



Utah Domestic Violence Council

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Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director

Utah Advocates Seeing an Increase in Demand for DV Services

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For Immediate Release:

Despite the recent Family Violence Statistics report released by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Utah's domestic violence advocates and service providers overall are experiencing an increase in demand for their services. The report indicates that across the nation, domestic violence incidents have dropped by more than half. However, Utah's victim advocate programs, domestic violence shelters, legal services, domestic violence crisis line and Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) have different statistics to share.

According to "No More Secrets" the Governor's Violence Against Women and Families Cabinet Council reports for 2004 and 2005, available online at www.udvc.org, domestic violence shelter stays have increased from 40,998 to 59,667 days—nearly a 50 percent increase over the past five years. Crisis calls to the state's 16 shelters increased from 35,457 calls in 2003 to 39,532 in 2004, an increase of more than 11 calls *each* day.

Additionally, the Domestic Violence LINK line, which offers 24-hour crisis and referral to victims of domestic violence, has seen a 42 percent increase in the number of people served from 1994 to 2003, according to LINK line coordinator, A.J. Hunt.

Other increases in requests for service, include

- A 400 percent increase in information and referral calls to the Midvale Victim Advocate Program, according to Victim Assistance Program Coordinator, Heather Roxburgh.
- A 60.3 percent increase in filings of civil stalking injunctions (from 446 in 2002 to 715 in 2004) and a 2.3 percent increase in protective orders filed in Utah from 2000 to 2003, according to the Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake.
- A 80.2 percent increase in DV-related Child Protective Services' cases reported from 1999 to 2004 and a *131.2 percent increase* in those cases substantiated, according to the Division of



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Child and Family Services. (There were 4,645 reported cases of DV-related child abuse in 2004. Of that number, 2,656 were substantiated.)

“Overall, the trend we’re seeing is not a drop in the need for domestic violence services,” said UDVC Chair Brandy Farmer. “In fact, shelters still routinely refer families to alternate places of safety because there is simply not enough room to provide service to them.”

For example, according to “No More Secrets,” 1,592 people were denied service by local shelters in 2004 due to a lack of space, up 58 percent from the previous year.

If you or someone you know needs more information about domestic violence, call the LINK line at (800) 897-LINK (5465). For more information about the Utah Domestic Violence Council call Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director, at (801) 521-5544 or Brandy Farmer, Chair, at (801) 281-1259.

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