**NYSCADV’S 2021 LEGISLATIVE DAY OF ACTION PRIORITIES**

***New York State’s domestic violence service delivery system is antiquated,***

***having not been updated since it was established more than 30 years ago.***

***As a result, victims are not able to obtain the support and services they need and deserve.***

It is clear that New York’s approach to providing services for domestic violence (DV) victims is no longer working. Under New York’s current model, on a daily basis, thousands of New York’s DV victims do not receive the services they need. **In fact, according to the National Census of Domestic Violence Services, nearly 2,000 requests for DV services went unmet in New York on just one day in 2020. That’s more than double the number of unmet requests received on a similar day in 2019.**

The New York State Legislature and Governor Cuomo have acknowledged the problem; the State’s system of funding and oversight of DV programs is antiquated, having been established more than 30 years ago when most DV victims sought emergency shelter. This focus on residential programs continues to be the primary method for funding DV service providers, despite the fact that a majority of DV victims are seeking non-residential DV services. These survivors want to stay in their homes, or with family or friends, while they obtain services such as counseling, legal services, childcare, housing assistance, etc. **New York’s DV service delivery system needs a major overhaul in light of this new reality.**

New York State’s Office of Children and Family Services received funding to conduct an important pilot study this year to assess a new, innovative model for providing DV services to all New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence. Upon completion, legislative and regulatory reforms will be needed to implement the new DV service delivery system.

**DV advocates recommend the following changes be made to transform New York’s DV service delivery system:**

1. Re-structure funding to support DV survivors’ individual needs and desires and broaden the range of services and options available to them;
2. Integrate funding for residential and non-residential DV services to ensure DV survivors are able to access a variety of services and programs;
3. Establish and rely on state funding instead of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) as the primary funding stream for DV services;
4. Reduce administrative burdens placed on DV programs; and,
5. Enable DV programs and DV survivors to determine when a survivor and family members are ready to leave emergency shelter.

**Legislative Priorities:**

During NYSCADV’s Virtual Legislative Day of Action, advocates across the State will be supporting the following legislation to prevent DV from occurring in the first place and to support DV victims when it does happen:

1. **A.2520 Weinstein/S.1789 Sanders,** to extend federal confidentiality protections to New York’s DV advocates, further clarifying that conversations between advocates and survivors are privileged.
2. **A.3891 Ramos/S.3086 Salazar**, to increase the age of consent for the purposes of marriage to the age of 18.
3. **A.6616 Nolan/S2584A Brouk**, to require age-appropriate, comprehensive healthy relationships and sexual education instruction for K-12 students in all public and charter schools.
4. **A.6207 Rosenthal/S.4815 Salazar,** to permit DV survivors to self-attest to their eligibility for breaking bundled or family-plan cell phone and TV contracts.
5. **A.211 Rosenthal/S.401 Biaggi,** to establish a women’s health education program in correctional facilities and enhance services for pregnant inmates.

**For more information:**

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April 28, 2021