

# Metro Nashville Office of Family Safety

## 2021 Annual Report



# METRO-NASHVILLE GOVERNMENT

## OFFICE OF FAMILY SAFETY



## Our Team

**Department Head:** *Diane Lance*

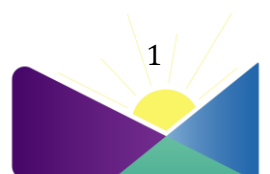
**Prepared for:** *The Honorable Mayor John Cooper*

**Prepared by:**

*Diane Lance, Department Head*

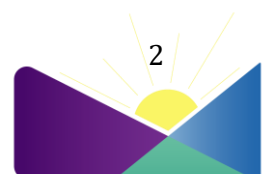
*Becky Bullard, Senior Director of Programs*

**Website:** <https://ofs.nashville.gov/>



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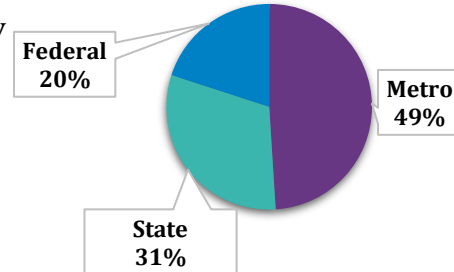
# OFS 2021 ANNUAL SUMMARY

The mission of the Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Office of Family Safety is to increase victim safety and offender accountability by providing vital crisis intervention services to victims of domestic violence, child and elder abuse, sexual assault, stalking, & human trafficking while maintaining the emotional wellness of service providers. This is accomplished in OFS's court and community-based Family Safety Centers through client advocacy, training, outreach, multidisciplinary teamwork, & collaboration.

Ordinance number BL2015-1125 established the Office of Family Safety as a department of the Metropolitan Government on June 17, 2015.

The Office of Family Safety (OFS) is deeply appreciative of the widespread support received in 2021 from the Mayor, the Metro Council, OFS Advisory Committee members, OFS partners, and OFS grant funders – the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP), the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). This support allows OFS to continue its work, expand its reach, and improve its services. OFS's 2021 budget was **\$3,768,546.00**. 49% was from Metro's General Fund, 31% from State grants, & 20% from Federal Grants. **\$744,000** was distributed to non-profit partners through CARES Act Funding.

## OFS Annual Budget



In 2021, OFS continued to adapt services to meet the increasing needs of victims, professional partners, and staff. With vaccines and booster shots becoming available to the public at large, 2021 held glimmers of hope. OFS and partner agency staff continued to help victims of interpersonal violence through their trauma, grief, and loss when they themselves were often experiencing their own. These heroic efforts and actions created stability for victims and survivors in the most unstable of times.

OFS's Team was amazingly adaptive as they fine-tuned a hybrid service delivery model, which continued beyond pandemic restrictions to increase accessibility. In 2021, OFS's client services numbers remained steady from 2020, with **4,141 individual clients served**. Client visits also remained steady with **13,320 client visits** and **444 case management sessions**. With the continued increased demand for long-term services, OFS requested funding for four case managers in 2021 through American Rescue Plan funds.

The increase in the severity of violence in 2021, a trend noted by Family Justice Centers across the country, was of great concern to OFS and its partners. OFS's High-Risk Teams continued to see this trend in its review of **1,262 high-risk cases** and the flagging of **4,469 stranglers** and **5,311 firearms carriers**. With police being the first responders to these violent and complex calls, OFS provided a **14-week training series** to members of MNPd and OFS **increased overall training offerings in 2021 by 58%**. In addition, OFS assisted the Department of Emergency Communications to improve their interpersonal violence call scripts, accomplishing a long-standing recommendation from the [2013 Safety & Accountability Audit](#).

While the fully in-person re-opening of the Centers was delayed by the Omicron variant at the end of 2021, the hopefulness and eagerness of the OFS team to "re-open" the office better than before were undeterred. As OFS enters 2022, our focus will remain on creating pathways to hope for clients, partners, and staff.



# OFS MILESTONES

## Nashville Host-City for Alliance for Hope Leadership Summit

On December 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>, OFS hosted the Alliance for Hope's annual Family Justice Center (FJC) Director's Conference in Nashville. Per Capita, Tennessee has the most Family Justice Centers in the country with Nashville's Family Safety Center being the largest. This was a long-awaited event as Nashville and OFS hosted the conference virtually the previous year. Nashville has now twice been chosen as the host city for this event because of the depth of programming and levels of collaboration. This Summit was also the most well-attended FJC Leadership Conference to date.



Alliance for Hope President Casey Gwinn, MNPD Chief John Drake, & OFS Dept. Head Diane Lance

*"There's a strong legacy of being the first state to establish an Office of Family Safety and still one of only four states to have a department entirely dedicated to this work. If the city's investments are a statement of principle, then Nashville got it right. Thank you for creating a more hopeful future for others with your work in the years ahead. Thank you for being here in Nashville.*

*It's the right place to be." ~ Mayor John Cooper*

During the conference week, OFS was able to reconnect with over 150 friends from FJCs across the country. Opening remarks for the conference each morning were provided by Nashville leaders, including Mayor John Cooper who welcomed attendees to Nashville and emphasized the life-saving work that each FJC does around the country; Chief John Drake who spoke about MNPD's new Interpersonal Crimes Branch and the role of police in FJCs; and District Attorney General Glenn Funk who spoke about the critical role of FJCs in the criminal justice process. OFS's VOICES Committee also provided a moving and poignant panel on the experience of survivors and the importance of FJCs being trauma-informed by incorporating survivor voice and choice.



Nashville VOICES Committee Members Karyn Johnson, Nicole Haney, & Amanda Cleveland



OFS Senior Director of Programs, Becky Bullard, speaking to attendees about firearms removal

OFS was recognized as a national model by the Alliance, who highlighted OFS's departmental model and many high-risk teams on firearms, strangulation, and human trafficking. Throughout the conference, OFS team members proudly presented on OFS's comprehensive programming for victims of interpersonal abuse, areas of excellence, and areas of continued need. OFS also spotlighted our onsite nonprofit and governmental partners such as MNPD's Family Intervention Program, MNPD's Interpersonal Crimes Branch, AGAPE, Nashville Children's Alliance, Mary Parrish Center, Legal Aid Society, and Sexual Assault Center.



*"What you're at today is leaders from all over the country coming here for our 12th annual summit to profile the (FSC) because it's now the biggest framework in America. It's now the largest family justice framework in the United States." ~ Casey Gwinn, Alliance for Hope*

## JCAC & FSC Tours for Alliance for Hope Leadership Summit

Conference attendees toured both the Jean Crowe Advocacy Center and the Family Safety Center while in Nashville as part of the conference agenda. **79 people toured the Jean Crowe Advocacy Center** and learned about OFS's court-based services for victims of abuse. Additionally, tour attendees were able to meet with representatives from OFS and the District Attorney's Office to learn more about how our services work together to support victims attending court.

**150 conference attendees toured the Family Safety Center** and heard from OFS staff about the building's unique design, use, and OFS and partner programming. A celebratory dinner followed the tour with partners from MNPD, Nashville Children's Alliance, Legal Aid Society, and Sexual Assault Center. The reception and feedback from FJC peers were exceptional and extremely rewarding to OFS's team. Please see the photos below of the tours and reception as well as the conference attendee quotes on the following page about their experience in Nashville and at OFS's Family Justice Centers.



OFS Client Services Assistant Director, Ashley Cathey, explains JCAC services during the tour



**79 Attendees**  
Toured the JCAC



**150 Attendees**  
Toured the FSC

*"Diane Lance & OFS has proved 'The Power of We' can change the world...Nashville is leading the movement and should be a required site visit for every community CCR and collaborative in America!"*

*~ Gael Strack, CEO Alliance for Hope*



## Family Justice Center Leader Feedback on OFS & its Centers

*"Your center is amazing. It is difficult to imagine the work and love that went into creating such a valuable service. You are all incredible!"*

*"Your staff is the most committed to survivors that I've ever seen.  
Amazing!!"*

*"The passion of staff was palpable. What a tremendous group of difference-makers.  
Thank you so very much. You set the standard SUPER high."*

*"Seeing your Family Safety Center exploded my mind with all of the possibilities for our FJC to be. Both centers are AMAZING!!."*



*"Your pride in your work and your care for survivors shines so bright! Thank you for sharing your space with us and leading the way in this work!"*

*"Your center is amazing but your team is outstanding!! Loved my visit with everyone!"*

*"I noticed so many tiny amazing details that you put into your tours. I loved that you could be heard - the footstools that you could be seen, the smiles so we all felt appreciated. Teamwork makes the dream work! Y'all are that!!"*

*"All of the time, effort, and energy you all put into this planning and hosting the Leadership Summit is appreciated. Words cannot adequately capture the value our team experienced and gained this week. Thank you for your humility and vulnerability to allow others to learn...you guys are inspiring!"*

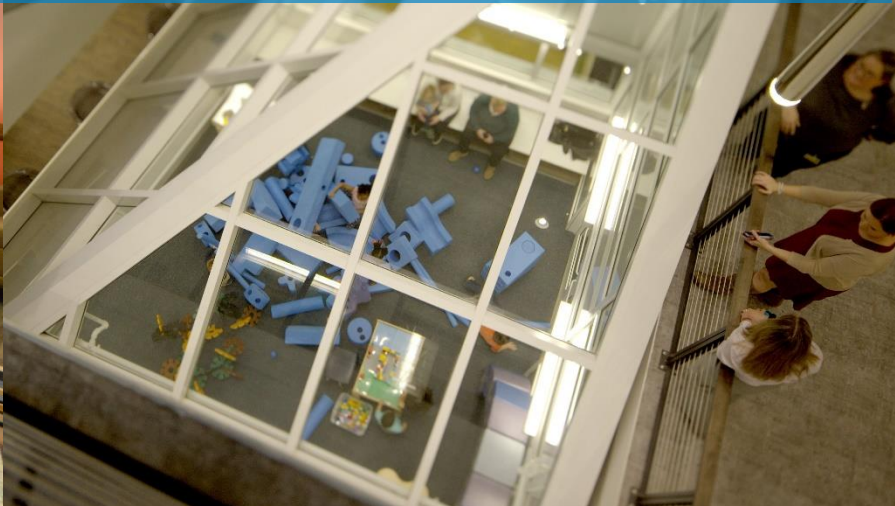
*"Your law enforcement officers are very lucky to have been working in partnership with your family safety center. To be included in that facility must be validating that LE is an important partner in helping families heal after a traumatic experience."*







# Nashville Family Safety Centers





# OFS FAMILY SAFETY CENTERS

Nashville's Family Safety Centers provide services to individuals who have experienced interpersonal violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, and human trafficking. The two Centers provide supportive services through OFS advocates and case managers along with multiple partner agencies, all in one place. These services include safety planning, danger assessment, information on abusive behaviors, referrals and resources, court accompaniment, and Orders of Protection.

Nashville's **community-based** Family Safety Center (FSC) is the largest Family Justice Center in the country and houses essential onsite and drop-in partners. The FSC is located at 610 Murfreesboro Pike and is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m. for walk-in services and appointments. Emergency services are available after-hours and on weekends. **Phone:** 615-880-1100 **Email:** [FSCINFO@jis.nashville.org](mailto:FSCINFO@jis.nashville.org).

The Jean Crowe Advocacy Center (JCAC) is the only fully **court-based** Family Justice Center in the country for clients who have cases in criminal and civil courts. The JCAC creates a supportive environment for clients to receive services while waiting for court apart from their abuser. The JCAC is located at the Ben West Building at 100 James Robertson Parkway, Suite 114, and is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Phone:** 615-862-4767 **Email:** [jeancroweadvocacycenter@nashville.gov](mailto:jeancroweadvocacycenter@nashville.gov)

## Family Safety Centers Partners:

The Office of Family Safety and its Family Safety Centers have multiple co-located and drop-in partners that help provide wrap-around services all in one safe location. These include the following:

### ***Co-located & Drop-In Partners:***

- MNPd Family Intervention Program (FIP)
- Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPd) Domestic Violence, Youth Services, Sex Crimes, and Vice Units/Divisions
- Department of Children's Services (DCS)
- Office of District Attorney General (both Centers)
- Davidson Co. Sheriff's Office & Archangel Security
- Juvenile Court
- AGAPE Morning Star Sanctuary
- FiftyForward Victory Over Crime
- Human-Animal Bond in TN (HABIT)
- Legal Aid Society TN & Cumberlands (both Centers)
- Mary Parrish Center (MPC)
- Nashville Children's Alliance (NCA)
- Sexual Assault Center (SAC)
- TN Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
- YWCA of Nashville & Middle TN (YWCA-both Centers)

### ***Community Referral & Multi-Disciplinary Team Partners:***

- Metro Civil & Criminal Courts (Clerks, Probation, Judges)
- Metro Emergency Communication Department
- Metro Fire Department
- Metro General Hospital
- Metro Health Department
- Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Metro Nashville Public Defender's Office
- Metro Social Services

- Catholic Charities
- Centerstone
- Conexión Américas
- Dept. of Veterans' Affairs, IPV Program
- End Slavery TN
- Epic Girl
- Family & Children's Services
- Hispanic Family Foundation
- Martha O'Bryan
- Mental Health Co-op
- Middle TN Mental Health Institute
- Oasis Center
- Our Kids Clinic
- Park Center
- Prevent Child Abuse TN
- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation
- Tennessee State Probation & Parole
- The Next Door
- The U.S. Attorney General's Office
- Thistle Farms
- Voices for Victims
- You Have the Power
- Area hospitals (Metro General, St. Thomas, TriStar Hospitals, Vanderbilt)
- Colleges and universities (Belmont, Lipscomb, Nashville State, Tennessee State, Trevecca, Vanderbilt)



# OFS CLIENT SERVICES

The continued challenges of the pandemic did not interrupt OFS's ability to provide comprehensive services to clients in a safe environment. In 2021, OFS Client Services continued to improve and enhance its remote services developed in 2020, while phasing back to in-person advocacy services with the availability of vaccines.

In May of 2021, the Jean Crowe Advocacy Center (JCAC), which had been closed due to space restrictions during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, was able to re-open on a limited scale. This meant that Order of Protection petitioners were able to meet with an advocate at the JCAC and receive court support in the courtroom. Similarly, in May of 2021, OFS increased the number of on-site advocacy staff at the Family Safety Center (FSC) to begin offering regular in-person advocacy to onsite clients.

Safety precautions were essential in 2021 with the return to in-person advocacy and with the continued ups and downs of multiple highly contagious COVID-19 variants. These safety precautions included plexiglass dividers, masks, and hand sanitizer that were provided for staff and clients at both Centers. OFS advocates continued to offer remote advocacy services through the use of "all-in-one" devices to ensure accessibility to individuals that chose to receive services virtually. OFS also continued its 2020 nationally recognized practice of making "cold call" and text outreach attempts to former clients to assess any new or ongoing needs. In 2021, these were utilized during the holiday season to provide holiday financial resources to recent and former clients.



OFS Staff & Intern in JCAC Support Room with plexiglass divider



OFS Advocate, Vicki Jones, on OFS "All-in-one" remote service machines

Language Access Plan 2021



In 2021, OFS enhanced services to its Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients by creating a Language Access Plan outlining how to best provide accessible services to individuals who are non-English speaking or have limited proficiency. OFS also implemented new policies and procedures, such as ASL Video Remote Interpretation for deaf and hard-of-hearing clients, and a new interpretation line specifically for indigenous languages.

Finally, as the trend of many clients needing ongoing assistance continued in 2021, OFS requested and received American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to increase its case management program for OFS clients. In 2021, case management staff consisted of one case manager focused on clients from the human trafficking court or OFS advocacy clients who had experienced human trafficking. With this funding in 2022, OFS will hire four additional

high-risk case managers for clients who are at the highest risk of being killed by their abuser and for clients with complex needs.

*"[My advocate] was the most sympathetic, compassionate, understanding, knowledgeable, and helpful person that I have ever met. She gave me hope."*

~OFS Client





## Client Advocacy Visits to the FSC & JCAC

In 2021, OFS had a total of **13,320 client visits**, a 9% increase from the previous year, and served **4,141 individual clients**, a 1% increase from the previous year. 1,714 of these visits, or **143 per month**, were to the FSC, while 1,298, or **108 per month**, were to the JCAC.

In 2021, a significant number of clients returned or reached out to advocates for more than one visit, demonstrating a need for case management. **67% of clients returned for two visits** (140% increase), **25% for five visits** (131% increase).

**10,308** of the client visits were **remote client contacts** made via phone and text message to increase accessibility for clients who could not come to either Safety Center in person. OFS's live-chat function on the OFS website was also important to maintain accessibility and OFS staff were able to answer **137 chat requests** in 2021.

A majority of clients' primary victimization continued to be **domestic violence, with 91% of clients**. However, there were significant increases in other victimizations from 2020, such as adult sexual assault (182% increase), child sexual abuse (194% increase), labor trafficking (162% increase), sex trafficking (133% increase), and stalking (167% increase). Additionally, **78% of clients identified as women**, and **16% as men** in 2021, with 6% unknown. A statistically small number of clients were transgender or non-binary, and **139 clients identified as LGBTQ**. **256 clients identified as having a disability**.



OFS Staff utilize ASL Video Remote Interpretation

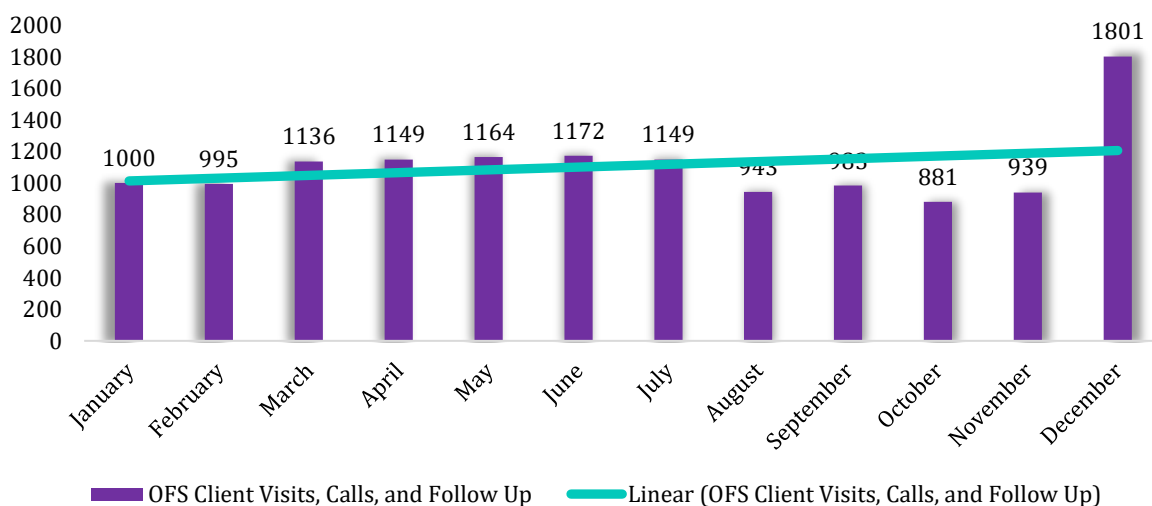
### OFS Client Visits



### OFS Individual Clients

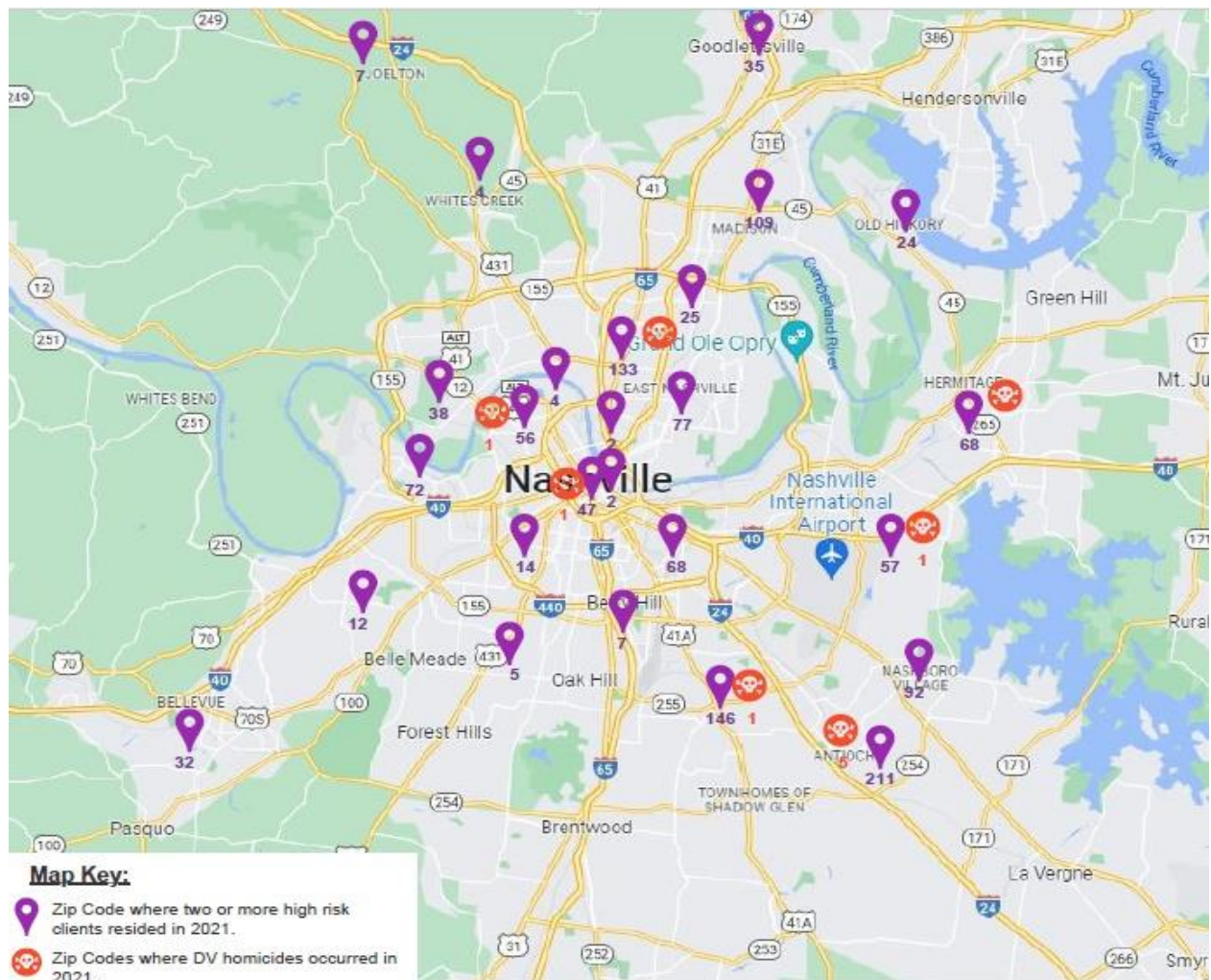


### OFS Client Visits, Calls, and Follow Up



The majority of OFS clients identified as **Black or African American at 35%**. This was followed by clients who identified as White at 29%, Hispanic or Latinx at 11%, 1% multiracial, and 1% Asian or Pacific Islander. While most clients spoke **English at 69%**, 8% of clients spoke Spanish, and 1% spoke Arabic.

In 2021, OFS translated **20** client documents and brochures into Arabic, and there was a **19%** increase in non-English speaking clients to the previous year in 2020.



The above map shows the **distribution by zip code of OFS's high-risk clients** served in 2021, and the locations of domestic violence homicides that occurred in 2021. Located in Antioch, **37013 had the highest number of high-risk clients** with 211 clients, followed by 37211 with 146, 37207 with 133, and 37115 with 109. OFS also provided services to a small percentage of high-risk clients who reside outside of Nashville when the abuse they experienced occurred within Davidson County.

*"Before going in to start this process, I was sad, hurt (emotionally), stressed, confused, praying that I get the help I need.*

*After finishing, I was able to take a deep breath and feel relieved as I was offered all the help I needed."*

*~OFS Client*



## Client Advocacy Safety Enhancements Provided

“Client safety enhancements” are services provided by OFS advocates that increase clients’ safety and well-being. In 2021, **29,570 safety enhancements** were provided, including the following **14,912 top-tier safety enhancements**:



This represents a **10% increase in safety enhancements** from 2020. Additionally, OFS advocates made **50 Metro Social Services referrals** and **787 OFS’s High-Risk Intervention Panel referrals**. The number of OP petitions completed by an OFS advocate held steady from the previous year at **41% of petitions overall**, continuing to demonstrate the benefit of improved accessibility through remote OPs. OFS advocates also continued to focus on two of the highest risk indicators that exponentially increase the risk of being killed – firearms access and strangulation. In 2021, OFS advocates reviewed **strangulation lethality information with 1,229 clients**, and **8 clients agreed to complete a firearms identification form** to assist with the legally required dispossession of their abuser’s illegal firearms.

## Client Case Management

OFS has provided case management services for clients who have experienced human trafficking since 2019. These clients are primarily identified in the Cherished Hearts Human Trafficking Court Program, coordinated by the General Sessions Criminal Courts and Judge Ana Escobar.

In 2021, OFS expanded its Client Case Management Program to serve all victims of intimate partner violence, rather than solely providing services for victims of human trafficking. As mentioned previously, OFS had one full-time case manager in 2021. Case management will increase significantly in 2022 with American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding for four additional high-risk case managers.

OFS provided the following case management services in 2021:



*Cherished Hearts Clients at  
2021 Graduation*



**444**  
Case  
management  
sessions



**41**  
Case management  
clients



**367**  
Safety Enhancements



**473**  
Referrals to  
Community Partners

Of the 41 clients provided case management, OFS worked with **32 victims** through the Human Trafficking Court and **9 victims** from FSC and partner referrals. For community partner referrals, OFS assisted clients with **130 financial assistance** referrals and **80 mental health** referrals out of the 473 total referrals made.

***OFS Case Management Story:** A case management client and participant in the Cherished Hearts began her work with OFS and court partners after she had lost custody of her daughter and ended up in an abusive relationship as a result of addiction. With the help of OFS's case manager and the Court, the client successfully completed in-patient treatment, received therapy from the Sexual Assault Center, found employment, and graduated in October 2021 from the Court program. The client now gives back to the community and works at a shelter where she provides recovery services for homeless women with addiction.*

## Impact of Client Services

OFS clients receive an exit survey to provide OFS with feedback and gauge whether clients experienced feelings of increased safety, hopefulness, and healing. Clients are also able to provide feedback on what was beneficial to them during their visit and where improvement is needed.

In 2021, clients shared the impact that services had on them by increasing their positive feelings and decreasing negative ones. Client survey results include:



87 %  
**Felt More  
Hopeful**



75% at entry  
18% at exit  
**Felt Nervous**



9% at entry  
46% at exit  
**Felt Knowledgeable**



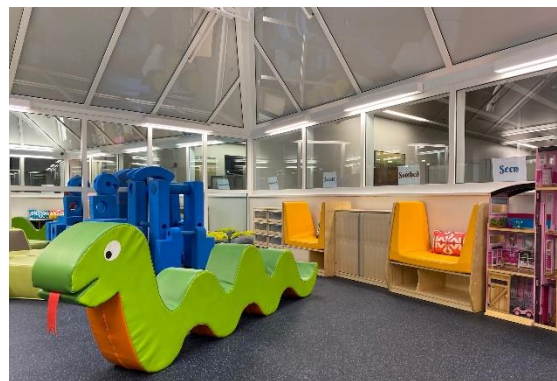
16% at entry  
70% at exit  
**Felt Supported**



28% at entry  
4% at exit  
**Felt Alone**

## Child Clients in the Family Safety Centers

OFS continued to prioritize efficient and effective services for child clients and family systems impacted by interpersonal violence in 2021. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of vaccines for children significantly reduced these specialized child services. While children still came to the FSC and JCAC with caregivers, they were only allowed to enjoy the large Play Pyramid space in singular family groups. Children were also able to accompany caregivers into client services support rooms with separate play spaces equipped with easy-clean toys and activities.



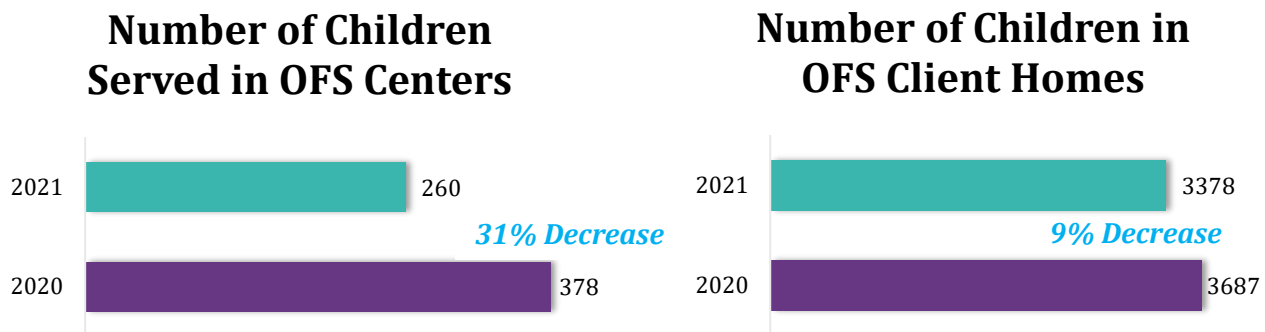
*FSC Play Pyramid*

***"Everyone was great! Attitudes, communication skills, made my daughter sooo comfortable that she asked to go back. Thank you all for what you do!!"***

*~OFS Client*



With the steady increase in remote services, OFS saw a **31% decrease** in children visiting the FSC from the previous year. The continued disruption caused to family routines by COVID-19 in 2021 may have prevented parents from accessing OFS services, potentially accounting for a **9% drop** in the number of children impacted by services provided to their caregivers.



In 2021, OFS's Child Trauma Specialist worked to update OFS's child spaces with toys, sensory items, and activities that attend to both "hyper" and "hypo" arousal needs of the children that are served at the Centers. This included the addition of weighted blankets, tactile activities, and agility toys such as a colorful tunnel. OFS also added dress-up items that allow the children to tap into their imagination and creativity. The OFS Specialist worked with ACE Nashville to provide pertinent information to increase OFS staff's training, understanding, and ability to respond appropriately to children and families that have experienced traumatic events.

## Support People in the Family Safety Centers

Oftentimes, clients come to the FSC and JCAC with a supportive family member or friend. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, support people were not permitted unless there was a special need. For this reason, **285 support people** visited the FSC and the JCAC, a **decrease of 38%**.

## Order of Protection Civil Legal Attorney (CLA) Program

Since August 2015, OFS and the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland (LAS) have partnered to improve access to free civil legal representation for high-risk interpersonal violence victims through the CLA Program. In 2019, AGAPE also began providing free legal representation for the CLA Program. This program creates a streamlined process for victims to apply for free legal representation for their Order of Protection (OP) hearing. Without these volunteer attorneys, victims are left representing themselves alone in court, often responding to direct questioning by their offender or offender's attorney. OFS advocates identify the highest-risk cases where the OP Petitioner is unrepresented by an attorney. In 2021, OFS advocates made **360 CLA referrals to LAS or AGAPE**. LAS provides representation with volunteer lawyers from 16 law firms, listed below:

*Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis LLP, Bradley, The Cassell Firm, Law Office of Kyle Turner, Corley, Heard, Lyle, Levy & Langford PLC, Butler Snow LLP, Law Office of Erin Coleman Esq., Law Office of Heather Meshell, Sites & Harbison PLLC, Law Office of Cynthia Cheatham, Weatherly, McNally & Dixon PLC, Thompson Burton PLLC; & Middle TN Meditation & Legal Services PLLC, Robing Kimbrough Hayes, Esq., The Law Office of Janae P. Davis, Maynard Cooper & Gale LLP*

## High-Risk Domestic Violence Probation Advocate Liaison

In partnership with General Sessions Court Probation and Batterers Intervention Programs (BIPs), OFS provides advocacy to domestic violence victims whose high-risk offender is on probation. An OFS advocate reaches out to victims to ensure offenders comply with court orders pertaining to victim safety. In 2021, the OFS Advocate Liaison received **32 high-risk probation referrals** and was able to reach **13 victims** in those cases. This initiative aims to reduce communication and safety gaps between an offender's probation officer and the victim.

OFS typically meets quarterly with General Sessions Court Probation and BIPs to review these cases and offer the victim's perspective on the offender's lethality and any information about non-compliance with probation. In 2021, the agencies met in the last quarter of the year. In this meeting, the OFS high-risk probation advocate introduced a new referral process where victims can better detail any violations or behaviors the probation officers should be aware of, and any resource needs from the OFS advocate. This will improve communication and collaboration between OFS and probation and enhance victim safety.





# FSC PARTNER CLIENT SERVICES



## Onsite & Drop-in Partners



The Victor S. Johnson III  
*Nashville Children's Alliance*  
— a child advocacy center —



AGAPE



THE MARY PARRISH CENTER

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**



**HABI**  
HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND IN TENNESSEE

*Fifty Forward*  
Love life at 50+



**Legal Aid Society**  
of Middle Tennessee & the Cumberland

Working Together. Doing Justice. Restoring Hope



**SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER**



Metro Office of  
Family Safety



tennessee  
**coalition**  
to end domestic & sexual violence

Office of the  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
NASHVILLE



**Juvenile Court**

METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE & DAVIDSON COUNTY



Department of  
**Children's Services**



## Clients Served by Partners in the Family Safety Centers

In 2021, OFS's Family Safety Centers' partner agencies continued to do incredible work serving people who experienced interpersonal violence during uncertain times with the ongoing pandemic. The FSCs Leadership Committee **met 5 times** during 2021, convening leaders from onsite and drop-in partners, to discuss challenges and find solutions together.

One of the most significant challenges for partner agencies was the loss of staff in 2021 due to the "great resignation" that impacted the entire country. This and the continued COVID variants created gaps in drop-in partner agency capacity to staff the Center for collaborative service provision. However, more fully co-located agencies came back in person to the FSC with the onset of vaccines in the Spring. This includes the Nashville Children's Alliance and Metro Nashville Police Family Intervention Program, which both provide counseling and advocacy services to victims. Additionally, the AGAPE-Morning Star Program continued onsite after-hours and weekend emergency Orders of Protection at the Center ensuring 24-hour coverage throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are descriptions of these agencies' work in 2021.



## Metro Nashville Police Family Intervention Program (FIP)



*MNPDP FIP Team*

The Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPDP) Family Intervention Program (FIP) was created in 1975 and in 2021, included 9 therapists and 6 advocates. In 2021, FIP restructured to include its first-ever Captain, Pete Dusche, and Division

Manager, Kim Page. OFS also worked with FIP to secure ARP funding for additional FIP therapists to begin work in 2022.

FIP provides free and confidential therapy, advocacy, and outreach to people who have experienced abuse or violence. In 2021, FIP provided **3,707 therapy sessions**, and **952 individuals were served by FIP advocacy and outreach**. FIP is fully co-located in the Family Safety Center and works together with OFS staff and FSC partner agencies to provide comprehensive services in one place.



**952**

Individuals served by MNPDP  
FIP advocates & outreach



**4,242**

MNPDP FIP Therapy  
Sessions

*"Since being co-located in the Family Safety Center with our partners, our work to serve clients has been more seamless. We are able to focus on our specialization areas and work with partners on their specialization areas for our clients. This has led to clients receiving organic whole services."*

*~Kim Page, Division Manager, MNPDP FIP*





## Nashville Children's Alliance (NCA)



NCA Staff & Donors

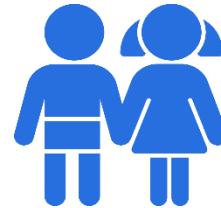
The Nashville Children's Alliance (NCA) is the child advocacy center for Nashville-Davidson County and provides forensic interviews and therapy to children who have experienced abuse.

In 2021, NCA provided **421 forensic interviews** and **3,806 therapy sessions** to children who had experienced severe physical abuse and/or sexual

abuse. NCA works at the FSC in conjunction with the Department of Children's Services, the MNPY Youth Services Division, and the Child Abuse Prosecution Unit at the DA's Office. NCA also coordinates the Child Protective Investigative Team (CPIT) meetings at the Center for these partners to collaboratively review child abuse cases. In 2021, OFS worked with NCA to secure ARP funding for additional NCA therapists to begin work in 2022.



**3,806**  
NCA Client  
Therapy Sessions



**421**  
NCA Forensic Interviews  
Conducted

*"Working in such a collaborative environment like the FSC is transforming the way we are able to serve clients. The partnerships and co-location create a proactive response rather than a reactive one. We all work together to develop new ways to support, connect, and care for those in our community."*

*~ Gina Crean NCA Director of Clinical Programs*

## AGAPE Morning Star Sanctuary

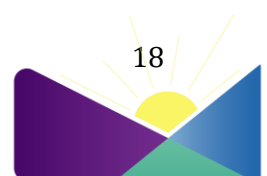
Morning Star Sanctuary, a program of AGAPE, provided **1,174 Orders of Protection** at the Family Safety Center after-hours and overnight for emergency assistance. AGAPE staff enhanced services during 2021, ensuring that every overnight and after-hours client received an abbreviated danger assessment as well as safety planning. AGAPE advocates also linked clients to OFS with their permission to receive follow-up contact the following business day after services were received. In 2021, OFS worked with AGAPE to secure ARP funding for additional after-hours advocates to begin work in 2022.



**1,174**  
After Hours OPs  
from AGAPE

*"AGAPE enjoys being a part of an ever-expanding, coordinated effort the Nashville community can really count on. Folks need to know they have a support system that 'gets it' and the AGAPE at FSC partnership is proof that out-of-the-box programs get things done. Together, we are bridging inherent gaps and gaining ground in victim advocacy and crisis intervention."*

*~Shanna Shilling, AGAPE Morning Star Director of Domestic Violence Programs*



## OFS & Partner Agency Client Referrals

Referrals between partner agencies and OFS provide crucial connectivity for clients to receive the comprehensive services they need. In 2021, **OFS advocates provided clients 12,714 referrals** and the **OFS case manager provided 473 referrals** to partners, most frequently to MNPDP FIP for counseling, MNPDP for detective assistance, Legal Aid Society for legal representation, and the District Attorney's Office.

**FSC partners referred 1,829 clients** to OFS in 2021, with the majority coming from **MNPDP at 37%** and the **District Attorney's Office at 16%** of referrals. The strength of co-location was especially apparent from the perspective of client experiences. The following provides vignettes of client experiences at the Centers to demonstrate the impact of co-location and wrap-around services.

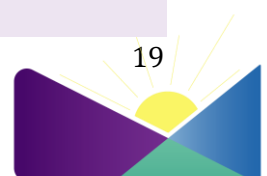
***OFS & MNPDP FIP, MNPDP DVD:** An Arabic-speaking client came to the FSC for an Order of Protection (OP) against her husband who she was extremely scared of and had received threats from others in the family. She had already been working with an MNPDP FIP advocate who partnered with the OFS Arabic-speaking advocate to create a safety plan with the client and provide her with financial resources to change the locks in her home. A domestic violence detective also spoke with the client to offer himself as a resource.*

***OFS & MNPDP Family Intervention Program (FIP) Partnership Story:** While obtaining an OP with an OFS advocate, a client made comments about being suicidal. The advocate contacted a FIP therapist who spoke with the client. The client disclosed to the therapist that she had attempted suicide the previous week. The client was given counseling support and connected to Mobile Crisis.*

***OFS Client Services, OFS Outreach, Hispanic Family Foundation:** A Spanish-speaking client came to FSC after speaking with the OFS Community Outreach Specialist at the Hispanic Family Foundation. This client was severely physically assaulted by her daughter's boyfriend who had been stalking her. An OFS Spanish-speaking advocate assisted this client with an Order of Protection and afterward, a FIP therapist was able to meet with her about FIP's therapeutic services.*

***OFS & Bridges:** A Deaf client came to OFS for services. She was in a complicated situation involving sexual violence and had been having difficulty accessing services because of her disability. OFS's Language Access Coordinator worked with Bridges for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to provide video ASL interpretation services for this client so that she could complete an OP and supportive services at the FSC.*

***OFS & the Sheriff's Office:** A woman was incarcerated on a parole violation from events stemming from her abuser holding her captive. When the woman's jail case manager learned this, they reached out to OFS and an OFS advocate helped the client take out an Order of Protection and referred her case to the High-Risk Intervention Panel. Ultimately, her parole violation was dismissed, and she was released.*







# Collaboration & Teamwork





# COLLABORATION & HIGH-RISK TEAMWORK

The Office of Family Safety (OFS)'s High-Risk Programs are focused on the multidisciplinary, wrap-around response to the elements of interpersonal violence that make individuals at high risk for continued violence or death. Even with the ongoing pandemic, OFS's multidisciplinary teams continued to meet and serve the needs of high-risk victims in Nashville. OFS continued to hold large collaborative meetings via Zoom for partner and staff safety from COVID-19 variants while engaging partners, flagging issues, and responding to high-risk cases through its many multidisciplinary teams. Data for meetings, teams, and case reviews are included below:



1,262

Intimate Partner  
High-Risk Case  
Reviews



1,452

Child Abuse &  
Neglect Cases  
Reviewed



1,165

Vulnerable Adult &  
Elder Cases  
Reviewed



42

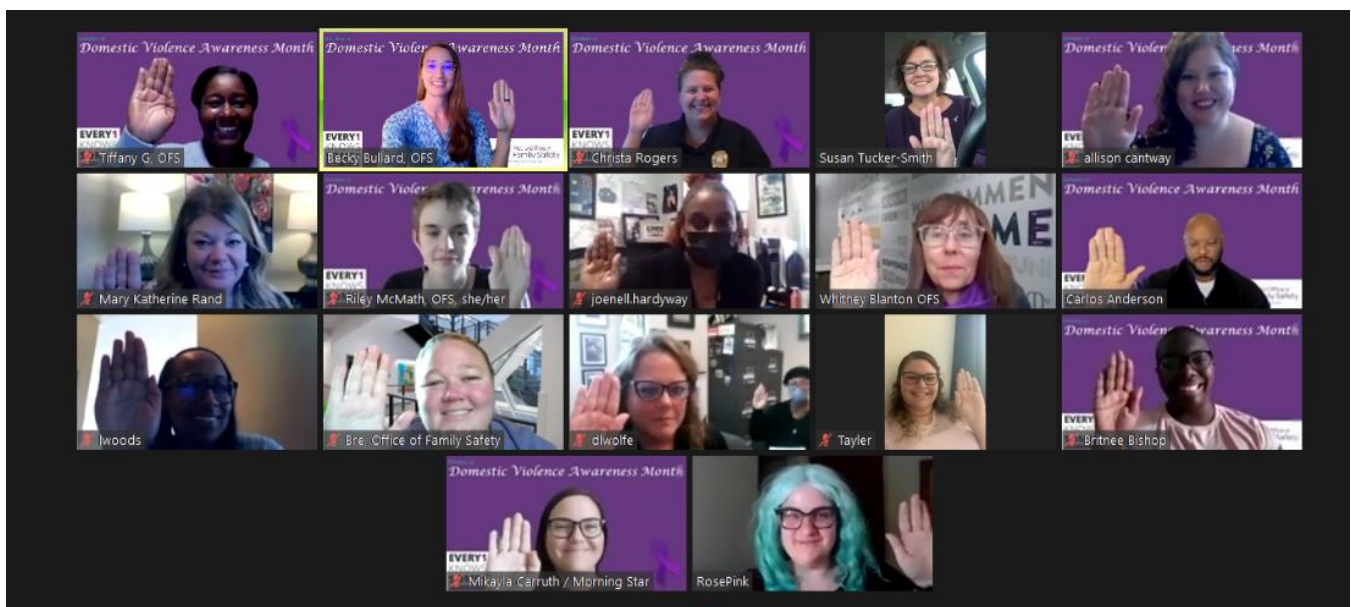
OFS-hosted Multi-  
Disciplinary High-  
Risk Team Meetings



11

Multi-Disciplinary  
Teams, Taskforces, or  
Committees at FSC

In addition to the High-Risk Intervention Panel (HRIP) managed by the OFS, the Child Protective Investigative Team (CPIT) led by the Nashville Children's Alliance (NCA), the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) led by the Sexual Assault Center (SAC), and the Vulnerable Adult Protective Investigative Team (VAPIT) led by the DA's Office regularly conducted case reviews at the FSC or through virtual meetings in 2021 when necessary.



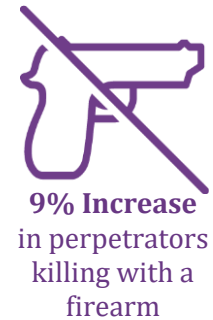
HRIP Members wearing purple for Domestic Violence Awareness Month during the HRIP October 2021 monthly meeting



## Domestic Abuse Death Review (DADRT) & Statewide Fatality Review Teams

OFS manages DADRT, a collaborative team that meets monthly to analyze local domestic violence homicide trends and provides technical assistance to developing teams throughout the state. DADRT members include AGAPE-Morning Star Sanctuary, the District Attorney's Office, Legal Aid Society, Metro Department of Health, Metro Social Services, MNPd DV Division, the Sheriff's Office, Vanderbilt University, You Have the Power, the YWCA, community members, and survivors.

- In 2021, there were **11 domestic violence murders**, making up **14%** of Nashville's total homicides. **7 were intimate partners**. None were OFS clients.
- In **64% or 7** of these domestic violence murders, the perpetrator killed their victim using a firearm; this is a **9% increase** over the previous five years.



In 2021, the Team **met 7 times** and completed its 2021 case review of an intimate partner homicide. Additionally, following a murder-suicide case in 2021, OFS and its partners held several meetings with a surviving member of the family to identify gaps in the response to the victim. As a result, OFS partnered with the Department of Emergency Communication (DEC) to update their call scripts to direct victims contacting 911 to the Family Safety Center when the situation is no longer active and police response is delayed. OFS also assisted DEC in updating its call scripts on all forms of interpersonal violence to give their emergency call specialists the tools they need to properly respond to these high-risk cases, accomplishing a long-standing recommendation from the [2013 Safety & Accountability Audit](#).

In 2021, OFS continued to facilitate the **Statewide Fatality & High-Risk Domestic Violence Committee**, which met five times during 2021 and is comprised of **22 members representing more than a dozen communities across Tennessee**. Members include leaders from law enforcement, domestic violence shelters, family justice centers (FJCs), legal aid, and district attorney's offices dedicated to improving domestic violence victim safety, increasing offender accountability, and promoting the prevention of domestic violence homicides on a statewide level. OFS also continued to provide training and technical assistance to FJCs and partners across the state interested in forming fatality review teams. As a result, the Knoxville FJC was able to form a DV Fatality Review Team in 2021 and craft a resolution, based on Nashville's Executive Order, to enshrine the team in county statute. The resolution was presented to their County Commission on October 18<sup>th</sup> and approved by the Commission on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

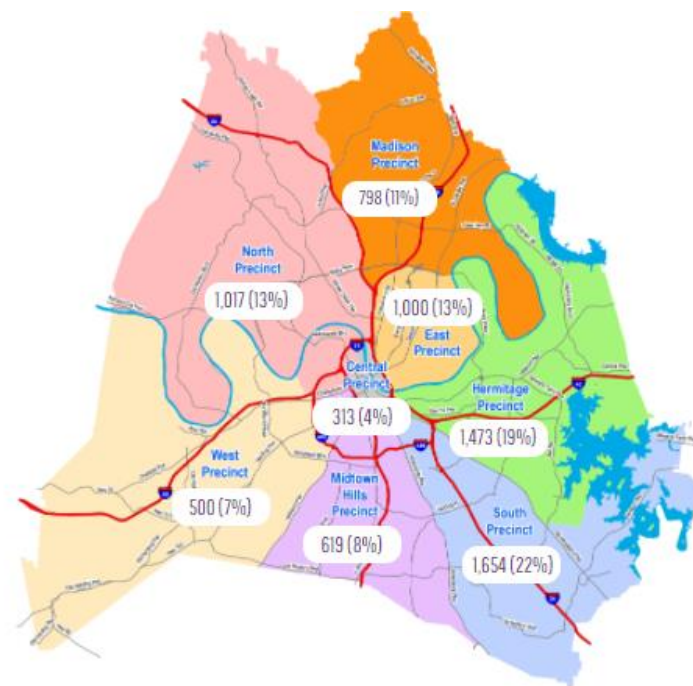
## Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)

The LAP is an 11-question assessment that MNPd officers administer to all intimate partner violence victims to determine their level of risk. In December 2016, OFS, Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPd), and the YWCA launched the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP). If a victim screens in as "high-risk," the officer connects them with the YWCA to plan for their safety. OFS reviews all LAPs and manages multidisciplinary team intervention plans for the highest-risk LAP cases.

- In 2021, MNPd administered **7,579 LAPs**, and **3,278**, or **43%**, screened in as high-risk.

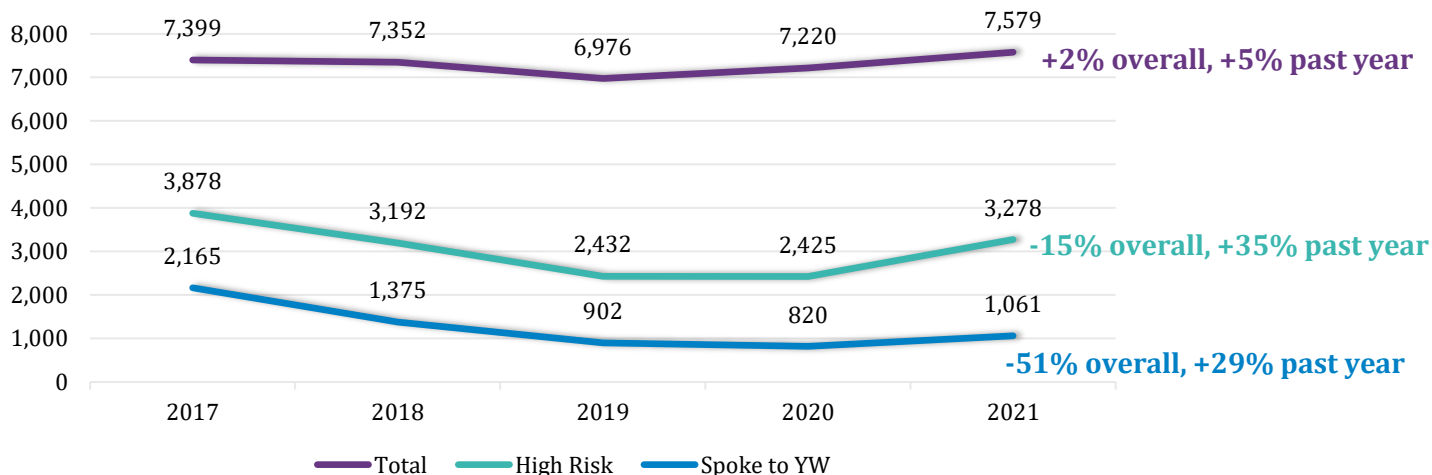


- The YWCA's hotline answered **1,061 LAP calls**. **24%** of shelter intakes were from LAPs.
- The map (right) shows the distribution of LAPs throughout Nashville, with **Hermitage & South Precincts** seeing the highest number of LAPs administered.
- Victims answered "yes" most often to being **strangled, experiencing coercive control**, and **leaving the offender**, the highest risk time to be killed. See questions and percent answered below.



While LAPs administered remained steady over the five years of the program, **the number of victims screening in as "high-risk" and speaking with the YWCA hotline has decreased overall from its inception** (as seen in the graph below). This decrease in high-risk screen-ins and YWCA contact coincides with an increase in victims choosing not to answer LAP questions, possibly from repeat LAPs. A promising trend seen in 2021 was a 35% increase in the number of high-risk LAPs and a 29% increase in the number of victims that spoke to the YWCA, bringing figures of high-risk LAPs closer to the first year of LAP implementation in 2017.

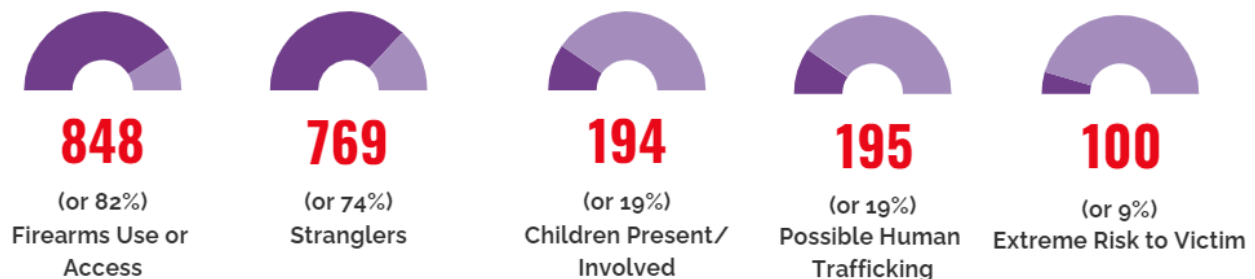
### Lethality Assessments Administered by MNP



## High-Risk Intervention Panel (HRIP)

OFS manages Nashville's High-Risk Intervention Panel (HRIP), a collaborative team that meets weekly to discuss the highest-risk cases from the LAP, the Danger Assessment, and partner referrals to create a plan for victim safety and offender accountability. HRIP includes AGAPE-Morning Star, the Department of Children's Services, the District Attorney's Office, FiftyForward Victory Over Crime, General Sessions and State Probation, the Legal Aid Society, Mary Parrish Center, Metro Social Services, MNPd's DV Division, Sexual Assault Center, the US Attorney General's Office of Middle TN, the YWCA Nashville and Middle Tennessee, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) in weekly and monthly meetings. In 2021, the HRIP team welcomed the Davidson County Juvenile Court to its meetings and has worked closely with them to expand the coordination of services for cases that involve children and youth.

In 2021, the Panel conducted **1,262** case reviews (a **17% increase** over 2020) and met **64 times** in person or via phone. The Panel also flags specific high-risk factors to highlight the severity of risk and possible ways partners and OFS staff can take action. The following are some of the flags from 2021 case reviews:



In addition to the above flags, OFS's HRIP team also flagged **337 offenders as serial abusers, 198 as sex offenders, and 47 offenders as being gang involved**. Noteworthy trends included: most flagged serial abusers had a history of firearms possession and/or strangulation, offenders flagged as gang-involved were also more likely to be firearms carriers and commit sexual assault, and offenders flagged as possible traffickers were more likely to abuse when children were present. These flags give insight into the possible follow-up needs of victims and encourage accountability strategies for offenders.

In 2021, OFS staff and HRIP partner agency representatives also provided training and technical assistance on the HRIP model to agencies in Chattanooga, TN, and the state of Kansas.

**Mary Parrish & HRIP Story:** *A client moved into Mary Parrish Center's transitional housing program with her children while she was also pregnant with twins. She was part of both the transitional housing and rapid re-housing programs. During her time there she had her twins, began working again as a nurse, started weekly therapy, and became financially independent. HRIP partners helped her safety plan, get an OP, connect her to housing, accompany her to court, and arrest her abuser on outstanding warrants. Mary Parrish told HRIP "You supported her throughout all her successes! When I asked her about sharing all of this with Panel, she wanted to let you know that she 'would not be here watching her babies grow without you.' She went on to say, 'You guys gave us a second chance at a real/happy life and I'm forever grateful for that.'"*



## Domestic Violence & Firearms Dispossession Taskforce

OFS manages the Domestic Violence & Firearms Dispossession Taskforce, which includes the Courts, the District Attorney's Office, General Sessions and State Probation, MNPd, and the Sheriff's Office. Firearms should be dispossessed under Federal and State law after a DV conviction or issuance of an Order of Protection; however, there is no method under Tennessee law to ensure dispossession.

The Taskforce met **2 times** in 2021 and OFS coordinated **two trainings by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFC)**. NCJFC presenters encouraged movement toward firearms dispossession policies in Davidson County and focused on compliance hearings and monitoring. At the end of 2021, the General Sessions Domestic Violence judges **agreed to begin status update hearings** for criminal defendants, and OP respondents instructed to dispossess themselves of their firearms, **beginning in 2022**.



NCJFC Training “Moving Beyond the Honor System in TN: Effective Strategies to Prevent Abusers’ Access to Firearms

While awaiting the launch of firearm dispossession compliance hearings, OFS continued to flag daily firearms indicators on all Circuit and General Sessions OP dockets and all Domestic Violence General Sessions criminal dockets. Individuals are flagged for firearms evidence in criminal affidavits, OP petitions, criminal histories, and LAPs. In 2021, OFS reviewed **11,975** criminal defendants and OP respondents and flagged **5,311 (or 44%)** as having access to firearms. As mentioned in the HRIP section, **848 or 82%** of Panel cases were flagged for firearms (a **10% increase** from 2020) and **48% of victims** answering the LAP indicated their offender had a gun (an **8% increase** from 2020). OFS also **trained 150** FJC Leadership Conference attendees on OFS's firearms work.



## Sexual Assault Response Systems Taskforce

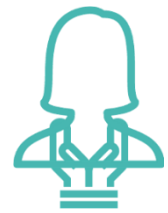
OFS coordinates the Sexual Assault Response Systems Taskforce to increase SANE exam access and evaluate services and responses for sexual assault victims and survivors. The Taskforce's members include the District Attorney's Office, Lacy Strategies, Metro Fire Department, Metro Health Department, MNPd Sex Crimes Unit, MNPS, Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute (MTMHI), the Nashville VA, Our Kids, the Sexual Assault Center (SAC), the TN Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence, TN Dept. of Health, and Vanderbilt Police Dept. as well as area hospitals (Metro General, St. Thomas, TriStar Hospitals, and Vanderbilt) and area colleges and universities (Belmont, Lipscomb, Nashville State Community College, Tennessee State, Trevecca Nazarene, and Vanderbilt). The Taskforce **met 2 times** in 2021.

In 2021, forensic exams were provided to **211 individuals** at SAC's SAFE Clinic, **658 children** at Our Kids, **196 individuals** by Metro General Hospital's traveling team (which includes exams at TriStar Skyline Medical Center, St. Thomas Midtown, and the SAFE Clinic), and **75 individuals** at Vanderbilt Medical Center. Additionally, OFS served **426** clients who indicated on the Danger Assessment that their partner had forced them to have sex.

To support this Taskforce's work, OFS prepared a Sexual Assault Response Survey (to be disseminated in 2022) for sexual assault survivors who engaged with the criminal justice system, survivors who did not engage the criminal justice system, and practitioners who work with survivors to collect data on Nashville's response to sexual assault. The purpose of this survey is to identify gaps in services and response to sexual assault and to receive feedback directly from survivors and practitioners on ways to improve victim safety and offender accountability. OFS hosted **1 webinar** on recognizing and responding to sexual violence facilitated by the Sexual Assault Center.

## Strangulation Response Committee

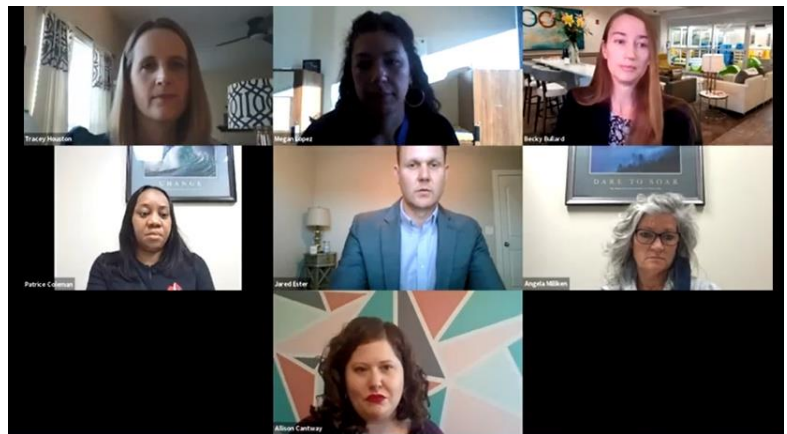
OFS created and leads Nashville's Strangulation Response Committee, which includes members from the DA's Office, Metro Emergency Communication Department, Metro Fire Department, the Metro Health Department, MNPD DV Division, and area hospitals (Metro General, Skyline, and Vanderbilt). Due to OFS planning and hosting Nashville's first annual Interpersonal Violence Summit and Strangulation Summit (below), the Committee **met 1 time** in 2021 and continued to work on a city-wide protocol for each agency's response to strangulation cases, patients, or clients.



**4,469**  
Stranglers Flagged

OFS continued daily strangulation indicators flagging for defendants and respondents with docketed DV criminal cases and/or Orders of Protection. In 2021, OFS identified **4,469**, or **37%**, criminal defendants and OP respondents as stranglers. Additionally, **831** OFS clients, or **54%**, that answered the Danger Assessment indicated their partner had strangled them. **454** of those, or **55%**, indicated their partner had strangled them to the point of unconsciousness. **56% of victims** who answered the LAP indicated their intimate partner had strangled them.

In 2021, OFS coordinated and hosted its **first Strangulation Summit**, an 8-hour virtual training on the dangers and intricacies of strangulation. Strangulation Response Committee partners from law enforcement, victim service providers, medical professionals, first responders, and prosecutors presented to over **150 participants**, representing agencies from **10 different states**. Because of the success of this event, OFS committed to making this an annual event.

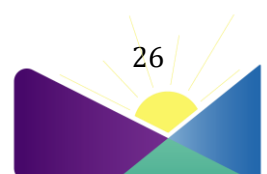


Day 1 Strangulation Summit Panelists from the Department of Emergency Communication, the District Attorney's Office, Metro Nashville Police, and the Office of Family Safety

At OFS's Centers, advocates gave out **1,229** strangulation brochures to high-risk clients.

Additionally, OFS hosted **2 webinars** related to strangulation: One regarding homicides staged as accidental drownings or suicides, facilitated by Forensic Aquatic Training & Consulting, and the other on effective forensic strangulation documentation, facilitated by the Metro Nashville DA's Office and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

*"Once again, a superb training. I look forward to sharing this with my colleagues in Massachusetts." ~ Strangulation Summit Participant*



## Human Trafficking Collaboration

OFS created and leads the Anti-trafficking Collaborative of Davidson County, which includes members from AGAPE, the DA's Office, End Slavery TN, Epic Girl, General Sessions Judge Escobar, General Sessions Probation, Mary Parrish Center, You Have the Power, Metro Nashville General Hospital, MNPd, Nashville Children's Alliance, Our Kids, TBI, Thistle Farms, YWCA, Department of Children Services, Nashville Public Defenders, and the US Attorney General's Office. The collaborative continued to expand in 2021, adding 6 new partner agencies including Advocating Opportunity, the Department of Homeland Security, Legal Aid Society, Oasis Center, TN Probation and Parole, and Vanderbilt Hospital Pediatrics. In 2021, the **Collaborative met 2 times** and enhanced cross-training and collaboration between juvenile and adult agencies by highlighting the efforts of partner agency Epic Girl and working on a resource manual for minors experiencing labor and sex trafficking.



Judge Ana Escobar, Captain Greg Davis, and Chrissy Twilley at the Red Sand 2021 event.

OFS continued its annual "Red Sand Awareness Campaign" during the last week of July and worked with partners from the Collaborative to create social media posts and partner videos describing misconceptions about sex and labor trafficking that were shared across partner social media platforms to amplify messaging. Additionally, OFS hosted an anti-trafficking expert panel, with representatives from OFS, TBI, End Slavery TN, and Free for Life International. OFS culminated the week with an event at the FSC that featured a survivor art gallery, partner resource fair, commemorative sand pouring, and remarks by a survivor and professionals in the field.



Sidewalk art from the Red Sand Event at the Family Safety Center

In partnership with Cherished Hearts, Nashville's Human Trafficking Court led by Judge Ana Escobar, OFS also provides case management services to clients of the Court, as well as a Trauma Specialist to advise the court on best practices for trauma responsiveness (see case management section for client statistics). In 2021, OFS provided multiple trainings for the court, and created and facilitated an alumni group for the graduates of the court to ensure ongoing support.

For events, training, and education on human trafficking in 2021, OFS provided the following:



8

Trainings on Human Trafficking



3

Outreach & Awareness Events



6

Diversion Classes with Education on Trafficking







# Training, Outreach & Community Engagement

**45% OF BLACK WOMEN & 40% OF BLACK MEN EXPERIENCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE, PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, OR STALKING BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THEIR LIFETIME.**



**#PURPLETHURSDAY  
FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS MONTH**



**VOICES of  
Survivors:  
The  
Importance of  
Self Love in  
Healing from  
Trauma**

**Thursday, February 18th  
10:00 am**



# OFS TRAINING & OUTREACH

## OFS Trainings for Metro, FSC Partners & the Community

The Office of Family Safety's Training Program enhances education on interpersonal violence in Nashville through extensive, in-depth interpersonal violence curricula and regular trainings. With the success of its webinar program in 2020, OFS continued to expand the number of remote and in-person trainings with a **58% increase** in trainings offered in 2021.

*This was a great training!! I walked away feeling further equipped to do my job and serve my community.*

*~ OFS training attendee*

OFS also continued to train and provide technical assistance nationally. For example, the Virginia Department of Social Services incorporated OFS's Domestic Violence Education Video into their family violence education course for child welfare workers across Virginia. In 2021, **2,385 on-demand OFS training recordings** were accessed. Additional training numbers include:



**5,774**  
Total Individuals  
Trained by OFS



**1,714**  
Metro Employees  
Trained



**160**  
Total Trainings  
hosted by OFS



**13**  
States Represented  
among Attendees



**96%**  
Satisfied with  
Training

In 2021, OFS hosted multiple large training events for local, statewide, and national partners. Four events, in particular, had wide-reaching local and national impacts. First, at the request of MNPDP's newly created Interpersonal Crimes Branch, OFS developed and delivered **14-week training curricula for police** personnel on

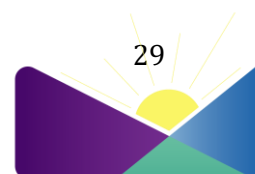


Diane Lance & Chief Drake  
at the 2021 Alliance for  
Hope Conference

interpersonal violence and trauma-informed law enforcement response. These were attended by **470 individuals**. Second, OFS hosted a **5-week Survivor Leadership Training** conducted by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) for 6 VOICES Committee members and 6 additional survivors across the state. Third, as highlighted in the "OFS Milestones" section, OFS and Nashville hosted the Alliance for Hope's annual Family Justice Center Leadership Conference in December, with 150 attendees from FJCs around the country who toured the FSC and JCAC and learned about the work of OFS and its partners. Finally, OFS planned and hosted the first annual "Strangulation Summit" with partners from the Strangulation Response Committee and reaching over **150 attendees from 10 states** (see "High-Risk Teams" section for more details).



OFS's Becky Bullard, Cpt. Rickey Bearden, Judge Ana Escobar, and ADA Christina Johnson presented for International Women Judges Site Visit



## Training Topics & Audiences

### Topics:

- Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking & Sexual Assault
- High-Risk Indicators
- Orders of Protection
- Safety Planning
- Strangulation Prevention
- Trauma Impact & Trauma-Informed
- Victim Advocacy

### Audiences:

- Judges & Commissioners
- Police & First Responders
- Attorneys – prosecutors, private, defense
- Service Providers
- Healthcare Providers
- Educators & Students
- Community Members & Survivors



LaToya Townsend, OFS Director of Outreach & Development, presenting on Cultural Humility

***Training Spotlight:** An anonymous Metro Government employee who received OFS's 'Domestic Violence in the Workplace' training in 2021 sent OFS the following message, "I appreciate OFS training and educating all the departments on this issue. I am a domestic violence victim. I have used the Family Safety Center for a restraining order last year. I adore them! [My advocate] was a lifesaver. They are such a great organization!"*

## OFS Community Engagement & Vulnerable & Marginalized Outreach

With the FSC open just a year before COVID-19 Stay-at-Home orders, OFS's outreach and engagement staff were excited to staff a limited amount of in-person community events in 2021. OFS **reached a total of 1,275 people** at outreach events in 2021, including **567 people from marginalized communities**. These communities included immigrant and refugee populations, those with limited English proficiency, and those from communities with low socioeconomic status.

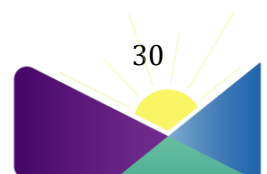
Nashville has the fastest-growing immigrant population in the country with 1 in 8 Nashvillians being immigrants. This creates a vital need to ensure OFS services are accessible to vulnerable and marginalized communities throughout Nashville, especially those that speak languages other than English. More than 85% of OFS clients with LEP (limited English proficiency) speak Spanish. As a result, OFS prioritized community outreach in Hispanic & immigrant communities. The outreach team connected with **36 community members** during World Refugee Day, **148 community members** during MNPd's "Back to School Bash and Night Out Against Crime, and **90 community members** during Conexión America's Family Festival. These events provided OFS the opportunity to engage community members independent of crisis to ensure people know where to find help.



OFS Outreach Coordinator, Maria Arvizu, at the World Refugee Day Celebration



OFS Outreach Coordinator, Maria Arvizu, MNPd's FIP & the Elmahaba Center





The Hispanic Outreach Committee, convened by OFS, **met 3 times** in 2021 to enhance collaboration among service providers and strategically plan ways to better reach the Latino community through resources and awareness events. OFS staff also participate in several community collaboratives including the Nashville Refugee & Immigrant Collective, Encuentro Latino, ACE Nashville, and the TN Coalition's Inclusivity Committee.

OFS also continued its collaboration with the Hispanic Family Foundation (HFF) in 2021 and **provided weekly advocacy and resource** connection at HFF. OFS staff assisted in the coordination of three major Latino community-wide baby showers, vaccination events, and women's health fairs to ensure vulnerable and marginalized community members have access to the services available at Nashville's Family Safety Centers. From community-wide baby showers alone, OFS reached **224 Spanish-speaking individuals**.

OFS continued to enhance its partnerships with Spanish-speaking media to create awareness about services offered at its Centers and educate the community about interpersonal violence. Radio stations La Ranchera 880, El Jefe FM, and online newscast Nashville Noticias amplified OFS's messages on **3 talk shows** and **3 live interviews**, reaching **6,199 viewers**. 2021 also brought a new outreach partnership with the Elmahaba Center. OFS hosted a livestream show in Arabic about domestic violence and the resources available. This event reached over **1,600 viewers**.

OFS's online engagements continued to be an essential way to reach out to communities and included:



**162,507**  
Total Online Engagements



**96,592**  
Facebook Reach



**6,830**  
Video Views



**17,089**  
Website Users

## VOICES Survivor Committee

The VOICES Committee is the Nashville Chapter of the VOICES Survivor Advocacy Network, a national program of the Alliance for Hope International, and was founded in April 2019 following the opening of the Family Safety Center. The VOICES Committee is a "by survivors, for survivors" group that informs the work of Nashville's Safety Centers, ensuring that the mission and work remain survivor-centered.

VOICES **met via Zoom and at the FSC 9 times in 2021**. In addition to these meetings, the Committee participated in community events. VOICES hosted a **resources table** at the annual "**Meet Us at the Bridge**" event for domestic violence



VOICES members at Meet Us at the Bridge

*"Being able to support families of homicide victims was very humbling today. Knowing that these families will never have their loved ones back because of Domestic Violence really hits home why we do what we do." ~ VOICES Member*



Director of Outreach, LaToya Townsend, presents on YWCA Stand Against Racism Panel

homicide victims' families and one of the VOICES members received an honor with the "Survivor of the Year" Award. VOICES members also **planned donation drives**, including a self-care drive for clients and staff at the FSC. Three VOICES members also participated in a **panel on the experience of survivors** in Family Justice Centers at the National Alliance for Hope Leadership Summit.

The VOICES group also helped organize and attend the first **Tennessee Survivor VOICES Leadership Training** during the summer of 2021, in partnership with the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). This training by OVC survivor consultants **provided tools for 12 survivors** around the state of Tennessee to tell their stories in an empowering way.

VOICES continuously advises OFS in its work and is critical to OFS's work because it is impossible to provide helpful services to survivors without survivors letting you know how best to do it.



VOICES members and OFS staff at the National Alliance for Hope Leadership Summit.

## FSC & JCAC Tours

OFS staff resumed in-person tours and site visits at the beginning of 2021 for groups looking to build their own Centers or individuals interested in learning more about OFS's Centers' work. These tours and site visits included individuals and groups from Tulsa, Denver, Arizona, and groups throughout the state of Tennessee such as Meharry Medical College, the Family Justice Center of Chattanooga, Williamson County Juvenile Court, Healing Trust, and FiftyForward.

As mentioned in the "OFS milestones" section, OFS's largest tour in 2021 was for the Alliance for Hope's annual Family Justice Center Leadership Conference in December. **150 conference attendees** from around the country had the chance to tour both the Jean Crowe Advocacy Center and the Family Safety Center. Tour leaders guided guests through multiple stops within the Centers where they learned about OFS partners, services, and programs.



OFS Tour Stop

*"The moment I walked into your center I felt calm and safe. Thank you for the environment you've created to not only help victims, but also help them heal."*

~ Tour Participant

OFS provided the following services in tours and site visits throughout the year:



21  
FSC & JCAC Tours



290  
Professionals toured  
the Centers



7  
Out of Town Site  
Visits



## Volunteers & Interns

In 2021, **25 interns and volunteers** worked **7,202.58 hours** valued at **\$173,837.63**. Interns from 10 schools including new partnerships with UT Martin and Nashville State's paralegal program enhanced our programming. Interns worked both in-person and remotely assisting with direct client services, firearms and strangulation flagging, hospitality, donation sorting and management, community outreach, research, and administrative tasks.



Interns and staff were excited to be back in person after almost two years of working remotely

*"I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to intern with the Case Management program. Through interning with their program, I learned how to provide an exquisite level of services for our clients. I could never ask too many questions and they used every second to teach and mold me into the social worker I am today." ~ OFS Intern*



In 2021, the volunteer program increased in-person opportunities. Volunteers assisted with donations, hospitality in the Family Safety Center, and donation drives. The H.A.B.I.T. therapy dogs program resumed in-person support at the Family Safety Center with two new dogs joining the team—Monique and Zizou. The dogs were able to meet with Center staff and OFS clients to help them feel calm and comforted while receiving services.



*"I love her. She makes me feel nice inside and makes me feel safe. I wish we could take her home." ~ OFS Child Client about HABIT Therapy dog*

## Donations

In 2021, OFS received **5,536** donated items valued at **\$24,894**. OFS continued to receive recurring donations from Starbucks, Whole Foods, Laura Little (Little Lady Big Cause), Costco, Mother to Mother, and Nashville Diaper Connection. In October, OFS hosted a food drive at Kroger's 21<sup>st</sup> Ave location. Nine Vanderbilt students and four community volunteers supported OFS at the day-long drive where **1845** items were donated, totaling **\$2979.16**.

Individual (non-recurring) donations are also crucial to OFS clients. In 2021, OFS had **34 individual donors**. Additionally, OFS hosted its second annual holiday sponsorship program. 11 families were sponsored for the holidays and community members provided gifts, gift cards, and food to support each family.

*"I'm speechless. Thank you. This Christmas is going to be so much better for my children because of this. I can't believe you also got something for me."*

*~ Holiday sponsorship recipient*

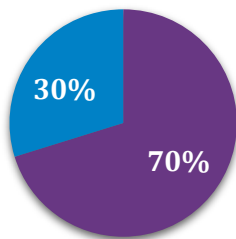


# INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE IN NASHVILLE

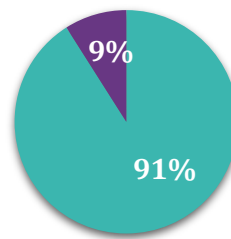
To understand the continued need for services from the Metro Office of Family Safety and its FSC partners detailed in this report, it is helpful to understand the scope of interpersonal violence in Nashville.

## Criminal Justice System Data Overview

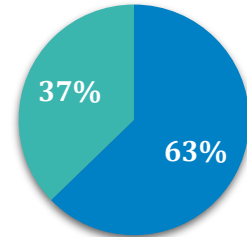
**23,942 DV Cases Reported**



**532 Sexual Assault Reports**



**707 Child Abuse Reports**



■ Intimate Partner ■ Non-Intimate Partner ■ Female ■ Male ■ Physical Abuse ■ Sexual Abuse

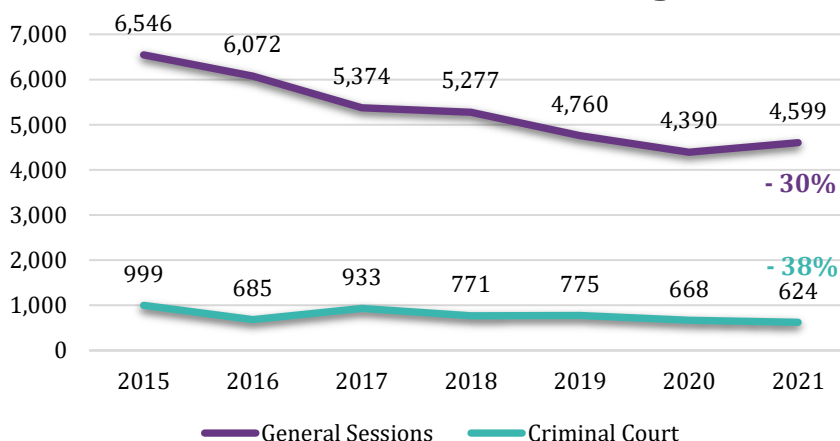
In 2021, the Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPd) received reports of **23,942 reports** of domestic violence\* (-3% from 2020), with **17,305** reports between intimate partners (-0.9% from 2020), **532** sexual assault reports (-19% from 2020), **707** child physical or sexual abuse reports assigned (-41% from 2020), **987** elder abuse incidents (+16% from 2020), **9** (-10%) sex trafficking reports, and **2** (+100%) involuntary servitude reports. Not all reports resulted in criminal warrants. These numbers are also under-representative of interpersonal violence in Nashville as most victims do not report to law enforcement.

For criminal cases, Nashville does not currently collect data on all interpersonal violence trends in court; however, the **Metro Office of Criminal Justice Planning (CJP)** has analyzed domestic violence case trends since 2015 as a recommendation of the 2013 Nashville Safety & Accountability Assessment. In 2021, the CJP reported domestic violence charges filed on **4,599 defendants** in General Sessions Court and **624 defendants** in Criminal Court. Although there was a slight uptick in the number of defendants charged

with domestic violence, the CJP report shows a slight downward trend in domestic violence case filings in Criminal Court.

CJP data did, however, show rates of **dismissed or retired cases decline** slightly in 2021 from **68.1% to 64.4%** while guilty dispositions in General Sessions Court also **decreased from 10.1% to 9.8%.**

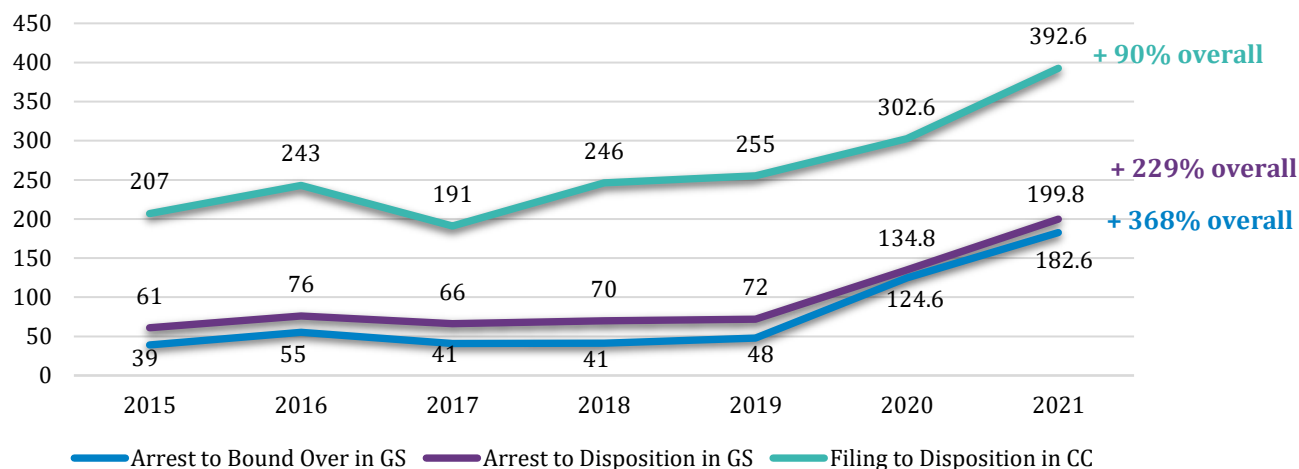
**DV Defendant Case Filings**



\*Domestic violence is defined in Tennessee as abuse by an intimate partner, family member, or co-habitant.



## Average Length of Bond Cases in Days



Over the past seven years, the **time between arrest and disposition** of criminal cases has risen consistently, making engagement in the criminal justice system a difficult, long-term experience for victims. The ongoing pandemic delayed court hearings even more drastically in 2021, creating an exponential increase in the wait for disposition on bond cases with **an average of 200 days** in General Sessions and **393 days** in Criminal Court. Unfortunately, these long waits for criminal cases resulted in long waits between ex parte Orders of Protection (OPs) and fully granted orders because the OPs were made to follow unresolved criminal cases. It was not uncommon in 2021 to see an OP in this temporary status for over six months, leaving petitioners without full OP protection, including the dispossession of firearms.


## Client Services Data Overview

### Medical Forensic Exam & Forensic Interview Data

Medical forensic exams and interviews provided to interpersonal violence victims in Nashville in 2021:



**658**  
Our Kids Child Forensic



**386**  
NCA Child Forensic



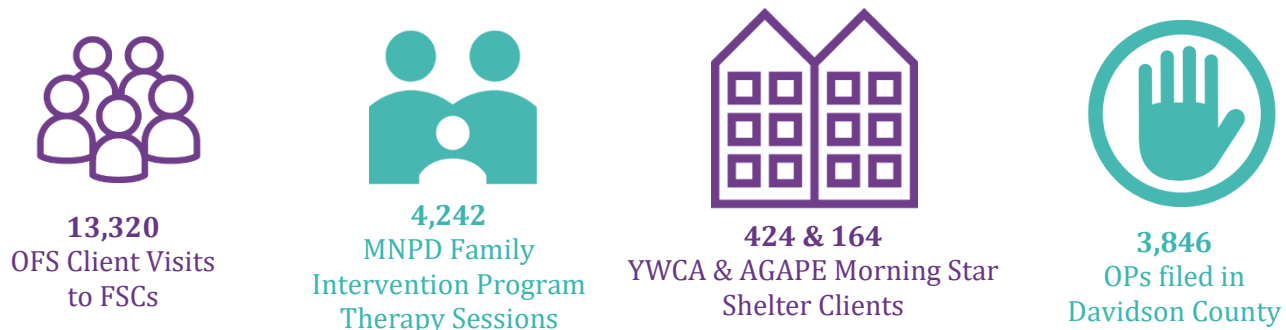
**211**  
SAC SAFE Clinic Adult Exams

In 2021, Nashville non-profit Our Kids provided **658 children** with a medical forensic exam. The Nashville Children's Alliance (NCA), located at the Family Safety Center, conducted **386 forensic interviews** with children with suspected physical/sexual abuse.

Nashville has made significant progress in the number of locations where adult sexual assault exams are available, which continues to increase the number of overall exams provided. In 2021, **211 individuals** were served at the Sexual Assault Center's SAFE Clinic by Metro General's Traveling Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) Team. Metro General also provided **196 additional exams** at Metro General, Skyline, and St. Thomas. Vanderbilt University Medical Center provided **75 exams**.

## Shelter, Therapy & Advocacy Data

The following provides a snapshot of services to interpersonal violence victims in Nashville in 2021:



Of the 3,846 Orders of Protection (OPs) filed during 2021, OFS advocates assisted with **1,567 or 41%** of these petitions. AGAPE Morning Star advocates assisted with after-hours petitions at the FSC for a total of **981 or 26%**. The remaining 33% of OPs were filed at Night Court by petitioners, where an OFS satellite office provides self-help materials for petitioners.

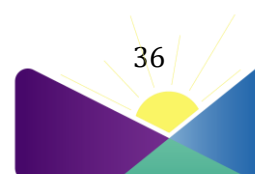
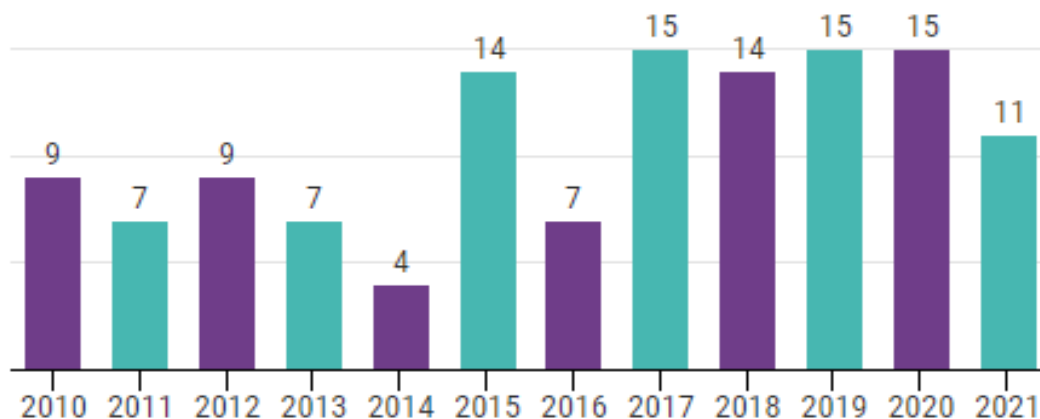
## Domestic Violence Homicide Data Overview

Domestic violence homicides include the murder of an intimate partner, a roommate, or a family member. There were a **total of 11** domestic violence homicides in 2021, a **17% decrease** over the previous five years and the lowest number of domestic violence homicides since 2016.

During 2021, the percentage of domestic homicides involving intimate partners **increased by 23%** compared to the last five years and **increased by 60%** compared to 2020. Intimate partner homicides in 2021 made up the third-highest percentage of all domestic violence murders since 2010. In contrast, the percentage of non-intimate partner domestic homicides (primarily familial) **decreased by 24%** over the same five-year period and **decreased by 40%** compared to 2020.

In addition, **64%** of domestic violence homicides involved firearms as the murder weapon, the highest such percentage since 2018. This emphasizes the importance of OFS and the DV Firearms Disposition Taskforce's continued work around firearm dispossession. To learn more about domestic violence homicide data, please see the OFS Domestic Abuse Death Review Team (DADRT) Annual Report here: <https://ofs.nashville.gov/get-to-know-us/what-we-do/high-risk-programs/dv-fatality-review/>

## Total Domestic Violence (DV) Homicides in Nashville 2010-2021





## Nashville Interpersonal Violence Summit

In 2021, the Office of Family Safety hosted its **first annual Interpersonal Violence Summit**, attended by **134 participants**, that presented and discussed the state of interpersonal violence in Nashville with city leadership, law enforcement, prosecution, and victim service providers. This event was also an opportunity to discuss setbacks and progress while envisioning new possibilities for victims of interpersonal violence to make Nashville the safest city for women and children in the US. Partner agencies were asked to complete a pre-Summit survey to indicate their thoughts around Nashville's response to each interpersonal violence category: domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child abuse, elder/vulnerable adult abuse, stalking, strangulation, and firearms dispossession. During the Summit, attendees separated into breakout groups where they discussed concerns, successes, and recommendations for their designated IPV victimization.



Some of the strongest recommendations for Nashville included:

- Increase the **availability of emergency shelter beds and affordable housing** options to reduce the housing and financial barrier to safety many victims face.
- Reduce the **time that victims or petitioners wait** for criminal cases and civil Orders of Protection to be heard to ensure that victims do not have to wait for justice or protection.
- Implement the use of **virtual/remote hearings or testimony** to make cooperation in prosecution easier and safer for victims and witnesses.
- Improve services for and increase outreach to **marginalized communities** and help build trust in the justice system.
- Create & retain **specialized prosecutors on all interpersonal crimes** to provide expert attention and care to complex cases throughout the criminal justice process. This includes creation of a specialized sexual assault prosecutor and the retention of expert prosecutors in child sexual abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, and human trafficking cases. A unit of these prosecutors would also build expertise given the intersections of these crimes and would mirror the newly created Interpersonal Crimes Branch of the MNPd.
- Enhance **trauma-informed training throughout the criminal justice system** to improve responses to victims and to improve case outcomes to hold offenders accountable.
- Increase the practice of **evidence-based or victimless investigations and prosecution** through thorough gathering and consideration of evidence, including witness testimony, detailed photographs of injuries and scene, expert testimony, medical exams, suspect interviews, etc.

All of the formal recommendations and outcomes of the Interpersonal Violence Summit will be organized and consolidated into an accompanying report to be distributed to attendees, partners, and city leadership in 2022.

# CLIENT PERSPECTIVES

*"Me sentí apoyada y que me pueden ayudar mucho cosa que antes no sabía que me podrían ayudar."*

*"This is a great program, and my advocate has gone above and beyond to help ensure my safety. He was genuinely concerned for my safety and making sure to share his knowledge so that I felt better and right about my steps to protect myself."*

*"Everyone here is so very kind and comforting. Thank you so much for your support. You have a great center here. You help people feel better, more than you may realize. That is wonderful. The DA and every representative were the nicest people I think I have ever met. They were so concerned, sincere, and compassionate. Thank you."*



*"La verdad me alegra mucho que exista un lugar donde nos puedan brindar su ayuda a personas como nosotros cuando nos sucede este tipo de problemas...que no tenemos apollo de nadie y es cuando sentimos que ya no podemos más seguir adelante brindarnos su ayuda nos da mucha confianza y seguridad. Muchas gracias."*

*"I can't say enough good things about my experience! [My advocate] is HEAD AND SHOULDERS above most. I was drawn in by her genuine concern and knew I was talking with the right person to get something done and it did get done! [She] is Amazing!"*

*"[My advocate] helped me seamlessly navigate this daunting process virtually. She patiently and knowledgeably answered my extensive list of questions and provided info and resources immediately via email. I appreciated being able to communicate directly with the same advocate throughout the week as the details of my situation unfolded. Her level of engagement allowed me to feel less nervous, more informed, and confident about the decision to take action on behalf of my own safety and welfare. Nashville is fortunate to have the Family Safety Center as an incredible resource for women and families that are dealing with unhealthy or dangerous domestic situations. Thank you!"*

