

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN WHATCOM COUNTY 2001 - 2006

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BELLINGHAM-WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1407 Commercial
Bellingham, WA 98225
360-312-5700



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INDICATORS: LAW ENFORCEMENT	
Domestic Violence Offenses	4
Verbal Domestic Violence.....	5
Domestic Violence Offenses vs. Verbal Domestic Violence.....	6
Per Capita Rates of Offenses	7
Domestic Violence Data by Jurisdiction	8
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INDICATORS: JAIL AND THE COURTS	
Jail Bookings	9
Misdemeanor Charges	10
Felony Cases.....	11
Probation.....	12
Domestic Violence Protection Orders	13
Misdemeanor Repeat-Offenders.....	14
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INDICATORS: SERVICES	
Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment	16
Services to Victims of Domestic Violence	17
APPENDIX A	
Statistical Analysis.....	19
APPENDIX B	
Glossary	21
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the fifth annual report of domestic violence data in Whatcom County published by the Bellingham/Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence. This report describes the characteristics of domestic violence-related incidents reported by all Whatcom County Municipal, Tribal and County Law Enforcement Agencies; the nature and outcome of domestic violence cases adjudicated in Tribal, Municipal, District and Superior Courts; and the characteristics of services utilized by both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence in Whatcom County.

In general, 2006 saw widespread changes in the level of domestic violence-related activity across Whatcom County. With little exception, domestic violence indicators across the criminal and civil justice systems dropped significantly in 2006. For example, the number of misdemeanor domestic violence charges filed, the number of domestic violence referrals made to probation, and the services provided to victims of domestic violence were at the lowest levels seen in the 6-year assessment period. Several additional indices (domestic violence offenses; per capita rate of domestic violence, and Protection Orders filed) were at the lowest levels since 2001. Thus, and with the exception of an increase in the number of individuals active in domestic violence perpetrator treatment, domestic violence-related activity across Whatcom County Criminal and Civil Justice Systems dropped significantly in 2006.

Despite the above, Whatcom County statistics continue to reflect that found across the state as a whole. For example, the number of domestic violence offenses per capita (defined as the number of domestic violence offenses for every 1,000 residents) remains statistically equal to that found in the state overall. Moreover, the crime rate in the state of Washington, as well as in the nation as a whole, is on the decline. As such, domestic violence-related activity across Whatcom County Criminal and Civil Justice Systems most likely reflect the trend seen across the state and the nation. Moreover, one would expect that if fewer domestic violence-related crimes were indeed occurring, every other subsequent piece of the system (i.e. the number of arrests made, the number of charges and cases filed, the number individuals booked into jail, the number of referrals to probation, etc.) would certainly reflect the lowered level of criminal activity. In short, the activity level of every component of the system is in part contingent upon the amount of crime that occurs in the first place.

With that being said, this report is unable to identify and differentiate the many factors that are likely responsible for changes in domestic violence-related activity. Limitations in the data as it currently exists prevent such analyses. Significant refinement and enhancement of existing data collection methodologies are required before such questions can be adequately addressed.¹

Raw numbers for domestic violence indicators were obtained from one of three sources: "*Crime in Washington*" (Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs); *Judicial Information System* (State of Washington); and records kept by individual agencies. These values were then evaluated using Pearson's Chi Square Analysis. Detailed description of statistical analyses, including their interpretation and results, are found in Appendix A. Lastly, a Glossary is included for definitional purposes and can be found in Appendix B.

¹ Detailed discussion of the issues related to data collection and analysis are detailed in the March 2005 Report: "Domestic Violence in Whatcom County: A Compilation of Data", which can be found on the organization's website (www.dvcommission.org).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN WHATCOM COUNTY: LAW ENFORCEMENT

Domestic Violence Offenses

In 2006:

- Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies reported a total of 1,387 domestic violence offenses²
- Domestic violence offenses were at their lowest levels since 2001, paralleling a drop in statewide rates

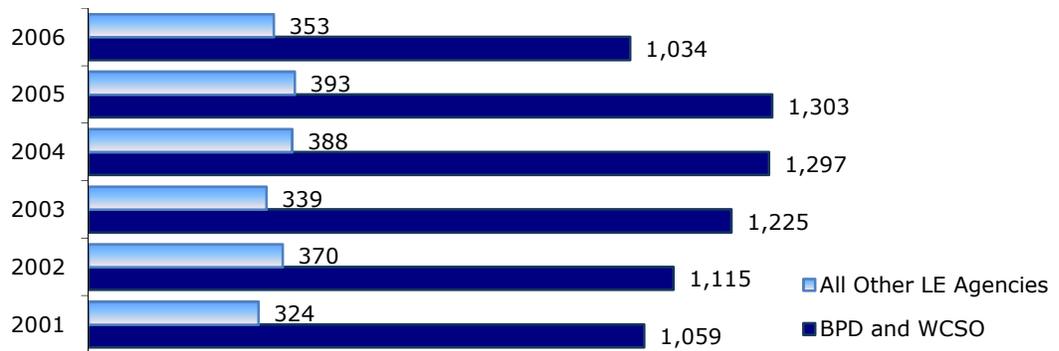


Figure 1
Domestic Violence Offenses: Whatcom County

In 2006, Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies reported a total of 1,387 domestic violence offenses. This represents a statistically significant drop to the lowest levels seen in the 6-year period evaluated. Notably, the decrease in the number of domestic violence offenses in Whatcom County parallels that seen in the state as a whole, which also recorded significantly lower aggregate levels of domestic violence in 2006. It is unclear at the present time whether the state and county's decrease represents a downward trend in domestic violence offenses, or is merely a one-year anomaly in these rates.

Domestic violence continues to represent a consistent proportion of the total criminal offenses that occur in Whatcom County. In 2006, as in preceding years, approximately 14% of all reported criminal offenses were domestic violence-related.

Figure 1 illustrates rates of domestic violence offenses as reported by all Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies.

² Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies refers to the Bellingham Police Department (BPD), Whatcom County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribal Police Departments, and Blaine, Everson-Nooksack, Ferndale, Lynden and Sumas Police Departments.

Verbal Domesticics

In 2006:

- *Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies reported 1,534 verbal domesticics³*
- *Bellingham Police Department and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office recorded 74% of all verbal domesticics in the county (1,133)*
- *The rate of verbal domesticics reported by BPD and WCSO were among the lowest levels seen in the 6-year reporting period*

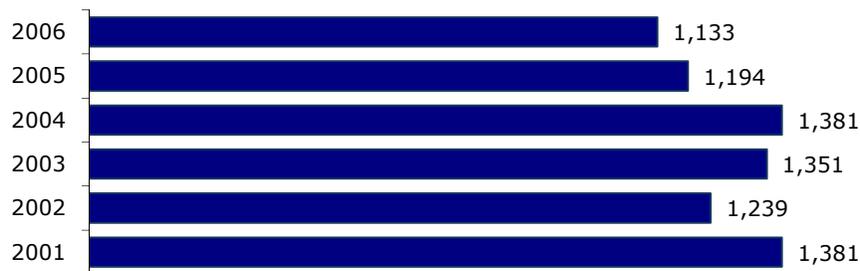


Figure 2
Verbal Domesticics: BPD and WCSO

During 2006, a total of 1,534 verbal domesticics were reported across all Whatcom County Law Enforcement Agencies. The vast majority of these incidents (1,133) were reported by the county's two largest law enforcement agencies: the Bellingham Police Department and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office. Alternatively, 401 verbal domesticics were reported by all other law enforcement agencies in the county. A breakdown of verbal domesticics by jurisdiction (i.e. all law enforcement agencies including smaller municipalities and tribal law enforcement) can be found in Table 1.

In general, there has been statistical variability in the rate of verbal domesticics over time. Notably, the number of verbal domesticics reported in 2005 and 2006 represent significantly lower levels than that seen in the preceding 4 years.

Figure 2 illustrates the number of verbal domesticics reported by the Bellingham Police Department and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office between 2001 and 2006.

³ Verbal domesticics represent incidents where law enforcement determines that no physical assault has occurred, and/or where no other conditions are met that warrant arrest.

Domestic Violence Offenses vs. Verbal Domestic

In 2006:

- The Bellingham Police Department and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office reported dealing with higher rates of verbal domestics than domestic violence offenses

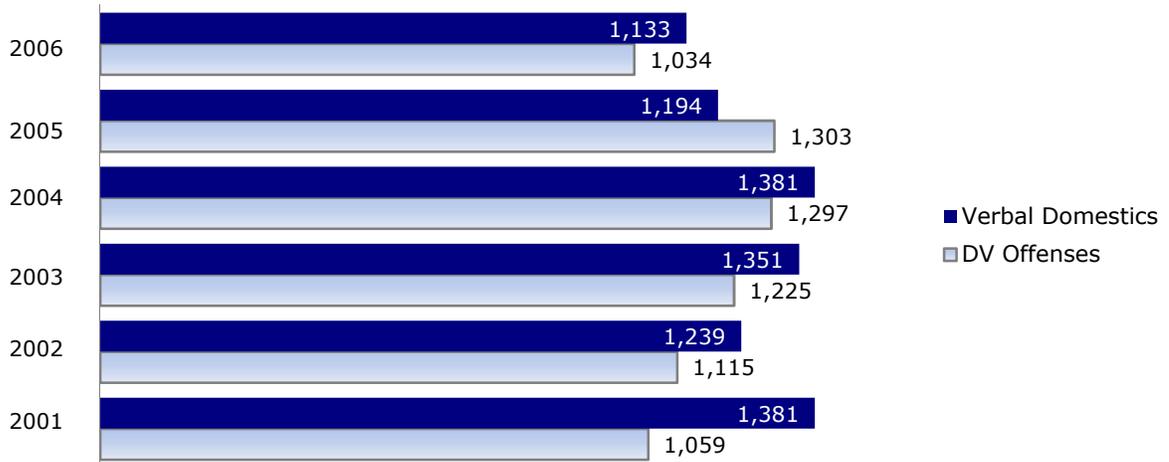


Figure 3
Domestic Violence Offenses vs. Verbal Domestic:
BPD and WCSO

Between 2001 and 2006, law enforcement typically dealt with verbal domestics (where no crime has been committed) at a higher rate than they did domestic violence offenses (where a crime has been committed). Exceptions to this pattern occurred in 2004 and 2005. However, there was a return to earlier standards in 2006, when the rate of verbal domestics exceeded that of domestic violence offenses once again.

Figure 3 compares the rate of reported domestic violence offenses to the rate of reported verbal domestics in each of the years evaluated.

Per Capita Rates of Domestic Violence Offenses⁴

In 2006:

- *Whatcom County's per capita rate of domestic violence offenses was 7.5*
- *Whatcom County's per capita rate of domestic violence continues to mirror that seen in the state as a whole*
- *Both state and county per capita rates of domestic violence are lower than that seen in the past 5 years*

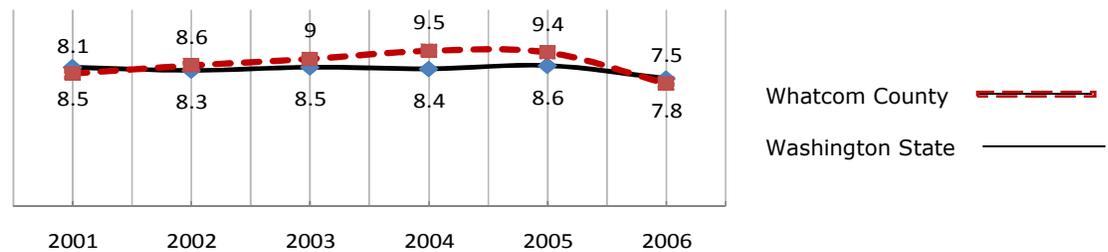


Figure 4
Domestic Violence Per Capita:
Whatcom County and Washington State

In 2006 Whatcom County's domestic violence per capita rate was 7.5 offenses for every 1,000 residents (compared to 7.8 in the state as a whole). Whatcom County's 2006 per capita rates of domestic violence offenses represent a significant decline from previous levels. Notably, a similar drop in these rates is also seen in the state as a whole, suggesting that Whatcom County is mirroring a trend that is occurring across Washington.

Figure 4 illustrates both Whatcom County and Washington State per capita rates of domestic violence offenses between 2001 and 2006.

⁴ Per capita rate is defined as the number of domestic violence offenses for every 1,000 residents

Domestic Violence in Whatcom County: Breakdown by Jurisdiction

Domestic Violence Offenses, Verbal Domestic, and Domestic Violence Misdemeanor Charges Filed are broken down by jurisdiction, as is detailed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: Domestic Violence Data by Jurisdiction

CITY OR JURISDICTION	POPULATION	DV OFFENSES	VERBAL DOMESTICS	DV MISDEMEANORS FILED
BELLINGHAM	73,460	538	764	335
BLAINE	4,480	66	75	55
FERNDALE	10,280	98	91	76
LYNDEN	10,750	32	27	19
SUMAS	1,125	8	11	14
NOOKSACK & EVERSON	3,139	23	36	33
UNINCORPORATED	81,066			
WCSO		496	369	377
LUMMI TRIBE		115	146	76
NOOKSACK TRIBE		11	15	6
TOTAL	184,300	1,387	1,534	991

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN WHATCOM COUNTY: JAIL AND THE COURTS

Jail Bookings

In 2006:

- The Whatcom County Jail reported 1,136 domestic violence-related bookings

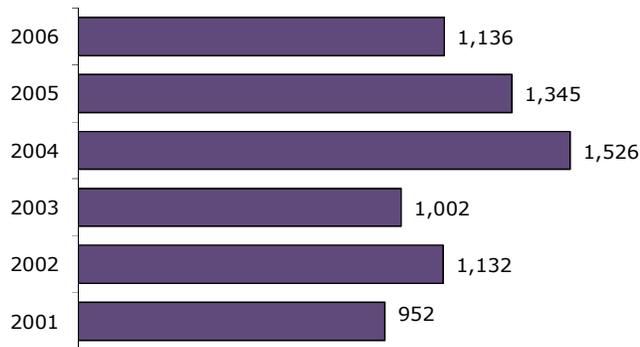


Figure 5
Domestic Violence Jail Bookings

Between 2001 and 2006, an average of 1,182 individuals were booked into Whatcom County Jail on a domestic violence-related offense. Domestic violence consistently represents a significant category of jail bookings, accounting for 20% of total bookings in 2006. Nevertheless, domestic violence related bookings dropped significantly between 2005 and 2006, likely reflecting the overall drop in domestic violence offenses.

Figure 5 illustrates the number of domestic violence-related jail bookings between 2001 and 2006.

Misdemeanor Charges: Filings and Resolutions

In 2006:

- *Whatcom County Courts reported 991 misdemeanor domestic violence-related charge filings*
- *The number of misdemeanor filings were at the lowest levels seen in the 6-year reporting period*

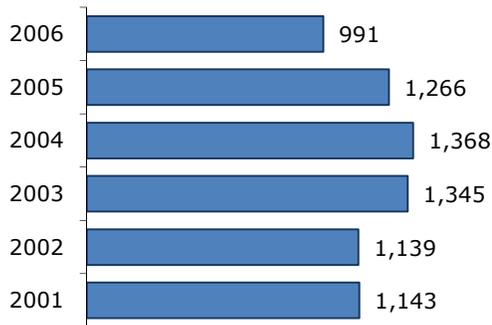


Figure 6
Domestic Violence Misdemeanors:
Charges Filed

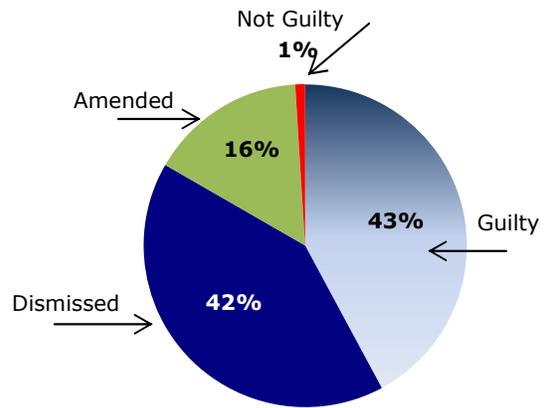


Figure 7
Domestic Violence Misdemeanors:
Resolution of Charges
N=1,023

In 2006, Whatcom County Courts reported 991 misdemeanor domestic violence-related charge filings, which represents a substantial decrease in the number of this category of filings over the preceding five years. Figure 6 illustrates the number of misdemeanor domestic violence charges filed in Whatcom County Courts between 2001 and 2006.

Over the course of 2006, there were 1,023 domestic violence misdemeanor charges resolved across Whatcom County Courts (excluding Tribal Courts). With respect to the outcomes of these charges, the majority resulted in either a "Guilty" (43%) or "Dismissed" (42%) status. Alternatively, 16% resulted in "Amended"¹ and 1% as "Not Guilty". Finally, from the point of filing to the point of resolution, these charges were in the court system an average of 133 days. Figure 7 illustrates the outcome of misdemeanor domestic violence charges that were resolved in 2006.

Felony Cases: Filings and Resolutions

In 2006:

- The Whatcom County Prosecutor's Office reported filing 226 felony domestic violence-related cases
- The number of felony filings dropped significantly to those levels seen in 2003 and 2004

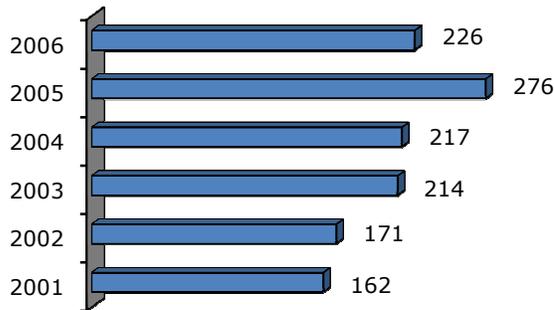


Figure 8

Domestic Violence Felonies: Cases Filed

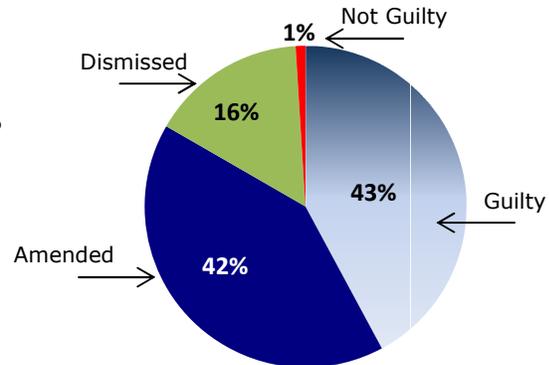


Figure 9

Domestic Violence Felonies:
Resolution of Cases
N=268

In general, the number of felony domestic violence cases filed by the prosecutor's office has increased every year. In contrast to this pattern, the number of felony cases filed in 2006 actually declined from those levels seen in 2005 (but are statistically equal to that seen in 2003 and 2004). Figure 8 illustrates the number of felony domestic violence cases filed by the Whatcom County Prosecutor's Office between 2001 and 2006.

Over the 2006 calendar year, there were a significant number of domestic violence felony cases resolved (n=268). With respect to the outcomes of these cases, the vast majority (82%) resulted in some form of a "Guilty" classification. The remainder resulted in "Dismissed" (16%), or "Other" (2%) classifications. Finally, from the point of filing to the point of resolution, felony domestic violence cases were in the court system an average of 206 days. Figure 9 illustrates the outcome of felony domestic violence cases that were resolved in 2006.

Probation Referrals

In 2006:

- *Whatcom County District Court Probation was referred 632 domestic violence-related charges for supervision*
- *The number of probation referrals was the lowest seen in the 6-year evaluation period*

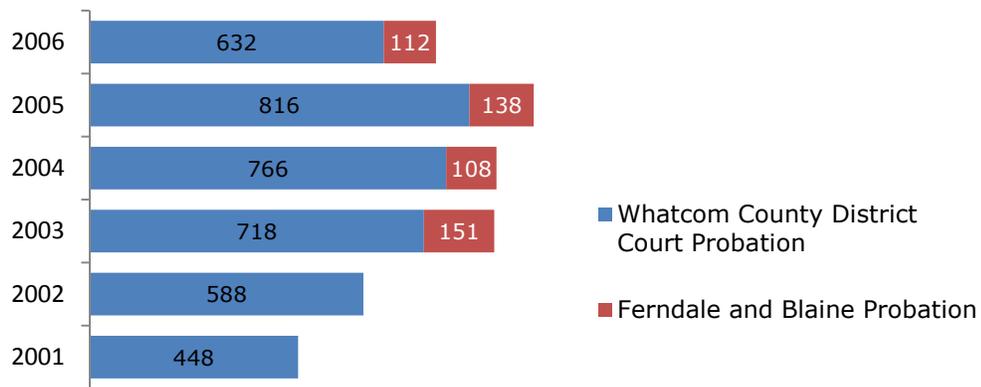


Figure 10
Domestic Violence Probation Referrals

In 2006, Whatcom County District Court Probation was referred a total of 632 domestic violence-related charges for supervision. This represents a marked decrease in supervision levels, to the statistically lowest seen across the 6-year assessment period.

Figure 10 documents all domestic violence charges referred to Whatcom County District Court Probation during the years 2001 through 2006. While domestic violence charges referred to Blaine and Ferndale Probation Departments are included beginning in 2003, these two agencies were not included in statistical analyses.

Protection Orders

In 2006:

- 332 Domestic Violence Protection Orders were filed in Whatcom County Courts⁵
- The number of Protection Orders filed in Whatcom County Courts dropped to those levels seen in 2001 and 2002



Figure 11
Domestic Violence Protection Orders Filed

In 2006, there were 332 Protection Orders filed in Whatcom County Courts, with an average of 375 Protection Orders filed in the six-year period evaluated.

Figure 11 indicates the number of Domestic Violence Protection Orders filed in Whatcom County Courts between 2001 and 2006.

⁵ Includes Whatcom County District and Superior Courts and Lummi and Nooksack Tribal Courts

Misdemeanor Repeat-Offenders⁶

Between 2004 and 2006:

- 22% of individuals re-offended after the resolution of their first domestic violence charge
- Over one-third of repeat offenders were charged with domestic violence crimes in multiple jurisdictions
- Repeat offenders were typically charged with Order Violations in subsequent incidents

Between 2004 and 2006, there were 2,094 individuals who had misdemeanor domestic violence charges resolved in Whatcom County Municipal and District Courts. During this three-year time period, and after their initial domestic violence-related charge had been resolved, 469 of these individuals were charged with at least one additional misdemeanor domestic violence offense. Figures 12 through 15 summarize information on the 469 repeat offenders.

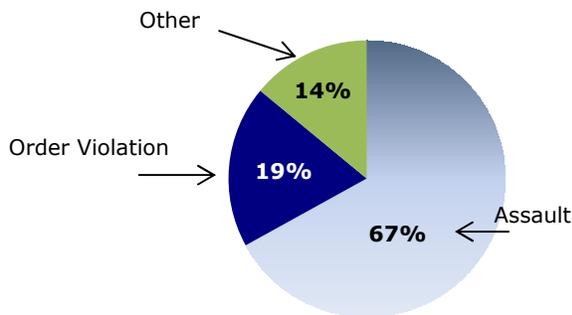


Figure 12
Misdemeanant Repeat Offenders:
Initial Offense
N=469

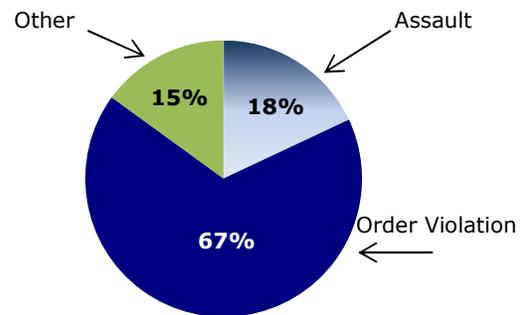


Figure 13
Misdemeanant Repeat Offenders:
2nd Offense
N=469

Figure 12 illustrates the nature of repeat offenders' initial domestic violence charge. As is seen in the chart, the vast majority of individuals were charged with Assault (67%), followed by Order Violations (19%) and Other⁷ (14%). However, when evaluating the nature of any subsequent charges, the pattern of offenses shifts markedly. For example, the majority of individuals re-offend not by being charged with another assault, but rather, by being charged with an Order Violation (i.e. Violation of a No Contact Order). As seen in Figure 13, almost 70% of second offenses are related to Order Violations. Assaults account for merely 18%, and the remaining 15% of second offenses fall within the category of Other.

⁶ Re-offenders are defined as those individuals who have been charged in more than one misdemeanor-level domestic violence incident between 2004 and 2006 in Whatcom County District or Municipal Courts.

⁷ Other offenses include Malicious Mischief, Interfering with Reporting Domestic Violence, etc.

Misdemeanor Repeat-Offenders Continued

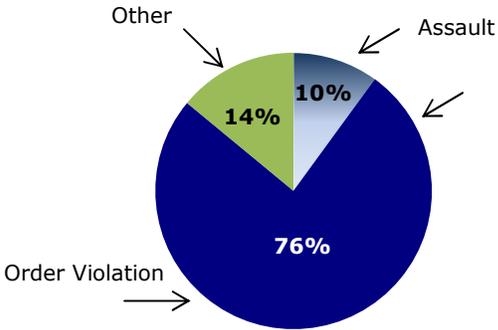


Figure 14
Misdemeanant Repeat Offenders:
3rd Offense
N=121

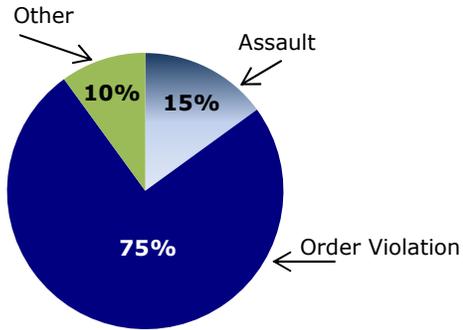


Figure 15
Misdemeanant Repeat Offenders:
4th Offenses (N=29) and
5th Offenses (N=13)

For those individuals who are charged with third, fourth, (or more) offenses within the 3-year evaluation period, the nature of subsequent charges remains quite stable. For example, those individuals who continue to re-offend overwhelmingly do so by being charged with Order Violations. Figures 14 and Figure 15 illustrate the nature of charges in those individuals being charged with third and fourth offense, respectively.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN WHATCOM COUNTY: SERVICES

Perpetrators: Evaluation and Treatment⁸

In 2006:

- 295 individuals successfully completed Domestic Violence Evaluations
- Significantly more individuals were in Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment than in preceding years
- One-third of individuals in Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment were terminated due to noncompliance

TABLE 2: Domestic Violence Perpetrators: Evaluation and Treatment				
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
Completed Evaluations	136	243	332	295
Individuals in Treatment*	140	181	238	309
Status of Treatment				
Ongoing	34 (24%)	48 (27%)	99 (42%)	116 (38%)
Completed	46 (33%)	54 (30%)	63 (26%)	90 (29%)
Terminated	52 (37%)	64 (35%)	71 (30%)	95 (31%)
Relocated	8 (6%)	15 (8%)	5 (2%)	2 (1%)
Other	-	-	-	6 (2%)
* Includes individuals in treatment at any point during the 2006 calendar year				

In 2006, two hundred and ninety five individuals completed Domestic Violence Evaluations. This drop did not represent a statistically significant change from the number of evaluations completed in previous years. On the other hand, the number of individuals in Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment continues to increase on an annual basis. Nevertheless, the status of those individuals in treatment has remained relatively stable over time. During any given year, roughly one-third of individuals will successfully complete treatment; one-third will be terminated from treatment for non-compliance; and the remaining third will continue to attend treatment over the course of the assessment period. Table 2 provides information related to Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment.

⁸ In 2006, services to perpetrators of domestic violence in Whatcom County were provided by three agencies: Lummi [Nation] CARE; Violence Intervention Professionals; and Waterfront Counseling.

Victim Services⁹

In 2006:

- 3,237 domestic violence victims received a wide array of services from Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS) of Whatcom County
- 109 domestic violence victims received a wide array of services from Lummi [Nation] Victims of Crime
- 1,100 victims of domestic violence utilized the emergency helpline provided by Womenscare Shelter, and 273 women and children stayed at least one night in Womenscare's shelter for victims of domestic violence



Figure 16
Victims Served:
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services

In 2006, three thousand two hundred and thirty seven domestic violence victims received services from DVSAS. Typically, the number of clients receiving services from DVSAS has seen minimal fluctuations. Nevertheless, the number of clients served by this agency in 2006 was significantly higher than that seen in most preceding years. This change may, in part, be due to differences in data collection procedures implemented by the agency for 2006. Figure 16 indicates the total number of domestic violence victims served by DVSAS between 2001 and 2006.

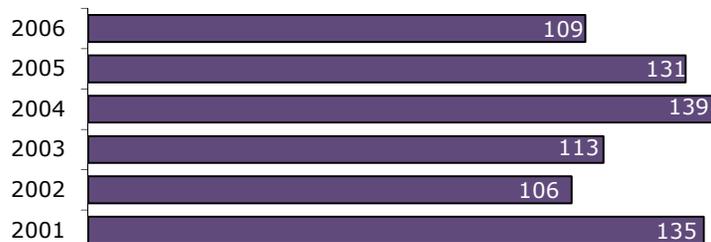


Figure 17
Victims Served:
Lummi Victims of Crime

In 2006, one hundred and nine Native American victims of domestic violence received crisis intervention/support services and/or legal advocacy services from Lummi Victims of Crime. While LVOC's service provision has fluctuated over time, an average of 122 native victims receive services annually from this agency. Figure 17 indicates the total number of domestic violence victims served by LVOC between 2001 and 2006.

⁹ Services to victims of domestic violence in Whatcom County are overwhelmingly provided by three agencies: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS), Womenscare Shelter and Domestic Violence Services (Womenscare), and Lummi Victims of Crime.

Victim Services Continued

Since 2001, there has been significant variation in the number of callers who utilized the Womencare Helpline. Service levels began declining significantly in 2005, and the number of callers to the Helpline in 2006 was at their lowest level in the six-year assessment period. Figure 18 reports the number of callers who received services from the Womencare Helpline between 2001 and 2006.

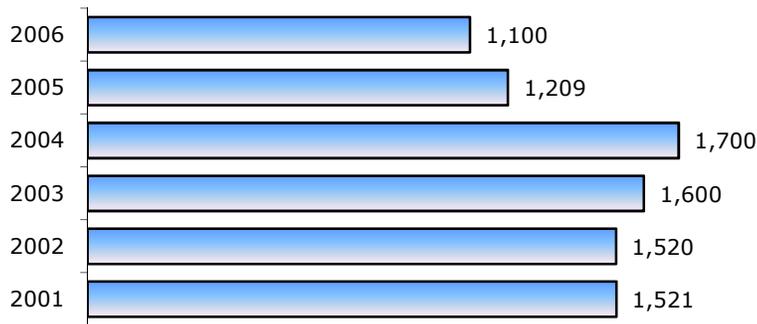


Figure 18
Victims Served:
Womencare Helpline Callers

In 2006, a total of 143 women and 130 children obtained emergency housing at Womencare Shelter in order to escape domestic violence in their own homes. Figure 19 reports the number of women and children victims who received emergency housing and support services from Womencare between 2001 and 2006.

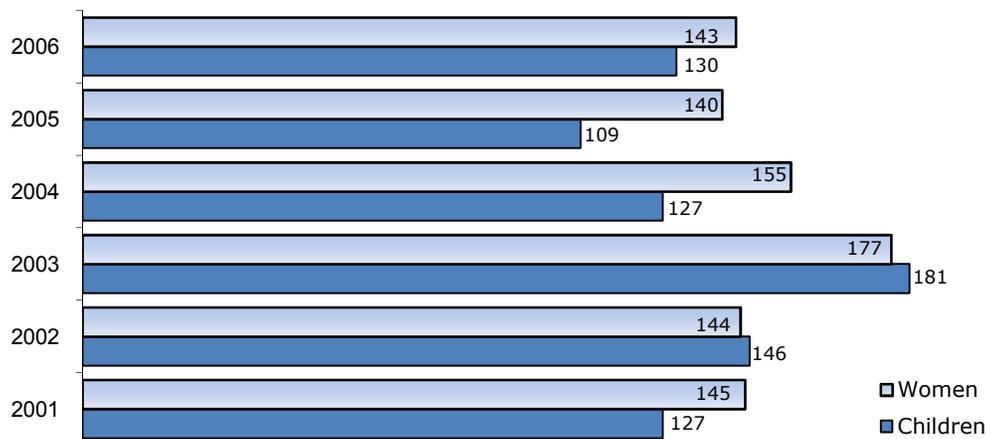


Figure 19
Victims Served:
Womencare Shelter Residents

Appendix A

Statistical Analyses

Domestic violence indices for 2006 were compared to all previous years in the assessment period (2001 – 2005). Comparisons were made using Pearson's Chi Square Analysis, a procedure that determines whether changes in numbers are mathematically meaningful (i.e. not due to chance and statistically significant), while also accounting for changes in the population. It is only when statistically significant differences between numbers are found that one can say that there are **true** increases or decreases in particular domestic violence indicators.

On the other hand, when no statistically significant differences are found, it means that the numbers being compared are essentially mathematically equal --- and that no *true* increase or decrease in a domestic violence indicator has occurred. For example, when one compares Verbal Domestic Violence between 2005 and 2006, the number of Verbal Domestic Violence drops by 61 (1,194 vs. 1,133). However, when one statistically evaluates this change, no significant differences are found. Thus, the rate of Verbal Domestic Violence in 2005 and 2006 must be viewed as *equal*, indicating that there is no *true* decrease in the rate of Verbal Domestic Violence over this 2-year period.

Statistical analyses for each domestic violence indicator (comparing 2006 values to previous years) are detailed in Table 3. Statistically significant differences between years are indicated by each year's inclusion in the table. Alternatively, when a given year is left out of the table, this indicates that no differences were found between 2006 and that year.

For example, analysis of Verbal Domestic Violence revealed statistically significant differences between 2006 and 2002, 2003, and 2004. Thus, there was a *true* drop in the rate of Verbal Domestic Violence in 2006, compared to these earlier years. On the other hand, there were no statistically significant differences between the number of Verbal Domestic Violence in 2006 and that seen in 2001 and 2005. Thus, while the number of Verbal Domestic Violence in each of these years is not exactly the same, statistical analyses indicate that they need to be treated as such. In this case, differences in values are due to chance or changes in the population, rather than any *true* change.

Table 3
Statistical Analyses

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Year</u>						
1	DV Offenses	2006<	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	
2	Verbal Domestic	2006<		2004	2003	2002		
5	Jail Bookings	2006<	2005	2004				
5	Jail Bookings	2006>						2001
6	Misdemeanor Charges	2006<	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	
8	Felony Cases	2006<	2005			2002	2001	
10	Probation Referrals	2006<	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	
11	Protection Orders	2006<	2005	2004	2003			
16	DVSAS	2006>	2005		2003	2002	2001	
17	Lummi	2006<	2005					2001
18	Womencare Helpline	2006<	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	
19	Womencare Shelter	2006<	2005		2003			2001

Appendix B

Glossary

Domestic Violence Offenses

Under Washington State law, an offense is considered to be domestic violence-related if it is committed by a family member (regardless of the family relationship) or by a domestic partner. Domestic violence offenses include crimes in the following categories: criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, arson and violation of Protection/No Contact Orders. It is not unusual for multiple offenses to occur during the same incident. However, based on recording standards established by the FBI, only the “highest-ranking offense” is recorded into *Uniform Crime Reports*, which is the nation’s statistical database for crime (utilized by this report). For example, an offender can break into a victim’s home, steal her car keys, force her into her vehicle, drive her to a secluded location, sexually assault her, take her car and her purse, and abandon her. Even though there are multiple offenses in this one event, the highest-ranking offense is the rape. This would be the only offense recorded, counted (and thus accessible to researchers) in *Uniform Crime Reports*. Therefore, for each domestic violence related incident, there is generally only one domestic violence offense counted. However, it is important to remember that this system of coding identifies and tallies a police identified problem and is not based on the findings of a court, medical examiner, jury or other judicial findings.

Felony Domestic Violence

Felony domestic violence offenses are defined as occurring when there is a family, household, or dating relationship, and one or both parties commit a crime against the person or property of the other. The nature of the charges filed may include both physical and non-physical assault offenses, including but not limited to, felony harassment/threats, violation of a no contact order, burglary, malicious mischief, robbery, kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment, assault and murder. The superior courts in the State of Washington have sole jurisdiction over the adjudication of cases when a felony offense is charged.

Misdemeanor Domestic Violence

Misdemeanor domestic violence crimes occur when there is a family, household, or dating relationship, and one or both parties commit a crime against the person or property of the other. Examples of this type of crime include: Violation of a Protection Order; Assault 4th Degree; Malicious Mischief; Disorderly Conduct; and Interfering with Reporting of Domestic Violence. Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (District and Municipal Courts) and Tribal Courts have jurisdiction over domestic violence related misdemeanors committed within their area of authority.

Verbal Domestic

Law enforcement officers are frequently called to respond to situations that are categorized as “Domestic Violence – No Assault”, or “Verbal Domestic”. These are incidents where law enforcement determines that no physical assault occurred, and/or where no other conditions were met to warrant probable cause for an arrest.

Jail Bookings

Due to inadequate jail space, Whatcom County Jail has had to prioritize those offenses that will be accepted for booking (versus being issued a citation and

released). For the past several years, domestic violence offenses have been prioritized and typically accepted for booking. Comparatively, significant restrictions have been imposed on most other bookings. As a result, domestic violence-related offenses represent a significant proportion of jail bookings relative to all criminal bookings. Until space issues are remediated, accurate estimates regarding the proportion of offenders booked into jail for domestic violence-related offenses (versus all other offenses) will not be able to be determined.

Probation Services

Whatcom County District Court Probation provides probation services for Whatcom County District Court and the Municipal Courts of Bellingham, Everson-Nooksack, Lynden, and Sumas. Lummi Tribal Court, Blaine Municipal Court, and Ferndale Municipal Court provide their own probation services.

Probation services are typically limited to misdemeanor cases, with felony domestic violence cases supervised by the Washington State Department of Corrections. It is important to note that the number of new referrals to probation does not correspond to the actual number of individuals requiring supervision by that department. For example, a single incident may result in two domestic violence charges. If the individual responsible for this incident is mandated to pre-trial probation supervision by the courts, the probation department counts this as two new referrals (corresponding to the number of charges). If during the same calendar year that same individual is convicted of one of those domestic violence charges and is ordered to two years of probation supervision, this is counted as an additional referral by the department. In summary, this individual's case will result in three new domestic violence probation referrals in one calendar year.

Protection Orders

A Domestic Violence Protection Order is a civil Court Order available to an individual who is a victim of domestic violence, or who is inflicted with the fear of violence by a family or household member (see RCW 26.50.510 for further definition). In general, Protection Orders may contain stipulations that include prohibiting contact of any kind between the abuser and victim, removing the abuser from a shared residence, awarding temporary custody of the children to the victim and setting parameters for visitation, and/or ordering an abuser to obtain a Domestic Violence Evaluation and Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment. Protection Orders are generally sought by individuals who are not involved in criminal domestic violence cases, individuals for whom a criminal case does not resolve all safety issues, such as temporary custody and visitation arrangements of children, and individuals who are the alleged victim in criminal domestic violence cases which result in no conviction or a dismissal of the charges or case.

Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment

Washington Administrative Code 388-60-0025 establishes minimum standards for programs that treat perpetrators of domestic violence. In the State of Washington, the Department of Social and Health Services must certify all domestic violence perpetrator treatment providers. In order to be certified, the program must demonstrate that it meets the standards outlined in WAC 388-60-0025. These state codes assert that the focus of domestic violence perpetrator treatment programs is on ending the program participant's physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. Treatment must be based on strategies and philosophies that hold the participant accountable for the violent and abusive behaviors and are not blaming of the victim. The minimum treatment period for program participants is twenty-six consecutive weekly

same gender group sessions followed by monthly sessions until a twelve-month period is complete.

Population Figures

Washington State's Office of Financial Management provided all population rates utilized in this report. Whatcom County and Washington State figures are as follows:

Year	Whatcom County	Washington State
2001	170,600	5,974,900
2002	172,200	6,041,700
2003	174,500	6,098,300
2004	177,300	6,167,800
2005	180,800	6,256,400
2006	184,300	6,375,600

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Commission Members

Cynthia Bauleke
Karen Burke
Anna Carey
Dennis Carlson
Randall Carroll
Regina Delahunt
William Elfo
Sheri Emerson
Cindy Enger
Nikki Finkbonner
Joan Hoisington
Rebecca Johnson

Chi-Na Kim
Michael Knapp
Jon Komorowski
Byron Mannering
Dave McEachran
Shannon Meyer
Joy Monjure
Steve Oliver
Candy Petersen
Linda Storck
Karen Summers
Bruce Van Glubt

Staff

Sue Parrott, Director
Linda Ward, Administrative Support

Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence
1407 Commercial
Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone: 360-312-5700
Fax: 360-312-5770
mail@dvcommission.org
Web: dvcommission.org

