

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT RECESS ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Recess is an ideal time to advocate for ending gender-based violence in your community and across the country. Below, you will find three levels of advocacy action to help you (1) learn more about gender-based violence; (2) urge your Members of Congress to support VAWA; (3) educate your community and elected officials about gender-based violence.

Action #1: Learn About Gender-Based Violence

We believe that everyone deserves to be safe and free from violence, abuse, and threats. However, violence against women continues to impact the lives of countless women and their families across the United States. Women and girls of all ages, income levels, racial and ethnic communities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations experience violence in the form of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking.

Even if your organization does not have programming specifically designed to support survivors, you likely come into contact with survivors of gender-based violence:

- 1 in 5 women has been raped in her lifetime; every two minutes another American is sexually assaulted
- 1 in 3 young girls is a victim of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse in the United States
- 1 in 3 women will experience domestic violence within her lifetime – and more than 3 women are murdered by their partners each day
- Intimate partner violence is the immediate cause of homelessness for almost half of homeless women, and over 90% of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical or sexual abuse during their lifetimes.

Make sure you – and your organization – know about the issues and where survivors can receive help:

- Domestic violence fact sheets - learn more about gender-based violence
 - YWCA Briefing Paper – Gender-Based Violence
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – Gender-Based Violence Facts](#)
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – Technology and Gender-Based Violence](#)
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – Veterans and Gender-Based Violence](#)
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – Child Sexual Abuse Facts](#)
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – Disabled Survivors Facts](#)
 - [GBV Fact Sheet – LGBTQ+ Survivors](#)

- [GBV Fact Sheet – Housing and Gender-Based Violence](#)
- [The National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 800.799.SAFE (7233) – provides a phone and chat line for survivors of domestic violence
- [The National Sexual Assault Telephone Hotline](#) (RAINN): 800.656.HOPE (4673) – provides a toll-free line for survivors of sexual assault

Action #2: Urge Congress to End Violence Against Women and Girls!

YWCA is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families, and strengthen communities. We believe that everyone deserves to be safe and free from violence. Unfortunately, survivors of violence are not given equal access to resources and support. In fact, some violence is ignored altogether. So, as we work to end gender-based violence, we must also address the unique challenges women and girls may face.

[Act Now!](#) Urge your Member of Congress to support reauthorization of VAWA and other policies that will help women and girls be safe and free from violence in your communities.

Action #3: Non-Partisan Issue Education for Community Members and Elected Officials

Here are some steps you can take to ensure that women and girls will be safe from violence in your community:

- Engage your community and elected officials on social media. Use our Social Media Guide for tips, sample tweets, and Facebook status updates to:
 - Raise awareness about gender-based violence in your community and the needs of survivors
 - Ask your elected officials where they stand and what they will do to support survivors
- Send a letter to the editor to your local news outlet
 - If there has been a recent incident of gender-based violence in your community, use Sample A, otherwise, use Sample B.
- Send a letter to your Representative
 - Use the Sample CEO Letter to draft a letter to send via email to your Member of Congress
- Call or meet with your Representative's local office
 - Use the VAWA Impact Sheet to learn more about YWCAs impact around the country, and the VAWA Talking Points to help craft your message

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT (VAWA) OF 2019 (H.R. 1585)

BACKGROUND

- Gender-based violence (domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence) occurs across all races, ages, classes, and ethnic backgrounds, but at disparate rates and with **disproportionate impacts for women of color and other marginalized communities**.
 - **One in three women will experience domestic violence**, and more than three women are murdered by their partners each day.ⁱ
 - **One in five women has been raped** in their lifetime.ⁱⁱ
 - One in six (**19.3 million**) **women have been stalked by an intimate partner** during their lifetime to the point that they felt very fearful or believed that they would be harmed or killed.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Fifty-four percent of multi-racial women, 46 percent of American Indian / Alaska Native women, 43 percent of Black women, 37 percent of Latinas, 36 percent of White women, and 20 percent of Asian or Pacific Islander women have been the victim of intimate partner violence.^{iv}
- Between 21 and 60 percent of **survivors of intimate partner violence lose their jobs** for reasons related to their abuse.^v
- Approximately **50 percent of women who are homeless report that intimate partner violence was the immediate cause** of their homelessness, and over 92 percent of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime.^{vi}
- **Negative physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health issues** have been linked to gender-based violence. Survivors are also at a higher risk for developing addictions to tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.^{vii}

WHAT THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019 (VAWA) DOES

- **Enhances judicial and law enforcement tools**, through reauthorization of the STOP grants and expansion of permissible use of the grants;
- **Improves services for victims** of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
- **Provides services, protection, and justice for young victims of violence**;
- **Reauthorizes and updates the SMART Prevention Program** to reduce dating violence, help children exposed to violence, and engage men in preventing violence;
- **Expands grants under the Public Health Service Act** to support implementation of training programs to improve the capacity of early childhood programs to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking among the families they serve;
- **Preserves and expands housing protections for survivors**;

- **Provides economic security assistance for survivors** by reauthorizing the National Resource Center on Workplace Responses, protecting employees from being fired because they are survivors of sexual assault or domestic violence, and protecting survivors' eligibility to receive Unemployment Insurance;
- **Helps prevent "intimate partner" homicides;**
- **Helps protect Native American women**, by including provisions to improve the response to missing and murdered Native American women, improving tribal access to federal crime information databases, and reaffirming tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators of violence and assault;

PLEASE SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has been instrumental in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Since its initial authorization in 1994, and as a result of improvements established during the 2000, 2005, and 2013 reauthorization processes, VAWA has:

- Directly addressed childcare, affordable housing, community support, transportation, and other barriers that survivors of gender-based violence face in accessing safety and resources.
- Ensured that survivors of gender-based violence from underserved communities have gained access to the same lifesaving and life-changing assistance and resources as other survivors.
- Significantly improved criminal justice and civil court responses to gender-based violence, which has led to an increase in reporting and criminal justice involvement by survivors and an increase in survivors seeking protective orders.
- Greatly strengthened federal-state partnerships to most effectively and efficiently combat gender-based violence, including provision of training and technical assistance, while giving states and jurisdictions the flexibility to respond to their own unique needs.

Please support survivors of gender-based violence by supporting the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 (H.R.1585).

ⁱ Black, M.C. et al (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved 24 January 2017 from https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf. [hereinafter NISVS:2010]

ⁱⁱ Id.

ⁱⁱⁱ Id.

^{iv} Id.

^v Emily F. Rothman et al. How employment helps female victims of intimate partner violence: A qualitative study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. (2007). 12(2). Retrieved 16 January 2017 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.12.2.136>.

^{vi} Pressing Issues Facing Families Who Are Homeless. (2013). American Institutes for Research. Retrieved 16 January 2017 from <http://online.fliphtml5.com/xsgw/iqjt/>.

^{vii} Global and Regional Estimate of Violence Against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence (2013). World Health Organization. Retrieved 16 January 2017 from http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf?ua=1.

THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA) YWCA IMPACT AND SUCCESS STORIES

OVERVIEW

- **YWCA USA reaches 2.3 million women, girls and their families** through more than 200 local associations in 46 states and the District of Columbia. They provide critical programs, including the domestic and sexual violence services, through 12,500 staff members and 52,000 volunteers.
- **Every year YWCAs provide more than 535,000 women with safety services**, which include domestic violence and sexual assault programs and services such as emergency shelter, transitional housing, crisis hotlines, counseling, court assistance, and other community and safety programs.
- Since the last reauthorization of VAWA in 2013, at least **56 YWCAs in 29 states have received more than \$30 million in VAWA funding** through DOJ's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). YWCAs effectively use VAWA funding together with local, state, and private funding from local foundations, private donations, and state agencies to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.
- YWCA is the **largest network of domestic violence providers in the country**.

VAWA FUNDING STREAMS

The following VAWA programs provide significant support to YWCAs as they work in communities across the country to meet the needs of survivors. The YWCA programs and success stories highlighted are representative of the difference VAWA funding has made since it was last reauthorized in 2013.

Transitional Housing Assistance Grants

- **26 YWCAs in 19 states have received \$ \$12,448,518**
- New York: A young woman in **YWCA Mohawk Valley's** crisis domestic violence shelter was referred to their Safe Horizon's transitional housing program, a residential program for 16-to-21-year-old runaways and homeless girls, due to violence perpetrated by her mother's boyfriend. In the program, this young lady had a determination to complete school and attend college. She is now almost done with college and is excelling in life.
- Oregon: **YWCA Greater Portland's Yolanda Project** is a unique, ongoing program that diverts pressure on the Portland region's emergency shelter system by working with survivors of domestic violence at risk of becoming homeless to obtain safe, stable housing for themselves and their families.

STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program

- **22 YWCAs in 16 states have received \$1,374,621**
- Washington State: A client of **YWCA Kitsap County** was able to make use of the local association's comprehensive wrap-around services funded through STOP. This included legal advocacy to get a domestic violence protection order, help with navigating the Dependency Court process to regain custody of her son after domestic violence and drug use, and using their support groups. The housing assistance cut across the continuum. She stayed at a YWCA shelter while visiting her infant daughter in the hospital and then made use of YWCA's partnership with the local housing authority. As a result, the client received a Project Based Voucher. The result of YWCA wraparound services is that the client has permanent housing, both of her children are home with her, her CPS case is closed, she is away from her abuser, and she is going on two years of clean/sober living.

Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program

- **9 YWCAs in 8 states have received \$610,420ⁱ.**
- Virginia: Headquartered in Lynchburg, **YWCA Central Virginia** provides free crisis intervention, support, advocacy, and information to approximately 750 survivors of sexual assault and abuse each year.
- Pennsylvania: A victim advocate from **YWCA York** responded to a hospital call for a possible case of child sexual abuse of a ten-year-old-girl. A family friend had approached the girl at a relative's house and attempted to touch her and remove her clothing. The girl revealed that she had shouted, "No! Stop!" before immediately leaving the room to seek a trusted adult. When our advocate told the girl she was proud of what she had done and asked, "Where did you learn how to do this?", the young girl said, "From you. You came to my class and taught me that lesson." The girl's family was given information about free counseling through the Victim Assistance Center and free legal services.

Improving the Criminal Justice Response to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (also known as Grants to Encourage Arrest and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program)

- **7 YWCAs in 6 states have received \$2,636,570.**
- Utah: **YWCA Utah** provides an array of programs and services for survivors, including its [Family Justice Center](#), shelters, and support services. After ten years of escalating abuse, Candace found her way to the safety of YWCA Utah's Women in Jeopardy shelter. She had just suffered an especially violent incident of physical abuse, perpetrated in front of their children. She was able to bring only one of her two children with her as her husband was keeping the other from her. With the welfare of her children and her pregnancy foremost in her mind, she summoned the strength to

actively take advantage of all the resources YWCA could offer. With the guidance and assistance of her YWCA case manager and advocates, she:

- Pursued free legal advocacy, was reunited with the child her husband had been withholding and began the process of obtaining a divorce and full custody of all the children.
- Applied for DWS assistance to obtain critical medical care for her high-risk pregnancy.
- Enrolled herself and her children in therapy to help them recover from the trauma and emotional harm of the abuse they had suffered.
- Ensured that her oldest child received academic support and enriching experiences through the YWCA's After School Program.
- Maintained her full-time employment with the support of a safe and stable living environment and the YWCA's free drop-in child care.
- Applied and was approved for Section 8 housing and Rapid Re-Housing program assistance and moved her family to an affordable new apartment.

Rural Assistance Program

- **6 YWCAs in 6 states have received \$4,569,650.**
- Hawaii: At **YWCA Kauai County**, a young mother of two young girls (aged 5 and 11) called the crisis line crying after learning from her youngest daughter that she had been sexually molested by her father. Crisis counselors provided services and supported her as she made a police report and with the children being interviewed. All three family members received therapeutic services from experienced YWCA therapists.

Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

- **4 YWCAs in 3 states have received \$2,308,589.**
- Washington State: The [Sexual Violence Law Center](#) at **YWCA Seattle|King County|Snohomish** has three staff attorneys and a director who provide holistic, trauma-informed legal assistance to victims of sexual violence in a wide variety of legal matters, including protection orders, immigration, employment, public benefits, Title IX, housing, crime victim rights, and provide technical assistance and trainings to advocates, attorneys, and judges working with victims of sexual violence.

Consolidated Grant Program to Address Youth and Children Experiencing Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies

- **3 YWCAs in 2 states have received \$2,637,470.**
- Tennessee: **YWCA Knoxville's GameChangers** is the only gender-based violence prevention program for middle-school boys in East Tennessee. It uses a group mentoring structure to teach

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

middle school boys about domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and about how they can help prevent violence against women and girls.

- Tennessee: YWCA Nashville – [AMEND Together](#) seeks to end the epidemic of violence against women and girls by empowering young men and boys to become the catalyst for cultural change.
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ⁱ YWCA North Central Indiana is listed as receiving funds from the Indiana Dept of Education and Indiana Criminal Justice Institute. The Criminal Justice Institute receives funding from both SASP and STOP. YWCA North Central Indiana is listed as having received \$408,028.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Social media is useful for raising awareness, issue education, and elevating YWCA's presence and reach. It is a tool to spread the word about the need to reauthorize VAWA. Social media helps to hold local, state, and federal government accountable to its commitment to preventing and addressing gender-based violence. With greater participation on social media, our collective voice on these important issues will be louder and have a greater impact!

TIPS & REMINDERS

- **Educate:** Issue education is vital when it comes to policy priorities. Share statistics, data, and qualitative research on social media, as well as relevant news articles, blog posts, and any other related content – there is a wealth of information out there! Write about how VAWA funding and programs help women, children, and families in your community.
- **Calls to Action:** Tweet at or tag your legislator(s) to implore them to take action to cosponsor VAWA (H.R.1585) and encourage others to do the same. You can also provide their contact information and urge your followers to do their part and contact their legislator(s) as well. You can find many of your legislators' twitter handles on this [list](#).
- **Hashtags:** Space-permitting, don't forget to use hashtags to connect your post to the larger advocacy campaign. Please add #VAWA, #VAWA4ALL, and #VAWA19 to connect with the VAWA reauthorization efforts.
- **Inspire & Support:** Encourage your friends and followers to join in. They can participate by sharing YWCA's messages and your posts, contacting their legislator(s), writing their own posts, and calling on others to get involved. Retweet partner organizations in this work and/or tag them in relevant posts. Encourage them to retweet and share with their followers and remind folks to contact their legislator(s).
- **Keep it short:** Facebook and Twitter offer quick and easy ways to engage members of your community and share critical messages widely but remember to keep it short! Think of a tweet or post like a headline. It should draw a reader's eye but leave her/him wanting to know more. Tweets can be no more than 280 characters and Facebook wall posts or status updates can be several sentences, and it's best to be concise.
- **Follow "high level" Twitter accounts and Facebook pages:** Look for other nonprofits, violence prevention advocates, agencies in your community or state, media and lawmakers. Follow, friend or like them and many organizations will follow, friend or like in return, or re-tweet or re-post your information.

OTHER SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter:

Remember to tweet at or tag your legislator(s) Twitter handle when possible! You can do so by including their Twitter handle in your tweet or tagging them in a photo or sharegraphic. If you are including their Twitter handle at the beginning of your tweet, be sure to include a period (“.”) beforehand, so your tweet will appear publicly on Twitter – see the first sample tweet for an example.

- **.@RepHandle**, violence against women happens in our community, too. Reauthorize #VAWA and support prevention and education programs that keep our jurisdiction safe! #VAWA19
- TY @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz for being champions for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We welcome the introduction of the ‘Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019’ for a #VAWA4ALL #VAWA19
- The Violence Against Women Act has always been a bipartisan bill. **@RepHandle** can we count on you to co-sponsor a #VAWA4All survivors? #VAWA19
- We're with @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz to pass #VAWA4ALL because communities need access to sexual assault prevention! **@RepHandle**, please co-sponsor #VAWA19
- **.@RepHandle** Violence doesn't discriminate and neither should our laws! Support #VAWA19 and ensure Native survivors of gender-based violence have access to justice on tribal lands! #VAWA4ALL
- Violence doesn't discriminate and neither should our laws! **@RepHandle**, support #VAWA19 and ensure incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence have access to trauma-informed care! #VAWA4ALL
- **@RepHandle**, support #VAWA19 and ensure survivors of domestic abuse access to safe housing! #VAWA4ALL
- Homicide reduction initiatives are key if we are going to reduce domestic violence fatalities! **@RepHandle**, support #VAWA19 and help prevent firearm-involved intimate partner homicides #VAWA4ALL
- Because of #VAWA, more survivors are able to seek & receive help from community service agencies & criminal justice system. #VAWA4All
- Just posted new action alert! Email Rep. [name] to support #VAWA19

Facebook:

- The Violence Against Women grants are critical for our domestic violence programs. Without this funding, [describe the impact e.g. we would struggle to keep our women's shelter open]. [Tag your legislator(s)]: Please support women and families by supporting the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 (H.R.1585) to ensure that we don't lose these vital funding streams.
- The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) supports 56 YWCAs across the country to provide preventive and support services to children and families. At YWCA [your local association], we provide [names programs or services supported by VAWA funding] which have resulted in [describe the outcome and successes of your local YWCA's efforts]. By working as a community, we will ensure that women, children and their families are afforded a safe harbor with comprehensive services to help them heal and thrive.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

Instructions:

- *If possible, start your letter with a short reference to a recent article (within the last five days) in the paper about VAWA or about an incidence of violence against a woman in your community. If you do not know of a recent story, search your newspaper's website for "violence against women act" or "domestic violence."*
- *Start you letter with a reference to the headline and the date it was published.*
- *Keep your final letter to less than 250 words.*
- *Check your local news outlet for submission rules, guidelines, processes.*

To the Editor,

In reference to your article, **HEADLINE**, on **DATE**, **ORGANIZATION** is urging our community and our elected officials to support the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Once again, VAWA – and the women and families it helps – are being overlooked in an effort to score political points in our current heated environment. That's wrong.

VAWA saves lives, supports families, and needs to be reauthorized. A strong VAWA reauthorization bill (H.R. 1585) has been introduced in the House.

As an organization serving women and families in **TOWN/CITY**, we strongly support the reauthorization of VAWA (H.R. 1585) and call on Congress to swiftly pass this bill to maintain and strengthen protections for victims and survivors of violence. We believe that ALL Members of Congress should take steps to end gender-based violence.

It's time to take the politics out of domestic violence and hold Congress accountable for helping to make sure all survivors are safe and free from violence and fear. **[Name(s) of Member of Congress]** – where do you stand?

NAME

TITLE, ORGANIZATION

(Include your phone number and email address. Some newspapers ask for a physical address as well, but none of that will be published.)

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

Instructions:

- *Keep your final letter to less than 250 words.*
- *Check your local news outlet for submission rules, guidelines, processes.*

To the Editor,

ORGANIZATION is urging our community and our elected officials to support the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

VAWA saves lives, supports families, and needs to be reauthorized. A strong VAWA reauthorization bill (H.R. 1585) has been introduced in the House.

Around the country, one in five women has been raped in her lifetime, one in three women will experience domestic violence, and more than three women are murdered by their partners every day. In our own community **[INSERT LOCAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS]**.

It is crucial that we know where our elected officials stand when it comes to preventing gender-based violence and protecting survivors.

Every current Member of Congress should also publicly declare their support for the reauthorization of VAWA.

It's time to hold Congress accountable for helping to make sure all survivors are safe and free from violence and fear.

NAME

TITLE, ORGANIZATION

(Include your phone number and email address. Some newspapers ask for a physical address as well, but none of that will be published.)



Dear Representative [Name of Representative]:

On behalf of YWCA [local association] and all of YWCA's local associations which help 535,000 women, girls, and families affected by gender-based violence each year, we ask for your strong support of H.R. 1585, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 (VAWA). VAWA programs and funding are critical to our ability to provide domestic and sexual violence services such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, crisis hotlines, counseling, court assistance, and other community and safety programs.

[Insert local success story or program as available]

VAWA expired on December 21, 2018 leaving victims, survivors, and the advocates who provide them with services and support in a state of uncertainty. Your support for its reauthorization is crucial. The VAWA reauthorization bill would invest in prevention, expand access, and remove barriers to services. We appreciate that Congress included protections for immigrant, LGBTQ, and Native victims and survivors in the 2013 reauthorization of VAWA, and we are pleased that this bill keeps protections for these vulnerable populations.

There is a continued need for VAWA programs as illustrated by the communities we serve. For example, more than one in four women who are homeless report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness and over 92 percent of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetimes. YWCA relies on VAWA's Transitional Housing Assistance Grants in 19 states to address this problem. But more needs to be done. In the VAWA reauthorization bill, YWCA successfully fought to include language to enforce housing rights for victims, increase survivors' options to maintain housing or break their leases, and strengthen the emergency transfer protections in federal housing programs to assist survivors needing to flee their homes due to safety concerns.

We urge you to cosponsor H.R. 1585 to quickly reauthorize VAWA so this transformational law can continue helping survivors in our community and across the country. If we can provide additional resources about the value of VAWA locally or you wish to visit our programs and discuss these issues, please let me know or contact Morgan Brand, Government Relations Manager with YWCA USA, who can be reached at mbrand@ywca.org.

Sincerely,

[Local Association Leader], [CEO/ED]
YWCA [Local Association]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT of 2019 (VAWA) TALKING POINTS

YWCA supports a strong VAWA Reauthorization, that includes provisions that protect underserved communities. YWCA strongly believes that all survivors of gender-based violence should have access to services and programs to help them recover, heal, and rebuild their lives.

YWCA stands for peace, justice and dignity for ALL. We recognize that women of color, immigrant women, LGBTQ survivors, and other marginalized populations have disproportionate experiences of violence, and increased barriers to seeking help.

- Native Americans are victims of rape or sexual assault at more than double the rate of other racial groups.
- Black women experienced intimate partner violence at a rate 35% higher than that of white women, and about 22 times the rate of women of other races.
- Up to 55 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander women having reported physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner.
- 48% of Latinas in one study reported that their partner's violence against them had increased since they immigrated to the U.S.
- In a national survey, more than 60 percent of LGBTQIA and gender non-conforming sexual and domestic violence survivors said they were denied access to domestic violence shelters.

As the largest domestic and sexual violence service providers in the United States, VAWA has helped YWCAs extend services and programs to millions of women, children, and their families.

- The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides comprehensive resources and support to meet the needs of victims and survivors of gender-based violence, particularly those who experience higher risks of violence, such as Native women, immigrant women, women of color, and LGBTQ+ survivors.

- VAWA provides strong foundational support to address the prevalence of gender-based violence in our communities.
 - Across our network, YWCAs rely on funding VAWA's transitional housing, STOP formula, sexual assault services, rural, legal assistance, underserved populations, children and youth, engaging men and boys as allies, and other grant programs – to meet the needs of their communities.
 - Tell your local YWCA's story
 - Services offered
 - Impact
 - Federal support you specifically rely on (if any)
- During VAWA reauthorizations this year, we need your support to ensure that the existing legislative structure and grant programs are maintained, and that VAWA's critical protections for survivors of color, LGBTQ+ survivors, Native women, and other survivors who experience higher risks of violence are preserved.
 - [Ask your Representative](#) to protect survivors of gender-based violence by cosponsoring and supporting the passage of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 (H.R. 1585).