

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence Against Women Online Resources

Site Usage Statistics

October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001

Jennifer Root

Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse

School of Social Work, University of Minnesota

140 Peters Hall, 1404 Gortner Avenue

Saint Paul, MN 55108

Introduction

This document highlights the activities and achievements of the Violence Against Women Online Resources website during the Federal fiscal year, October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001. This report provides statistical information regarding site usage, a summary of key findings gathered from information requests and a listing of new documents and content added to the site.

Violence Against Women Online Resources is a cooperative project between the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse within the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota and the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, United States Department of Justice. This site provides law, criminal justice, and social service professionals with current information on interventions to stop violence against women.

Funding

VAWOR is supported by grant number 98-WT-VX-K001 awarded by the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Organizational Structure

VAWOR is maintained by approximately 2.5 FTE staff, which includes an Executive Director (PI), one full-time project manager, two half-time graduate assistants, a partial-time administrative assistant and technical contractor. The site is advised by a National Advisory Board comprised of professionals from a spectrum of criminal justice and related professions. The board members review documents added to the site.

The project's Principal Investigator oversees the design, management, and direction of Violence Against Women Online Resources.

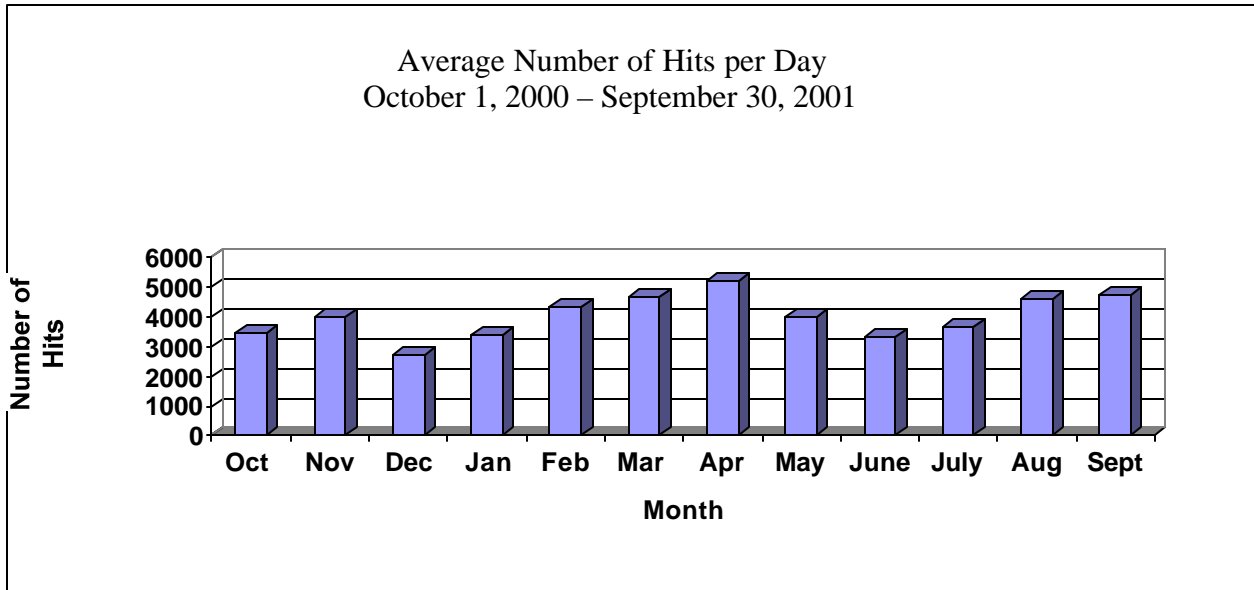
The Project Manager manages the daily operations of the site, including project design, management and staff supervision. She acts as the key liaison to VAWO and the National Advisory Board, supervises the project staff, and oversees the contract with the web-server consultant.

The graduate assistants assist the Project Manager with identifying existing material for linkage to the site, identifying existing documents and obtaining in an electronic form, coding documents in HTML, and preparing them for placement on the site. They also scan the site for dead links, repair broken ones, and search for material that has moved.

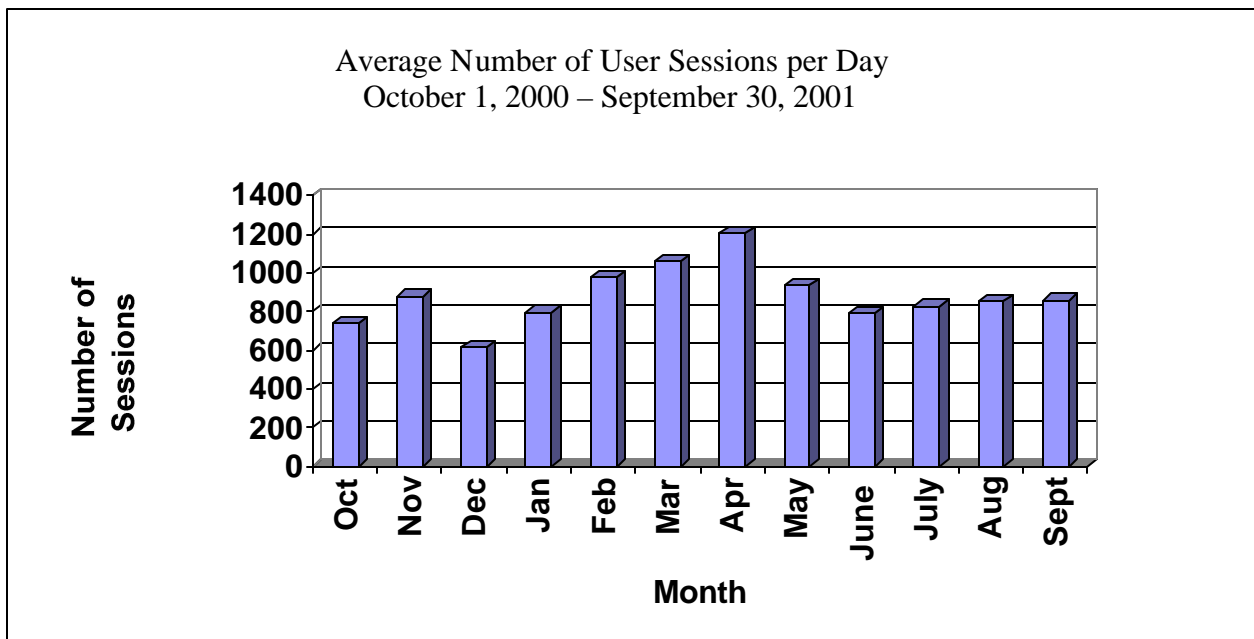
The technical contractor specialist maintains the server and performs specialized programming in CGI and Java to allow interactive access to search routines, databases, and other advanced features.

Site Usage

The following general statistics tables indicate the total monthly and yearly activity for Violence Against Women Online Resources.

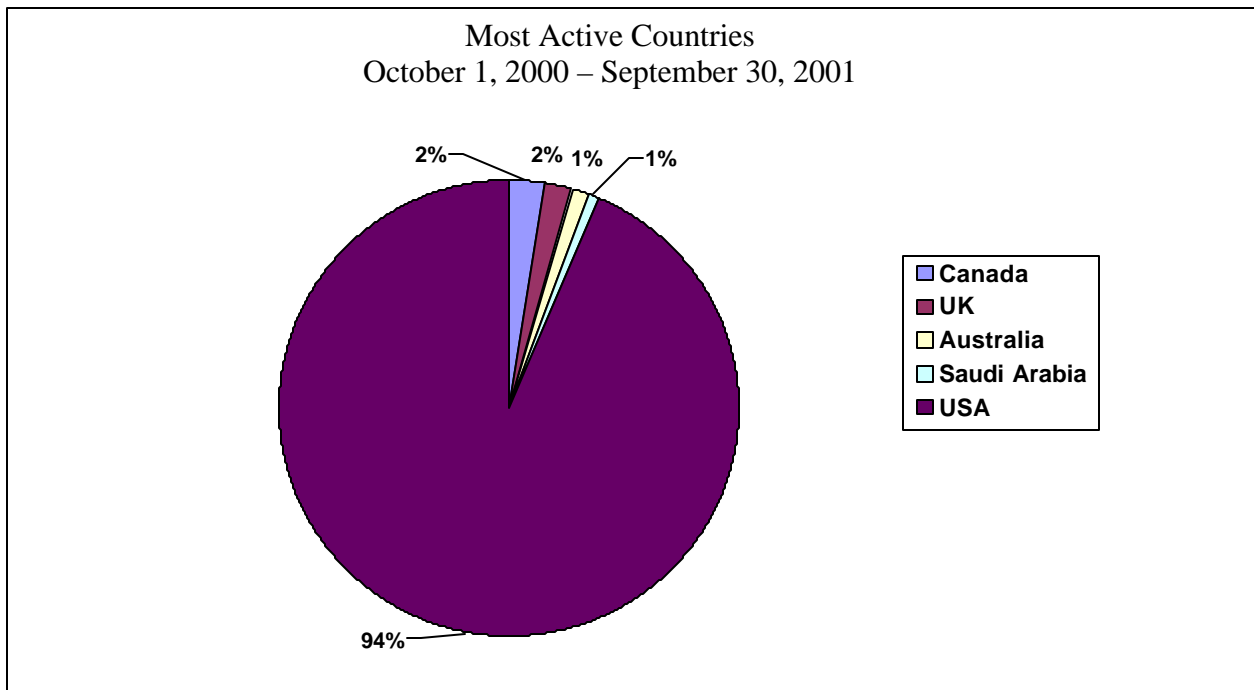


The term 'hit' can be thought of as the number of times the entire site was accessed by users. The average number of hits per day ranges from 2,686 in December 2000 to 5,192 in April 2001. On average, the site receives approximately 4,000 hits per day, an increase of 81% from the previous year. During the previous year, the average number of hits per day was 2,213.



The table above illustrates the number of user sessions per day. This data does not inform us about the number of unique people accessing the site per day, but does provide insight about how many times per day users conduct a session on the site. A ‘user’ is considered a unique person accessing the site. A user commits ‘hits’ on the site when she visits various pages on the website. Therefore, one user may commit several hits during her user session.

On average, the site experienced approximately 878 user sessions per day between October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001. During the previous year, the site averaged approximately 491 user sessions per day, a 79% increase in the number of user sessions per day from the previous year.



The above chart represents the most active countries in terms of site usage. Each of the countries listed had a significant usage increase during the year. The United States represented the most active country between October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001 with 227,318 user sessions (94%). Countries in the top five include:

2. Canada (2%)
3. UK (2%)
4. Australia (1%)
5. Saudi Arabia (1%)

Users accessing the site have come from many different countries including, Japan Singapore, Germany, New Zealand (Aotearoa), Malaysia, Belgium Arab Emirates, Norway, and Mexico.

The following charts represent the top ten downloaded PDF documents and the top ten most accessed HTML documents on the site. Some of these documents are available in both PDF and HTML formats, while others are only available in one of these formats.

**Top 10 Downloaded PDF Documents
October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001**

Document	Total Number of Downloads
An Advocates Guide to Full Faith and Credit	2,616
Police Response to Crimes of Sexual Assault: A Training Curriculum (Modules 1, 2 , 3 and 5)	2,255
Child Custody and Visitation Decisions in Domestic Violence Cases: Legal Trends, Research Findings, and Recommendations	262
Assessing Justice System Response to Violence Against Women	200
Problems Associated with Children's Witnessing of Domestic Violence	194
Evaluating Coordinated Community Responses to Domestic Violence	160
A Review of Standards for Batterer Intervention Programs	146
Evaluations of Advocacy Efforts to End Intimate Male Violence Against Women	146
Marital Rape	131
The Overlap Between Child Maltreatment and Woman Abuse	49

**Top 10 Accessed HTML Documents
October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001**

Document	Number of times Viewed
Marital Rape	53,632
Child Custody and Visitation Decisions in Domestic Violence Cases	16,374
Poverty, Welfare and Battered Women: What Does the Research Tell Us?	9,878

Annual Report on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Domestic Violence	7,509
Abuse and Women with Disabilities	6,782
Problems Associated with Children's Witnessing of Domestic Violence	6,598
Handbook for statutory rape issues	4,350
Critique of the "Battered Woman Syndrome" Model	4,152
A Law Enforcement Officer's Guide to Enforcing Orders of Protection Nationwide	2,476
Reviewing Domestic Violence Fatalities: Summarizing National Developments	1,490

It is important to note the significance of the number of times “Marital Rape” by Raquel Bergen was accessed. This document has been the number one accessed document for the past two years. Additional statistical data reveals that the document “Marital Rape” is also the top exited page and the top single access page. Since users were accessing this document and immediately exiting the site, this leads us to believe that some users may be seeking material outside the context of technical assistance regarding violence against women and perhaps are instead seeking pornographic material.

Site Development

Violence Against Women Online Resources houses over 100 full text documents related to sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking. Staff members solicit content for the site from national and international organizations. The site houses papers, reports, research findings, curricula, presentations, training manuals and multi-media resources related to violence against women.

From October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001, VAWOR added 30 new documents to the website. Of these, 27 were previously published documents and three documents were commissioned by VAWOR. The 27 previously published documents include:

1. Expanding Solutions for Domestic Violence and Poverty: What Battered Women with Abused Children Need from Their Advocates by Susan Schechter
2. Building Bridges Between Domestic Violence Organizations and Child Protective Services by Linda Spears
3. Should childhood exposure to adult domestic violence be defined as child maltreatment under the law? by Jeffrey L. Edleson
4. Educating to End Domestic Violence: A Law School Report by American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence
5. Managing Adult Sex Offenders in the Community by the National Institute of Justice
6. Understanding sexual violence: Prosecuting adult rape and sexual assault case by The National Judicial Education Program (NJEP)

7. Domestic Violence Community Policing Resources by Carol Sullivan and Jane Sadusky
8. Successfully Investigating Acquaintance Sexual Assault: A National Training Manual for Law Enforcement by The National Center for Women & Policing
9. VAWnet Library by VAWnet, the National Electronic Network on Violence Against Women
10. Towards an Understanding of Women's Use of Non-Lethal Violence in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships by Shamita Das Dasgupta, Ph.D.
11. Housing and Battered Women: Using Housing Vouchers to Assist Battered Women Move from Welfare to Work by Robin Hammeal-Urban
12. New Challenges for the Battered Women's Movement: Building Collaborations and Improving Public Policy for Poor Women by Susan Schechter
13. Building Bridges between Domestic Violence Advocates and Healthcare Providers by Janet Nudelman, MA with Helen Rodriguez Trias, MD
14. Federal Housing and Domestic Violence: Introduction to Programs, Policy, and Advocacy Opportunities by Robin Hammeal-Urban and Jill Davies
15. Housing and Battered Women: A Case Study of Domestic Violence Programs in Iowa by Amy Correia
16. Housing and Battered Women: Increasing Battered Women's Access to Federal Housing Programs by Robin Hammeal-Urban
17. Innovative Strategies to Provide Housing for Battered Women by Amy Correia
18. Impact: Feature Issue on Violence Against Women with Developmental or Other Disabilities by Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota
19. The Snapshot Project by Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service's Institute for Child and Family Policy
20. Evaluating the Outcomes of Domestic Violence Service Providers: Some Practical Considerations and Strategies by Cris M. Sullivan and Carole Alexy
21. Survivors of Intimate Violence Seek Help Online: Implications of Responding to Increasing Requests by Ann L. Kranz
22. National Sexual Violence Resource Center's website
23. Sex Offenses and Offenders: An Analysis of Data on Rape and Sexual Assault by Lawrence A. Greenfeld
24. Sexual Assault in Indian Country: Confronting Sexual Violence by National Sexual Violence Resource Center
25. State Legislators: Handbook for Statutory Rape Issues by Noy S. Davis and Jennifer Twombly
26. The Sexual Victimization of College Women by Bonnie S. Fisher, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner
27. Addressing Stalking in Indian Country by Rebecca St. George

Commissioned Documents

Violence Against Women Online Resources commissioned authors to develop six unique, research manuscripts where a lack of information related to violence against women existed. The National Advisory Board identified research priorities from which the document topics were drawn. After identifying the research priorities, VAWOR staff

began searching for and commissioning authors to develop these original documents. During the document development process, VAWOR staff worked closely with authors and reviewers to develop these highly utilized documents.

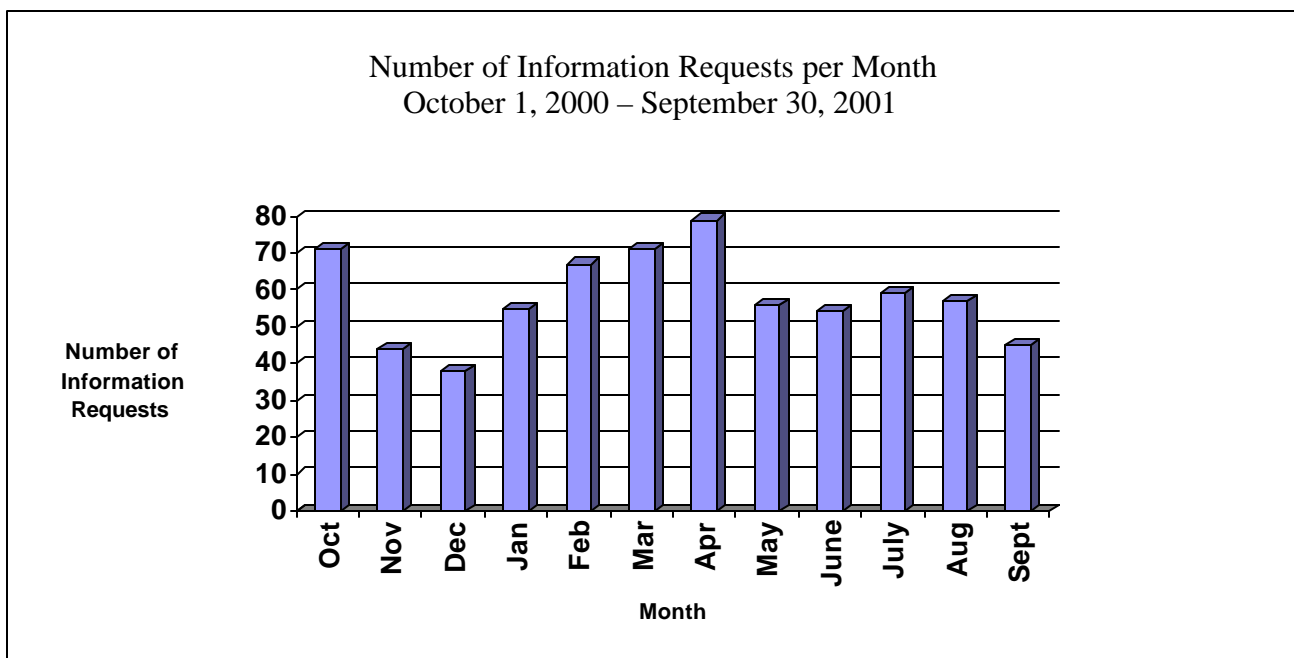
These documents, created to fill a gap in information, were published online. In total, six manuscripts were commissioned by VAWOR.

1. Considering the Victim in the Implementation of Megan's Laws by Alexandra Walker
2. Domestic Violence Organizations Online: Risks, Ethical Dilemmas, and Liability Issues by Jerry Finn, Ph.D.
3. Forensic Evidence Collection and Care of the Sexual Assault Survivor: The SANE-SART Response by Linda E. Ledray, RN, Ph.D, LP, FAAN
4. Mental Health Services for Rape Survivors: Current Issues in Therapeutic Practice by Rebecca Campbell, Ph.D.
5. Strategies to Improve Supervised Visitation Services in Domestic Violence Cases by Sharon Maxwell and Karen Oehme, J.D.
6. Trafficking of Women, Children and Images for Sexual Exploitation: Focus on the United States by Donna Hughes, Ph.D.

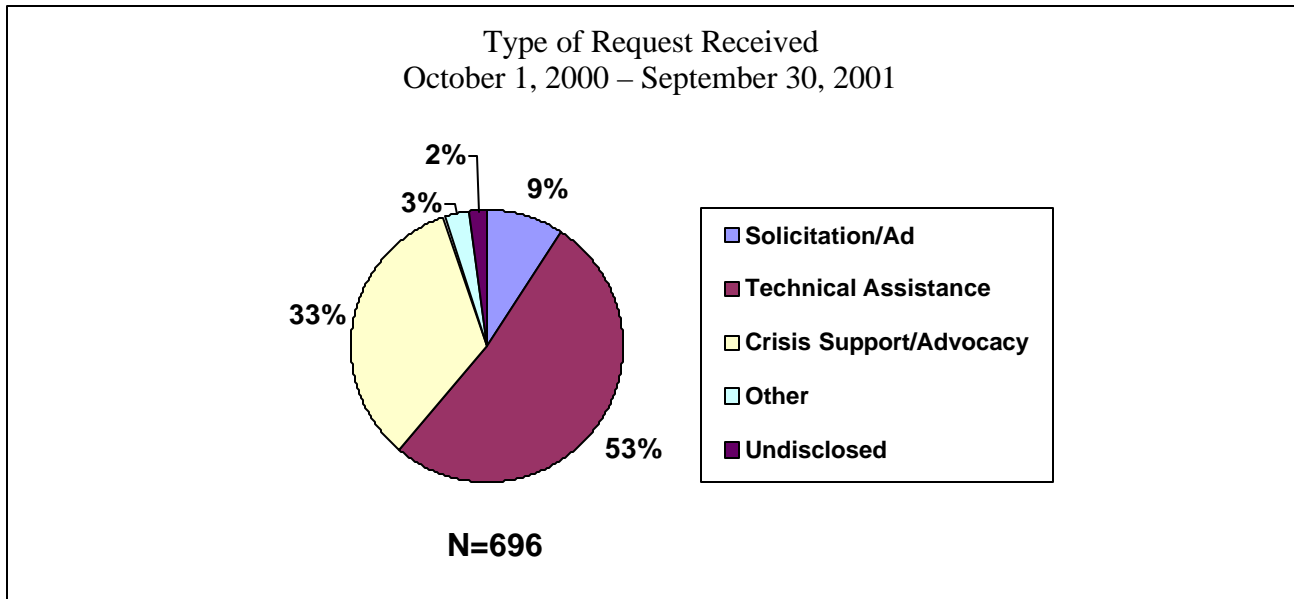
These commissioned documents have been greatly utilized since their publication on the site. One month following their publication, one half of the documents were in the top five of the most downloaded PDF's. They continue to be heavily used both in HTML and PDF formats.

User Profiles and Information Request Statistics

From October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001, Violence Against Women Online Resources received 696 information requests through the website's email account. The following charts provide information regarding the number of requests per month, type of requests, topic of technical assistance and the identity of the requestor.



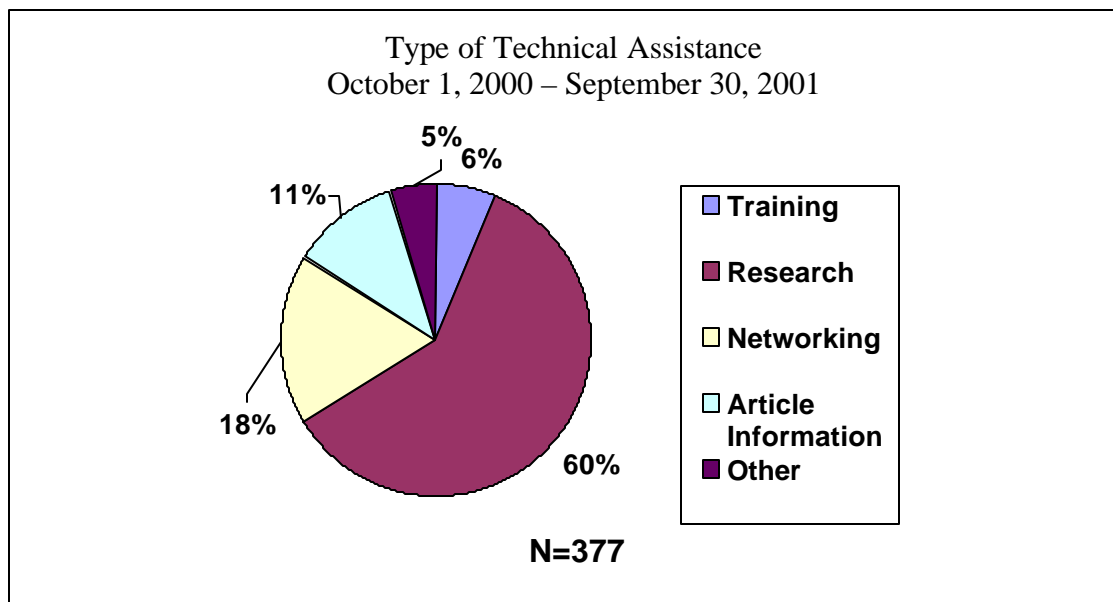
Violence Against Women Online Resources received a total of 696 requests for information between October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001, a 61% increase in the number of requests received the previous year.



VAWOR identifies the type of request received as either a (1) solicitation/ad, (2) technical assistance, (3) crisis support, (4) other or (5) undisclosed. These five categories are defined by VAWOR as:

- (1) Solicitation/Ad: Advertisements, chain letters, press releases, mass (listserv) messages, and announcements.
- (2) Technical Assistance: Request for information/resources such as article permission, article information, site navigation, grants/funding, organizational information, action alerts, events/training, and other inquiries regarding locating services/information to related to violence against women.
- (3) Crisis Support/Advocacy: Request for information about supportive/emergency resources for victim/survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking.
- (4) Other: Requests that do not adequately meet the definition of 1-3 as stated above.
- (5) Undisclosed: Email that does not clearly state a specific request and does not adequately meet the definition of 1-4 stated above.

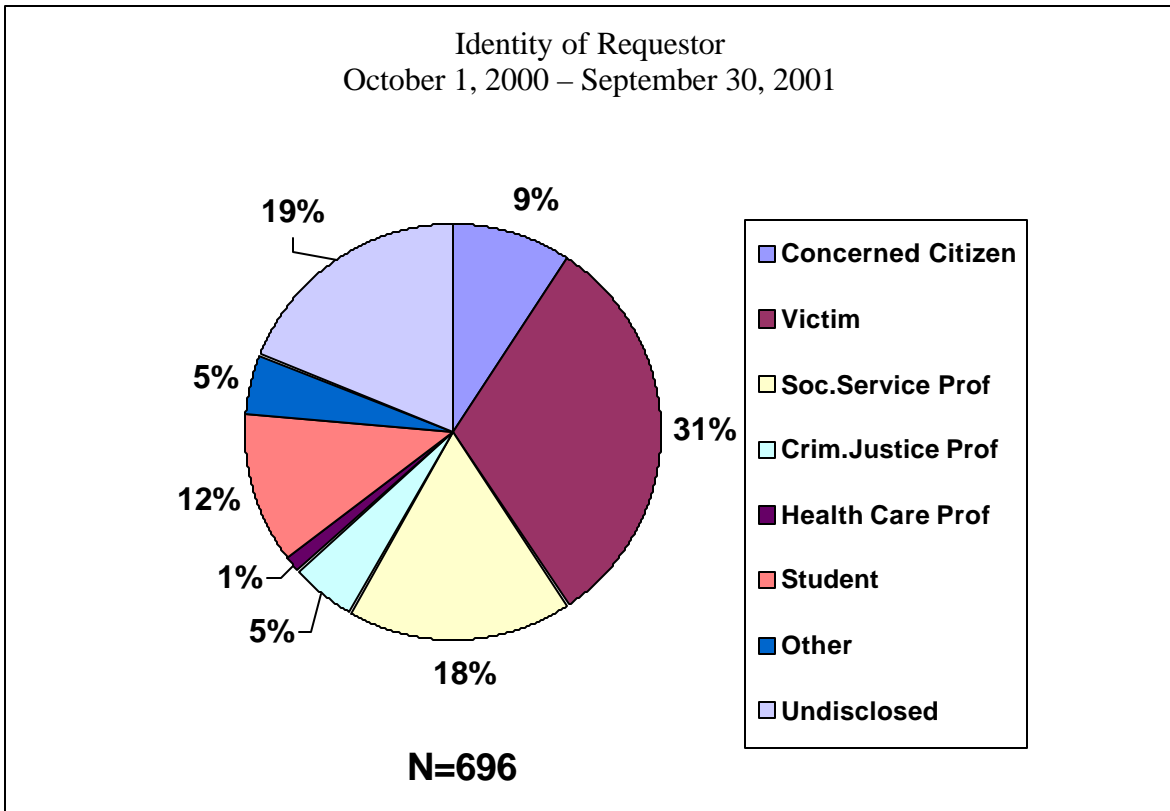
Between October 1, 2000 – September 30, 2001, the majority (53%) of requests were identified as technical assistance. Requests for crisis support/advocacy, typically sent by primary and secondary victims, represented 33% of the requests received.



The category Technical Assistance is further broken down into descriptive types of technical assistance. VAWOR defines these types as:

- (1) **Training:** Requests that indicate/reflect interest in locating training, training manuals, creating training manuals/opportunities, or other activities that are associated with training related to violence against women.
- (2) **Research:** Requests that are looking for research material, statistics, data, charts, stories, photos, etc. that are to be used for the purposes of publications, research papers, journals, briefs, articles, presentations, seminars, etc.
- (3) **Networking:** Requests that indicate interest in becoming connected with other people/organizations with similar interests related to violence against women.
- (4) **Article Information:** Requests that indicate they are looking for a particular author of a document, publishing company, organizational publications, additional materials or other inquiries related to articles/documents.
- (5) **Other:** Requests that do not adequately meet the definition of 1-4.

As seen in this chart, the majority (60%) of requests for technical assistance is regarding research.



The categories are defined in the VAWOR Code Book as:

- (1) Concerned Citizen: Requestor does not identify as a primary or secondary victim. Is interested in helping/volunteering/gathering information to work towards ending violence against women.
- (2) Social Service Professional: Advocates, social workers, day care personnel, counselors.
- (3) Criminal Justice Professional: Police officers and other members of a police department, judges, attorneys, probation officers, juvenile and adult court administrators, corrections officers, legal advocates.
- (4) Health Care Professional: Nurses, doctors, paramedics, mental health professionals, health care aides, and therapists.
- (5) Student: Requestor identifies being a student and/or requesting materials for the purpose of a school paper/project/presentation.
- (6) Other: Requestor does not adequately meet the definition of the above stated categories (1-7). Including teachers, media and other professions that do not fit into the categories noted above.

(7) Undisclosed: The identity of the requestor cannot be determined.

For each email request that is received, VAWOR gleans demographic information about the requestor. The largest category of requestors (31%) is comprised of primary victims (those who experience violence) and secondary victims (friends or family members of those who experience violence).

The requests received from victims this year represent a 4% decrease from the previous year. This could be attributed to the recent implementation of warnings regarding Internet safety and privacy on the website's email page. VAWOR made these warnings available to victims so that they would be aware that an abusive partner could monitor their Internet activity. These warnings could account for the decrease in information requests from victims.

Professionals are also major users of the site. Social service, criminal justice and health care professionals represent 24% of the requestors. The identity of the requestor could not be determined in 19% of the cases.

Summary

VAWOR experienced enormous growth and activity over the past fiscal year. This growth can be seen in the site's usage, development and technical assistance provision.

On average the site experienced close to 1,000 user sessions per day. While the United States represented the majority of users, it was clear that VAWOR also had an international presence. International usage among the top five countries increased, on average, 95% from the previous year. With user sessions increasing and international recognition growing as well, the number of users accessing the site increased 79% from the previous year.

Growth could also be seen in the number of new full-text documents and website links that were added to the site. Between October 1, 2000 and September 30, 2001, VAWOR added 27 previously published documents and three commissioned documents to the site.

VAWOR continued to receive increasing numbers of requests for technical assistance. The majority of requestors, victims and professionals, contacted VAWOR for information related to crisis support, advocacy, research and training. These requests increased 61% from the previous year.

VAWOR receives positive feedback about the site and staff are pleased that the resources are well utilized in the community.