crisis intervention	5,516
Hotline/crisis line counseling	5,311
Emergency financial assistance	5,102
Individual advocacy	4,954
Emergency shelter or safe house	4,504

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[7] Office for Victims of Crime. n.d. Human Trafficking – Victim Service Providers. Retrieved on August 12, 2019 from *https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/providers.html.*

NOTABLE TRENDS AND EMERGING ISSUES

Grantees noted several trends and emerging issues during FY 2018. Some of the most commonly reported ongoing trends and recent issues included—

- A lack of housing options for victims. Shelters and transitional housing are often at capacity, and new locations are not being developed due to limited funding. States reported challenges in finding affordable, long-term housing for victims who are transitioning out of shelters or need to relocate.

- Escalating levels of opioid use. Opioid addiction may be a factor in the victimization of the individual using the substance as well as family members and the larger community, often presenting unique and complex victim needs. These individuals, and all those who are affected, may have increased medical, emotional, and financial needs.

- Increases in domestic violence and human trafficking victimizations. In FY 2018, an average of 824,777 victims of domestic violence and 13,115 victims of human trafficking were served per quarter, representing increases of 14 percent and 48 percent, respectively, over FY 2017. Victims of domestic violence and trafficking each present a unique set of needs, and they may seek a range of short- and long-term services. Although needs vary based on each individual's situation, shelter/housing, physical and mental health care, and financial assistance are some of the most common needs identified.[8,9] Some VOCA-funded organizations reported challenges providing victims with necessary services, often citing gaps in mental health services and lack of available housing.

- Transportation and translation services as barriers to victims receiving services. Individuals living in rural areas often do not have access to public transportation, making it more difficult to connect with victim service providers. The limited availability of language interpreters makes it challenging for organizations to provide services to individuals who only speak a different language.

CONCLUSION

An individual's reaction following a victimization is unique and may include various forms of short- or long-term emotional, physical, or psychological trauma. The data provided by VOCA-funded victim service organizations demonstrates the range of situations and needs presented by the 6.3 million victims of crime that received services from providers in FY 2018. This information can be used by grantees and service organizations to further understand population demographics and victim needs, help identify gaps in victim services, and decide how to best allocate future resources. When VOCA-funded victim service providers fill gaps and thoughtfully allocate resources, victims can gain greater access to the tailored services they need to recover from their trauma successfully, however that is defined by each victim.

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[8] McCann, M. 2018. *Human Trafficking: An Overview of Services and Funding for Survivors.* Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved on August 28, 2019, from *www.ncsl.org/documents/cj/Human_Trafficking_FINAL_32391.pdf*.

[9] Lyon, E., Lane, S., & Menard, A. 2008. *A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Retrieved on August 28, 2019 from *https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/225025.pdf*.

APPENDIX A: TYPES OF VICTIMIZATIONS

Subgrantees reported data on individuals who received services based on 26 presenting victimization types. OVC consolidated these types, as reported by subgrantees, into 13 main victimization types. The following list outlines the types of victimizations that make up each category.

1. Adult abuse/assault
    - Adult physical assault *(includes aggravated and simple assault)*
    - Elder abuse or neglect
    - Survivors of homicide victims
2. Adult sexual assault/stalking
    - Adult sexual assault
    - Adults sexually abused as children
    - Stalking/harassment
3. Child abuse/assault
    - Bullying *(e.g., cyber, physical, or verbal)*
    - Child physical abuse
    - Teen dating victimization
4. Child sexual abuse/assault
    - Child pornography
    - Child sexual abuse/assault
5. Domestic and/or family violence
6. Hate Crimes
    - Hate crime: Racial/religious/gender/sexual orientation/other
7. Human Trafficking
    - Human trafficking: Labor
    - Human trafficking: Sex
8. Kidnapping
    - Kidnapping: Custodial
    - Kidnapping: Noncustodial
9. Mass Violence
    - Mass violence (domestic/international)
    - Terrorism (domestic/international)
10. Other
11. Property/financial crimes
    - Arson
    - Burglary
    - Identity theft/fraud/financial crime
12. Robbery
13. Vehicular crimes
    - Driving under the influence/driving while intoxicated incidents
    - Other vehicular victimization (e.g., hit and run)