Alaska Intimate Partner Violence Interactive Data Dashboard Project

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to:

The Center for Victim Research

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Project Overview

The Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) and the Alaska Justice Information Center (AJiC) partnered to develop an **intimate partner violence interactive data dashboard (IPV-IDD)**. Using *Alaska Victimization Survey* (AVS) data, the IPV-IDD is intended to provide end users with customizable, compelling, and dynamic data visualizations of Alaska's IPV victimization patterns. With ready access to AVS data, state, local and tribal victim service providers will be able to leverage critically important IPV victimization data to improve the design and delivery of their programs.

Alaska Victimization Survey. Modeled on the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*[1], the AVS is primarily designed to provide point-prevalence estimates of both lifetime and past-year intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization for non-institutionalized, English-speaking adult women residing in Alaska. Statewide AVS surveys were conducted in 2010 and 2015; regional AVS surveys were conducted in 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. AVS data sets are archived by AJiC, which is housed within the UAA Justice Center.

AVS data have proven to be an essential data resource for the State of Alaska as well as local victim service providers. Prior to 2010 when the AVS was first fielded, valid and reliable estimates of IPV victimization were not available in Alaska. With the advent of the AVS, the CDVSA and its statewide, local, and tribal partners now have accurate estimates of the extent to which adult women in Alaska experience IPV victimization. In 2010, for example, AVS data revealed that an estimated 47.6% of non-institutionalized, English speaking adult women in Alaska experienced IPV in their lifetimes, and an estimated 9.4% experienced IPV in the 12 months preceding the survey. Estimates like these have proven to be critically important to the state's community of domestic violence service providers for advancing prevention, intervention, and advocacy efforts.

The AVS has also provided Alaska with the opportunity to assess its domestic violence intervention, prevention, and advocacy efforts. Because statewide data were collected in both 2010 and 2015, CDVSA and its partners have been able to track changes in IPV victimization rates over time. In 2015, an estimated 40.4% of non-institutionalized, English speaking adult women in Alaska experienced IPV in their lifetimes, and an estimated 6.4% experienced IPV in the 12 months preceding the survey. Both of these 2015 estimates – lifetime and past-12 month IPV victimization – were lower[2] than the 2010 estimates. CDVSA and its partners have been able to use findings like these to refine victim service delivery models, enhance prevention and intervention programming, and strengthen their advocacy efforts with state, local, and tribal policymakers. Thus far, the AVS effort has been a resounding success.

However, while the derivation of point prevalence estimates is a critically important step in building evidence-based practices, CDVSA and AJiC were eager to collaborate on a project to

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[1] See: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datasources/nisvs/index.html
[2] Reductions in lifetime and past-12 month IPV victimization were statistically significant.

enhance the utility of AVS data to grantees and other community partners. This project provided a framework for taking tangible steps toward this goal.

Data and Methods

AJiC made use of archived AVS data sets to develop the IPV-IDD. CDVSA and AJiC worked collaboratively and iteratively to identify the specific IPV **measures** to be included in the IPV-IDD, and the specific **dimensions** by which those measures were examined.

For the purposes of this project, IPV was operationalized to include three domains of perpetrator behavior: (1) *physical violence*, (2) *psychological aggression*, and (3) *coercive control and entrapment*. In total, the IPV-IDD project included 21 distinct behaviors comprising intimate partner violence across these three domains.

Physical Violence. Eight survey items were included in the measurement of *physical violence*. Survey participants were asked, "Has a romantic or sexual partner ever [behavior]?"

- "Forced you to engage in sexual activity?"
- "Tried to hurt you by choking or suffocating you?"
- "Kicked you?"
- "Made threats to physically harm you?"
- "Pushed or shoved you?"
- "Slammed you against something?"
- "Slapped you?"
- "Used a knife or gun on you?"

Psychological Aggression. Five survey items were included in the measurement of *psychological aggression*. Survey participants were asked, "Has a romantic or sexual partner ever [behavior]?"

- "Acted very angry towards you in a way that seemed dangerous?"
- "Called you names like ugly, fat, crazy, or stupid?"
- "Insulted, humiliated, or made fun of you in front of others?"
- "Told you that no one else wanted you?"
- "Told you that you were a loser, a failure, or not good enough?"

Coercive Control and Entrapment. Eight survey items were included in the measurement of *coercive control and entrapment*. Survey participants were asked, "Has a romantic or sexual partner ever [behavior]?"

- "Said things like 'If I can't have you, then no one can.'?"
- "Tried to keep you from seeing or talking to your family or friends?"
- "Kept you from leaving the house when you wanted to go?"
- "Kept track of you by demanding to know where you were and what you were doing?"

- "Tried to get you pregnant when you did not want to or tried to stop you from using birth control?"
- "Threated to hurt him or herself or commit suicide when he or she was upset with you?"
- "Threatened to hurt a pet or threatened to take a pet away from you?"
- "Threatened to hurt someone you love?"

Overview of IPV-IDD

These data elements were used to develop three sections ("tabs") within the IPV-IDD. The first section, titled *Summary of IPV*, presents overall composite estimates of the percentage of AVS respondents who indicated that one or more of their romantic or sexual partners ever committed any acts of physical violence, psychological aggression, or coercive control and entrapment against them (see Figure 1a).

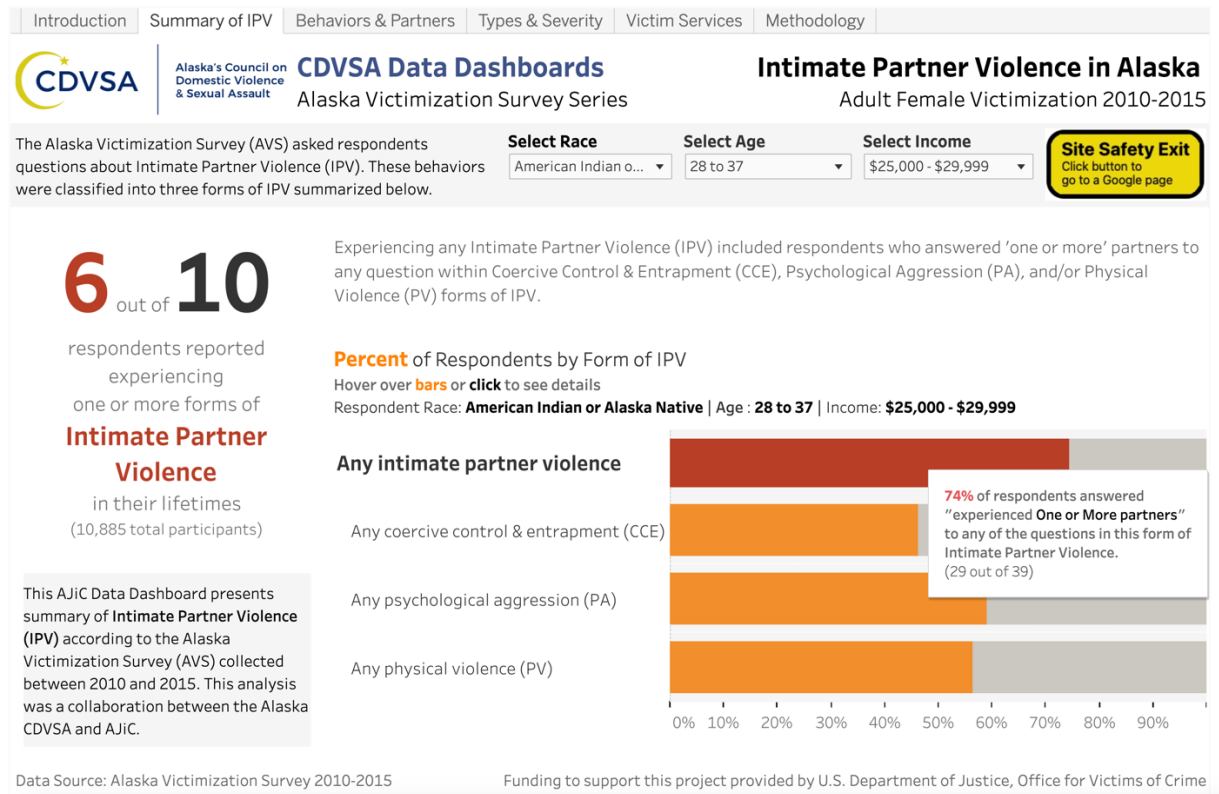**Figure 1a.**
IPV-IDD Screenshot: Summary of IPV page
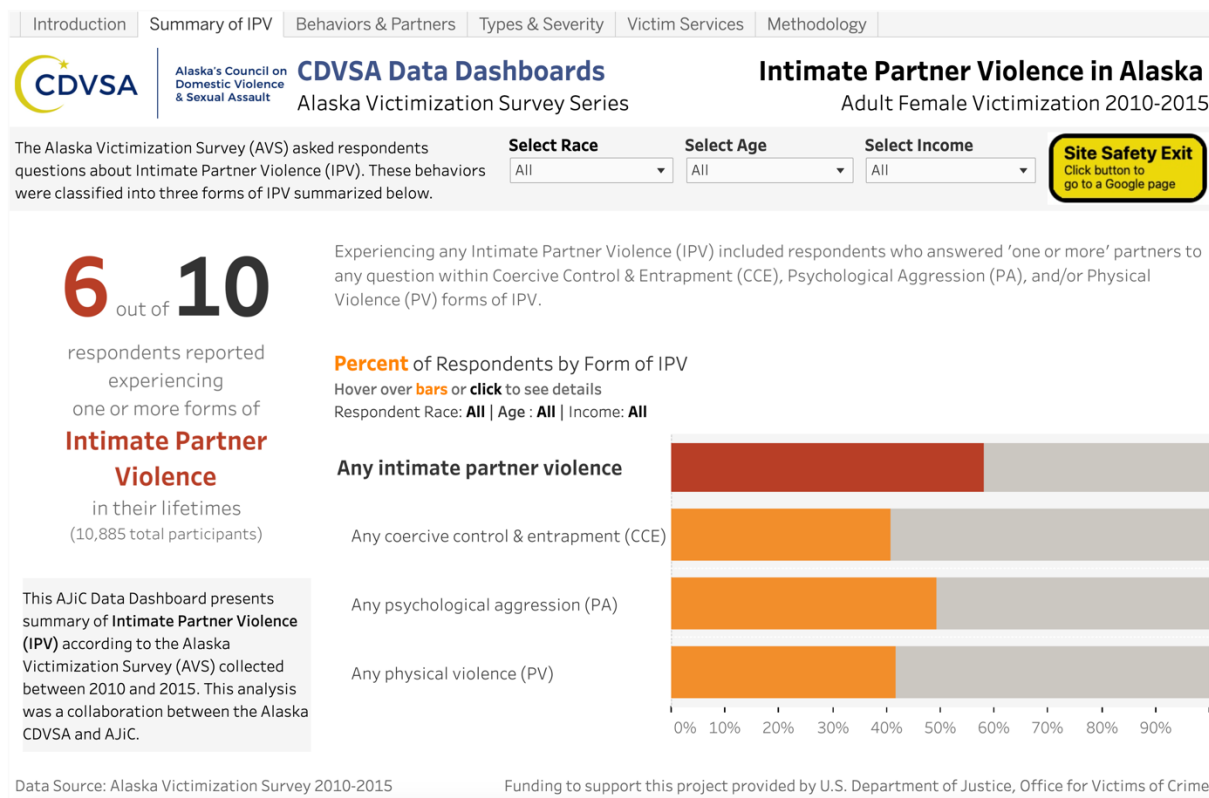
Notes
1. Readers can access the IPV-IDD at: uaa.alaska.edu/ajic/dashboards/avs.

In addition to providing overall estimates, the *Summary of IPV* page allows users to examine the data for any combination of respondent race/ethnicity, respondent age group or respondent household income (see Figure 1b).

Figure 1b.

IPV-IDD Screenshot: Summary of IPV page, with respondent race/ethnicity, respondent age, and respondent household income filters selected
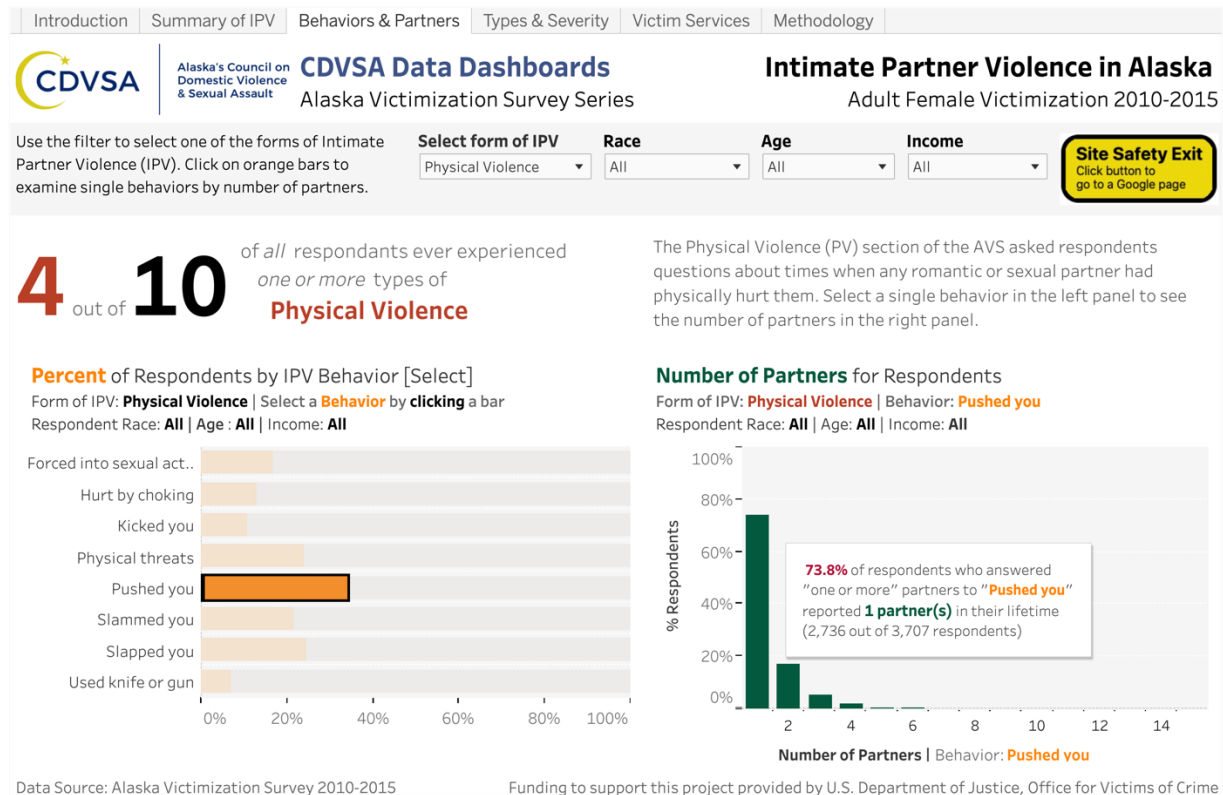

Notes

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The second section of the IPV-IDD is the *Behaviors & Partners* page (see Figure 2). This page of the dashboard breaks out the component items of each IPV composite and, for a specific IPV item selected, presents the distribution of the number of romantic or sexual partners AVS participants reported committing that behavior. For example, the selections presented in Figure 2 show that 34% (n=3,707) of AVS respondents indicated that one or more of their romantic or sexual partners ever pushed or shoved them (orange bar chart). Furthermore, nearly three-quarters (73.8%) of those who reported that one or more of their romantic or sexual partners ever pushed or shoved them also reported that they had one – and only one – romantic or sexual partner who pushed or shoved them (green bar chart). As with the summary IPV measures included in the first page of the dashboard, users can explore the data elements in the *Behaviors & Partners* page using any combination of victim race/ethnicity, victim age group, and victim household income.

Figure 2.

IPV-IDD Screenshot: Behaviors & Partners page, with Form of IPV: Physical Violence selected

Notes

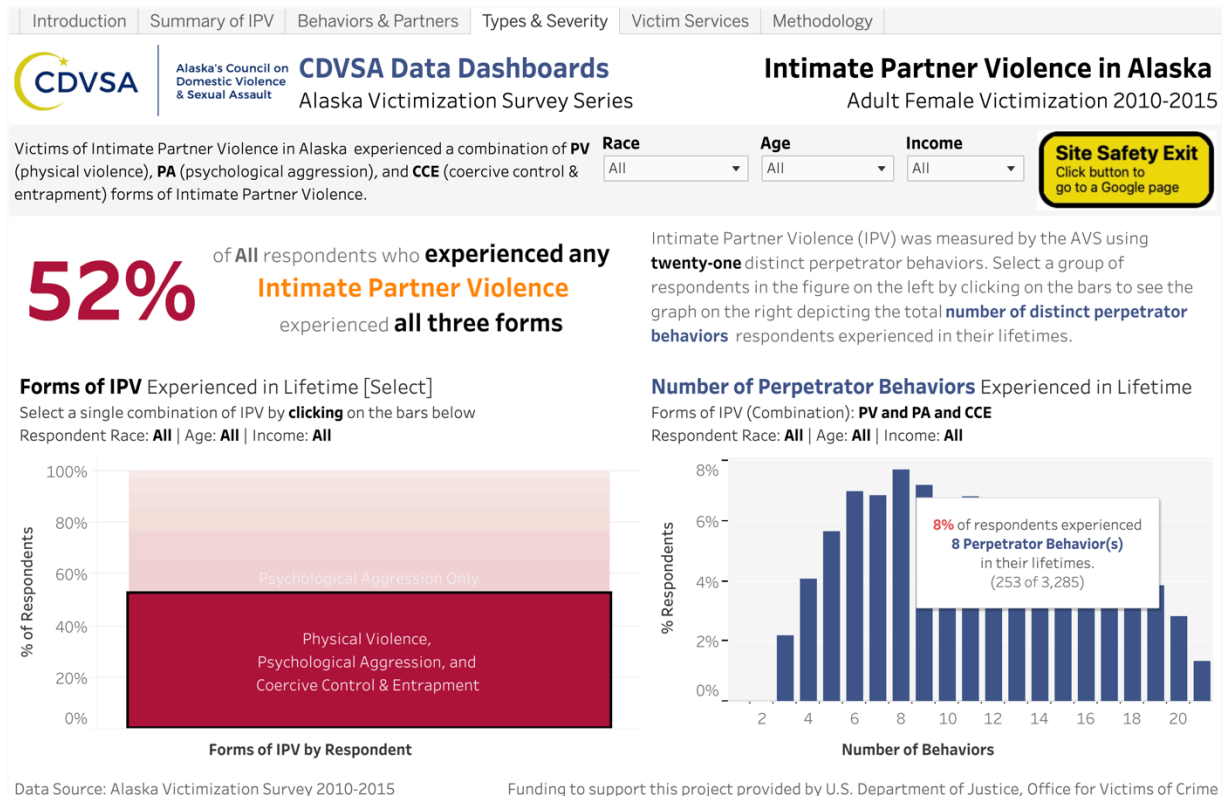1. Readers can access the IPV-IDD at: uaa.alaska.edu/ajic/dashboards/avs.

The third section of the IPV-IDD is the *Types & Severity* page (see Figure 3). The goal of this page is to present information on the extent to which AVS participants experienced multiple forms of IPV ("polyvictimization"), as well as the intensity of their IPV experiences. Polyvictimization is depicted on the *Types & Severity* page using a red graduated color bar chart that shows the percentage of respondents who experienced each combination of IPV: physical violence (only), psychological aggression (only), coercive control and entrapment (only), physical violence and psychological aggression, physical violence and coercive control and entrapment, psychological aggression and coercive control and entrapment, and all three forms of intimate partner violence: physical violence and psychological aggression and coercive control and entrapment.

For example, the data in Figure 3 show that more than half (52%) of all AVS respondents who reported IPV in their lifetimes experienced at least one instance of all three forms of IPV (red graph): physical violence and psychological aggression and coercive control and entrapment (not necessarily committed by the same perpetrator). Also shown in Figure 3 is the distribution of the total number of perpetrator behaviors experienced by that subset of victims (blue bar chart). Victims experienced between 3 (one in each IPV domain) and 21 (every IPV measure)

perpetrator behaviors. In the example provided, 8% of victims who experienced all three forms of IPV (physical violence and psychological aggression and coercive control and entrapment) experienced 8 different perpetrator behaviors across those domains. As with the summary IPV measures included in the first and second pages of the dashboard, users can explore the data elements in the *Types & Severity* page using any combination of victim race/ethnicity, victim age group, and victim household income.

Figure 3.
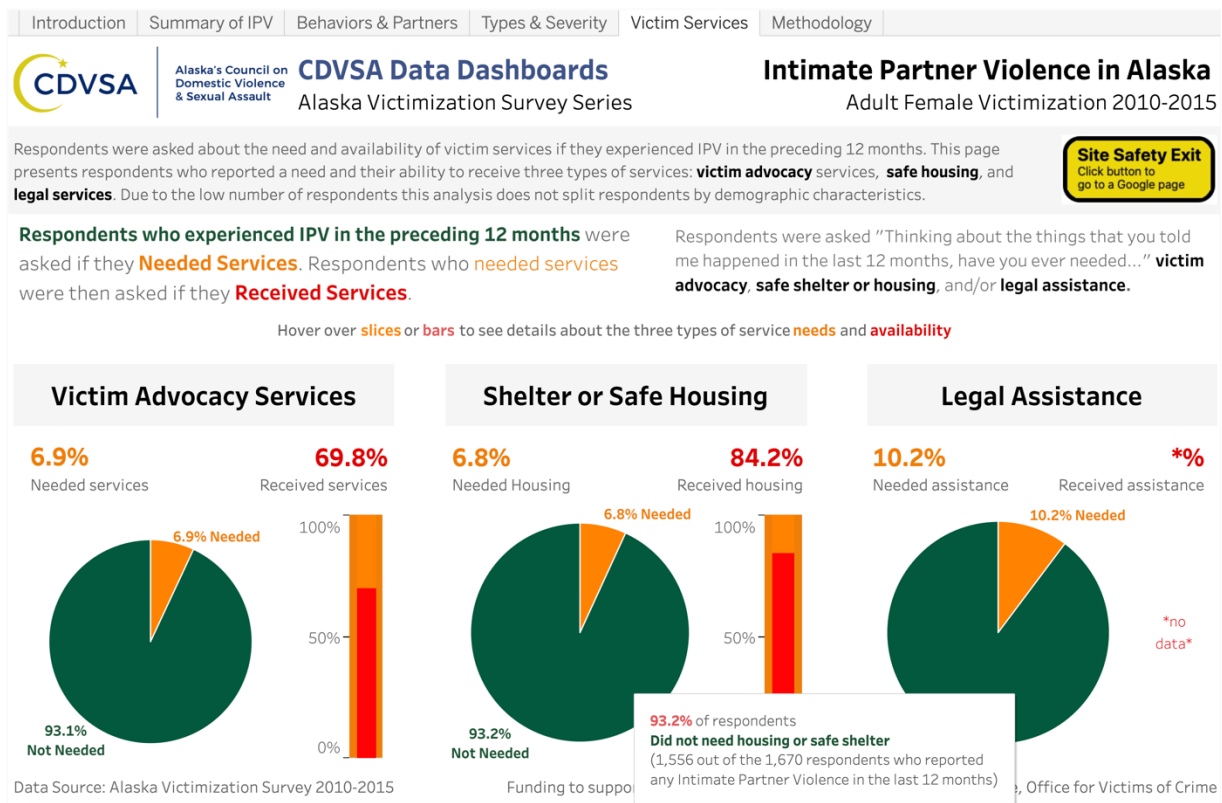IPV-IDD Screenshot: Types & Severity page

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1. Readers can access the IPV-IDD at: uaa.alaska.edu/ajic/dashboards/avs.

In addition to the *Summary of IPV*, *Behaviors & Partners*, and *Types & Severity* pages, the dashboard also includes data taken from the victim services section of the AVS. These data are presented on the *Victim Services* tab (see Figure 4). Unlike the data presented in the previous three pages of the dashboard, the data presented on the *Victim Services* page are limited to AVS respondents who reported experiencing one or more instances of IPV in the preceding 12 months. (Only respondents who experienced past-12 month IPV victimization were presented with the victim services survey questions.) Because of the much smaller sample size, the data presented on the *Victim Services* page do not allow for deeper exploration using victim race/ethnicity, victim age group, or victim household income. Nevertheless, the information presented provides some key insights about IPV victim service "gaps" in Alaska. For example, the data shown in Figure 4 revealed that among AVS

participants who experienced IPV in the 12 months preceding the survey, 6.8% reported needing safe shelter or housing, and that among those who needed it 84.2% were able to secure safe shelter or housing.

Figure 4.
IPV-IDD Screenshot: Victim Services page

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Additional Dashboard Pages. The IPV-IDD also includes two "bookend" pages – an *Introduction* page and a *Methodology* page in addition to the data pages just described. The *Introduction* page provides users with a brief textual description of each page contained in the dashboard along with a thumbnail image. The *Methodology* page summarizes the methods and data sources used to develop each page included in the dashboard.

Figure 5.

IPV-IDD Screenshots: Introduction and Methodology pages
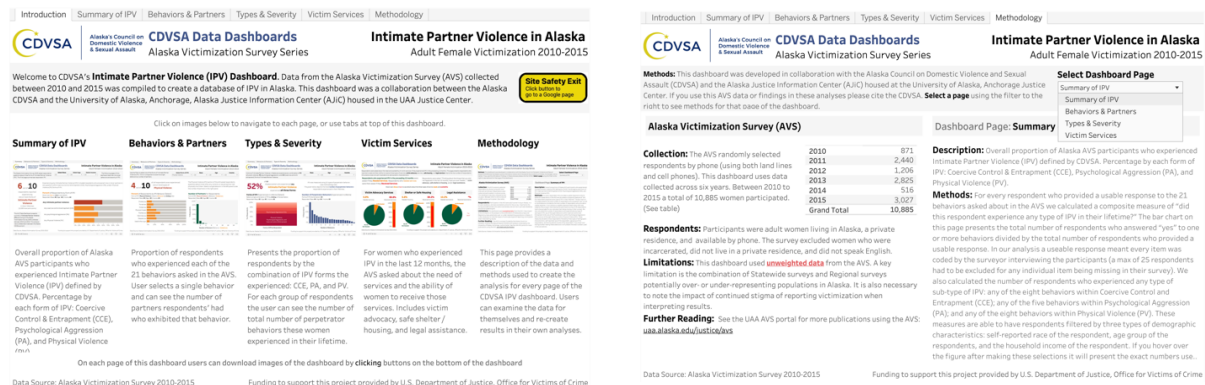
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Summary. The IPV-IDD developed by CDVSA and AJiC provides a range of important IPV information for use by domestic violence providers, policymakers, and members of the public. With this tool, users can explore multiple dimensions of IPV including overall prevalence (*Summary of IPV* tab), the frequency of specific IPV behaviors as well as the number of romantic or sexual partners that engaged in those behaviors (*Behaviors & Partners* tab), the extent to which victims experience multiple forms of IPV (*Types & Severity* tab), and the service needs of those who recently experienced IPV. Importantly, with the exception of the data included on the *Victim Services* page, users of the tool can examine the extent to which patterns in the data vary according to victim race/ethnicity, victim age, and victim household income.

Accessing the Tool. A primary objective of Alaska's VOCA-SAC partnership project was to "liberate" the AVS data and make it widely available to all those interested in learning more about the prevalence and nature of intimate partner violence in the state – service providers, policymakers, researchers, journalists as well as members of the general public. In order to accomplish this objective, the IPV-IDD is freely available to anyone with Internet access via AJiC's *Tableau Public* site (uaa.alaska.edu/ajic/dashboards/avs).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Access to and use of quality data is critical for the work being done by CDVSA, its community-based subgrantees and its numerous stakeholders. Development of the IPV-IDD is a significant step forward in providing customizable, compelling and interactive data that can be used by everyone. Too often data is contained in journals and research papers that are neither accessible to those working in the field at the community-level nor are they clearly understandable and relevant to the general public and those outside of research environments. The IPV-IDD allows Alaska Victimization data to be extricated and understandable for the general public as well as researchers and others. These data are from first person accounts of

Alaska women experiencing intimate partner violence—the data are personal, intimate and powerful and should be accessible to all Alaskans.

The vision of CDVSA is "Alaska freed from domestic and sexual violence." The way to reach this vision is for all Alaskans to work together to stop violence in their homes, families, and communities. In order to create a clear direction for improved policies and practices, using a data-driven approach, data must be timely, understandable, accessible and useable. The IPV-IDD is all of these things.

This tool will fill a gap in domestic violence data just by being useable and easily accessible. CDVSA and AJiC envision the IPV-IDD being used by shelter programs, advocates, survivors, grant writers, journalist, researchers, policymakers and the general public. Because of the unique interactive nature of the IDD, each person can customize the data to focus on their specific area of interest, compare and contrast, understand polyvictimization, and how services are accessed – or not.

These potential uses of the IPV-IDD provide many opportunities for better understanding of the intricacies of violence and its impact on victims and survivors. The data will allow us to look at patterns of abuse, characteristics of abusive relationships and gaps and needs in services to address intimate partner violence.

The AVS data which populates the IDD is Alaska specific—not an extraction of national data to estimate what is happening in Alaska. This makes the data and the tool that much more important in determining needs, gaps, challenges and strengths in Alaska's experience with intimate partner and domestic violence.

Because of the platform the IPV-IDD uses (Tableau) there are many tools that will be especially useful for grant and report writing, presentations, and white papers. The ability to copy and paste graphics, export information into a PowerPoint presentation, and the ability to use the data to create individual comparisons will be invaluable. This tool will elevate subgrantee's ability to use and leverage this information to improve current, as well as future programming endeavors.

Prior to finalizing the IPV-IDD, CDVSA identified six (6) beta testers to explore the database, use it, and to provide feedback regarding the ease of use, usefulness of the features, as well as ideas for future iterations of the IDD. The feedback was reviewed and a number of changes were made to improve the visuals and usability. One key feature that was added following the beta test was the emergency escape button that allows someone to leave the site quickly if a dangerous situation arises when a victim or survivor uses the database. While not all suggestions were able to be implemented at this time, a number of changes did occur that improved its overall functionality.

Dissemination. Broad dissemination of information about the IPV-IDD is a key component to maximizing the availability of this tool for all Alaskans. CDVSA and AJiC will undertake a

number of strategies to inform stakeholders and the public about the IPV-IDD. The first step was the submission of a joint Media Release to Alaska media on October 7, 2020. The release is posted on the Department of Public Safety's website at: https://dps.alaska.gov/ast/pio/pressreleases/home. The media release will be sent to subgrantees, Board members, and other stakeholders beyond just the media. Information will be posted on the UAA AVS webpage and the CDVSA webpage, as well as postings on social media.

Secondly, all CDVSA sub-grantees will receive an email with information about the IPV-IDD, including tips for how to access and use the tool to its full extent. CDVSA and AJiC will be meeting to discuss next steps including offering an instructional webinar to "walk" participants through the IDD, showing how to use its many features. Additional projects may include developing an online guide for users, to guarantee everyone can fully access the data and understand/interpret the presented data.

CDVSA and AJiC are considering the submission of a presentation proposal for the January Alaska Health Summit (virtual) to provide information on both the AVS and the IPV-IDD and how these two projects intersect. Additional ideas for dissemination and utility will be discussed and decided upon in the coming months.

Sustaining Alaska's VOCA-SAC Partnership

The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the UAA Justice Center, which houses the AJiC, were partners and collaborators for many years prior to the VOCA-SAC Partnership. And, this relationship will continue long after completion of the IPV-IDD. CDVSA and AJiC are natural partners. Past project have included research and survey development related to perpetrator rehabilitation, and development of the first Alaska DVSA dashboard, that continues to be updated and improved annually. The DVSA Dashboard can be viewed at: https://dps.alaska.gov/CDVSA/Resources/Alaska-Dashboard. Since 2009 CDVSA and the Justice Center/AJiC have partnered to create and conduct the Alaska Victimization Survey. The AVS is conducted every 5 years, beginning in 2010 with surveys in 2015 and 2020. The 2020 AVS is being conducted at this time, with survey calls continuing through early December.

Delays due to the pandemic, pushed the initial start date by two months. Initial data from the 2020 survey may be available as early as Spring of 2021. Once data from the 2020 AVS is compiled and analyzed, AJiC and CDVSA will collaborate to add the new data into the IPV-IDD, providing more utility of the IDD tool.

Future projects may include more detailed analysis of the broad information within the AVS focusing on polyvictimization, impacts of COVID-19 on victims and survivors, as well as access to services, victimization of seniors, the intersection of DVSA and substance abuse, mental health, disabilities, homelessness and other relationships.

CDVSA and AJiC will continue this collaboration and partnerships for many years—working together to explore critical information to create a data-driven foundation for the work to end domestic and sexual violence.