**15. Please discuss each priority (i.e., child abuse, domestic assault, sexual assault, and underserved) in which VOCA funds have been used to assist crime victims during the reporting period. Instruction(e.g., using case histories or other descriptions; case histories or other materials may be submitted with upload of report in to GMS).**

**\*All names have been changed.**

**Domestic Violence**

**Case Study 1:** A 40-year-old African American survivor of domestic violence was referred to the case manager at Thrive Virginia by the shelter manager at Bridges of Change shelter in New Kent, VA. The survivor came to the shelter after fleeing a physically and emotionally abusive relationship in Norfolk, Virginia. Additionally, the survivor had recently experienced a traumatic car accident resulting in physical injuries and psychological trauma. Before the accident, the survivor owned a residential cleaning business. Due to her physical injuries and having to relocate, the survivor was unable to continue operating her business. The grant-funded case manager was able to provide services to the survivor, including housing assistance, employment assistance, transportation assistance, and referrals to social services. The survivor indicated wanting to move to Richmond City, where she could have more opportunities for work and childcare options for her two children. The grant-funded staff member encouraged the survivor to apply for employment in Richmond so she could start forming connections in that area. Keeping the survivor's previous trauma and physical injuries in mind, the Thrive Virginia case manager encouraged the survivor to apply for jobs that were less physically demanding. Hence, she had time to heal and recover from her accident physically. While the survivor was applying for jobs, she reported an inability to complete classes for her associate's degree in business due to financial hardship. The survivor could not re-enroll in her classes until she paid an overdraft fee. The grant-funded staff member aided the survivor in securing financial assistance to re-enroll in school. As of this reporting period, the survivor is in the process of looking for housing with a regional Rapid Rehousing program and will receive financial assistance for the first few months she is living in a new apartment. By partnering with another program at Thrive Virginia, the grant funded case manager was able to procure a used vehicle for the survivor. Because the survivor will have consistent and reliable transportation to meet her basic needs, she can now re-open her cleaning business. Through working with the case manager, the survivor is currently a part-time college student and is working full time. The case manager's next steps will be assisting the survivor in finding affordable medical and dental care, as well as long-term child care options.

**Case Study 2:**

Representation was provided to a domestic violence victim who fled the State of North Carolina with the child of the parties. There was an existing North Carolina protective order in place against her spouse when she fled to Virginia, however there was no custody or visitation order in place. The client filed for custody and visitation in Virginia prior to establishing six-month residency and the abuser/father of the child contested Virginia’s jurisdiction. The client’s move to Virginia resulted in both the father of the child and her parents contesting her petitions for custody, so not only was this client fighting her spouse for custody, but her own parents were upset because she moved from North Carolina. Through evidence the advocate was able to establish that the client had always been and continued to be the child’s primary caretaker, and that it was in his best interest for his mother to remain in that role. The final order of the court was agreeable to all parties. Primary physical custody was awarded to the client (mother of the child), and joint legal custody was granted to both parents. The father of the child and the maternal grandparents were granted monthly visitation with the child.

**Case Study 3:**

A grant funded victim advocate has been working with a family experiencing domestic violence. The father held a knife to the mother’s throat and threatened her life. The perpetrator then threated the life of both his mother and father. Three children were present on scene. Police arrived and all of the family members were able to get out of the house safely. The perpetrator was charged with multiple felonies and misdemeanors. The victim advocate has met with the family multiple times, accompaniment them to the hearing to extend the protective order and then to obtain a permanent protective order. The perpetrator’s mother had needed additional support. Services have been offered at the local domestic violence shelter and one child is receiving counseling through that program. CPS is involved and safety plans are in place to ensure the safety of the children. The victim advocate remains in contact with the family members and continues to provide support through the court/trial process.

**Case Study 4:**

“Yolanda” called the Choices’ 24/7 support line, and shortly after, she came to Choices, leaving her physically and emotionally abusive husband who sought to isolate and control her. After arriving at the shelter, Yolanda received many services. The Choices’ Court Advocate worked with her to access local legal assistance to help with divorce proceedings. Yolanda received court accompaniment to protective order proceedings and support during the search to find a lawyer qualified to take her case, which Blue Ridge Legal Services agreed to take. Yolanda attended the Healing Trauma Group (H.T.G.) with our in-house Prevention Coordinator. This seven-session support group focuses on what trauma is and how to navigate your own. During her sessions, she learned grounding techniques to help fortify her resilience toward re-traumatization. Yolanda provided feedback, stating she feels it gave her perspective and hope for future relationships without abuse. Day-to-day case management meetings helped Yolanda find a stable job and create better goals for her future. The Services Coordinator helped her navigate technology unfamiliar to Yolanda and walked her through job applications and follow-up. Yolanda opened her own checking account during her stay at Choices which gives her more financial freedom and control. Choices’ Housing Services Coordinator provided housing assessments, rental information, and available real estate properties to Yolanda. The Housing Program could not help Yolanda due to her income bracket. However, the coordinator still assisted Yolanda with questions regarding the sale of her home, realtors, and safety planning if she were to see her husband concerning selling their house. Shelter staff provided supportive listening and information regarding Yolanda’s health issues with helpful management tips and referrals to her primary care physician. The Choices’ team also held house meetings allowing Yolanda more opportunities to speak about her trauma and how communal living affected her.

**Case Study 4:**

A 23 year old African American female with a 3 year old African American daughter arrived in shelter after a domestic violence incident involving a physical assault from her same sex partner with whom she lives. She initially worked with the funded Mentor to address emotional and safety needs. During her stay she received information and referrals for NW Works for employment, DSS for assistance with her daughter and daycare, and to The Laurel Center’s Rapid Rehousing program. She received domestic violence therapy services and learned coping skills from the grant funded therapist. She also received assistance with transportation assistance in the form of cab vouchers. Following her stay in emergency shelter this woman and child exited to her own apartment funded through The Laurel Center’s Rapid Rehousing funds.

**Sexual Assault**

**Case Study 1:**

J.W., an active duty United States Naval Officer, traveled to Augusta County to attend her best friend’s wedding, with G.C. as her guest. At the reception, friends notices that J.W. appeared intoxicated. She left the reception area and boarded the shuttle bus to take her back to her hotel. G.C. then boarded the bus and insisted that J.W. exit the bus. Friends noticed this exchange and expressed concern. G.C. stated that he would ensure J.W. made it back to her hotel. G.C. escorted J.W. to her room and sexually assaulted her. The following day, J.W. reported the assault to her Navy mentor, completed a SANE exam and the case was referred to the Augusta County Sherriff’s Office. The case was set for trial in June, 2018 then continued due to J.W.’s deployment. The case was reset for December, 2019. During this time, the Augusta County Victim Witness director was in contact with J.W. on a weekly, and sometimes daily basis. Additionally, the director made hotel reservations for eleven of the twenty five witness, airline reservations for five witnesses, and arranged ground transportation for seven witnesses. Witnesses travelled from Maryland, Virginia, Nevada, California, Texas, and Japan for the trial, the defense witnesses and supporters were around 40 individuals in total. This larger number required the program director, assistance director and advocate to coordinate support and accompaniment services throughout the trial.

Prior to the trial, the program director coordinated numerous phone conference and scheduled in-person interviews with the Commonwealth. During the trial, crisis counseling was provided multiple times. J.W. testified for nearly four hours on two days. The trial lasted well into the evening all three days of the trial and witnesses and victim staff required law enforcement escorts to their vehicles each evening due to threats made by defense supporters. The jury was out for three hours when the defense approached the Commonwealth and asked to please abduction, with a sentence of 10 years with 7 years suspended. The Commonwealth agreed after consulting with J.W. and her family. The program director has continued to remain in contact with J.W. to discuss counseling options and the effects of the trauma of going through the judicial process. J.W. never wavered in her courage and resolve to see the trial through to the end.

**Case Study 2:**

A grant funded victim advocate worked with a victim of sexual assault to obtain a protective order. The victim is here on a visa and was very nervous and wary of the criminal justice process. The victim advocate helped her obtain a preliminary protective order and provided a courtroom tour. She provided the victim with pre-printed information on protective orders, legal aid, and the local victim witness program. She also advised the victim of the defendant’ bond conditions and the data of the criminal trial. On the day of the permanent protective order hearing, the victim advocate accompanied the victim and set up a separate waiting area for the victim. A meeting with the prosecutor was also facilitated so that the victim would know what to expect. The victim advocate remains in regular contact with the victim as the court process proceeds.

**Case Study 3:**

 Staff was working with a client who left a relationship after years of daily physical and sexual abuse. During the course of a regular day at the shelter, the client’s child disclosed that the perpetrator had sexually assaulted them as well. The client spoke with the court advocate and decided to report to law enforcement. The court advocate assisted the client in getting in touch with the proper jurisdiction in another part of the state and helped facilitate a digital interview with the client and law enforcement. The court advocate then worked with the local Child Advocacy Center to set up a meeting with the child who disclosed the assault, a CAC advocate, and the investigator. This proved challenging as the CAC’s local office was closed due to COVID-19, and the Investigator’s jurisdiction was far away. All three agencies worked together to come up with a solution to provide services without inconveniencing the client or child. The court advocate referred the client to Blue Ridge Legal Services to obtain representation in filling for custody and support. As we continued to work with the family it became apparent that lack of child care, trauma, legal issues and loss of employment were affecting the client’s sobriety. The case manager began working with a local substance abuse peer support advocate to provide services to help the client maintain sobriety.

**Case Study 4:**

Kristine, a 39 year old female contacted the hotline looking for counseling for a sexual assault. Kristine was referred to the sexual assault counseling program and began receiving weekly counseling services. She had recently been released from prison after serving a sentence for manslaughter. While in prison, she was violently raped by another female inmate and was treated for her injuries. She did not report and PREA was not involved. Kristine shared a childhood full of physical and emotional abuse and neglect, and that she married at a young age to escape. Her husband gave her everything materially, she had never before had but was very controlling and isolated her from her sister and friends. They became foster parents to a baby, but Kristine suffered from postpartum depression and her husband refused to let her get help despite her continued pleading. As a result she suffered a psychotic episode and the baby died. While in prison, Kristine rediscovered herself and got an associate’s degree and several certifications. When she told her husband she wanted to work when she got out of prison, he filed for divorce. Since leaving prison with support and counseling, Kristine has renewed her relationship with her sister, found a place to live, gotten a job, dealt with her abuser being released and harassing her, and has reported the sexual assault to her parole officer. She has also gotten a dog and is exploring the possibility of a new relationship. Kristine still struggles with low self-esteem, a hostile parole officer and the challenges of applying to college so she can get her bachelor’s degree. The Women’s Resource Center will continue to provide her with support and counseling as long as she feels it is beneficial.

**Child Abuse**

**Case Study 1:**

 A referral was made, by the Judge, at the time of removal and placement in foster care. A CASA was appointed to the case and was involved from the beginning through the conclusion. The case involved one 9 year old girl and the issue that resulted in the emergency removal was failure of the parent’s to provide appropriate health care. The child was immediately placed in the hospital for several weeks before being placed in therapeutic foster care home. The hospital report stated that had this situation gone on without intervention she would have died from organ failure. However it was complicated because the mother genuinely believed that what she was doing was to protect her child. As an example, she fed her seaweed in water with salt. That is why the child weighed less than 42 pounds. The mother had represented this situation effectively, to the family and the school as a genuine medical issue. Although she saw many physicians, none had made a CPS report. It was the paternal grandparents who alerted the department of social services when they had not been able to see their grandchild for a year. The mother maintained that the child could not tolerate most food. However in foster care for the first time she ate pizza, ice cream, sandwiches and many other foods all of which she had no trouble digesting. The case was a challenge for the CASA because of the extensive medical component, the severity of the child neglect and the mother’s mental illness that was the cause of her behavior. Extended family was vigorously competing for custody but there were concerns about their ability to be a protective factor given that they had not intervened earlier. This child had to make a major adjustment in her life. At her home she had been limited to her bedroom and the bathroom. She found herself living in a foster home with other children, playing outside and going to school. The CASA advocate was not only her support but helped her adjust to a whole new world. The final outcome benefited from a dedicated, professional passionate advocate who was able to stay focused on the child’s needs and not get distracted by the other dynamics of the case. This case involved multiple retained attorneys and family members of means and standing in the community. It became very confrontational with the department of social services and the CASA was able to be there, all the time, for the child. The child was placed with one set of grandparents.

**Case Study 2:**

In FY20, a judge appointed us to serve six siblings who were spread across four and sometimes five different placements. The children ranged from toddlers to teens; had a significant trauma background; and a variety of complex needs very specific to their personal experiences. Serving these six was almost like serving two different sets of siblings because of the age gap between the oldest and youngest, and it became clear that the permanency goals might not be the same for the entire group – and that the siblings might not all end up together in a single home. Our CASA put forth tremendous effort to develop a meaningful relationship with each child, listening carefully to the kids as they expressed their concerns and desires, and helping DSS pinpoint the services that would most benefit each one. As the case went on, the children – especially the older ones -- made it clear that no matter what happened with their parents, they didn't want to lose their siblings. If they couldn’t all live together, they wanted to be sure their caregivers understood how important it was to keep the siblings connected. The CASA was instrumental in elevating the children’s individual needs and desire to stay connected, and in making that a priority for DSS and the court. The CASA was such a vital part of the children’s lives and the child welfare team that when the court case ended, the DSS agency – which has not always been thrilled by CASA’s involvement in the past -- asked the CASA if she would remain available to the kids.

**Case Study 3:**

Victim A was 17 at the time of the offense. The defendant was her coach and groomed the victim through providing food, gifts, as well as involving the victim in his business and family. This culminated in the defendant sexually assaulting the victim multiple times. This case went on trial in front of a jury fir 4 days; the jury deliberated for less than 2 charges and convicted the defendant of all charges. The grant funded victim advocate stayed in constant contact with the victim, as well as providing counseling services and connecting the victim with the local sexual assault crisis center. The victim has no support from her family, but the victim advocate ensured that the victim was never alone in court.

**Case Study 4:**

Though a smaller program, People Incorporated’s CASA of the 28th Judicial District has several dedicated volunteers advocating for the best interests of children in Southwestern Virginia. A particularly noteworthy and trying case involves a sibling group of three young children. The children were removed from their biological parents and entered foster care due to physical abuse in August 2018. The two oldest children had been removed a few years earlier due to similar allegations. Upon entering care, the children exhibited signs of severe trauma. Due to the nature of the case, the program assigned an advocate for the sibling group prior to the dispositional hearing. Upon his assignment, the advocate quickly began advocating for each child, visiting with each child shortly after assignment. Throughout the life of the case, the advocate reviewed the medical files of each child, interacted with service providers of the children, and collaborated with the GAL. Due to the abuse experienced, one child was forced to be placed in a residential facility. The advocate was instrumental in encouraging the Department of Social Services to complete parenting assessments. During multiple Family Partnership Meetings, the volunteer zealously advocated against sending the children home prior to the parents addressing their parenting abilities, working in conjunction with the GAL to discuss concerns with the mother and father’s counselor. Earlier this year, contrary to the advocate’s stance and the children’s best interests, the children were sent home on a trial placement. Shortly thereafter, the trial placement failed due to physical abuse allegations. Currently, the children have been placed in appropriate foster homes and are receiving necessary services. The goal for the children is adoption, and the parents have signed permanent entrustments for an August hearing. Throughout his advocacy, the volunteer contributed over 400 hours to the case, including visiting each child nearly 40 times, making over 450 contacts, and submitting 4 court reports with 33 recommendations

**Underserved**

**Case Study 1:**

A Spanish-speaking client received advocacy and case management services throughout the quarter. The advocate was also able to connect her to our Spanish-speaking licensed counselor to process the long-term domestic violence she endured at the hands of her husband and also to learn how to be a supportive parent and process a recent disclosure from her daughter that she had been sexually assaulted by a close family member. Thanks to our collaborative efforts among staff, the client was able to receive basic services like housing, food, diapers, and other items for herself and her family. Furthermore, the client met with an attorney from a local legal advocacy agency that provided free immigration consultations in our office due to the VSGP funding. Staff advocated for the client with this agency and after hearing about her situation they agreed to represent the client in her immigration case free of charge.

**Case Study 2:**

On October 12, 2019, this worker received a hotline call from an APS worker requesting assistance responding to an emergency involving a 69-year old individual. Law enforcement had been on scene and served as the initial incident reporter to the APS worker. Law enforcement initially responded to the residence for a disturbance call involving one of the homeowners and a family member who did not reside at the location of the disturbance. The APS worker indicated there would be a small window of time to arrive at the residence and speak with the individual prior to the alleged abuser returning to the residence. Together this worker and the APS worker arrived at the residence to assess the needs of the individual. After speaking with the individual and learning details of earlier events, law enforcement was called and an emergency protective order and elder abuse charges were filed against abusers. One sheriff’s deputy remained on scene with the APS worker and this worker to assure safety to all involved, while another sheriff’s deputy went to the office to video time a magistrate (only sheriff’s personnel allowed in secure video area) and present evidence in an effort to secure the EPO and bring forth elder abuse charges.

These events occurred on a holiday weekend dictating this worker act with hast to complete the intake packet, secure an attorney, and contact the JDR judge to provide details of the individuals’ physical limitations. The individual was completely bedridden (unable to bend at the waist) and only transportable via ambulance on a stretcher, the court could accommodate wheelchairs only not a stretcher, which required utilizing other methods to meet the client’s need of securing a protective order. The client has a severely handicapped adult child living in the home who demonstrates as having minimal verbal skills and has the need for constant care providers. The abuser was attempting to remove the care providers from the shared residence, which added another layer of concern for securing a preliminary protective order prior to the EPO ending. Throughout the weekend this worker conducted a home visit to assist with completion of the intake packet, contacted three attorneys to find one with availability to represent the client, and contacted the JDR judge for guidance on how to proceed with securing a preliminary protective order based on the special needs of the client’s physical limitations. The JDR judge suggested conducting the preliminary protective order intake via FaceTime.

On Tuesday October 15th this worker and the APS worker gathered the preliminary protective order packet from the JDR intake office delivered it to the client, returned the completed packet and then returned to the client’s home to FaceTime the JDR judge via this worker’s cell phone. A preliminary protective order was granted on October 15, 2019. The original permanent protective order date was schedule for October 28th, but the attorney originally slated to represent the client had a conflict and this worker secured another attorney willing to assist. This worker assisted the attorney by gathering witness statements and pictures then forwarding all information to the Commonwealth’s Attorney. The client appeared before the JDR judge utilizing FaceTime via this worker’s cell phone, while the APS worker appeared in the court room with the client’s witnesses. The abuser faced pending criminal charges of elder abuse and for this reason the permanent protective order matter was pushed back to January 6, 2020. The judge did order the abuser could retrieve personal belongings from the residence. The judge further stated, if this worker and the APS worker were present and the abuser named a third party, that person could enter the residence to collect the items. The APS worker and this worker did assist with removal as requested. This worker accompanied the Fauquier County Commonwealth’s Attorney to the client’s home in an effort to gather information relating to criminal charges against the abuser.

**Case Study 3:**

One week after the murder of George Floyd, our local Sheriff’s Department was involved in a case where a black man was wrongfully arrested on his own property after being assaulted by a white mob. Our local law enforcement agencies are overwhelmingly comprised of white males (there are less than 5 officers/deputies of color and less than 15 female officers/deputies in the entire county). This incident has caused a deepened distrust with law enforcement amongst our minority victims. The court advocate met with each law enforcement Chief and the Sheriff to discuss the feelings of our marginalized victims and to develop a plan to improve their response to marginalized populations in our community. We are trying to meet monthly, looking for ways to provide meaningful trainings to patrol, foster better community relationships and bring more diversity into these organizations.”

**Case Study 4:**

The Richmond Victim Witness program responded to the survivors and witnesses of a juvenile homicide. The victim was shot in the head by another juvenile while with a group of peers. The victim advocate met with the victim’s mother to provide condolences and make her aware of resources that might assist her in the wake of the tragedy, including homicide survivor support groups and counseling services. The advocate also coordinated with law enforcement and other MDT members to identify services that might be beneficial for eye witnesses of the homicide, who were also juveniles.

The advocate helped the victim’s mother to complete a victim’s compensation application to cover funeral costs and counseling not covered by insurance. Meeting were also coordinated to ensure that the victim’s mother understood the courts process, understand her rights, and navigate through the judicial system. Throughout the court process, the victim’s mother had continual contact with the Victim Witness program. At one point, the victim’s mother expressed safety concerns and the advocate worked with the detective assigned to the case to discuss safety planning and relocation.

The perpetrator of the crime was tried as juvenile and the victim’s mother struggled with feeling like justice wasn’t served. The advocate provided emotional support, crisis intervention, and guidance and the mother expressed her frustrations. Follow-up support was provided including linkages to mental health support and ongoing grief/homicide support groups.