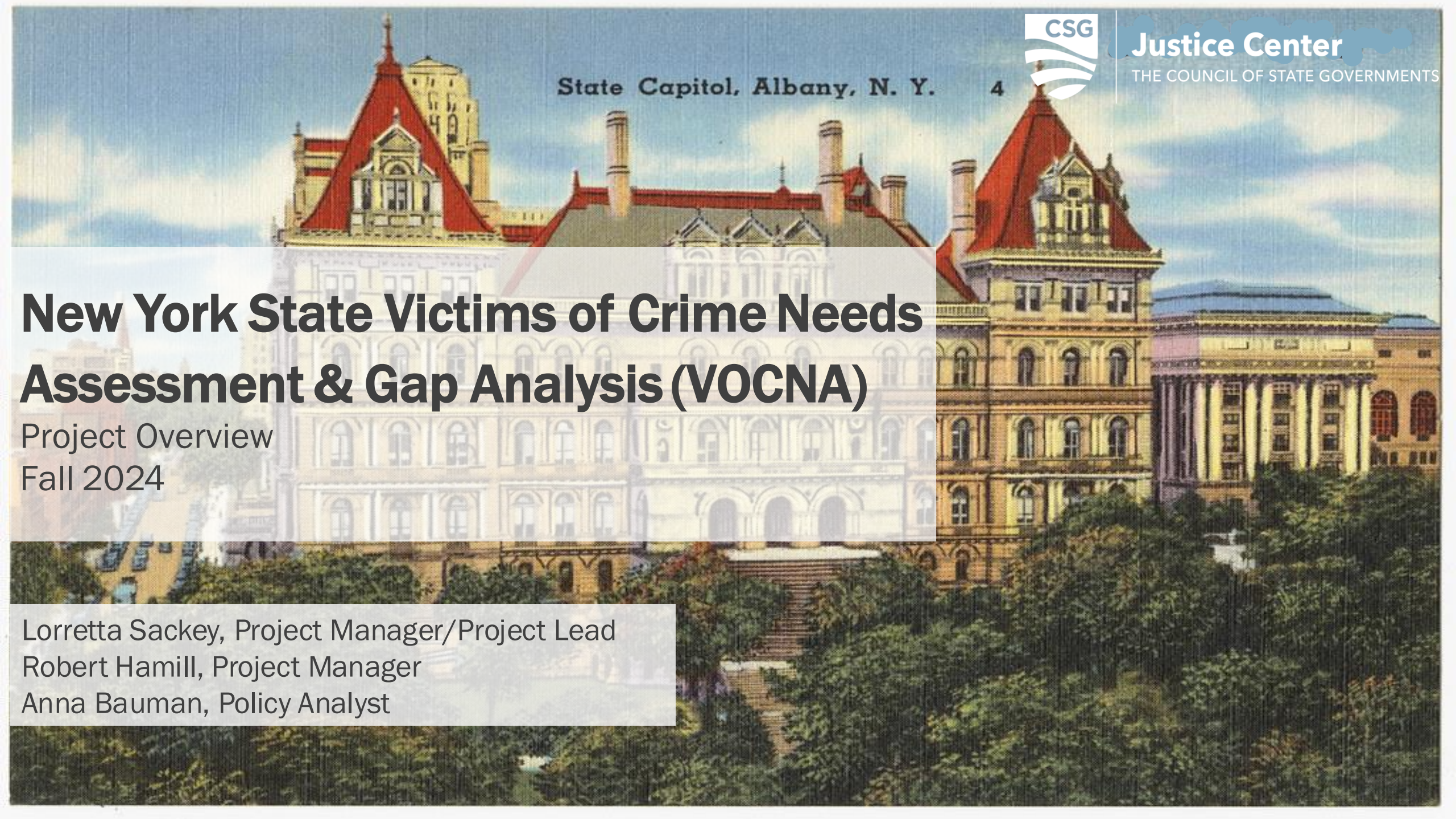

CSG Justice Center
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

New York State Victims of Crime Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis (VOCNA)

Project Overview
Fall 2024

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The Council of State Governments Justice Center

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, representing state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

- The Council of State Governments Justice Center is committed to advancing racial equity internally and through our work with states, local communities, and Tribal Nations.
- We support efforts to dismantle racial inequities within the criminal and juvenile justice systems by providing rigorous and high-quality research and analysis to decision-makers and helping stakeholders navigate the critical, and at times uncomfortable, issues the data reveal. Beyond empirical data, we rely on stakeholder engagement and other measures to advance equity, provide guidance and technical assistance, and improve outcomes across all touchpoints in the justice, behavioral health, crisis response, and reentry systems.

Thank you

On behalf of the CSG Justice Center staff involved in the New York State Victims of Crime Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis Project, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters for the opportunity to engage in such meaningful and impactful work.

We greatly appreciated working alongside our dedicated project partners, Lauren Szczesny and Blake Kush. Their insights and unwavering support were instrumental in bringing this project to fruition. Together, we navigated challenges and celebrated successes, all while remaining focused on our mission to identify the needs of victims/survivors and uplift the goals of providers.

We would also like to recognize the Office of Victim Services for its unwavering commitment to this cause, especially Director Bea Hanson, Katie Egglefield, Melinda Williams, Kathleen Joslin, and former Director Elizabeth Cronin. Your kindness, trust, and collaborative spirit have been invaluable.

This project was also supported by subject matter experts, Courageous Fire and Jorge Vidal. Thank you both for your energy, spirit, and determination. Your contributions were vital to our shared success, and we are grateful to have had you on this journey with us.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the victims and survivors who courageously shared their experiences with us. Your openness and willingness to share your stories have been a profound gift. We hope the recommendations we present truly reflect your expressed needs.

Finally, thank you to all the providers and community-based organizations who took the time to connect with our team. Your willingness to share your insights and experiences allowed us to engage deeply, laugh, cry, and learn together. We are hopeful that the recommendations shared resonate with what was discussed on those important calls, benefiting victims and providers alike.

Thank you all for your incredible support and collaboration.

NYVOCNA Project Overview

1. Project Background and Data Analysis
2. Results from Victim Impact Survey
3. Results from the Victim Provider Questionnaire
4. Focus Group Discussions and Interviews
5. Recommendations

The Office of Victim Services contracted with the CSG Justice Center to conduct a needs assessment on victims of crime across New York State.

The assessment sought to do the following:

- Understand the most immediate, direct needs and long-term indirect needs of victims of crime.
- Understand barriers that victims of crime and their families face in seeking and receiving services.
- Identify unserved and underserved populations and service areas.
- Identify gaps in service and unmet needs of victims and their families as a result of being identified as an underserved population or being in an underserved area.
- Identify how victims and service providers can be better served.
- Identify recommendations to support identified needs of victims and their families that align with OVS's mission, including recommendations for how OVS can sustain provision of services to the populations and service areas identified as unserved and underserved.

To further understand the direct and indirect needs of victims, data from several sources were examined.

Publicly Available Crime and Victimization Data – Data from publicly available sources helped inform who in the state may be experiencing crime and reporting victimization.

- **Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Data.** Participating local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies provide crime statistics that are standardized across jurisdictions.
- **National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Data.** Provides higher-quality data by collecting information about offenses, people who commit crimes, victims, and crime location.
- **New York Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Data.** DCJS data contains aggregate crime data for each of New York's 62 counties, including violent crime counts, firearm crimes, and domestic violence incidents.

Requested Victim Services Data – Data from the NY Office of Victim Services (OVS) helped fill gaps in publicly available data and better inform who is experiencing victimization and accessing services.

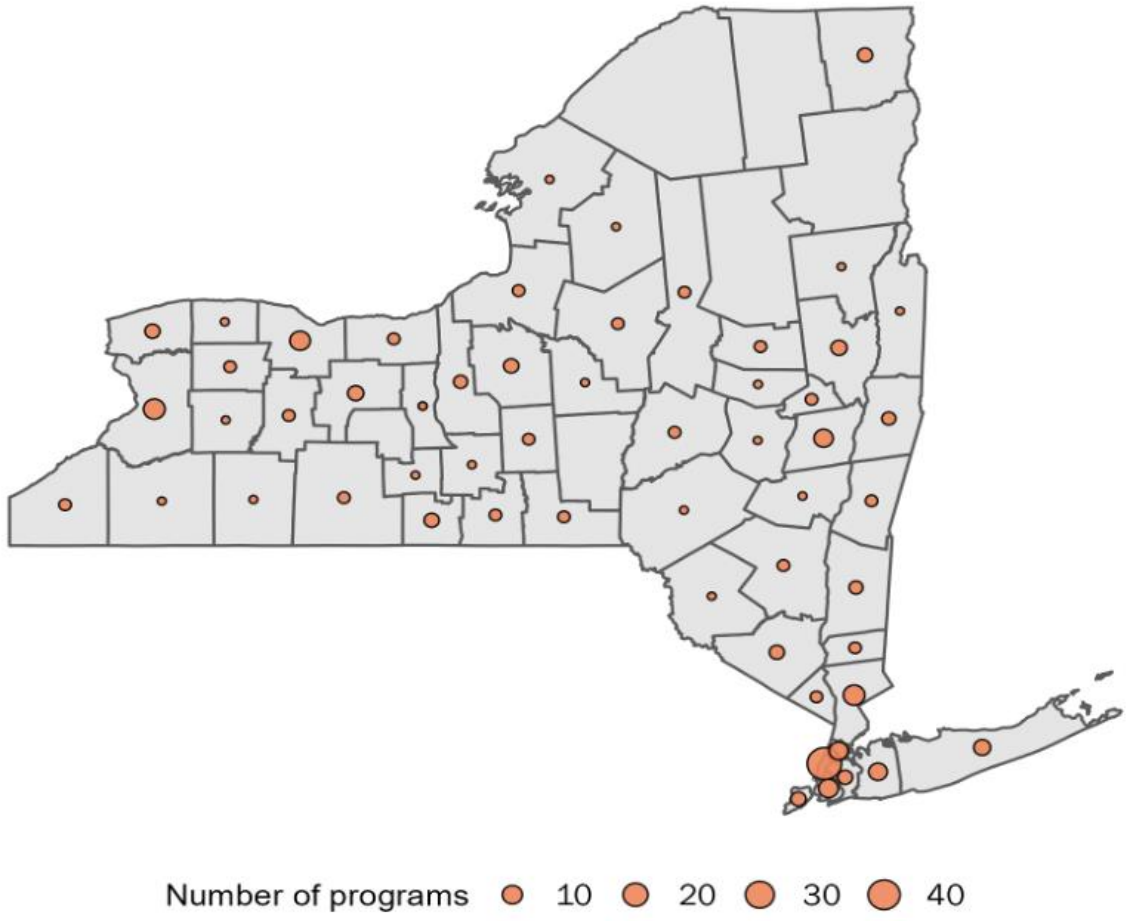
- **Crime Victim Compensation Data.** CSG Justice Center staff requested Victim Assistance Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) reports to better understand what victim services are available and who is accessing them. Victim Assistance PMT reports provide information about organization type and location, victimization types served, special classifications of individuals, and direct services offered.
- **OVS Grants Unit Data.** CSG Justice Center research staff requested compensation data from OVS to better understand who is experiencing victimization and which services and supports are being accessed in the wake of victimization.

A review of OVS-funded programs demonstrated where programming is located relative to crime rates.

In 2022, there were 11 statewide programs in addition to 229 individual programs throughout the state with a defined administrative base in 1 of New York's counties.

- With 49 programs, New York County had the most programs. Many programs serve the entire city.
- The North Country counties of St. Lawrence, Franklin, Essex, and Hamilton do not have any programs, but a few programs in Clinton provide services to Essex and Franklin Counties.

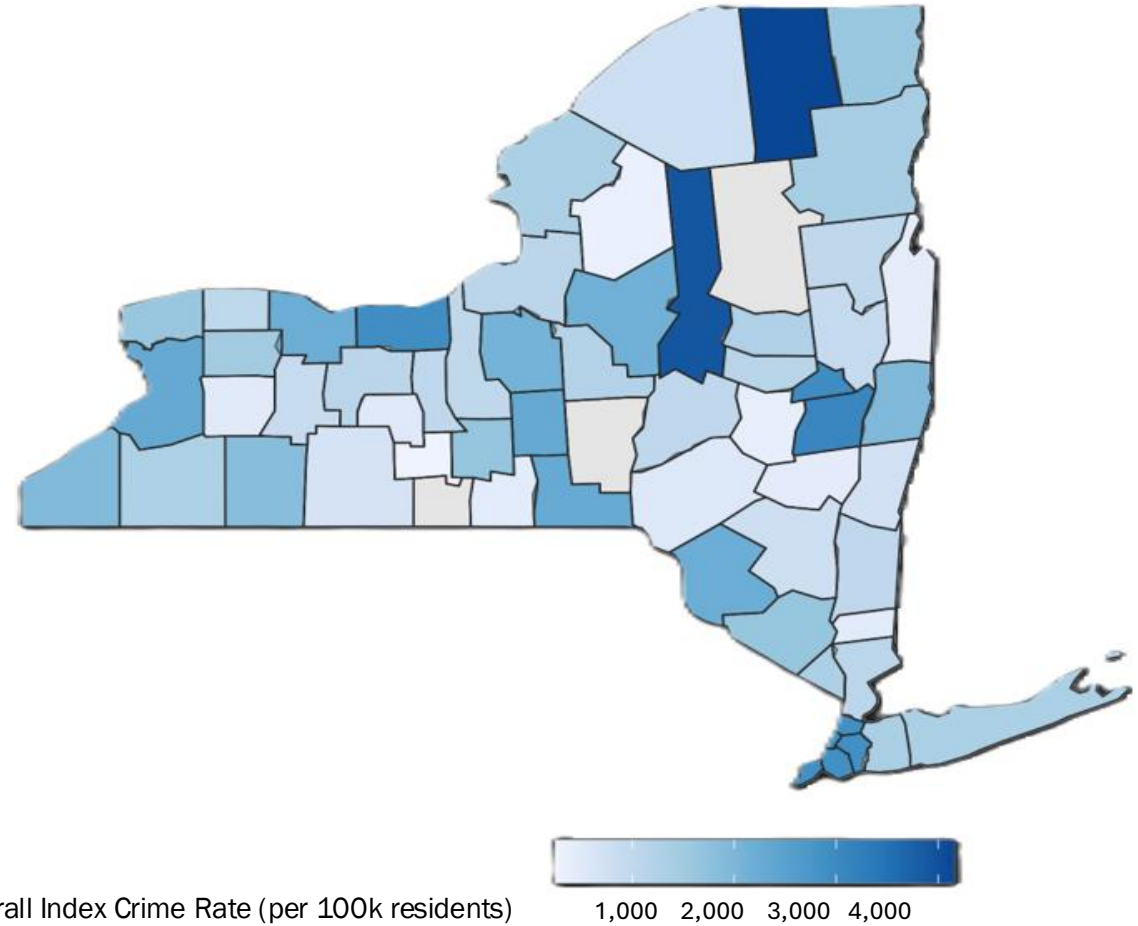
Programs by County



Analysis of 2022 OVS Program Information conducted by The Council of State Governments Justice Center, November 2022.

Understanding where crime is happening helps inform where people are experiencing harm.

Index Crime Rate in New York, 2022



County	Index Rate
Franklin	4,152
Herkimer	3,918
Albany	3,087
Schenectady	2,954
Wayne	2,925
New York City	2,885
Erie	2,306
Cortland	2,302
Broome	2,290
Monroe	2,200

Uniform Crime Reporting Program Summary Reporting System Federal Bureau of Investigation Most Recent Data: 2022, accessed April 24, 2024, cde.ucr.cjis.gov/.

The direct and indirect needs of victims were analyzed through surveys and questionnaires.

Victim Impact Survey – Survey shared with victims/survivors, secondary victims, and people who witnessed crime in New York to understand

- The types of harm they encountered;
- The impact of their victimization;
- The barriers they faced in receiving services;
- The resources accessed following these experiences;
- Who they notified following their victimization; and
- Their needs both at one and six months following victimization.

Victim Provider Questionnaire – Questionnaire shared with victim service providers (hospitals, lawyers, advocates) to further understand the direct and indirect needs of victims from the perspective of providers. Providers were asked to

- Share insights on their organization;
- Consider the needs of victims/survivors they have identified;
- Share what victims have directly expressed as needs; and
- Share information on the demographic they support, the region, and the resources available.

Determining the direct and indirect needs of victims also required firsthand communication with funded and unfunded service providers.

Focus Group Discussion – Discussions with OVS-funded programs to further gain insights into the challenges that victims and providers face. Topics ranged:

- Victims in rural communities
- Homicide victims
- Needs of sexual assault victims
- Victims impacted by violent crimes
- Human trafficking victims
- Victims of property crime
- Undocumented and refugee victims
- Victims in historically marginalized communities and culturally specific support

Interviews – Interviews were conducted directly with community-based organizations (CBOs) to share how they support the people in their community with their various needs.

CBOs shared how they educate the community and provide direct support to victims/survivors.

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Before reviewing the analysis, here are some identified limitations of the victim impact survey.

- This group of respondents does not represent the experiences of all victims of crime in New York State.
- Historically marginalized communities often do not report.
- The results are limited to the people who chose to respond to the victim impact survey.
- Individuals who respond to surveys tend to be more invested or interested in the topic.
- Although the survey was disseminated to various agencies, organizations, and stakeholders, and we did our best to recruit as many people as we could, we cannot conclusively say whether certain groups were excluded from the survey.
- Conclusions about all victim experiences should be interpreted with caution.

The victim impact survey helped identify the direct and indirect needs of victims following victimization.


Office of Victim Services

In partnership with

Justice Center

New York State Victim Impact Survey

The State of New York is seeking to survey victims, survivors, and bystanders of crime to learn about how your experiences have affected you or your community.

We are hoping to learn more about your needs, the challenges you faced while getting services, and the resources you accessed as a result of these experiences.

With the information you share, we can better understand the gaps in services to victims of crime in New York.

Thank you for your participation!

If you have additional questions, contact

ovsoutreach@ovs.ny.gov

To take the survey, use

or visit

bit.ly/3TgFonw

The survey is being distributed by The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS).

Victim Impact Survey

2,099 valid response counts from the English and Spanish survey results.

Valid responses represented:

- Respondent was 18 years or older.
- Respondent could answer the survey for themselves or on behalf of family member, friend, or fellow community member who was a victim of a crime in New York State in the past 5 years.

Responses to the survey were from:

- Anyone who has experienced harm or violence firsthand *(myself)*
- Anyone who has witnessed or been negatively impacted by witnessing harm to someone else *(secondhand victimization)*
- Anyone who knows someone in their community (such as a family member, close friend, etc.) who has experienced harm or violence *(someone in my community)*

The victim impact survey helped identify the direct and indirect needs of victims following victimization.

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Victim Impact Survey

1,034 (49.3 percent) of responses for "myself" and 1,065 responses (50.7 percent) for "someone in my community"

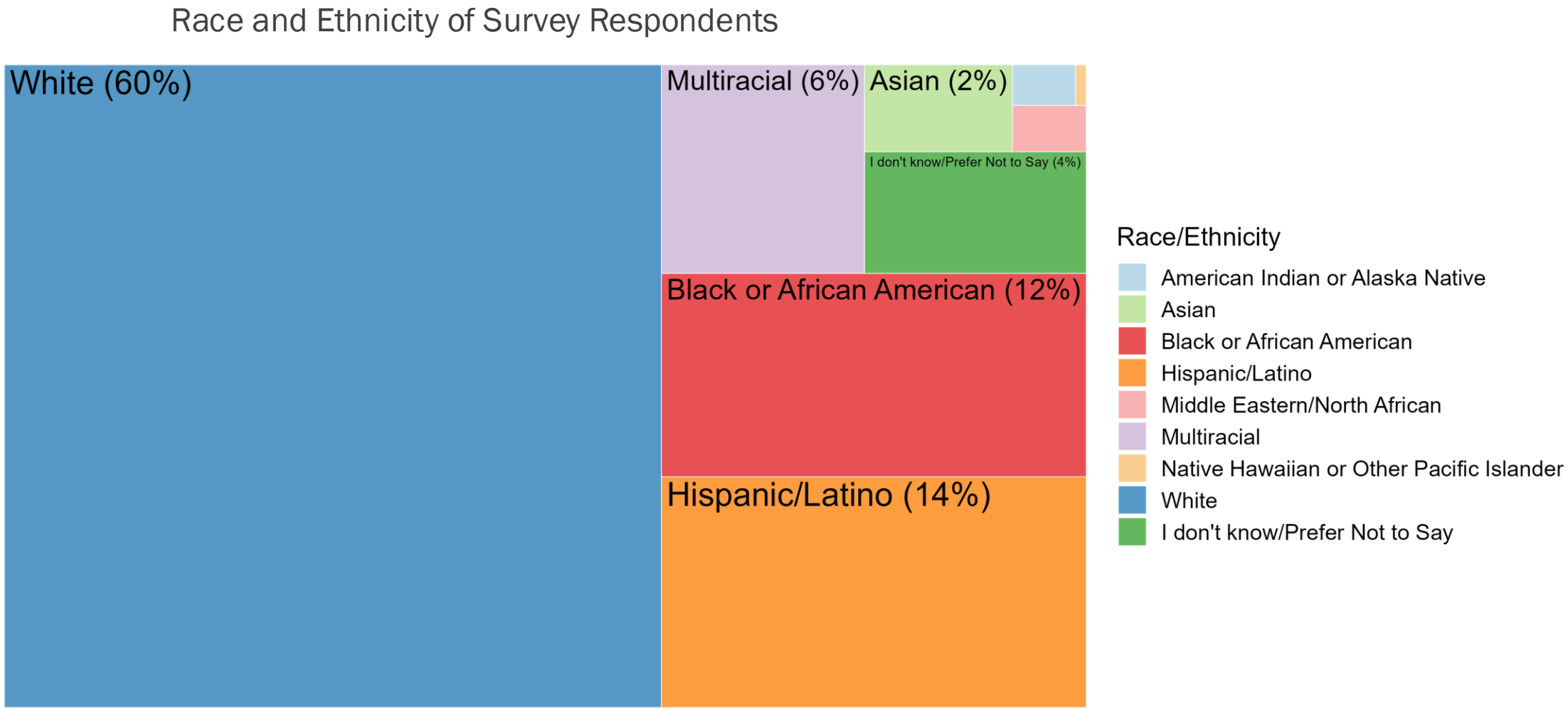
61 of New York's 62 counties were represented in the survey results.

- The only county that did not have a survey selection was **Hamilton County.**

NOTE: This does not mean that responses did not come from Hamilton County; it means that no one selected Hamilton County as a county of residence.

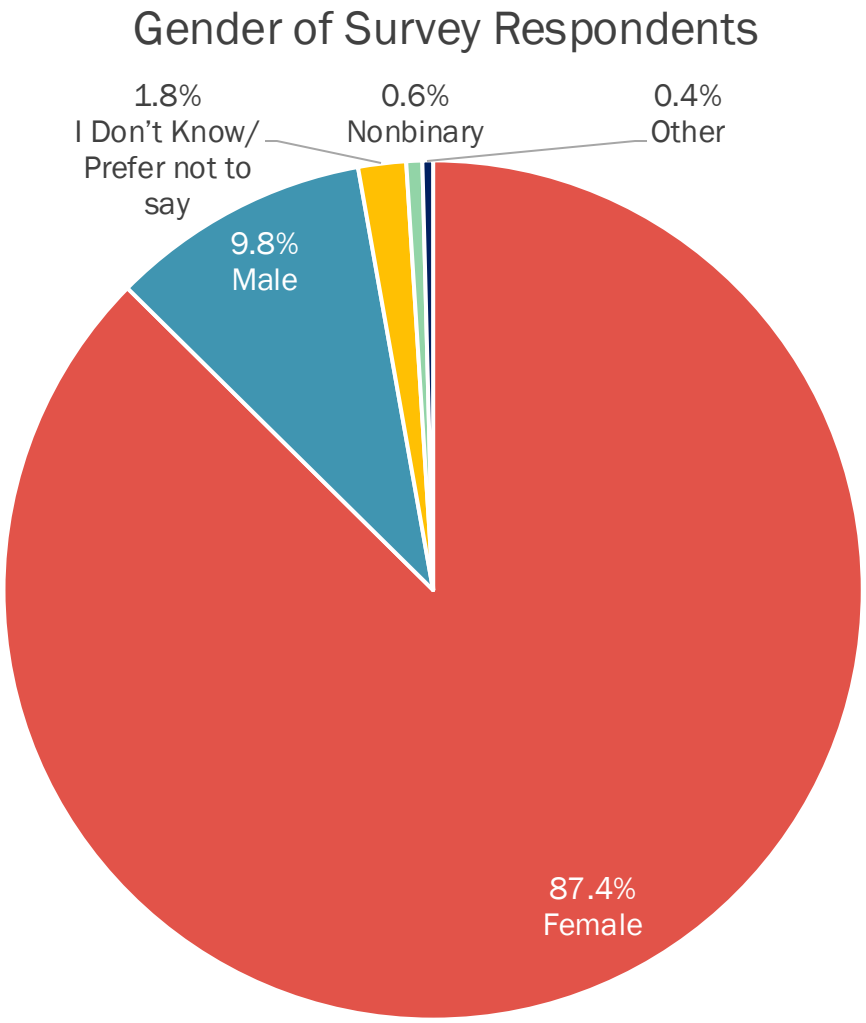
- 72 percent of respondents selected an answer for county of residence.

Survey respondents represented different races and ethnicities.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

The survey showed that most of the people who reported experiences of victimization were women (87.4 percent).



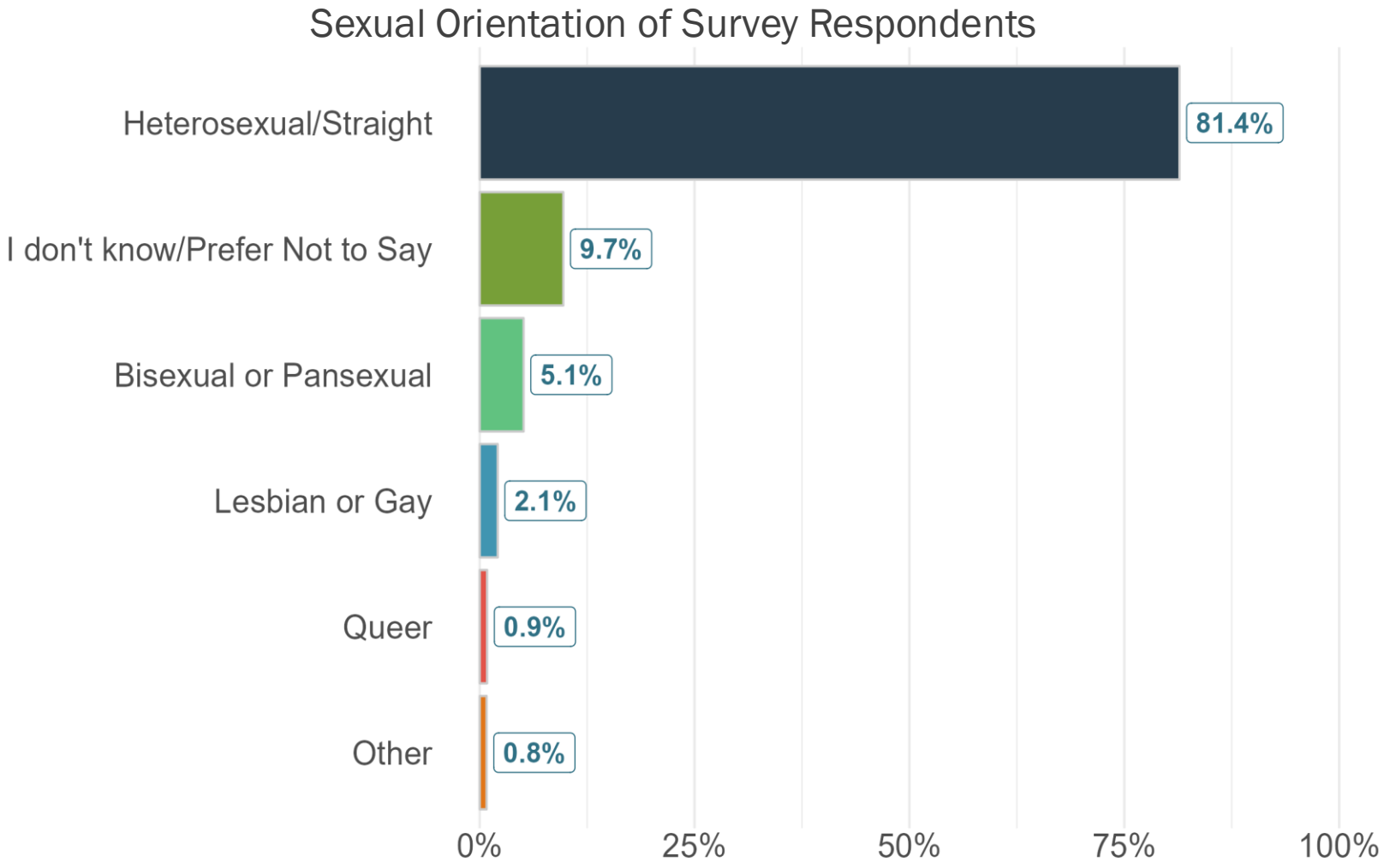
The sample also included men at 9.8 percent and nonbinary individuals at 0.6 percent.

78%

of responses included information on the gender of the victims.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Most victims who participated in the survey identified as heterosexual or straight.

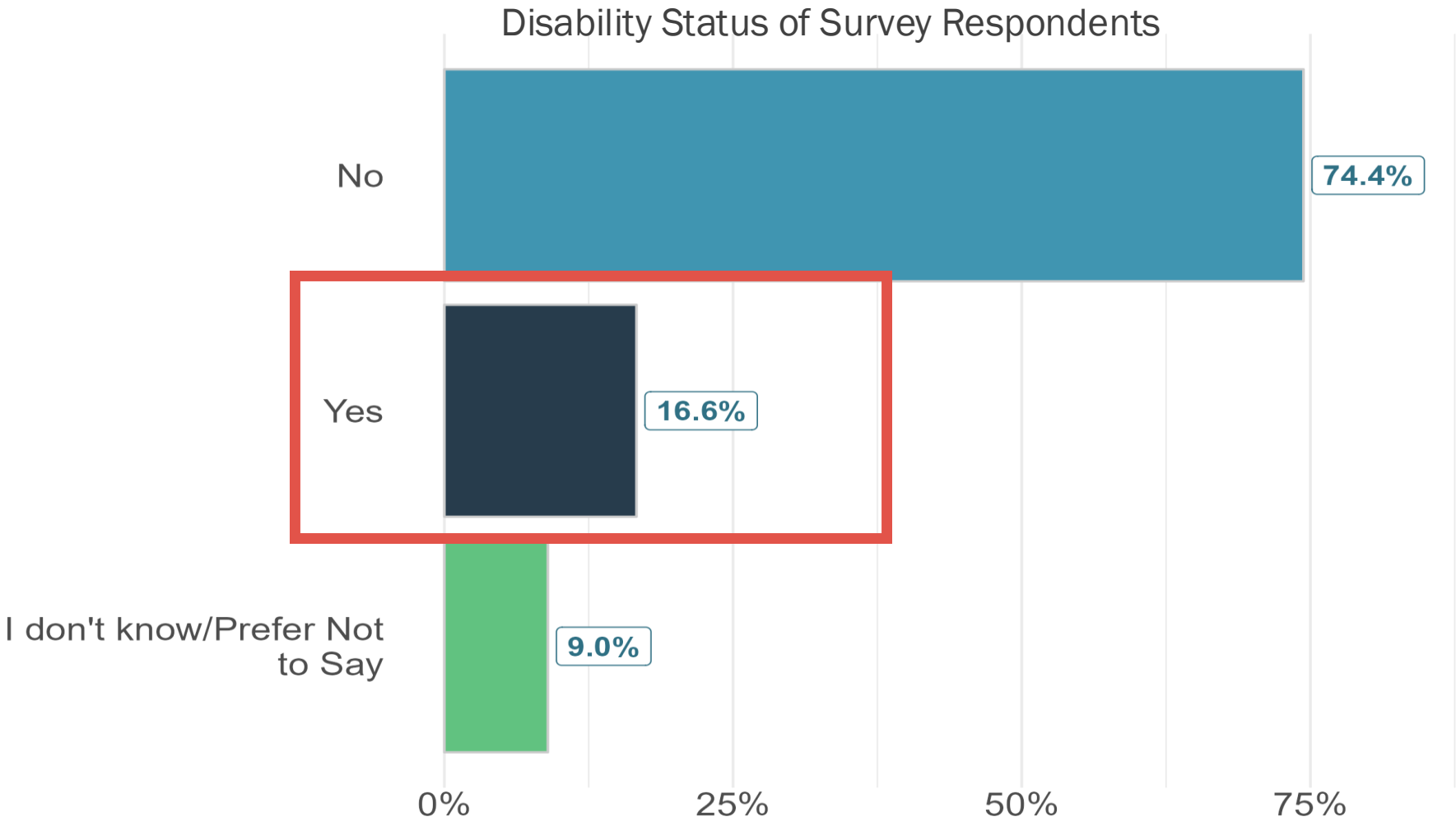


77%

of respondents identified their sexual orientation on the survey.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Almost 17 percent of respondents reported having a disability that impacts their ability to access services or resources.



77%

of survey respondents answered the question about disability.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Survey results represent only the experiences of victims who responded to the survey.

Harm

Type of harm/victimization

Impact

Impact of victimization on the victim

Notification

Who victims notify after victimization

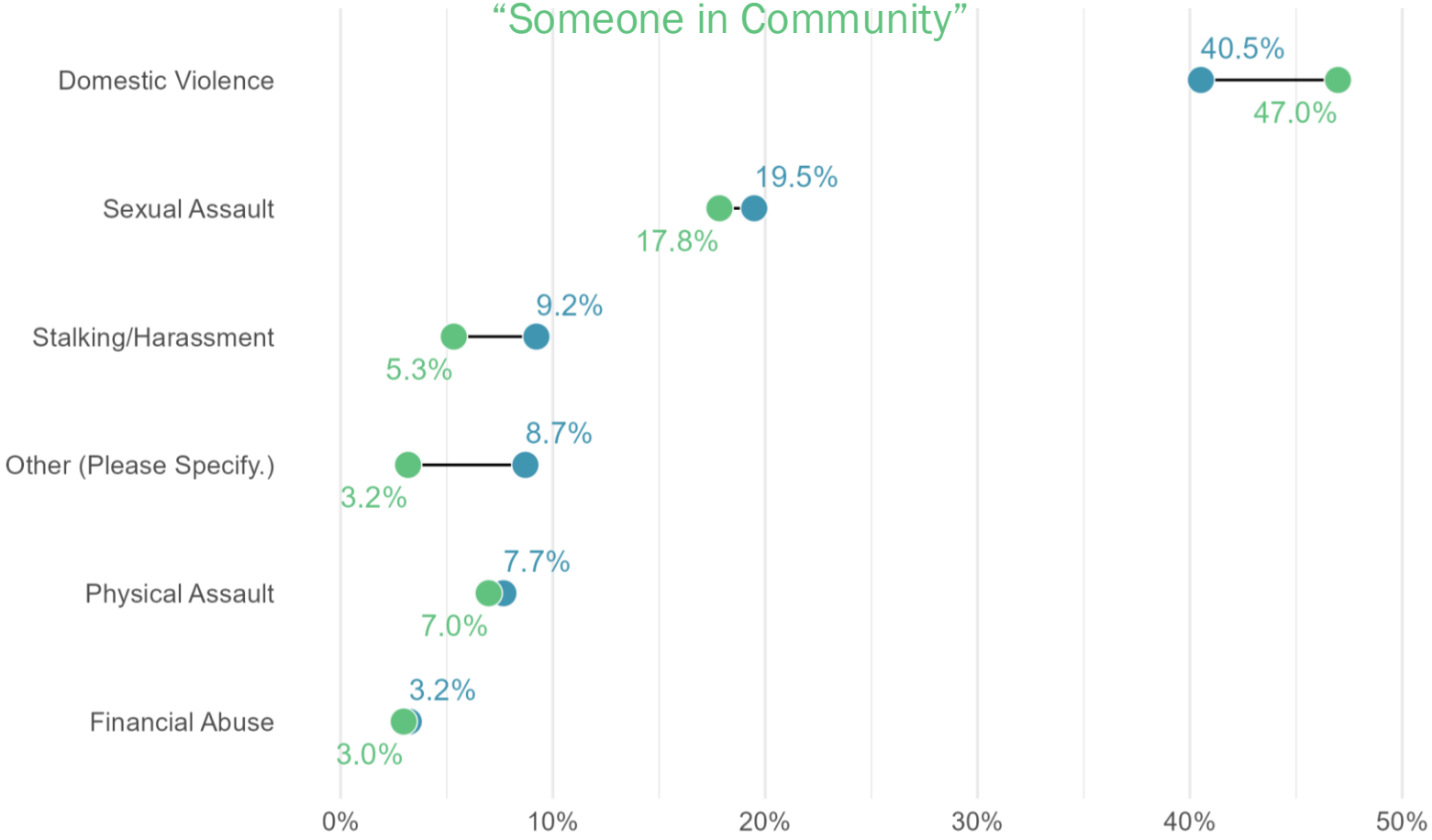
Needs

Needs of victims at one and six months

Survey results are broken out by respondents who completed the survey as “myself” or “someone in my community.”

Results revealed that domestic violence was the most reported form of harm or violence experienced, followed by sexual assault.

Type of Harm or Violence Experienced by "Myself" and "Someone in Community"



Survey respondents were asked:

What type of harm or violence did you experience?

If more than one applies, please select the one that feels most appropriate to you.

- This response does not account for poly-victimization.
- Physical assault and domestic violence can often be conflated. Domestic violence is often considered to be physical assault, but it can also be financial abuse, stalking, harassment, etc.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey. May 2023.

In their own words:

Victims and survivors share experiences with domestic violence and sexual assault.

"The OVS applications are not designed to help domestic violence survivors. Survivors often leave with only the clothes on their back so there are no receipts highlighting what was lost. 99% of DV survivors experience financial abuse, so they don't have access to bank or credit card statements to address the loss of receipts. The necessity of a police report is a huge barrier; police simply do not believe survivors and frequently cause further harm."

"Please be mindful of the fact like myself that victims/survivors have experienced multiple situations of violence from child sex abuse, child abuse, rape, and domestic violence; it's always going to be more than one."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023.

In their own words: Victims and survivors share experiences with domestic violence and sexual assault.

"Medical professionals do not seem to be aware of the process a victim experiences for getting the rape exam. They think that rape exams cover all the victim's needs, and it is far from it."

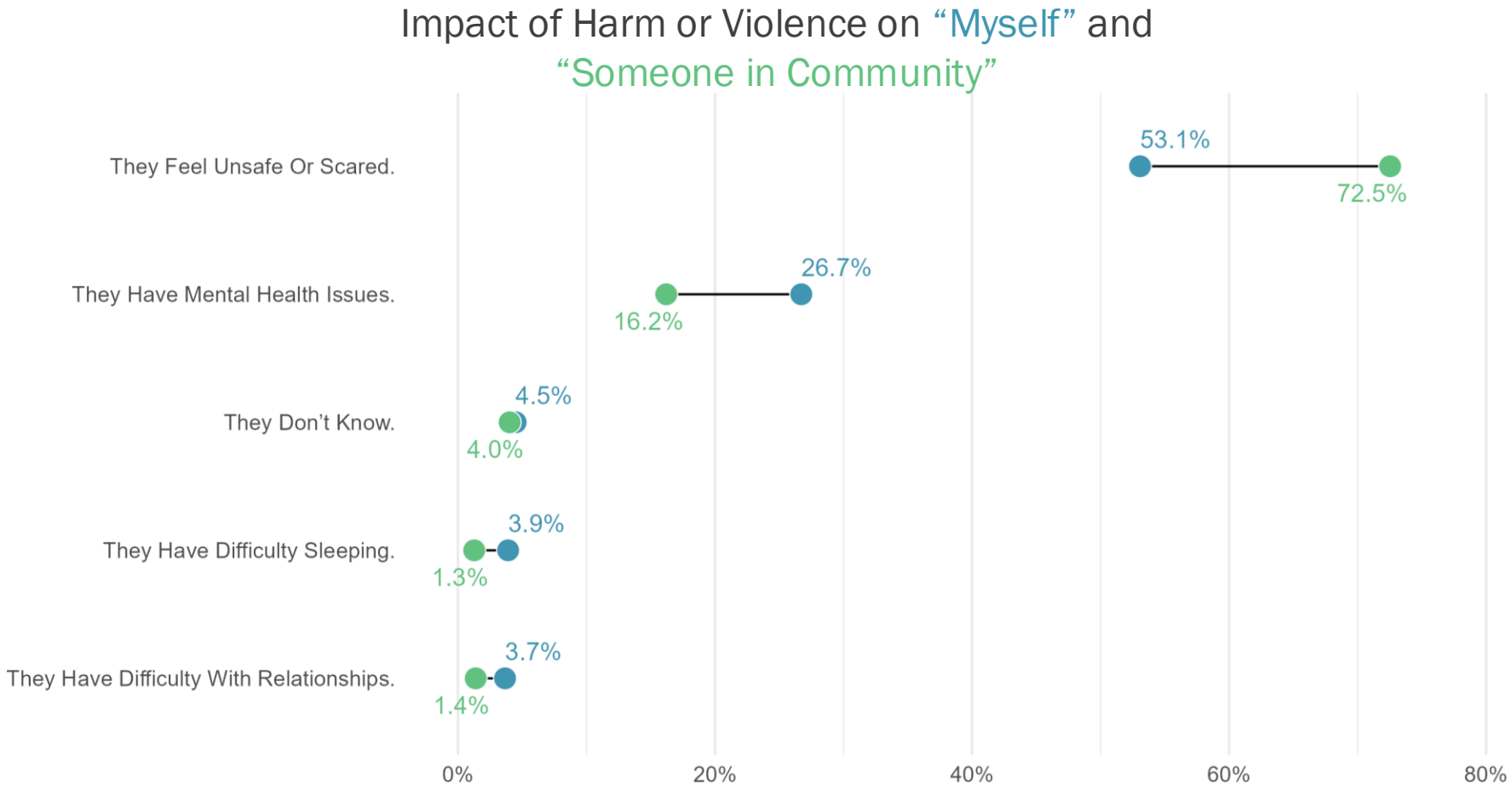
"I was not taken seriously by the police when I made numerous calls regarding my experience of stalking/harassment/rape."

"This happened when our daughter was in college. She was being stalked by an ex-boyfriend. Police could not do anything other than file a restraining order. Nothing could be done until he laid hands on her. That should be changed."

She [the victim/survivor] lacked education about domestic violence and how to seek help."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey. September 2023

Victims reported that their victimization impacted feelings of safety, followed by mental health.



Survey respondents were asked to select in what ways they had been impacted by harm or violence.

82 percent of survey respondents answered this survey question.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey. May 2023.

In their own words: Victims and survivors share how their mental health and safety were affected following victimization.

"Trauma is not to be underestimated. The general population, friends and family included, don't understand trauma. Thankfully, everyone within the justice system and medical professionals understood trauma. My trauma informed therapist has been instrumental in helping me heal. Victim services are crucial in helping victims heal to find purpose to live a meaningful life after crime & trauma."

"This was a sexual assault that led to long-term mental health issues including an attempted overdose; this person has had a hard time finding quality mental health services in her rural community."

"Being hyper vigilant all the time affects your life and health in many ways."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

In their own words:

Victims and survivors share how their mental health and safety were affected following victimization.

"There should be way more services available for victims because we're never going to be the same. I'm forever going to be impacted by the events that took place. The decisions that I make are based off my experience and whether I'll be safe."

"A long pattern of harassment has made it extraordinar[il]y difficult to be confident of my safety."

"Persons victimized have expressed fear of the offender and are now apprehensive to file charges because of the lack of resources needed to be safe."

"The fact that violent crimes (at least in my case) have such a drastic impact on daily life even years after they occur shows how incredibly important victim services is."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

In their own words: Victims and survivors share how their mental health and safety were affected.

"I did not have a positive experience[e] reporting the incidents to law enforcement due to my mental health at that time as well as the fact that I waited to report."

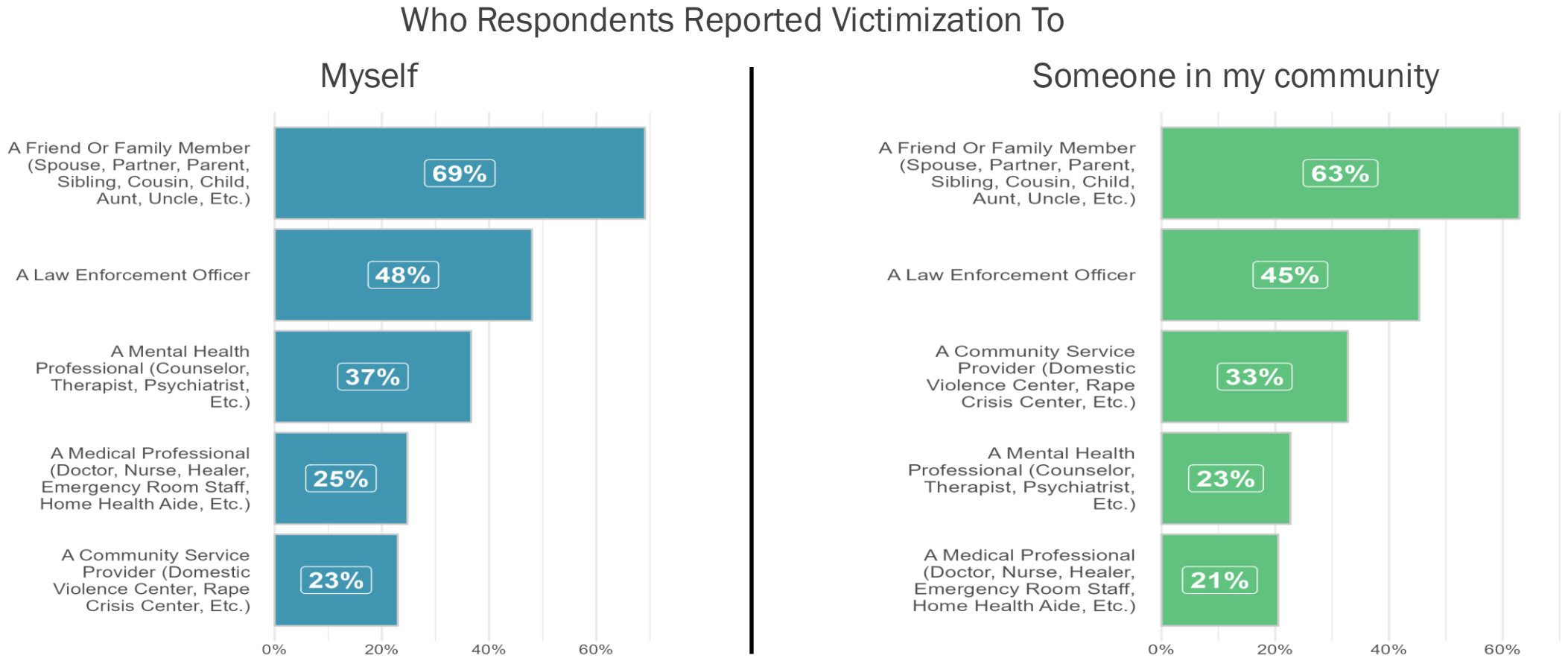
"How does it affect your character or how do you react to other[s]? I am angry and I am more careful when I interact with others."

"For 1–3 years after the crime, I felt unsafe, I was depressed, etc. But all that has gone [except] for the lack of trust."

"I was afraid of all men; my body shook."

"The long-term [mental] effects of having to coparent with the person who caused the harm and/or threatened to do so."

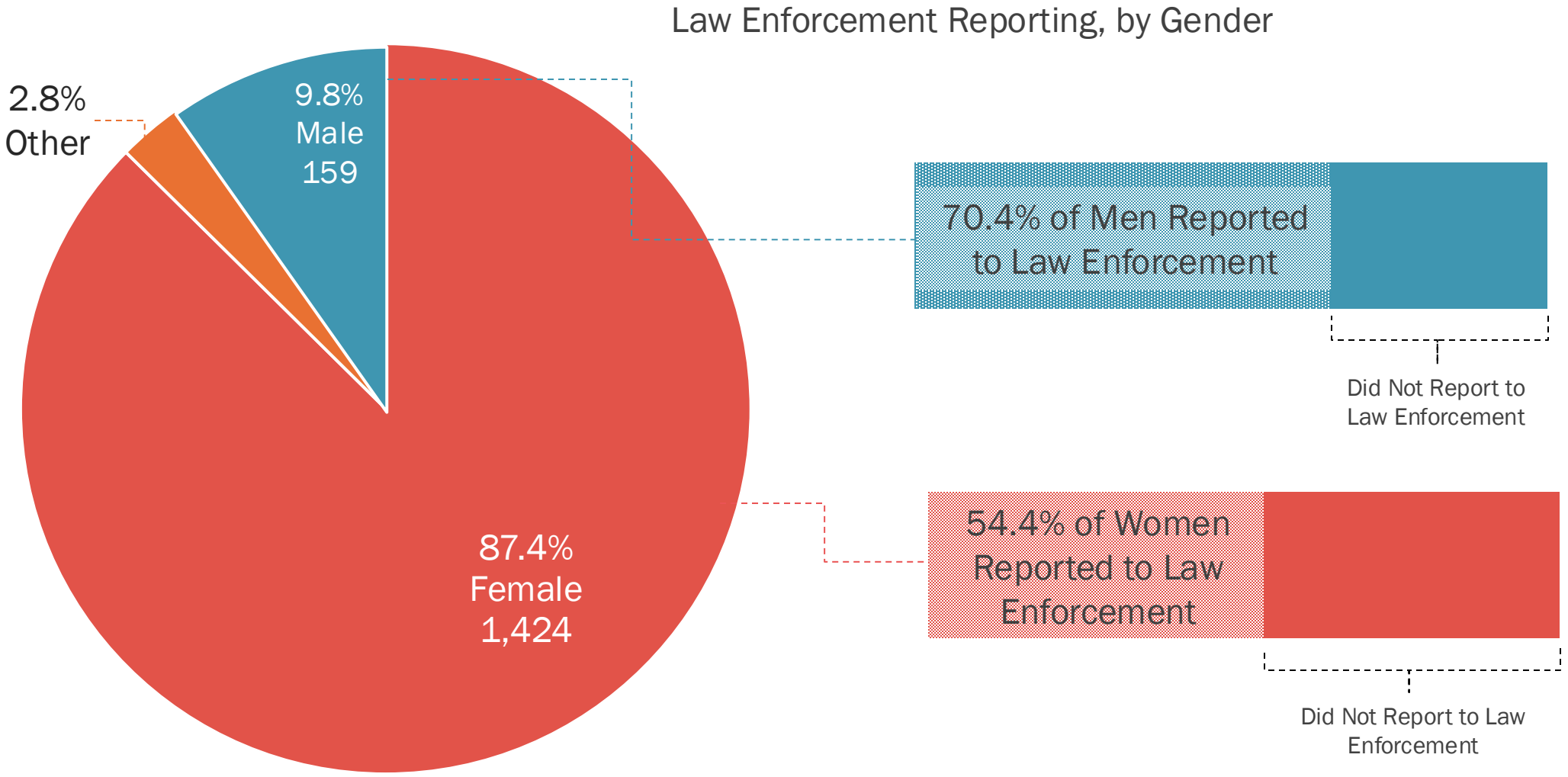
Respondents who reported their victimization primarily notified family and friends, followed by law enforcement agencies.



66 percent of respondents provided answers on reporting their harm/victimization.

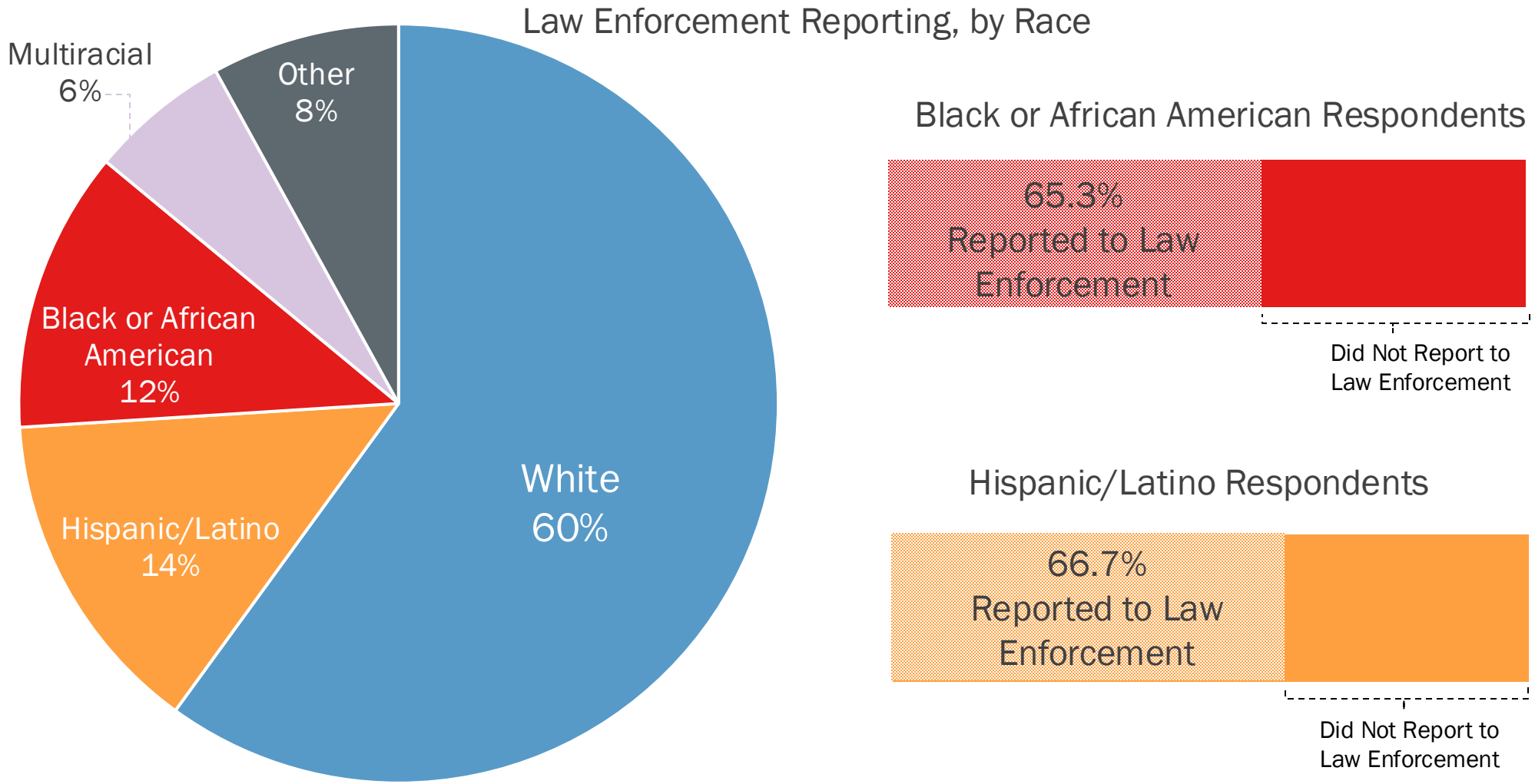
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Of the people who reported their gender, 70 percent of males reported victimization to law enforcement, compared to 54.4 percent of female respondents.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Twenty-six percent of survey respondents were either Black or Hispanic/Latino. Two-thirds of these groups reported their victimization to law enforcement.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

In their own words: Victims and survivors share experiences with law enforcement and courts following harm.

"Every officer needs to go under serious empathy and victim service training to learn how to deal with survivors. I could have been killed that night and they made it a joke."

"Once the police take a report, you're basically left alone to figure it out. Very rarely do they give you more than a prepared sheet with a few phone numbers."

"Service providers lack a lot of education, experience and knowledge. Family court system is broken. Family justice center advocates lack knowledge and experience. Judges and support magistrates are not empathetic and don't care."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

In their own words:

Victims and survivors share experiences with law enforcement and courts following harm.

"I felt unsupported and victimized by a system, and the reason I am alive is because a friend helped me."

"I wish they [law enforcement] explained more so I had felt more comfortable to go to court and file an order of protection. I would have had proof and would not have need[ed] to present my own. As such, I did not pursue the order. No one gave me any additional information or support. Just signed a form and they left."

"I felt I had a lot of support from law enforcement and victim advocacy. I still struggle going through family court with him."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023.

Characterization of Needs Following Harm or Victimization

Daily living: clothing, food, personal hygiene items, etc.

Housing: shelter, rent payments

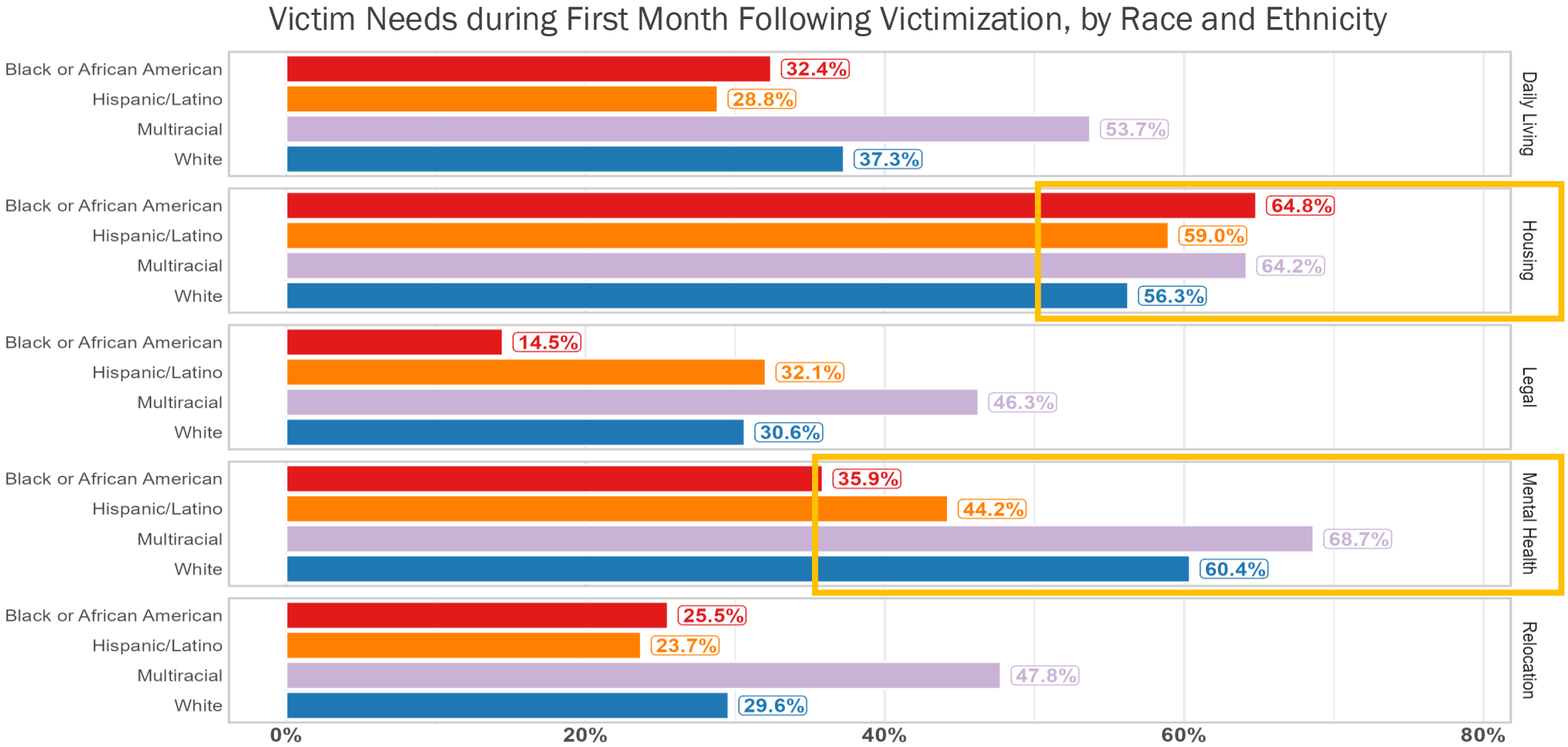
Legal: criminal attorney, civil attorney, etc.

Mental health: therapy, counseling, etc.

Relocation: moving company, U-Haul, storage unit, security deposits, etc.

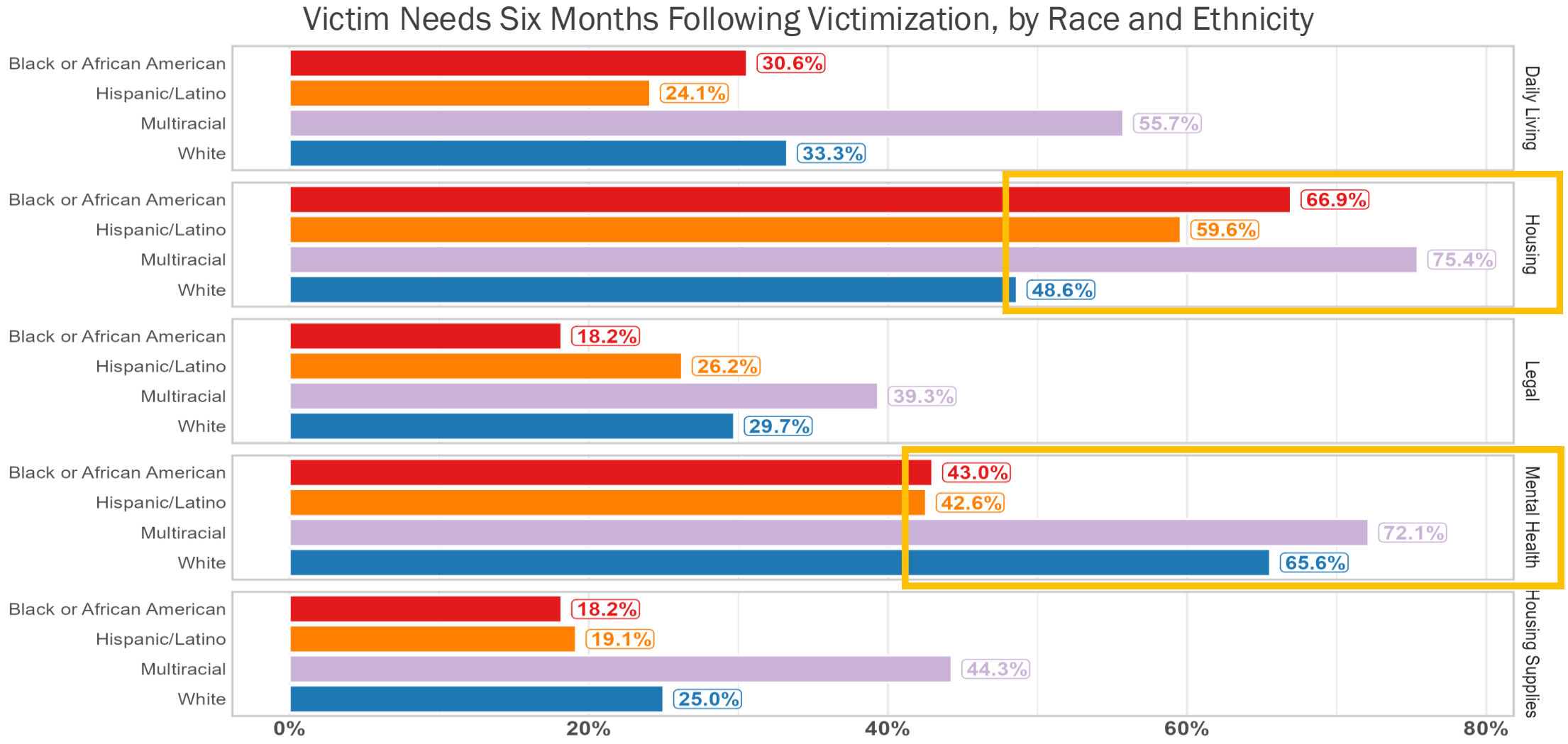
Housing supplies: bed, box spring, dishes, utensils, etc.

Survey results determined that across race and ethnicity, housing and mental health were among the top victim needs identified *during the first month* following victimization.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

The highest needs remained housing and mental health *six months after victimization*.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

In their own words: Victims and survivors share their housing challenges following harm.

"Renewal House never looked at me differently when I went back to my abusive ex many times. They were there every time I needed them, and I finally left for good. I've been away from him for going on five years now though he tried up until last year to contact me. They gave me strength."

"Many victims need appropriate housing to secure a safe place for themselves and their children."

"9 months after the violence which started with a sexual assault and domestic violence until after birth of child, I was homeless with 4 children. Safe houses were not safe. I entered another domestic violence relationship afterwards. Crime victim services is helping me understand trauma and its triggers so I can enter a healthy lifestyle."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

In their own words: Victims and survivors share their housing challenges following harm.

"Finding affordable and available housing is frequently an experience."

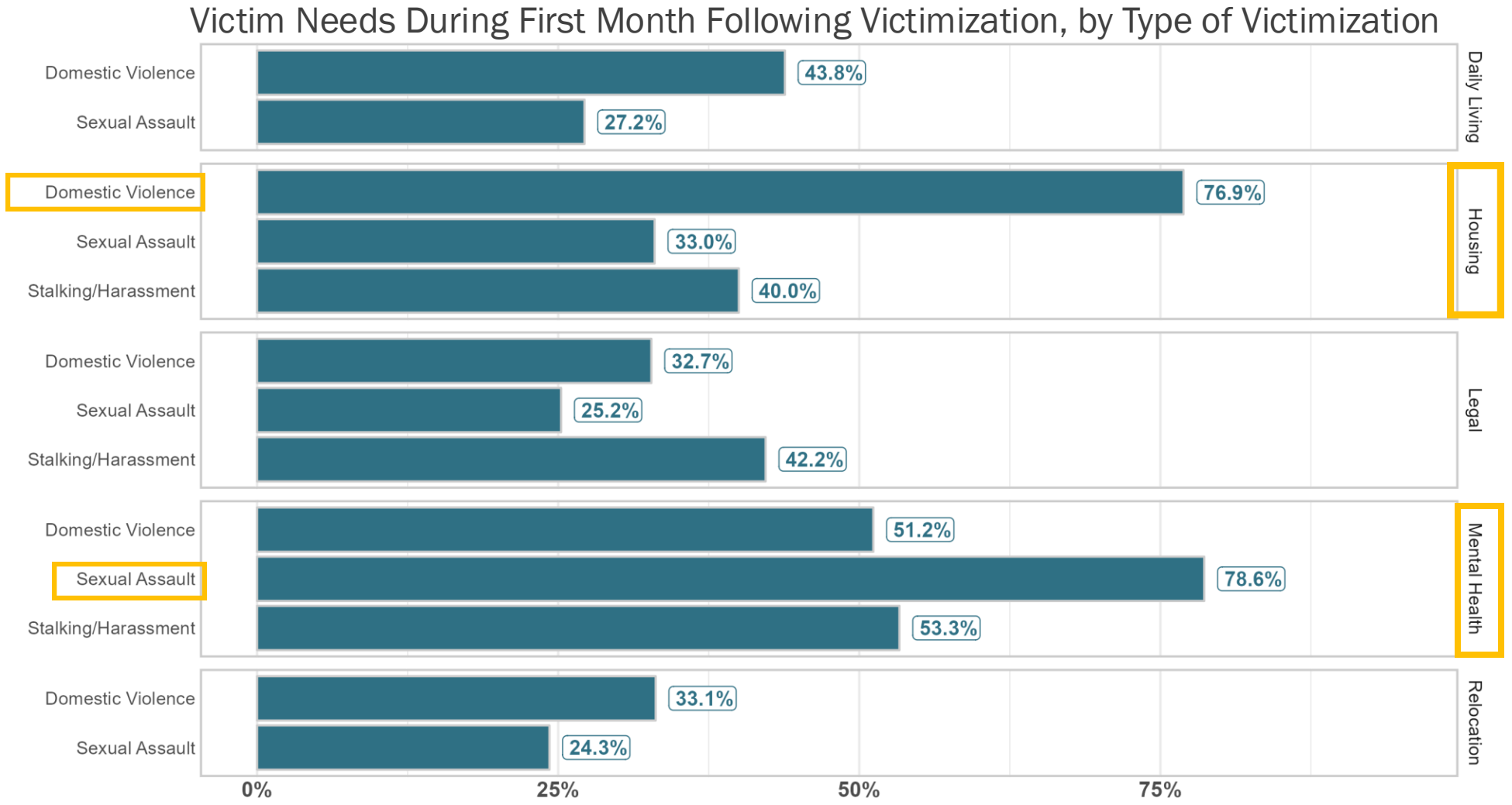
"It was very hard to leave the situation and that they had unstable housing for a while before getting somewhere stable with assistance from multiple agencies. The person causing harm continues to cause harm even after physical removal from the domestic violence situation."

"Why is he allowed to live 7 houses down from me? I have had to change my life patterns to avoid him in my neighborhood."

"I'm still in temporary housing and have almost nothing."

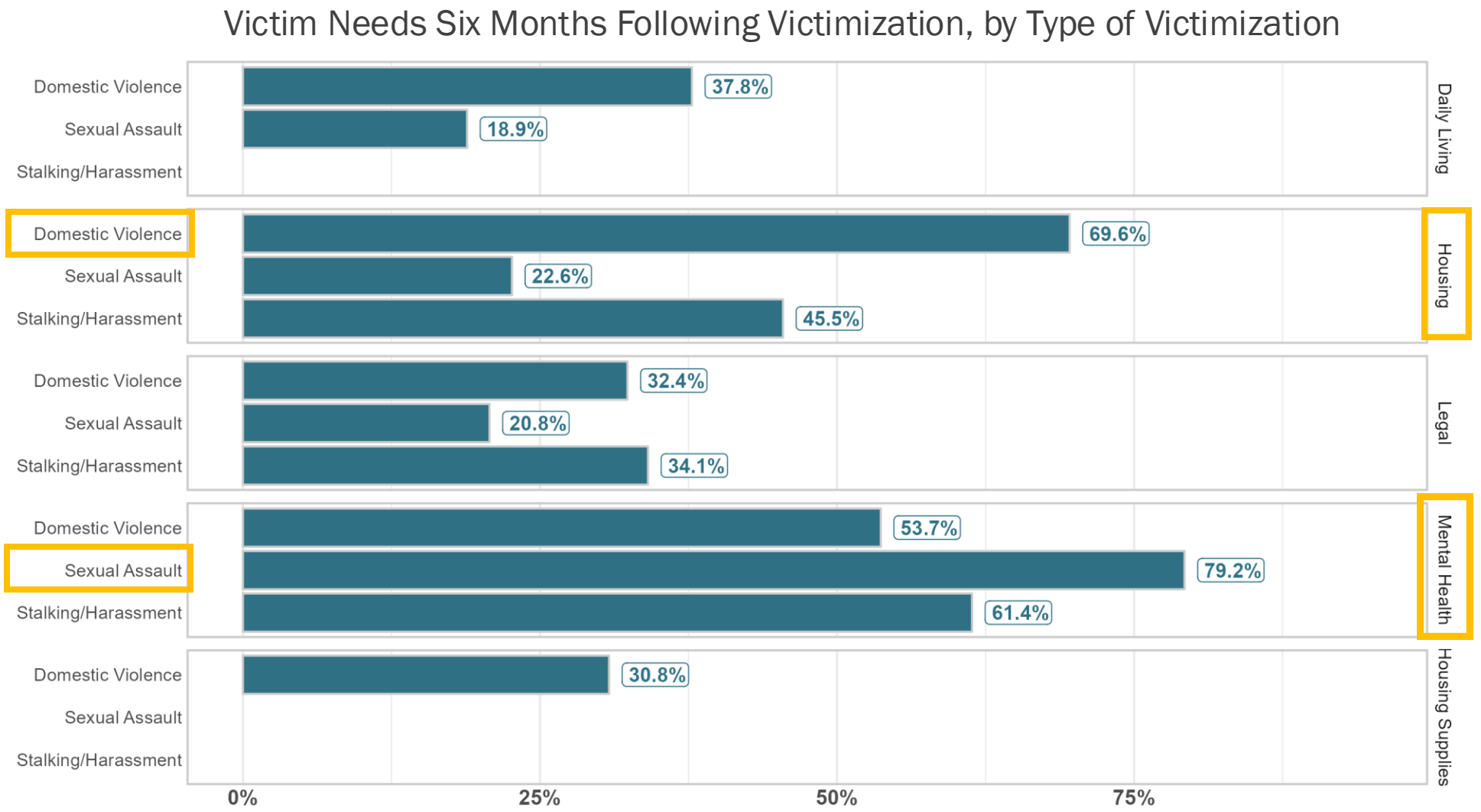
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

The top needs *during the first month* following victimization varied based on the type of victimization.



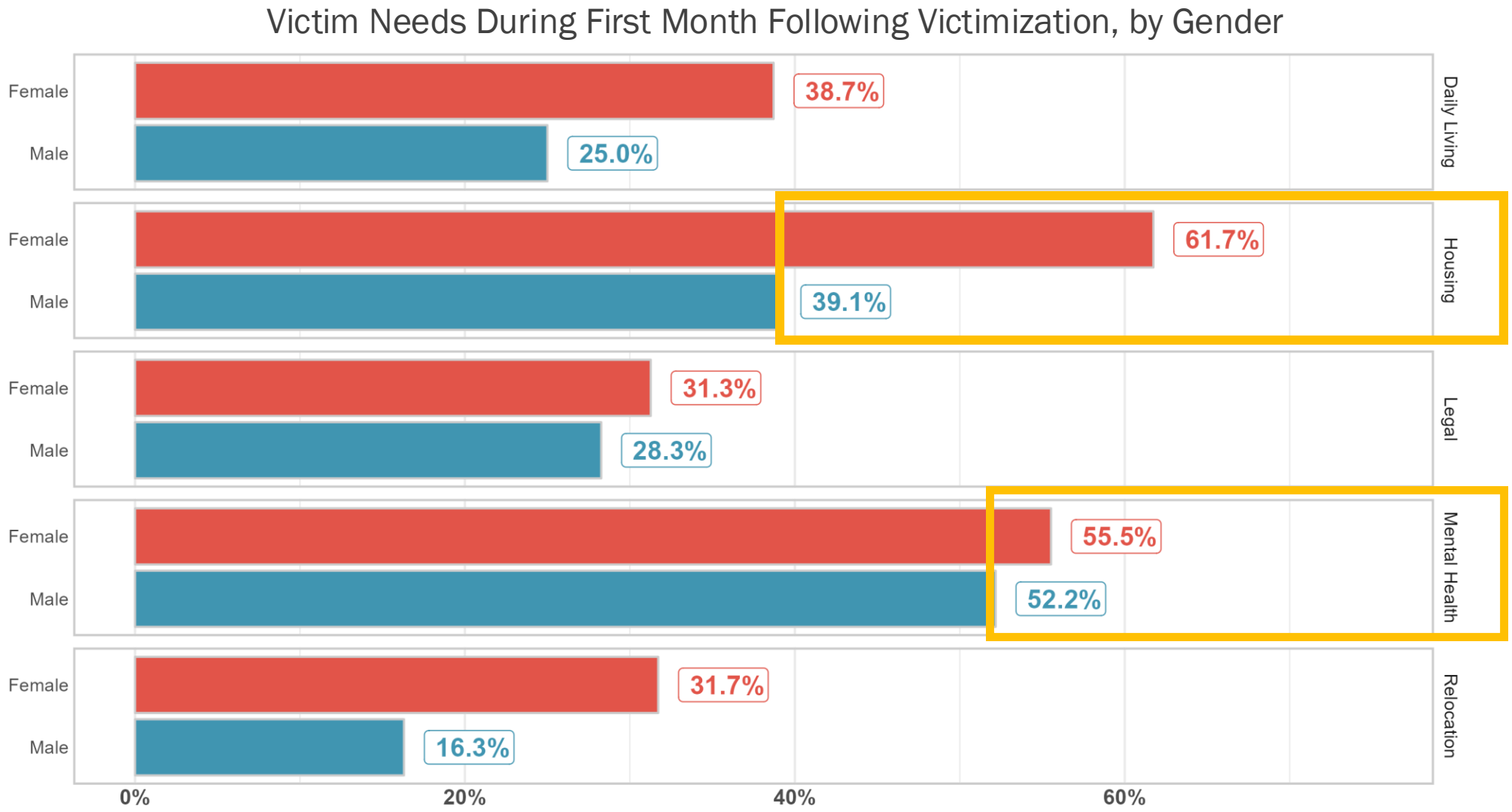
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Top needs, based on type of victimization, remained housing and mental health *six months after victimization*.



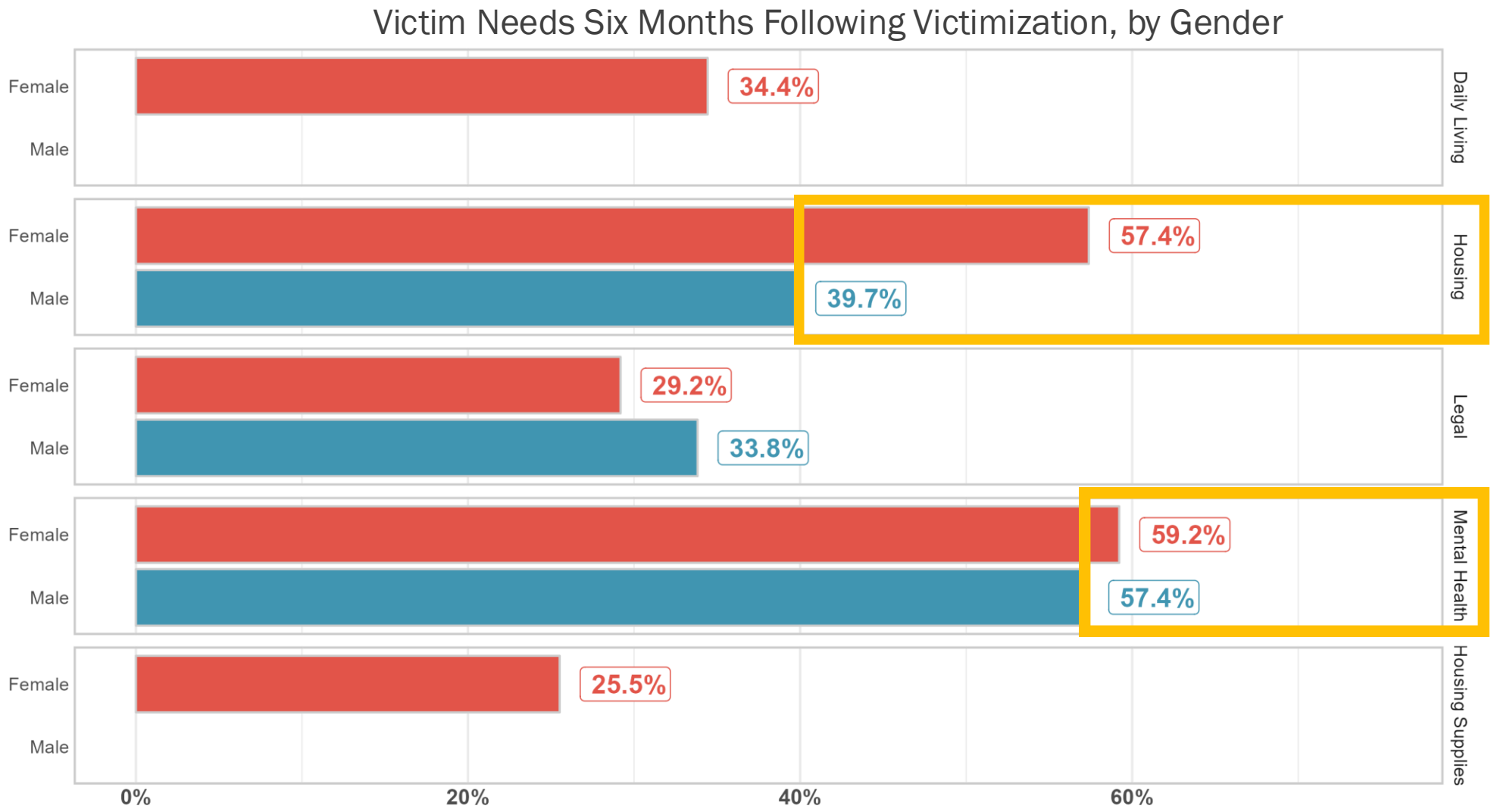
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

The top needs among men and women *during the first month* following victimization were housing and mental health.



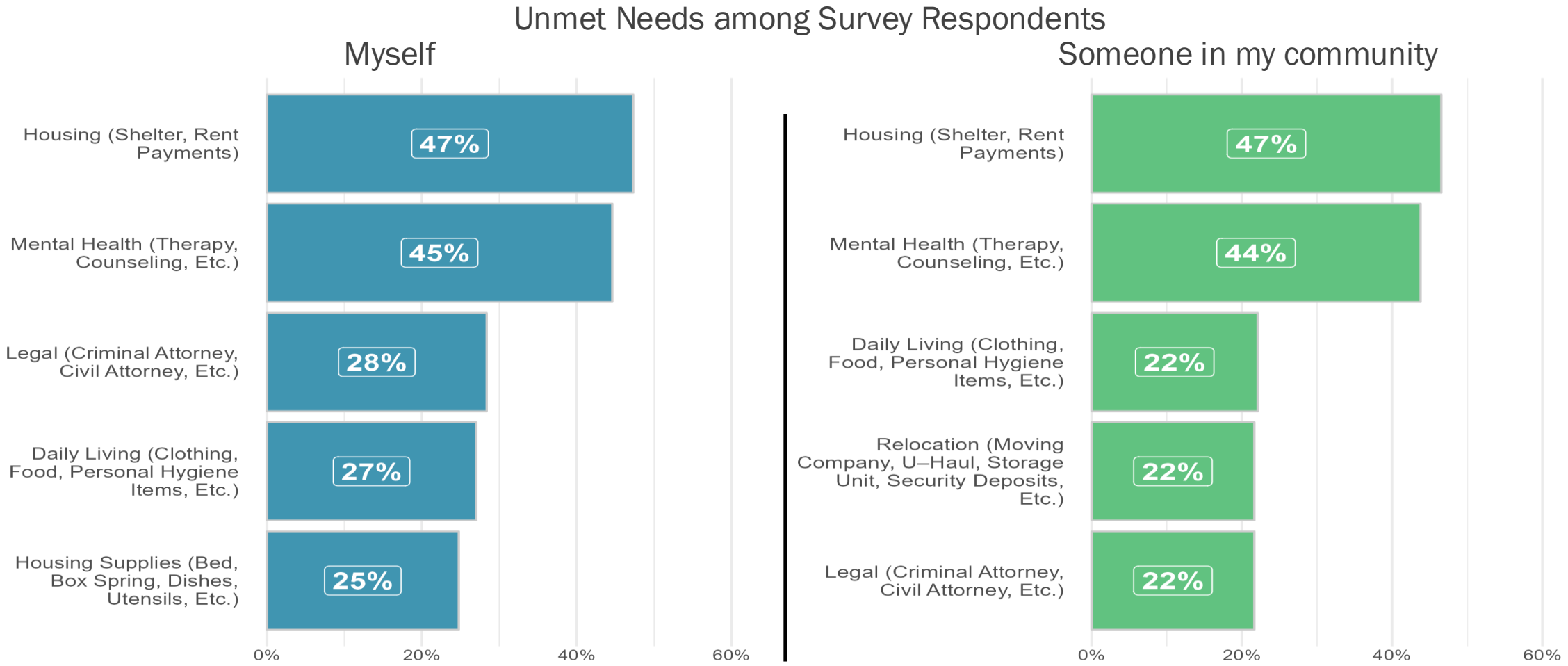
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Six months following victimization, housing and mental health remained the top needs for male and female respondents.



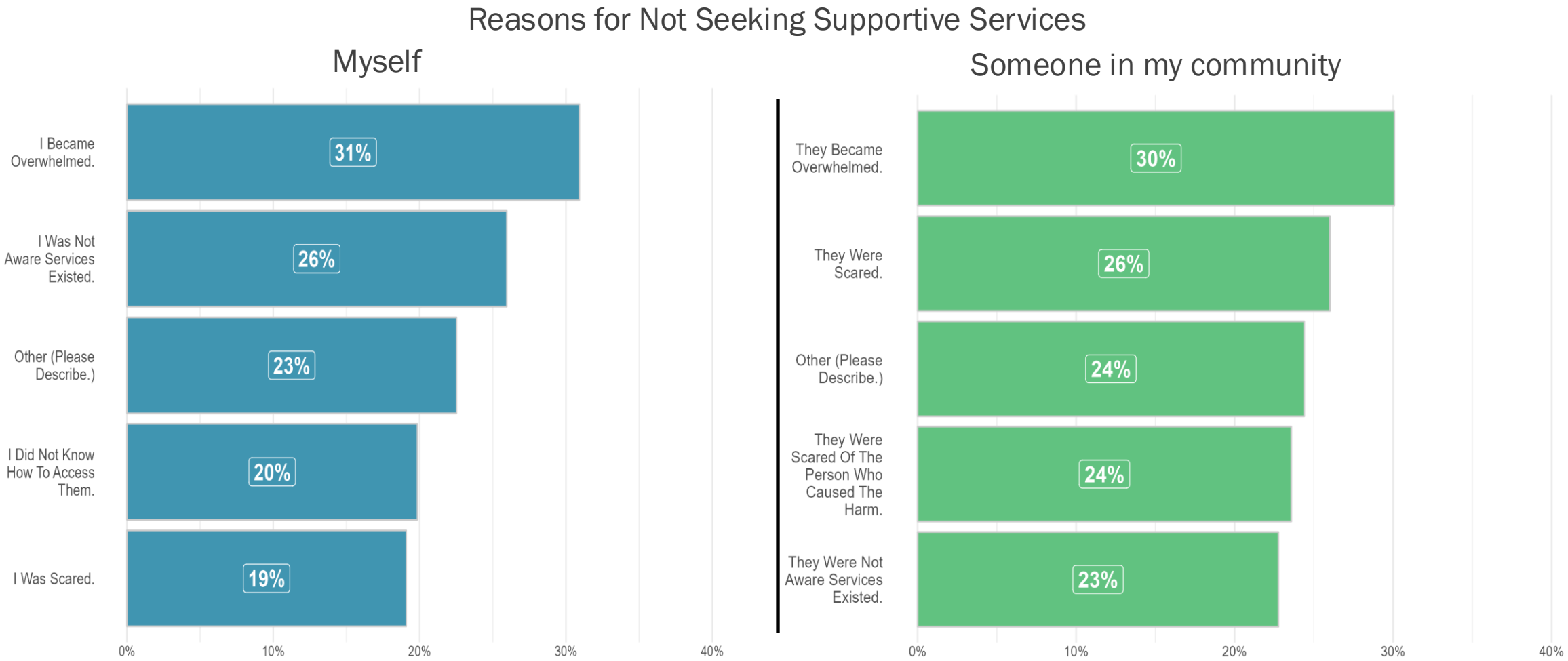
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Housing and mental health support were among the top *unmet* needs in both survey groups.



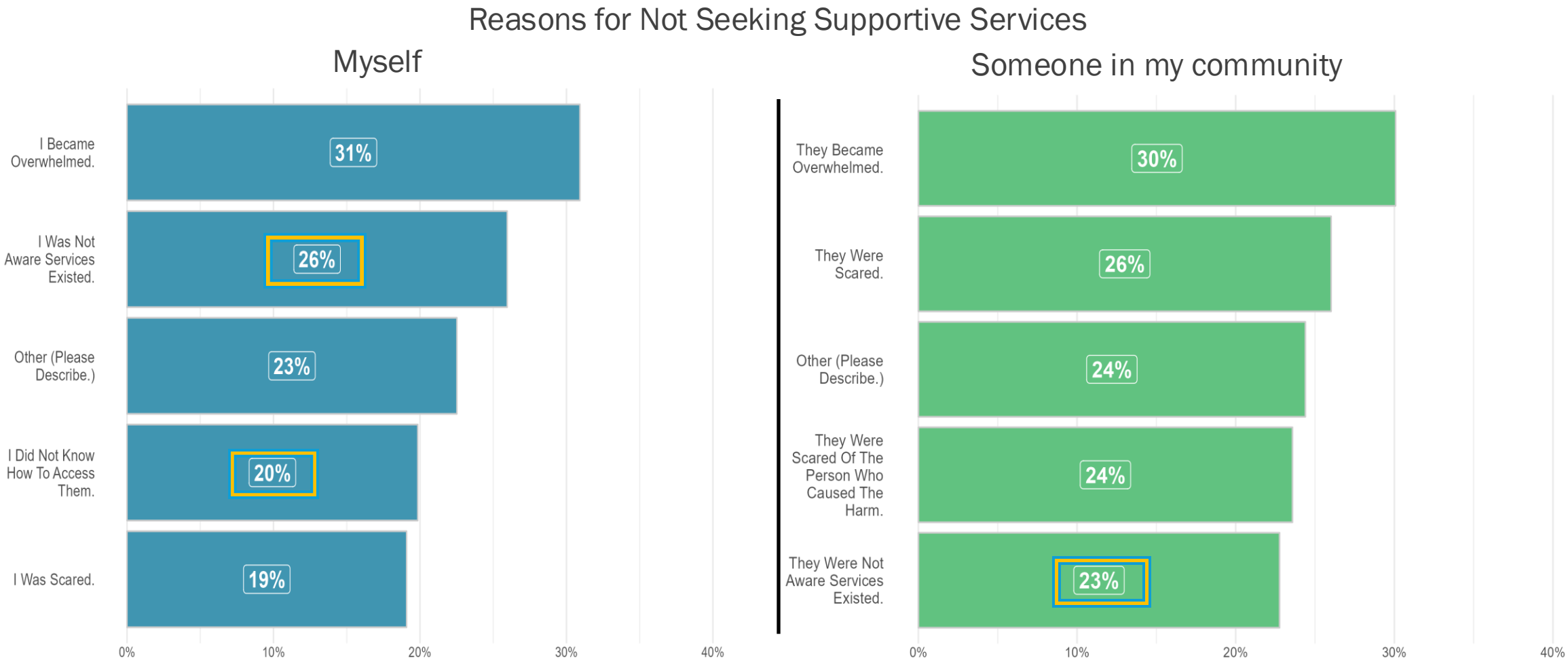
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

The most common reported reason for not seeking supportive services was a feeling of being overwhelmed and scared.



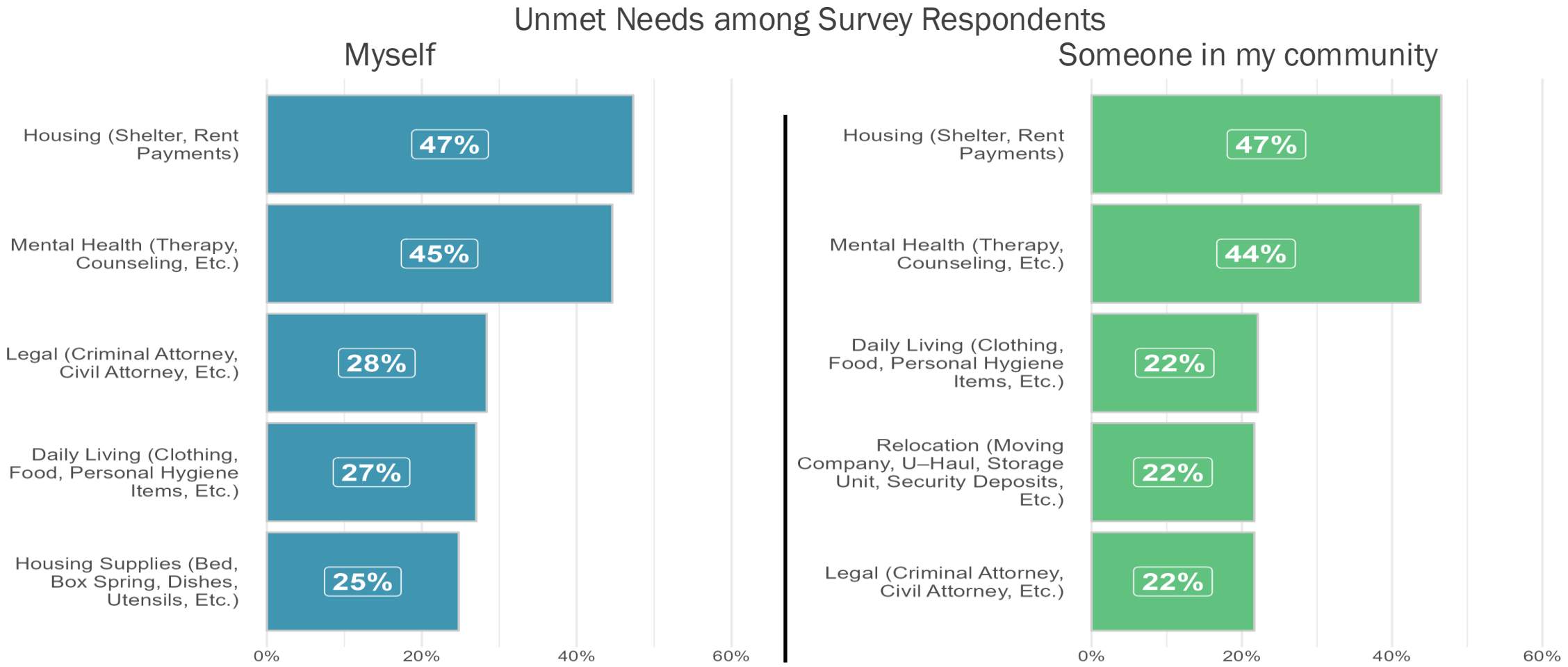
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Forty-six percent of victims who responded for themselves were unaware of or did not know how to access services.



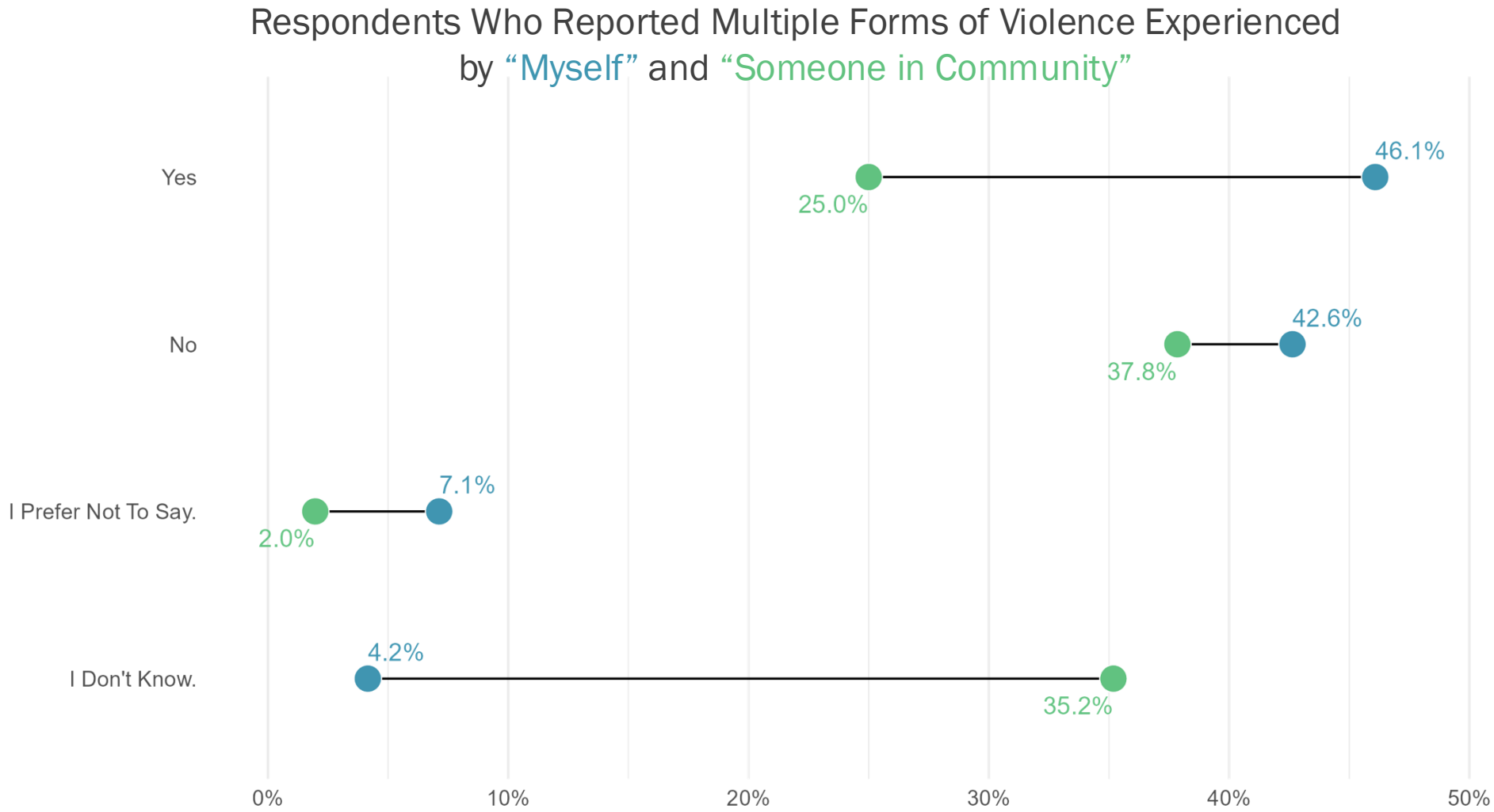
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Housing and mental health support were among the top *unmet* needs in both survey groups.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Forty-six percent of primary victims reported experiencing multiple forms of violence compared to 25 percent of secondary victims.



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Eighty-six percent of victims who reported multiple instances of victimization knew who harmed them.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Victim Impact Survey Takeaways (Housing)

- Victims and survivors reported that there was no immediate housing support following their harm.
- Victims and survivors used domestic violence shelters as they navigated leaving harmful settings.
- There were some victims and survivors who fear the shelter system and often find the process to enter the shelter traumatizing.
- Often, victims and survivors bear the brunt of continued harm because they lack available and affordable housing.
- Victims and survivors appreciated the support received from domestic violence shelters and credit the actions of the shelter/staff with their continued safety.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023

Victim Impact Survey Takeaways (Mental Health)

- Victims and survivors reported limited mental health counselors and resources.
- Victims and survivors in rural communities face additional challenges finding available mental health counselors to support their needs.
- Victims and survivors reported insurance, or lack thereof, inhibited their access to mental health counselors.
- Victims and survivors reported that the process of applying for reimbursement was traumatic; the questions were invasive and made people feel guilty.
- For those victims and survivors who received mental health support, their counselors are credited with helping them heal.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, September 2023.

Victim Impact Survey Takeaways

- OVS has funded victim service programs throughout the state of New York and specifically in areas where crime is occurring most.
- Those with a disability often faced an additional barrier in accessing and receiving services.
- Respondents primarily reported crime to “family and friends” as opposed to formalized service providers and/or law enforcement.
- Domestic violence was the most reported form of harm or violence experienced followed by sexual assault.
- Crime victims noted “feeling unsafe” and “mental health challenges” as the top impacts of victimization.
- Almost half of victims were unaware of or did not know how to access services.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

Victim Impact Survey Takeaways

- Proportionately, male-identified respondents reported to law enforcement more than female-identified respondents.
- Twenty-six percent of survey respondents self-identified as Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino.
- Housing and mental health were identified as top needs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or type of victimization both at one and six months after the victimization.
- Housing was a primary need for African-American/Black and Hispanic/Latino respondents, while Multiracial and White respondents noted the need for mental health services.
- For respondents experiencing domestic violence, housing was a primary need; following a sexual assault, mental health was a primary need.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

NYVOCNA Project Overview

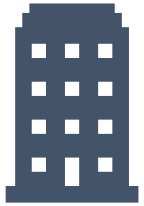
1. Project Background and Data Analysis
2. Results from Victim Impact Survey
3. **Results from the Victim Provider Questionnaire**
4. Focus Group Discussions and Interviews
5. Recommendations

The victim provider questionnaire had some limitations that should be considered.

- The results are limited to the providers who chose to respond to the questionnaire.
- This group of respondents does not represent the experiences of all victim service providers in New York State.
- We requested that providers from the same organization share their experiences (such as executive directors, advocates, volunteers) to better understand the various individuals who support victims of crime.
- Although the questionnaire was disseminated to various agencies, organizations, and stakeholders, we cannot conclusively say whether certain organizations/programs/providers were left out from completing it.
- Respondents were not required to fill out every single question; they could skip questions or end the questionnaire at any time.

The questionnaire was designed to gain insights into provider and victim needs through three sections.

About You: Questions about position, length of time in position, and familiarity with OVS



About Your Organization: Questions about type of organization, region, and solicitation of feedback

Provision of Services: Questions about services provided to victims, support/referral, needs and barriers

Providers were asked to share details about their organization as well as what they have identified as the direct and indirect needs of victims.

Victim Provider Questionnaire

869 participants shared their insights on their roles and organizations.

- 33 percent of providers have been in their role between 1 and 3 years, and 26 percent have been in their role more than 6 years.
- 47 percent of providers shared that they have been working in victim services for more than 6 years.
- 44 percent of questionnaire respondents felt that they were extremely familiar with OVS.
- 77 percent of providers work at or support nonprofit organizations.
- 53 percent of providers shared that their primary geographic region was urban; those primary regions were Bronx, Kings (Brooklyn), New York (Manhattan), Queens, and Richmond Counties.

Office of Victim Services | Justice Center, The Council of State Governments

New York Victim Provider Questionnaire

The State of New York is launching a victim provider questionnaire aimed at victim assistance, service providers, and criminal justice stakeholders to learn about their experience and how to better support victims and survivors who have witnessed or experienced harm or violence.

We are hoping to use the information gained to better identify how victim services may be improved across the state.

Thank you for your participation.

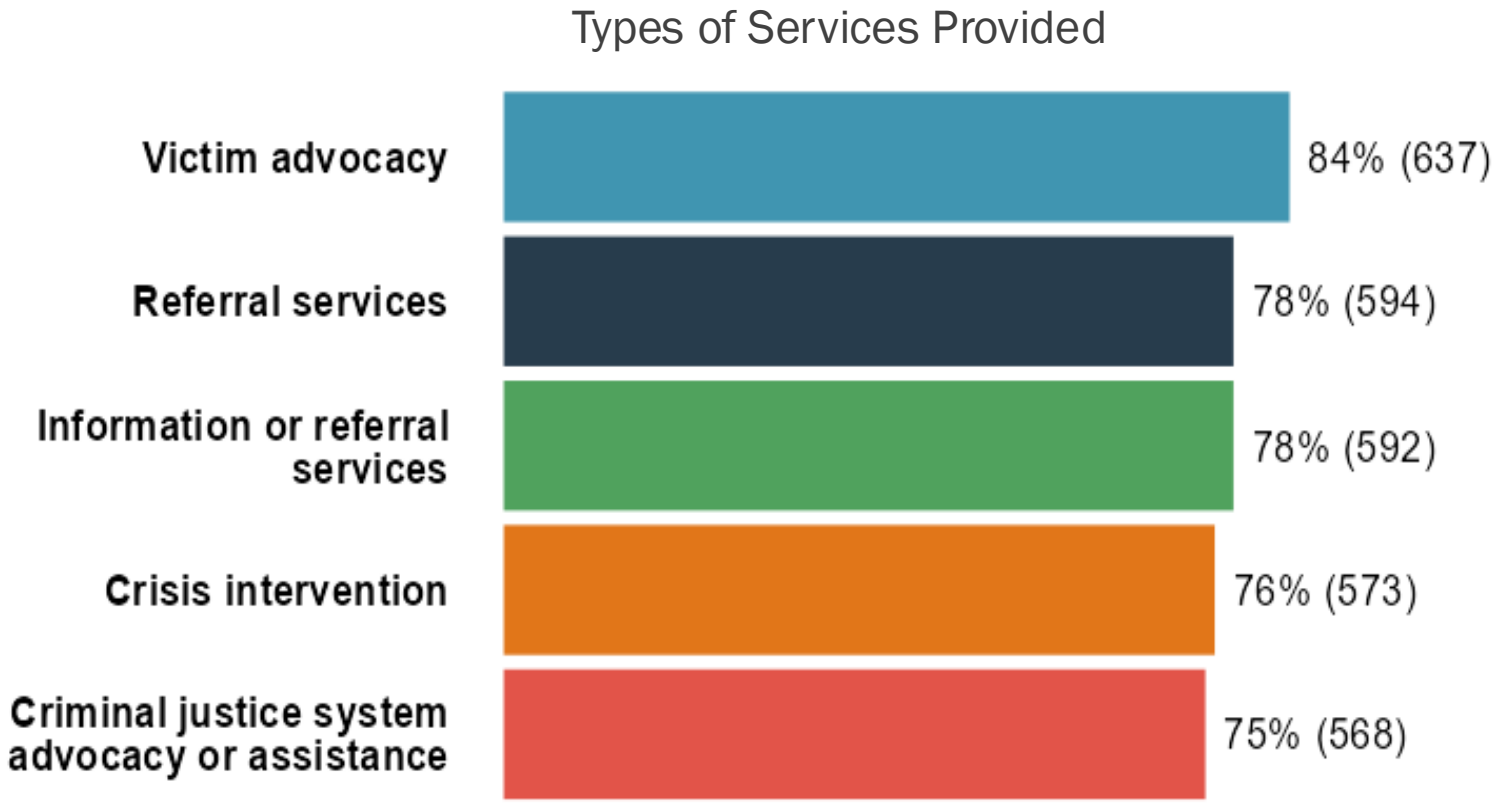
If you have additional questions, contact:
ovsoutreach@ovs.ny.gov

Scan the code to access the questionnaire:

Or visit:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSYRXTT

The questionnaire is being distributed by The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS).

Victim service providers shared the type of services they provide, or their organization provides, for victims.



Other forms of services include:

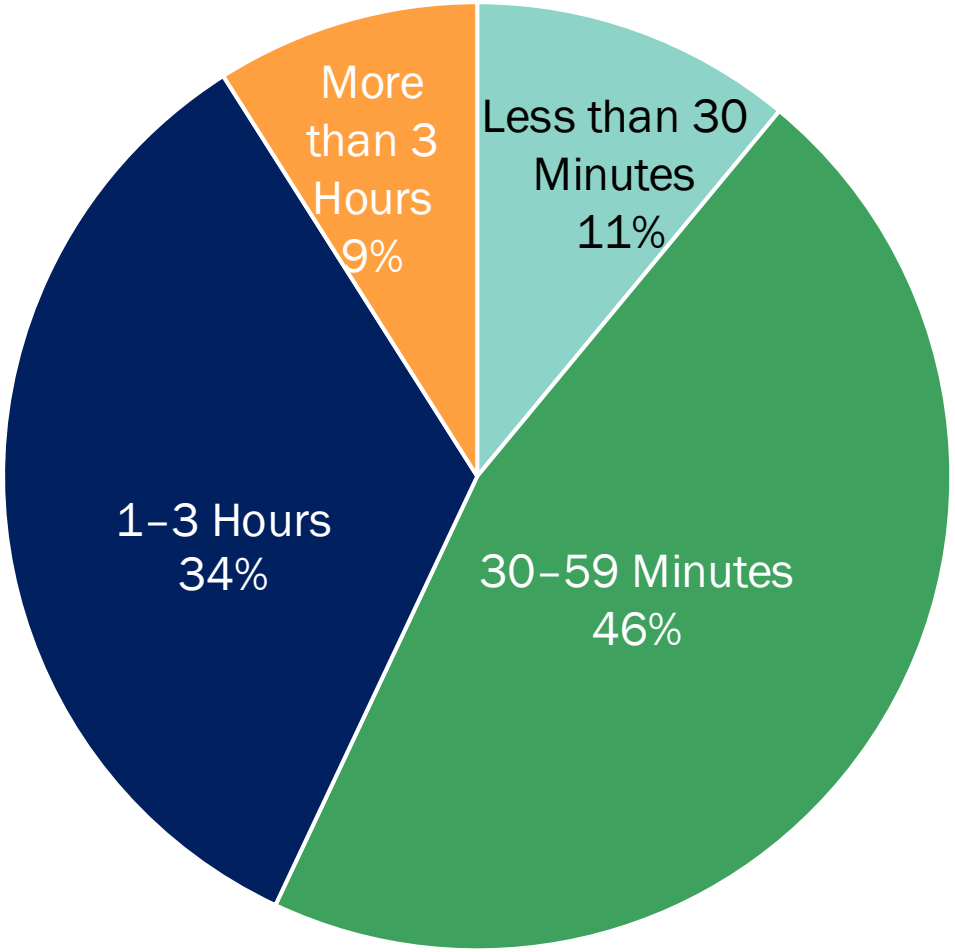
- ✓ Victim compensation assistance
- ✓ Emergency financial assistance
- ✓ Hotline, helpline, chat services
- ✓ Legal advocacy
- ✓ Emergency services
- ✓ Employment assistance
- ✓ Notice of court or criminal justice
- ✓ Shelter or housing services
- ✓ Transportation

This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 758 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 1), "Skip question" (n = 18), and blanks (n = 92).

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024

On average, victim service providers spend about 30–59 minutes per week with each victim/survivor.

Average Amount of Time Providers Spend Supporting Victims Weekly



Provider Voices:

"There are weeks when I am overwhelmed with the number of victims needing assistance and other weeks when the load is significantly less. Because of this, I don't always feel like I am able to provide adequate assistance to every victim."

Out of 592 Responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say " (n=13), "Skip question (n=95)," and blanks (n=169).

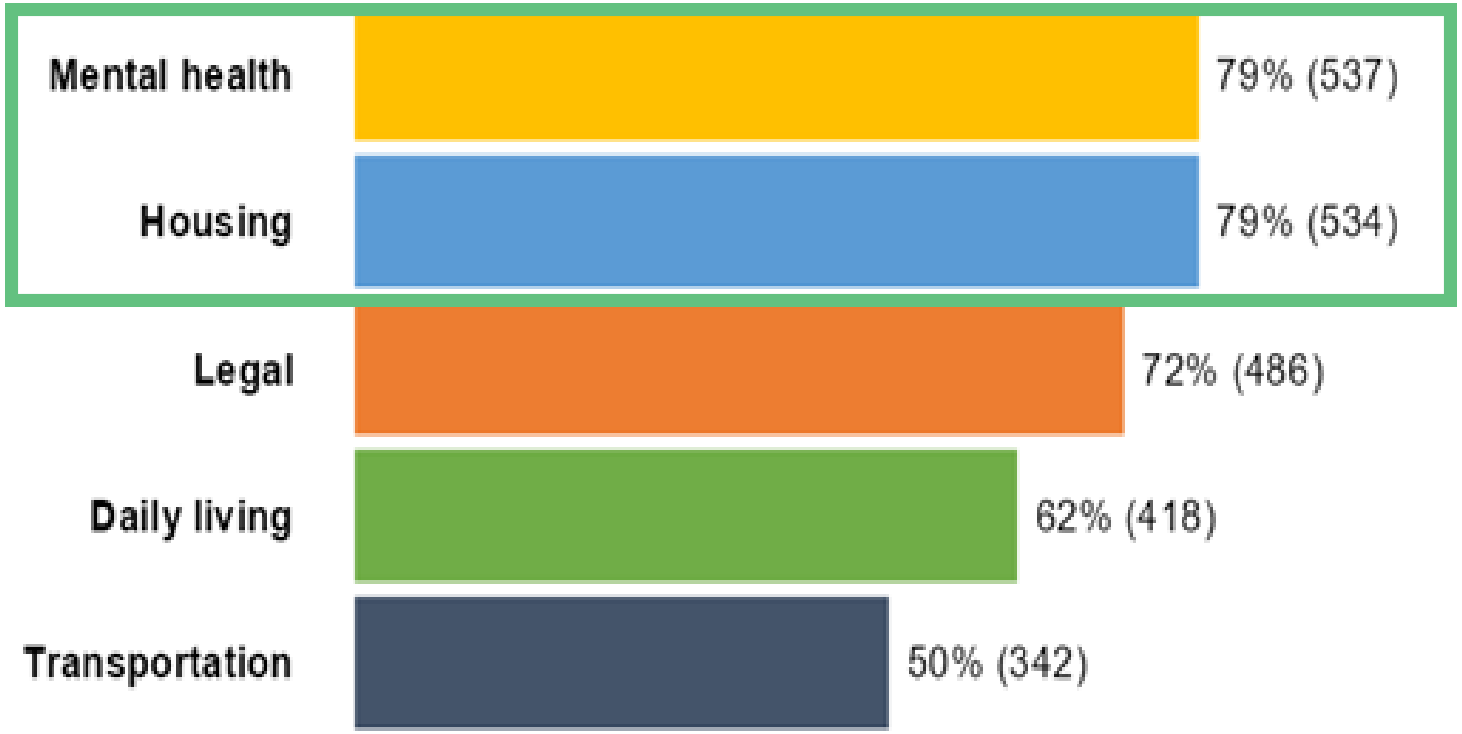
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, January 2024.

Providers shared that *one month* following victimization, mental health and housing support were among the top five needs they identified among victims/survivors.

Provider Voices:

"We really need more funding for mental health counselors, even administrators that have a mental health component background is a plus since many of these clients that arrive at the family justice center are in an imminent need of counseling and they don't qualify for insurance and those who do, the wait list is extremely long."

Provider-Identified Victim Needs *One Month* Following Victimization



This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 679 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 3), "Skip question" (n = 66), and blanks (n = 121).

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Provider Voices: Quotes Related to Mental Health

- "Referral services for ongoing mental health are often quite delayed due to other agencies/private practitioners schedules being overloaded already. Also, there are NO Spanish speaking therapists in our community."

- "I serve in a dual role as a preventionist and a therapist. My primary role is in prevention, and I often do not have the capacity to provide enough therapy services considering the high demand for these services from our client base."

- "We are desperate for funding for additional advocacy positions and mental health therapists."

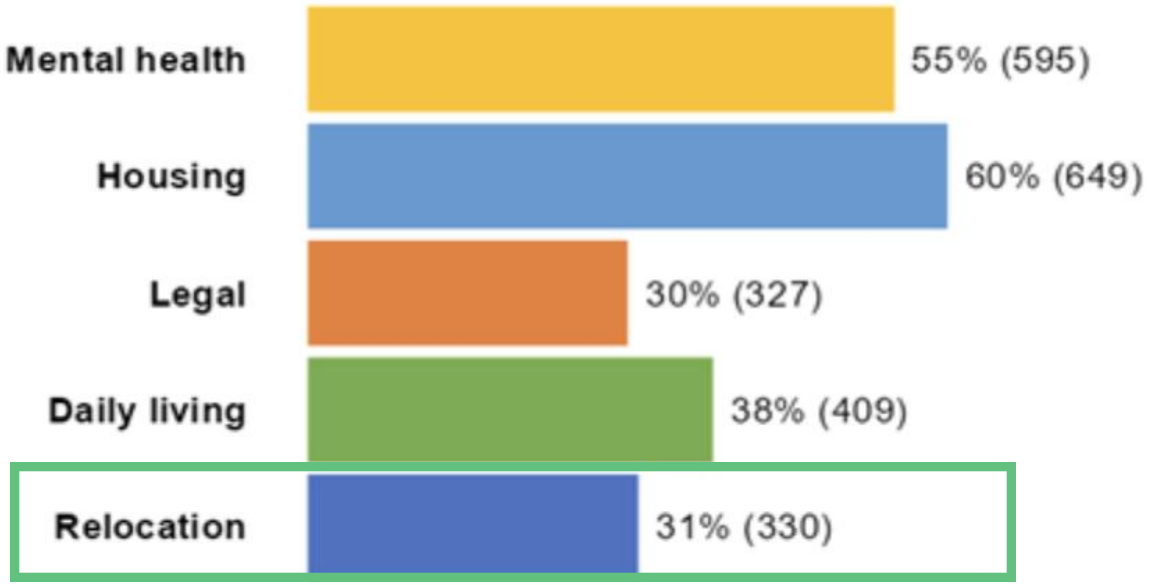
- "As a therapist, I must necessarily spend an adequate amount of time in session with each survivor to meet their mental health needs, however when it comes to case management and advocacy, the time is almost never enough."

- "Funding for agency trauma-informed counselor to meet immediate mental health needs, as outside mental health waiting list is very long."

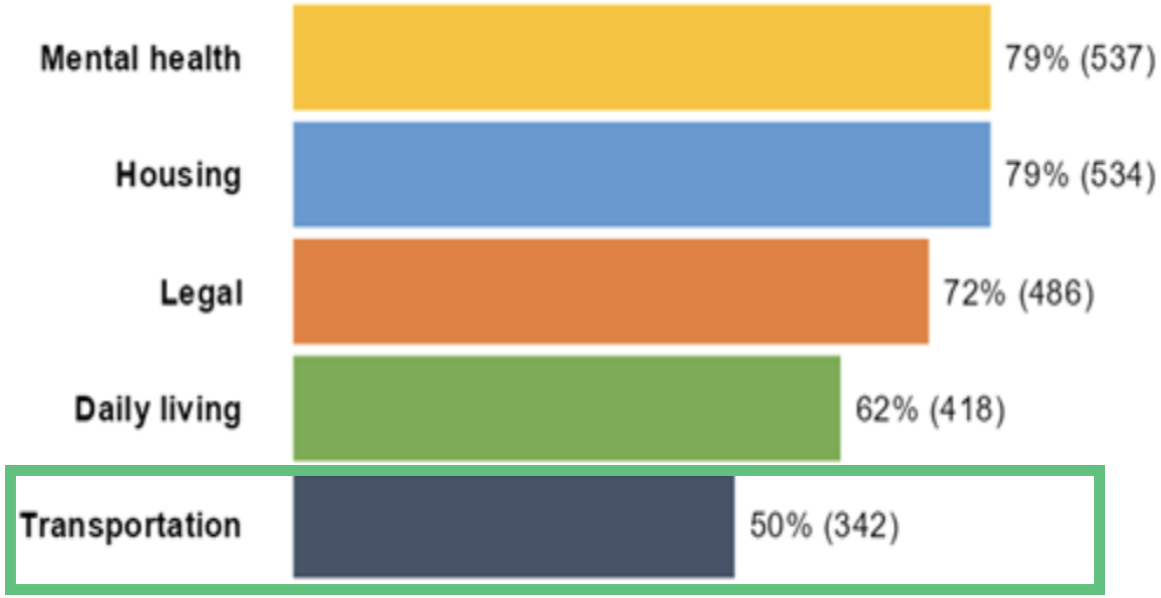
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Victims and providers shared similar identified needs *one month* following victimization but differed on relocation and transportation.

Victim Impact Survey – *One Month* Results



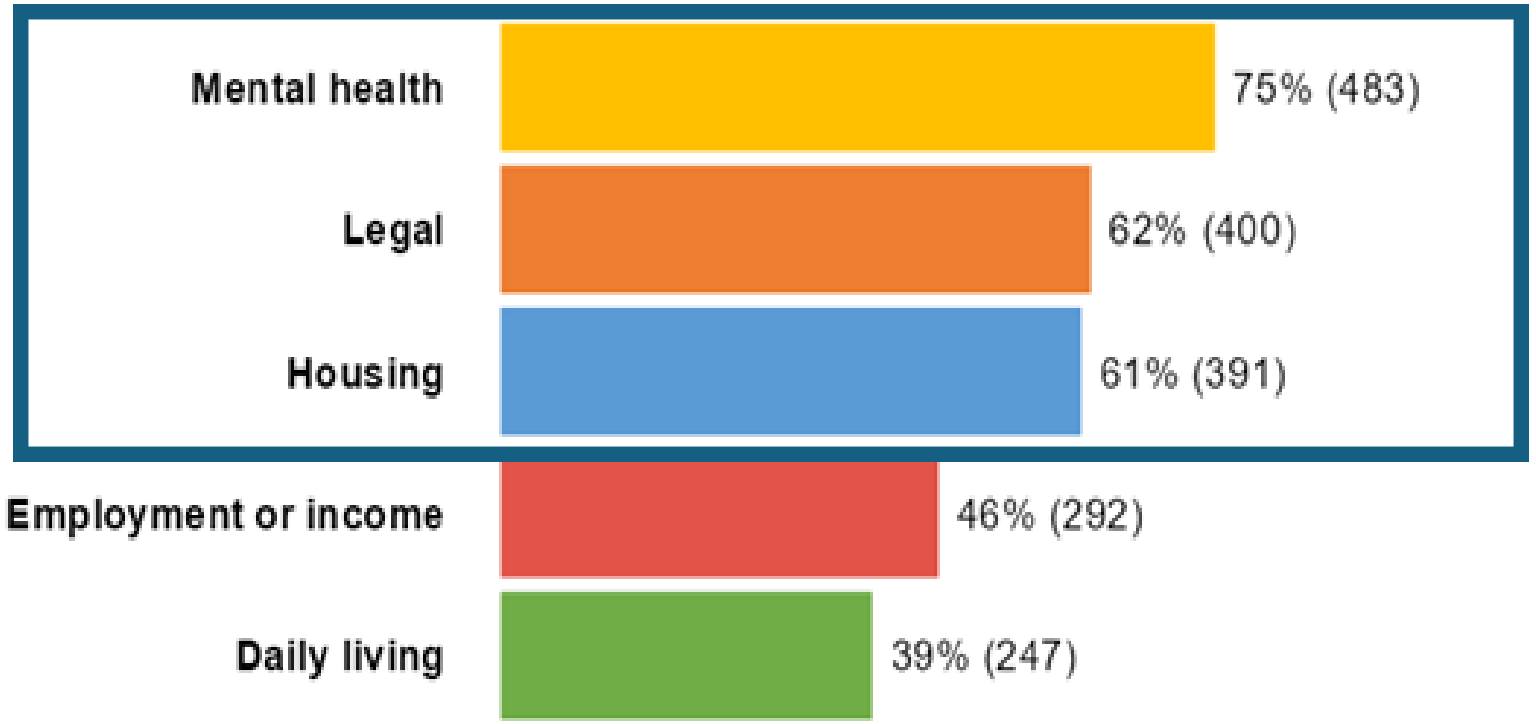
Victim Provider Questionnaire – *One Month* Results



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, February 2024.
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024

According to the providers who participated in the questionnaire, in the *six months* following victimization, mental health, legal, and housing support were among the top needs.

Provider Identified Victim Needs *Six Months* Following Victimization



This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 640 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 5), "Skip question" (n = 103), and blanks (n = 121).

Provider Voices:

"I feel the one area my organization struggles in is getting assistance for survivors with mental health issues. It is outside of our jurisdiction, but our clients are often victims of DV/SV and have other mental health concerns, which we are unable to address."

"We are desperate for funding for additional advocacy positions and mental health therapists."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Provider Voices: Quotes Related to Housing

- “Domestic violence survivors need to be able to access resources to relocate and rebuild their lives quickly, without a lot of hoops to jump through. The DSS budget does not go very far in providing for the housing and personal care needs a family will realistically have. Survivors need to be able to access funds quickly and without a lot of administrative oversight to move to safer situations.”

- “Our clients have many unmet needs and often have many difficulties with needs not being met (mental health, housing, poverty, childcare, dysregulation, etc.).”

- “I wish we had a shelter to provide housing.”

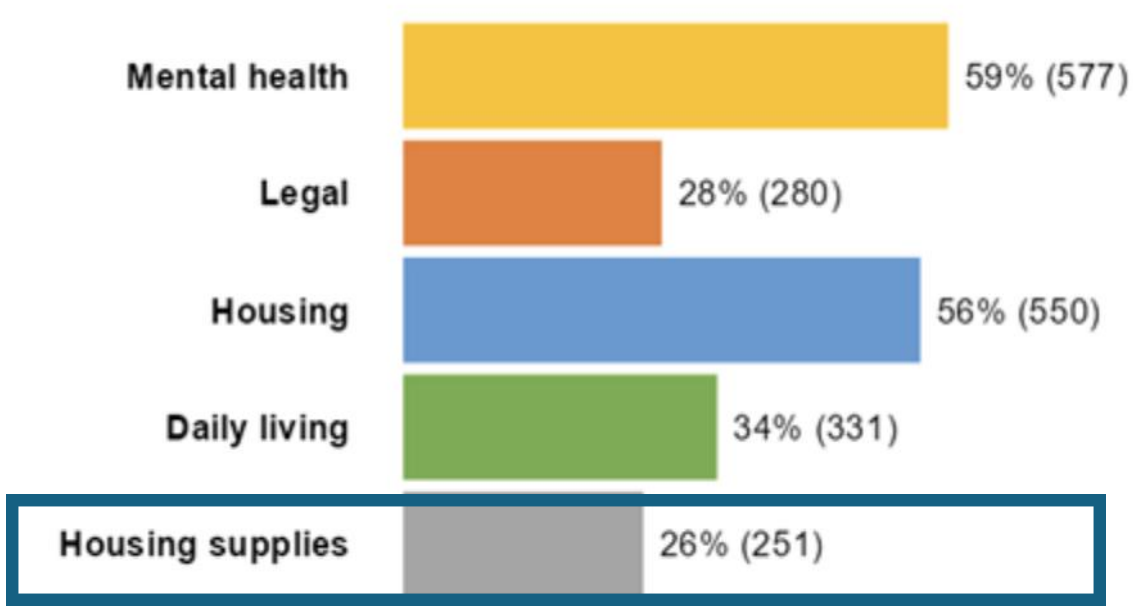
- “Our biggest hurdles tend to be access to safe and affordable housing, lack of money to hire private assistance for serving court documents, and restrictions on what benefits are available to immigrants.”

- “Even though our agency does the best we can to meet survivors where they are at and address the needs that they feel are most pressing, resources in our area, such as available low-income housing, are often scarce or unavailable.”

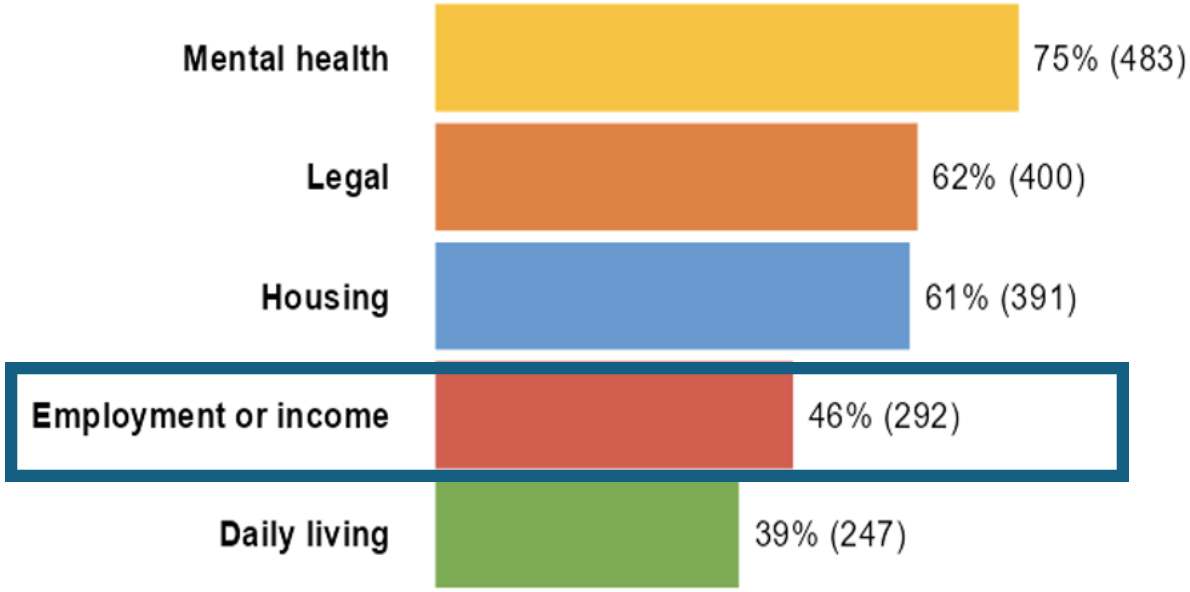
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Victims and providers shared that the top needs six months following victimization are mental health and housing, but they differed on housing supplies and employment.

Victim Impact Survey – *Six Months* Results



Victim Provider Questionnaire – *Six Months* Results



CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, February 2024.
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Providers shared that the victims they generally serve are those who have directly suffered victimization and often more than once.

95%

victims/survivors were primary victims.

Based on 746 total responses.
123 people did not select a response for this question.

79%

victims/survivors experienced victimization more than once.

Based on 739 total responses.
130 people did not select a response for this question.

In comparison to the victim impact survey, where 51 percent of respondents shared insights as "someone in my community" (secondhand victimization) compared to 49 percent who shared for "myself" (firsthand)

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, January 2024
CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Impact Survey, May 2023.

In instances where a victim could not be supported by a particular service, 72 percent of providers referred them to other organizations.

Provider Voices:

"I don't think any one organization can meet all the needs of the victims and survivors that we serve. That is why it is important to listen to survivors when they tell us what they need and collaborate with other systems to help provide needed resources and support for as long as needed."

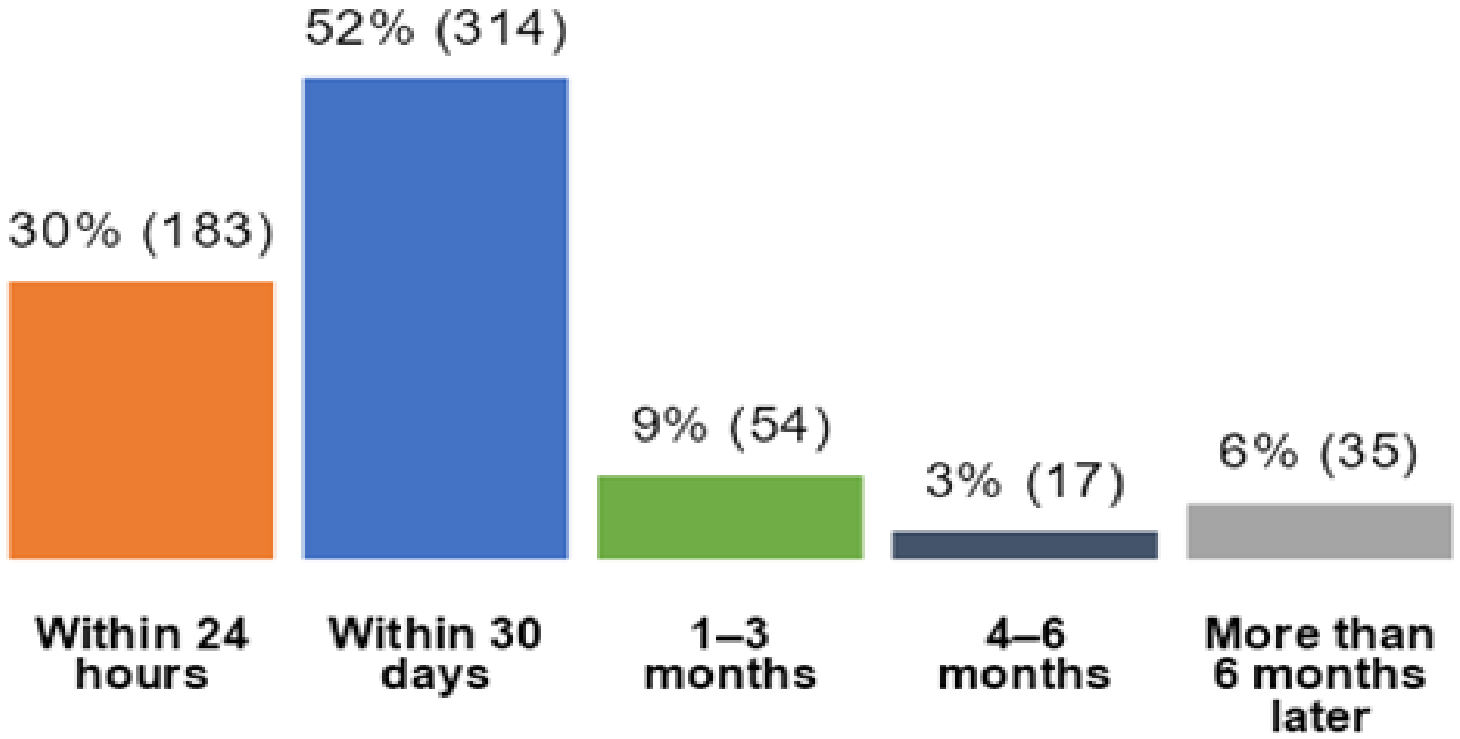
Providers shared that they often refer victims/survivors to:

- ✓ Community health clinics
- ✓ Community-based organizations
- ✓ Counseling services
- ✓ Food banks or pantries
- ✓ Grassroots organizations
- ✓ Legal services
- ✓ Mental health counselors
- ✓ Refugee resettlement
- ✓ Immigrant services
- ✓ Shelters or housing agencies
- ✓ Social services

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024

Providers shared that, on average, victims often sought their support within 30 days following victimization.

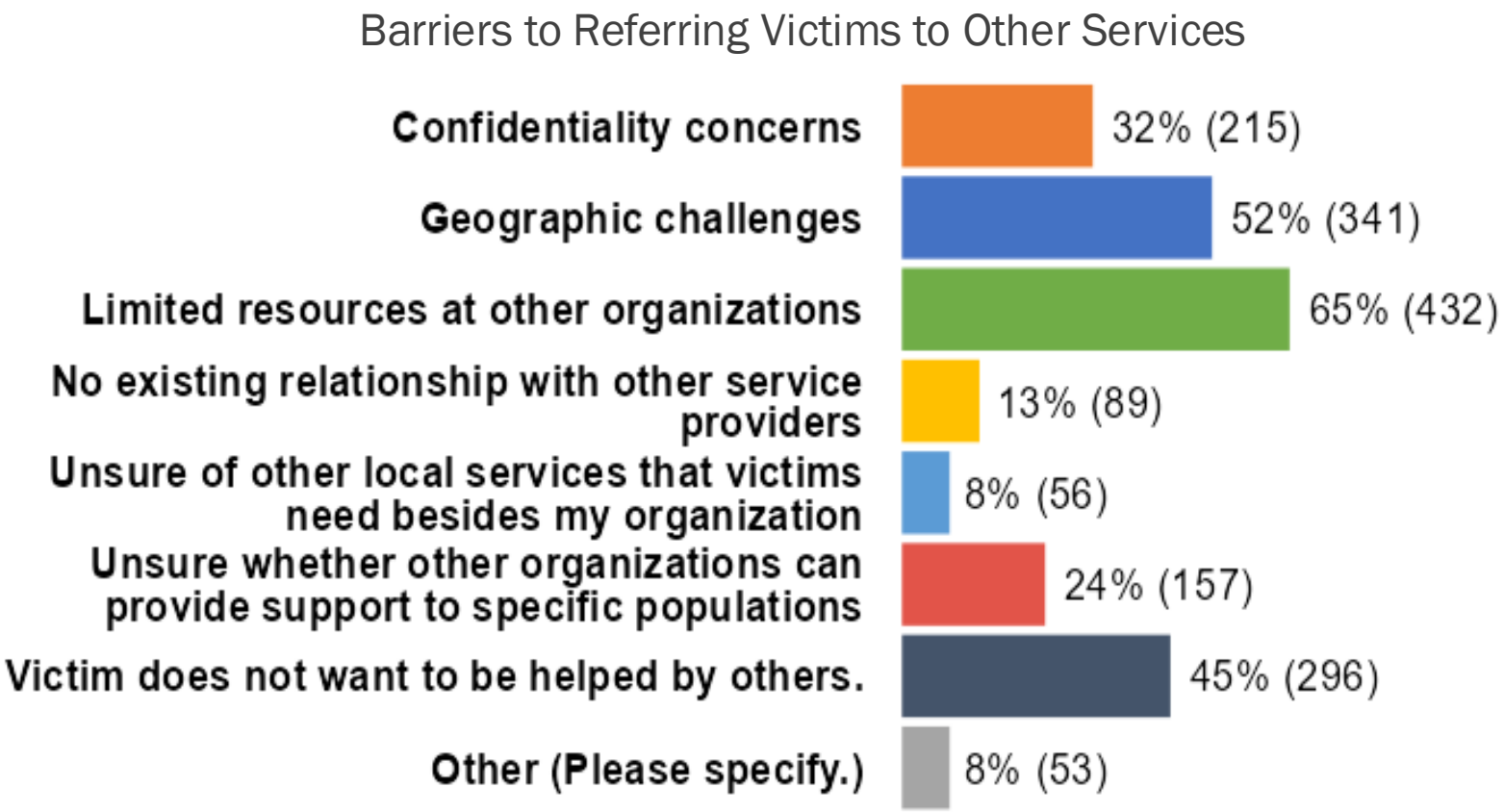
Average Length of Time Following Victimization that Victims Seek Provider/Organizational Support



Percentages are based on 603 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 14), "Skip question" (n = 131), and blanks (n = 121).

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Providers noted barriers that they often encounter when referring victims to other service organizations.



Provider Voices:

"Broome County needs more collaboration between agencies serving Domestic Abuse victims/survivors. There is too much competition, and it impacts the work."

This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Percentages are based on 662 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 1), "Skip question" (n = 64), and blanks (n = 142).

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

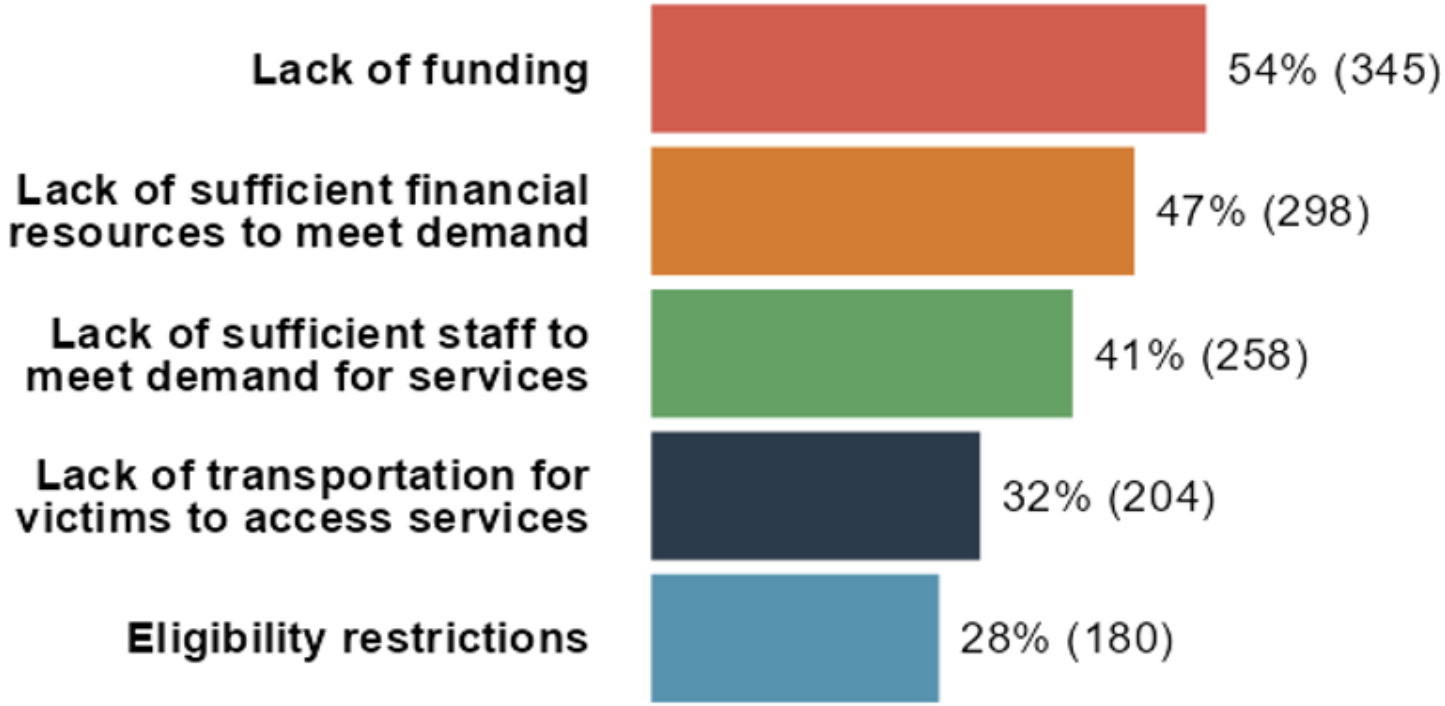
Lack of funding and financial resources is a critical barrier that *providers* face in supporting victims.

Provider Voices:

"The agency is in need of funding to be able to meet the demands of our clients."

"Lack of funding to provide transportation, temporary housing assistance, and more staff is a huge barrier to assisting victims' needs to the highest standard."

Barriers that Providers Face Within Their Own Organization/Capacity

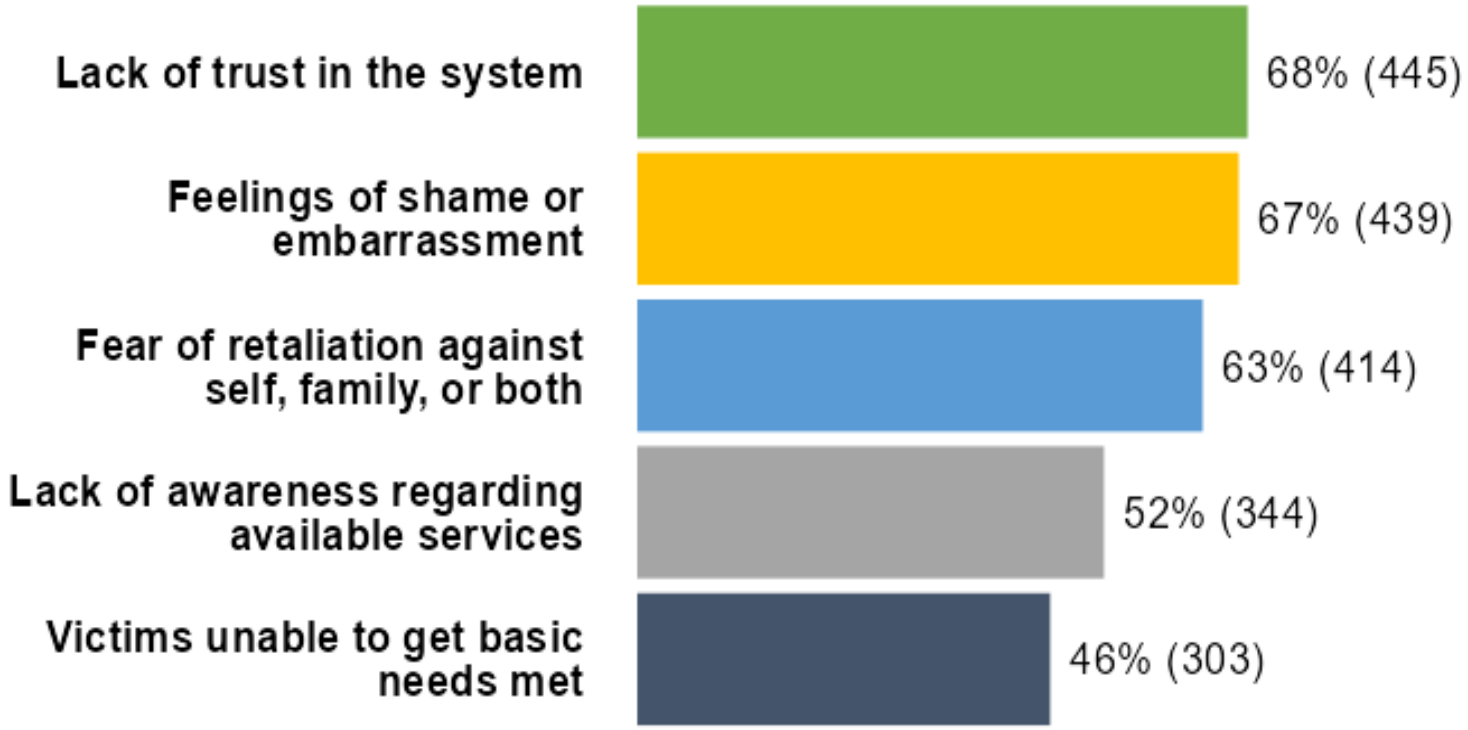


This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 636 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 9), "Skip question" (n = 72), and blanks (n = 152).

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Providers shared that the barriers that *victims* face in seeking services are often lack of trust and feelings of shame and embarrassment.

Identified Barriers that Victims Face *(Provider Lens)*

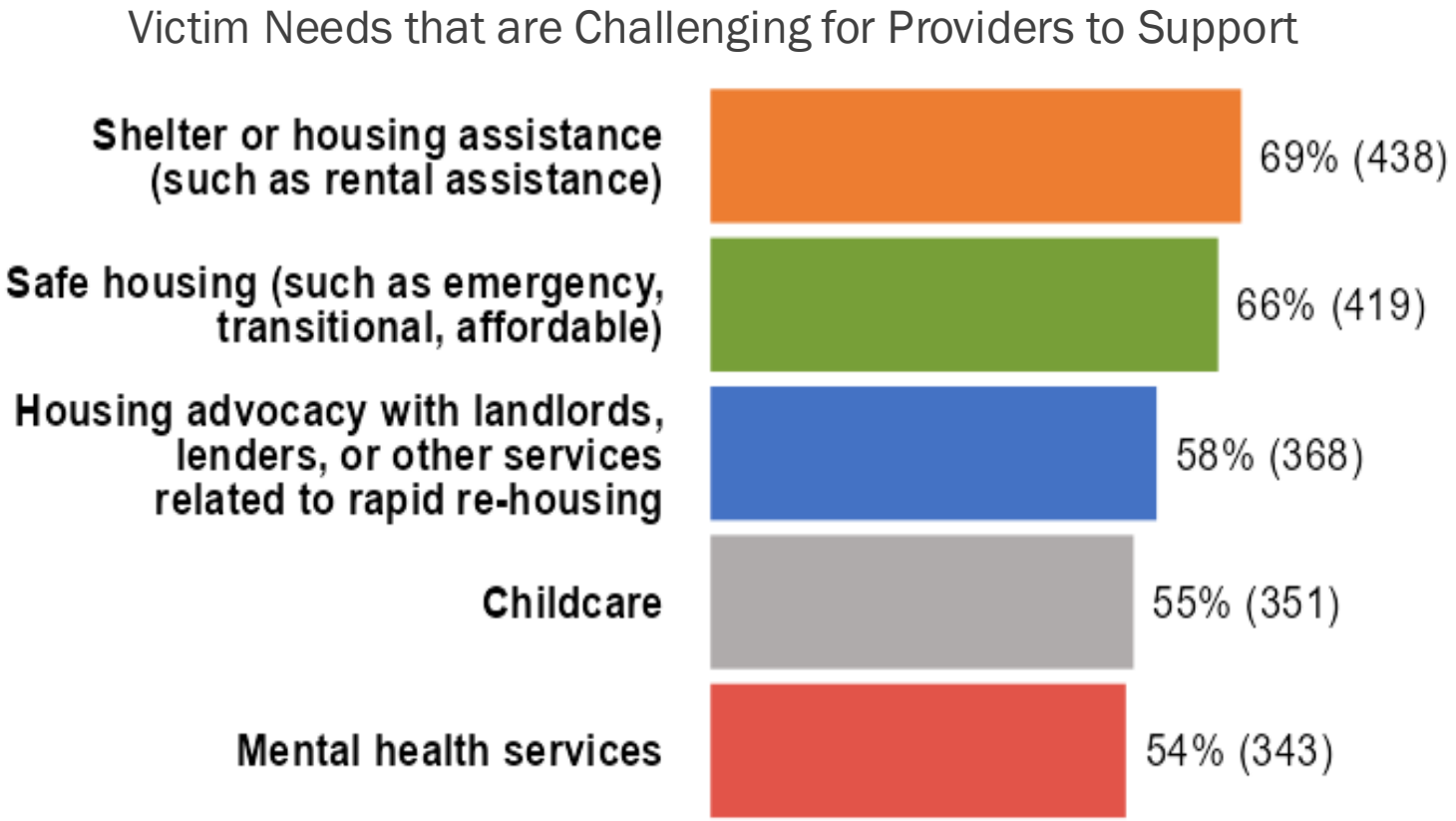


This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization.
Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 658 responses.
Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 6), "Skip question" (n = 47), and blanks (n = 158).

Victim impact survey results indicate a similar theme. Victims shared that they became overwhelmed, were not aware that services existed, were fearful of retaliation from the person that caused harm, or did not know how to access the services available to them.

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Providers noted victim needs that are beyond their capacity to support.



This question allowed people to select all options that applied to them or their organization. Only the 5 most frequently selected responses are shown. Percentages are based on 636 responses. Excludes responses "I prefer not to say" (n = 4), "Skip question" (n = 66), and blanks (n = 163).

Provider Voices:

"Housing crisis prevents victims from escaping abuse."

"Access to housing resources/housing navigators, low-income housing and shelter for single adults is significantly lacking."

"Our clients have many unmet needs and often have many difficulties with needs not being met (mental health, housing, poverty, childcare, dysregulation, etc.)."

CSG Justice Center analysis of the New York State Victim Provider Questionnaire, April 2024.

Victim Provider Questionnaire Takeaways and Themes

- Housing and mental health supports are among the top identified victim needs; providers find meeting those victim needs difficult.
  - Providers shared that safe and affordable housing options are not available in their regions—this includes shelters and DV shelters as well as temporary and transitional housing options.
  - Providers noted that there are a limited number of mental health providers to support victims. If a provider is available, then victims must contend with long wait lists or mental health providers who are not bilingual.

- Providers shared that the legal system is difficult for victims to navigate, and courts can exacerbate harm and harmful behavior.

- Providers shared that the lack of resources can perpetuate additional victimization.

Victim Provider Questionnaire Takeaways and Themes

- Providers supporting victims often do not reflect the community they are attempting to serve, which can hinder the way victims seek support from those organizations.
- Providers shared not feeling as though they had enough time to support victims.
- Providers often support primary victims of crime, most of whom have experienced victimization more than once.
- Providers are willing to refer victims to other organizations if they cannot support them or meet their identified needs.
  - However, providers also shared that other organizations do not have adequate resources to support victims.

Victim Provider Questionnaire Takeaways and Themes

- Providers shared that victims on average seek out support within 30 days of victimization; however, there is often lack of trust and feelings of shame that contribute to victims' delay in requesting support.

- Providers cited lack of funding, funding flexibility, and limited resources within their respective organizations as a reason why some victim needs remain unmet.

- Providers shared that they are often overwhelmed because organizations have limited staff support, and they struggle with staff retention due to limited compensation and vicarious trauma.

NYVOCNA Project Overview

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2. Results from Victim Impact Survey
3. Results from the Victim Provider Questionnaire
4. **Focus Group Discussions and Interviews**
5. Recommendations

To further deepen our understanding of the needs of people impacted by crime and the needs of service providers in New York, providers were invited to participate in focus groups.

From February through April, over 20 focus group sessions with OVS-funded programs occurred to understand how providers support victims and what their needs are in their own words.

- Focus groups focused on the needs of:
  - Homicide victims
  - Domestic violence victims
  - Sexual assault victims
  - Human trafficking victims
  - Violent crime victims
  - Property crime victims
  - Undocumented and refugee victims of crime
  - Elder abuse victims

Providers joined focus group discussions and shared their views on issues related to their work and the victims/survivors they support.

- “There is a lack of trust in institutional systems. Asking someone to go to the hospital can be traumatizing. Similarly, asking people to come to us can be problematic. Most people are not going to the police, and most hospitals don’t have rape crisis centers. Victims have less access to resources during a crisis.”
- “Basic needs must be met. Housing is a barrier. [We need to provide] more resources around temporary and long-term housing.”
- “[Provide the] community with mental health resources, what you should do when you see a person having an episode. There needs to be more education in the community, more information sharing among the community and among organizations.”
- “Traveling nurses and doctors are often used to providing an additional level of care or filingl the gap. However, they often don’t know specifics. They are not familiar with the areas and the level of care. Often, travel nurses are thrown into doing sexual assault examinations, and they are not prepared to do it or support the victim adequately. There needs to be education around supporting victims in hospitals.”

Community-based organizations shared how they, too, support victims.

From March through April, CSG Justice Center staff conducted 18 interviews with community-based organizations. These interviews helped introduce OVS to organizations that are unaware of their resources and allowed us to identify their needs and the needs of the communities they support. Some of the organizations are listed below:

- El Centro Hispano
- PurpLE Health
- Pinnacle Community Services
- Healing Hands
- Allen Women's Resource Center
- Her Justice
- Seven Dancers
- Brooklyn Community
- Warwick Area Farm Organization (WAFO)
- Center for Independence of the Disabled
- African American Planning Commission

Community-based organizations noted how they implement their services in the community and how trust ensures that people share information and resources with them.

- “Community-based organizations seek to implement programs according to the needs of the community. All the programs we share were requested by the community, and we look to meet their needs.”

- “Organizations are open to everyone and provide community support. Every received donation goes back out to support the community.”

- “Those who are undocumented often feel as though they cannot ask for help following victimization.”

- “Often it is a choice between employment and other needs.”

- “Domestic violence is often what brings them to emergency shelter, but after you talk with them you find so many layers of abuse. Dealing with adult trauma and childhood abuse.”

The CSG Justice Center facilitated introductions between community-based organizations and OVS. It was a shared opportunity to learn about each other and the collective support that can be provided to victims/survivors.

While connecting with the various community-based organizations, it became evident that several were unaware of OVS and the resources they could provide.

Several members of OVS

- Connected and shared insights on the grants and compensation process;
- Made themselves available to answer wide-ranging questions on education and victimization;
- Provided information on the requests for proposals and how CBOs can use state funding to support the important work they're doing in their communities; and
- Encouraged CBOs to see themselves and their organizations in the application process and underscored the shared goal of reaching underserved and unserved communities.

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5 Recommendations

NYVOCNA Project Work: Recommendations

The following recommendations address the findings from the statewide needs assessment and gap analysis and supported policy options to improve accessibility and equity for underserved populations and service areas, reduce barriers to victims and families seeking and receiving services, and aim to better meet the direct and indirect needs of victims of crime.

Based on the information gleaned from the survey, questionnaire, focus groups, and interviews, recommendations identified top areas of concern to prioritize include:

- ✓**Improving Access and Availability of Housing:** Victims and survivors should receive permanent, supportive housing after experiencing crime/violence.

- ✓**Expanding Mental Health Resources and Access to Services:** Victims and survivors should receive culturally responsive and accessible mental health services to heal and recover after crime/violence.

- ✓**Investing in Victim Advocacy at Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** Victims and survivors who may never have access to state-supported trauma-based services should receive help through CBOs.

- ✓**Enhancing Administrative Processes and Capacity to Supported Housing, Mental Health, and CBOs:** Organizations should have additional supports and resources to successfully manage housing and mental health projects.

Thank You!

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