

From Research To Community Service

**Abstract:**

Initially, survey research was conducted to examine the economic impact on domestic violence with a two-county area in South Texas. Surveys were distributed to the police departments in these areas to obtain this information. Once the data were collected, there was evidence that the downturn in the economy was having an effect on family violence. Physical threat of harm was identified as the typical type of violence, the abuser was most frequently male, and the victim female. Most of the victims came from a low socio-economic status, with little, if any resources. Recommendations from this study included the need for increased services for family violence, in addition to education about prevention. Contact was made with a local non-profit organization that provides shelter and services to women and children who are victims of domestic violence. An inquiry was made regarding the availability of services to the victims of family violence, and also the need for additional services. Specific needs were identified by the agency, and a Civic Engagement grant was obtained through the university. A project was set up as a module in the counseling techniques class that provided hands-on experience, in keeping with research-based information about the design and utilization of a therapeutic environment. The students carried out the work at the agency to create a space that allowed for group counseling, as well as a children's play/play therapy area, and storage.