



TASKFORCE  
• DELTA VICTOR •

# WE CAN BE HEROES

Submission to the Inquiry into  
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

# SUBMISSION PREPARED BY

This submission has been prepared by Shelley Erhart, Lisa Erhart and Becks Simpson.

It offers independent thinking and advice using evidence based insights directly from victims of domestic, family and sexual violence. We have no vested interest and are not recipients of government or community funds.

Our contribution is focused on **Terms of Reference ITEM C)** as it is the most significant catch all for women and children victims of domestic, family and sexual violence.

*Item: c) The level and impact of coordination, accountability for, and access to services and policy responses across the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, local governments, non government and community organisations, and business.*



This has been a Machine Learning project investigating the factors driving Domestic Violence in Australia

POWERED BY:



Inquiry into family, domestic and sexual violence  
Submission 5

ABOUT THE PROJECT...

# • THE PROBLEM •

There are **2.2 million Australians** who have **experienced physical or sexual violence** from a current or previous partner.

A review in 2014 determined that **78% of calls** to DV counselling and support service **1800Respect went unanswered**.

Even with the documented ineffectiveness of this and other programs, the Australian Government has committed \$723million in funding from Nov'18 to Jun'21.

*And yet...*

**On average, 1 woman every week is murdered  
by a current or former partner.**

**Why are women still losing  
their lives?**

**How can we more  
effectively connect victims  
with local support services  
to find better outcomes?**

**What is the data telling  
us about the factors  
and patterns driving this  
appalling statistics?**

## ABOUT THE PROJECT...

# SHINING A LIGHT • USING AI-DRIVEN INTELLIGENCE •

Kalista AI is a team of Australian data and AI entrepreneurs who want to turn the power of AI-driven machine learning engine to this problem.

The Taskforce Delta Victor project aims to create a collective knowledge base of multiple sources of data – from victims' personal experience data to government reports to institutional statistics – and then apply machine learning to ask questions of the data.

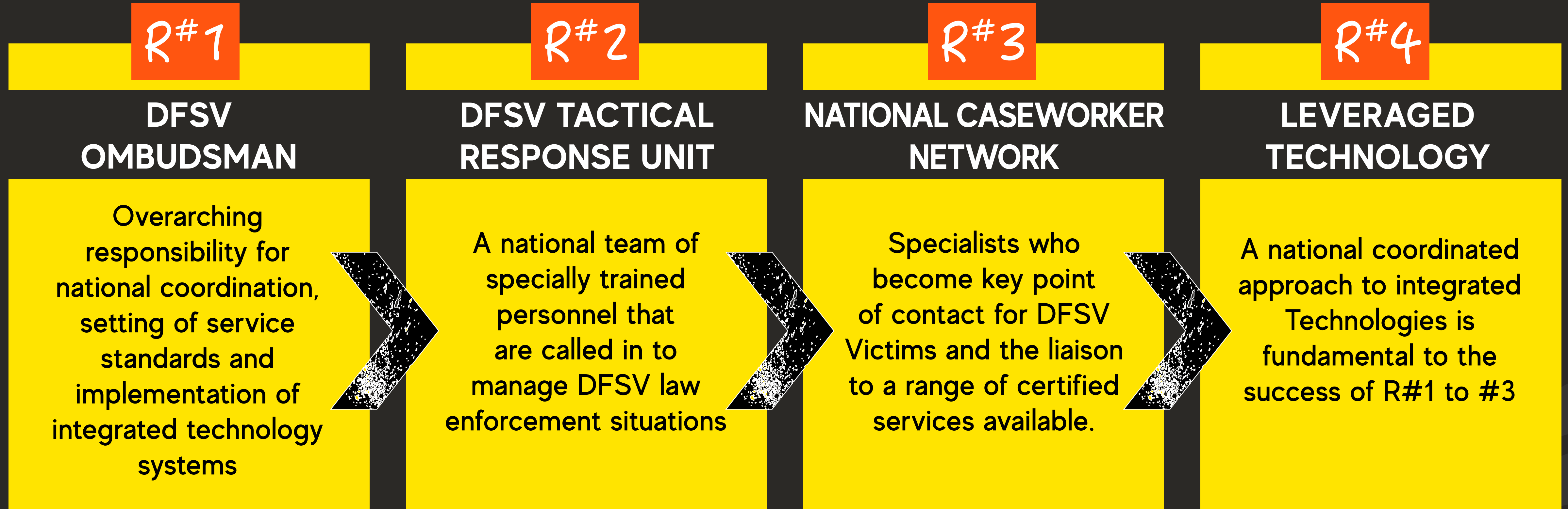
The project aims to shine a light on the unseen factors, patterns and gaps behind the data, test predictive scenarios and ultimately find insights around the problem.

*Our proposal, therefore is to:*

1. Implement evidence based service delivery performance measures
2. Build in transparency at key points of failure in the system
3. Identify additional sources of data that would enable deep learning and produce solutions

# • RECOMMENDATIONS •

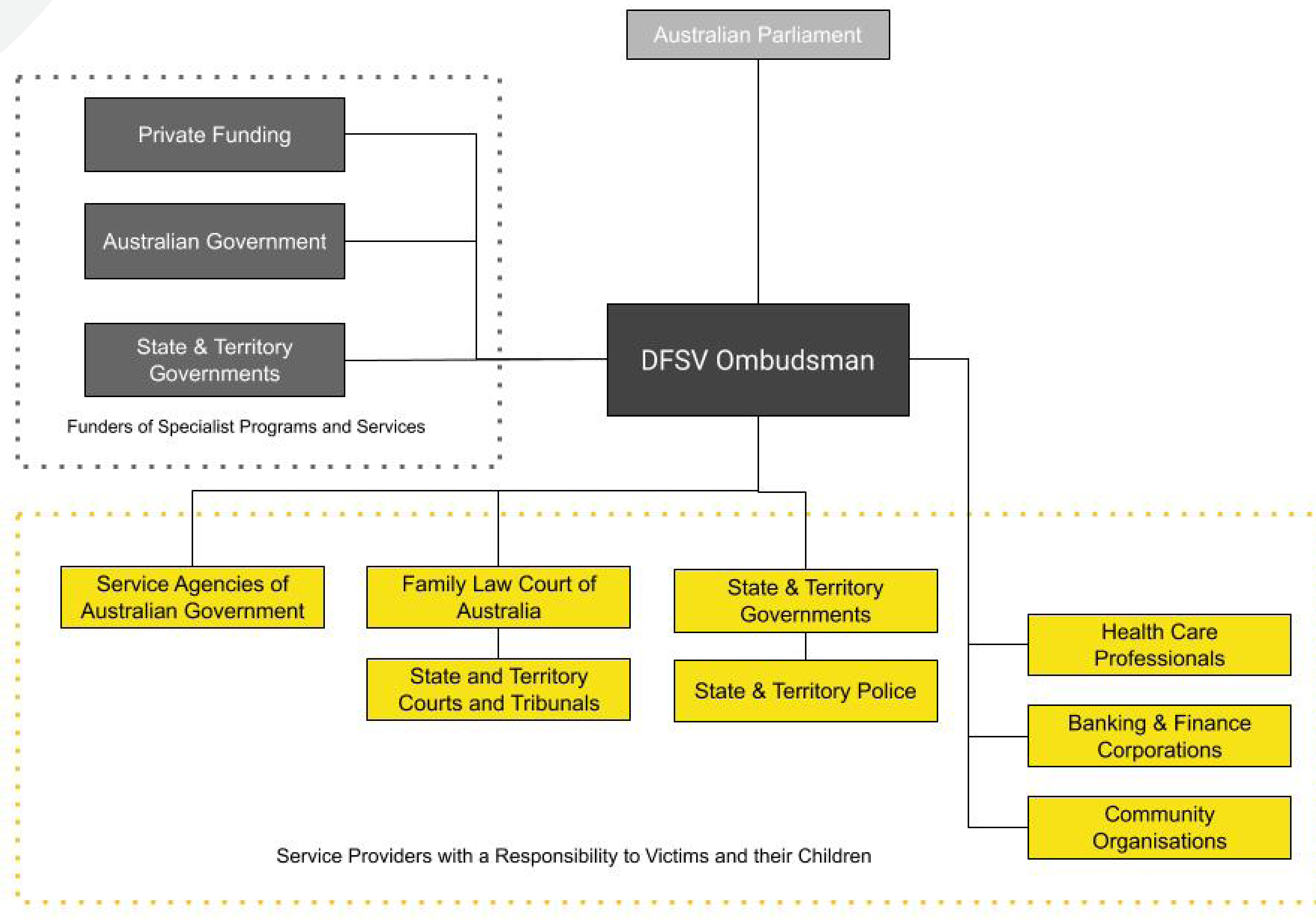
We asked female victims of domestic, family and sexual violence and abuse to use their voices. To tell us what they want from a system that is supposed to protect them. The overwhelming message is.... They don't feel safe. The trauma they've experienced is real. They've lived through the equivalent of a high-conflict war zone. The difference is... these women and children aren't armed. They don't have a team of trained specialists to watch out for them. **They are alone.**



# • PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS •

# R#1: One overarching organisation

## THE DFSV OMBUDSMAN\*



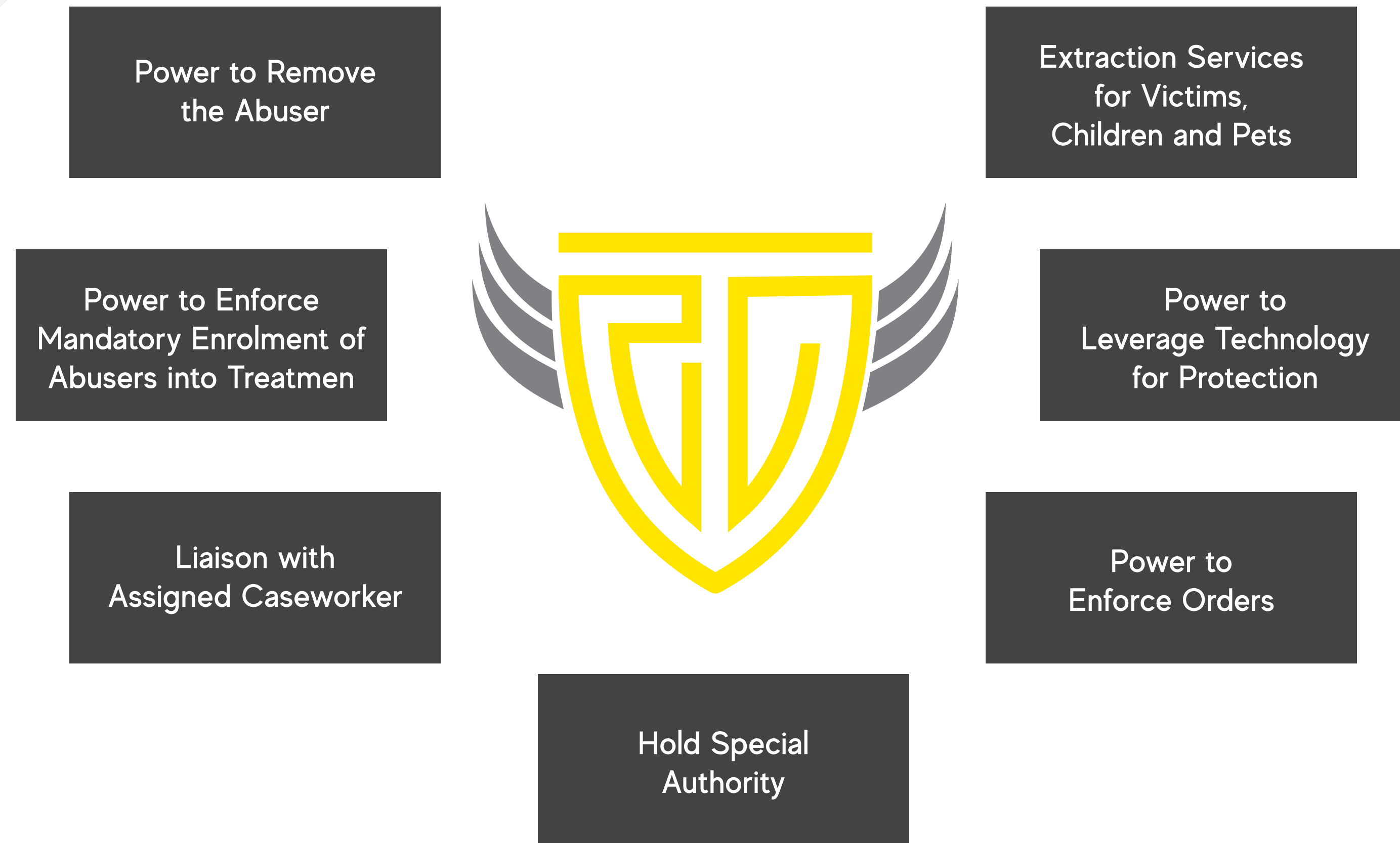
Independent Officer of the Parliament of Australia with responsibility to:

- National coordination of DFSV programs
- Set program and service standards
- Delivery framework and service provider certification
- Partner with Australian National Audit Office to monitor performance and measure effectiveness of programs
- Implementation of integrated data and technology systems
- Investigate the actions of public authorities and community organisations including State Government agencies, statutory authorities and boards, and local governments
- Publish results

in relation to Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

\*\*Ombudsman is used here as an evolved, expanded version of the traditional dispute resolution model.

# R#2: National DFSV TACTICAL RESPONSE UNIT

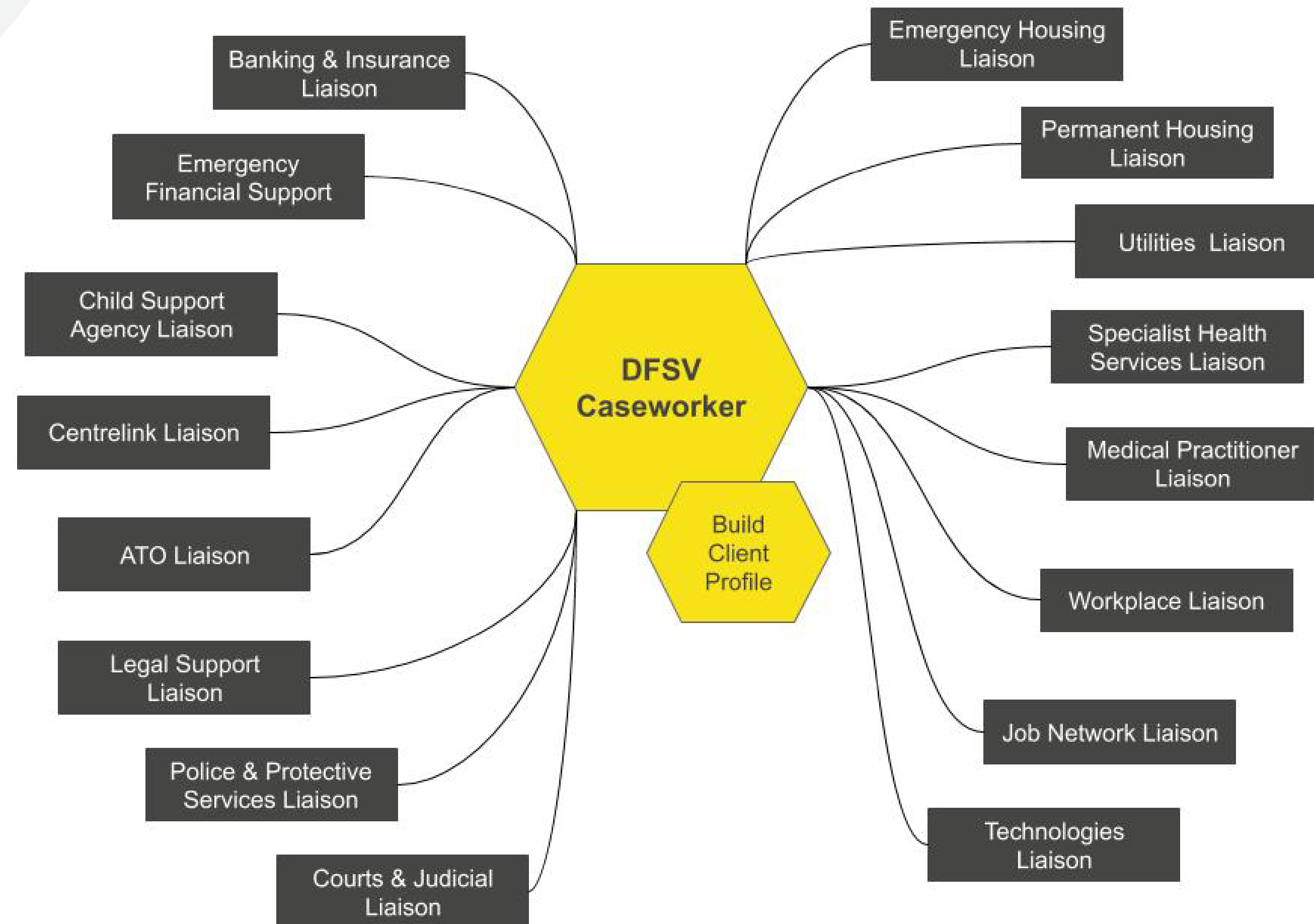


.....

The DFSV Tactical Response Unit is a national team of specially trained personnel that are called in to manage DFSV law enforcement situations that exceed the capabilities of standard police resources.

.....

# R#3: Specialised Caseworkers TO DELIVER TARGETED SUPPORT



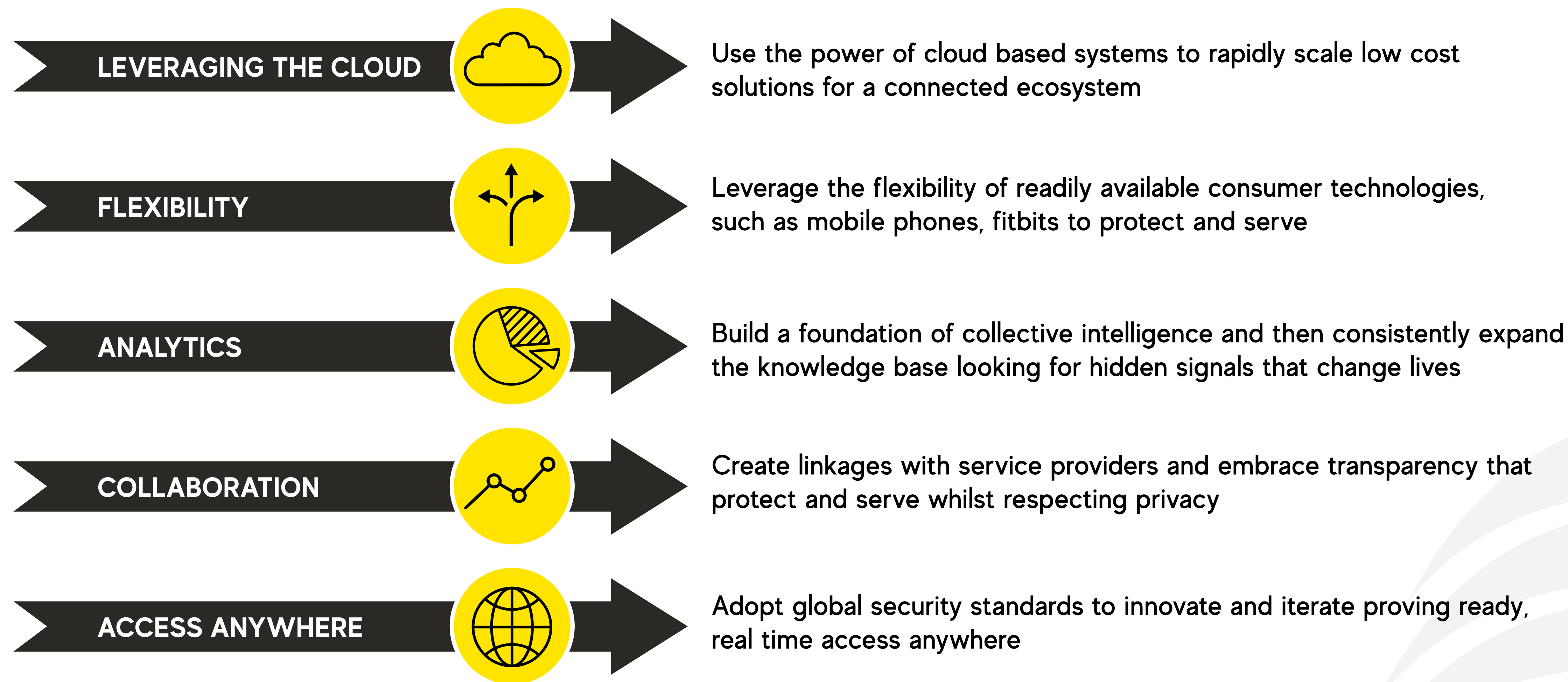
Specialists who become key point of contact for DFSV Victims and the liaison to a range of certified services available.

Victims share their story once, confident in the knowledge they will be heard and receive the support they need.

Caseworkers are coordinated nationally and are pivotal in leveraging the power of technology such as collecting meaningful data to inform service decisions.

Caseworkers may replace the existing helpline model.

# R#4: LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY

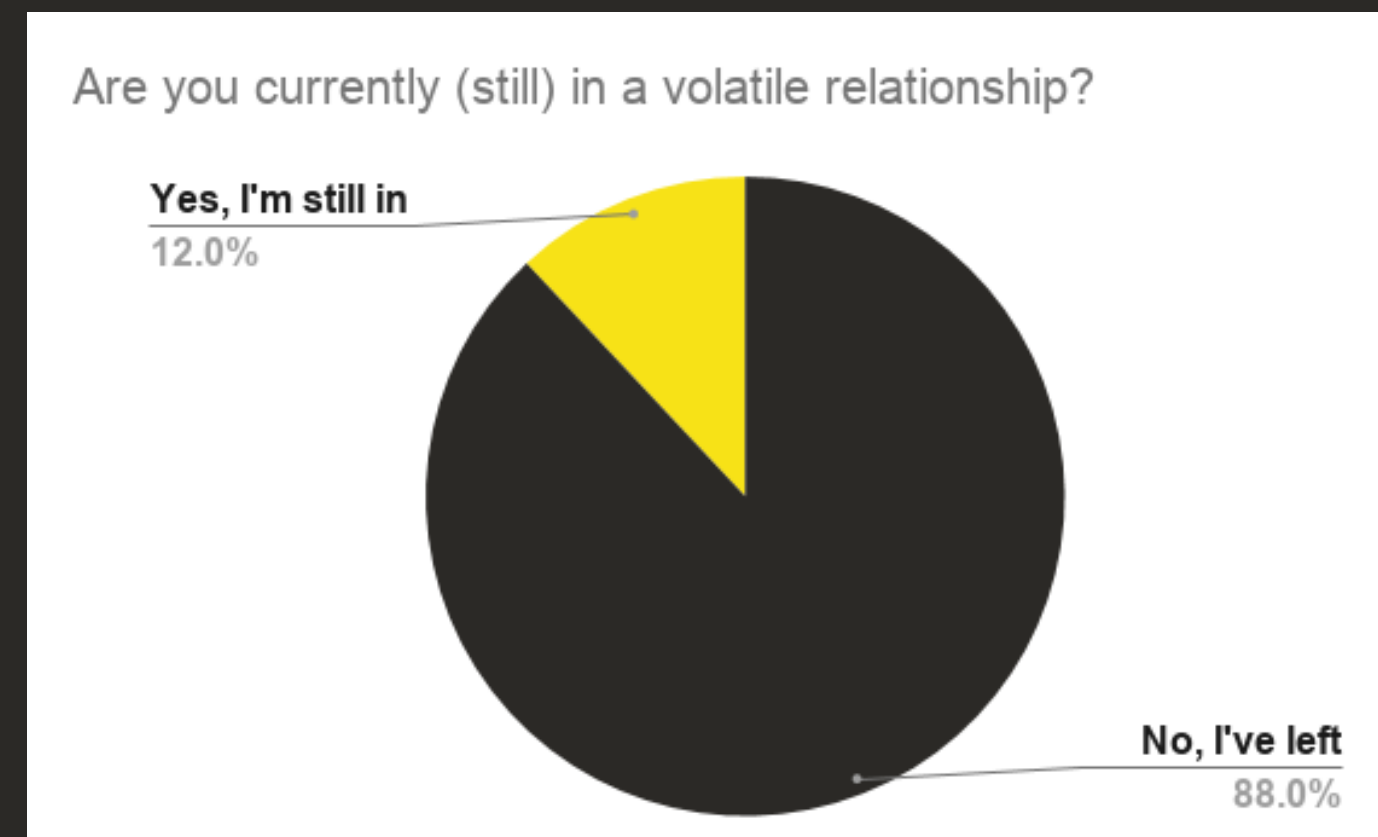
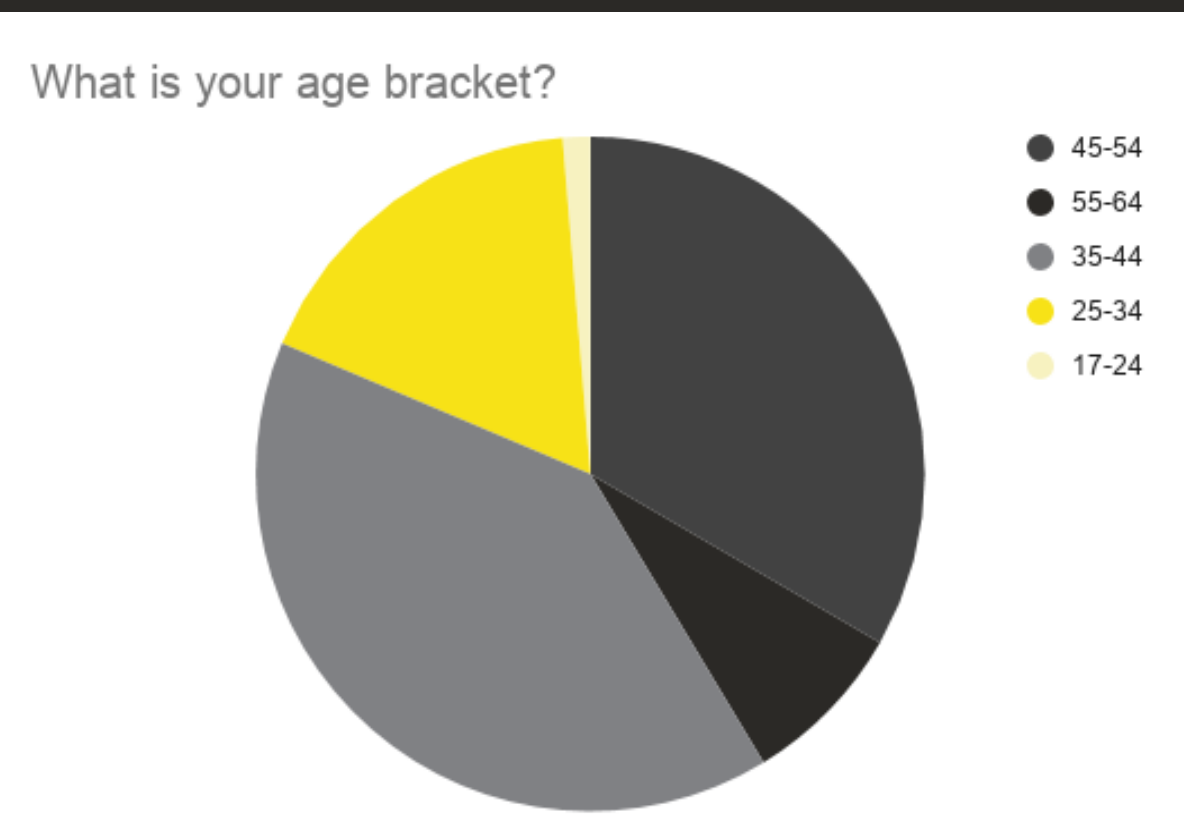


The fundamentals of leveraged technology (above) can be applied at Ombudsman level, mobile Tactical Response Units, Caseworkers, and for Victims themselves.

# • OUR RESPONDERS •

# • THE VOICE OF VICTIMS •

Number of Victims Voices captured in this submission **76**

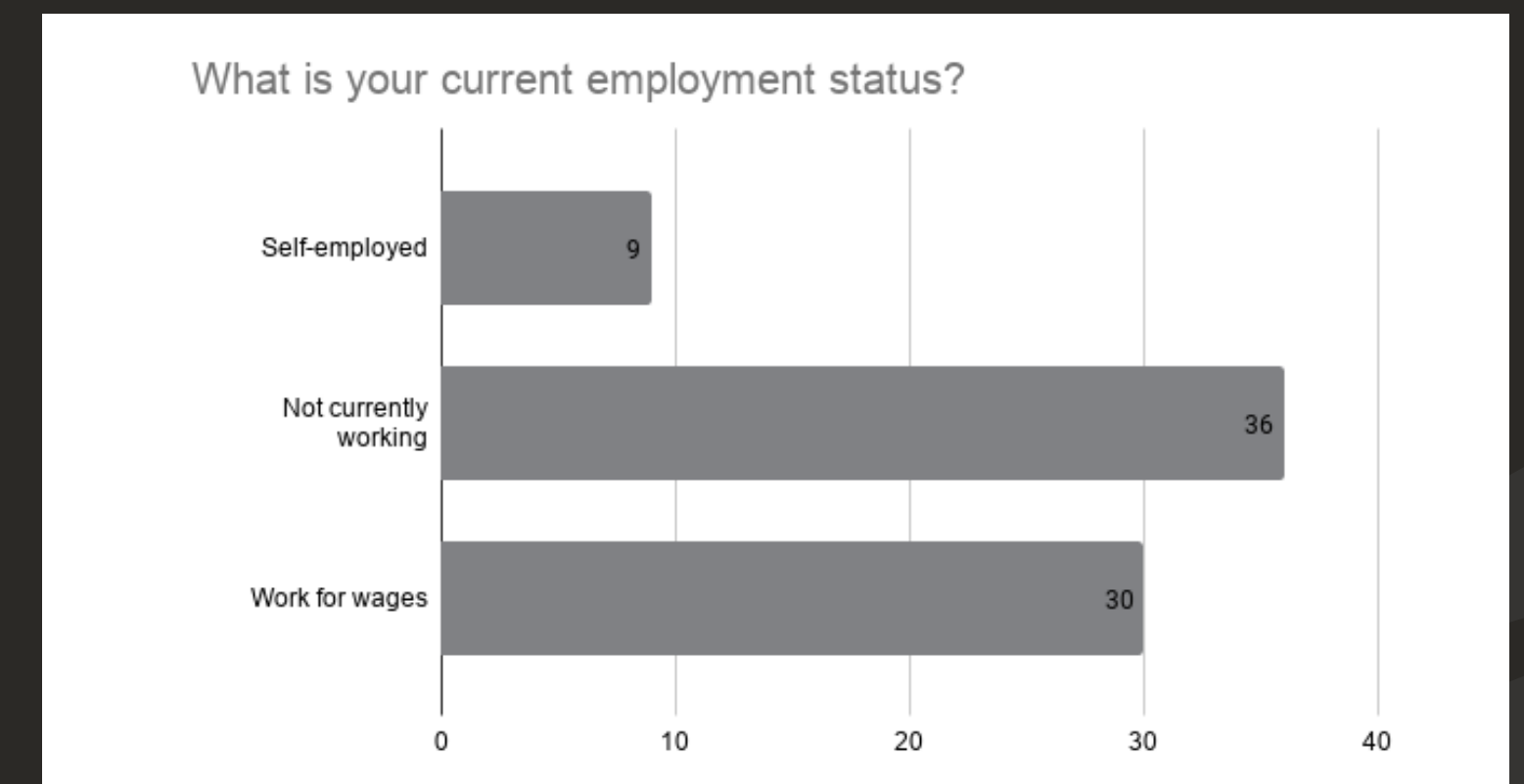
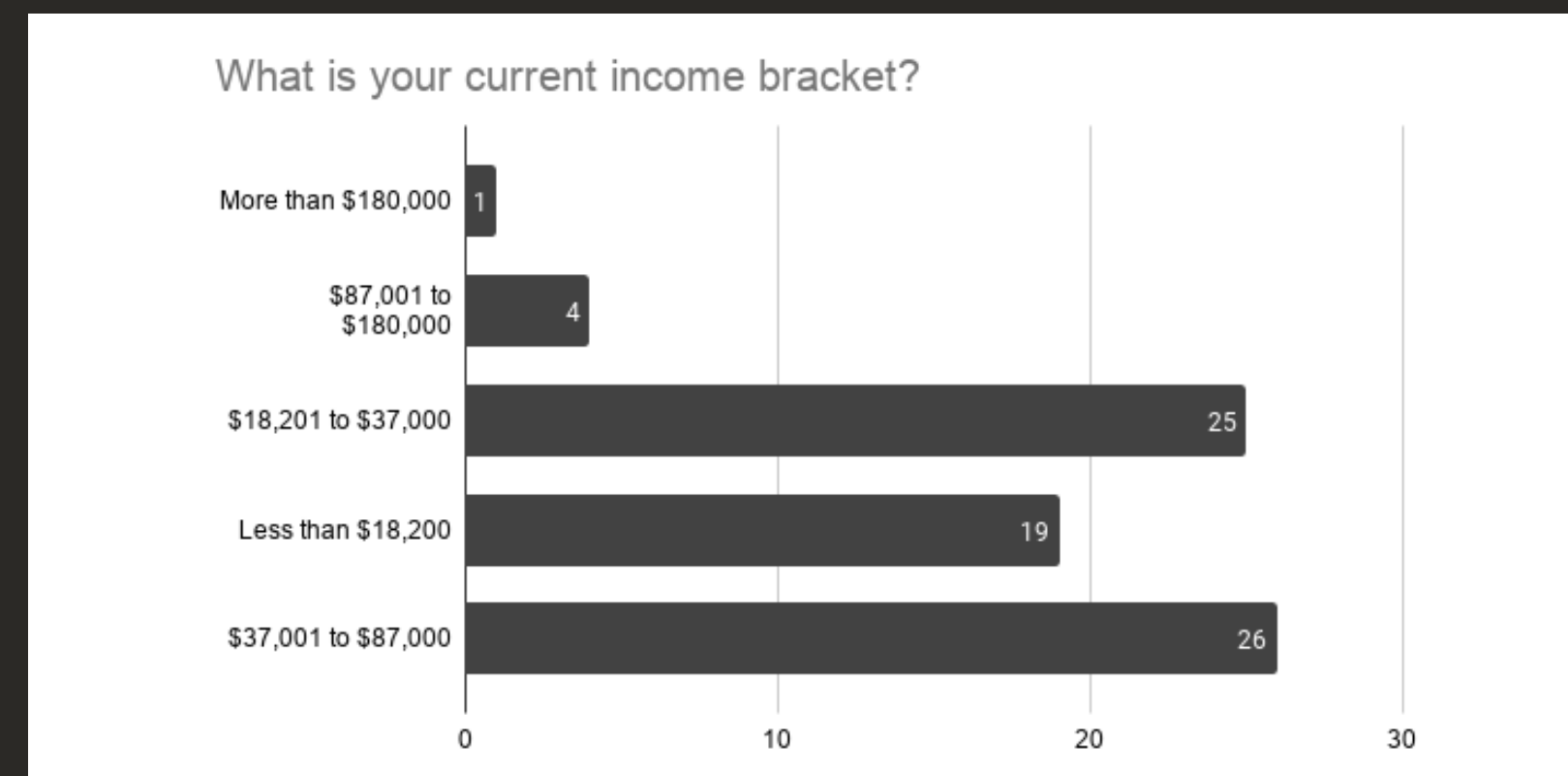
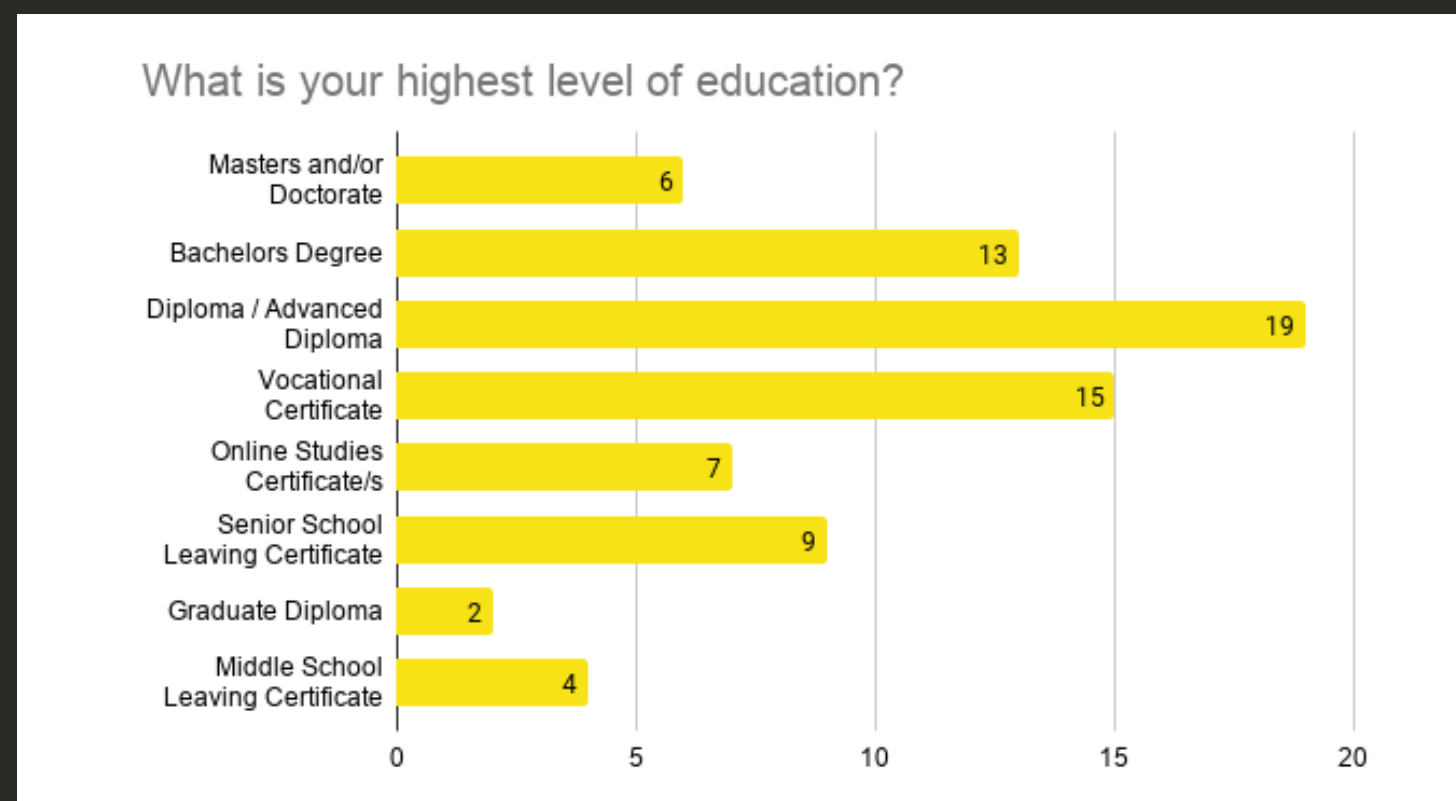


**When survivors leave the relationship but remain victims of abuse or violent attack.**

**85.7% (66)** Survivors are **no longer** in a relationship with violent partner

**47% (31)** remain 'victims' subjected to **ongoing abuse** and/or violent attacks

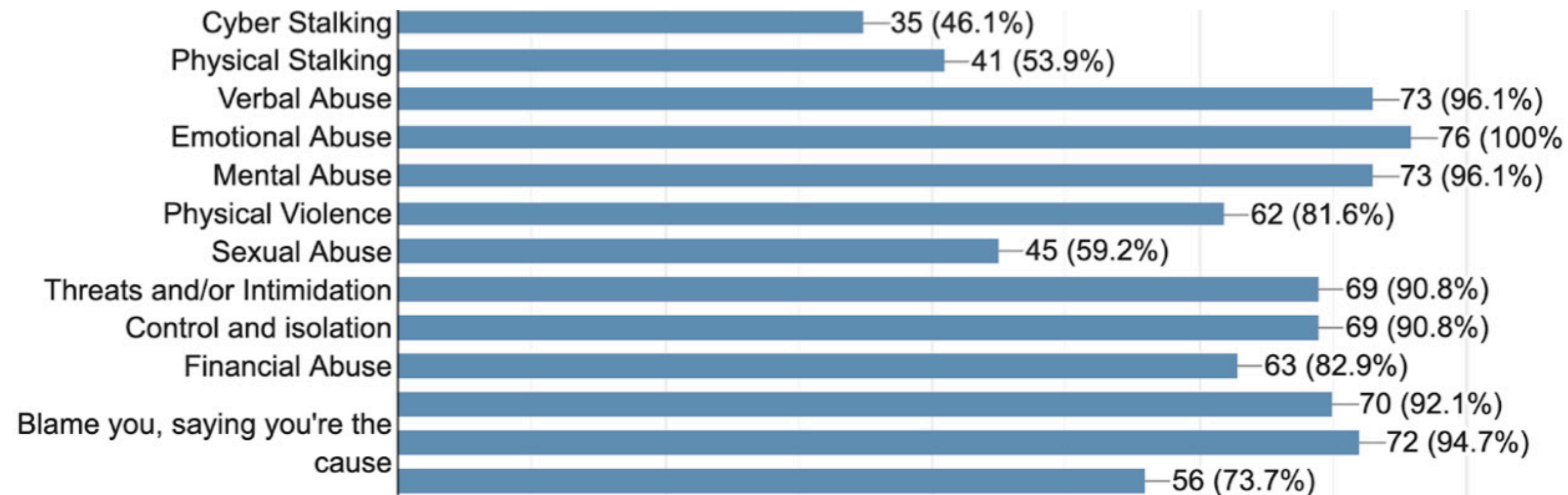
**4% (3)** **remain victims** of abuse or attacks daily, 11 weekly and 6 monthly



# • TYPES OF ABUSE •

# TYPES OF ABUSE

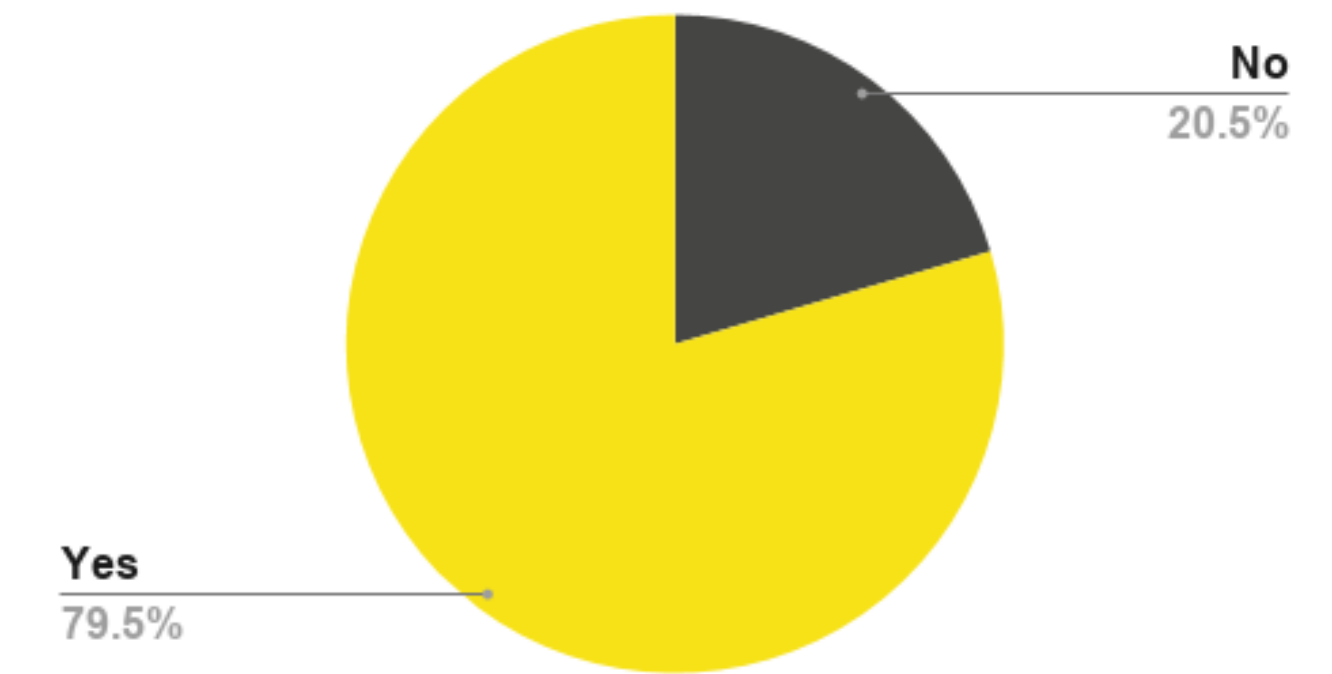
What are the types of abuse you've experienced?



**Women are financially constrained.**

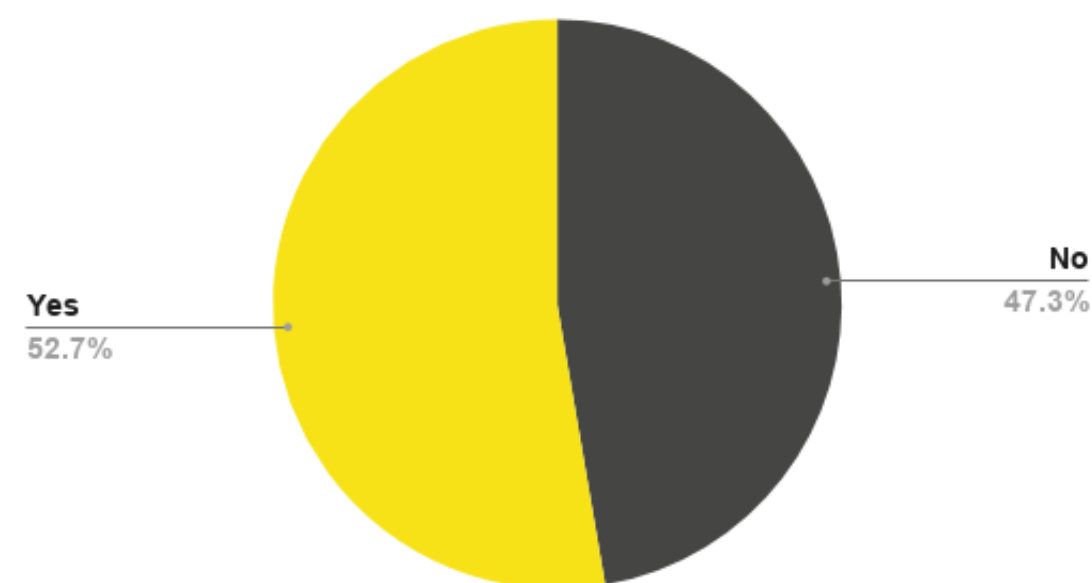
They earn less and are often left with debt they shouldn't be responsible for

Did debt levels increase during the relationship?

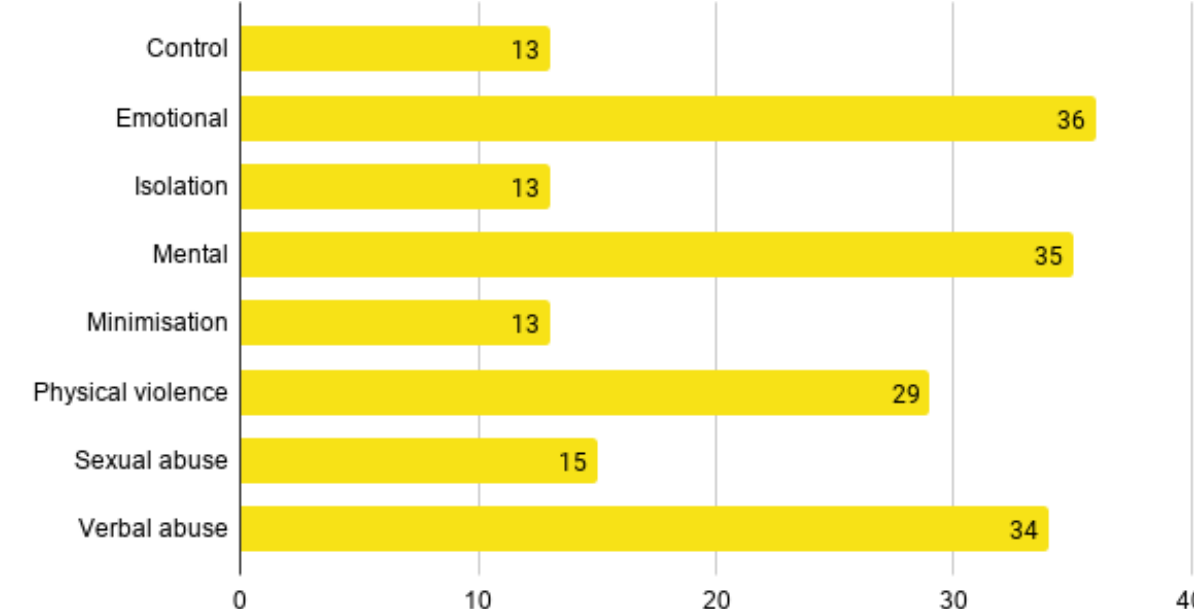


- > Partner spending excessively
- > Partner gambling, strip clubs, alcohol
- > Victim's salary pays all household bills plus mortgage but also incurs debt from property settlement
- > Partner would create debt in my name and then not meet repayments
- > Forced by court to live in an affluent suburb (that is unaffordable) to be near children's father
- > Ongoing credit card debt
- > Property damages
- > Court fees

Did you grow up in an abusive household?



If 'yes' what types of abuse were you exposed to?



# • ACCESS TO SERVICES •

## And their impact

# • CALL FOR HELP •

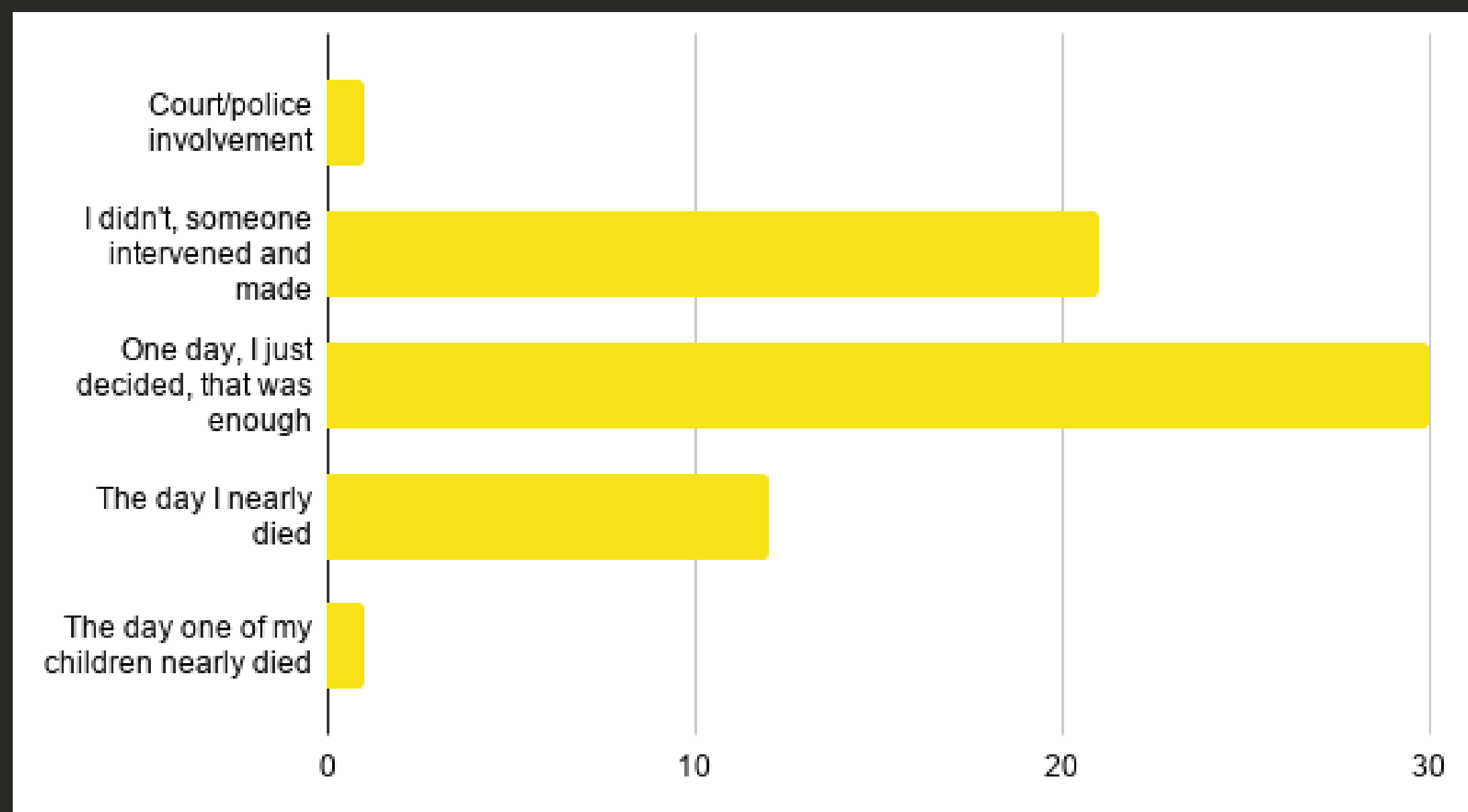
# 85.5%

Of victims have  
asked for help!

## MOST ACCESSED SERVICES

- 1.. Friends and Family
- 2.. Paid for mental health
- 3.. Free mental health service
- 4.. Somewhere to live

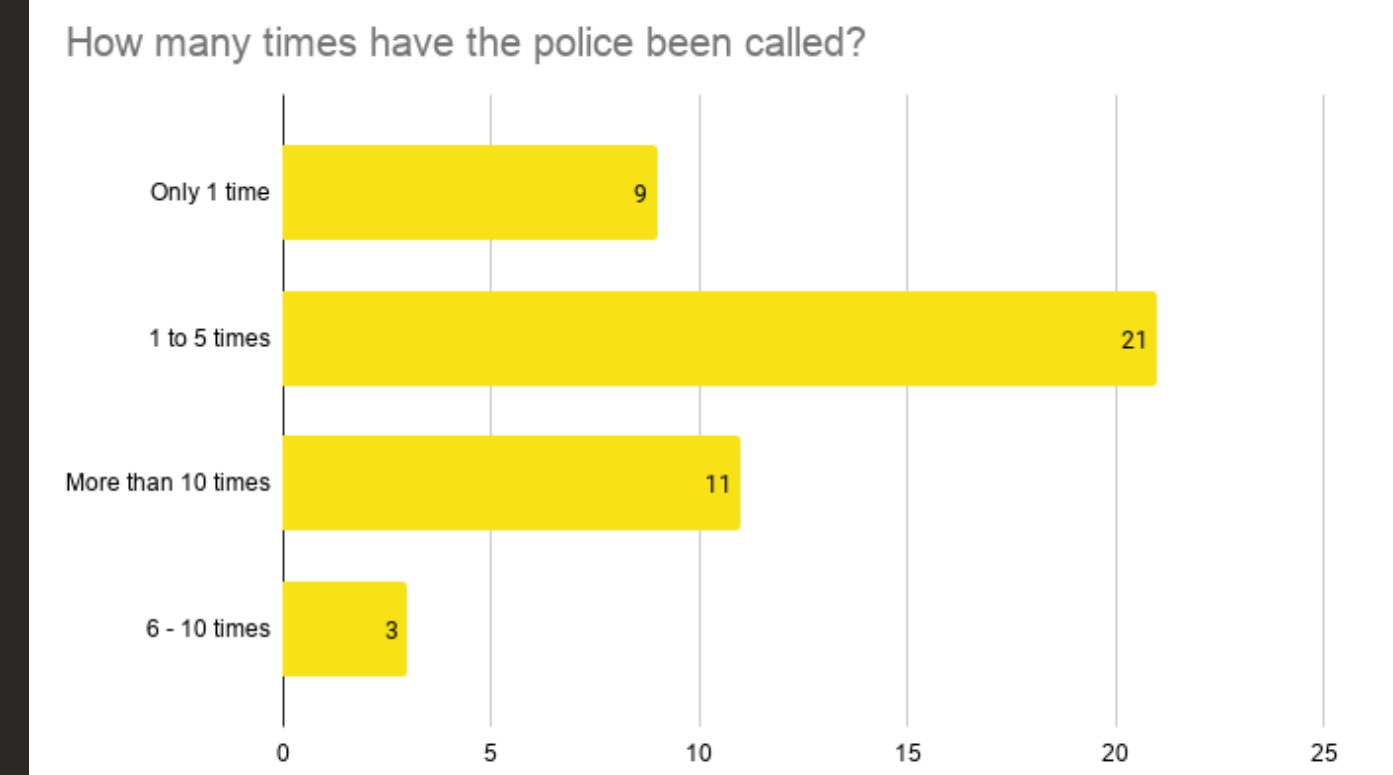
WHAT PROMPTED YOU  
TO CALL FOR HELP?



## TOP 5 MOST HELPFUL SERVICES

Service Accessed	Number of Victims	Rated Service as Helpful
FINANCIAL SUPPORT (Centrelink)	29 of 38	75%
LEGAL ADVICE (Child Custody)	29 of 40	72%
MENTAL HEALTH (Paid Services)	29 of 41	71%
FRIENDS / FAMILY	40 of 56	71%
LEGAL ADVICE (Child Support)	21 of 30	70%

70% of victims  
accessing  
services did so  
daily, weekly or  
monthly.



# SERVICE EXPERIENCES

Even though the majority of women are reaching out for help,  
they are still being killed at an average rate of 1 per week?

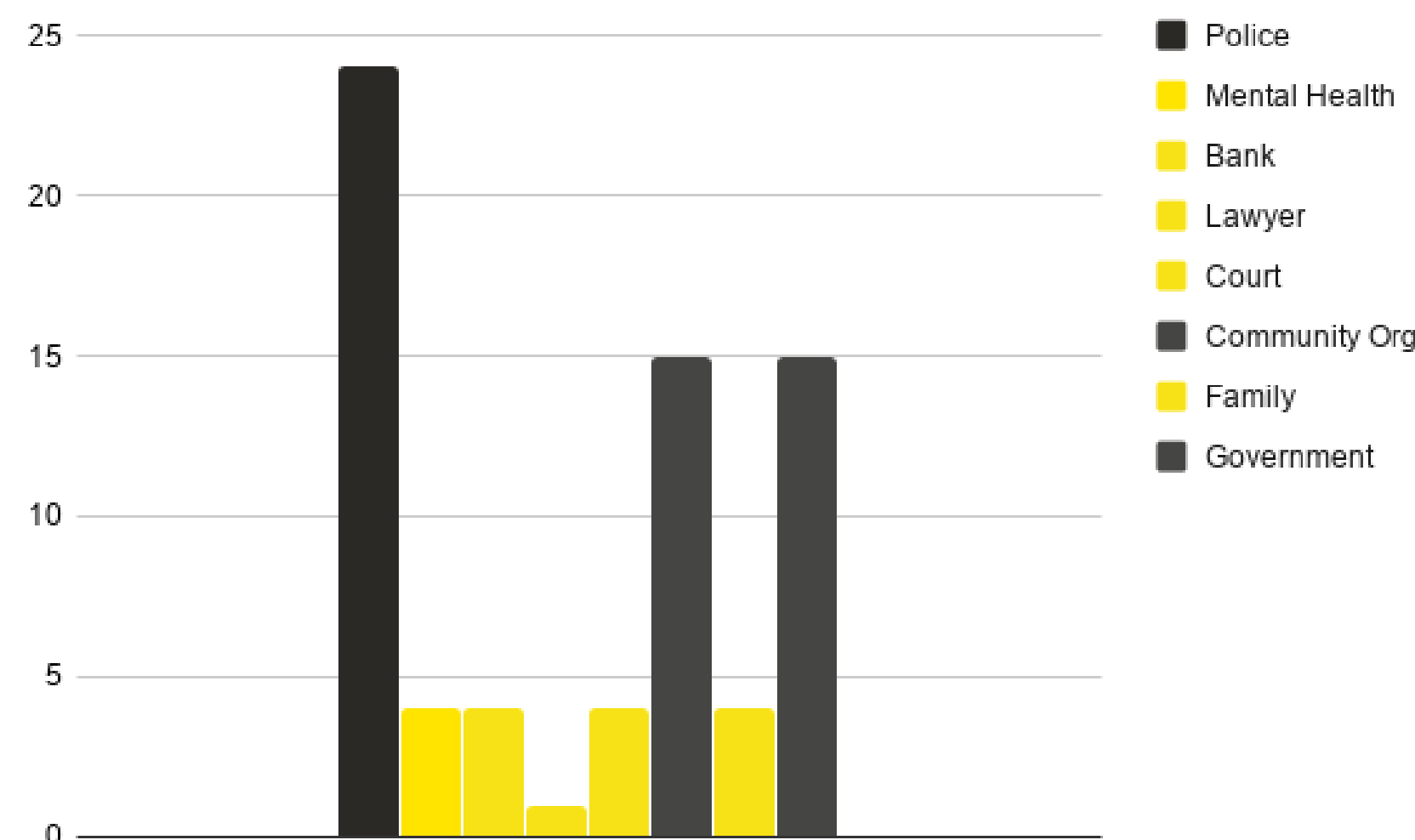
Service Accessed	Number of Victims	Rated Service Harmful
Relationship Counselling	14 of 38	37% harmful
Protective Services (Police)	10 of 54	19% harmful
Banks and Insurance	5 of 31	16% harmful

64 (85%) responded with service feedback

*Assumption - service providers not sufficiently trained in DV cause harm*

## WORST OFFENDERS

(24) Police  
(15) Community Org  
(incl. relationship counselling)  
(14) Government



## PROBLEM AREAS

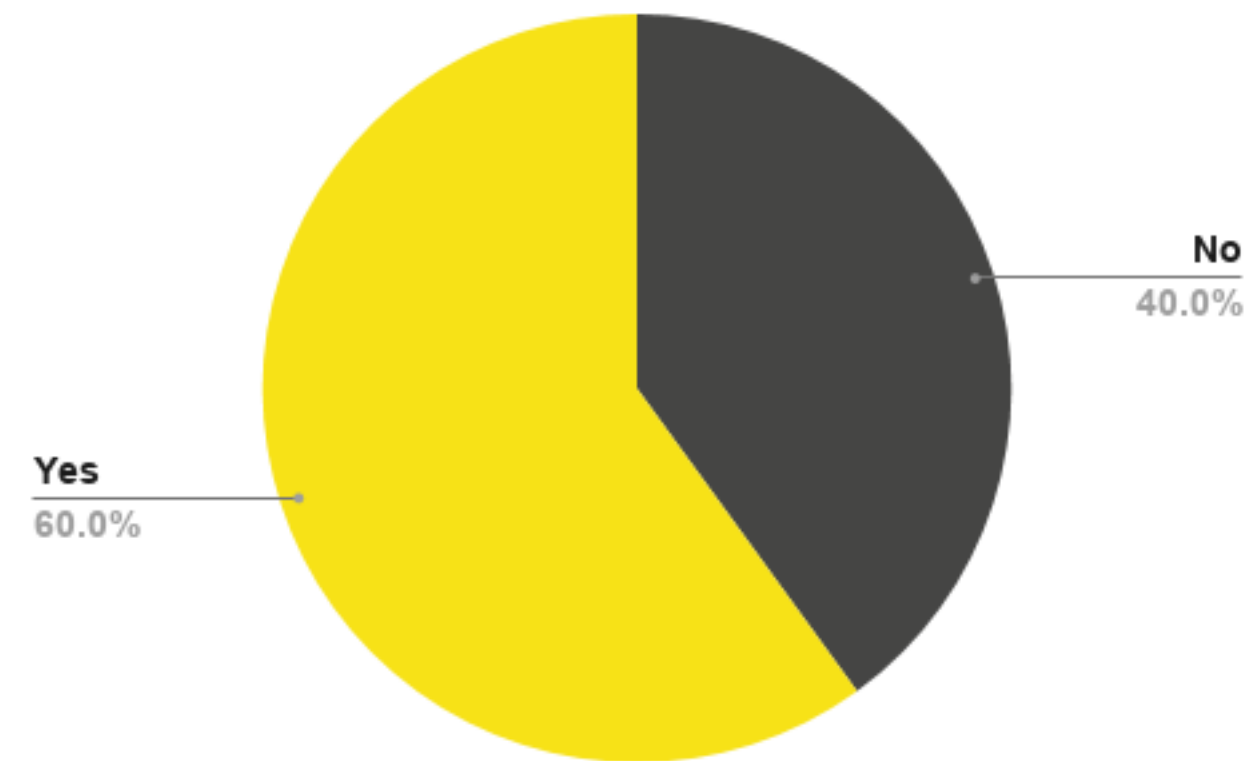
- ... No calls returned
- ... No help offered
- ... Only referrals offered
- ... Appalling advice re property settlement
- ... Judging the victim
- ... Never honoured appointments
- ... Hung up
- ... Too slow for public housing claims
- ... Not evicting perpetrator
- ... Siding with perpetrator

# • PROTECTED... OR NOT? •

## MOST SAY 'NOT'

# POLICE AS PROTECTIVE SERVICE

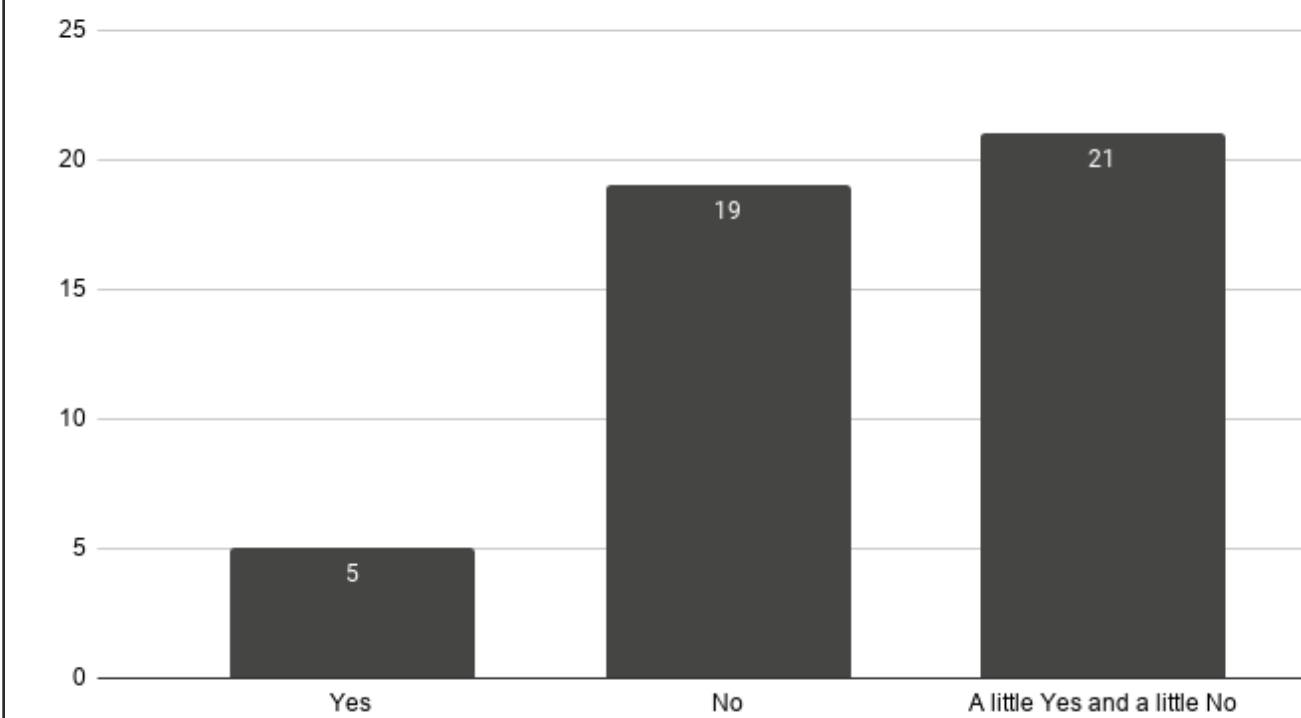
Have Police been called during an attack?



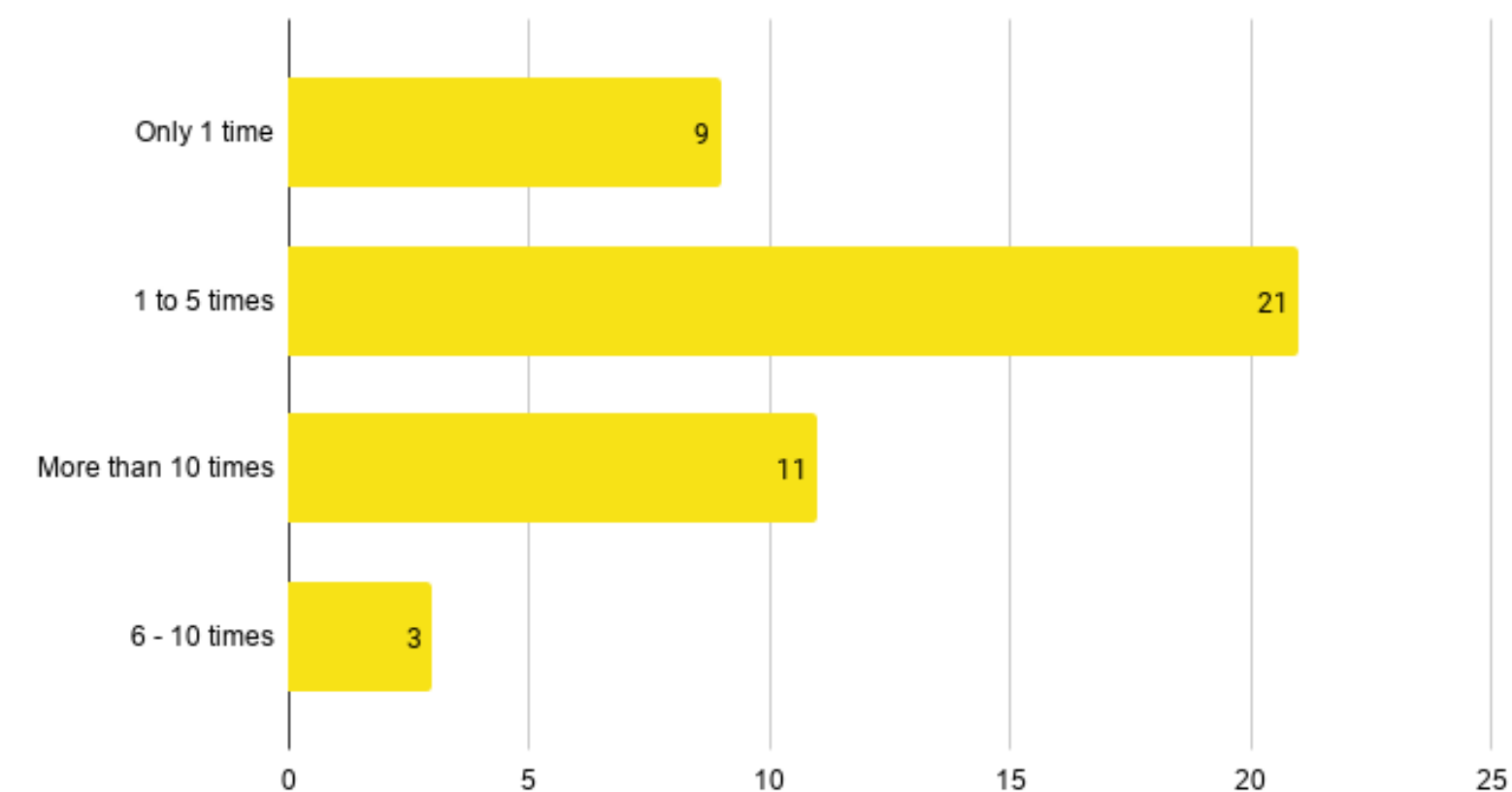
## Top 5 Complaints about Police

- 1... Not believing the victim
- 2... Victim blaming
- 3... Minimising abuse
- 4... Siding with perpetrator
- 5... DVO not helpful

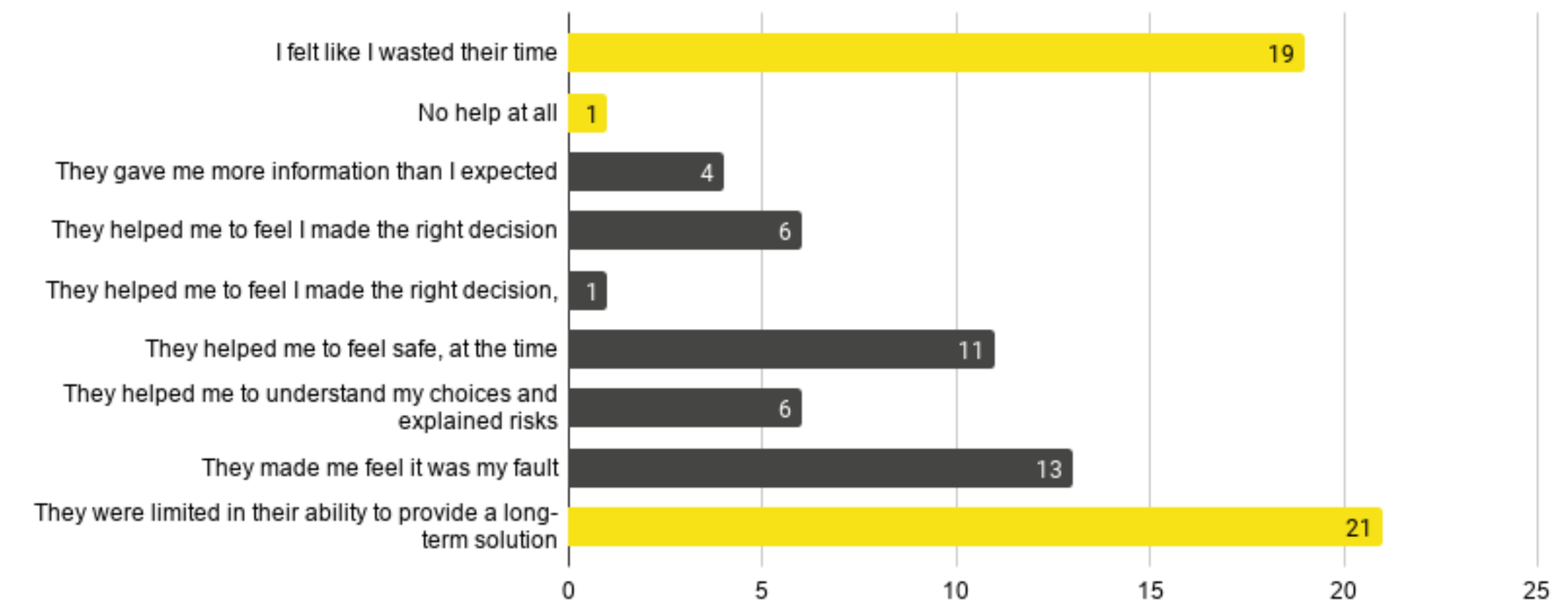
Did that experience give you the confidence to call the police again?



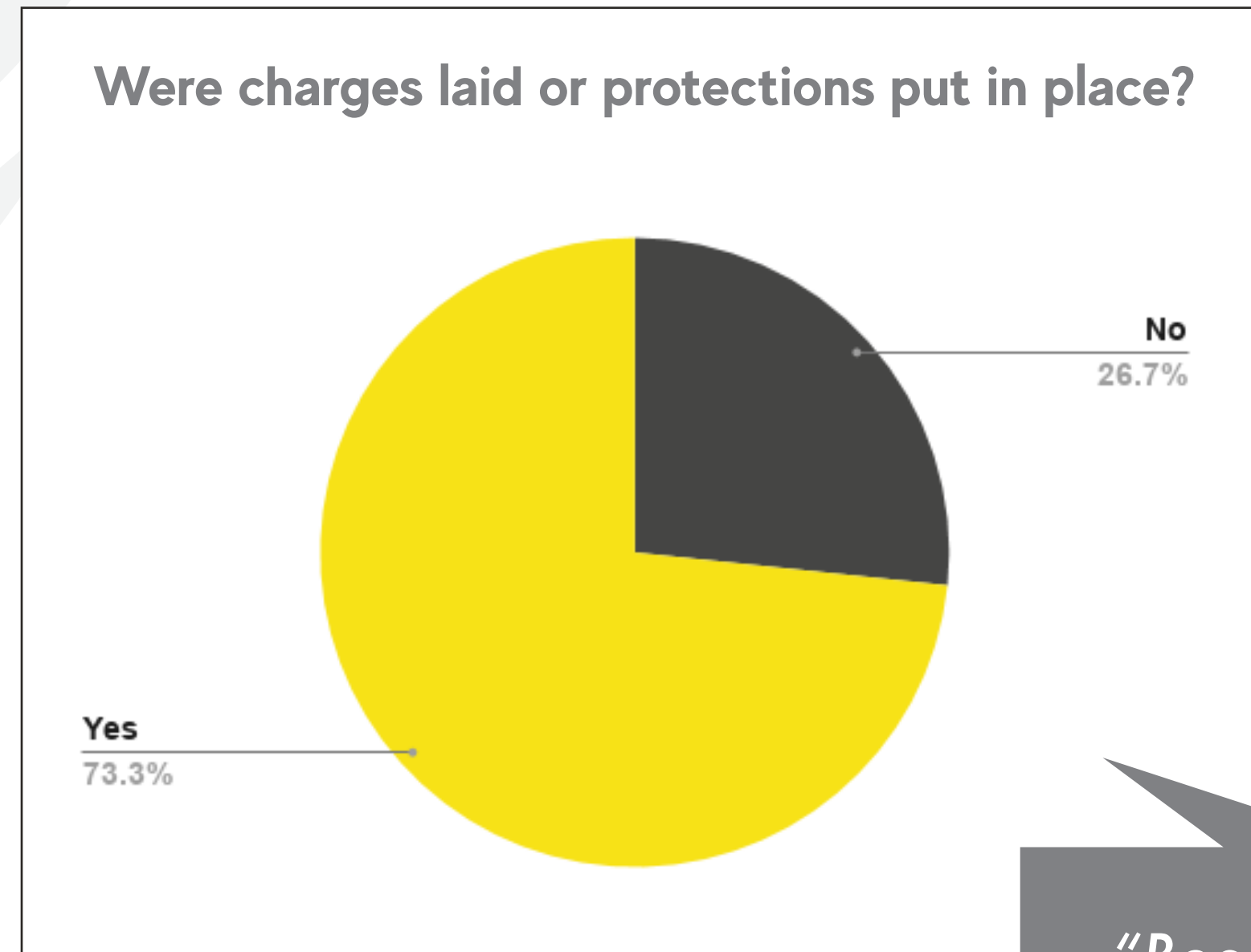
How many times have the police been called?



If you called the police, how was the experience?



# CROSSOVER BETWEEN POLICE AND COURTS



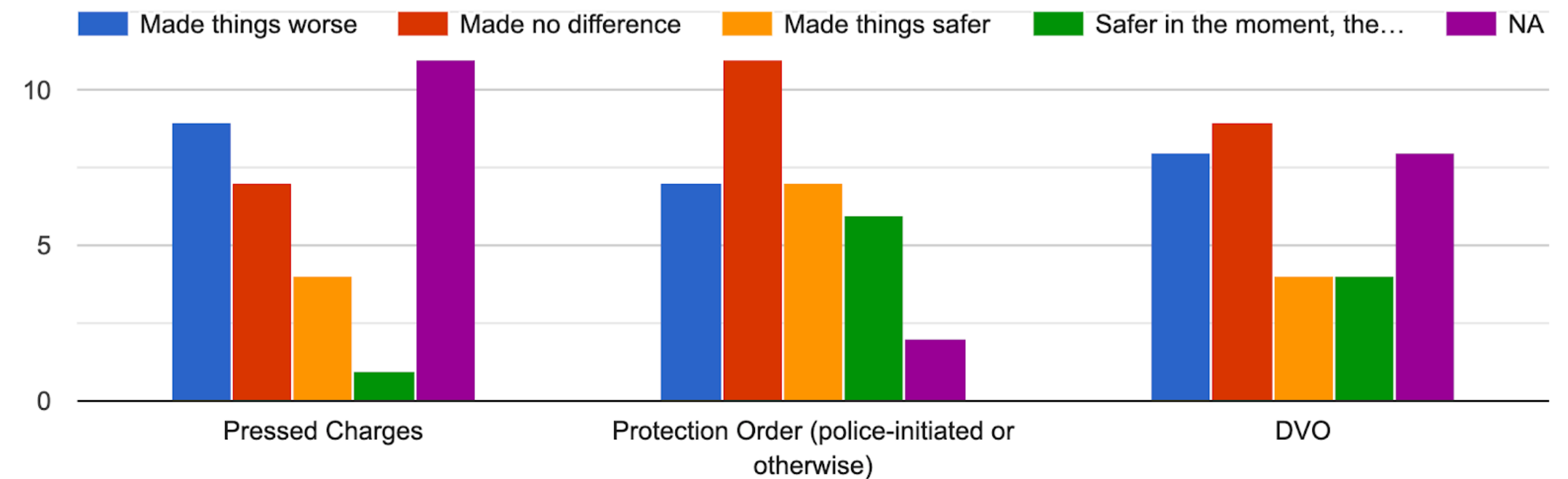
*"Not being informed what is happening and giving support to child victims."*

**My daughter is going through her own case and after the report, him being arrested and charged.** She has not once been contacted regarding the court process.

There has been no offer of support or any updates from police, door or advocates involved. She is 10yrs old and been subpoenaed as a witness and is terrified of facing my ex in court."

*"Because of failed help with constant breeches and unsure whether I would be protected from my abuser."*

If you pressed charges, had a Protection Order, or took out a DVO, did it improve your situation?



*"The process is crippling me financially."*

I have to work full time and care 100% for a 3 year old. He pays nothing but the court enables him to take me to court and continue abuse.

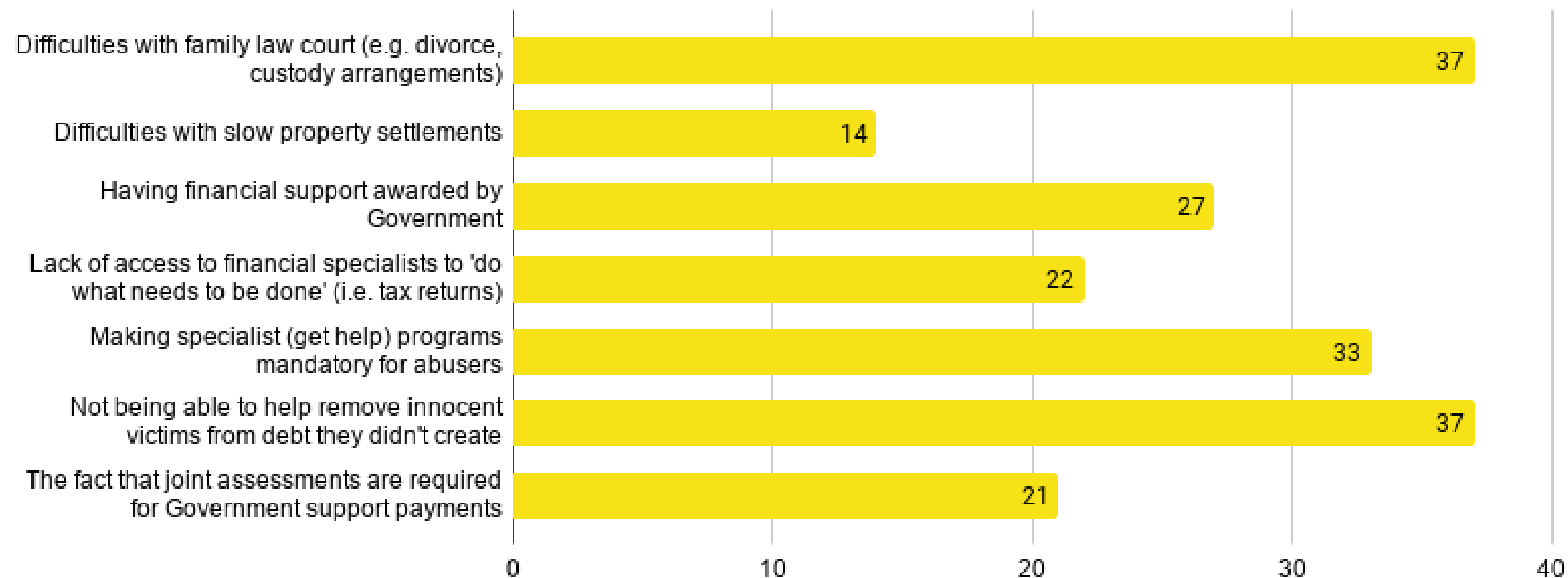
All I do is work - my daughter misses out on so much as all money goes to legal fees and see is in childcare so often.

I can't see an end to this."



# CROSSOVER BETWEEN GOVERNMENT & COURTS

Thinking about your experiences with the legal system and courts of law, where have they failed you?



*"5 breaches and he is slapped on the wrist. A further 9 breaches in a different state become new breach number."*

*"You need **legal representation** which is expensive unless you can speak for yourself which is near impossible when you've spent years having it drilled into you that you can't and you're stupid and no **one will listen** to you etc, forcing mediation in situations where it's not possible, **forcing you to sit in a room with your abuser** for mediation, having threats passed on by the mediators during mediation at his insistence having lawyers get emotionally involved and threatening on their clients behalf as he sells the story so well, **they do not protect the children** and you are forced to go through years of hell to even try."*



• **ABILITY TO FEEL SAFE** •

# HAVE SOMEWHERE SAFE TO LIVE...

*sometimes*

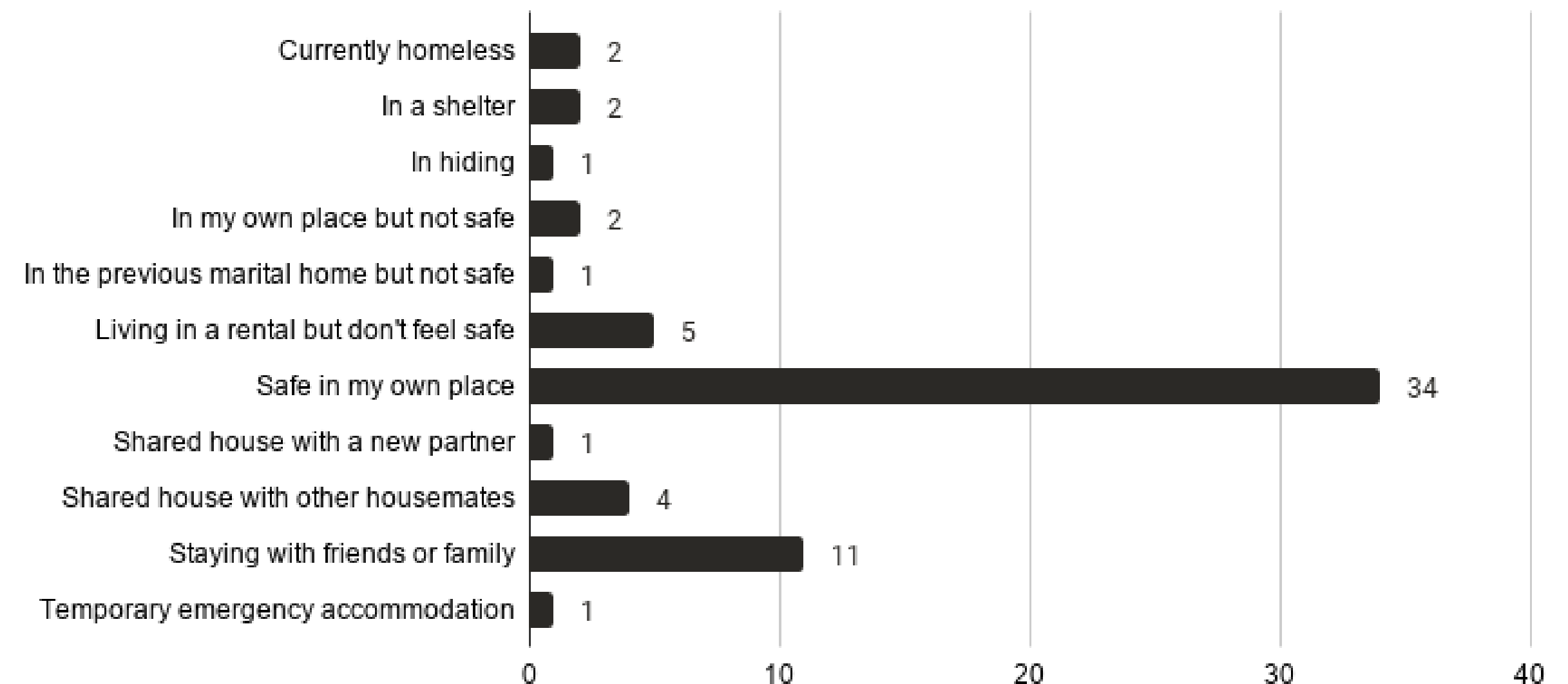
52.2% ...of victims are safe in their own place

16.4%....are staying with friends or family

6%.....share with housemates

25.4% ....feel unsafe because they are in shelters, homeless, squatting, in emergency accommodation, and take precautionary measures, such as constantly moving, in hiding

How would you describe your current housing situation?



# • KEY IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES •

Remove the abuser, put them into mandatory programs	Give women/children protection and time to collect belongings and move out	Better understanding of DV, better training, more empathy	Refuse bail for continual AVO breaches, keep abusers in custody
Understand the impact of psychological abuse	Use technology, tracking, monitoring, trigger breaches	Harsher penalties for breaches Respond to Breaches	Safe emergency housing
Better integrated documentation and data collection	Enforce exclusion zones for period AVO is in place	Extend AVO to 5yrs or longer	Issue immediate DVO VRO without court
Mediation at FRC was biased towards the perpetrator	Technology with 'panic' signals Capture audio/video when triggered	Investigate past crimes	Technology to collect evidence stalking, harassment, intimidation to remove need for victim to attend court when abusers falsely plead not-guilty
No alert to bail, disconnect between police, courts & corrections, limited in sentencing options	More protection for psychological abuse	Sexist, discriminatory	Specalised workers

# • BURDEN OF DISEASE •

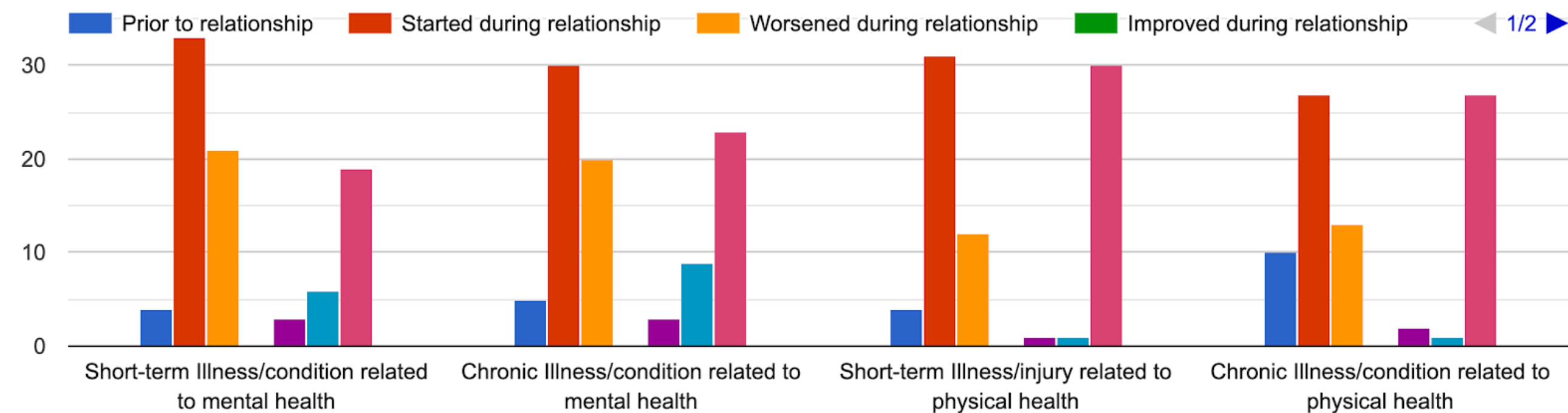
# • THE BURDEN OF DISEASE •

Burden of disease  
and ill-health  
sits with victims...

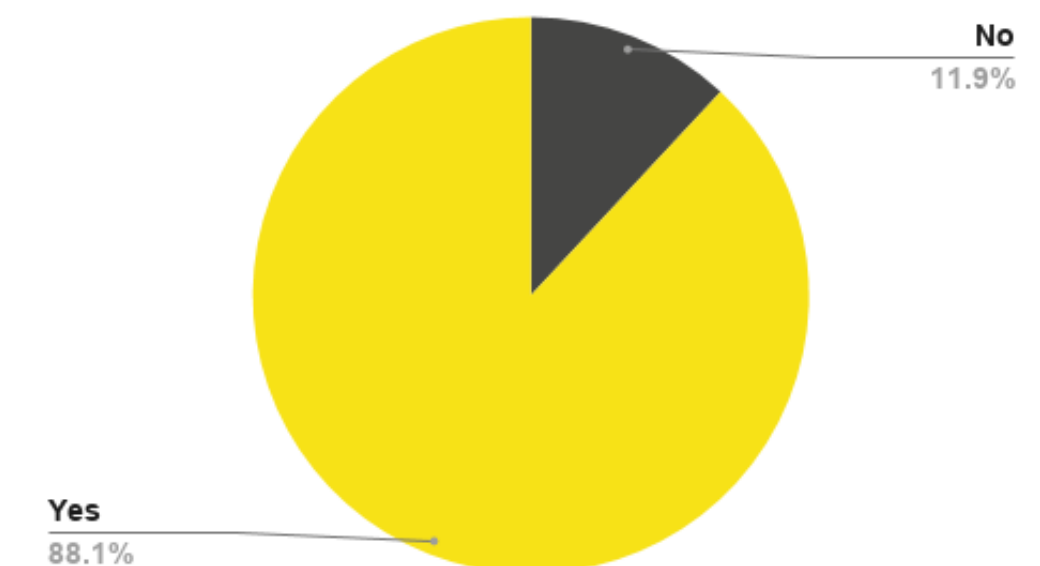
89.7% of victims earn less than \$87,000 per year.  
Add the burden of debt **75%** of victims said their  
debt levels increased during the relationship

*Those with the least resources are  
expected to perform miracles*

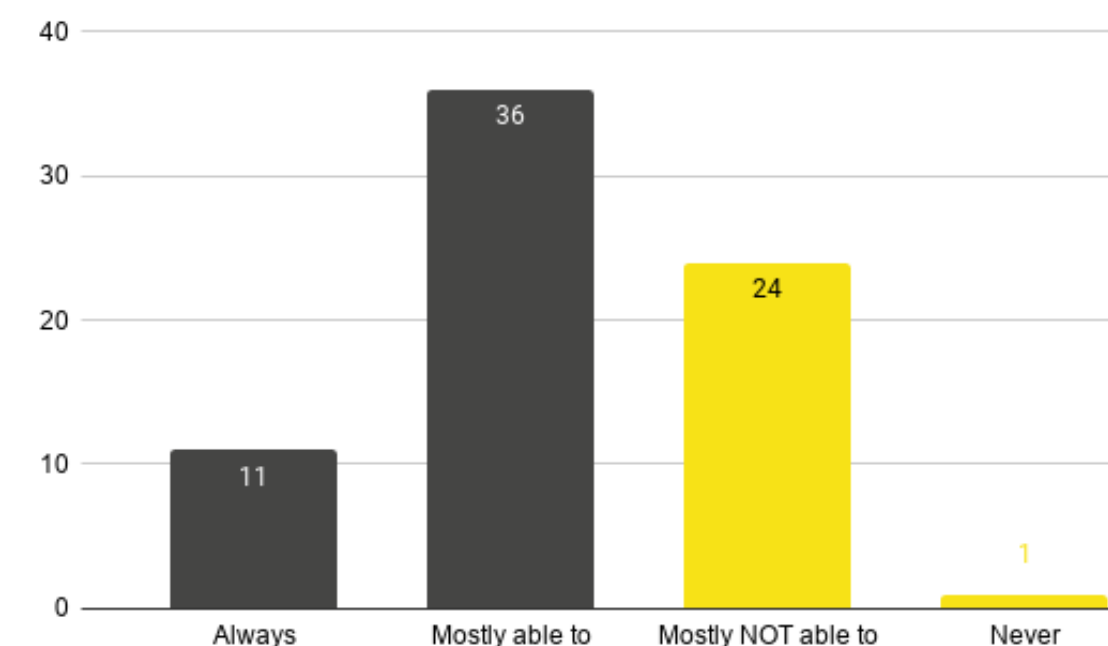
Thinking about your health and well-being today... do any of the following apply to you?



Do you need regular treatments for any of your conditions?



Are/were you able to access treatment as required?



# • OUR SUPERHEROES •

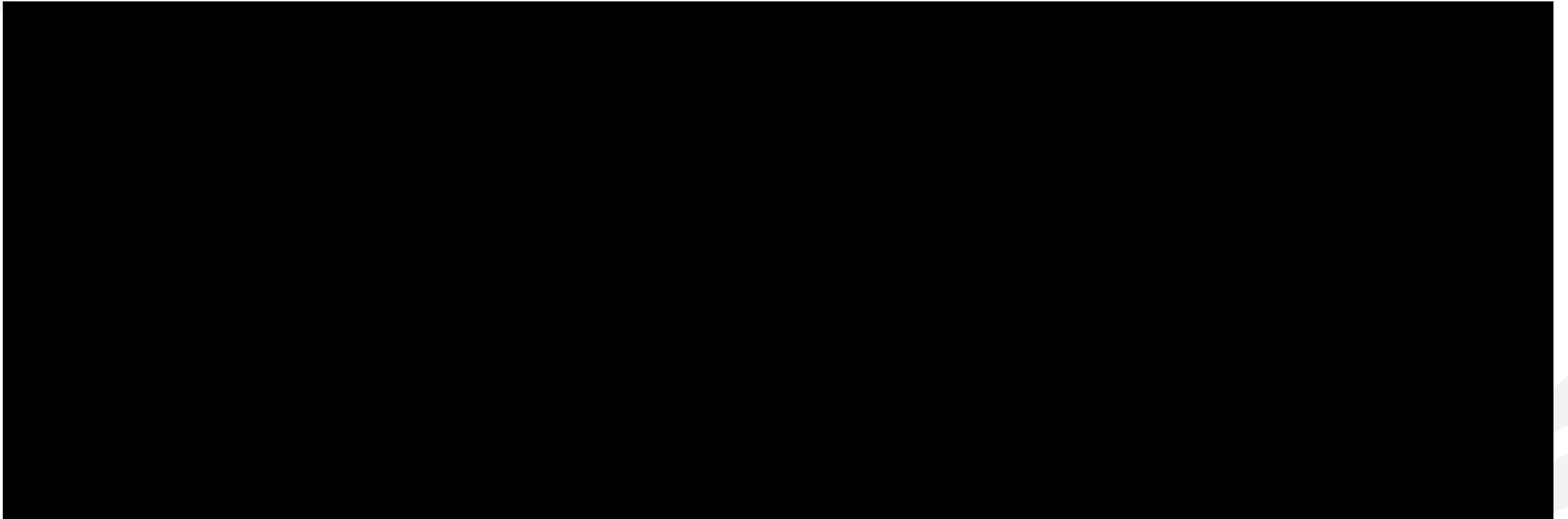
# • STRUGGLE TO BE WELL •

Crushed fractured Two femurs RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome  
CHRONIC MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURY C4 to C7 disc prolapse nerve damage ADHD  
MAJOR ANXIETY broken nose PANIC DISORDER  
severe eating disorder ENDOMETRIOSIS Graves' disease  
heart problems SHOULDER INJURY Hit across the spine with steel bar  
FIBROMYALGIA haemochromatosis PTSD PANIC ATTACKS gastric ulcers  
ankle injury that never healed properly AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE  
VESTIBULAR MIGRAINE BIPOLAR chronic insomnia  
genital/anal trauma from repeated sexual assaults FIBROMYALGIA DIABETES  
major depressive disorder Weight gain anxiety and digestion issues

80% of Victims need regular treatment but  
33.8% say they are 'mostly' NOT able to access it.

# • ABOUT US •

# • MEET THE TEAM •



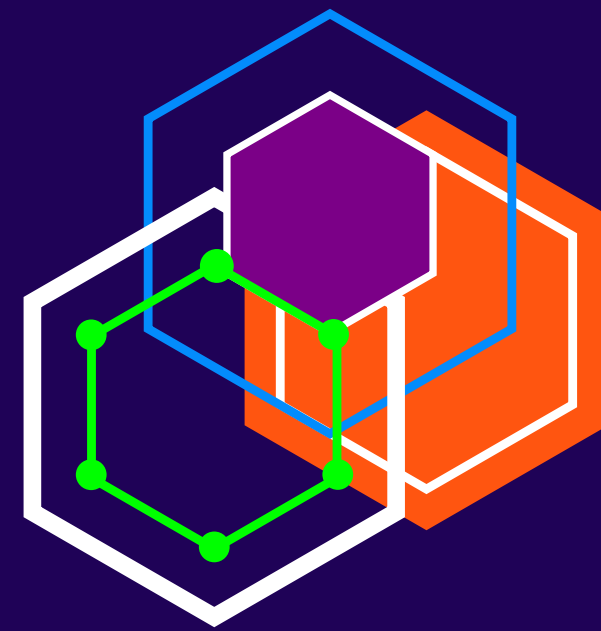
[Redacted text]

|

[Redacted text]

|

[Redacted text]



# KALISTA AI

The simple AI solution for anyone wanting actionable insights from data



T A S K F O R C E  
• DELTA VICTOR •

A Machine Learning project to investigate the factors driving  
Domestic Violence in Australia

POWERED BY

KALISTA AI

