

Partnership Advocating Safety and Security (P.A.S.S.)

An Evaluation of Processes and Services



Reported by
The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission

Department of Crime Control and Public Safety

September 2000



Partnership Advocating Safety and Security (P.A.S.S.)
An Evaluation of Processes and Services

Report Prepared By:

Doug Yearwood, Director of the Criminal Justice Analysis Center
Barry Bryant, Lead Victims' Services Planner
Sandy Dixon, Victims' Services Planner
James Klopovic, Lead Evaluator
Michael Wilson, Information Processor
Carlotta Winstead, Victims' Grants Manager
Trenette Clark, Institute of Government Intern

Questions or comments can be referred to:

The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission
1201 Front Street, Suite 200
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609
(919) 733-4564
(919) 733-4625 fax
www.gcc.state.nc.us

David E. Kelly, Secretary of Crime Control and Public Safety
Linda Hayes, Chair, Governor's Crime Commission
David E. Jones, Executive Director, Governor's Crime Commission

September 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
PROJECT OVERVIEW	1
STUDY RATIONALE	2
EVALUATION TEAM	2
METHODOLOGY	3
RESULTS	
Site Visits	5
Mail Surveys	10
Client (Victim) Surveys	14
FISCAL MONITORING REPORT	16
COST EFFECTIVENESS	16
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	19
APPENDICES	
A. On-site interview survey form	
B. Mail out survey	
C. Client assessment	
D. Fiscal monitoring report	
E. Existing data and literature	

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Processes of Project P.A.S.S.....	6
Figure 2:	Awareness of Project P.A.S.S. by Agency.....	10
Figure 3:	Respondents' ratings of Project P.A.S.S.....	12
Figure 4:	Respondents' ratings of Project P.A.S.S. by Agency.....	13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project P.A.S.S. (Partnership Advocating Safety and Security) is a program that is operated through Legal Services of North Carolina, Inc., where attorneys represent disadvantaged victims of domestic violence in emergency legal actions. This project has been funded through the Governor's Crime Commission since 1996 using Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant funds. The staff of Project P.A.S.S. works collaboratively with domestic violence programs across the state to provide effective services to victims of domestic violence. This effort is accomplished through the development of screening and referral protocols, reciprocal training and consultation, mutual accountability, ongoing interactive relationships between agencies, efficient use of resources and greatly improved services for battered victims.

During the FY 2000 Victims' Services Committee grants review meeting, committee members faced the issue of whether or not to recommend funding for pro bono legal assistance to domestic violence victims. The committee determined that the funding was critical; however, to continue funding this initiative at gradually increasing rates, members of the committee wanted to know more about the quality of services provided for the victims and the future of alternate funding sources. A project evaluation team was created to produce a thorough, unbiased and comprehensive program evaluation. This team met throughout the life of the study; all team members had input into the survey design and survey administration as well as the creation of this final report.

Contact was made with all eight of the Project P.A.S.S. field offices, which were funded under the Governor's Crime Commission's VOCA grant. Team members talked with 17 different Project P.A.S.S. employees including site directors, paralegals and attorneys. These interviews were conducted from early May to late June and included Project P.A.S.S. programs in Raleigh, Ahoskie, Greensboro, Sylva, Fayetteville, Hillsborough, Morganton and Wilson. A 26-item, open-ended and structured interview protocol was developed by the team and administered to the above mentioned P.A.S.S. staff. In addition, site directors were asked to administer surveys to their clients. Finally, a 13-item survey was developed and mailed to 226 members of the local criminal justice agencies in those 54 counties where Project P.A.S.S. provides legal assistance.

Site Visits-Staff Interviews

Respondents were asked to identify the specific client groups they were trying to serve. Over 82 percent of respondents indicated they were trying to serve victims of domestic violence. However, over 64 percent of the respondents reported that they were trying to serve female victims of domestic violence, compared to only 30 percent who reported that they were trying to serve male victims of domestic violence. A mere 35 percent of the respondents stated that they were trying to serve minors who were victims of domestic violence, while 35 percent reported that they were trying to serve low income victims of domestic violence.

Respondents were then asked how they measured the success of the project. Evaluating the feedback received from the clients and domestic violence shelters was reported as a way to measure the success of Project P.A.S.S. When asked if there were any existing alternatives to Project P.A.S.S., several respondents reported they have in the past either received individual grants or sought the assistance of pro bono attorneys. However, 35 percent of the respondents reported that the alternatives were not feasible and “were grossly inadequate.”

During the interview, respondents were also asked to identify the initial, mid-range and ultimate effects of Project P.A.S.S. According to the results, 47 percent of respondents stated that providing victims with a sense of safety and security is one of the initial effects of the project. Some of the reported mid-range effects of the project include the reestablishment of a safe lifestyle for the victim, empowerment of the victim and the ability of the victim to restructure their life. Finally, the ultimate effects reported by the respondents were the ability to provide legal assistance for indigent victims of domestic violence, the ability to assist victims in obtaining protective orders from the court and the sense of security victims develop. In contrast to these positive effects, one respondent stated that the ultimate relief a victim receives from the project is merely a temporary fix to the problem of domestic violence, especially when the victim is financially dependent on the abuser.

When asked to identify the future costs associated with Project P.A.S.S., 29 percent of the respondents stated that in the future there would be a need to increase the number of attorneys assigned to the project as well as their salaries. Likewise, some respondents (24 percent) stated that there would need to be an increase in the number of staff members assigned to the project as well as their salaries. When asked to identify future benefits associated with the project, respondents stated that the project educates victims of domestic violence and provides a high quality of services for these victims. Moreover, respondents stated that an increase in victim independence, a reduction in the number of victims seeking assistance and the breakdown in the cycle of domestic violence are also future benefits of the project.

Respondents were also asked if there was a written plan of action to start Project P.A.S.S. Approximately 82 percent of the respondents stated that there was a written plan of action. In most cases, the plan was the actual grant, which highlights timelines and protocols. Respondents stated that memorandums were also used as part of the written plan to start the project. Finally, respondents were asked if there were any plans for permanent funding. According to the results, 65 percent reported that they were not aware of any permanent funding plans.

Mail Surveys

The mail survey asked respondents if they were aware of Project P.A.S.S. Out of the 96 respondents, 68 percent (n=65) reported they were not aware of Project P.A.S.S.,

compared to 32 percent (n=31), who stated that they were aware of the project (Note: n = number of respondents).

However, when broken down by category, it was discovered that 81 percent of respondents in the police and sheriff department category were not aware of Project P.A.S.S., while 67 percent of respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis agencies category were aware of the project. Respondents were also asked about their knowledge of Project P.A.S.S. When broken down by category, 79 percent of respondents in the police and sheriff category stated that they had no knowledge of the project. In contrast, 69 percent of respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis agencies category stated that they had knowledge of the project.

The next series of questions asked respondents about their interaction with staff members of Project P.A.S.S. and the effectiveness of the project. Among the 31 respondents who stated that they were aware of the project, 73 percent stated that they had positive interaction with the staff of Project P.A.S.S. When asked about the effectiveness of the project, 93 percent of the respondents who were aware of Project P.A.S.S. stated that the project was effective.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate Project P.A.S.S., on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being outstanding, on the following measures: accessibility of services, responsiveness to referrals, desire to assist crime victims in regards to customer service, delivery of training, the conduction of in-house legal clinics, delivery of services, use of volunteers and the efficient use of resources. Respondents who were aware of Project P.A.S.S. rated it a seven in the areas of accessibility of service, responsiveness to referrals, delivery of training, conducting enough in-house legal clinics and use of volunteer. These same respondents rated the project an eight in the areas of desire to assist crime victims, delivery of services and efficient use of resources. Overall, respondents who were aware of Project P.A.S.S. rated it an eight.

Client (Victim) Survey

Respondents were asked if Project P.A.S.S. helped them feel better about themselves. Out of 26 respondents, over 92 percent stated that the project made them feel better about themselves. Several respondents felt that Project P.A.S.S. increased their confidence, sense of security and gave them a new outlook on life. The next question asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. has helped improve their health. According to the results, 64 percent felt that the project has helped improve their health. Specifically, some of the respondents stated that the services they received helped relieve stress, while others stated they experienced both physical and emotional improvements.

Respondents were also asked if the project improved their relationship with significant others as well as with other family members. According to the results, 69 percent of respondents felt that the project improved their relationship with significant others, while 73 percent felt that the project improved their relationship with other family members.

One respondent felt that due to the services offered through Project P.A.S.S. “My family is closer than before.” In addition, 88 percent of respondents stated that the project helped them feel more comfortable talking about their experiences with others. Several respondents stated that the services they have received from Project P.A.S.S. helped them build the confidence necessary to confront their situation rather than avoid talking about it. Additionally, Project P.A.S.S. services helped them overcome the shame and embarrassment of talking about their unfortunate experiences with domestic violence.

Respondents were also asked if Project P.A.S.S. helped increase their attendance on the job as well as job satisfaction. While only 38 percent of respondents’ felt that the project helped increase their attendance on the job, 46 percent stated that their level of job satisfaction increased. Being able to concentrate better on the job, according to several respondents, was one reason for the increase of job satisfaction.

Finally, respondents were asked if Project P.A.S.S. taught them about preventing domestic violence through recommended services. According to the results, 81 percent of respondents stated they have learned about preventing domestic violence through recommended services.

Cost Effectiveness

A complete cost effectiveness analysis was not within the scope of this project. However, some observations about cost effectiveness, especially considering “unmeasurable” benefits are most germane since this considers the overarching concerns of the impact and effectiveness of Project P.A.S.S.

Effects on Adults

- *Representation* - Needy victims of domestic violence do indeed get legal representation. Whereas, without Project P.A.S.S. they would get no representation and be left to the mercy of the court system or, most likely, continue in the circumstances of violence.
- *Reduce Abuse* - This service does reduce domestic violence. If anything, the record of services delivered and a day spent observing DV Court, leaves the observer with a sense that the program is a valuable service and should be expanded via an extension of DV shelters to each county and area of need with attendant legal services.
- *Community Stability* - When good legal services resolve a domestic violence situation, the victim has a tendency to remain in the community, rather than continuously move, which means that a job can be sustained and children can remain in school.
- *Reduced Medical Bills* - There is an observed drop in need for medical attention whether it is physical or mental health care.

Effects on Children

- *Reduced Institutional Response* - When a family is stabilized, fewer services and expensive institutional responses are necessary. There is less reliance on counseling, foster care, and group homes.
- *Breaking the Cycle of Abuse* – It's a proven fact that abusive homes produce abusive adults; most abusers come from abusive homes and abuse is a learned behavior. Therefore, removing children from or stopping domestic mistreatment tends to help children avoid abusive patterns of behavior.
- *Reduction in Runaways* – Most children do not run away from stable environments.
- *School Performance* - School performance in general improves. Most importantly there is less tendency for students to drop out when the home is calm and stabilized.

Systemic/Community Effects

- *Fewer Homicides* - Murder between significant others is the extreme expression of domestic violence. This indicator is reduced through the legal services that Project P.A.S.S. provides to victims of domestic violence. These rates reflect the undramatic but larger strain on the family and community. Legal services to the underprivileged, and those with little or no knowledge of legal alternatives, has a tendency to reduce homicide and domestic violence in general.
- *Welfare Dependency Reduction* - Homes that are both intact and functioning well depend less on social services, especially welfare. Most victims who break away from a violent/abusive relationship return to work in a relatively short period of time, which benefits the community.
- *Less Action in Criminal Court* - Overburdened courts get some relief in reduced case loads from domestic violence when there are good, professional and persistent legal services to the underprivileged.
- *Police Are Safer* – Some law enforcement injuries and death in the line of duty are the result of responding to domestic calls. A decrease in domestic violence, in effect, helps to reduce this risk.
- *Less Strain on Social Services* - There is a significant reduction in the need for expensive social services such as mental and public health care. There is also a reduction in the number of repeat calls for service from law enforcement. The savings in law enforcement time and resources are, in many cases, significant enough to justify alternative programming such as legal services and staff dedicated to the problem of domestic violence.

One thing that can be of value in the mix of policy determination and decision making is to determine the overall cost per unit of “production.” In this case, for the last full year of legal services, 2,248 cases were handled while being funded with \$1,115,075 in federal VOCA monies. This gives an overall cost measure of \$496.00 per case. This is a gross indicator because so much more is provided via Project P.A.S.S. However, decision-makers need to consider this “direct” measure of production, while considering other needs and alternatives when addressing funding for social intervention.

There are several points worth reiterating from the results of this study. First, Project P.A.S.S. has been viewed as an effective service for victims of domestic violence. The results from the mail-out survey showed that 93 percent of the respondents who were aware of the project felt that it was effective. Specifically, 94 percent of respondents from domestic violence and rape crisis agencies found Project P.A.S.S. to be effective for their clients. In addition to being an effective service, respondents in the mail-out survey also considered Project P.A.S.S. effective in the areas of desire to assist crime victims, delivery of services, and efficient use of resources.

Second, the results of this study clearly show there is a need to inform other criminal justice agencies, especially law enforcement agencies, about Project P.A.S.S. Although respondents from the on-site surveys stated that Project P.A.S.S. considered all relevant groups, only 19 percent of the respondents from law enforcement agencies (police and sheriff departments) in the mail-out survey were aware of the project. Similarly, only 22 percent of respondents from the district court judges, DA offices and court personnel category were aware of Project P.A.S.S.

Third, Project P.A.S.S. has a positive effect on victims of domestic violence. The results of the client assessment surveys showed that 92 percent of victims served felt better about themselves, 64 percent had improved their health, 69 percent experienced improved relations with significant others, and 46 percent experienced improved job satisfaction.

While not within the scope of the grant, or the goals of Project P.A.S.S., we recommend that Legal Service, Inc. staff expand outreach to make law enforcement and court personnel more aware of the project and its services. This would expand the pool of potential clients since many victims of domestic violence have law enforcement contact before entering the shelter.

Other recommendations are as follows:

- ❖ Where applicable, and if the victim is willing to help, use victims who have been served by Project P.A.S.S. as volunteers. These volunteers could provide counseling, offer peer support, and share their story with other domestic violence victims.
- ❖ Explore options for adding additional staff attorneys either through permanent funding and/or on a pro bono basis.

-
- ❖ Project P.A.S.S. staff meetings should not only discuss case management; they should also focus on operational efficiency and program effectiveness and performance. Specific measures should be developed for tracking program impact and outcome.
 - ❖ Explore options for continuation and permanent funding from sources beyond VOCA and VAWA grants.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Project P.A.S.S. (Partnership Advocating Safety and Security) is a program that is operated through Legal Services of North Carolina, Inc., where attorneys represent disadvantaged victims of domestic violence in emergency legal actions. This project has been funded through the Governor's Crime Commission since 1996 using Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant funds. The project enhances programs and services that many legal service organizations have been attempting to provide to victims of domestic violence. At the time of this survey, 54 counties were participating in Project P.A.S.S. Through this funding, the project employs 15 full-time attorneys, one part-time attorney, two paralegals and an on-site advocate in the Division of Social Services. The project also provides funding for travel, training and supplies.

The types of services offered to battered victims and their children through Project P.A.S.S. include attorney representation, advice, counsel and referral. The types of actions where attorneys are needed include assistance in obtaining protective orders and emergency support. Additionally, Legal Service agencies provide on-site legal clinics for shelter staff and their clients (victims), volunteers, law enforcement agencies and court personnel, while maintaining continuous collaboration with these groups. Moreover, Legal Services identify and train pro bono attorneys and volunteers who expand their resources to battered victims. The program also provides child custody services free of charge to domestic violence victims. Finally, a comprehensive network of battered women shelters provide initial screenings and referrals of domestic violence victims to legal service organizations through strong working relationships and established protocols.

In summary, the staff of Project P.A.S.S. works collaboratively with domestic violence programs across the state to provide effective services to victims of domestic violence. This effort is accomplished through the development of screening and referral protocols, reciprocal training and consultation, mutual accountability, ongoing interactive relationships between agencies, efficient use of resources and greatly improved services for battered victims.

STUDY RATIONALE

In 1996 the Victims' Services Committee of the Governor's Crime Commission (GCC) received grant applications for the first time from several legal service agencies across the state. Initially, committee members were reluctant to support those proposals. The committee was concerned that legal service agencies may not be committed to providing quality services to domestic violence victims. This concern existed at that time because legal service agencies learned they were going to lose other federal funding they had received for years.

As a result, the staff of the Governor's Crime Commission was asked to contact the Director of Legal Services of North Carolina, Inc., who at the time was Beth Weisman, to gain more information about their services, specifically, how long they had been in existence, what counties they served and other pertinent information. Ms. Weisman made a presentation to the committee. After the presentation, the committee members made a decision to provide funding for one year to the legal service organizations that submitted grant applications. The committee also decided to review the project after one year to evaluate the effectiveness of the services offered.

From 1997 to 1999, the committee continued to fund Legal Services, Inc. at increasingly higher funding amounts. The committee continued to recommend future funding to Legal Services due in large part to their consistent collaboration with non-profit victim service agencies and the interagency agreement that they devised with the assistance of domestic violence service providers.

During the FY 2000 Victims' Services Committee grants review meeting, committee members again faced the issue of whether or not to recommend funding for pro bono legal assistance to domestic violence victims. The funds that were requested by legal services totaled over 1 million dollars for FY 2000. While committee members were satisfied with services provided through the grant, they voted unanimously for an in-depth study of the process and observed effectiveness of the grant.

The committee determined that the funding was critical; however, to continue funding this initiative at gradually increasing rates, members of the committee wanted to know more about the quality of services provided for the victims and the future of alternate funding sources.

PROJECT P.A.S.S. EVALUATION TEAM

An evaluation team was created to produce a thorough, unbiased and comprehensive evaluation of Project P.A.S.S. This team met throughout the life of the study; all team members had input into the survey design, survey administration, as well as the creation of this final report. The team consisted of the Lead Victims' Services Planner, a Victims' Services Planner, the Analysis Center Director, the GCC's Lead Evaluator, the Analysis Center's Information Processing Specialist, a Grants Manager who manages

victims' services grants and an Institute of Government summer intern. The GCC executive staff also contributed to the evaluation design and oversaw project work.

METHODOLOGY

Site Visits

Contact was made with all eight of the Project P.A.S.S. field offices, which were funded under the Governor's Crime Commission's VOCA grant. Team members talked with 17 different Project P.A.S.S. employees including site directors, paralegals and attorneys. These interviews were conducted from early May to late June and included Project P.A.S.S. programs in Raleigh, Ahoskie, Greensboro, Sylva, Fayetteville, Hillsborough, Morganton and Wilson. A 26-item, open-ended and structured interview protocol was developed by the team and administered to the above mentioned P.A.S.S. staff. The first group of questions were oriented toward program processes, such as initial program start-up, referral process, selection of project participants, program performance evaluation, program success measures and management interaction with program staff members. The next group of questions concerned fiscal issues such as fixed and variable costs as well as the issue of continuation funding. Finally, respondents were questioned about the outcomes and impact of their service delivery (Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the staff questionnaire).

Mail Survey

A 13- item survey was developed and mailed to 226 members of the local criminal justice agencies in those 54 counties where Project P.A.S.S. provides legal assistance. Specifically, 51 surveys were mailed to police departments, 52 to sheriffs' offices, 45 to domestic violence shelters, 17 to district attorneys and 61 to district court judges. A second mail-out was required to increase the survey return rate.

The questionnaire asked the respondents if they were aware of Project P.A.S.S. and its mission. Respondents who were aware of the program were asked further questions concerning how the staff of Project P.A.S.S. interacts with their offices, how effective the program is in their county plus the most and least beneficial aspects of the program. Respondents were also asked to rate the program on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of its accessibility, responsiveness, delivery of training plus other services, and the program's use of volunteers (Refer to Appendix B for a copy of this survey).

Client (Victim) Survey

Each site director was asked to administer ten surveys to their clients (victims). This brief 13-item questionnaire asked victims if Project P.A.S.S. services helped them feel better about themselves, improved family life, increased or improved their vocational performance and most importantly helped them cope with and alleviate their domestic violence problem (Refer to Appendix C for a copy of the client assessment survey).

Existing Data and Literature Search

Finally, Project P.A.S.S. executive staff provided statistical information to the evaluation team, which was used for analyzing a gross cost measure of effectiveness for the project. Fiscal and aggregate information on the number of victims served was presented. Other materials and data were also collected from the sites, which included training manuals, brochures and flyers, site specific fiscal and service delivery data as well as copies of Project P.A.S.S. office forms (This information can be found in Appendix D).

RESULTS

Site Visits-Staff Interviews

The following is both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results obtained from the on-site interviews. Although the actual questionnaire consisted of twenty-six open-ended questions, we only report the results to those questions that were significant in regard to response rates.

➤ *The Problem Defined/Clients Served*

Members of the evaluation team began the on-site interviews by asking respondents to define the problem they were trying to address with Project P.A.S.S. The majority of respondents reported they were trying to address the problem of lack of legal services for underprivileged battered women. The interviewers then asked respondents to identify the specific client groups that they were trying to serve. Over 82 percent indicated they were trying to serve victims of domestic violence. However, over 64 percent of the respondents reported that they were trying to serve female victims of domestic violence, compared to only 30 percent who reported that they were trying to serve male victims of domestic violence. A mere 35 percent of the respondents stated that they were trying to serve minors who were victims of domestic violence, while 35 percent reported that they were trying to serve low income victims of domestic violence.

➤ *Measures of Success and Alternatives*

A second series of questions asked respondents how they measured the success of the project and if there were existing alternatives to Project P.A.S.S. One way to measure the success of Project P.A.S.S., according to respondents, is to evaluate the feedback received from clients they serve. Similarly, evaluating feedback from the domestic violence shelters that refer clients, according to the respondents, is a second way of measuring the success of the project. Yet, another method of measuring the success of Project P.A.S.S., according to the respondents, is to review the outcome of the cases that the attorneys handled. When asked if there were any alternatives to Project P.A.S.S., several of the respondents reported that they have in the past either received individual grants or sought the assistance of pro bono attorneys. However, 35 percent of the respondents reported that the alternatives were not feasible, stating that “the alternatives were grossly inadequate.”

➤ *Benefits/Comparable Programs*

A third series of questions asked respondents to identify the benefits of resolving the problems associated with obtaining legal assistance for victims of domestic violence and if there were similar programs that could be used as a comparison to Project P.A.S.S. According to the results, 29 percent of the respondents stated that one benefit of resolving

the problem associated with obtaining legal assistance is that the project helps victims obtain financial independence from their abusive spouses. Other benefits, according to the respondents, included preventing injury, developing hope in victims and meeting the legal needs for victims of domestic violence. When asked if there were any similar programs to compare with Project P.A.S.S., over 47 percent of the respondents stated there were none.

➤ *Project Inputs*

The respondents were then asked to identify the logistical inputs needed for the program. According to the respondents, the following items were identified as necessary inputs: facilities, telephones, fax machines, computers, software, office supplies, furniture, transportation, access to legal databases, cellular phones, copy machines and training materials.

➤ *Project Process*

The next question asked respondents to identify the processes that make their program operate. Although responses varied, there were several processes that proved to be prevalent in each individual response to this question. The sequence is as follows:

Figure 1: **Processes of Project P.A.S.S.**

- ❖ *Gather Data* -The shelter fills out a data form, which indicates information about the victim.
- ❖ *Refer Client* -The form is either faxed or sent to the director of the legal service office or the client is referred directly to the legal service office.
- ❖ *Prepare Case File* -The paralegal of the legal service office intakes the referral forms or records information directly from the client and creates a case file.
- ❖ *Notify Attorney* -The attorney for the covered area is contacted and notified of the case.
- ❖ *Make Initial Client/Attorney Contact* -The attorney or legal service office contacts the client and speaks with the individual within a specified period of time, which is usually 24 hours after being referred.
- ❖ *Determine Eligibility* -The attorney conducts a conflict and eligibility check on the client to make sure he or she qualifies for services; i.e. financial and legal requirements. (Note: All staff supported with federal VOCA or VAWA funding are prohibited from denying clients services based on income eligibility or any other basis)

-
- ❖ *Set Court Date and Determine Initial Action(s)* -If the case is valid (the complaint is valid and case meets both financial and legal requirements) the attorney will set a court date. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the attorney may request from the court an ex parte order, which will grant the victim a 10-day protection order. The attorney may also seek to obtain temporary custody for the victim's children under Chapter 50B of the North Carolina General Statute.
 - ❖ *Determine Extended Action(s)* -During the case, the attorney may request protective orders for the victim, which are usually effective for one year.
 - ❖ *Maintain Records* -The attorney maintains all records about the case until it is closed.
 - ❖ *Close Case* -The case is closed once the initial protective orders expire, unless new protective orders are obtained.
 - ❖ *Complete P.A.S.S. Documentation* -The attorney submits the closed case to the project director, who reviews and gives his or her approval to close the case.

➤ *Project Effects*

Initial Effects

Respondents were then asked to identify some of the initial, mid-range, and ultimate effects of the project. When asked about the initial effects, 47 percent of the respondents stated that the project provides victims with a sense of safety and security. Other initial effects reported were the immediate relief from the situation for the victims, protection for victims' children, and the ability to assist victims in acquiring their homes back from their abusive spouses. In contrast, one respondent stated "a negative initial effect that victims experience is fear of the unknown." Specifically, the project is limited in regards to the types of services it can provide for victims such as obtaining alimony from the abusive spouse for the victim. In effect, this limitation creates a sense of fear for the victim when he or she is financially dependent on the abuser and must think about providing for themselves as well as their dependents.

Mid-Range Effects

Some of the mid-range effects reported by respondents were the reestablishment of a safe lifestyle for the victim, empowerment of the victim, and the ability of the victim to restructure their life. In contrast to these mid-range effects, one respondent reported that some victims experience the difficulty of going through the effects of a separation and dealing with issues of child support and alimony with their abusive spouses. Some

respondents also stated that some of the victims who received services eventually return home to their abusive partners.

Ultimate Effects

Finally, the ultimate effects reported by the respondents were the ability to provide legal assistance for indigent victims of domestic violence, the ability to assist victims in obtaining protective orders from the court, and the sense of security victims develop. In contrast to these positive effects, one respondent stated that the ultimate relief a victim receives from the project is merely a temporary fix to the problem of domestic violence, especially when the victim is financially dependent on the abuser.

➤ *Obstacles to Implementation*

A fourth series of questions asked respondents to describe some of the obstacles that may have an effect on project implementation, and to identify future costs and benefits associated with the project. Several respondents identified restrictions on the use of VOCA funds, hiring staff, collaborating with shelter staff, cooperation of judges and transportation to cover areas of responsibility as some of the major project implementation difficulties. Other responses to this question included the mandatory referral process of clients and determining the amount of time a case will take.

➤ *Future Cost and Benefits*

When asked to identify the future costs associated with Project P.A.S.S., 29 percent of the respondents stated that in the future there would be a need to increase the number of attorneys assigned to the project as well as their salaries. Likewise, some respondents (24 percent) stated that there would need to be an increase in the number of staff members assigned to the project as well as their salaries. Other future costs associated with Project P.A.S.S. included additional funds to provide a full range of services for the client, access to criminal databases, cost for training, cost for the use of the Internet and other logistical costs. When asked to identify future benefits associated with the project, respondents stated that the project educates victims of domestic violence and provides a high quality of services for these victims. Moreover, respondents stated that an increase in victim independence, a reduction in the number of victims seeking assistance, and the breakdown in the cycle of domestic violence are also future benefits of the project.

➤ *Relevant Groups/Plan of Action*

A fifth series of questions asked respondents if the project considered all relevant groups and if there was a written plan of action to start the project. Approximately 76 percent of the respondents stated that the project in fact considered all relevant groups to include judges and court personnel, law enforcement, chief district court judges, district attorneys, local domestic violence service providers and other women's centers. When asked if there was a written plan of action to start Project P.A.S.S., approximately 82

percent of the respondents stated that there was a written plan of action. In most cases, the plan was the actual grant, which highlights timelines and protocols. Respondents stated that memorandums were also used as part of the written plan to start the project.

➤ *Project Operation*

Respondents were then asked to respond to questions that related to meetings between staff members and project directors, permanent funding, performance data and the clarity of reports to decision makers. According to the results, 88 percent of respondents reported that management met regularly with staff members to discuss issues related to the project. Specifically, staff members and management conduct either weekly or biweekly meetings to review cases. These meetings include discussions about quarterly reports, closing cases and the handling of current cases. One respondent stated, “Typically, each day there are a number of crisis situations that result in attorney and project manager meetings.”

➤ *Plans for Permanent Funding/Performance Data*

When asked if there were any plans for permanent funding, 65 percent of the respondents reported that they were not aware of any permanent funding plans. When respondents were asked if readers would be able to understand performance data, 71 percent stated that readers would be able to comprehend the performance data, while 77 percent stated that reports were clear, concise and understandable to decision makers. According to the respondents, protective orders are oftentimes used as performance data, along with court data, case status report sheets and case summaries.

Finally, respondents were asked to identify things that they would have handled differently during the beginning phase of the project. According to the results, some of the things that respondents would have done differently during the beginning of the project would be to increase the number of attorneys assigned to the project, increase funding, eliminate some of the restrictions on the grant and provide more services for clients. Other responses to this question included establishing more collaboration and contact between staff members and key stakeholders in the criminal justice system, more training for shelter staff about domestic violence, and more education for clients in regards to the court process, the laws and demeanor in the court room.

Mail Surveys

➤ *General Project Awareness*

The first question of the mail survey asked respondents if they were aware of Project P.A.S.S. Out of 96 respondents, 68 percent (n=65) reported they were not aware of Project P.A.S.S., compared to 32 percent (n=31) who stated that they were aware of the project (Note: n = number of respondents). To get a better interpretation of the results to this question, we created three categories of respondents: 1) Police and Sheriff departments, 2) Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis agencies and 3) District Court Judges, DA offices, and court personnel. Figure 2 depicts the results of this categorization.

Figure 2: Awareness of Project P.A.S.S. by Agency

Agency	Response	Number of Respondents	Percent
Police and Sheriff departments	Yes	9	19%
	No	39	81%
Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis agencies	Yes	18	67%
	No	9	33%
District Court Judges, DA offices, and court personnel	Yes	4	22%
	No	14	78%

The next question in the survey asked respondents about their knowledge of Project P.A.S.S. The four original responses “no knowledge, some knowledge, knowledgeable, and very knowledgeable” were condensed into two new response categories “no knowledge” and “knowledgeable.” This recode, in effect, would provide two mutually exclusive categories, thus increasing the response rates. According to the results, 65 percent of the respondents who answered this question (n=60) reported that they had no knowledge of Project P.A.S.S. However, when the respondents were broken down into the three categories described earlier, we discovered that 79 percent (n=37) of respondents in the police and sheriff department category and 71 percent (n=12) of respondents in the district court judges, DA offices and court personnel category stated that they had no knowledge of Project P.A.S.S. In contrast, 69 percent (n=18) of respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis center category stated that they were knowledgeable of Project P.A.S.S.

➤ *Interaction with Project Staff*

The next question of the survey asked respondents about their interaction with staff members of Project P.A.S.S. Among the 31 respondents who stated that they were aware of the project, 73 percent (n=22) stated that they had positive interaction with the staff of Project P.A.S.S. When broken down by category, 56 percent (n=5) of respondents in the police and sheriff department category and 83 (n=15) percent of respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis center category stated that they had positive interaction with the staff of Project P.A.S.S. Finally, 68 percent (n=2) of respondents in the district court judges, DA offices and court personnel category stated that they had positive interaction with the staff of the project.

➤ *Project Effectiveness*

Respondents were then asked about the effectiveness of Project P.A.S.S. The four original response categories “not effective, little effectiveness, effective and very effective” were condensed into two new categories “not effective” and “effective”. Among the 31 respondents who were aware of the project, 93 percent (n=25) stated that Project P.A.S.S. was effective in terms of assisting victims of domestic violence. When broken down by category, 89 percent (n=8) of respondents in the police and sheriff department category and 94 percent (n=15) of respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis center category felt that the project was effective. Fifty percent (n=2) of the respondents in the district court judges, DA offices and court personnel category felt that the project was effective.

➤ *Referral Frequency*

The next question of this survey asked respondents to report the number of times their agency had referred someone to Project P.A.S.S. within the last month. According to the responses, the mean number of times a victim was referred to Project P.A.S.S. during the specified time period was three. However, the mean number of referrals reported by respondents in the domestic violence and rape crisis category was six. This result was significantly higher than the results from the other two categories, where the mean number for the police and sheriff department category and the district court judges, DA offices, and court personnel category was one.

➤ *Project Benefits*

The next two questions of the survey asked respondents to identify the most and least beneficial aspects of Project P.A.S.S. Providing agencies a legal source to refer victims of domestic violence and providing indigent victims of domestic violence with legal assistance were among the most frequently reported responses for the most beneficial aspects of Project P.A.S.S. In contrast, respondents stated that the least beneficial aspects of Project P.A.S.S. were the lack of time allocated to clients and the financial restraints of

the project, i.e. the limitations placed on the income of victims for qualification to P.A.S.S. services.

➤ *Project Services*

Figure 3 represents the rating of Project P.A.S.S. by respondents who were aware of the project. The project was rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being outstanding, on the following measures: accessibility of services, responsiveness to referrals, desire to assist crime victims in regards to customer service, delivery of training, the conduction of in-house legal clinics, delivery of services, use of volunteers and the efficient use of resources. The results in the table reflect the mean response score to each measurement in the question.

Figure 3: **Respondents' Rating of Project P.A.S.S.**

Measurement	N	Mean response score
a. Accessibility of service	27	7
b. Responsiveness to referrals	27	7
c. Desire to assist crime victims	27	8
d. Delivery of training	25	7
e. Conducting enough in-house legal clinics	23	7
f. Delivery of services	25	8
g. Use of volunteers	15	7
h. Efficient use of resources	20	8
Overall rating of Project P.A.S.S.	26	8

Figure 4 also represents the rating of Project P.A.S.S. by respondents who were aware of the project. However, the results are broken down by category.

Figure 4: **Respondents' Rating of Project P.A.S.S., by Agency**

Measurement	Agency or Organization		
	Police and Sheriff Departments	Domestic violence and rape crisis centers	District court judges, DA offices and court personnel
a. Accessibility of service	7 (n=8)	8 (n=17)	6 (n=2)
b. Responsiveness to referrals	7 (n=8)	8 (n=17)	5 (n=2)
c. Desire to assist crime victims	8 (n=8)	8 (n=17)	6 (n=2)
d. Delivery of training	7 (n=8)	8 (n=15)	5 (n=2)
e. Conducting enough in-house legal clinics	6 (n=8)	7 (n=14)	6 (n=1)
f. Delivery of services	7 (n=8)	8 (n=16)	9 (n=1)
g. Use of volunteers	6 (n=6)	7 (n=9)	---
h. Efficient use of resources	8 (n=8)	8 (n=11)	8 (n=1)
Overall rating of Project P.A.S.S.	8 (n=8)	8 (n=16)	6 (n=2)

➤ *Improvement and Denial of Services*

The next two questions asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. improved the effectiveness of legal services for crime victims in their primary county of service and if they were aware of anyone who was denied services by the project. Among the 31 respondents who were aware of the project, 89 percent (n=23) felt that Project P.A.S.S. improved the effectiveness of legal services for victims within their primary county of service. In response to being aware of anyone who was denied services, 52 percent (n=14) of the respondents who were aware of the project stated that they were aware of clients who were denied services, compared to 48 percent (n=13) who stated the opposite. Some of the reasons why clients were denied services, according to the respondents, included: conflict of interest, client not meeting financial criteria, legal services needed were not available through the project, and clients not being able to reach services.

➤ *Additional comments*

Finally, respondents were asked to provide any comments that were relevant to Project P.A.S.S. Several respondents commented they have never heard of the project and would like to know more. In contrast, respondents stated that the project was a great program and helped provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence. Other comments

included: the project provided a sense of security for victims of domestic violence, the project did not accept victims from rape crisis centers, and the project is beneficial to clients in general.

Client (Victim) Survey

➤ *Client Satisfaction Overall*

The first question of the client assessment survey asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. helped them to feel better about themselves. Out of 26 respondents, over 92 percent stated that the project made them feel better about themselves. Several respondents felt that Project P.A.S.S. increased their confidence, sense of security and gave them a new outlook on life. The next question asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. has helped to improve their health. According to the results, 64 percent felt that the project has helped to improve their health. Specifically, some of the respondents stated that the services they received helped relieve stress, while others stated they experienced both physical and emotional improvements.

➤ *Effects on Relationship with Significant Others*

The next series of questions asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. improved their relationship with significant others as well as with other family members. According to the results, 69 percent of respondents felt that the project improved their relationship with significant others, while 73 percent felt that the project improved their relationship with other family members. One respondent felt that due to the services offered through Project P.A.S.S. “My family is closer than before.” The next question asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. helped them feel more comfortable talking with someone else about their experiences with domestic violence. The results showed that 88 percent of respondents felt the project helped them to be more comfortable talking about their experiences with domestic violence. Moreover, several of the respondents stated that the services they have received from Project P.A.S.S. helped them build the confidence necessary to confront their situation rather than avoid talking about it. Additionally, Project P.A.S.S. services helped them overcome the shame and embarrassment of talking about their experiences with domestic violence.

➤ *Effect on Employment*

The next series of questions were related to the respondents’ current work situations. Specifically, respondents were asked if Project P.A.S.S. helped increase their attendance on the job, as well as job satisfaction. While only 38 percent of respondents felt that the project helped increase their attendance on the job, 46 percent stated that their level of job satisfaction increased. Being able to concentrate better on the job, according to several respondents, was one reason for the increase of job satisfaction. The next question asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. taught them about preventing domestic violence through recommended services. According to the results, 81 percent of respondents stated they

have learned about preventing domestic violence through recommended services. The respondents were then asked if Project P.A.S.S. has helped them obtain assistance for domestic violence. Over 88 percent of the respondents stated the project helped them obtain assistance for domestic violence.

➤ *Effect on Family Interaction and Substance Abuse*

The final series of questions asked respondents if Project P.A.S.S. had helped them to discuss other problems outside of domestic violence with family members and if the project helped reduce or eliminate drug or alcohol dependency. According to the results, only 27 percent of respondents felt the project helped them discuss other problems with their family members. Finally, 4 percent of respondents stated the project helped reduce their dependency on drugs or alcohol, while 8 percent stated the project helped them eliminate their dependency on drugs and alcohol altogether.

FISCAL MONITORING REPORT

The Governor's Crime Commission Grant Management staff is required to monitor all grants awarded by the Commission to ensure compliance with federal and state guidelines. During the monitoring visit, the following areas are reviewed: personnel records, professional and contractual services, travel expenses, equipment purchases and operating expenses. In addition, grant managers are required to maintain these records for review by state and federal auditors (Refer to Appendix D for a copy of the current fiscal monitoring report).

COST EFFECTIVENESS

A complete cost effectiveness analysis was not within the scope of this project. However, some observations about cost effectiveness, especially considering "unmeasurable" benefits are most germane since this considers the overarching concerns of the impact and effectiveness of Project P.A.S.S.

First, one should consider cost effectiveness as an evaluation tool to understand policy. Cost effectiveness analysis helps compare costs to units of program objectives and may be the first step in benefit-cost analysis if policy makers decide to place a dollar value on benefits. When we consider resolution of domestic violence, most of the benefits defy cost computation; yet, those factors must be considered. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider some of the more notable observable outcomes so that decision makers can decide if the dollar cost of the program is worth the result. Measured results in this case are largely the "output" of numbers of cases handled, which is another reason to enumerate more important benefits which indicate the intended effect on the individual and the community.

Note also that a decision to choose one program for sponsorship or development is not simplistic. Operating one local program comes at the expense of another; programming decisions are difficult and have very subjective tradeoffs. The effects of Project P.A.S.S., while largely problematic to measure, can be organized into three areas or categories, even though effects on one segment generally have an effect on another.

Effects on Adults

- *Representation* - Needy victims of domestic violence do indeed get legal representation. Whereas, without Project P.A.S.S., they would get no representation and be left to the mercy of the court system or, most likely, continue in the circumstances of violence.

-
- *Reduce Abuse* - This service does reduce domestic violence. If anything, the record of services delivered and a day spent observing DV Court, leaves the observer with a sense that the program is a valuable service and should be expanded via an extension of DV shelters to each county and area of need with attendant legal services.
 - *Community Stability* - When good legal services resolve a domestic violence situation, the victim has a tendency to remain in the community, rather than continuously move, which means that a job can be sustained and children can remain in school.
 - *Reduced Medical Bills* - There is an observed drop in the need for medical attention whether it is physical or mental health care.

Effects on Children

- *Reduced Institutional Response* - When a family is stabilized, fewer services and expensive institutional responses are necessary. There is less reliance on counseling, foster care, and group homes.
- *Breaking the Cycle of Abuse* – It's a proven fact that abusive homes tend to produce abusive adults; most abusers come from abusive homes and abuse is a learned behavior. Therefore, removing children from, or stopping domestic mistreatment, tends to help children avoid abusive patterns of behavior.
- *Reduction in Runaways* – Most children do not run away from stable environments.
- *School Performance* - School performance in general improves. Most importantly there is less tendency for students to drop out when the home is calm and stabilized.

Systemic/Community Effects

- *Fewer Homicides* - Murder between significant others is the extreme expression of domestic violence. This indicator is reduced through the legal services that Project P.A.S.S. provides to victims of domestic violence. These rates reflect the undramatic but larger strain on the family and community. Legal services to the underprivileged, and those with little or no knowledge of legal alternatives, has a tendency to reduce homicide and domestic violence in general.
- *Welfare Dependency Reduction* - Homes that are both in tact and functioning well depend less on social services, especially welfare. Most victims who break away from a violent/abusive relationship return to work in a relatively short period of time, which benefits the community.

-
- *Less Action in Criminal Court* - Overburdened courts get some relief in reduced case loads from domestic violence when there are good, professional and persistent legal services to the underprivileged.
 - *Police Are Safer* – Some law enforcement injuries and deaths in the line of duty are the result of responding to domestic calls. A decrease in domestic violence, in effect, helps to reduce this risk.
 - *Less Strain on Social Services* - There is a significant reduction in the need for expensive social services such as mental and public health care. There is also a reduction in the number of repeat calls for service from law enforcement. The savings in law enforcement time and resources are, in many cases, significant enough to justify alternative programming such as legal services and staff dedicated to the problem of domestic violence.

One thing that can be of value in the mix of policy determination and decision making is to determine the overall cost per unit of “production.” In this case, for the last full year of legal services, 2,248 cases were handled while being funded with \$1,115,075 in federal VOCA monies. This gives an overall cost measure of \$496.00 per case. This is a gross indicator because so much is provided via Project P.A.S.S. However, decision makers need to consider this “direct” measure of production, while considering other needs and alternatives when addressing funding for social intervention.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several points worth reiterating from the results of this study. First, Project P.A.S.S. has been viewed as an effective service for victims of domestic violence. The results from the mail out survey showed that 93 percent of the respondents who were aware of the project felt that it was effective. Specifically, 94 percent of respondents from domestic violence and rape crisis agencies found Project P.A.S.S. to be effective for their clients. In addition to being an effective service, respondents in the mail out survey also considered Project P.A.S.S. effective in the areas of desire to assist crime victims, delivery of services and efficient use of resources.

Second, the results of this study clearly show that there is a need to inform other criminal justice agencies, especially law enforcement agencies, about Project P.A.S.S. Although respondents from the on-site surveys stated that Project P.A.S.S. considered all relevant groups, only 19 percent of the respondents from law enforcement agencies (police and sheriff departments) in the mail out survey were aware of the project. Similarly, only 22 percent of respondents from the district court judges, DA offices and court personnel category were aware of Project P.A.S.S.

Third, Project P.A.S.S. has a positive effect on victims of domestic violence. The results of the client assessment surveys showed that 92 percent of victims served felt better about themselves, 64 percent had improved their health, 69 percent experienced improved relations with significant others, and 46 percent experienced improved job satisfaction.

While not within the scope of the grant, or the goals of Project P.A.S.S., we recommend that Legal Service, Inc. staff expand outreach to make law enforcement and court personnel more aware of the project and its services. This would expand the pool of potential clients since many victims of domestic violence have law enforcement contact before entering the shelter.

Other recommendations are as follows:

- ❖ Where applicable, and if the victim is willing to help, use victims who have been served by Project P.A.S.S. as volunteers. These volunteers could provide counseling, offer peer support, and share their story with other domestic violence victims.
- ❖ Explore options for adding additional staff attorneys either through permanent funding and/or on a pro bono basis.
- ❖ Project P.A.S.S. staff meetings should not only discuss case management; they should also focus on operational efficiency and program effectiveness and performance. Specific measures should be developed for tracking program impact and outcome.
- ❖ Explore options for continuation and permanent funding from sources beyond VOCA and VAWA grants.

