

Safe Horizon's Lang Report: Beyond Shelter

A Longitudinal Needs Assessment of Domestic Violence Survivors

Domestic violence takes a devastating toll on victims and their loved ones. Experiences of isolation, economic abuse, and financial dependence leave many victims without the financial and social resources to build a new life for themselves and their children.

GOALS

- To understand how Safe Horizon emergency shelters can better support residents to achieve self-sufficiency.
- To gain a better understanding of the after-care needs of survivors of domestic violence who have utilized Safe Horizon emergency shelters.
- To utilize findings to improve Safe Horizon's programming and inform policy changes.

METHODOLOGY

83 PARTICIPANTS

from

6 EMERGENCY
SHELTERS

across

5 BOROUGHES



INTERVIEWED 3 TIMES



**"Shelter is a safe,
stable place for me
to call home."**

-Lang Report Participant

For survivors in crisis, domestic violence emergency shelters offer a safe refuge. Shelters have been found to reduce the frequency and intensity of ongoing violence and to decrease depression.

Did you know?



25,000+ victims and their children are receiving emergency shelter services every day in the U.S. (NNEDV, 2014).



Every year **7,000** victims call the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline, operated by Safe Horizon, asking for shelter.



Safe Horizon operates 8 domestic violence shelters serving over **760** adults and **1,100** children every year.

Shelter works.

But there is much more shelters can and should offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINDINGS

1. Increase funding for shelter programs

Shelter works. After entering shelter, 95% of participants experienced a decrease in abuse. In New York City, only 52% of hotline callers seeking shelter are linked to an emergency shelter space.

2. Improve access to trauma treatment

Families need support in reducing trauma reactions. Upon entering shelter, 68% of participants met criteria for clinical depression. Upon leaving shelter, 56% of participants still met criteria for clinical depression. Upon entering shelter, 57% of participants met criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder. Upon leaving shelter, 37% of participants still met criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder.

- ▶ Safe Horizon is enhancing mental health services in our shelter program through NYC's Connections to Care program, and by opening on-site mental health satellite clinics.

3. Enhance financial literacy and job training

Survivors need support to establish self-sufficiency. 81% of participants entered shelter unemployed. 71% of participants wanted a job or job training program.

- ▶ Safe Horizon is piloting a brief trauma-informed financial literacy program in our shelters, and developing new partnerships with job training programs.

4. Reduce barriers to affordable housing

Survivors' number one concern is finding affordable housing. While 37% of participants were residing in their own home after leaving the emergency shelter program, 26% were living in homeless shelters.

- ▶ Safe Horizon has hired a housing search coordinator who works with realtors and landlords to identify more affordable housing options for clients.

5. Make it easier for survivors to maintain community and family connections

Many survivors need and want to remain engaged in their families and communities. 67% of participants reported feeling emotionally distant or cut off from their support network.

- ▶ Safe Horizon will advocate with city and state regulators to ease restrictive rules and pilot an open shelter model.

Acknowledgements

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