



# EVALUATION OF A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

FINAL REPORT  
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## Contents

<b>Overview of the Evaluation</b> .....	1
<b>Evaluation Design</b> .....	2
<b>Procedures</b> .....	3
<b>Who is in the Study?</b> .....	4
<b>Survivors' Changes in Housing Barriers Over Time</b> .....	7
<b>Assistance Received</b> .....	9
<b>Survivors' Stability Over Time</b> .....	15
<b>Summary of Findings</b> .....	26
<b>References</b> .....	28

## Overview of the Evaluation

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In 2016, the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) received federal grant money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement a Domestic Violence Housing First Rapid Re-Housing (DV RR) Demonstration Project with Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM). NAM is a non-profit organization in Houston, Texas that offers various community-based social services such as access to emergency basic needs, housing services, access to healthcare, and assistance with issues pertaining to family violence. Through the initiative funded by HCDVCC, NAM launched a rapid re-housing program specifically for survivors of domestic violence. The intent of the program was threefold:

1. Divert DV survivors from shelter,
2. Help them move quickly into safe housing, and
3. Provide assistance needed to help them sustain safe housing over time.

Specifically, funds could be used to provide rental assistance for at least one year, and up to two, and could also cover security deposits, move-in costs, utility payments, assistance with furniture or household goods, childcare, transportation and other costs related to obtaining and sustaining housing.

Potential clients were first referred from the Harris County Coordinated Entry program, which was designed to prioritize homeless individuals into appropriate services. Survivors then completed an extensive assessment at NAM, and eligible participants were offered the rapid re-housing option. Notably, there were a few participants who entered shelter between completing the assessment and receiving financial rental support from NAM. Eligibility criteria for the program included:

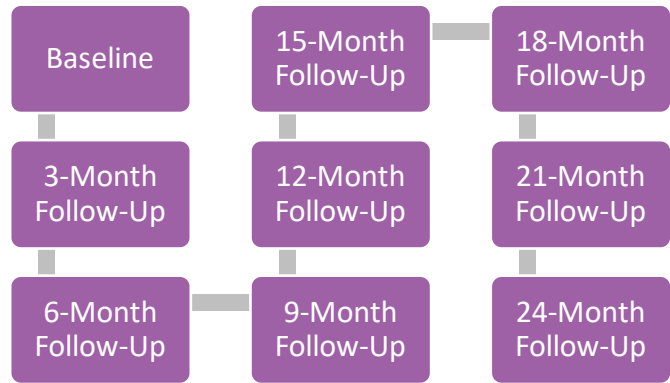
- 18 years or older,
- Homeless,
- Not currently in shelter, and
- Recently experienced domestic violence

Once a client was in safe housing, the role of the case manager was to continue providing individualized advocacy, emotional support, and case management for up to two years. The intent was to follow the Domestic Violence Housing First model of providing community-based, mobile advocacy as well as flexible funding to ensure safe and stable housing for survivors over time (Sullivan & Olsen, 2016).

This report focuses on data collected across all nine time points: baseline, 3-months, 6-months, 9-months, 12-months, 15-months, 18-months, 21-months, and 24-months after baseline.

## Evaluation Design

The original evaluation design involved interviewing NAM’s DV RR clients every 3 months over 12 months, beginning shortly after client enrollment into the program. At entry, clients signed a form stating their understanding that the financial support would last up to twelve months; however, a number of participants reported their case managers saying that the financial support would be up to twenty-four months. Part way through the evaluation, in part due to the revelation that a number of survivors were not receiving supportive case management, the decision was made to increase the training and supervision of case managers and to continue interviewing clients for a second year of interviews, again separated by three months each.



Participants were paid \$50 for each of the interviews, and interviews focused on:



## Procedures

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### RECRUITMENT INTO THE STUDY

NAM enrolled 72 clients into the DV RR program from February 2017 through July 2017. During this time, they referred 42 domestic violence survivors to the evaluation. The evaluation coordinator then contacted the individual survivors and described the evaluation in more detail. If the individual was interested in participating, the baseline interview was conducted in person. One person referred to the study refused to participate. Because of a misunderstanding with the interviewer, a family member of a NAM participant was interviewed instead of the participant -- she was also dropped from the study. Another participant was interviewed for the baseline time point at the same time as the 3-month time point; she too was dropped from the study. Findings are presented on a final initial sample of 39 clients.

The intent of the study was to conduct baseline interviews shortly after people were enrolled into the DV Rapid Re-housing program, in order to capture what clients were looking for from the program and what their housing barriers were at program entry. Unfortunately, only 40% of the participants were recruited into the study and interviewed within the desired time frame of 10 days or less after program entry. An additional 25% of the sample were interviewed 11-29 days after program entry, and a third were interviewed a month or more after entering the DV RR program. This means that baseline data need to be interpreted cautiously. For example, 9 people were already housed when they completed the baseline interview, and for the 35% who were interviewed a month or more after program entry, we do not know their mental health status or social support when they entered the DV Rapid Rehousing program.

### STUDY RETENTION OVER 24 MONTHS

Thirty-nine survivors completed baseline interviews, and 36 of them (92%) were located and interviewed three months later. Study retention remained quite high over time, with 37 participants interviewed at 6-months (95%), 35 participants interviewed at 9-months and 12-months (90%), 34 participants interviewed at 15-months (87%), 33 participants interviewed at 18-months (85%), and 29 participants interviewed at 21 and 24-months (74%). It is important, when interpreting the evaluation findings, to remember that 10 of the 39 original participants were unable to be found at the final interview time point, and their housing and safety experiences are not represented herein.

## Who is in the Study?

### Age range

The 38 survivors who answered the question about age ranged in age from 23 to 63 years old, with the most common age being 29. Almost half the sample (45%) were between the ages of 31 and 41 years old, with a large portion of the sample (39%) between the ages of 20 to 30 years old: See Figure 1.

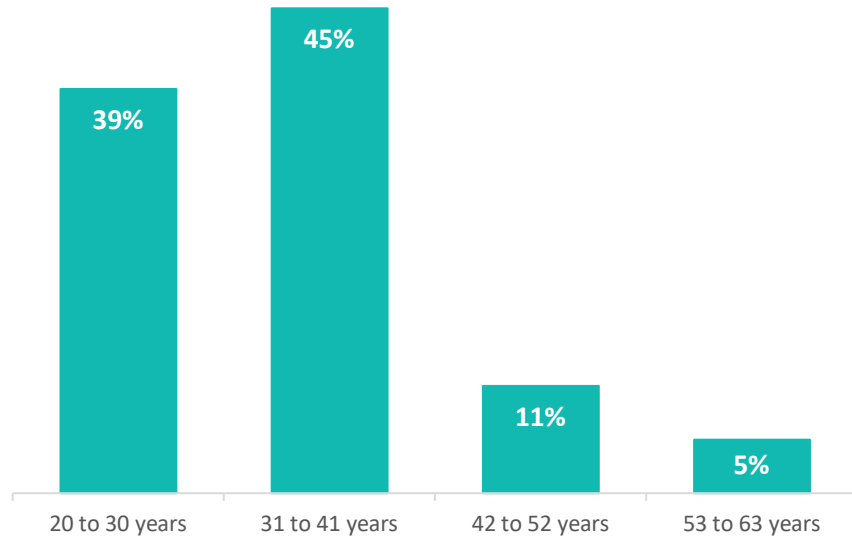


Figure 1. Age of survivors in evaluation, at enrollment (n=38)

### Race/ethnicity

Of the 35 participants who shared their race/ethnicity, 80% identified as African American. See Figure 2.

### Gender and Sexual Orientation

Thirty eight of the 39 participants are women, and all participants identified as heterosexual.

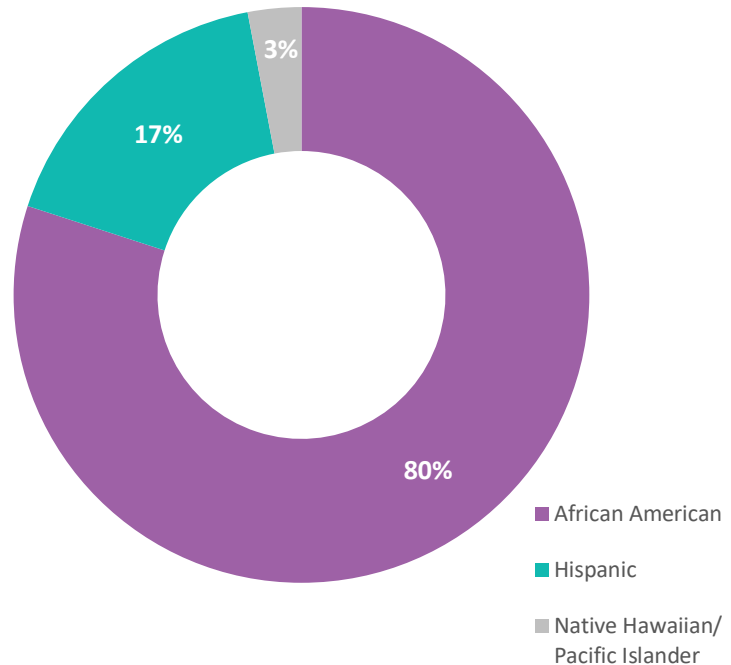


Figure 2. Race/ethnicity of survivors in evaluation, at enrollment (n=35)

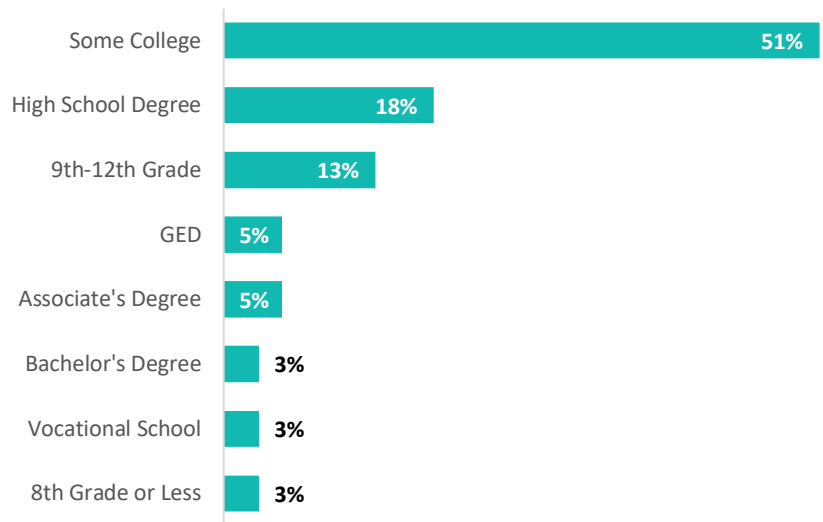


Figure 3. Education level of survivors in evaluation, at enrollment (n=39)

### Education level

Over half of the sample (51%) had attended at least some college. See Figure 3.

### Citizenship

Not being a citizen of the United States can make it much more difficult to find housing. In many cases, they may not qualify for government housing help or may not be able to find adequate employment. Because their residency may be tied to their partner, it may also allow an abusive partner more control over a survivor's life. At program entry, 10% (n=4) of the sample were not citizens or were still in the process of becoming citizens. Two of these individuals had work permits, and two did not. Over the course of two years, one participant was working with their advocate to obtain a U Visa. The other three did not mention wanting or receiving help with citizenship from their advocates.

### Substance Abuse

Participants' substance abuse was measured using the 4-item CAGE substance abuse scale (Ewing, & Rouse, 1970). Each yes answer was counted as 1, and the higher the score on the scale (which runs from 0 to 5), the more severe the substance abuse. A score of 2 or higher is considered as having an abuse issue. At enrollment, 97% of participants' average score was well below the level of abuse. At 24-months (n=29), 100% of participants' average score was below the level of abuse.

### Number of Children

87% of the participants had at least one child, with over half (51%) having two to three children. 18% had four or more children.

### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

PTSD can be an outcome for many survivors of domestic violence. It can affect their quality of life and make it more difficult to heal (Jones, Hughes, & Unterstaller, 2001). To assess if participants struggled with PTSD, a short evidence-based screening tool was used, and people’s scores could range from 0-10. A score of at least 6 out of 10 indicates that the survivor might suffer from PTSD.

At baseline, the majority of participants (72%) scored at least a 6, indicating they may have PTSD. At 24-months, participants that scored 6 or higher decreased to 48%.

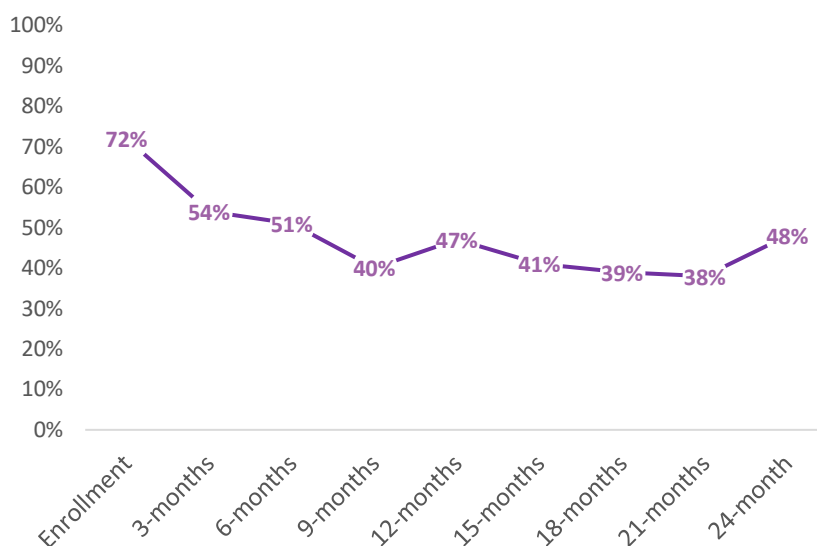


Figure 4. Percent of participants with a PTSD score above a 6 over time (n=39).

### Participants’ Prior Use of Emergency Shelter

Almost three quarters of participants (74%, n=25) had sought emergency housing at some point before their current situation and entry into the study. Nine of the 25 participants who had sought emergency housing had reached out for help from a homeless shelter, and 7 of them had done so between 1 and 3 times in the past.

Almost all (96%) of the 25 participants who had sought emergency housing had reached out for help from a DV emergency shelter. Twenty-one of those who had sought help at a DV emergency shelter had done so between 1 and 3 times in the past. Of those seeking help from a DV emergency shelter, 19 were turned away at least once due to full occupancy. Several participants mentioned that they had to call repeatedly or were put on waiting lists for several months before receiving shelter.

## Survivors' Changes in Housing Barriers Over Time

There are many barriers that can stand in the way of someone who is homeless finding housing. Using a scale developed to assess housing barriers (Gubits, Shinn, Bell, Wood, Dastrup, Solari, ... & McInnis, 2005), participants were asked how big of a problem each of 24 common housing barriers were when they entered the DV RR program. Response options were: not a problem at all, small problem, or big problem. The barrier mentioned by the most people as being a big problem was not having enough income to pay rent (100%), followed by inability to pay security deposit (97%) and being unemployed (72%). These three barriers were also the barriers with the largest change in average response over 24 months. It is interesting to note that the barriers that saw the most change over time were those the participants reported receiving help with from their advocate. Over the two-year evaluation period, some clients reported receiving help from their advocates in their job search efforts, received help to pay security deposits and first month's rent, received help to pay rent on an ongoing basis, and helped pay utility bills.

*"She's been working on a housing voucher. She has been working with me making sure I don't get in my depression anymore. She always watching over us, making sure we will be okay and that we're going to make it."*

*– Participant*

*"I've been keeping up with my case worker and she been trying to give me referrals on housing since I'm about to move and my lease is up, so I've been consistently on the phone with her like a couple of hours a week just to make sure we are on the same page and see if there is any other kind of help she can give me or any other resources that she can help me with."*

*– Participant*

See Table 1 for a comparison between Baseline and 24-month housing barriers listed in order of most change to no change.

<i>Housing Barrier</i>	<i>Baseline</i>			<i>24-Months</i>			<i>Significant Change</i>
	<i>Not a Problem</i>	<i>Small Problem</i>	<i>Big Problem</i>	<i>Not a Problem</i>	<i>Small Problem</i>	<i>Big Problem</i>	
Not enough income to pay rent			100%	28%	7%	65%	Yes
Inability to pay security deposit		3%	97%	24%	10%	66%	Yes
Not being currently employed	23%	5%	72%	45%	14%	41%	Yes
Unpaid utilities	50%	16%	34%	76%	10%	14%	Yes
Lack of transportation to look for housing	46%	13%	41%	76%	10%	14%	Yes
Poor credit history	18%	10%	72%	31%	24%	45%	Yes
Past lease violation	56%	8%	36%	76%	7%	17%	
3 or more children	60%	15%	25%	83%	14%	3%	Yes
No rent history	72%	3%	24%	76%	21%	3%	Yes
Problems with past landlord	72%	8%	20%	83%	10%	7%	Yes
Owing back rent	56%	5%	39%	69%	10%	21%	
Discrimination	62%	18%	20%	69%	14%	17%	
No reference from past landlord	57%	15%	28%	69%	17%	14%	
Someone in the home under 21	92%	5%	3%	83%	7%	10%	
A past eviction	61%	5%	34%	59%	17%	24%	
Criminal record/background	74%	10%	16%	86%	4%	10%	
Recently moved to a community and no local rent history	84%	8%	8%	76%	10%	14%	
Problems with police	85%	2%	13%	90%		10%	
Felony drug record	95%		5%	97%	3%		
Teenagers in the house	90%	8%	2%	86%	10%	4%	
Disability	92%	3%	5%	90%	3%	7%	
Immigration status	92%		8%	90%		10%	
Pets that some properties may not accept	100%			100%			

Table 1. Participants' housing barriers at baseline and 24-months

## Assistance Received

### HOUSING ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

The objective of Rapid Re-housing is to bypass shelter and quickly house homeless individuals by providing rental assistance and the additional supports necessary for a period of time to help people stay safely housed. The initial goal of quickly housing clients was partially met by NAM staff. Three people were quickly housed, within 2 weeks, and an additional 8 were housed within a month (n=11; 28%). Just under half of the sample (45%) were housed between 1-2 months after entering the program, and 18% were housed between 2-3 months after program entry. One person was housed four months after entering the program, and 2 were never successfully housed (one continued living with family and friends).

<i>Time between program entry and obtaining housing:</i>	<i>Percent (n)</i>
<b>2 weeks or less</b>	8% (3)
<b>15-30 days</b>	20% (8)
<b>31-60 days</b>	45% (18)
<b>61-90 days</b>	18% (7)
<b>115 days</b>	3% (1)
<b>Never housed</b>	5% (2)

Table 2. Length of time to get housed after program entry (N=39)

Figure 5 shows the percent of participants who were stably housed over time. Percentages are based on 36 participants that were located and interviewed at 3-months, 37 participants interviewed at 6-months, 35 participants interviewed at 9-months and 12-months, 34 participants interviewed at 15-months, 33 participants interviewed at 18-months, and 29 participants interviewed at 21 and 24-months.

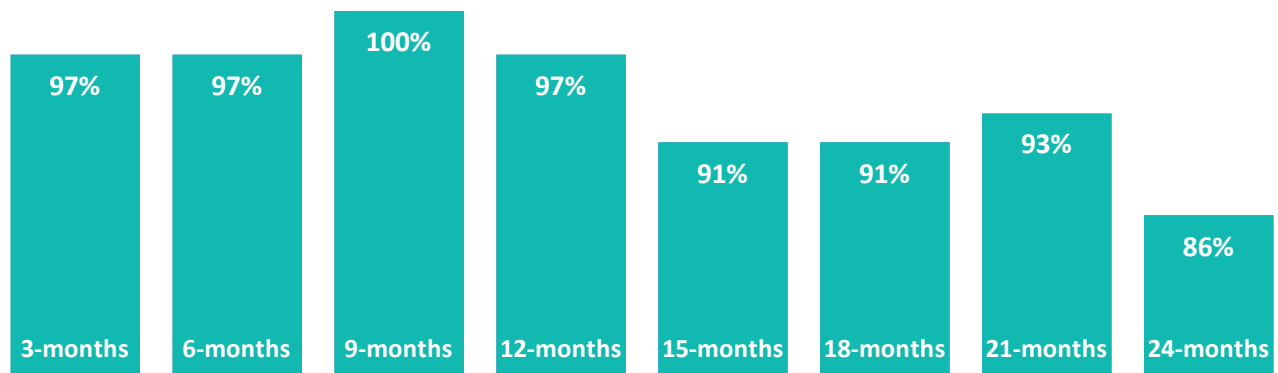


Figure 5. Percent of participants who were in stable housing over time.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

The original intent of the program was to provide rental assistance to participants for up to 12 months, and survivors were asked to sign a form stating that they understood this upon entry. Financial help could include rent assistance, childcare stipends, transportation assistance, utility assistance and food assistance. Case managers were to work with participants to determine what type of financial assistance they needed, and for how long. A number of participants reported that their case managers told them financial assistance would last up to 24 months. This caused confusion and concern partway through the program when all participants were told that their financial assistance would end after 12 months. NAM then said they would support clients for up to 24 months, and then later reduced the help to no longer than 18 months (see Table 3). These changes, which felt arbitrary to many participants, and which were not shared with everyone in a consistent manner or with sufficient notice, were a significant source of stress for participants. Financial help increased to 24 months for some survivors when the Rapid Rehousing program was taken over by HCDVCC and the Fort Bend Women’s Center.

*Amount of Time Rent Assistance was Received: Percent (N=39)*

<b>Never received rent assistance</b>	5%
<b>Less than 12 months</b>	5%
<b>12 months</b>	15%
<b>13-15 months</b>	23%
<b>16-18 months</b>	8%
<b>19-24 months</b>	44%

*Table 3. Amount of time each participant received financial assistance for rent*

## INTERACTIONS WITH CASE MANAGERS

One of the most important components of a DV Rapid Re-Housing Program is the provision of client-centric case management that includes safety planning. The case managers’ role was to assist with locating safe housing, including application assistance, placement, budgeting, and helping survivors find local resources in their new community. Case managers were also to continue addressing any domestic violence issues, while providing additional support services for the survivor and their children. This section includes the perspectives of clients regarding their interactions with their case managers.

### Contact with Case Managers

As the baseline interview was intended to occur shortly after participants were enrolled into the DV RR program, questions were not asked about work with case managers. At each following time point we asked those who were still receiving services, how often they saw their case managers and what services and financial assistance they received from the program.

Figure 6 shows the percent of participants who reported seeing their case managers in the prior week over time. Across the first three months of the program, over half of the participants (56%) had been in contact with their case manager in the prior week. This spiked once to 66% at 9-months, before steadily decreasing over time. However, when services began to be provided by HCDVCC and Fort Bend rather than by NAM, many participants were confused about whether they were or were not receiving case management from the DV RR program. Because of this, we are only reporting on people’s experiences with case managers through 18-months.

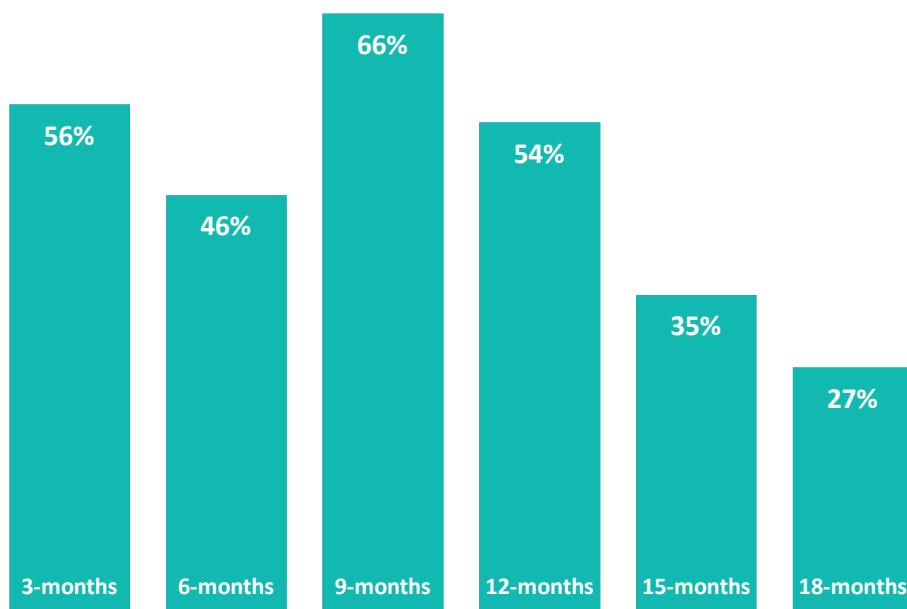


Figure 6. Percent of participants who have seen their case manager in the prior week over time

### Extent of Contact

If a participant said they were still in contact with their case manager, they were asked follow-up questions about that contact. One question pertained to how many hours per week, on average, they spent with their case manager in the prior 3 months.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of participants who had spent an hour or more per week with their case manager over time. Percentages are based on the number of participants who indicated they had been in contact with their case manager within the last ninety days: 35 participants at 3-months and 6-months, 33 participants at 9-months, 30 participants at 12-months, 27 participants at 15-months, and 16 participants at 18-months.

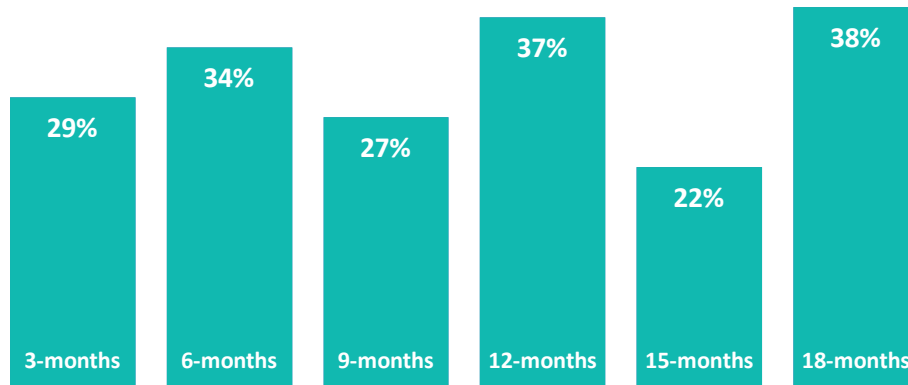


Figure 7. Of participants working with case managers, percent who spent an hour or more per week with their case manager over time.

*“I will say they know my situation about the hospital and everything and they've been trying to help me, toiletries, whatever help that I need, they help me, but I was not able to get in touch with them for a long time because I don't have a car.”*

– Participant

Over the first 3-months of the evaluation, slightly more than a quarter of participants (29%) spent an hour or more per week with their case manager. The number vacillated across time from 22% to 38% (see Figure 7).

### Services Needed

Participants who were still receiving services from the DV RR program were asked at each time point (except at 24-months) what services they were hoping to get from the program in the next 3 months. The three most requested services at almost every time point were housing assistance, financial help, and counseling, respectively. Employment and education assistance were also highly requested at each time point. One interesting thing to note is that help increasing social support was the least requested service at baseline, and at the 21-month interview it was one of the greatest requested services. See table 4 for the full list of services requested over time.

	Baseline N=39	3-months N=36	6-months N=36	9-months N=33	12-months N=31	15-months N=28	18-months N=19	21-months N=8
<b>Housing</b>	100%	100%	100%	88%	58%	7%	16%	38%
<b>Financial Help</b>	90%	94%	67%	55%	55%	14%	16%	25%
<b>Counseling</b>	90%	81%	44%	55%	52%	7%	21%	25%
<b>Employment</b>	69%	69%	55%	52%	35%	7%	11%	13%
<b>Education</b>	67%	83%	64%	64%	32%	11%	21%	25%
<b>Legal Assistance</b>	51%	33%	39%	36%	26%	7%	11%	25%
<b>Childcare</b>	56%	39%	42%	45%	42%	11%	16%	13%
<b>Transport</b>	49%	56%	53%	36%	26%	7%	5%	13%
<b>Healthcare</b>	54%	47%	42%	30%	32%	11%	5%	13%
<b>Issues for Children</b>	28%	42%	19%	24%	19%	11%	5%	13%
<b>Food</b>	51%	53%	44%	48%	32%	14%	16%	13%
<b>Clothing</b>	77%	64%	44%	42%	29%	11%	11%	25%
<b>Other Material Good</b>	85%	67%	55%	39%	29%	7%	5%	13%
<b>Increase Social Support</b>	46%	64%	42%	45%	45%	11%	5%	25%

Table 4. Percent of participants still receiving services, who indicated wanting services in each category from the DV RR program in the next 3 months.

### Satisfaction with Case Managers

Satisfaction with NAM case managers was somewhat positive at the 3-month time-point, with 63% expressing being satisfied with them. This fluctuated over time, and returned to 63% at 18-months. Figure 8 shows the percentage of participants who were satisfied with their case manager over time. Percentages are based on the number of participants who indicated they had been in contact with their case manager within the last ninety days, through 18-months. While 35 participants reported working with a case manager at 3-months and 6-months, this declined to 33 participants at 9-months, 30 at 12-months, 27 at 15-months, and 16 at 18-months.

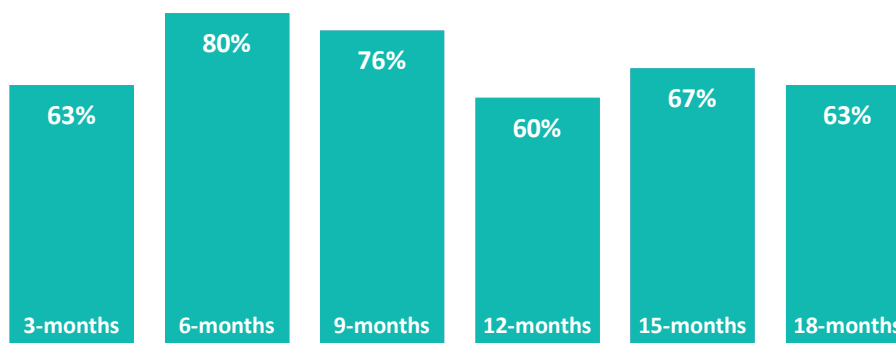


Figure 8. Percent of participants who were satisfied with their case manager over time

Although there were some time-points where there was a large decrease in satisfaction, the number of participants who were not satisfied never fell below half. Some participants mentioned that, in addition to receiving help with furthering their education, job skills, and reaching financial stability, their case manager had also helped with their overall well-being and happiness. One participant reported weekly conversations with their case manager, during which they discussed everything the participant needed.

*“They helped me when I was on the program and I was thankful for that and now there is another organization helping me.”*

*– Participant*

Other participants felt that they did not get the time, help, or resources they needed to be successful. Some participants mentioned that they were unsure who their new case manager was or if they even had one.

One participant helped provide care for a close family member, who was very sick, so had a limited radius that she could relocate to. She felt her case manager would keep suggesting places too far away and would become angry when she was reminded that the participant needed to stay close to her ill relative.

*“I’ve been keeping up with my case worker and she been trying to give me referrals on housing since I’m about to move and my lease is up so I’ve been consistently on the phone with her like a couple of hours a week just to make sure we are on the same page and see if there is any other kind of help she can give me or any other resources that she can help me with.”*

*– Participant*

Some participants stated that they found it difficult to get in touch with their case manager. In the past, this resulted in participants being unable to move into housing, either because the case manager missed the appointment with the potential landlord or because, by the time they reached the case manager, the housing was no longer available. However, some participants felt that their case managers were doing a great job of contacting them, which led them to reporting higher satisfaction.

## Survivors' Stability Over Time

### HOUSING STABILITY OVER TIME

From the 21-month to 24-month time points, survivors were asked to walk the interviewer through where they were living from enrollment to their current situation. Twenty-nine survivors responded to this section.

Two patterns emerged about the housing journey that survivors were experiencing. All had been homeless or unstably housed when first entering the DV RR program. At the 24-month time point (N=29), participants were either stably housed (86%, 25/29) or homeless (14%). Of those who were stably housed, the vast majority (23/25) were living in a house or apartment that they rented, and two survivors resided in a Transitional Housing program.

Of the 25 survivors who were stably housed, 10 were receiving partial financial help for their rent, and 7 were receiving complete financial help for their rent from someone or some organization.

Four survivors (14%) were homeless at the final, 24-month interview. Of these four, one was staying in a DV shelter after being evicted due to accumulated late-payment fees, two were living with friends or family members without paying rent, and the fourth was paying to stay in a hotel or motel without enough income to pay for a downpayment.

*"Got the apartment though NAM and once that happened our lives changed for the better because they, we were able to have more space, more room, more privacy and we felt safer because my ex didn't know where we lived."*

*– Participant*

*"I'm kind of still fleeing, I don't want to get caught up again, and they don't...because right now, nobody knows where I am because I don't have anything in my name."*

*– Participant*

Participants were also asked a series of questions to ascertain how unstable their housing was at each time point. This scale ran from 1 to 10, with 10 indicating the most instability. Participants at Baseline had an average score of 4.21, which decreased significantly to 1.66 at the 24-month time point.

## FINANCIAL STABILITY OVER TIME

### Difficulty Paying Bills

In order to see how financially stable participants were over time, at each time point they were asked how much difficulty they had paying bills. There was a large increase in the percent of participants who had little to no difficulty with bills, from almost a quarter of participants at enrollment to over half of participants at 12-months. This decreased to less than half at 24-months.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of participants who had little to no difficulty paying bills over time. Percentages are based on the percent of participants interviewed at each time point: 39 participants were interviewed at baseline, 35 at 3-months, 37 participants interviewed at 6-months, 35 at 9-months, 34 participants at 12-months, 34 at 15-months, 33 participants interviewed at 18-months, and 29 participants at 21 and 24-months.

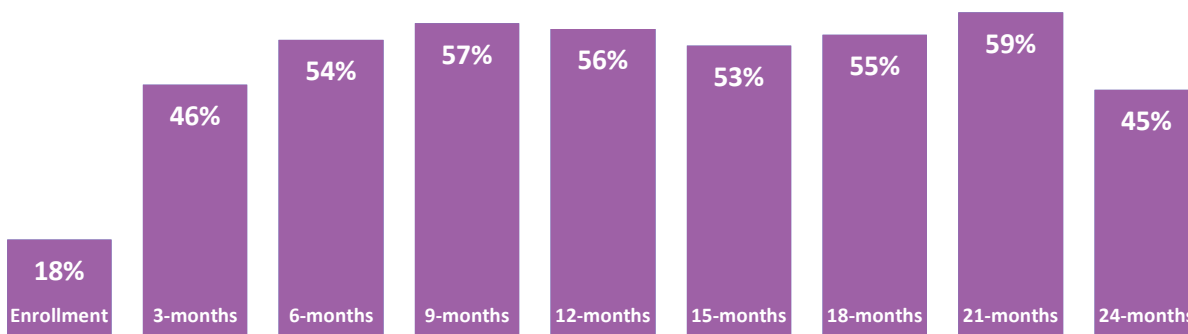


Figure 9. Percent of participants who have little to no difficulty paying bills over time.

### Up to Date on Bills

To help gauge how difficult it was to pay bills, participants were asked at each time point if they were up to date on utilities and other bills. Percentages in this section are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point, which is the same as the above section. At the 3-month check, 72% were up to date on utilities, and this increased to 76% at 24-months.

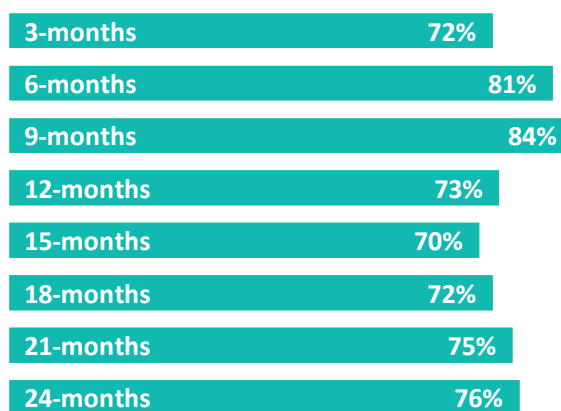


Figure 10. Percent of participants who are up to date on bills over time.

### Employment over Time

Participants were asked if they had worked in the last 3-months at each time point. There was a gradual increase of those working from the 3-month interview to the 24-month interview (60% to 66%).

Figure 11 shows the percentage of participants who were employed in the past 3 months over time. Percentages are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point.



Figure 11. Percent of participants who had worked in the last 3-months over time.

### Currently Employed

Participants were asked if they were currently employed at each time point. Slightly under a third (31%) of the participants were employed at baseline. This increased to 62% at 24-months. See Figure 12.

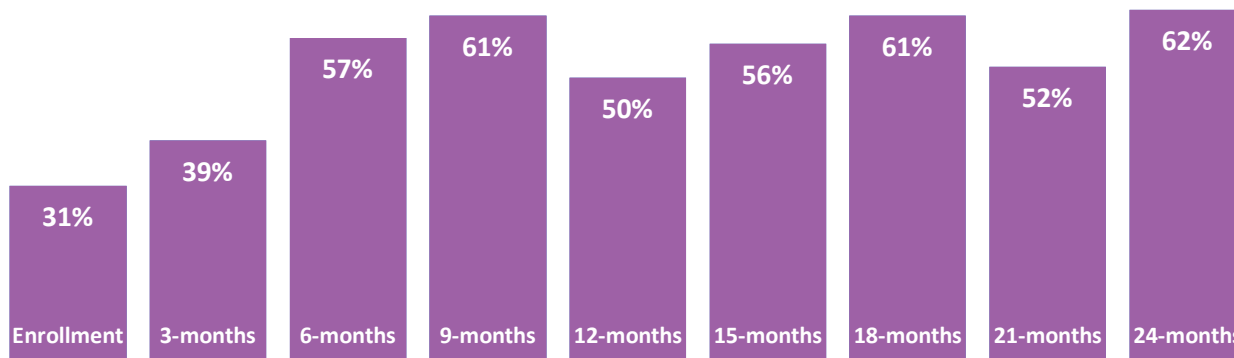


Figure 12. Percent of participants who were currently employed over time.

### INCOME OVER TIME

#### Monthly Income

One goal of a Rapid Re-housing program is to help clients increase their income over time. Figure 13 shows the percentage of participants who made more than \$1,500 per month at each time period. Percentages are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point.

At baseline, few people (23%) were making more than \$1,500 per month, which increased at 12-months (to 32%) and again at 24-months (to 41%).

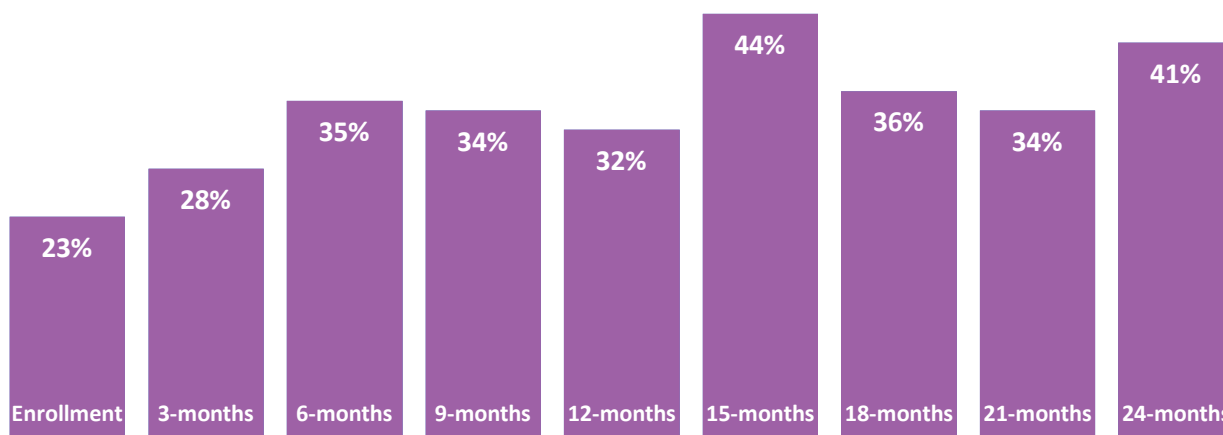


Figure 13. Percent of participants who were making more than \$1,500 per month over time.

### SAFETY OVER TIME

#### Continued Domestic Violence

When entering the NAM Rapid Re-Housing program, none of the participants were still in a relationship with the person who was abusing them. This remained constant through the 24-month check in. However, many experienced continued instances of at least some form of domestic violence.

**Financial Abuse**

At baseline, over half (44%, n=17) of the participants experienced financial abuse in the previous 3-months. There was a slight decrease over time to 18% at 12-months. Participants experiencing financial abuse increased to just over a quarter (27%, n=9) at 15-months and at 18-months. Much of this financial abuse at the 15- and 18-month marks was related to child support. The number of participants experiencing abuse decreased to 21% at 24-months.

*“He stopped paying child support, I’m supposed to be getting \$400 a month, he is sending \$100 at a time if he sends anything. He was leaving notes at my door threatening me with jail time.”*

– Participant

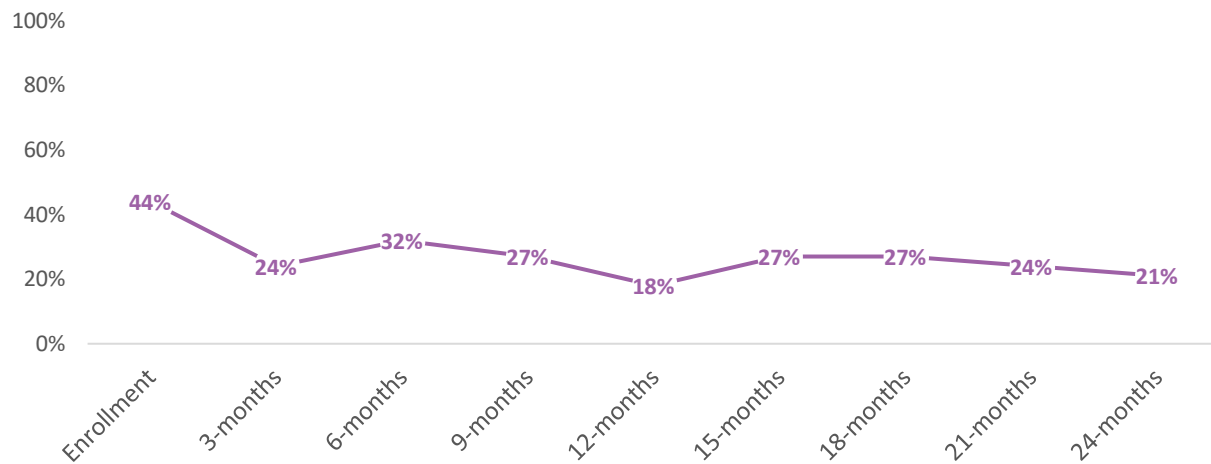


Figure 14. Percent of participants who were experiencing financial abuse over time.

**Emotional Abuse**

Most participants (82%, n=32) were experiencing emotional abuse in the 3-months before enrollment. This followed an overall downward trend to 21% at the 24-month mark.

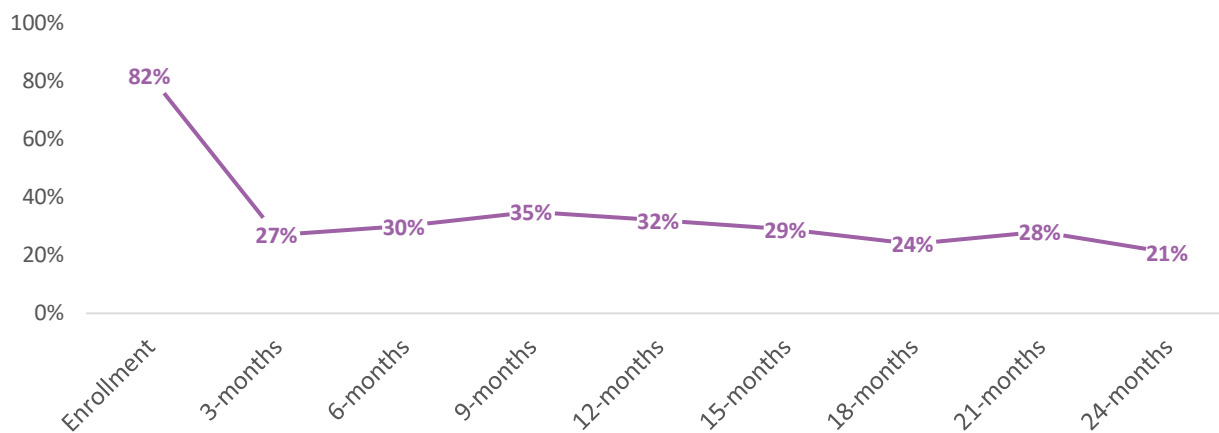


Figure 15. Percent of participants who were experiencing emotional abuse over time.

### Stalking Behavior

Stalking behavior was quite high (66%, n=25) in the three months before enrollment. There was a general decrease until the 9-month and 12-month time points, where stalking behavior increased from 38% to 44%. Stalking behavior decreased by half at 15-months (18%, n=6) and decreased to 17% at 24-months.

*“About a month and a half ago, he tried to follow me home one day [...] I saw his car, I called the police and they did a report.”*  
 – Participant

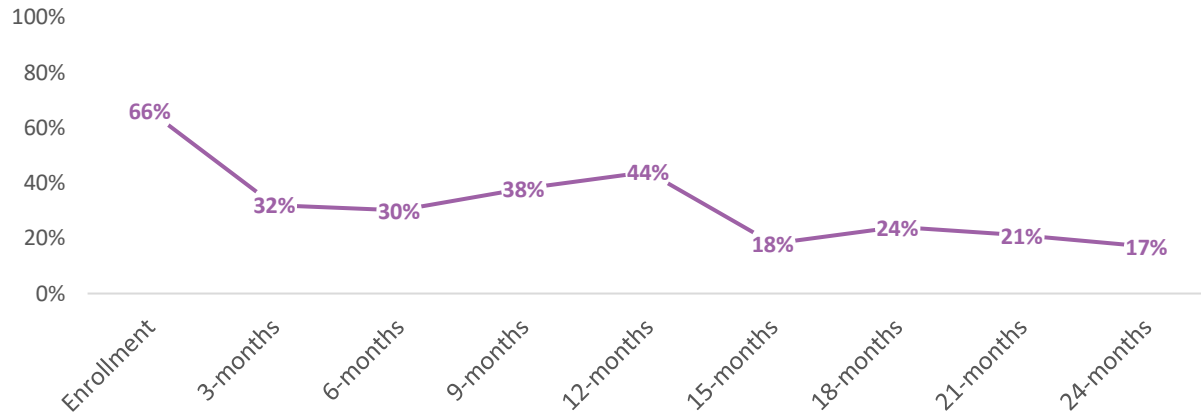


Figure 16. Percent of participants who were experiencing stalking over time.

### Threats of Physical Abuse

Almost three quarters of the participants (69%, n=27) were experiencing threats of abuse in the 3-months before enrollment. This decreased to less than a quarter (24%, n=8) between enrollment and 3-months, and to only 8% between 3-months and 6-months. The number continued stayed steady between 6-months and 9-months (9%, n=3) but doubled between 9 and 12-months (18%, n=6). By 24-months the number of participants decreased to just 7% (n=2).

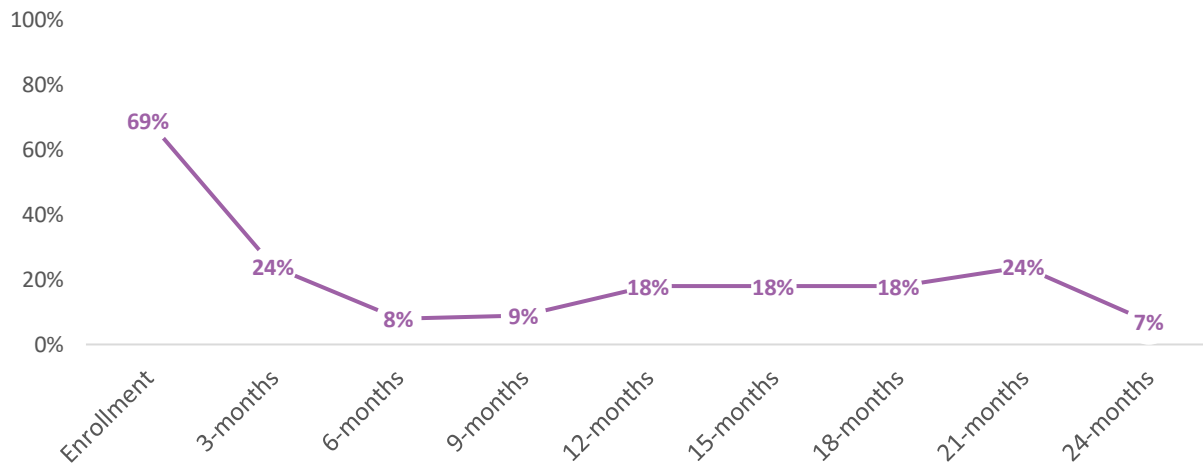


Figure 17. Percent of participants who were experiencing threats of abuse over time.

### Physical Abuse

Over half of participants (54%, n=21) were experiencing physical abuse in the 3-months before enrollment. Between enrollment and the 3-month mark that had decreased to 9%, and to 0% between 3-months and 6-months. Unfortunately, the number of participants experiencing physical abuse increased to 3% from 6-months to 9-months, and to 15% from 9-months to 12-months. However, at 24-months just one participant was still experiencing physical abuse.

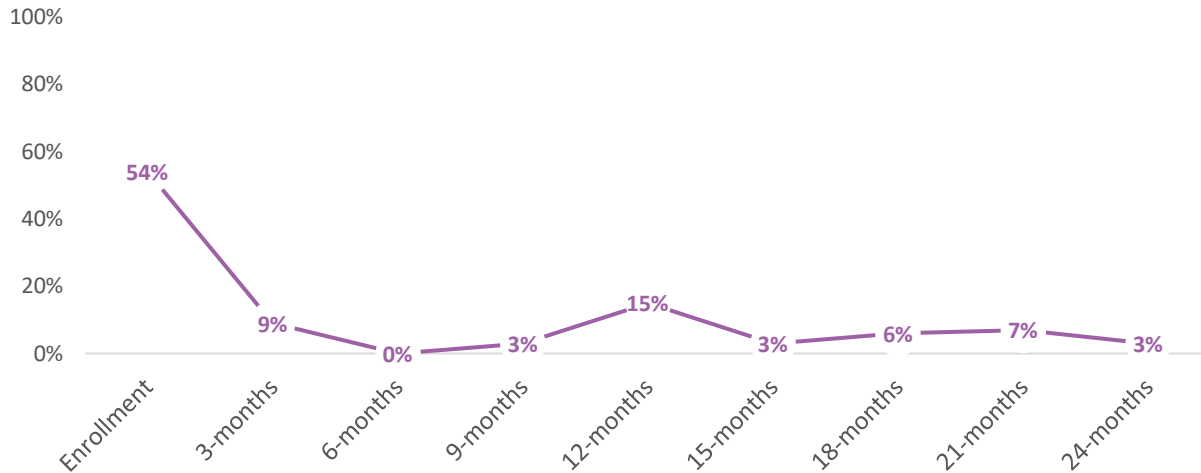


Figure 18. Percent of participants who were experiencing physical abuse over time.

### HURRICANE HARVEY

Between the baseline and 3-month check, the Houston area was hit hard by Hurricane Harvey. It impacted the recovery of many of the participants and made it harder to secure safe housing. The hurricane affected many of participants' homes, their transportation, and, in many cases, their employment.

For a handful of participants, our 3-month interviews took place after the hurricane, while all 6-month interviews took place afterward. At 3-months, 11% of participants reported that the hurricane had affected their housing and transportation, while 19% reported their job was affected. At 6-months almost half (45%) had their housing affected, and transportation was affected for over a quarter (29%) of participants. Finally, 37% of participants' jobs were affected by the hurricane.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

At each time point, interviewers asked survivors to describe the impact that the DV RR program had on their lives over the last three months if the survivor had received assistance and seen their case manager during that time (n=7 at 21-months and 3 at 24-months). At the 21-month interview, most survivors (86%) talked about the positive impact the program had made for them including helpful referrals, giving them the “push” they needed, and boosting their safety. One mentioned that they were not impacted because they hadn’t had any help in the previous three months. In the 24-month interview, all three survivors mentioned support as the most impactful aspect of the program, especially financial support.

*“They have been helping me so much, it’s really changing my life and I have a lot of support from them.”*

*– Participant*

*“They gave me the opportunity to get away from a dangerous situation and turn my life around. It impacted me positively.”*

*– Participant*

## Relationship Between Housing and Abuse

For both homeless and housed participants, all types of abuse decreased over time. It is also important to note that there was a large shift in the number of those who were housed between baseline and 24-months. The vast majority of participants were homeless at baseline, while the majority at 24-months were housed. At baseline, homeless participants were experiencing higher rates of emotional abuse, physical abuse, threats and stalking.

## Participants’ Seeking Shelter During the DV RR Program

A goal of Rapid Rehousing is to divert homeless individuals from shelter. We therefore asked participants if they had needed shelter over the time they were in the study. Out of the 29 participants interviewed at the 24-month time point, only two reported having needed to enter some type of shelter since they began working with the DV RR program. In one case, a participant was working part-time at a job when they were offered full-time employment. When the company ran their background check, Human Resources found a DV charge from a former issue with the person who was abusing them. This resulted in termination of their employment.

In the other case, a participant was late with rent, and charged late fees. When the participant tried to pay the rent for the following month, they were informed that they had to pay the fees in full before the complex would accept any future rent payments. They were sued by the apartment after failing to pay the late fees and rent, and they were evicted. Only one of these participants remained homeless at the 24-month interview.

### SOCIAL SUPPORT, QUALITY OF LIFE, AND HOPEFULNESS

While two clear desired outcomes of a DV Rapid Re-housing program are that participants will be safer and stably housed over time, it is also hoped that these interventions will increase survivors' sense of social support (which has often been diminished intentionally by the abuser over time), overall quality of life, and feelings of hope. We therefore measured all three of these constructs over time.

#### Social Support

Social support was measured using the MOS Social Support Survey 6-item (MOS-SSS-6) (Holden, Lee, Hockey, Ware, & Dobson, 2014). This survey asks questions such as “how much of the time would you say you CURRENTLY have someone in your life who can help if confined to bed” and asks participants to respond to each question on a scale from 0 to 4. The scale score was created by taking an average of the 6-items on the scale. A score of 4 indicates that they have support all of the time, 3 indicates support most of the time, 2 indicates some of the time, 1 indicates a little of the time, and 0 indicates none of the time. Figure 19 shows the average score at each time point. Averages are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point.

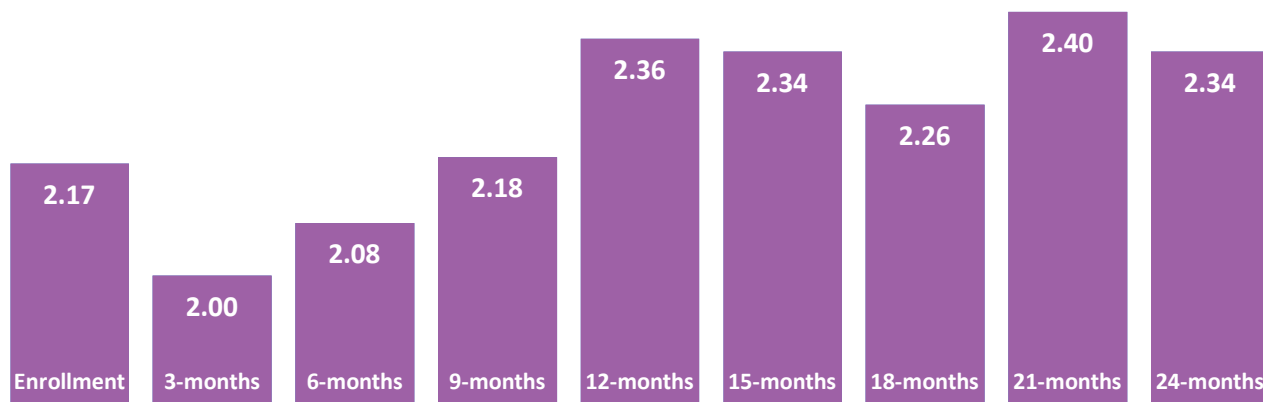


Figure 19. Average score on social support scale over time: 0=support none of the time, 1=a little support, 2=support some of the time, 3=support most of the time, 4=support all of the time

Surprisingly, social support decreased over time from baseline to 3-months, before rising at 6-months. Mean scores suggest that, on average, participants had some social support at 9-months, some support to support most of the time at 12-months, and then “some” support through 24-months.

When first housed, several participants shared that they had to move away from family to secure safe housing. Some moved to Houston from other cities or states in order to escape from the abuse; however, others felt pressure to move into specified apartment complexes by their case manager. This insistence on certain rental properties resulted in them moving far from their support systems.

*"I vacated, and she [advocate] told me to go look for another apartment ... When I contacted her again, she told me that rent for that apartment had already been paid ... When I moved out of [apartment complex], my dad said he would start looking for somewhere for me so we would be somewhere we would never have to leave. When I couldn't get ahold of [advocate] and found out they paid the rent, he went ahead and bought this [house]."*

*– Participant*

### Quality of life

To measure quality of life, we used the 9-item Quality of Life Scale (Sullivan & Bybee, 1999). Scores range from 1 to 7, with a score of 1 being terrible, a score of 4 indicating mixed feelings, a score of 5 equaling mostly satisfied, and a score of 7 indicating they are extremely happy with their quality of life.

Following the lowest point at baseline, average scores for participants increased, from feeling mixed to feeling mostly satisfied with their quality of life overall. A paired samples t-test was used to see if the changes were significant. The change from baseline to 24-months was found to be significant, with people's sense of quality of life being higher at 24-months than it was when they entered the evaluation.

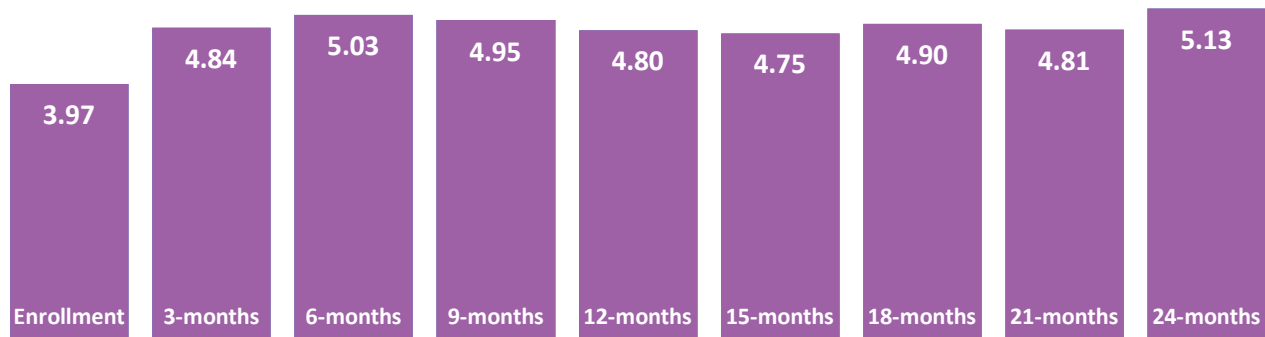


Figure 20. Participants' quality of life over time.

### Hopefulness

Participants were asked to indicate if they were more hopeful about the future at each time point. Figure 21 shows the percentage of participants who felt more hopeful about the future over time. Percentages are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point.

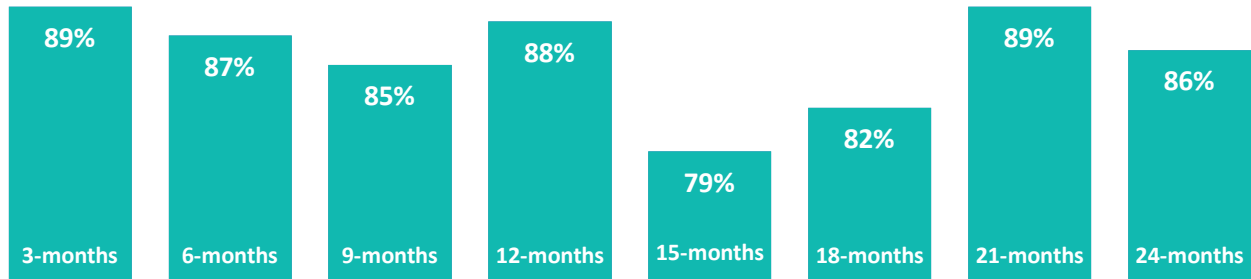


Figure 21. Percent of Participants who felt more hopeful about the future

Over the first 9-months participants who felt more hopeful about the future decreased just slightly (from 89% to 85%) The number fluctuated over the next year, ending at 86% at the 24-month time-point.

### Whether Participants Felt Their Lives Were Better Over Time

At all of the time points, from 3-months to 24-months, participants were asked if their life was better off than it was 3-months ago. Figure 22 shows the average scores. Percentages are based on the number of participants interviewed at each time point.

Almost all (92%) at 3-months felt their life was better off. This number decreased through 9-months (to 69%), but increased at 12-months (82%). Responses fluctuated over time, but decreased slightly overall to 76% at 24-months.

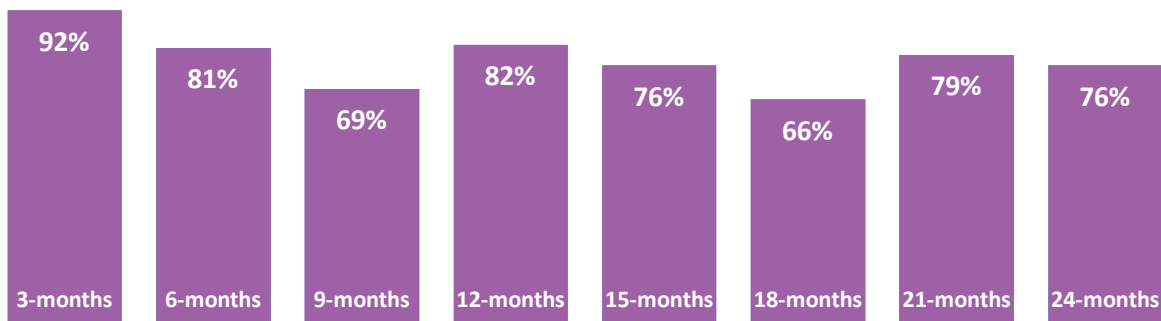


Figure 22. Percent of Participants who felt their life was better than 3-months ago

## Summary of Findings

Of the 39 participants who began the study, 91% were housed within 3 months of entering the Rapid Re-housing program. Throughout the duration of the program only 2 survivors had to enter shelter, and at 24-months, 86% of those interviewed were housed. At the 24-month interview, 68% of those who were housed were still receiving help with rent from some agency. This suggests that the financial help is important long-term to help at least some survivors stay in stable housing.

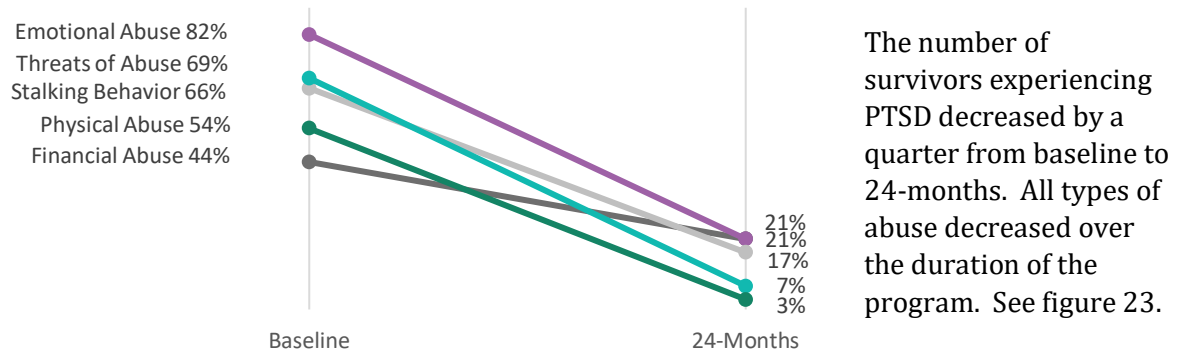


Figure 23. Percent of participants experiencing abuse at baseline and 24-months

Many other areas of the participants’ lives improved for them over time. This included difficulty paying bills, having an income over \$1,500 per month, and being currently employed. See figure 24.

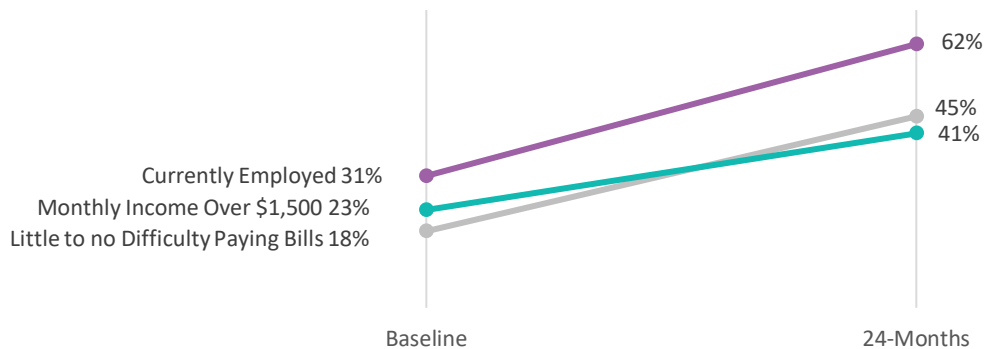


Figure 24. Percent of participants who are currently employed, have a monthly income over \$1,500, and little to no difficulty paying bills

Unfortunately, the number of those who felt hopeful about the future and those who felt they were better off slightly decreased from 3-months to 24-months from 89% to 86%. However, despite the decrease, over three quarters of survivors felt hopeful about the future and the vast majority felt their lives were better off.

Social support increased throughout the duration of the program, indicating that, overall, the participants were able to build a better social support web.

In conclusion, survivors' experiences with the DV Rapid Rehousing program were quite mixed with regard to how supportive their case managers were, how much time (if any) they spent with them, what they worked on, and how long financial assistance lasted. While this was a single-program evaluation with no control or comparison group, and data must be interpreted within those parameters, the findings suggest that, when survivors receive both financial support and strong case management, they can see improvements in their lives across safety, housing stability, economic stability, mental health, social support, and well-being.

*"Even though I think and say all the negative things that happened, I feel that I'm extremely happy now. Because I had for two years, to not worry about the housing. My daughter got a job, it has been a really amazing experience for me. Before I was extremely down and now, I'm happy. Now, I can breathe, I'm not on medication anymore, I've been able to get myself together.*

*– Participant*

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