



Idaho Crime Victim Survey: Year Two

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The *Biennial Report on Victimization & Victim Services* is a series of papers on the state of victimization, response to victimization, impacts of crime on victims, and victim services in Idaho. The project is funded by the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence & Victim Assistance. For more information on the project, watch the introductory video at www.idvch.com or contact Dr. Lisa Growette Bostaph at lisabostaph@boisestate.edu.



Study Overview

The *Biennial Report on Victimization & Victim Services* is a series of reports produced by Boise State University (BSU) researchers and funded by the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance (ICDVVA). As a part of this project, an anonymous, online survey was administered via Qualtrics to gather information from crime victims across the state. The survey requested information about the victimization(s) respondents suffered, their experiences seeking services, and basic demographic information. The findings from the initial crime victim survey (King et al., 2020a), which was deployed from May-December of 2020, can be found at <https://idvch.com/all-research-reports/>. This report focuses on the second round of the survey with responses collected between December of 2020 and October of 2022.

A survey was deemed the most appropriate method to gather information from crime victims. Research indicates that most victimization goes unreported so relying solely on official statistics leaves out a large portion of victims (Bureau of Justice Statistics [BJS], 2022). According to the *National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)*, only 30.8% of property crime victimizations and 45.6% of violent crime victimizations were reported to police in 2021 (BJS, 2022). Thus, this study surveyed people who had experienced victimization, but may or may not have reported it to police, providing a more inclusive picture of victimization in Idaho. Prior to beginning this study, approval was received from BSU's Institutional Review Board. After reviewing the informed consent, respondents who agreed to participate proceeded with the survey which was available in five languages: English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Swahili. While the majority of surveys were completed in English, 4.5% were completed in Spanish.

In order to obtain survey respondents, assistance was requested from all of the agencies that were invited to take the service provider survey¹ (King et al., 2020b; 2022). Emails were sent asking providers to distribute the survey to crime victims who contacted their agency for services, and agencies that received Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding during the study period were required to distribute the survey as per their grant agreement. Links to the survey, including the QR code for smart phone access, were provided to agencies to share. In addition, thousands of informational cards about the survey (available in all five languages) were created and shared with agencies across the state. It is important to keep in mind how the sample for this study was gathered. All of the respondents had had contact with a service provider, either inside or outside of the criminal justice system. Thus, they may be different from other crime victims who do not seek services. Also, participation in this survey was completely voluntary, so there may be differences between people who completed the survey and people who did not.

A total of 286 survey responses were recorded between December 4, 2020 and October 3, 2022. Once the survey responses were downloaded, it was discovered that 129 of them were incomplete or mostly incomplete, and one was not completed by a crime victim. These responses were removed for analysis. The research team also received 20 completed paper copies of the survey from one victim service provider². Between the online and paper surveys, the final sample size was 176. Unfortunately, it is not possible to calculate a response rate as there is no way of knowing how many crime victims were invited to complete the survey. Nevertheless, this is a sufficient sample size for analysis, enabling the research team to make conclusions and recommendations about the experiences of crime victims in Idaho.

¹ The provider survey reports can be found here: <https://idvch.com/all-research-reports/>

² This provider had contacted the research team during the study period to ask if they could print copies for their clients to complete in-person.

Results

The focus of this section is on describing the experiences and opinions of this sample of Idaho crime victims in regard to the crime(s) they experienced, the services they received, any unmet needs, their interactions with the criminal justice system, and basic demographics. The results are organized by topic and described below.

Demographic and Crime Characteristics

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the sample. Almost 90% of respondents identified as female, followed by male (9.7%) and non-binary (0.6%). While this is not representative of the overall population of Idaho in which 49.6% are female (United States Census Bureau [Census], 2021), it is not surprising as females are more likely to seek assistance following criminal victimization (McCart et al., 2010) and have been overrepresented in previous survey research on Idaho crime victims (Growette Bostaph et al., 2015; King et al., 2020a).

Table 1
Sample Demographics

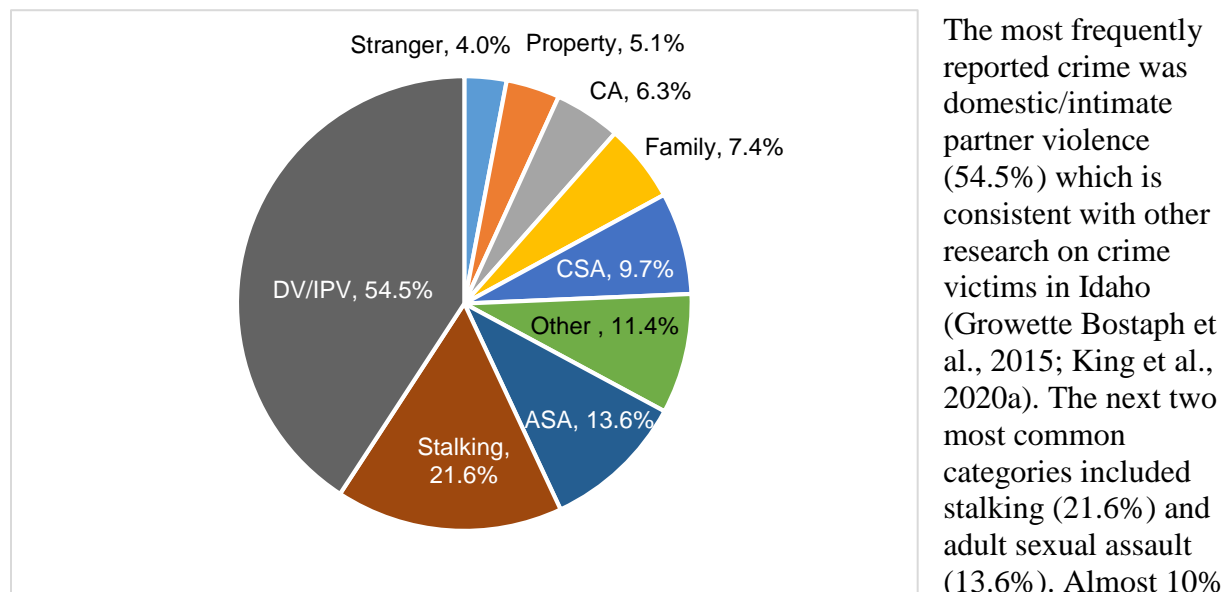
Variable/Category	Frequency (%)	Average	Range	
Sex				In terms of sexual orientation, the majority (89.8%) identified as heterosexual/straight with the remaining selecting bisexual (6.1%) and other (4.1%). The other category included one person who indicated gay/lesbian, one pansexual, and four others without clarification. Caucasian/White (62.5%) was the most frequently selected racial/ethnic category, followed by Hispanic/Latinx (15.3%), Native American (5.7%), Asian/Pacific Islander
Female	139 (89.7)			
Male	15 (9.7)			
Non-binary	1 (0.6)			
Sexual Orientation				
Heterosexual/straight	132 (89.8)			
Bisexual	9 (6.1)			
Other	6 (4.1)			
Race/Ethnicity				
Caucasian/White	111 (62.5)			
Hispanic/Latinx	27 (15.3)			
Native American	10 (5.7)			
Asian/Pacific Islander	4 (2.3)			
African American/Black	3 (1.7)			
Other	3 (1.7)			
Relationship Status				
Married	58 (37.9)			
Single	51 (33.3)			
Divorced	29 (19.0)			
Other	10 (6.5)			
Widowed	5 (3.3)			
Age		40.63	18-87	

(2.3%), African American/Black (1.7%), and other (1.7%). Compared to the entire Idaho population, the sample contained a lower percentage of people identifying as Caucasian/White (62.5% versus 92.8%) and greater percentages of Hispanic/Latinx (15.3% versus 13.3%), Native American (5.7% versus 1.7%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2.3% versus 1.8%), and African

American/Black (1.7% versus 0.9%) (Census, 2021). Thus, in comparison to the entire population of Idaho, this sample was overrepresented by people of color. In regard to their current relationship status, the majority identified as married (37.9%) or single (33.3%). The remaining respondents selected divorced (19.0%), other (6.5%), and widowed (3.3%). Last, participants ranged in age from 18 to 87 years with an average age of about 41.

One of the first questions on the survey asked respondents about the type of crime(s) for which they received services in Idaho in the past year. Brief descriptions of the crimes (e.g., stalking: repeated harassment by someone that caused you fear, distress, etc.) were included for clarification. Respondents were instructed to select all that apply. The results are displayed in Figure 1. The total number of crimes selected ranged from 1-6 with an average of 1.48. Almost 70% selected one crime, 27.7% selected 2-3, and 3.1% selected 4-6.

Figure 1³
Crimes for Which Services Were Received in the Last Year



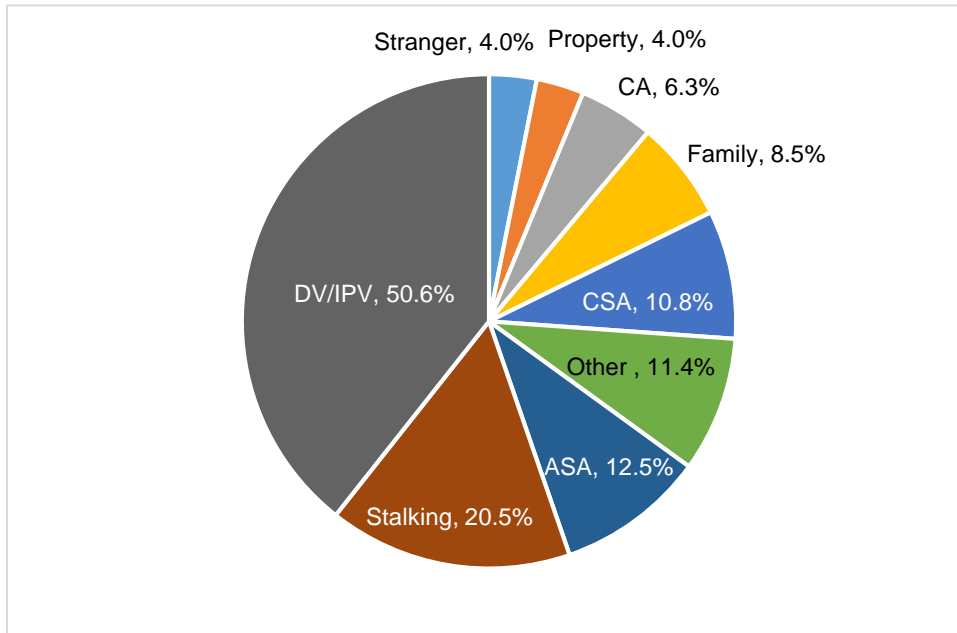
The most frequently reported crime was domestic/intimate partner violence (54.5%) which is consistent with other research on crime victims in Idaho (Growette Bostaph et al., 2015; King et al., 2020a). The next two most common categories included stalking (21.6%) and adult sexual assault (13.6%). Almost 10%

selected child sexual abuse, followed by assault by a non-intimate family member (7.4%), child physical abuse or neglect (6.3%), a property crime or robbery (5.1%), and assault by a stranger (4.0%). The ‘other’ category (11.4%) included homicide survivors, DUI, and a few other single responses such as firearm assault by an acquaintance, non-DUI vehicular assault, human trafficking, and bullying. Some of the respondents who selected ‘other’ did not elaborate about the crime(s) they experienced.

Participants were also asked about the type of crime(s) for which they received services in Idaho *most recently*. The results are displayed in Figure 2. The number of crimes selected for this question ranged from 1-8 with an average of 1.44. Just under 71% selected one, 27.4% selected 2-3, 1.3% selected five, and 0.6% selected eight. The types of crimes reported were similar to those from the previous question with domestic/intimate partner violence selected most frequently (50.6%), followed by stalking (20.5%), and adult sexual assault (12.5%).

³ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

Figure 2⁴
Crimes for Which Services Were Received Most Recently

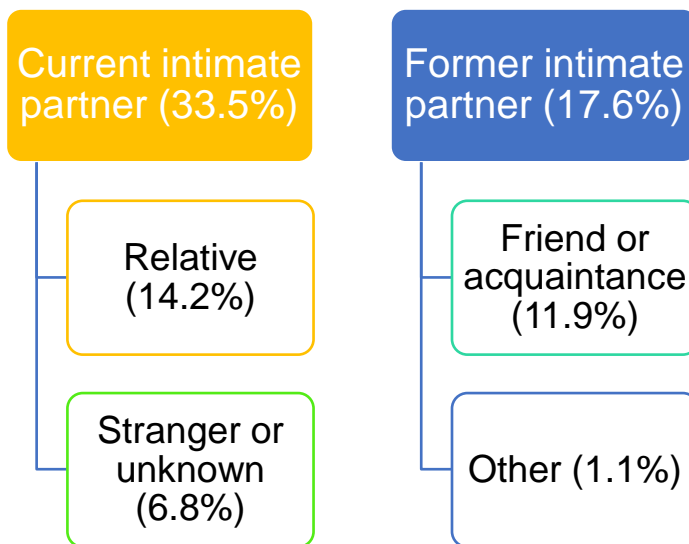


Almost 11% selected child sexual abuse, followed by assault by a non-intimate family member (8.5%), child physical abuse or neglect (6.3%), a property crime or robbery (4.0%), and assault by a stranger (4.0%). The ‘other’ category (11.4%) again included DUI, homicide survivors, and

single responses such as firearm assault by an acquaintance, non-DUI vehicular assault, human trafficking, and bullying.

Consistent with other research on criminal victimization (Growette Bostaph et al., 2015; King et al., 2020a), the perpetrator was known to the victim in the majority of cases.

Figure 3
Relationship of Victim to Perpetrator

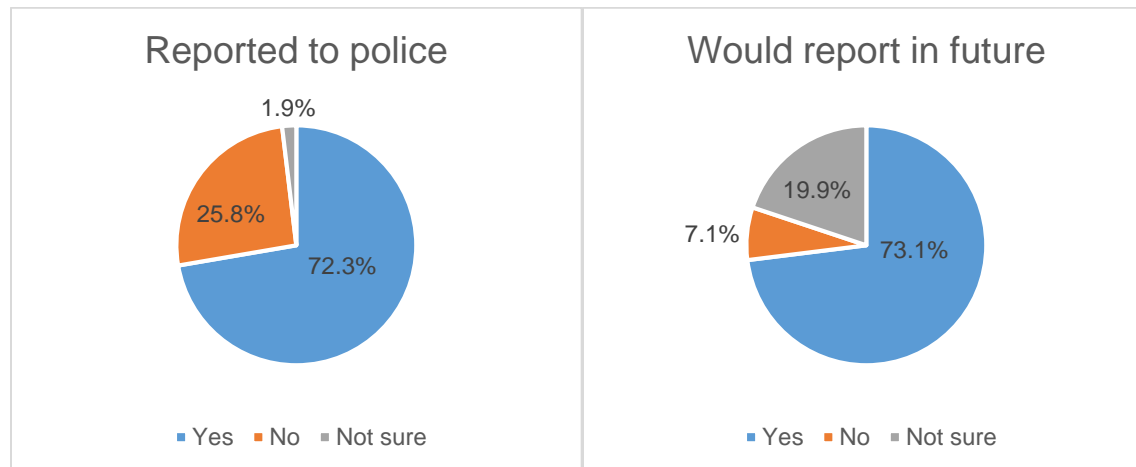


As displayed in Figure 3, The most frequently selected victim–perpetrator relationships included current intimate partner (33.5%), former intimate partner (17.6%), relative (14.2%), and friend or acquaintance (11.9%). Less than 7% indicated that the perpetrator was a stranger or was unknown. The two respondents who selected ‘other’ reported more than one victim–perpetrator relationship (e.g., a romantic partner and a stranger).

⁴ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

Participants were asked if their most recent victimization was reported to police and whether they would report in the future if they were harmed (see Figure 4).

Figure 4
Reporting to Police



Over 70% of participants indicated that they or someone else reported their victimization to police. This percentage is quite a bit higher than national estimates. For example, in 2021, the national reporting rate estimate for intimate partner violence was 50.7% and only 21.5% for rape/sexual assault (BJS, 2022). However, it is important to keep in mind that respondents to this survey were invited to participate by a service provider either within or outside of the criminal justice system. Thus, these crime victims may be different than other crime victims in Idaho in regard to reporting because they had already sought assistance. When asked if they would report in the future, 73.1% answered affirmatively. Only 7.1% said they would not, while almost 20% were unsure if they would report.

Table 2⁵
Reasons for not Reporting

Category	Frequency	Percent
Afraid of offender	13	35.1
Other	9	24.3
Didn't consider it a crime	8	21.6
Private matter	7	18.9
Police would not do anything	6	16.2
Afraid of people finding out	6	16.2
Didn't want offender to get in trouble	5	13.5
Didn't know how to report	4	10.8
No confidence in CJS	4	10.8
Afraid of being deported	1	2.7

Participants who indicated that their most recent victimization was not reported to police (n=41) were asked why (see Table 2). Of those who answered this question (n=37), the most frequently selected reason for not reporting was that they were afraid of the offender (35.1%), which is

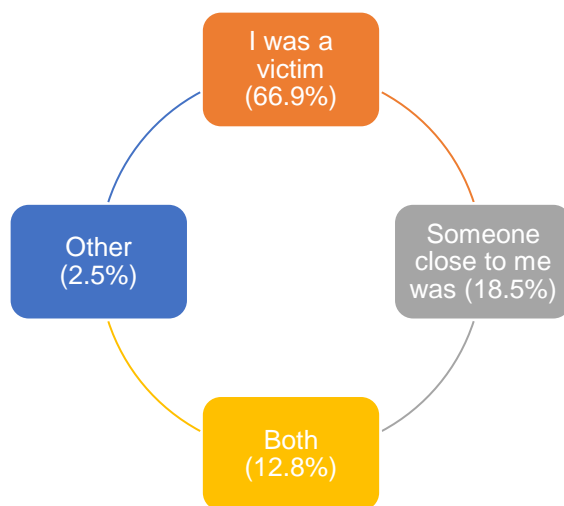
⁵ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

consistent with the finding that most victims knew the perpetrator. The remaining reasons for not reporting included: the victim not considering the incident to be a crime (21.6%), it was a private matter (18.9%), police would not do anything about it (16.2%), fear of people finding out (16.2%), did not want to get the offender in trouble (13.5%), did not know how to report (10.8%), no confidence in the criminal justice system (10.8%), and fear of being deported (2.7%). The ‘other’ responses (24.3%) included things such as the incident being a civil matter, the victim was too young at the time to understand, police were the offenders, previous negative experience with reporting which made the situation worse, the incident occurred too long ago, and the police contacted the victim first. None of the respondents selected language or cultural issues as being the reason why they did not report. However, it is important to consider that victims who may have chosen this option may have been less likely to complete this survey.

Services Received

The survey asked respondents about the number of times they have received crime victim services in Idaho in the past year (not shown). Of those who entered a single number, they ranged from 0-160 with most indicating five or less. A number of participants were not exactly sure as they wrote things such as: several times, dozens of times, once a week, and ongoing.

Figure 5
Reason for Services



A question was also asked about why services were received most recently (see Figure 5). Almost 67% of respondents indicated that they were the victim of a crime. Close to one-fifth reported that services were received because someone close to them was a victim of a crime and almost 13% indicated that they were the victim of a crime and someone close to them was

too. The ‘other’ category (2.5%) included things such as: seeking services in order to get some questions answered and assistance to deal with traumatic events.

One of the primary goals of this survey was to assess the services available to crime victims in Idaho. As such, a list of common services and accompanying descriptions was provided and respondents were asked to indicate which services they needed and which they received. The results are displayed in Table 3 in descending order based on service need. Crisis response (i.e., immediate service in-person or on the phone) was the most needed service (35.0%). This was followed by criminal justice system support (26.0%), individual counseling (24.3%), and explanation of crime victims’ rights (22.6%). An interesting finding, however, was that a greater proportion of respondents reported receiving these services than needing them. For instance, 23.2% more respondents received crisis response than reported needing it. This theme

was evident for several other services. Conversely, for other services, a greater proportion reported needing the service than receiving it. Possible explanations for this are discussed in more detail below.

Table 3⁶
Services Needed and Received

Category	Needed	Received
Crisis response	62 (35.0%)	103 (58.2%)
Criminal justice system support/orientation	46 (26.0%)	76 (42.9%)
Individual counseling	43 (24.3%)	65 (36.7%)
Crime victims' rights explained	40 (22.6%)	67 (37.9%)
Support group	39 (22.0%)	35 (19.8%)
Safety planning	35 (19.8%)	31 (17.5%)
Help getting a protection or no-contact order	34 (19.2%)	77 (43.5%)
Emergency services	29 (16.4%)	33 (18.6%)
Help applying for crime victim compensation	26 (14.7%)	28 (15.8%)
Legal services (e.g., divorce, custody, immigration)	24 (13.6%)	27 (15.3%)
Help accessing a job, housing, or public benefits	24 (13.6%)	18 (10.2%)
Child or child/parent counseling	23 (13.0%)	19 (10.7%)
Shelter/temporary housing	23 (13.0%)	23 (13.0%)
Medical services	18 (10.2%)	28 (15.8%)
Transportation	14 (7.9%)	17 (9.6%)
Child care	10 (5.6%)	3 (1.7%)
Accompaniment to hospital/medical services	8 (4.5%)	14 (7.9%)
Referral to other services	8 (4.5%)	10 (5.6%)
Bilingual services	7 (4.0%)	8 (4.5%)
Other	5 (2.8%)	4 (2.3%)

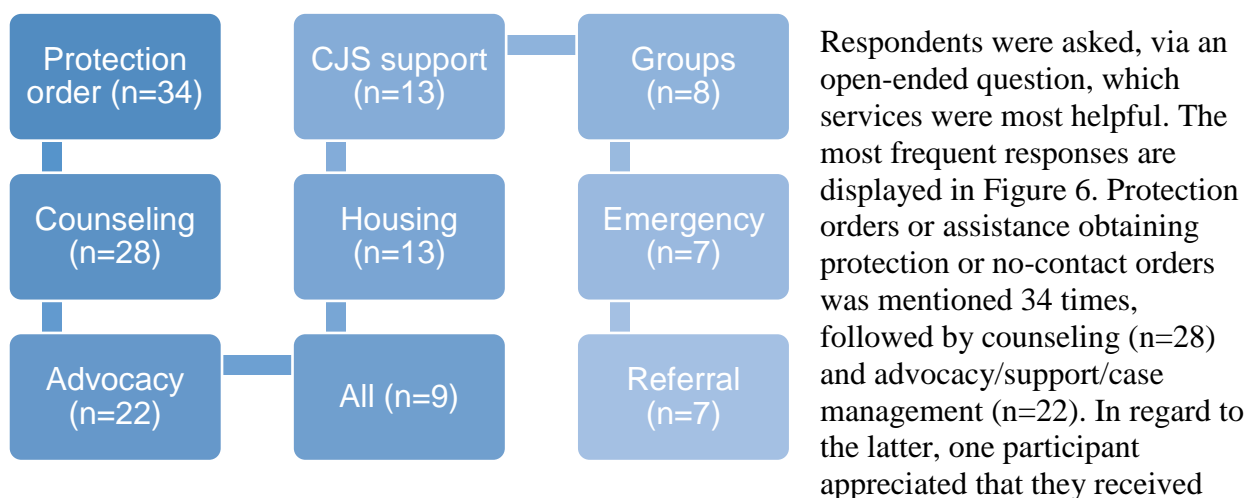
Support groups (22.0%) and safety planning (19.8%) were also commonly needed (see Table 3). However, a slightly greater proportion of respondents indicated needing these services than receiving them. These were followed by help getting a protection or no-contact order (19.2%), emergency services (16.4%), help applying for victim compensation (14.7%), and legal services (13.6%). All four of these services were more frequently received than needed. Help accessing a job, housing, or public benefits and child or child/parent counseling were needed by 13.6% and 13.0%, respectively, and a greater proportion indicating needing them than receiving them. Shelter/temporary housing was needed by 13.0% of respondents and it was the only service with equal percentages needing and receiving. The remaining services were needed by about 10% or less and they were a mix of more needing than receiving (child care (5.6%) and other (2.8%)) and more receiving than needing (accompaniment to hospital/medical services (4.5%), referral to other services (4.5%), bilingual services (4.0%)). The 'other' category included things such as utilities, guardianship, immigration assistance, and mediation.

There are several potential explanations for the discrepancies between the percentages needing and receiving services. First, it is possible that respondents did not understand that they could check needed and received for each service; some may have thought they could only check

⁶ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

one. This could potentially explain some of the instances in which a greater percentage indicated they received the service than needed it. However, several did check both so this would not apply in all cases. Second, it is possible that the services victims thought they needed when first seeking services changed over time and that was not captured in the survey. Third, respondent recall about all of the services that were actually received may not be completely accurate, especially considering the effects of trauma on cognition (Campbell, 2012). Fourth, it is possible that victims are receiving services that they do not feel they need. Fifth, in regard to the services which had a greater percentage needing than receiving, it is possible that some victims are not receiving all of the services they need either because they are not available or they did not know to request them. It is also important to note that similar discrepancies between the percentage needing and receiving services have been identified in other research examining crime victimization in Idaho (see Growette Bostaph et al., 2015).

Figure 6
Most Frequently Mentioned Helpful Services



“knowledge about domestic violence [and] help with questions regarding paperwork.” A number of respondents (n=13) noted services related to criminal justice support, particularly with the court system. For example, one person noted: “Without the advocate, I would have struggled greatly negotiating various court requirements and appearances.” This category was followed by housing/shelter/emergency housing (n=13), all services (n=9), support groups (n=8), emergency services (e.g., food, gas, clothing, and locks; n=7), and referral to others services (n=7). The remaining services (not shown) were mentioned by a few respondents each: a specific agency (n=5), crime victim compensation (n=5), crisis support (n=4), forensic interview (n=3), transportation (n=3), having their rights explained to them (n=2), safety planning (n=2), bilingual services (n=2), mediation (n=1), medical services (n=1), and public benefits (n=1). There were only a few negative comments left for this section. One simply stated “none,” suggesting that none of the services were helpful, while another described how they were “just now getting on a waitlist for counseling and haven’t received services,” and one stated: “I did not receive any services. I enrolled myself in counseling.”

The next survey item asked participants to describe which services were least helpful. Among those who responded to this question (n=87), 73.6% (n=64) communicated that

everything was helpful. Many wrote “none” or “N/A” and others left comments such as: “All help was needed and appreciated,” “They were all very helpful, I cannot say one was least helpful,” and “I have been pleased by all of the services I have received.” Of those who did note something negative, many described frustrations with the criminal justice system:

- “I wish the judge took my infant’s safety more seriously”
- “County law enforcement”
- “Not getting enough information from detectives”
- “The attorney I was referred to has not been very responsive to my needs”

Another noted that the police stated: “We have better things to do than come help you, there was a murder that night.” A few specific services were noted as being least helpful by one respondent each: court advocacy, criminal justice support, support group, shelter, Legal Aid, safety planning, state run institutions and federally funded programs, and victim services through the police department. Three respondents stated that they did not receive much help because they were not the direct victim, they only received email correspondence, and one agency stopped helping them. Despite some negative experiences, the majority of survey respondents were positive about the services they received.

In addition to the most and least helpful services they received, participants were asked if there were any services they needed but did not receive (see Table 4). Of those who responded to this question (n=89), 66.7% answered “None” or “N/A.” Housing or shelter was mentioned by 5.6% with comments such as “Ability to get an apartment sooner due to being homeless” and “Shelter – it was occupied.” Legal support/services were noted by 4.5% (e.g., “Help navigating the legal system. The ball was dropped, no one seemed to care that my life was almost lost.”);

Table 4⁷
Services Needed but not Received

Variable/Category	Frequency	Valid %
None/NA	58	66.7%
Other	7	7.9%
Housing/shelter	5	5.6%
Legal support/services	4	4.5%
Education	3	3.4%
Support group	2	2.2%
Safety plan	2	2.2%
Child care	2	2.2%
Counseling	2	2.2%
Gas	2	2.2%
Crime victim comp.	2	2.2%

“It is difficult to understand the criminal court process and procedures.”) and education by 3.4% (e.g., “Empowerment to understand manipulation tactics to protect myself and my children against them”; “I wish I would have known prior about the hotline number.”). A number of services were each mentioned by 2.2%: support group, safety planning, child care, and counseling. In regard to the latter, one mentioned the need for a counselor specializing in sexual trauma and the other desired counseling for dealing with the

perpetrator’s family members. The ‘other’ category included responses that were mentioned by one participant each: faith-based services, protection for abused children, an ombudsman, biohazard services, peer support, school coordinations, and testing for date rape drugs.

⁷ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

Respondents were asked about the types of providers from which services were received for their most recent victimization. As can be seen in Table 6, the most common selection was a domestic/sexual violence program or other direct victim service provider (74.4%).

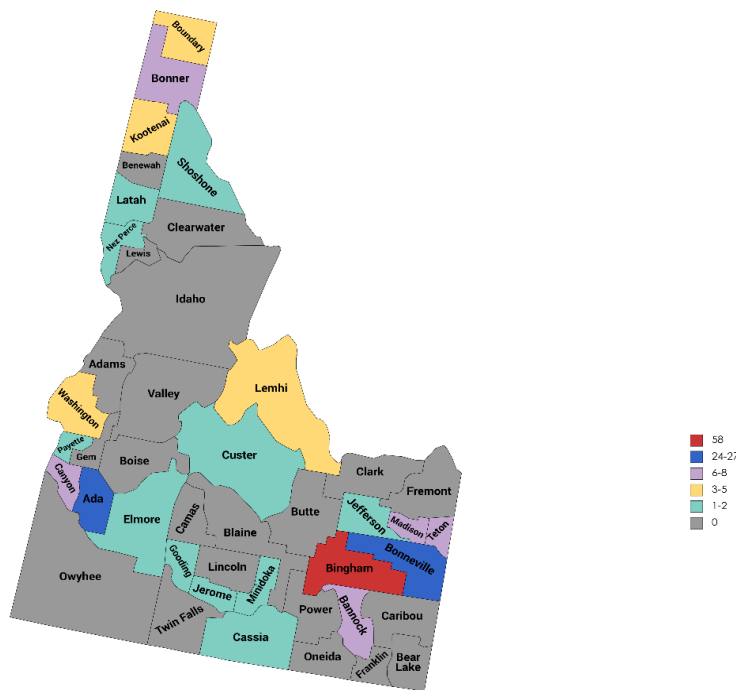
Table 6⁸
Service Provider Type

Variable/Category	Frequency	Valid %
DV/SV program or other VSP	131	74.4
Police department	66	37.5
Counseling services	42	23.9
Prosecutor's office	26	14.8
Medical services	20	11.4
Legal Aid or private attorney	14	8.0
Not sure	8	4.5
Faith-based program	5	2.8
Other	3	1.7
Tribal program	1	0.6

This was followed by police department (37.5%), counseling services (23.9%), prosecutor's office (14.8%), medical services such as a doctor or hospital (11.4%), and Legal Aid or a private attorney (8.0%). A number of respondents (4.5%) were unsure about the type of agency. The remaining selections included a faith-

based program (2.8%), other (1.7%), and a tribal program (0.6%). The 'other' responses included Health & Welfare and Social Security.

Figure 7
Service Provider Location



Respondents were also asked about where services were received for the most recent incident. The responses were tabulated by county and are displayed in Figure 7. Bingham County (red on the map) had the most responses by far (n=58), more than double any other county. The next two most frequently indicated counties, shown in blue on the map, were Ada (n=27) and Bonneville (n=24). Madison, Teton, Bonner, Bannock, and Canyon counties were each indicated by six to eight (purple). Between three and five respondents listed locations in Kootenai, Washington, Boundary, and Lemhi counties (yellow). Gooding, Latah, Elmore, Jefferson,

⁸ Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were able to select all that apply.

Custer, Shoshone, Nez Perce, Payette, Minidoka, Cassia, and Jerome were noted by one to two (green). Locations in Idaho’s remaining 21 counties were not listed by respondents (gray). It is important to recall that victims were invited to participate in this survey by crime victim service providers. If providers did not invite victims to complete the survey, they likely would not have known about it. Thus, the counties listed in Figure 7 are not necessarily indicative of where crime victim services are received most frequently in Idaho, but instead, where victims were more likely to be invited to take the survey and/or complete the survey.

In addition to needed and received services, the survey asked respondents if they were treated with respect by the service providers they accessed (see Table 7).

Table 7
Opinions about Service Providers – Respect

	Treated me with respect	Did not treat me with respect	
Hospital or doctor	29 (100%)	0 (0%)	Of those who received medical services or assistance from Legal Aid/private attorneys, 100% felt as though they were treated with respect. Respondents who sought services from a domestic/sexual violence program or other direct service provider overwhelmingly reported
Legal Aid or private attorney	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	
DV/SV program or other VSP	137 (99.3%)	1 (0.7%)	
Counseling services	57 (98.3%)	1 (1.7%)	
Police department	64 (83.1%)	13 (16.9%)	
Prosecutor’s office	28 (75.7%)	9 (24.3%)	
Faith-based program	6 (75%)	2 (25%)	
Tribal program	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	

being treated with respect (99.3%), followed by 98.3% who received counseling services. Positive responses about policing agencies (83.1% treated with respect) and prosecutors’ offices (75.7% treated with respect) were less common but still comprised the majority. Lower proportions of being treated with respect were reported for faith-based programs (75%) and tribal programs (50%) though the total number of participants who provided information for these categories was quite low.

Table 8
Opinions about Service Providers – Needs

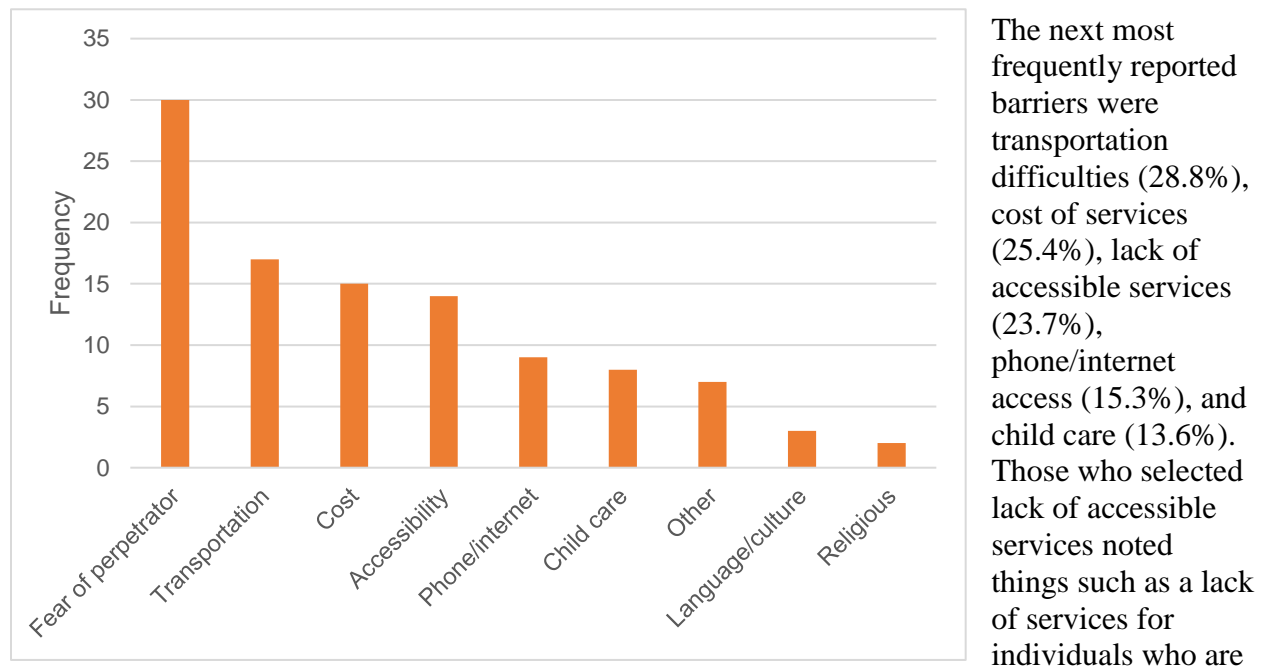
	Met my needs	Did not meet my needs	
DV/SV program or other VSP	60 (96.8%)	2 (3.2%)	Participants were also asked if their needs were met by the providers they accessed (see Table 8). The most positive findings were in regard to domestic/sexual violence programs and counseling services in which 96.8% and 93.3% of victims had their needs met. Needs were met for 85% of
Counseling services	28 (93.3%)	2 (6.7%)	
Hospital or doctor	17 (85%)	3 (15%)	
Legal Aid or private attorney	10 (71.4%)	4 (28.6%)	
Police department	35 (66.0%)	18 (34.0%)	
Prosecutor’s office	14 (51.9%)	13 (48.1%)	
Faith-based program	1 (33.3%)	2 (67.7%)	
Tribal program	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	

those who accessed medical services and 71.4% who accessed Legal Aid or a private attorney. Slightly lower percentages of needs being met were found for police departments (66%) and prosecutors' offices (51.9%). The most concerning findings indicated that only 33.3% of those who accessed a faith-based program and none of those who sought services from a tribal program had their needs met. Again, however, it is important to note the very small number of people who responded about these two service providers.

Barriers

There are a variety of barriers that can make it more difficult for victims to seek or receive services. The number of barriers participants experienced ranged from 0-6 with an average of 0.60. Among those who reported at least one barrier (33.5%), the average was 1.78. Given the high percentage of respondents who reported knowing their perpetrator, it is not surprising that fear of the perpetrator was the most frequently selected (50.8%) barrier (see Figure 8).

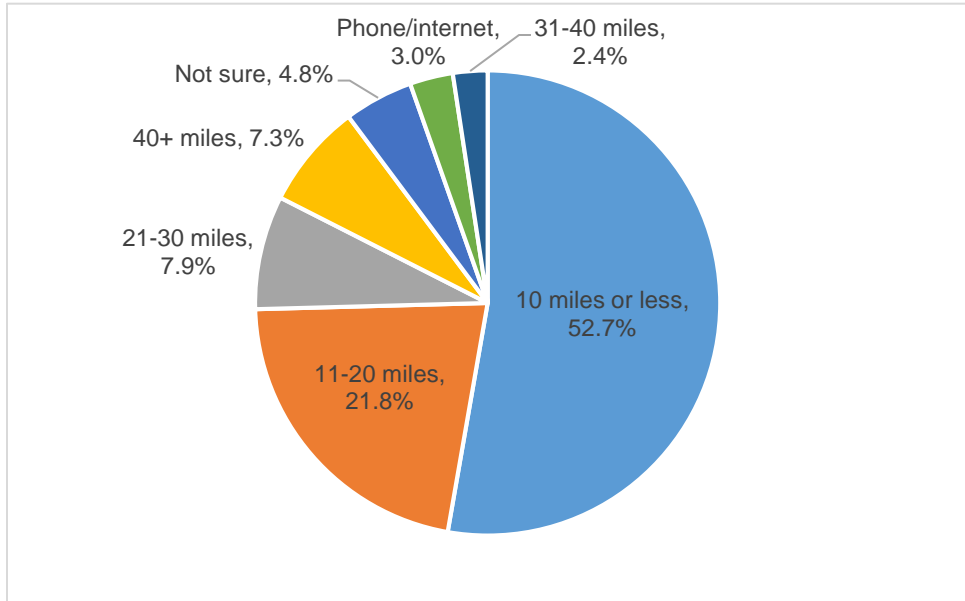
Figure 8ⁱ
Barriers Experienced



blind, inability to get a protection order due to victim-perpetrator relationship, lack of a support group for non-offending parents of sexually abused children, waiting lists, and housing. The 'other' category (11.9%) included things such as being out of state from where the victimization occurred, housing, and difficulties related to being in a rural location. The least frequently indicated barriers were language/cultural difference (5.1%) and religious differences (3.4%).

As noted above, transportation difficulties were the second most frequently indicated barrier and previous research has illustrated that this can be a significant barrier for crime victims in Idaho (Growette Bostaph et al., 2015; King, 2020a). As such, respondents were asked how far they had to travel for services and the results are displayed in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9
Distance Traveled for Services



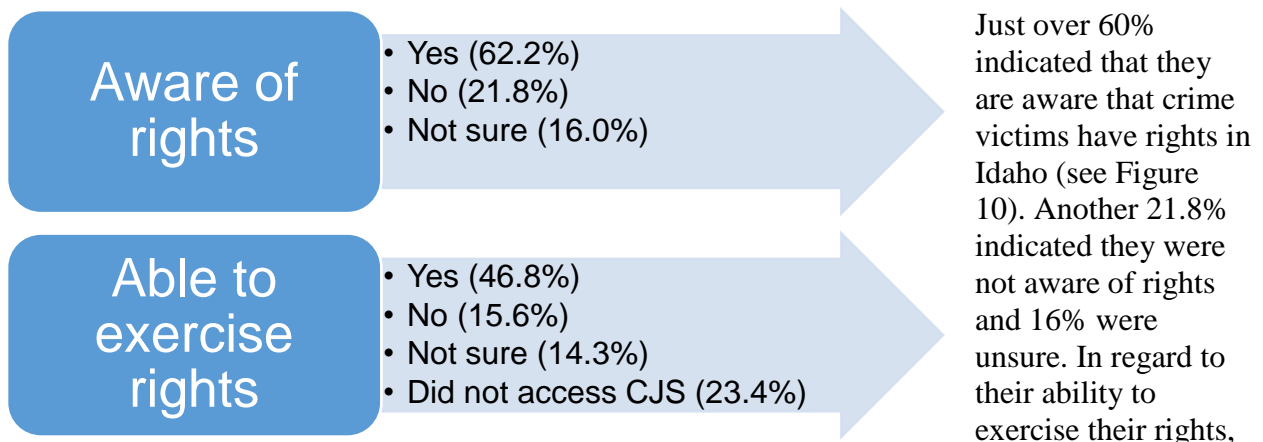
More than half (52.7%) traveled 10 miles or less to receive services and 21.8% traveled 11-20 miles. Several had to travel more than 20 miles to receive services, which can present a significant barrier for victims who do not have their own transportation or access to public transportation.

More specifically, 7.9% traveled 21-30 miles, 7.3% more than 40 miles, and 2.4% 31-40 miles. A handful (4.8%) were unsure how far they traveled and 3.0% only received services online or over the phone. It is important to note that even shorter distances can present an obstacle for victims who do not have their own transportation.

Crime Victims' Rights

The final section of the survey asked about participants' knowledge of crime victims' rights. The first question asked if they are aware that crime victims have specific rights in Idaho and the second asked if they were able to exercise their rights. Examples of rights were provided (e.g., treated with respect, timely processing of case, notification, court attendance, restitution).

Figure 10
Crime Victims' Rights



Just over 60% indicated that they are aware that crime victims have rights in Idaho (see Figure 10). Another 21.8% indicated they were not aware of rights and 16% were unsure. In regard to their ability to exercise their rights,

less than half responded affirmatively, 15.6% said they were not able to access them, and 14.3% were unsure. Almost one-quarter reported that they did not access the criminal justice system. Overall, these percentages are somewhat concerning. They suggest not only that a sizeable portion of Idaho crime victims are unaware of their constitutional rights, but that they are not able to exercise them.

After these specific questions about crime victims' rights, respondents were provided with a text box to add any additional comments about rights or anything else asked in the survey. Of the 22 comments left in this section, some expressed gratitude:

"I am extremely impressed with the compassion and protection I have received from law enforcement, the judicial system, the prosecutor's office, and victim advocate. I couldn't have made it through this without them!"

"The ladies at victim services helped me get my protection order. I know I wouldn't have been able to without their help."

The majority of comments, however, were more critical. Some respondents wrote about issues they had with police:

"I was not treated with respect. I was asked inappropriate questions like 'Why did it take you so long to report?' It was horrible and made me feel like this policeman thought this trauma wasn't important enough. I was discouraged from pressing charges and decided not to because the police department is so awful, ignorant, and disrespectful."

"I reported a sexual assault case that happened to my daughter but the officer did a very poor job even though he found evidence on my daughter's phone."

Others focused on frustrations with the court system:

"The prosecutor's office did not maintain open lines of communication, including not notifying me of a motion to dismiss, changes in the schedule of court proceedings, and was unprepared for some of the hearings."

"Prosecutor's office dismissed charges, failed to communicate re: prosecution and treated victims with hostility."

There were also a few critical comments specifically about victim service providers:

"What has been the most frustrating point of contact has been the victim advocate and victim services. Little to no communication unless I start the conversation and then very short answers. Very little help or instruction or guidance on how it might go on day of court hearings. Makes me feel like I don't belong or am not trying to do the right thing when they are supposed to support the victim the whole process thru."

"It appears as though crime victim services are in collusion with the prosecutor's office."

Last, a few left general comments about reporting, not receiving services, and other frustrations with the process:

“I hesitated in reporting the crime because I was afraid it would get worse.”

“Apparently you can only receive services if you’re bleeding or dying.”

“Honestly, I am not too happy with crime victim services because not only have I not heard back any updates or gone to court, they still have my belongings. Do better.”

“Notification regarding the case status is not always received. Lack of familiarity with the process and lack of knowledge of the status of the case has caused some anxiety.”

As noted earlier, this same survey was administered to Idaho crime victims from May through early December of 2020 (King et al., 2020a). That sample (N=19) was quite a bit smaller than the present sample (N=176), making direct comparisons between the two inappropriate. Thus, the recommendations provided below are based solely on the present sample collected between December of 2020 and October of 2022.

Summary and Recommendations

The goal of this survey was to gather information from crime victims to learn about the victimization(s) they suffered, their experiences with service providers, and their opinions about the services they received. Hearing directly from victims provided an important perspective on the state of crime victimization and victim services in Idaho to supplement the findings of the service provider survey (King et al., 2020b; King et al., 2022). The following recommendations, which are based on the survey data collected, are offered to the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance (ICDVVA) and relevant stakeholders in an effort to continue to support and serve crime victims across the state.

Resources for Crime Victims

The results of this study suggest the need to provide crime victims, and perhaps all Idahoans, with important information. First, the percentage of respondents who were aware of their constitutional rights as crime victims was relatively low (62.2%) and a minority reported being able to exercise them (46.8%). An increased awareness of rights may lead to an increased ability to exercise them. Second, many respondents reported confusion about the criminal justice process. Thus, learning more about the process and what to expect could reduce some of these frustrations. Third, many participants expressed unawareness of the services available to them.

Recommendation #1: While the ICDVVA recently updated its crime victims' brochure, we suggest creating additional guides in a variety of formats (e.g., short videos, easily accessible website) to outline the constitutional rights of crime victims in Idaho and describe the criminal justice process and what victims can expect in each stage.

Recommendation #2: Provide these educational resources in multiple adaptive formats (e.g., several languages, screen reader accessible, various audio formats) to ensure they are accessible to all victims.

Recommendation #3: Share these educational resources with crime victim service providers, criminal justice system personnel, and the broader community (e.g., high schools, community education programs) to improve Idahoans' awareness of their rights and the criminal justice process.

Recommendation #4: Enlist the media's help to spread awareness about crime victim rights and the criminal justice process.

Recommendation #5: Consider the implementation of an ombudsman to receive and address reports by crime victims about not being able to exercise their rights.

Recommendation #6: Encourage crime victim service agencies to provide victims with a list of all services available to them both within their agency and from surrounding agencies and organizations, where this is not already being done.

Service Need

A variety of recommendations related to service need were gleaned from the survey results. There were several services for which a greater proportion of respondents reported receiving them than needing them. Conversely, other services had a greater proportion needing them than receiving them. As discussed above, these discrepancies could be the result of confusion about how to complete the survey and/or a gap in needed and received services. In terms of the services that were deemed the most needed and/or the most helpful, there were some important patterns identified, in addition to services respondents indicated they needed but did not receive.

Recommendation #7: Encourage service providers to verify with the crime victims they serve which services they need in order to avoid devoting resources to services that victims are not requesting.

Recommendation #8: Support agencies in providing high-quality services that are deemed the most needed or most helpful: assistance obtaining a protection or no-contact order, crisis response, criminal justice system support/orientation, advocacy, individual counseling, explanation of crime victims' rights, support groups, safety planning, and housing/shelter.

Recommendation #9: Offer resources to service providers to facilitate agency collaborations or other methods to increase the availability of services that have been deemed needed but unavailable in some instances: housing/shelter, legal support/services, support groups, safety planning, child care, counseling, gas money, and assistance obtaining crime victim compensation.

Populations

The survey data suggest continued outreach to several frequently served populations and expanded outreach to underserved populations.

Recommendation #10: Continue to support the provision of high-quality, trauma-informed services to crime victims who most commonly seek services: domestic/intimate partner violence, stalking, and adult sexual assault.

Recommendation #11: Distribute resources to providers in order to expand outreach and services to less frequently served crime victims who may be unaware of their availability: property crime, child physical abuse and neglect, non-intimate partner violence, child sexual abuse, homicide survivors, DUI, and human trafficking.

Resources for Providers

The majority of respondents reported being treated with respect and having their needs met by domestic/sexual violence programs and other direct service providers, counseling services, and medical providers. However, lower proportions of victims felt that they were treated with respect and had their needs met by other providers within and outside the criminal justice system. Recognizing that providers have many responsibilities and are likely understaffed (King et al., 2022), offering easy-to-access information about trauma and appropriately responding to victims' needs is warranted. Additionally, victims' understanding of their rights and the criminal justice process (Recommendations #1-#4), should aid in improving their experiences as well.

Recommendation #12: Share resources about understanding trauma, treating victims with respect, and striving to meet their needs with tribal programs, faith-based programs, police departments, prosecutors' offices, Legal Aid, and private attorneys in Idaho.

Barriers

Research shows that barriers to reporting victimization and receiving services are common and the findings of this study were no exception. Some of these barriers have more obvious solutions while others are more complex. Attempting to lessen these barriers could aid in increasing reporting to police and/or seeking services, as well as decreasing victims' healing time.

Recommendation #13: Share with all providers best practices for making victims feel safe and empowered in order to lessen the impact of fear of the perpetrator on their ability to report their victimization and/or receive the services they need to recover.

Recommendation #14: Compile information for crime victims about how to receive free or low-cost services (e.g., transportation vouchers, counseling, child care, phone/internet service) to reduce some of the common barriers to seeking or receiving services.

Recommendation #15: Continue to investigate ways to increase the availability of housing and shelter resources across the state.

Data Collection

The findings from this survey have provided valuable insight into the experiences of crime victims in Idaho, information that could not be gleaned from another source. Thus, continued survey data collection is encouraged to expand on the findings reported here in an effort to continue evaluating and improving the experiences of crime victims and the services available to them. A statewide victimization survey, which would provide valuable information about the needs and experiences of all crime victims in Idaho (i.e., those who report and those who do not, those who seek services and those who do not) is also recommended.

Recommendation #16: Continue to collect anonymous survey data from Idaho crime victims in order to assess their experiences with service providers and identify ways to improve the services available to them and lessen the impact of criminal victimization across the state.

Recommendation #17: Add appropriate questions to the survey as changes in services, funding, and resources are made in order to evaluate their impact.

Recommendation #18: Fund the administration of a periodic, statewide victimization survey in Idaho in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the reporting and help-seeking decisions and needs of all crime victims.

Conclusion

Crime victimization can impact victims, their families, and communities in a variety of detrimental ways. Unfortunately, violent and property crime victimization affect millions of Americans each year (BJS, 2022). While available data in Idaho only provide information about crime that is known to police, there were over 75,000 criminal offenses committed in 2021 (Idaho State Police, 2022). This likely equates to more than 100,000 victims based on the fact that the majority of victimizations are not reported to police (BJS, 2022). Services available to victims within and outside the criminal justice system offer invaluable assistance to those recovering from the trauma of victimization. This report has highlighted the successes of victim service provision in Idaho, as well as provided a number of recommendations to improve these services and further aid victims in their recovery.

As noted earlier, it is important to remember that this survey included crime victims who had sought services. There may be differences between crime victims who seek services and those who do not, as well as those who report to police and those who do not. Future research on crime victimization in Idaho should seek to gather information from all crime victims, regardless of whether they reported to police or sought services. Care should be taken to include the voices of those who may face additional obstacles such as non-English speakers, refugees, people with physical or developmental disabilities, and other vulnerable/underserved populations. Such efforts will provide a more complete picture of victimization to inform policy and practice in Idaho.

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