

# A Profile of Family Violence In Alameda County

## A Call For Action



*Prepared By*

Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Section  
Community Assessment Planning and Education Unit  
**Alameda County Public Health Department**

*In Collaboration with*

**Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative**

**May 2003**

## Acknowledgements

This report was made possible under the leadership and support of the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section of the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD). Much technical assistance and guidance was provided by the Community Assessment, Planning & Education (CAPE) Unit of the ACPHD. The report was written and interpreted by Sonia Jain, MPH, MCH Epidemiologist in the CAPE Unit, Deborah Arthur, City of Berkeley, and Quamrun Nessa, Coordinator of the ACPHD DV Collaborative. We wish to recognize the efforts of the Alameda County Death Review Team who carefully review all domestic violence homicide cases and collect information that made this publication possible. Finally, we thank the Data Subcommittee of the Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative for their invaluable assistance in data collection, expertise on the complex issue and commitment to the report.

We further thank the following community partners for their participation in the Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative and for their unending commitment to eliminating domestic violence in our communities.

- Community Partners, e.g. DV Shelters, Hotline and referral agencies, District Attorney's Office
- Community Members
- Alameda County Board of Supervisors
- Alameda County Public Health Department Staff
- Law Enforcement, e.g. City Police Departments and Courts
- State Partners<sup>11</sup>
- City of Berkeley Domestic Violence Prevention Program, Public Health Department<sup>10</sup>  
Santa Clara County Family Violence Council<sup>12</sup>

*For copies or comments, please contact:*

Maternal Child and Adolescent (MCAH) Section  
Alameda County Public Health Department  
1000 Broadway Suite 500  
Oakland CA 94607  
Phone: (510) 208-5980  
<http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/publichealth>

# A Profile of Family Violence In Alameda County

## A Call For Action

*Prepared By*

Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Section  
Community Assessment Planning and Education Unit  
**Alameda County Public Health Department**

*In Collaboration with*

Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative

May 2003

**Dedicated to All Survivors of Family Violence**

## Background

Family violence in Alameda County is a problem of epidemic proportions. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, from 1992-1998, violent victimization by an intimate partner accounted for 22% of the violence experienced by women.<sup>2,20</sup> It is the leading cause of injury to women ages 15-44 years in the United States.<sup>16</sup> Studies have shown that approximately 1 out of every 3 women treated in hospital emergency rooms has experienced some form of domestic violence.<sup>27</sup> Further, women are 5 times more likely than men to be victims of intimate partner violence.<sup>25</sup>

Family violence is a major public health problem and a crime that directly affects thousands of women each year in Alameda County. It often causes injury and death, endangers individuals and families and significantly increases health care costs. In addition, men who have witnessed domestic violence as children are three times more likely to abuse their own wives/partners than children of non-violent parents.<sup>5</sup> Child abuse is 15 times more likely to occur in families where domestic violence is present.<sup>23</sup>

Domestic violence is severely underreported. Nevertheless, in Alameda County from 1991 to 1997, there were an average of 10,400 domestic violence-related calls reported each year to local police jurisdictions.<sup>13</sup> During the same time period, arrests for domestic violence climbed steadily by more than 37%. In 1997, there were more than 2,000 domestic violence-related arrests in Alameda County. Also in 1997, approximately 19,100 reports of child abuse and neglect were filed in Alameda County reporting neglect (48%), sexual abuse (20%) and physical abuse (32%).<sup>23</sup>

In an effort to better document the extent of family violence in our county and to better understand countywide gaps in local programs and services, the Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative has gathered local data and information from the criminal justice system, hospitals, shelter and legal services and other data sources into this report: A Profile of Family Violence in Alameda County 2003. It is our hope that this report will serve as a platform for action that will benefit battered women, their children and whole families and communities who have been impacted by family violence.

## Table of Contents

### *A Profile of Family Violence in Alameda County 2002*

Introduction.....	1
Socio-demographics of Alameda County.....	2
Deaths Related to Domestic Violence.....	6
Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Police .....	9
Domestic Violence-Related Arrests.....	14
Prosecutions by the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office.....	15
Battered Women’s Shelters and Other Domestic Violence Services.....	16
Recommendations.....	18
Technical Notes.....	21
References.....	23

## Introduction

Family violence is a major public health problem and a crime that directly affects thousands of women each year in Alameda County. It often causes injury and death, endangers individuals and families and significantly increases health care costs.<sup>16</sup> It is a complex issue that crosses cultural, racial, ethnic, economic and political boundaries and it may involve alcohol and other drug abuse, poverty, homelessness, or criminal activities.

Family violence *is* preventable. Risk factors for family violence include intergenerational abuse and socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, social norms and values.<sup>16,18</sup> To date in Alameda County, there is no comprehensive countywide community assessment and/or strategic plan for the prevention of family violence.

The mission of the Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative is to work in partnership with the community to end domestic violence countywide and to promote the safety and well being of all battered women and children in our communities. The Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative hopes that this report will serve as a platform for action. The report attempts to:

1. Estimate the nature, extent and consequences of intimate partner violence and family violence in Alameda County;
2. Identify who is at risk for abuse to better coordinate both intervention and prevention programs, including how women of childbearing age are affected;
3. Identify gaps in domestic violence-related services and existing resources;
4. Share data tools and coordinate systematic data collection throughout the County; and
5. Facilitate community-driven approaches to assessment, planning and development of intervention and prevention strategies.

Information in this report relates to both intimate partner violence and family violence. Throughout the report we cite some national and state figures as well as some findings from research studies to demonstrate the extent of the problem nationally. It should be noted that national statistics are quite universal in terms of the risk and resiliency factors of violence in homes and relationships. Keep in mind that the data presented is limited by the availability of the local data. This report does not represent a comprehensive picture of family violence in the County. Yet, we hope it will serve as a reference and advocacy tool. As Alameda County becomes more and more ethnically and culturally diverse, it is important to further understand both risk and resiliency factors that contribute to family violence.

## Socio-Demographics of Alameda County

Domestic violence has increasingly been recognized as a serious health problem for both adults battered by their partners and for children who witness violence in their home. The consequences of this violence can be both psychological (including depression, anxiety, suicide attempts and re-victimization) and physical (including broken bones, bruises, sexually transmitted diseases and miscarriages).<sup>3</sup> Clearly, the health of entire families and communities are impacted in both direct and indirect ways.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the county provide us with information about possible underlying factors that may influence the health outcomes of the residents and the community, and may explain an individual or community's risk of family violence or their ability to prevent it.

The Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative uses the following definition of "domestic violence" as provided by the Family Violence Prevention Fund.<sup>14</sup>

**Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of behaviors that may include physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse and/or economic control used by adults or adolescents against their current or former intimate partners in an attempt to exercise power and authority which has a destructive, harmful effect on individuals, the family and the community.**

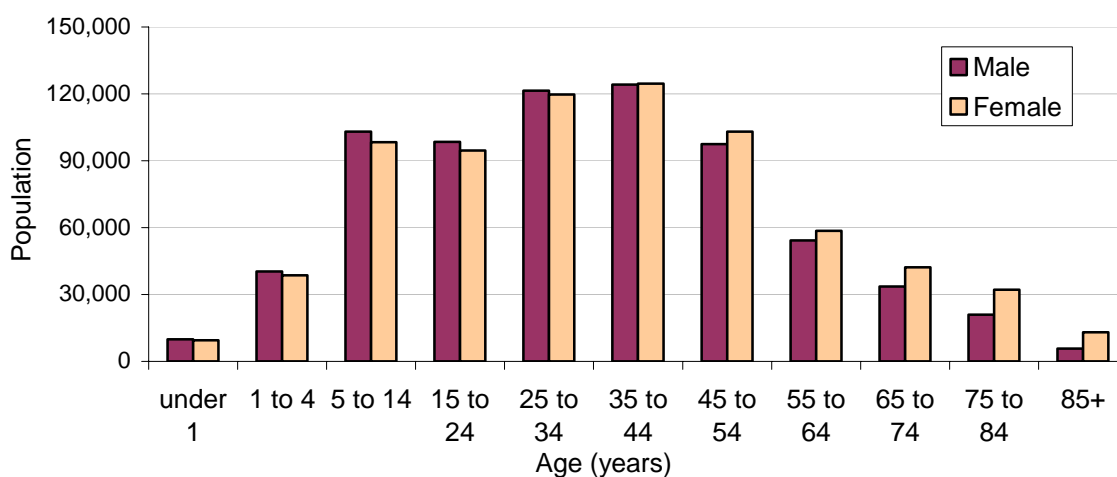
Alameda County is one of nine counties that make up the greater San Francisco Bay Area. With a population of 1,443,741 in year 2000, it is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse regions in the nation.<sup>7</sup> The ethnic communities comprise majority of the County's population: 41% are White, 21% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 19% Latino, 15% African American, 4% identify as more than one race and less than 1% are American Indians. It has been documented that women of all races are about equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate partner.<sup>3</sup>

Adults make up more than 75% of the county population, although children and adolescents 5-14 years of age and adults ages 45 and older represent a growing proportion of the county population. Alameda County is fairly evenly divided between men and women. However, after 35 years of age women slightly outnumber men (*see Figure 1.*)

***"I went to the MD five times waiting for him to ask. It took my hairdresser to convince me to talk to the MD the 6<sup>th</sup> time when I went for an appointment and he noticed the marks on my neck."***

***--A Young Woman Experiencing Dating Violence***

**Figure 1 Age Distribution by Gender,  
Alameda County 2000**



Data Source: Census 2000

*Women are six times more likely than men to experience violence committed by someone they know.<sup>26</sup>*

Women experience more intimate partner violence than do men.<sup>25</sup> Violence perpetrated against women by intimates is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior.<sup>2</sup> One fourth of women in Alameda County are of childbearing age (15-44 years). It has been shown that women age 19 to 29 are more likely than other women to be victims of violence by an intimate partner.<sup>2</sup> Abuse during pregnancy jeopardizes both the woman's health and the health of her baby. It has been documented that battered women are at increased risk for receiving inadequate prenatal care, for having a low birth weight baby, using drugs and alcohol during pregnancy, and depression and other mental health problems.<sup>1</sup> Studies have shown that one out of every three women treated in hospital Emergency Departments have experienced some form of partner violence.

In the last decade, there has been an influx of immigrants, particularly Asian and Hispanic immigrants, into this prosperous region. Immigrant women are often at higher risk for domestic violence and may possess limited English skills and may be reluctant to report the violence for fear of deportation, loss of work authorization or fear of authority. According to the 1990 census, 33% of the Asian/Pacific Islanders and 20% of the Spanish-speaking residents in Alameda County were linguistically isolated.

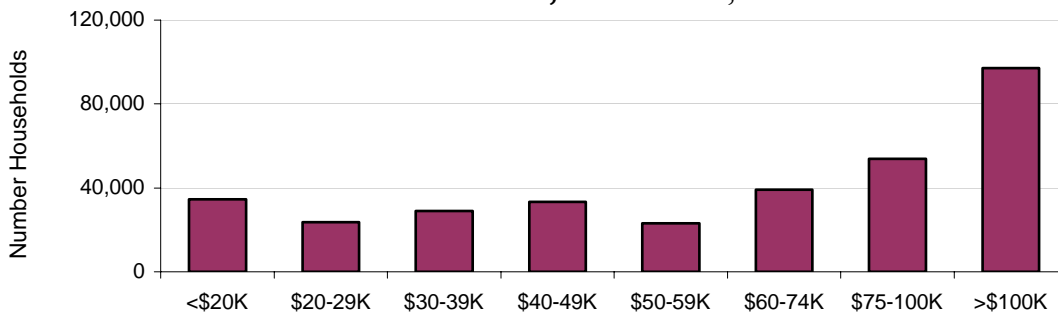
In the US today, women and children constitute approximately two-thirds of all legal immigrants. Focus groups with Asian women, conducted by the Maternal and Child Health Section of the County Public Health Department in 1997, suggested an acceptance of a subordinate role for women in the home and a tolerance of the husband's use of



physical abuse.<sup>19</sup> “Domestic violence stems from a legacy of male dominance and sexism that is widespread in many Asian American communities,” said Family Violence Prevention Fund Associate Director and (Un)heard Voices Co-director Leni Marin. “We need to develop solutions to violence that can work within the context of Asian American cultural traditions.”<sup>14</sup>

In year 2000, more than 10% of the county residents were living in poverty.<sup>7</sup> The number of children under 18 living in poverty in the county has declined significantly from 15.1% in 1990 to 10.8% in 2000.

**Figure 2 Income Distribution of Alameda County Households, 2000** n=333,828



Data Source: Census 2000

*Children living in poverty are 18-22 times more likely to be abused, 44 times more likely to be neglected, and 60 times more likely to die from maltreatment, compared to children living above the poverty line.<sup>13</sup>*

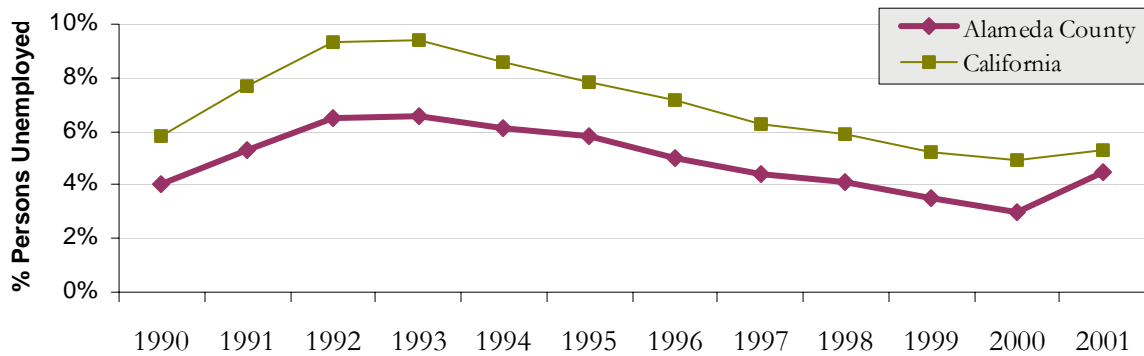
Domestic violence affects every one of us. It doesn't matter if we are teenagers, grandmothers, what neighborhood we live in, or what race or class we belong to.

While women of all economic backgrounds experience domestic violence, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has noted a significant link between poverty and an increased incidence of domestic violence.<sup>25</sup> DOJ reports that in 1992-93, “women with an annual family income of under \$10,000 were more likely to report having experienced violence by an intimate than those with incomes over \$10,000”.<sup>26</sup>

In year 2000, approximately 10% of the county households had an income below \$20K and about 30% above \$100K (see Figure 2).<sup>7</sup> Women in poverty face hardships and challenges that can exacerbate the trauma domestic violence causes. Economic distress does not cause domestic violence. But there is no question that economic self-sufficiency is a vital key to enable women to be free from violence in their lives.<sup>14</sup>

The unemployment rate is one traditional measure of the economic health of a community. In order to be officially classified as unemployed, a person must be available for work and must have actually searched for work within the previous four weeks.<sup>16</sup> The unemployment rate in the county peaked in 1993 to 6.6%, steadily dropping to 3.0% in year 2000 and rising significantly in the last year to 4.5% (see Figure 3). Unemployment may create additional challenges that may exacerbate violence among families.

**Figure 3 Average Annual Unemployment Rate,  
Alameda County vs. California 1990-2001**

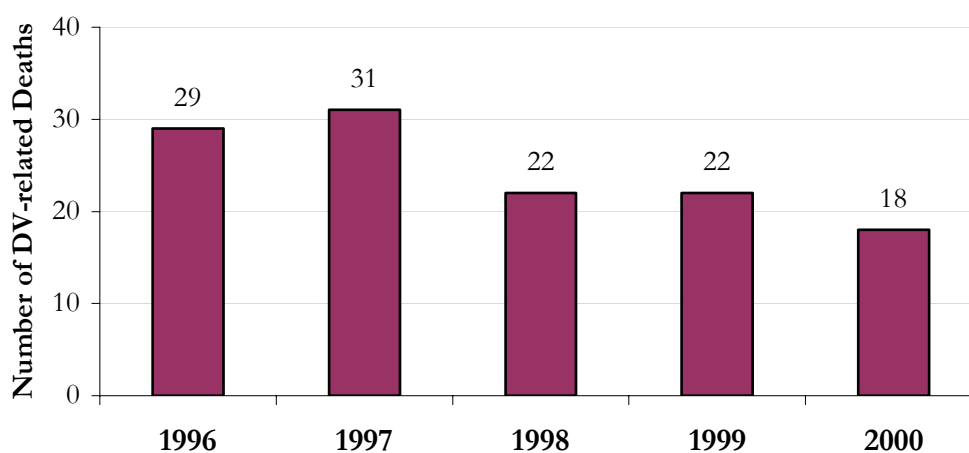


Data Source: Census 2000

## Deaths Related to Domestic Violence

Women are more likely to be killed by someone they know, and nearly one-third of women are killed by an intimate partner compared to approximately 4% of men, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.<sup>3,8</sup> The most severe impact of domestic violence is measured by the number of deaths occurring in the county as a result of domestic violence. The following data used was obtained and reviewed by the Alameda County Death Review Team.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 4 Number of Deaths Attributed to Domestic Violence in Alameda County by Year**

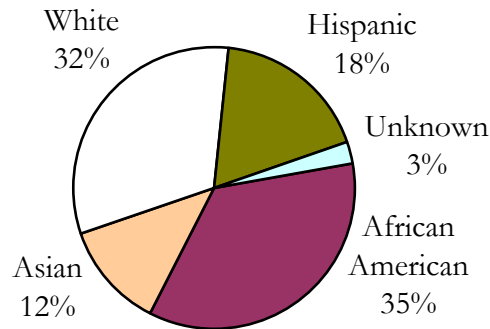


Data Source: Alameda County Death Review Team

There were a total of 122 deaths related to domestic violence in Alameda County in the last five years from 1996 to 2000, an average of 24 deaths each year. In the last five years, 1997 had the highest number of domestic violence-related deaths and, in fact, year 2000 observed the lowest number of deaths related to domestic violence in the county.

Fifty-seven (57) of these deaths were considered victims of ongoing domestic violence.<sup>9</sup> Fifteen (15) of these homicide deaths were considered the domestic violence perpetrator. Thirty-three (33) of the deaths included in this data were suicides; that is, in 18 of the cases, the domestic violence/homicide perpetrator committed suicide after killing his/her partner (or ex-partner). And in 15 of the cases, the domestic violence perpetrator killed him- or her-self and may have attempted but failed a homicide. Bystanders were also homicide victims considered in this data including 6 children and 3 adults (a family member or “Good Samaritan”). An additional 8 cases included domestic violence as a contributing factor but not the primary cause of death.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 5 Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Domestic Violence-Related Death Cases, 1996-2000 Average (n=122)**



From 1996 to 2000, one out of three domestic violence-related deaths were African American and one-third were White, one out of five were Hispanic and more than one fifth were Asian (*see Figure 5.*)

The average age of the domestic violence/homicide victims from 1996-2000 was 39 years, ranging in age from a fetus to 75 years.

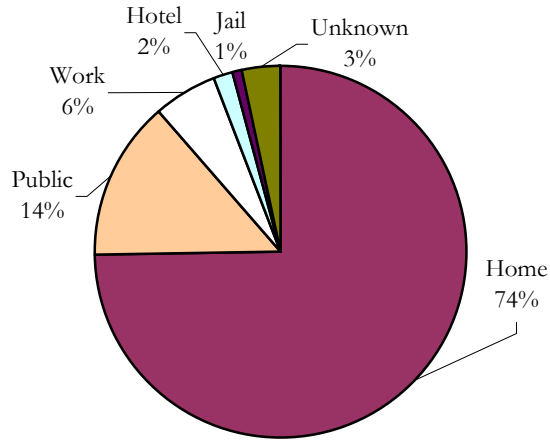
A 2000 study by Department of Justice reported that 72% of the persons murdered by intimates are women.<sup>3</sup> From 1996-2000, of the 122 domestic violence-related deaths in Alameda County, 51% were female and 49% were male. Upon closer examination, however, 53 (91%) of the 58 females who died were killed by a current or previous intimate partner. In contrast, 8 (15%) of the 55 men who died were killed by an intimate partner. The male victims included 2 men killed by another sibling, 4 men killed by a male roommate or partner, and 1 man killed by a female partner.

Of the 122, 31 were suicides of which 30 were men. Twelve of the suicides were considered to be domestic violence perpetrators.

***“Domestic violence is destroying the fabric of our society.”***

—Rosario Navarrette,  
San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women,  
SF Death Review Team

**Figure 6 Location of Fatalities, 1996-2000 (n=122)**



Data Source: Alameda County Death Review Team

The majority of the deaths (74%) occurred at home. About 15% were in a public place, 6% occurred at a workplace and 2% were at a hotel (see Figure 6.)

Further, almost 57% of the fatalities involved a gun, 13% involved a knife, 11% were the result of assault and 7% were due to asphyxia probably the result of strangulation.

Of the incidents where it was known whether a child/children were present at the scene of the domestic violence-related death (n=76), it was confirmed that one or more children were present in over half the incidents (55%).

Multiple studies have indicated that a previous history of domestic violence is a significant risk factor for domestic violence. Previous contact with the criminal justice system due to domestic violence was reported in 57% of the incidents in the county, unknown in 37% and no previous history was noted in only 6 cases or 5% of the homicide deaths. A Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) had been filed in 20% of the cases, not filed in 19% of the homicides, and was unknown in the majority (61%) of the cases.

## Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Police

The *reported* number of domestic violence-related telephone calls to local police jurisdictions includes all calls where police responded and there was indication of an act of domestic violence. It may also include calls where no weapon was used (e.g. hands, fist and feet are considered weapons).<sup>4</sup> It is possible that repeated calls related to domestic violence could have been made by the same person; thus the number of domestic violence-related calls received and reported by the police departments does not necessarily indicate unduplicated individual cases. To better understand disparities in health outcomes of various at-risk populations, and to better target prevention efforts, information at the community or city level is invaluable. Hence, we looked at both the number and the rate of calls to police in the North vs. the South County, as well as in specific jurisdictions.

Most intimate partner victimizations are not reported to the police. Only approximately one-fifth of all rapes, one-quarter of all physical assaults, and one-half of all stalkings perpetrated against female respondents by intimates are reported to the police.<sup>2,20</sup> Even fewer rapes, physical assaults, and stalkings perpetrated against male respondents by intimates are reported. There are many reasons why someone may not report family violence to law enforcement. For example, many survivors of family violence do not report their victimization to the police and may believe the police will not or cannot do anything on their behalf.

In 1990, there were 9,948 calls for police assistance countywide. By 1999 there were a total of 7,111 reported calls to police that were related to domestic violence.<sup>4</sup> Two-thirds of these calls (n=4,670) were in North County and one third (n=2,441) were from South County residents. North County had a high number of reported calls in 1992 (8,210) and South County had a high number of reported calls in 1997 (3,545) (*see Table 1.*).

**Table 1 Number of Reported Domestic Violence Calls in North & South Alameda County, 1990 to 1999**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>North County</b>	7,504	7,286	8,210	7,303	6,356	NA	5,207	5,105	4,697	4,670
<b>South County</b>	2,444	2,494	2,744	2,378	2,851	2,658	2,499	3,457	3,545	2,441
<b>Countywide</b>	9,948	9,780	10,954	9,681	9,207	NA*	7,706	8,562	8,242	7,111

\* NA: Oakland Police Dept did not report data in 1995.

The number of calls in the North County has decreased in the last ten years by 38%, yet the number of reported calls to police in the South County has increased or remained constant.

**Table 2 Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance by Jurisdiction, Alameda County 2000**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b># Of Calls</b>	<b>Cases with Weapons<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>% With Weapons</b>
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>6,283</b>	<b>3,191</b>	<b>50.8%</b>
Alameda	174	174	100%
Albany	33	23	69.7%
Berkeley	271	264	97.4%
Sheriff's Dept - Dublin	74	74	100%
Emeryville	28	26	92.9%
Fremont	643	629	97.8%
Hayward	405	405	100%
Livermore	246	87	35.4% <sup>2</sup>
Newark	138	126	91.3%
Oakland	2,319	282	12.2% <sup>2</sup>
Piedmont	18	5	27.8%
Pleasanton	123	90	73.2%
San Leandro	217	213	98.2%
Union City	218	86	39.4% <sup>2</sup>
Sheriff's Department- Unincorporated	1,325	660	49.8%
E. Bay Municipal Util. Dist.	0	0	0
E. Bay Regional Park Dist.	2	0	0%
UC Berkeley	9	7	77.8%
UC Livermore Lab	0	0	0
CSU Hayward	1	1	100%
BART	39	39	100%
Union Pacific Railroad	0	0	0
CA Highway Patrol	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Weapons include hands, feet, fist, firearms, knives/cutting instrument or other dangerous weapon.

<sup>2</sup> Reports may have omitted one or more weapon types.

In year 2000, Alameda County's 23 distinct law enforcement jurisdictions reported a total of 6,283 domestic violence-related calls for assistance, half of which (n=3,191) reported some type of weapons use, e.g. hands/feet/fist, firearms, knives.<sup>4</sup>

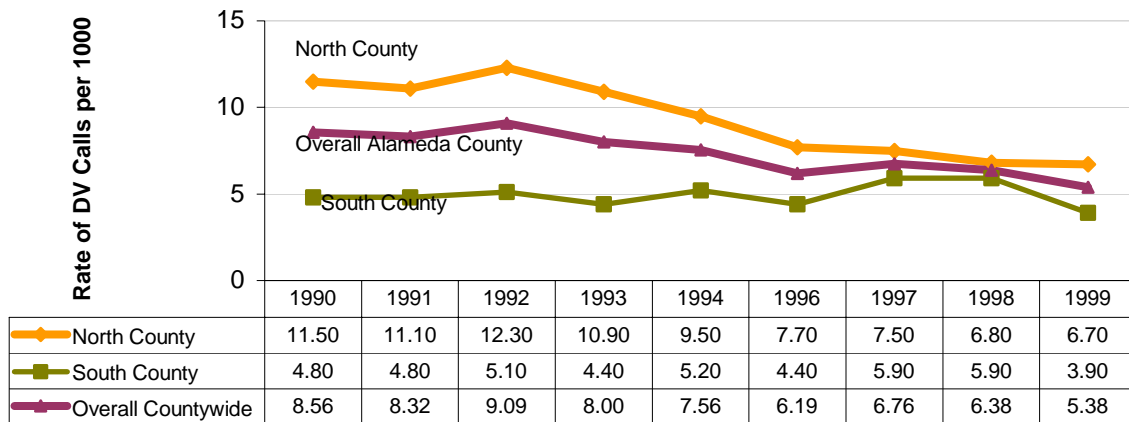
Oakland received the greatest number of calls (2,319 or 37%) of all the jurisdictions, perhaps surprisingly only 12.2% of these calls involved weapon use. Note that it is

possible that one or more weapon types may have been omitted from the data reported to the State, i.e. hands, fist. As a result, these numbers may be inaccurate. The next highest number of calls was received by the Sheriff’s Department (1,325) with almost 50% involving a weapon, followed by Fremont (643) and Hayward (405), where both cities cite almost 100% of the calls involving a weapon of some type.

Jurisdictions in the South County were significantly more likely to involve a reported weapon (e.g. hands, fist, feet, guns, knives) than jurisdictions in North County. It is possible that police officers in North County are not reporting hands, feet and fists as a weapon. This data may change with improved officer training.

It is important to account for population differences in the various jurisdictions, which may at least in part explain the reported number of calls. For instance, Oakland is the most populated city in the county, thus proportionately more calls are likely to be made to the Oakland jurisdiction. However, Oakland residents may also be at higher risk for intimate partner violence for some reason and therefore have a higher rate of domestic-violence calls (*see Figure 8.*)

**Figure 7 Rate of Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Police per 1,000 People North vs. South County, 1990 to 1999**



Since 1992, there has been a steady decline in the rate of reported calls to local police departments for domestic violence in the county (*see Figure 7.*) Since 1990, there has been a 37% decrease in the rate of calls countywide, from 8.6 calls per 1,000 people in 1990 to 5.4 calls per 1,000 people in 1999. The decline has been predominantly in the North County. Noticeably, the rate of domestic violence calls in the South County has actually remained the same or increased since 1990 to 1998. These **rates\*** of calls per 1,000 people

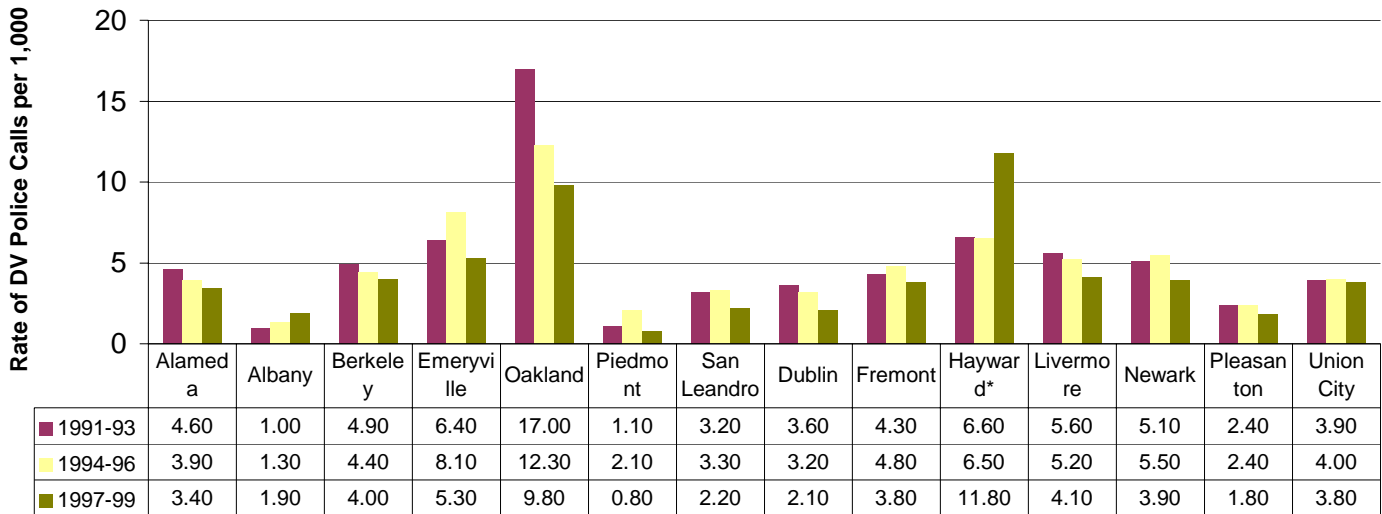
\*Rate of Domestic Violence-related Calls to Police is the Number of Domestic Violence-related Calls to Police in Specific Jurisdiction/ Number of People Living in the Jurisdiction.



take into account the population. Either there may have been an actual increase in residents' willingness over time to report a domestic violence-incident to the police, or there may have been in fact an increase in the incidence of domestic violence.

A calculated rate allows us to compare across different populations, although in this case we do not adjust for age, race, gender or socio-economic or other differences such as immigration into the different cities. However, since South County has experienced an influx of Asian and Latino immigrant families, mostly younger adults, in the past 10 years, it is increasingly evident that culturally and linguistically specific prevention and intervention efforts are critical.

**Figure 8 Rate of Domestic Violence-Related Calls to Police by City, 1990-1999**



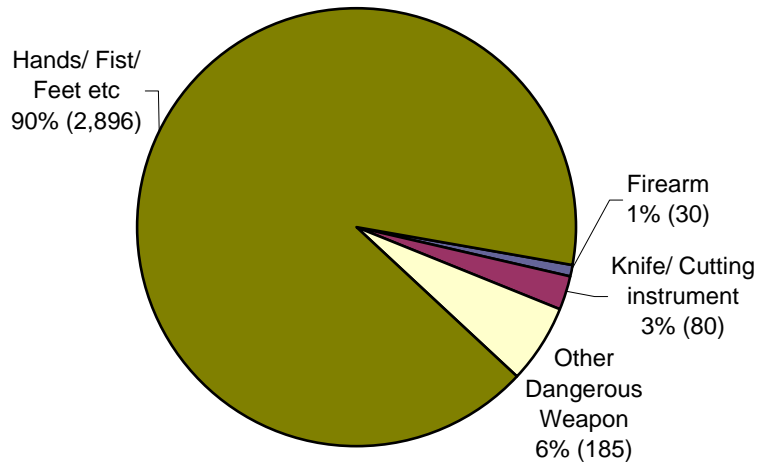
Data Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Report No. 14;  
California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit

\*The dramatic increase in the rate of domestic violence-related calls in 1997-99 in the city of Hayward may also be a result of a change in policy or reporting rather than an actual increase in the number of occurrences. An authoritative source in the Hayward Police Department indicated that new reporting policies effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1997 and formation of a dedicated Domestic Violence Unit as of July 1998 may have resulted in improved reporting, investigation and monitoring of domestic violence calls resulting in an increase in domestic violence-related arrests as well.

The rate of reported domestic violence appears to have declined since the mid-1990s for all cities in the county except Hayward and Albany.

The rate of domestic violence calls in Oakland continues to be the highest of any city in the County, with a three-year average rate of 9.8 per 1,000 from 1997 to 1999, significantly higher than the county rate of 6.17 per 1,000.

**Figure 9 Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance, 2000  
By Type of Weapon Involved, Alameda County (n=3,191)**



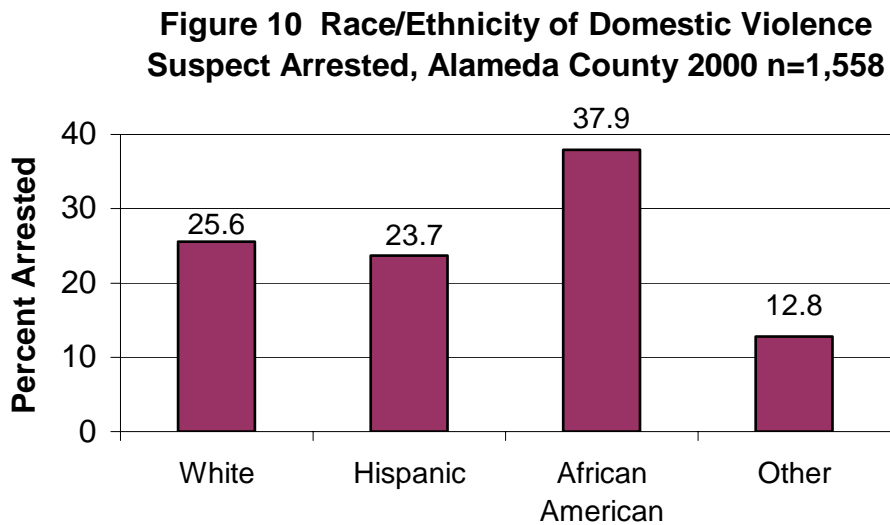
Data Source: Criminal Justice Statistics Center

In year 2000, there were 6,283 domestic violence calls reported (thus far) by police in the county. Approximately one-half of these calls (n=3,191) involved the use of some kind of a weapon (*see Figure 9.*) The majority (90%) of weapons reported were hands, fist or feet.

## Domestic Violence-Related Arrests

According to the California Department of Justice, Alameda County reported a total of 1,558 arrests for incidents of domestic violence in 2000.

Almost 38% of perpetrators arrested for a domestic violence incident were African American (see Figure 10.) One fourth of those arrested were White (26%), one fourth Hispanic (24%) and 12.8% of Other race/ethnicity.



In the U.S., every 9 seconds a woman is physically abused by her husband.<sup>26</sup>

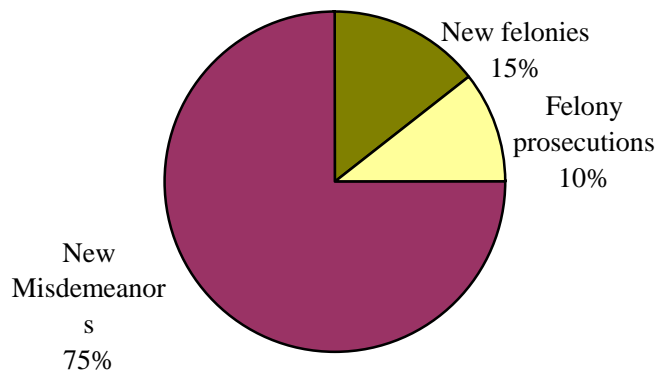
Data Source: California Dept of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center

## Prosecutions by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office

According to the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, there were a total of 2,259 adult cases filed and prosecuted for domestic violence in Alameda County in year 2000.<sup>†</sup>

Of these, the majority of cases (75%) were new misdemeanors (n=1,695). The number of new felonies filed was 328 (15%) and the number of felony prosecutions, filed prior to 2000, was 236 (10%) (see Figure 11.) Prosecutions are cases where there was a definitive result of conviction by plea, by trial or by dismissal. Cases settled during this period also included cases filed prior to the year 2000.

**Figure 11 Alameda County District Attorney's Office  
Domestic Violence Cases Filed in 2000  
(n=2,259)**



Data Source: Alameda County District Attorney's Office

In addition, in year 2000 a total of 448 complaints were filed with the County District Attorney's office related to domestic violence. More than half (55%) of the filed complaints reported either a domestic violence or domestic incident. Of these complaints, the majority (83% n=311) was related to domestic violence and 31% (n=137) involved a domestic incident. Similar statistics exist for 1999.

The percent of complaints involving domestic violence have increased significantly since 1998 when about 64% of the complaints were for domestic violence or incident.

<sup>†</sup> The charging criteria for filing a domestic violence case included: Penal Code Section (PC§) 187 [murder due to domestic violence], PC§ 262 [spousal rape], PC§ 243(e)(1) [battery upon a current or former spouse or co-habitant], and PC§ 273.5 [corporal injury on a current or former spouse or co-habitant.]

## Battered Women's Shelters and Other Domestic Violence Services

In order to estimate the services provided to victims of domestic violence, data was obtained from four battered women's shelter programs that are located in Alameda County for the time period July 1, 2000 – June 30, 2001. SAVE, Tri-Valley Haven, Building Futures for Women and Children, and A Safe Place provided information for this report.

Due to a limited number of bed spaces, unfortunately not all women and children who are in need of shelter at any one time are able to access these services. In addition, it is important to remember that not all women seek emergency shelter in order to escape an abusive relationship. Therefore, in addition to emergency shelter, shelter-based programs generally offer additional services which may include a 24-hour telephone crisis line, drop-in support groups and/or one-on-one counseling, children's counseling services, legal services (i.e. restraining orders) and community outreach and education programs to raise community awareness.

To enhance safety for women and their children, Alameda County shelters may also provide services to women from outside the county and even outside the state.

Some women who have left an emergency shelter may move into a transitional housing facility for 6 months to 1 year where they often receive additional counseling and support services. Transitional housing, however, is even more limited than emergency shelter in Alameda County.

***“The cycle of violence must be broken by the police, the prosecutors, social services, the courts and finally our government. This most committed and least reported crime in America is one of the most crucial civil rights issues that we have ever had to deal with. Please join us and dedicate the government to protecting our families. Give us the resources to research, train and educate and we will save lives in this country. There is no greater honor.”***

–Sgt. Wynn, former member of the Metropolitan Police Dept  
Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee,  
Testimony before the House of Representatives April 19, 1993

Among the four shelters in Alameda County, in a year, approximately 9,000 crisis line calls are received by survivors of domestic violence. (see Table 3.) Note that these calls include repeat callers. Of these, about 5% of the total number of women calling received shelter, many of them with their children as well.

A bed night is the equivalent of shelter and services for one night for one person. On average, the number of bed nights ranged from 30 nights per client (SAVE) to 49 nights per client (Tri-Valley Haven). About 7,000 bed nights were provided by both SAVE and Tri-Valley Haven during this one year time period.

**Table 3 Services Provided by Alameda County Battered Women Shelter Programs  
July 1, 2000 – June 30, 2001**

Services Provided	SAVE	Tri-Valley Haven	Building Futures with Women and Children	A Safe Place <sup>1</sup>	Est. TOTALS
Number of crisis line calls received	3,989	3,157	N/A	1,921	<b>9,067</b>
Number of women receiving shelter	110	59	277	N/A	<b>446</b>
Number of children receiving shelter	111	86	N/A	N/A	<b>197</b>
Number of shelter bed nights <sup>2</sup> provided	6,852	7,043	5,823	2,608	<b>22,326</b>
Hours of individual adult counseling	299	1,036	N/A	37 <sup>3</sup>	-
Hours of individual child counseling	723	630	N/A	20 <sup>4</sup>	-
Transitional Housing services provided	17 women 33 children	No transitional housing	N/A	No transitional housing	-
Legal Services Restraining Orders	444	42	N/A	N/A	-

*N/A Not Available*

<sup>1</sup> *Data provided is for the time period January 1, 2001 – December 31, 2001*

<sup>2</sup> *Bed nights: 1 bed night is shelter and services for 1 night for 1 person*

<sup>3</sup> *Number of women receiving counseling*

<sup>4</sup> *Number of children receiving counseling*

Additionally, from January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000, the Family Violence Law Center received 2,975 calls and provided legal services to 473 clients. Support group services were utilized by 260 clients.

## Recommendations

As highlighted in this report, family violence including intimate partner violence is an epidemic of enormous proportions, particularly among women and children, in Alameda County. We hope this report serves as an advocacy tool for action to prevent domestic violence in our communities. Following are some general recommendations for implementation.

- ✓ Develop a three to five-year comprehensive strategic plan for action including prevention and intervention activities for family violence in Alameda County.
- ✓ Advocate for resources and funding to address the *reported* need for comprehensive domestic violence services countywide.
- ✓ Continue to assess and monitor the magnitude, nature and consequences of family violence, including child abuse, elder abuse, and intimate partner violence, both countywide and in specific communities.
- ✓ Advocate for development and enforcement of legislation and program policies for safety and support of at-risk battered women and children.
- ✓ Continue efforts to identify gaps in services and resources.
- ✓ Promote systematic collaboration of legal services, medical/health providers, social services and other systems and organizations that work with survivors of domestic and family violence.
- ✓ Increase awareness and reporting of family violence for both community and health professionals.
- ✓ Provide education and alternative strategies for men, including young men and families, who may be at risk for future intimate partner violence.
- ✓ Increase the identification, retention and support of at-risk children in childcare.
- ✓ Increase domestic violence outreach and intervention efforts into drug treatment programs, jails, homeless shelters, childcare, schools and other settings.
- ✓ In partnership with schools, recognize and provide meaningful resources to youth who may be encountering violence at homes, on the street or in intimate relationships.

- ✓ Assure access to and availability of linguistically and culturally competent helplines, referrals and other necessary services to assist survivors of domestic and family violence.
- ✓ Communities of color, immigrant, refugee, limited English-speaking, disabled, and gay/lesbian/queer communities should be supported, to develop targeted and culturally specific community education and prevention campaigns regarding intimate partner violence and other forms of family violence.



## Recommendations for Future Assessments

Continued and expanded assessment of family violence is critical to planning effective prevention efforts. Standardizing some data collection tools across agencies and service providers may help to gather more accurate data and in-depth information including socio-economic data, demographics and information about risk factors and history of violence.

It is highly recommended that the following be included in the assessment of family violence in future County profiles.

- ✓ Injuries and violence-related hospitalizations: Hospital Discharge Data from Office of Statewide Health and Planning Development.
- ✓ Injury deaths (homicides and suicides) among women and children where violence at home was possible: Mortality Files.
- ✓ Adverse birth outcomes such as low birth weight babies, infant mortality where domestic violence may have been detected (during prenatal care or not): Birth Files, Infant Mortality, Fetal Death Files, data from Fetal Infant Mortality Review and Child Death Review Teams.
- ✓ Data from local Emergency Departments, health care providers, substance abuse treatment centers for women and men.
- ✓ School data on at risk youth and school performance.
- ✓ Child abuse data from social services and foster care systems.
- ✓ Domestic violence-related criminal and civil justice statistics.
- ✓ Qualitative data and stories from focus groups or surveys.
- ✓ Data from community agencies that provide referrals, helpline and other support services to victims of violence.
- ✓ Data about legal services and immigration assistance provided to battered women.

## Technical Notes

This profile analyzed readily available data for the most recent years, primarily 1998 – 2001, in order to complete the data collection and analysis in a timely manner. Much of the data was analyzed using SPSS. All data was kept strictly confidential and was provided anonymously.

### Data Collection Process

Indicators for the report were selected based on an agreed upon criteria by the Alameda County Domestic Violence Collaborative. These included availability of the data, accuracy and completeness of the data and its relation to the specific definition of family violence. The collaborative, with a spirit of partnership and a vision for ending family violence countywide, went through an extensive, year-long effort to identify all possible sources of data, assess the availability of that data and reviewed tools and procedures used by those sources. It is important to note that we limited our analysis and data collection for this report to a few sources for practicality.

### Data Sources

#### Vital Statistics

Domestic violence-related deaths each year are compiled and reviewed by the Alameda County Death Review Team. Note that fetal and child death review data are not included.

#### Law Enforcement Data

Data concerning the number and nature of arrests for domestic violence in the state of California is collected through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Local city police departments, county sheriff's offices, the California Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies report these arrests monthly to the California Department of Justice (DOJ), which supplies the information to the Federal Bureau of Investigations.

Arrest totals shown should not be interpreted as the actual number of individuals arrested for domestic violence offenses because it is possible that some individuals may have been arrested for domestic violence on more than one occasion. Variation in reporting does exist among police districts. Incidents of battering for which a police report was not made are not included in this data.

## Population Data

Population estimates of Alameda County residents by age, sex, race/ethnicity, and income levels for year 2000 were obtained from US Census 2000. Immigration data for the last 10 years for the county was obtained from the California Department of Finance, Research Unit.

## Shelter Data

Specific shelter data was obtained in aggregate for the most recent years 2000 and 2001 through partnerships with the shelters. Note that all data provided was confidential, anonymous and analyzed in aggregate.

## District Attorney's Office

A special data request was made to obtain most recent data available for year 2000 of the total adult cases filed and prosecuted for domestic violence, from the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

## Limitations of the Data

The information presented is highly limited in terms of content, severity of the issue, the populations it affects, the extent of the problem, etc. Moreover, it is a very highly sensitive issue that many battered women do not even ever report. It is documented that about half of all female victims of intimate partner violence report an injury of some sort, and about 20% seek medical assistance.

Another limitation of this report is that the same victim may access different resources in the county. For instance, she may call the police department to report the abuse, a shelter hotline to talk about it and a legal services agency to obtain a restraining order. This may duplicate counts and may slightly overestimate the number of victims of domestic violence at a population-level. However, it is a more accurate reflection of the use of community resources. Finally detailed data on child abuse and other types of family violence were not included in this report.

Hence, this report is limited by the availability and accessibility of the domestic violence data available. However, we hope this report highlights the importance of coordinating and sharing data and information locally in order to more accurately monitor and assess family violence in Alameda County.

## References

1. Abuse During Pregnancy: Effects on Maternal Complications and Birth Weight in Adult and Teenage Women, *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, Vol. 84, September 1994.
2. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, Intimate Partner Violence and Age of Victim October 2001.
3. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *The Women's Health Data Book: A Profile of Women's Health in the United States*, Ed. Dawn Misra, Ph.D., 2002.
4. California Department of Justice, Bureau of Criminal Information and Analysis, Criminal Justice Statistics Center. <https://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/index.htm>
5. California Legislative Analysts Office. Child Abuse in California Part I 1996. <http://www.lao.ca.gov/cw11096a.html>
6. The Commonwealth Fund, *Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Health*, May 1999.
7. Census 2000. <http://www.census.gov>.
8. Department of Justice – BJS Study on Intimate Partner Violence, May 2000 (Cavnet document 762)
9. Domestic Violence Deaths: A Review of DV Related Deaths in Alameda County 1995-2000 by Domestic Violence Death Review Team December 2001
10. Domestic Violence in Berkeley: Including Intimate Partner Violence and Family Violence, Annual Data Report: 1997-2000. Prepared by the Berkeley Public Health Department, Domestic Violence Prevention Program, 2002.
11. Domestic Violence in California: A Status Report to the California DHS, by M. Dalton, November 1996.
12. Domestic Violence in Santa Clara County: Annual Data Report 2001. Prepared by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. <http://www.growing.com/nonviolent/>.
13. Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence in Alameda County, Maternal and Child Health, Alameda County Public Health Department 2000.
14. Family Violence Prevention Fund, SF, CA. <http://www.endabuse.org/programs/economic/>

15. From Vision to Action: A Framework for a Violence Prevention Plan. California Attorney General's Office Crime and Violence Prevention Center.
16. Healthy People 2010: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives. US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service. <http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>
17. Honoring their Lives, Learning from their Deaths: Findings and Recommendations from the Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review December 2000. Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
18. Kyriacou DN, Anglin D, Taliaferro E et al. Risk factors for injury to women from domestic violence against women. New England Journal of Medicine 1999. 341(25): 1982-8.
19. Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment and Five-Year Plan 1999-2004. Maternal and Child Health Section, Alameda County Public Health Department, 2000.
20. National Crime Victimization Survey, the Bureau of Justice Statistics
21. Power to Change: Faith Communities Take Action Against Family Violence, SF Collaborative Organized to Prevent Abuse, Funded by San Francisco Department of Public Health, Community Health Education Section. [www.interfaithfamilyviolence.org](http://www.interfaithfamilyviolence.org).
22. Preventing Domestic Violence: A Blueprint for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Department of Health Services.
23. Quality of Life Benchmarks Report 2000. Alameda County Social Services Agency. <http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/socialservices>
24. The Profile of Family Violence in Contra Costa County, Contra Costa County Public Health Department and Contra Costa Advisory Council Against Domestic Violence.
25. U.S. Department of Justice, Intimate Partner Violence, May 2000.
26. U.S. Department of Justice, Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current Spouses, Boyfriends and Girlfriends, March 1998.
27. U.S. Department of Justice, Violence Related Injuries Treated in Hospital Emergency Departments August 1997.

**Domestic Violence is Preventable --**