

2013

# CITY OF CHICAGO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELP LINE REPORT

*Domestic Violence Help Line*

**1-877-TO END DV**

**1-877-863-6338 (TTY)**



Chicago Department of Family and Support Services  
Division on Domestic Violence

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# Domestic Violence Help Line

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## Help Line Overview

The Domestic Violence Help Line is a toll-free clearinghouse to domestic violence services in Chicago and throughout Illinois. Established in 1998, it is a service of the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Division on Domestic Violence and operates as a partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network.

The Domestic Violence Help Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a confidential and multilingual service that accepts inquiries from all members of the public. Callers to the help line can be assisted in over 170 different languages via the Language Line.

Calls are taken by Victim Information and Referral Advocates (VIRAs) who work with the caller to determine the caller’s needs. These can include: referrals to domestic violence service providers and/or directly linking callers with a provider via a 3-way transfer, safety planning, information about domestic violence, and non-emergency crisis support. VIRAs can offer victims referrals to over 400 agencies that provide domestic violence services in Chicago, Cook County, and throughout Illinois. All Help Line staff complete the state required 40-hour

domestic violence training program before they interact with callers.

## The 2013 Report

This Domestic Violence Help Line Report presents a summary of information collected for all calls taken by the Help Line during the 2013 calendar year.

The summary includes overall descriptions of 1) the Help Line call volume and 2) regional comparisons of victim caller characteristics, violence experience, and service needs; dependent characteristics; and abuser characteristics. In the regional summaries, narrative text reflects data for the entire state of Illinois while the charts are used to show the breakdown of statewide data by Chicago, Cook County without Chicago, and Illinois without Cook County.

This report is not an indicator of the prevalence or incidence of domestic violence in Chicago or Illinois. It is a community resource that documents characteristics of Help Line calls, service needs, and the role of the Help Line in connecting victims with service and support.

## Data Source and Methods

In January 2012, the Domestic Violence Help Line switched from a legacy Microsoft Access-based application for call service delivery to iCarol, a web-based hot line software. iCarol's automated service delivery assists with integration of call content, resource referrals, staff scheduling, and staff management capabilities. Adoption of this automated web-based system met the Help Line's expanding needs to simplify and automate call retrieval and monitoring processes. Benefits of using iCarol also include minimized IT and external consultant support and enhanced access to victim data.

In iCarol, VIRAs record case specific information about each call and can easily search for domestic violence service programs and

agencies in Chicago and Illinois to refer the caller.

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## Other Reports and Publications

Visit the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS), Division on Domestic Violence (DDV) website to access this and other reports produced by the Division on Domestic Violence:

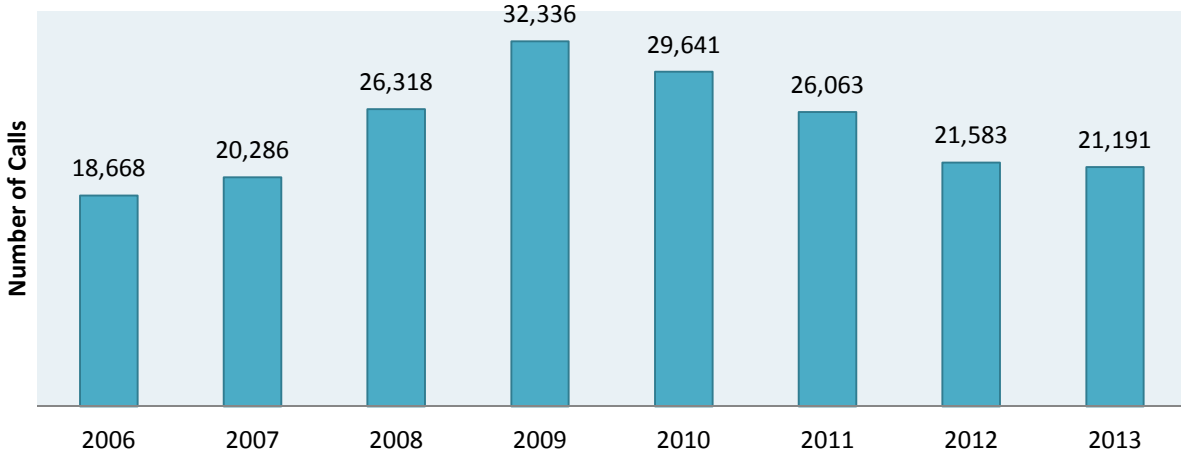
[www.cityofchicago.org/domesticviolence](http://www.cityofchicago.org/domesticviolence).

This 2013 Domestic Violence Help Line Report was prepared by Ebony M. Dill, Coordinator of Research and Evaluation of the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services with feedback provided by members of the Domestic Violence, Coordinated Response Council (DV CRC).

# 2013 Total Call Volume

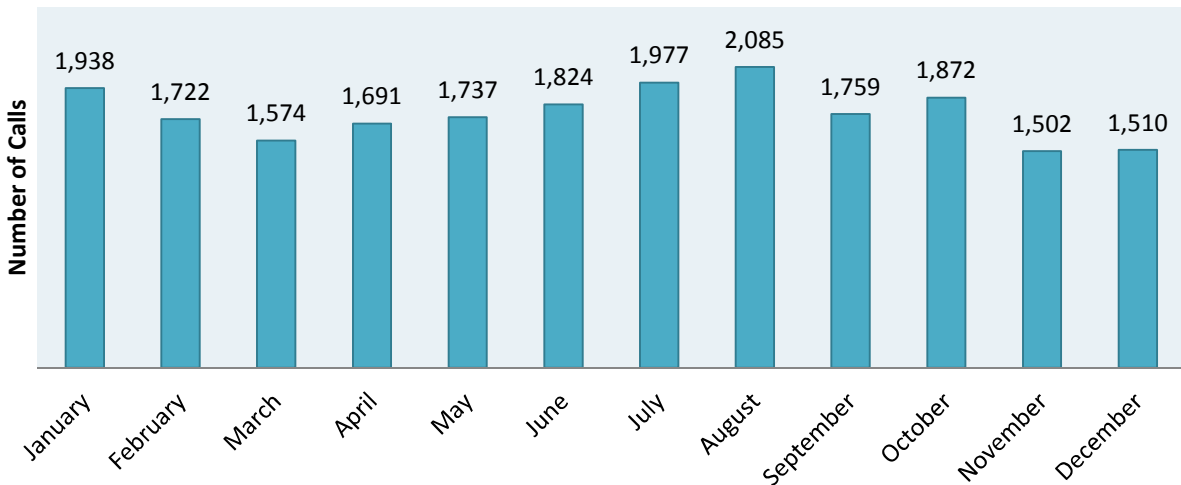
Descriptive summaries of all calls taken by the Help Line.

## Annual Call Volume 2006-2013



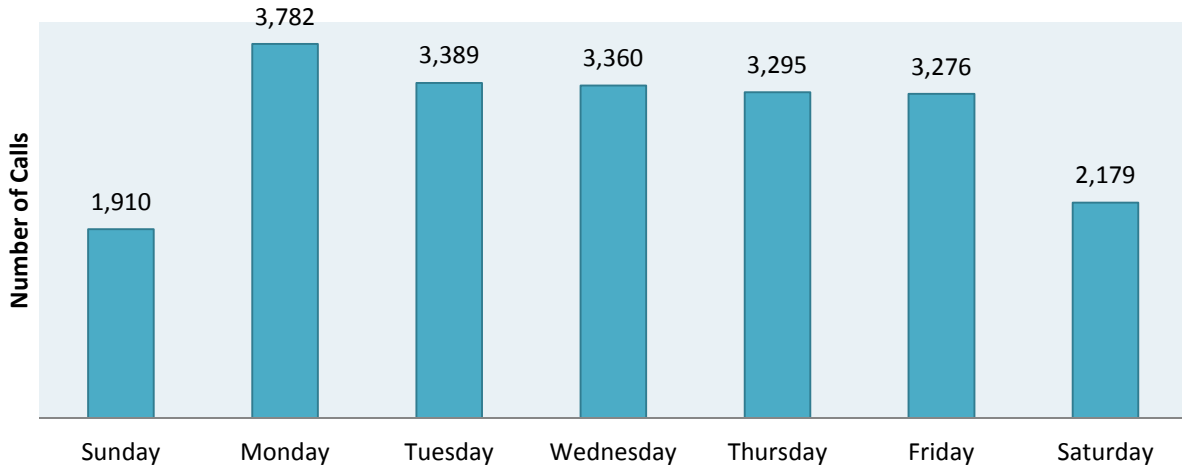
The Domestic Violence Help Line answered 21,191 calls in 2013.

## Monthly Call Volume N=21,191



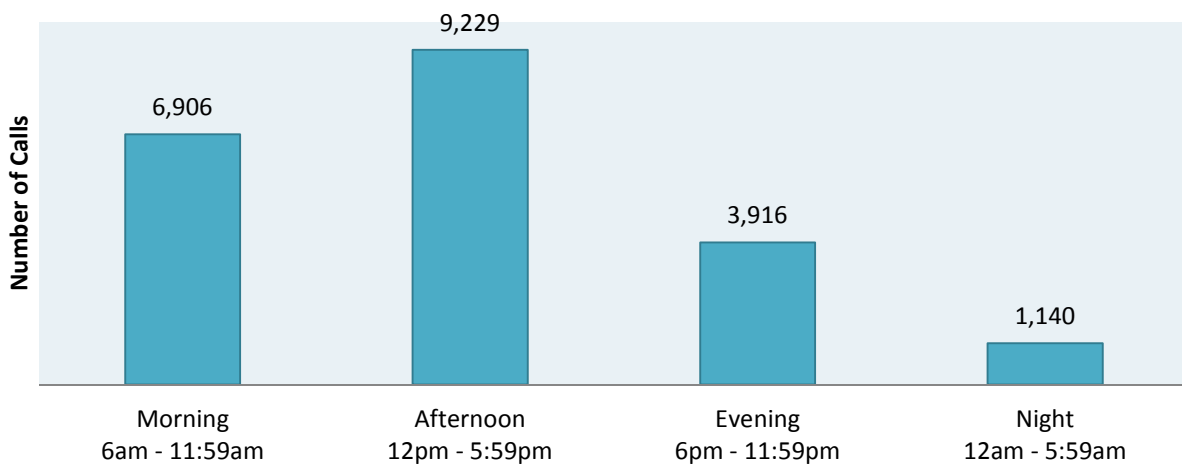
On average, 1,766 calls were answered each month.

### Daily Call Volume N=21,191

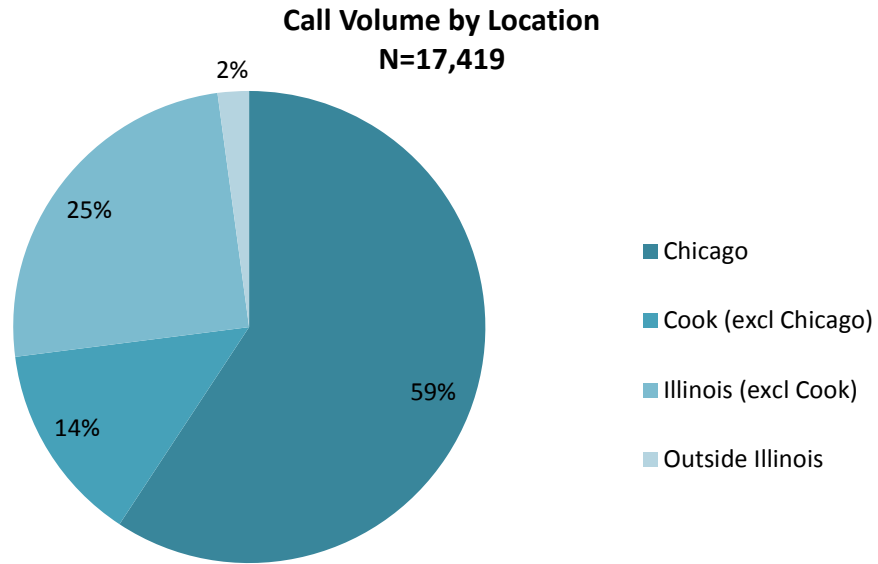


On average, 58 calls were answered each day.

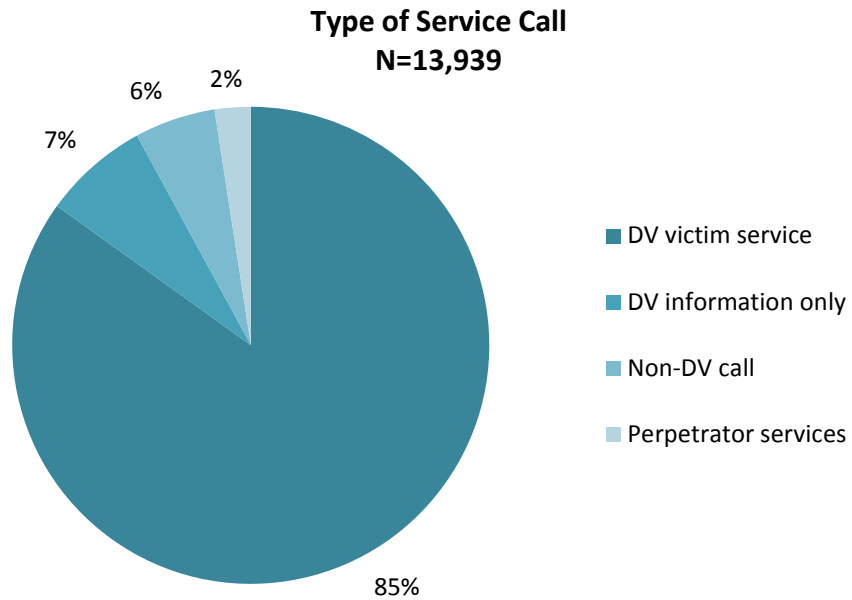
### Call Volume by Time of Day N=21,191



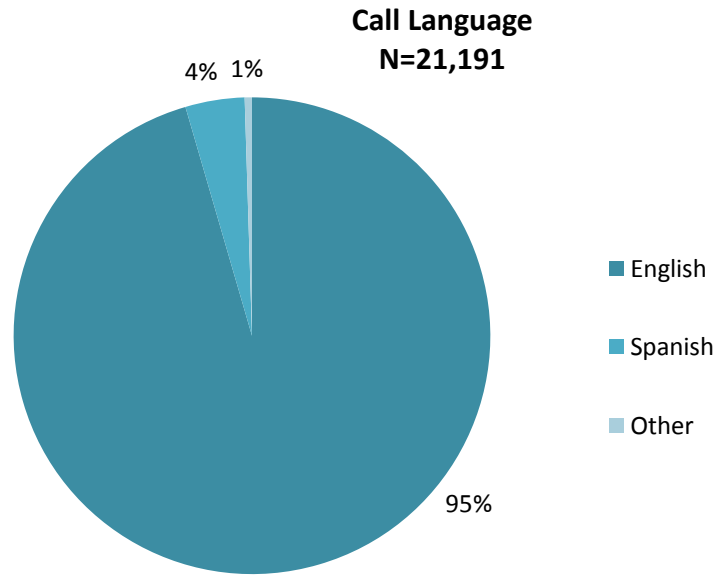
Most calls were placed in the afternoons between the hours of 12pm – 5:59pm (n=9,229).



The majority of callers to the Help Line were from Chicago (59%).



The majority of callers were seeking victim services (85%).



Most calls were conducted in English (95%). Calls were also taken in Spanish (4%) and other languages (1%) that included (in order of frequency): Polish, Arabic, Urdu, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Lithuanian, French, Ukrainian, TTY,<sup>1</sup> Urdu, Amharic, Bosnian, Cantonese, Creole, Croatian, Italian, Punjabi, Tagalog, and Thai.

**Summary from a call:**

*A victim who has family in Chicago but currently lives in another state, wants to escape her abuser and come to Chicago. She would bring two children with her. Caller was referred to speak with an attorney about custody concerns.*

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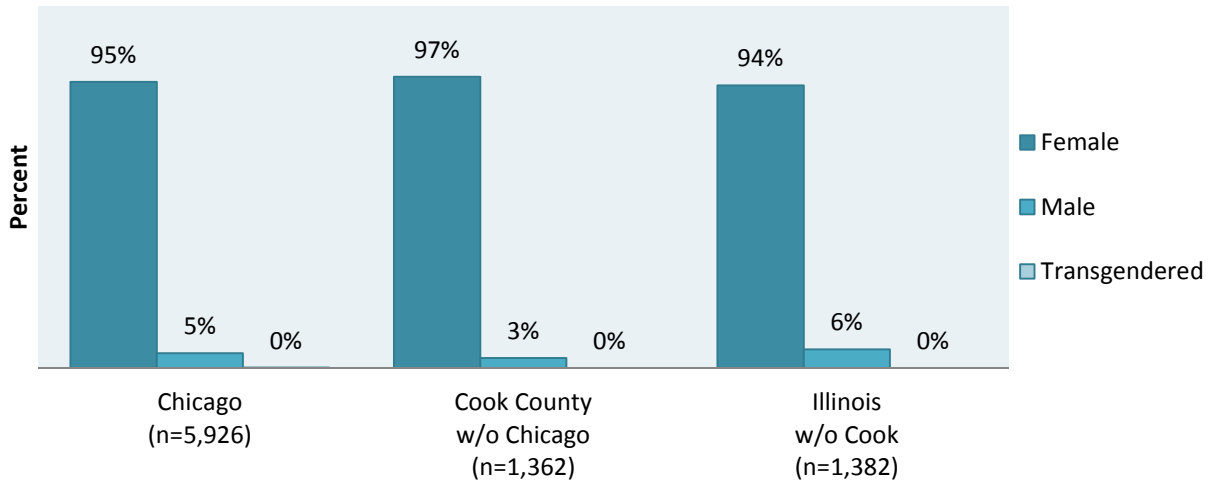
<sup>1</sup> TTY stands for teleprinter, teletypewriter or teletype and is a special device that lets people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate, by typing messages.



# 2013 Victim Characteristics

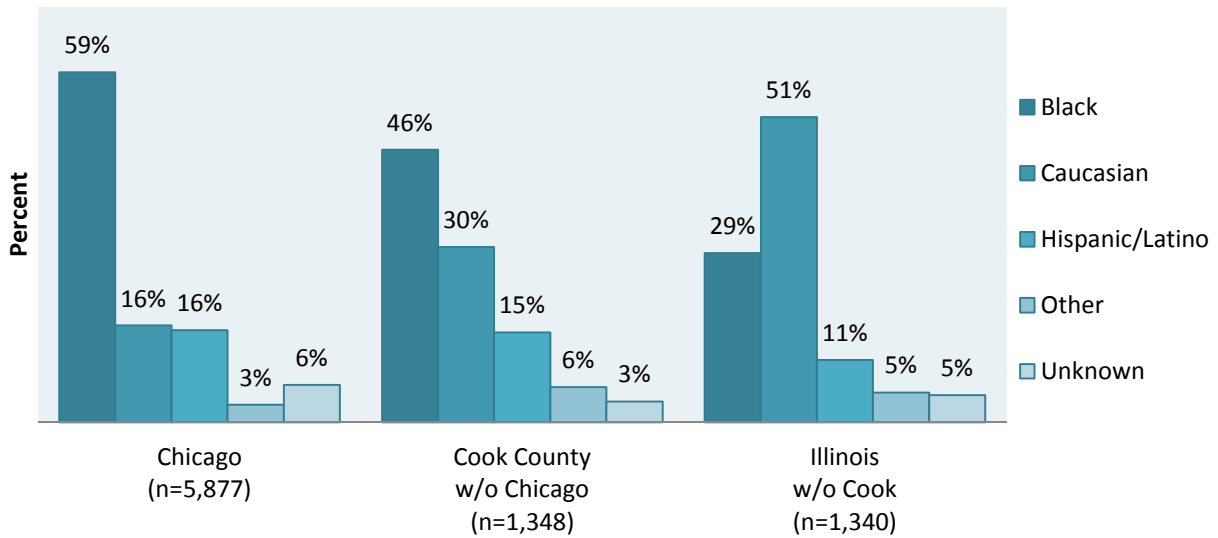
Descriptive summaries of victim calls by Illinois locations.

## Victim Gender N=8,670



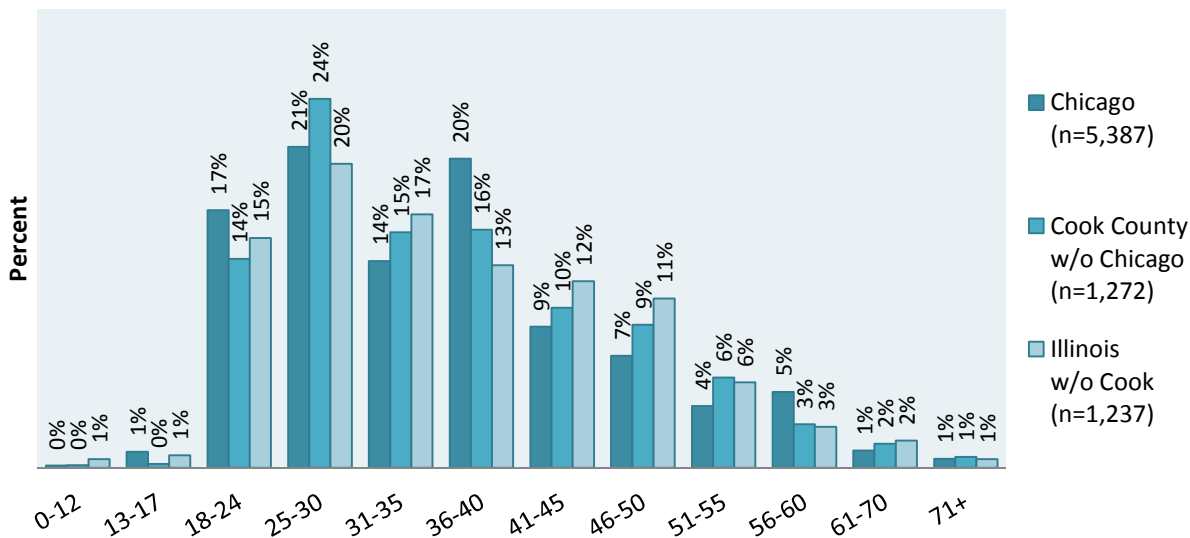
Most victims were female (95%) and 3 victims (in Chicago) self-identified as transgendered.

## Victim Race N=8,565



More than half of all victims were Black (52%), followed by White (24%) and Hispanic (15%).

**Victim Age  
N=7,896**



The majority (70%) of victims were between the ages of 18-40; 1% of victims were teens 17 years of age and younger and 6% were seniors 56 and over.

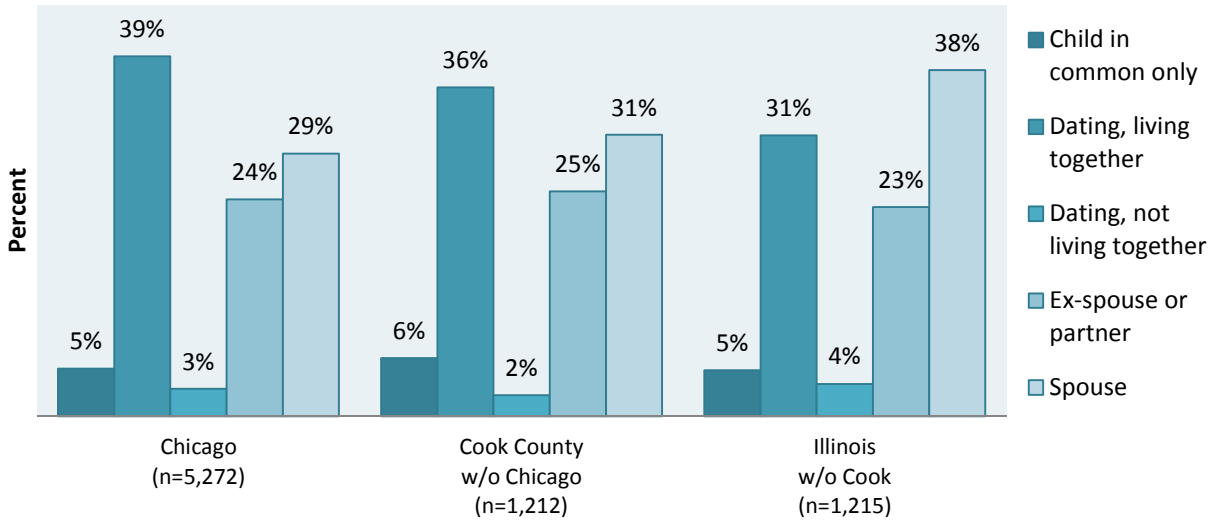
**Summary from a call:**

*A caller was seeking shelter in advance of her boyfriend being released from temporary custody. She says she is “black and blue” and physically in pain all over her body. She was linked to a shelter for intake and placement.*

# 2013 Victim Violence Experience

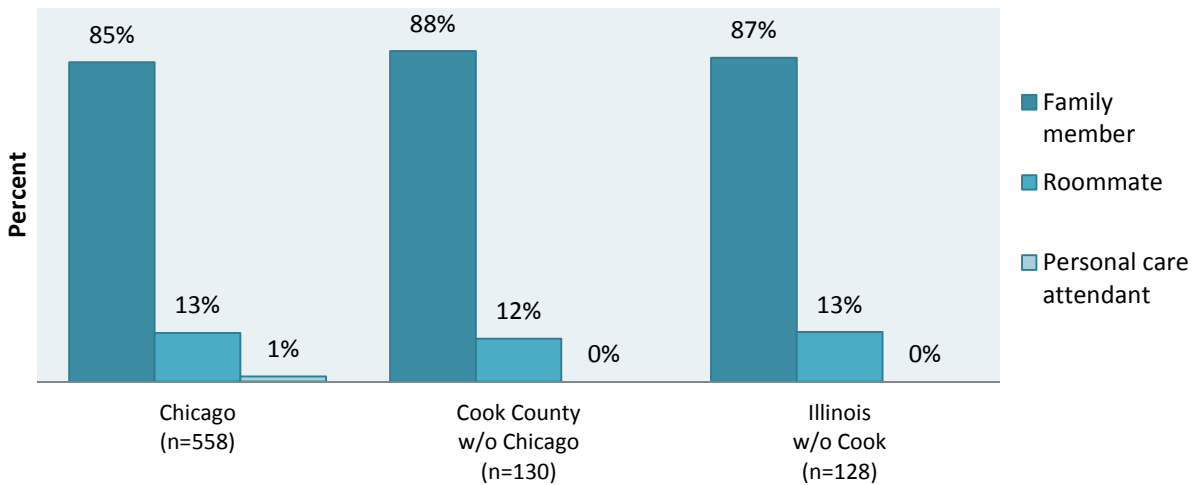
Statewide victims reported being abused by an intimate partner (90%) or family/household member (10%).

## Intimate Partner Abuser N=7,699



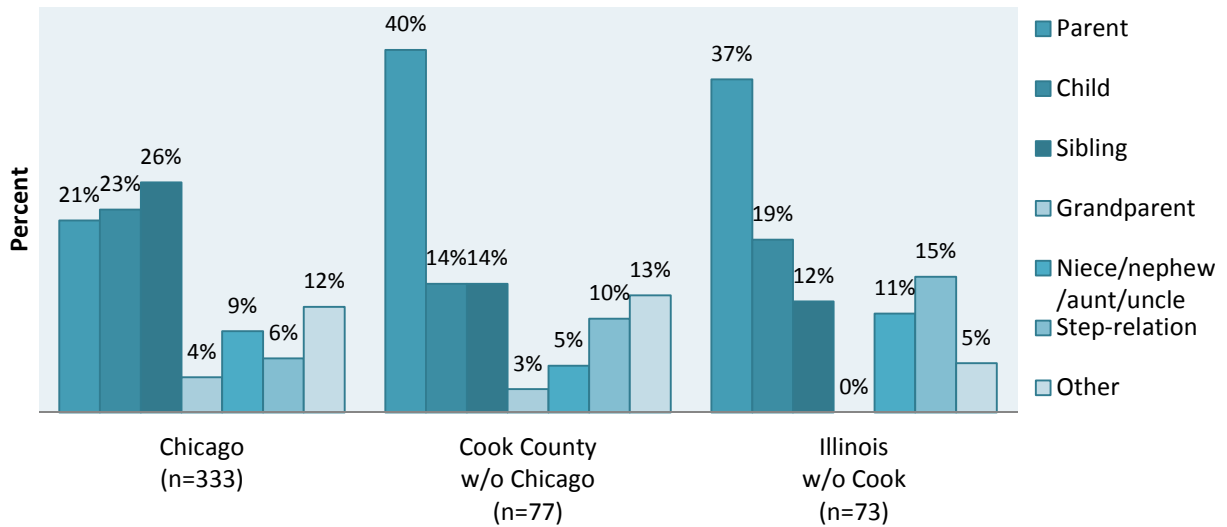
Intimate partner victims were often abused by a live-in partner (38%), spouse (31%), or an ex-spouse/ex-partner (24%).

## Family/Household Member Abuser N=816



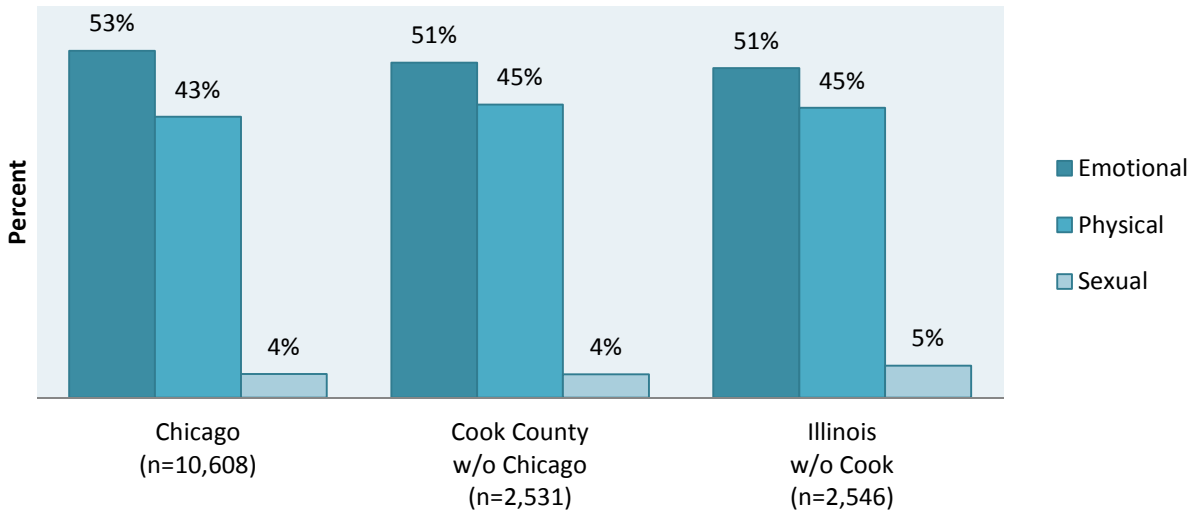
Victims of family/household violence were most often abused by a family member (86%).

**Family Member Abuser  
N=483**



Family member abusers were most often a parent (26%), sibling (22%), or child (21%).

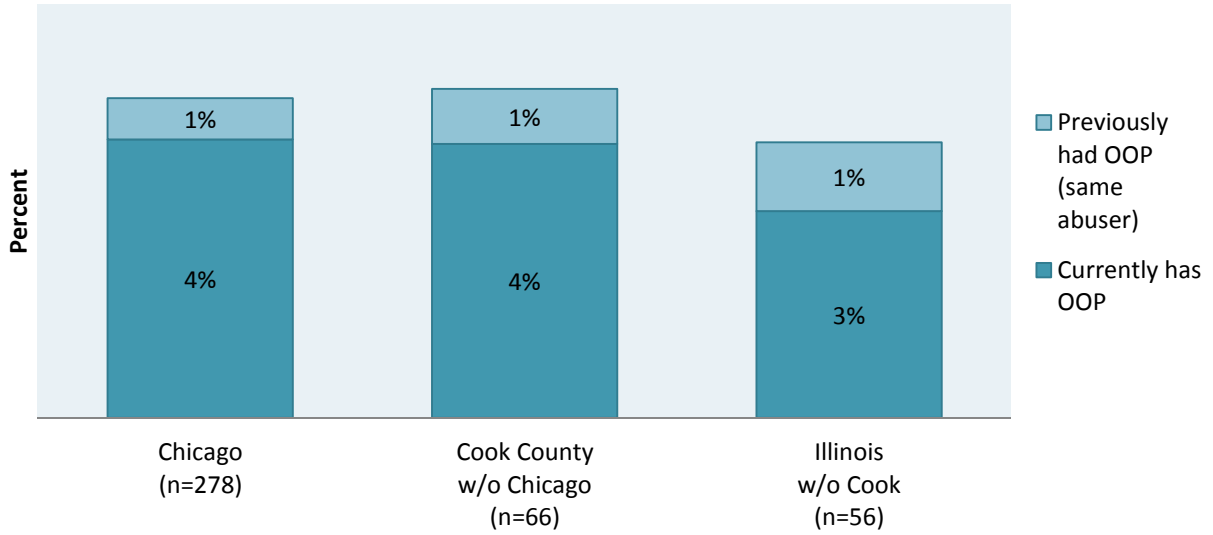
**Type of Abuse  
N=15,685**



Victims reported emotional (53%) and physical (44%) forms of abuse.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The type of abuse that victims experience was determined during a discussion of “what happened.” One or multiple forms of abuse may be identified. It is believed that the experience of sexual violence in DV situation is much higher; however due to stigma and many other concerns, it is believed that victims were less likely to report sexual forms of violence.

**Order of Protection  
N=400**

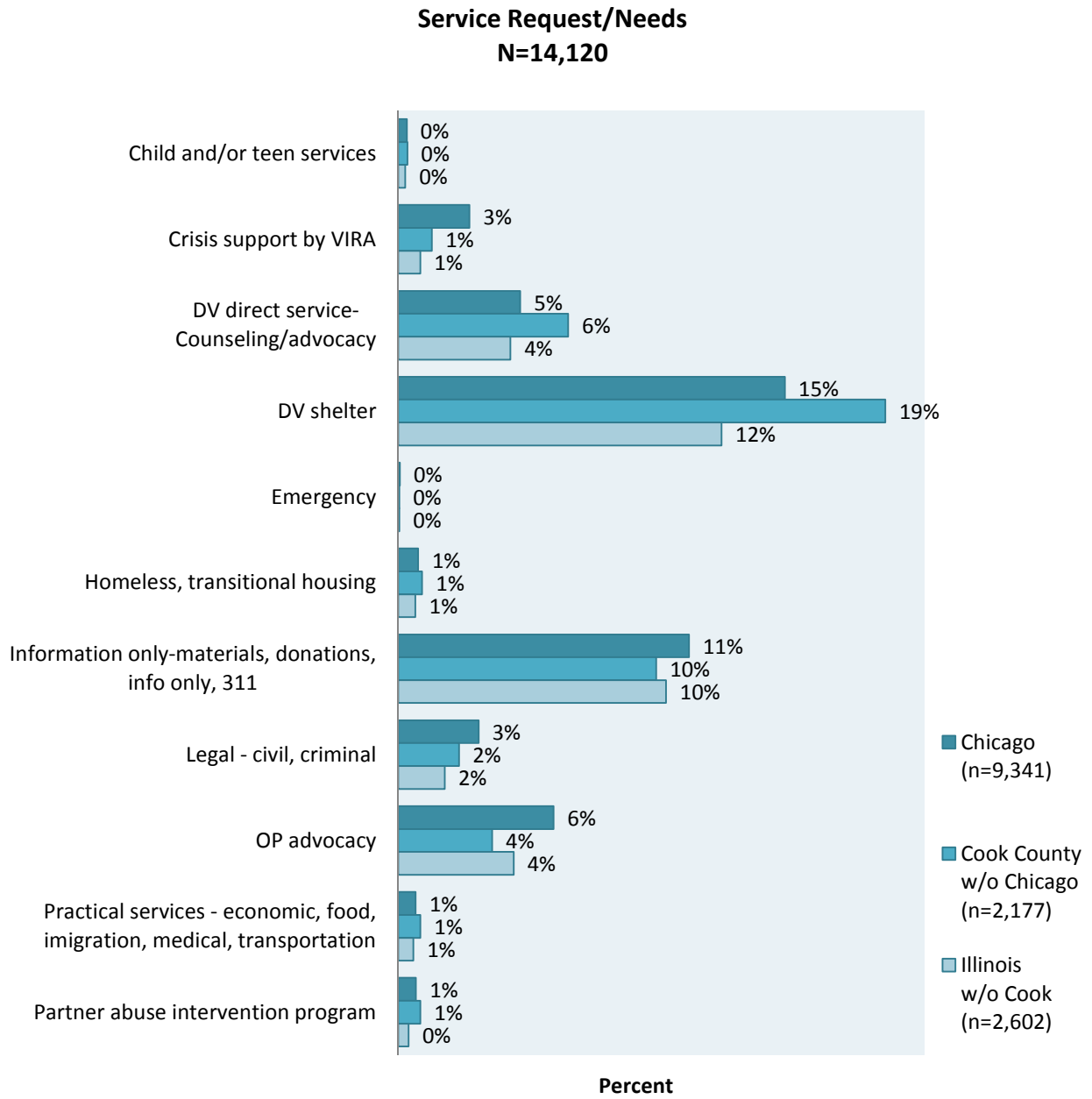


Four percent (4%) of victims had a current or previous order of protection against their abuser.

**Summary from a call:**

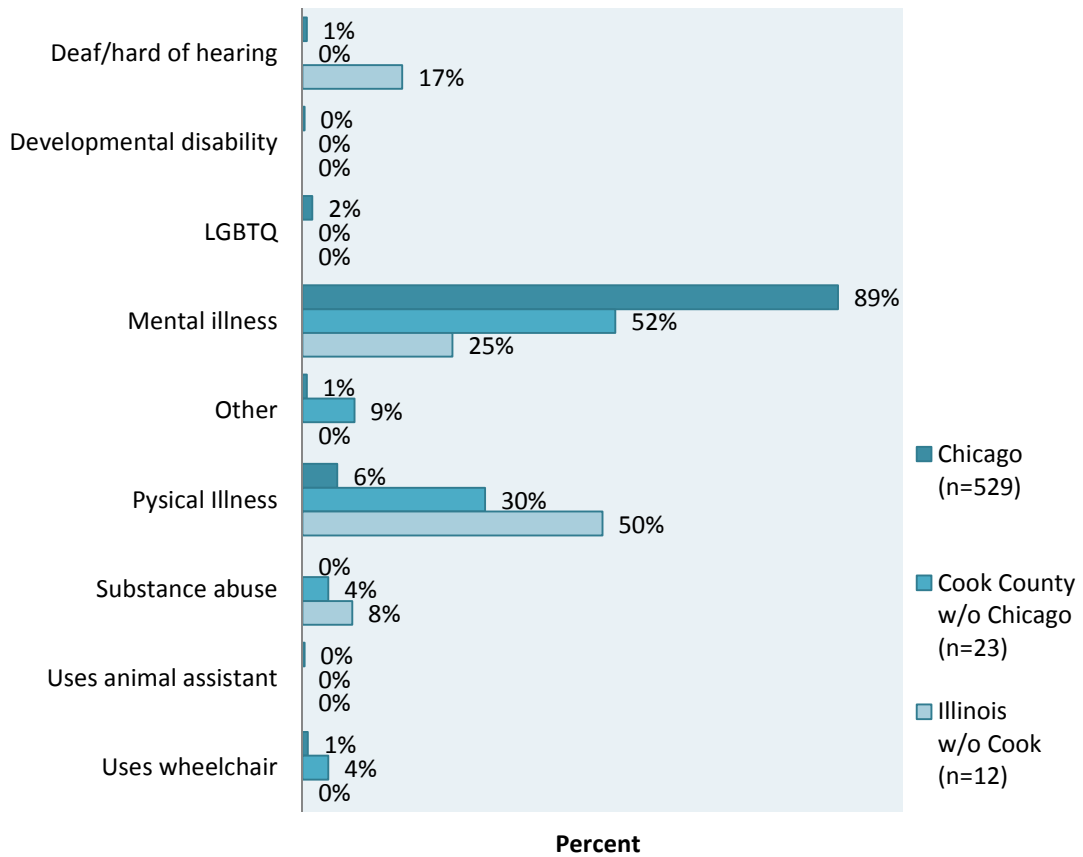
*A woman, with an order of protection, needed information on what to do because her abuser keeps texting her and harassing her on the phone. The caller said she contacted the police and they told her to call us. The VIRA assisted caller in contacting a sergeant in her district about arresting the abuser for violating the court order.*

# 2013 Victim Service Needs



Services were requested for victims that included shelter (35%), information only (25%), order of protection advocacy (12%), and counseling (11%).

**Special Service Needs  
N=564**



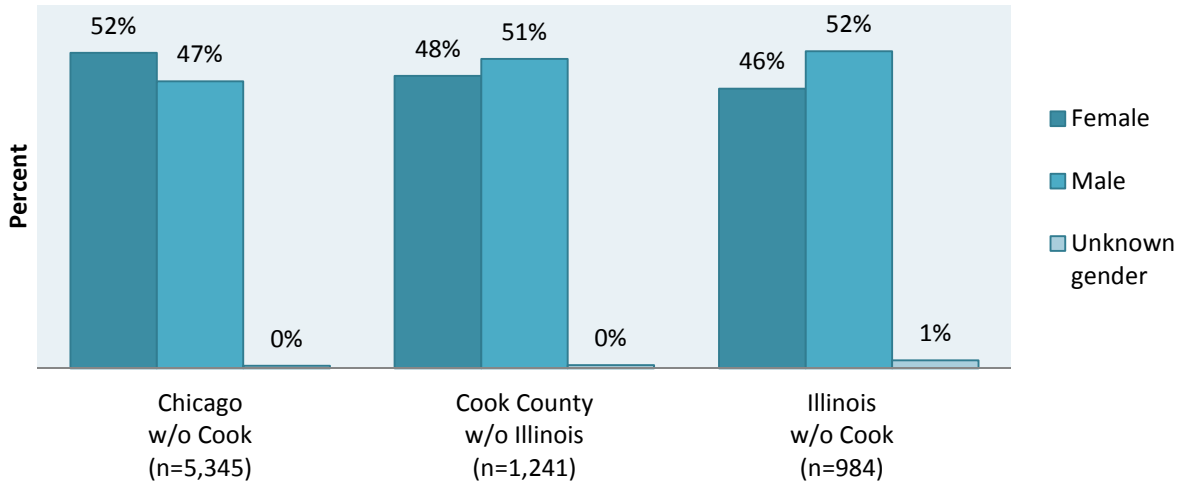
Victims also identified the need for services that were not domestic violence specific, however they are related to victims’ well-being. Statewide, callers seeking special services most often requested mental health services (86%).

**Summary from a call:**

*A caller only wanted to talk about what happened to her in a dating relationship that she had just ended. The caller did not want a referral, she just wanted to try and “understand” what she experienced. The VIRA spoke with her about violence in relationships, power and control, and helped her with safety planning. The caller thanked the VIRA and told her that she better understood what she went through and that she felt better able to “move on” with her life.*

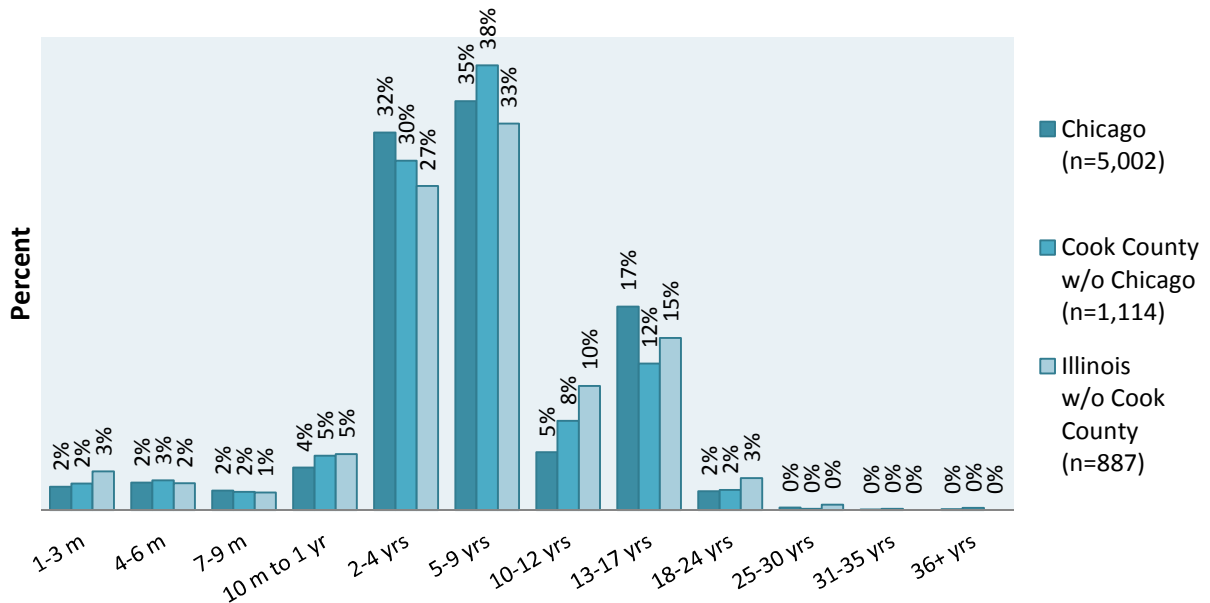
# 2013 Dependent Characteristics

**Dependent's Gender**  
N=7,570



Most victim callers have children. Slightly more than half of victims' dependents were female (51%).

**Dependent's Age**  
N=7,003

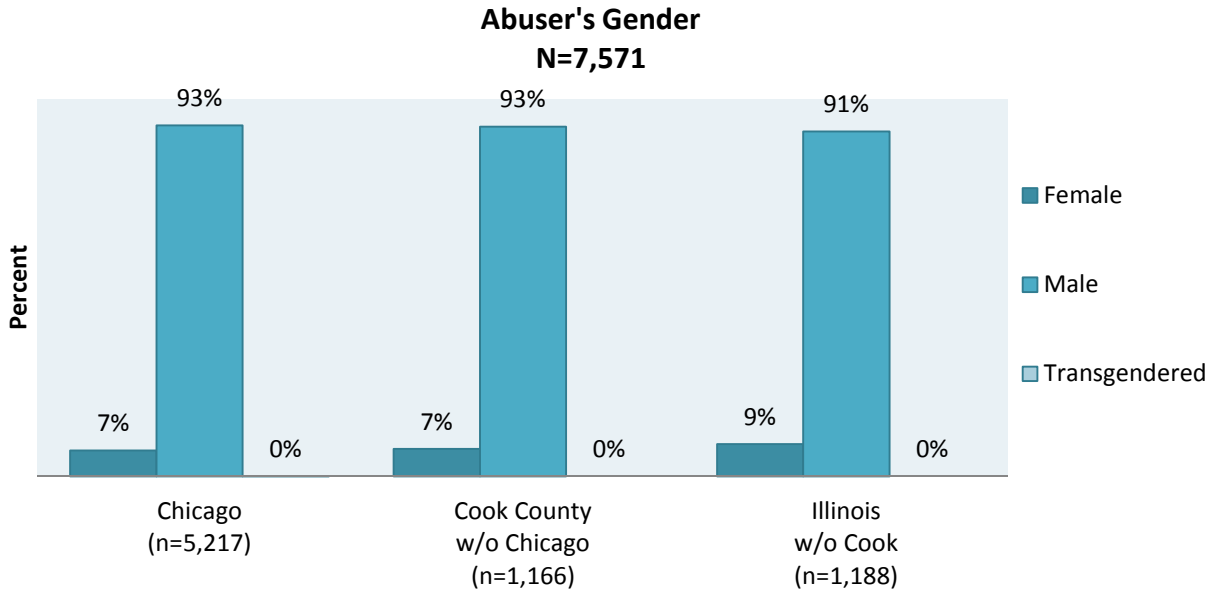


Dependents were mostly youth ages 2-17 (88%) with 66% of these youth ages 2-9; 2% of dependents were 18 years of age and older.

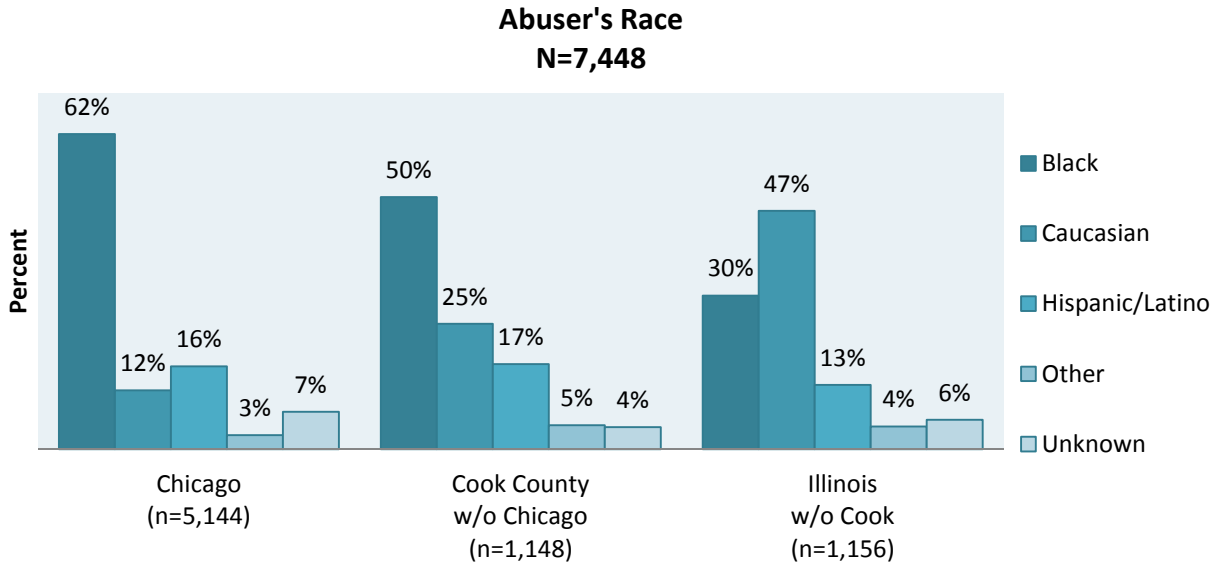


# Abuser Characteristics

Descriptive summaries of abusers by Illinois locations.

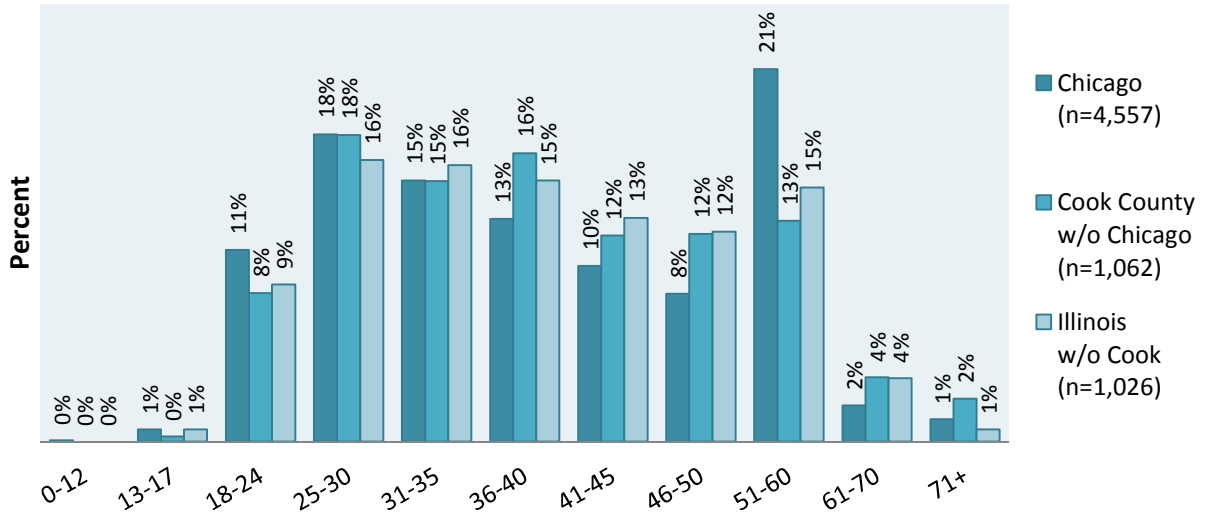


Abusers were male (93%) with 5 abusers (all from Chicago) identified as transgendered.



More than half of abusers were Black (55%) followed by White (19%) and Hispanic (16%).

**Abuser's Age**  
N=6,645



Abusers were adults mostly 18-60 years of age with 17% of abusers 25-30 years of ages and 19% 51-60 years of age; 1% of abusers were teens 17 and younger and 4% were seniors 61 and older.

**Summary from a call:**

*A woman called and said she was afraid for her life. Her husband took her cell phone, broke her car windows – so she can't drive, and doesn't let her speak to anyone. Safety planning was started. Victim doesn't think she can leave home to go to counseling. She doesn't feel she can go to a shelter... she is scared. VIRA provided support, safety planning and referral information.*

# Key Terms

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<b>Abuser</b>	The abuser is anyone reported to have perpetrated abuse. Callers provide demographic information (gender, race, age) about the victim's abuser. Abusers also call seeking services, albeit less frequently.
<b>Call Volume</b>	The total number of calls reported for a given time period.
<b>Dependent</b>	Callers provide gender and age for all dependent children living with the victim. Dependent children can be a minor child as well as an adult child.
<b>Language</b>	Language reflects the language used during the call. Callers can however be connected with services in their primary language, if requested and available.
<b>N</b>	N represents the total count or the sub-population of the total count. Missing data account for total count variations.
<b>Race</b>	Callers identify the victim's race/ethnicity and the call taker records it as Black/African American, White, Latino/Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian, Multi-racial, Native American or Other.
<b>Service Call</b>	Service calls are classified as requests for domestic violence (DV) victim services, information only, non-DV information, or perpetrator services to describe the support provided to callers. These calls can be placed by the victim or any caller on behalf of the victim.
<b>Service Request</b>	Callers request services based on their needs. They receive referral information or are transferred via a 3-way telephone link with a service provider. Identification of needed services does not necessitate service connection or receipt.
<b>Victim</b>	A victim is anyone who has experienced abuse in a domestic relationship such as from an intimate partner or a family/household member. Characteristics, violence experience, service needs, dependent information, and abuser characteristics are reported for victims.

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