Overview of Achievements, 2018-2019

Day One’s Legal Services Program provides legal representation for young survivors of dating violence aged 24 and under. While our legal services focus on serving youth within New York City, we receive requests statewide to provide technical assistance to advocates and attorneys working with young survivors. Additionally, through webinars and in-person trainings, we deliver legal trainings statewide. In the past year, our civil legal services program closed 114 cases and benefited 175 survivors and their children.

Since the last annual IOLA report, significant advancements have been made to increase our program’s capacity, including the receipt of new specific grant funds for legal services, the mentoring of law students, and the use of a volunteer attorney. Additionally, in January 2019, Day One was joined by Michele Martinez, as the program’s first paralegal. Day One’s legal team now includes five full time staff, which includes three attorneys and the Director of Legal Services, with one attorney position to be filled.

Population Served: Low Income Population
Area Served: New York City Metropolitan Area
Total Funding: $553,674.48

Total IOLA Grant: $40,000

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 4.00
- Lawyers: 3.00
- Paralegals: 1.00
“Caterina,” a high school senior, contacted Day One in October, 2017 after filing for an order of protection against her ex boyfriend. In addition to navigating potential interactions with her ex boyfriend around school and within their communities, Caterina was very nervous about her safety and litigation. After a number of attempts at settlement failed, Caterina expressed anxiety about going to trial and testifying in front of her ex about the abuse to which he subjected her. Through the support of Day One, she bravely prepared for trial, while navigating her safety day to day. The trial was scheduled for June, 2018, and Day One’s legal team spent many hours gathering evidence and medical records, and preparing witnesses for trial. Following weeks of working with Caterina intensely during this period, Day One successfully negotiated a settlement that resulted in an Order of Protection for our client, forgoing the necessity of her testifying in front of her ex.

“Rose”, a 21-year old college student, was referred to Day One for legal services in August, 2017. Rose had a history of childhood sexual assault and was in a relationship with a 36 year old man who was extremely manipulative and abusive. Early in their relationship, her partner forced her to have unprotected sex with him; this occurred on an ongoing basis, and her reproductive autonomy was taken from her. Rose’s partner was extremely physically and sexually abusive and raped her several times. Further complicating her case, he took sexually explicit videos of her against her will and often threatened to disseminate the videos online, in her neighborhood, and to her parents. For many reasons, Rose did not want to involve the criminal or family court system in her life, but lived in fear every day. Throughout, Day One advised her of her rights and options, including civil legal remedies such as obtaining an order of protection, emergency housing, public benefits, etc. Throughout, Rose was adamant that she did not want to pursue formal legal action.

Over the summer of 2018, Rose became determined to leave the relationship, and we began in-depth safety planning, some of which involved Rose slowly bringing her belongings bit by bit to our office for safe keeping as she worked with us to develop the safest plan for her to leave. One area of legal advocacy success occurred when Day One’s legal team advocated for Rose at her university. Through meeting with administrators and exploring education remedies and accommodations available through Title IX, Day One advocated for Rose so that she could leave without being penalized for missing the last week of school, and to ensure that her credits could be transferred. When she was ultimately able to flee safely and relocate, Rose was deeply grateful to Day One.
To prevent and confront intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking among youth in New York City, Day One continues to implement and refine our multi-part strategy. First, Day One provides a full spectrum of legal services, ranging from provision of legal information and advice to full representation for young survivors of IPV throughout the five boroughs. However, because Day One also prioritizes outreach and awareness on the issue of dating violence, we utilize both community education and Know Your Rights Guides materials as well.

Through our community education program, Day One’s educators speak directly to young people in middle schools and high schools, connecting with youth in all five boroughs. Over the course of the year, Day One’s attorneys train advocates, law enforcement professionals, social workers, and other attorneys about the dynamics of dating abuse, the use of technology as a form of power and control, as well as the legal rights of young survivors. These trainings are supplemented by the distribution of “Know Your Rights” guides, which address areas such as Custody & Visitation, Stalking, Orders of Protection, Technology Abuse, and LGBTQ Dating Violence. Each of these trainings and guides includes elements of legal education and information. In the last year, Day One distributed 51,761 guides. This multi-part strategy to reduce IPV among youth recognizes the importance of both preventive and direct intervention efforts and combines the approaches to fully meet our organizational

**Other Legal Related Services: Examples**

- As Day One’s full range of services beyond the legal program includes counseling in schools, our Legal Team members are occasionally asked to present to student groups. While these usually take the form of Know Your Rights trainings, they can also include presentations to high schools clubs. For example, Day One’s staff attorney, Amanda Reynoso-Palley, recently presented at high school where one of our Relationship Abuse Prevention Programs (RAPP) is situated.

- In 2018, New York City passed a law to address non-consensual pornography, the non-consensual sharing of intimate images or videos. As this affects many young people, Day One trained many advocates, and lawyers around the city on the provisions of the bill and promising practices related to technology abuse. Through these trainings, many ask about the laws application and limitations as it applies to youth.

- Through these trainings, it is not uncommon for our legal staff to be approached by a young person or student with a question about their relationship or the relationship of a friend. In those instances, it provides an opportunity to help a young person navigate their options, including identifying if they are in an abusive relationship, how they may be able to help a friend, or if they require more information about their rights or even a legal consultation.
**Trainings**

Day One invests heavily in the onboarding and professional development of staff. In addition to a thorough onboarding process for all new staff and volunteers, Day One has created a professional development calendar, Day One Professional Education (DOPE). From learning about community organizing, a professional grammar workshop, and an overview of organizational finances and development, DOPE serves to increase the skill set of staff while strengthening the organization’s knowledge base of how nonprofits function. Finally, as two of Day One’s legal team are members of the City Bar of New York, they regularly attend relevant trainings and CLEs in matters involving the rights of minor, litigating custody and visitation cases, as well as on emerging immigration issues.

Day One’s board of directors meets bimonthly, and, at every meeting, one or more staff members attend and conduct a 30-minute training or case presentation. Board members are also required to attend a Day One youth workshop as part of their recruitment and orientation to the board.

**Technology**

With ongoing success, Day One continues to utilize Slack as one of its internal communications systems. For organization-wide communications, Slack has helped our program communicate about issues that affect our practice and community among onsite and offsite staff members. Day One’s legal team uses Slack to share relevant news articles, meeting agendas, policy updates, and legislation developments. While it is expressly not used for client matters, integrating Slack into our practice has increased our efficiency as a whole by cutting down on emails, and creating opportunities for more effective communication beyond face to face meetings. Finally, during this reporting period, Day One’s legal team partnered with graduate students from NYU’s Wagner School of Public Service to research New York State healthy relationships legislation. As the students often worked remotely, we utilized Slack to share updates about our project and to maintain
Throughout this year, Day One continued to operate in deep collaboration with numerous legal service providers, community based organizations, and governmental resource centers. Day One has been invited to train lawyers and judges by the American Bar Association, the New York State Office of Court Administration and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Staff members sit on panels and speak at conferences monthly, and review and advise other institutions on the materials they create for youth (including the New York State Office for Prevention of Domestic Violence and the National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline).

Our deepest government collaboration remains with the Mayor’s Office to End Gender Based Violence. Through our partnership with them on training and at the Family Justice Centers, we maintain a visible presence for legal referrals, technical assistance, training, and policy advice. In 2018, Day One continued as an on-site partner at the Brooklyn, Bronx, and Manhattan Family Justice Centers (FJCs). At the FJCs, youth in need of civil legal services related to dating abuse are directed to Day One’s staff. In addition, over the past year, Day One’s trainers have provided training on the Dynamics of Dating Abuse at FJCs around the city. Through the FJCs, Day One is connected to an extensive intersection of service providers including law enforcement, prosecution, public benefits, and housing advocates, along with other civil legal services organizations and social service providers. Connections to this diverse collection of resources ensures speedier resolution of client cases, and allows survivors to access services that they may not otherwise know exist in their borough.

In 2016, Mayor de Blasio launched the NYC Task Force on Domestic Violence, which was charged with developing a comprehensive citywide strategy to address one of the most urgent challenges facing our city. The Task Force consisted of experts from inside and outside of government, including service providers, lawyers, academics, law enforcement agencies, policy makers and survivors. In order to develop a comprehensive, citywide approach to domestic violence, the Task Force worked with other stakeholders to map the current landscape of domestic violence work in New York City. From 2017 through today, Day One’s leadership has played an influential role in the Task Force with Day One’s Executive Director, Stephanie Nilva, currently sitting on the steering committee, and Michele Paolella, Day One’s Director of Social Services and Training, co-chairing the prevention subcommittee since 2018. Andrew Sta. Ana, Director of Legal Services, participates in the subcommittee on Risk Assessment.

Finally, Day One’s legal team continues its presence on the Lawyer’s Committee Against Domestic Violence (LCADV), where staff attorney Amanda Reynoso-Palley serves as its current secretary. In this capacity, Day One is strengthening its integration into New York City’s community of legal service providers. Through the LCADV, Day One can raise the unique concerns of young survivors and advocate for policies that are responsive to their needs. Day One’s presence and active participation.
Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

Day One utilizes the private bar to serve young survivors of dating abuse through its Pro Bono Initiative. Day One’s Pro Bono Initiative seeks to partner with NYC law firms to invest resources in firms with the goal of developing a network of attorneys to provide legal services and to advocate for the legal needs of young survivors. Over the past year, pro bono partnership has taken the form of research for challenging legal issues and staff in a free legal clinic organized by Lorena Jiron, Day One’s Equal Justice Works fellow.

Furthermore, throughout the year, Day One partners with law students who are interested in working with young survivors. Director of Legal Services, Andrew Sta. Ana, also serves as an adjunct clinical professor at New York Law School. Through his launch of a first of its kind legal clinic to serve victims of cyber-harassment, it serves as a referral source for appropriate cases. Throughout this reporting period, the clinic served as referral sources so that survivors who experienced cyber-harassment by a former intimate partner could secure resources.

Each semester, we endeavor to partner, mentor, and train law students to become the next generation of advocates with a deep understanding of the challenges facing young survivors. In the summer of 2018, we were able to supervise two full time summer interns. In the Fall and Spring we were joined by part time interns, law students seeking to serve victims of dating violence. From assisting with case research to potential client screening and legal issue spotting, legal interns have become an essential feature of our program. Legal interns are essential to cultivating our work at Day One, in fact, Lorena Jiron, our newest attorney, is a former Day One intern. Towards the end of this reporting period, Day One was joined by Lisa Alexander, a seasoned domestic violence litigator, who serves as a volunteer attorney. While Lisa is primarily focusing her work on policy advocacy, she has provided valuable strategic insight to the legal team regarding our ongoing litigation.

Pro Bono Statistics

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Sources Of Funding

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