

DAY ONE

2023 – 2024
Report

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Day One’s Legal Services Program serves young survivors of dating, domestic, and sexual violence, aged 24 and under. Many of the young people we assist are low-income, students, people of color, immigrants, workers, parents of young children, and/or those who identify as LGBTQIA+ who have experienced harm in their intimate and domestic relationships. While most of our legal clients identify as female, we also serve male-identifying and gender-non-conforming survivors.

For the FY24, we provided services on cases and matters relating to orders of protection, visitation, custody, child support, paternity, divorce, criminal justice, and other areas; 439 from individuals were affected directly or indirectly by these services.

Our legal team provided in-depth consultations to young service-seekers who were referred to us by partner agencies or other Day One staff, or who contacted us via our Helpline, text line, or web form. During our consultations, our staff gave service-seekers information and advice about their legal questions and options, reviewed paperwork with them, and helped draft pro se petitions. For our long-term clients we drafted and argued petitions and motions, attended court appearances, and conducted hearings and trials. Whenever appropriate, we referred clients to other New York City-based legal services agencies, court-appointed counsel, and/or counseling services for assistance.

Throughout FY24, the New York City Family Courts continued to operate in a hybrid capacity. Day One also offered clients the option of virtual or in-person services, with the vast majority of clients selecting virtual appointments.



Service Area: New York City

Population Served: General Low-Income Populations

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:

Total Staff: 4.1	Lawyers: 2
Paralegals: 1	Others: 1.1

DIRECT LEGAL SERVICES

Case Example #1, Family Law: In June 2023, 19-year-old, Spanish-speaking Anna* was referred to Day One’s Legal department for a consultation. Anna was in need of legal representation, as she had filed pro se for an order of protection in family court against the father of her daughter. Day One senior staff attorney, Bianca Hernandez, conducted a consultation with Anna in Spanish. As Bianca spoke with Anna, she learned that Anna’s daughter’s father, Adrian*, was in a violent gang and was sending other gang members to harass Anna. Adrian also had access to guns and would often threaten to use them against Anna. The legal team agreed that this was a case Bianca should take on for full representation.

Anna told Bianca that she had met Adrian when she was 16 and he was 25. Anna was beginning her junior year of high school but dropped out because every time Anna came home, Adrian would beat her and accuse her of cheating on him and talking to other men at school. Shortly after dropping out of school, Anna became pregnant with Adrian’s daughter. Anna disclosed that Adrian was physically abusive while she was pregnant, as well as after she gave birth.

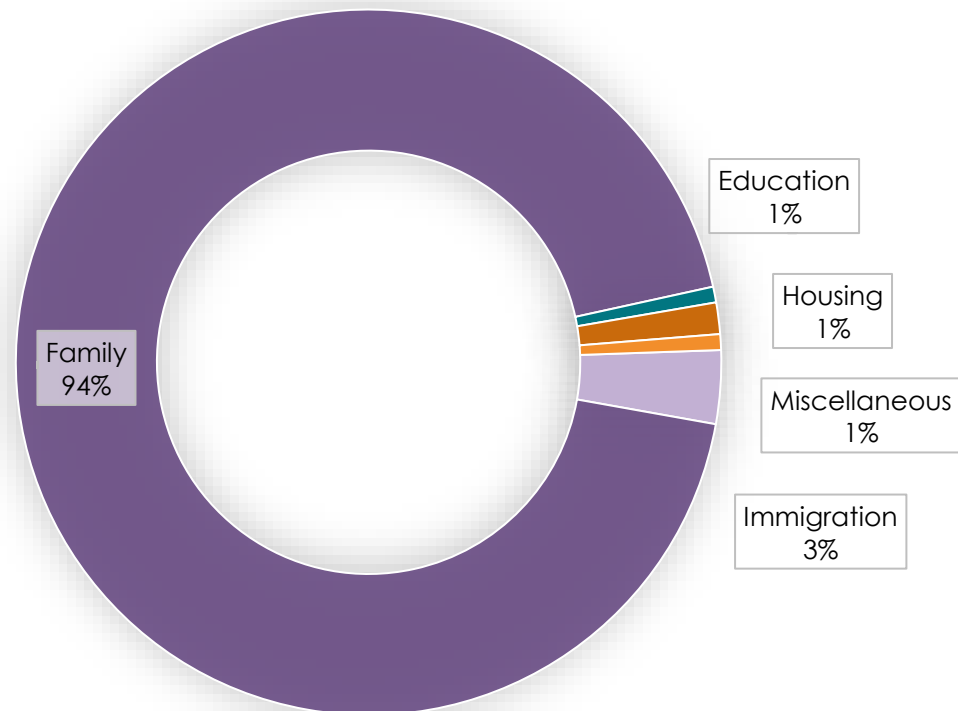
Due to Adrian’s behavior, Anna moved out of their shared space and went back to live with her father and brother. After Anna moved out, Adrian, his father, and other gang members began to come to Anna’s father’s apartment building yelling profanities and threats. Anna was in need of an order protection, so she had filed in family court pro se and a court date was scheduled for the following month.

Adrian never appeared, and an inquest was scheduled. Bianca and Anna met several times to practice Anna’s testimony. Bianca was able to practice Anna’s testimony in Spanish and was also able to mimic an interpreter so that Anna would know what to expect in court.

On the court date, the inquest began. Anna testified about the violence she had endured from Adrian and why she was also concerned about her daughter’s safety. Bianca successfully



CASES BY LEGAL PROBLEM AREA



argued that Anna's case had aggravating circumstances and she needed a five year order of protection that included her daughter. The judge agreed. Although at the beginning, the court process was scary, Anna felt empowered and safer by the end of it.

Case Example #2, Family Law: In April 2023, Cassie* contacted Day One seeking legal services because she had recently broken up with her abusive girlfriend and had filed for an order of protection in family court. Cassie was seeking resources to help her through the process. Due to the abuse and trauma that Cassie had endured, she also stopped going to her college courses.

When Cassie was linked to Day One legal services, senior staff attorney Bianca Hernandez, conducted a consultation and thought this would be a good case to partner with pro bono representation. Under Bianca's supervision, pro bono attorney Christine began providing legal representation to Cassie. During the first court appearance, Cassie's ex-girlfriend appeared and was assigned an attorney, but she did not want to consent to a final order of protection. Christine and Bianca spoke with opposing counsel afterward, and a settlement was reached. Unfortunately, at the following court appearance, the Respondent was not present, so a notice of inquest was issued.

Bianca and Christine began preparing Cassie for an inquest. Christine had limited experience with family court, so Bianca also trained Christine on inquests and client testimony. Although the preparation was difficult for Cassie, and at many times retraumatizing, Cassie worked intensively with Bianca and Christine. During this time, Cassie was also set to start her second year of college.

Unfortunately, because Cassie had stopped attending school during the prior semester, her financial aid was cut off, so Cassie was unable to begin the school year. With Cassie's consent, Bianca wrote a letter to Cassie's school and financial aid department. After a few different attempts to advocate for Cassie, Bianca was able to get her financial aid department to reinstate Cassie's financial aid. Cassie was able to start the school year knowing that she had funding.

In October 2023, Cassie, Bianca, and Christine appeared in family court prepared to go to inquest. During the court appearance, Cassie's ex-girlfriend appeared. Opposing counsel presented an offer that included a two-year final order of protection for Cassie. Christine and Bianca advised Cassie that if she accepted the offer she would not need to testify and could get a final order of protection that day. Cassie decided that she wanted to accept the offer, and a final two-year order of protection was issued.

OTHER LEGAL-RELATED SERVICES

To prevent and address intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking among youth in New York City, Day One continues to implement and refine our multi-part strategy. We provide a full spectrum of legal services, ranging from one-hour legal consultations to brief services to multi-year representation for young survivors of IPV throughout the five boroughs.

Since Day One also prioritizes conducting outreach about and raising awareness around dating violence-related issues, we also utilize both community education and Know Your Rights Guides materials. This multi-part strategy to reduce IPV among youth recognizes the importance of both preventive services and direct intervention efforts and combines the approaches to fully meet our organizational objectives.

Through our community education program, Day One's educators speak directly to young people in middle schools and high schools in all five boroughs. 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, and the legal rights of young survivors. These trainings are supplemented by the distribution of “Know Your Rights” guides that address areas including Custody and Visitation, Stalking, Consent, Orders of Protection, Technology Abuse, and LGBTQ Dating Violence. Each of these trainings and guides includes elements of legal education and information. Pre-pandemic, Day One distributed tens of thousands of physical “Know Your Rights” guides. However, demand for physical guides (and our ability to distribute them) decreased dramatically. FY24, Day One recorded 8,372 physical guides were distributed. However, to adapt to the evolving needs of the community, we also created and increased the distribution of our downloadable guides. We have received 936 downloads during this reporting period. Day One is conservatively estimating that each downloaded guide will reach approximately 25 individuals. Since a single downloaded guide can be shared with an entire student group, class, school or organization, we believe that the number of guides actually viewed is much higher than the figures of total downloads suggests.

9,023

people
benefited from
**Community
Legal
Education**

936

people
benefited from
**Web-Based
Assistance**

TECHNOLOGY

Keeping up to date with Technology is a critical part of Day One’s Legal service practice. For FY24, Day One continued to build on its existing communications systems. Each Staff member is provided with their own laptop with a range of programs from Microsoft Office Suite and Google Suite to communications platforms such as Zoom and Slack. Day One continues to utilize Slack as a primary system for internal communications. Slack has helped our programs

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, published court decisions, policy updates, and legislative 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.

Additionally, we have utilized Zoom for team meetings, individual supervision, virtual retreats, and client meetings. For example, we use Zoom's video conference features for a weekly team check-in which includes team building and discussion of ongoing client matters. While Zoom has some limitations for developing attorney-client relationships, we have used it to prepare for virtual hearings and court appearances and to talk with clients who prefer to see us when we meet. Often, the platform has saved time for clients who would otherwise need childcare or have difficulty traveling to our offices. Additionally, we utilize Microsoft Team for court appearances and Salesforce as a data management system. Our team regularly attends training through Roundtable, and we utilize safety measures such as two-factor authentication. Since our office's document system is Google-based, we are easily able to review and edit documents, draft or edit materials in real-time during court proceedings, and search for writing samples.

IOLA TECHNOLOGY GRANT

The 2023 Technology Grant allowed Day One to purchase: 48 Port Switch, WIFI Upgrade, work on a JumpCloud AD Migration project, and funded the purchase of a MacBook. Day One, and the legal team in particular, rely heavily on a strong and efficient WIFI access in order to remain in contact with clients via programs such as Zoom, and to access any court appearances that remain virtual. The 48-port switch allows 48 devices (laptops, computers, printers, etc.) to securely connect together to access each other and the internet. This faster switch allows for faster and better connections and workflow.

The WIFI upgrade and the switch together result in better and faster uploads and downloads. The WIFI upgrade also helps with connecting to the office remotely for staff that are working remotely or in a hybrid remote capacity.

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

Day One partners with volunteer lawyers and law students who are interested in working with young survivors. Each semester, Day One's legal team endeavors to partner, mentor, and train law students to become the next generation of advocates with a clear understanding of the challenges facing young survivors. In the Spring of 2023, we supervised one hybrid law student intern. In the Summer of 2023, we supervised one law student intern who was able to work full time on a hybrid schedule. In the Fall of 2023, we also supervised one law student extern. From assisting with case research to potential client screening and legal issue spotting, legal interns have become an essential feature of our program.

During this reporting period, Day One's legal team has collaborated with two different firms and three different attorneys on pro bono cases. In the Summer of 2023, Senior Staff Attorney Bianca Hernandez supervised a pro bono attorney who was directly representing a young person obtaining an order of protection in family court. In the Fall and Winter of 2023 going into 2024, Bianca had two custody cases with two pro bono attorneys assisting with supervision. Day One's legal team is actively seeking cases that would be appropriate for pro bono attorneys to serve as co-counsel.



3

attorneys volunteered **158** hours



3

law students volunteered **490** hours

SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

Legal Service Providers and Community-Based Organizations: Throughout this reporting period, Day One continued our collaborations with legal service providers, community-based organizations, and governmental resource centers. Day One is known as an expert in the field of dating violence prevention and direct services for young people. Day One's legal team continues its presence on the Lawyer's Committee Against Domestic Violence (LCADV). Associate Director of Legal Services, Norah Rexer, and Senior Staff Attorney, Bianca Hernandez, are both members and regularly attend monthly meetings. Through the LCADV, Day One has helped center the unique concerns of young survivors in Family Court, mediation, and other systems and spaces. We have connected with members from other nonprofits, small firms, and government agencies, which has helped increase our referral numbers and expand the number of organizations to which we can refer clients.

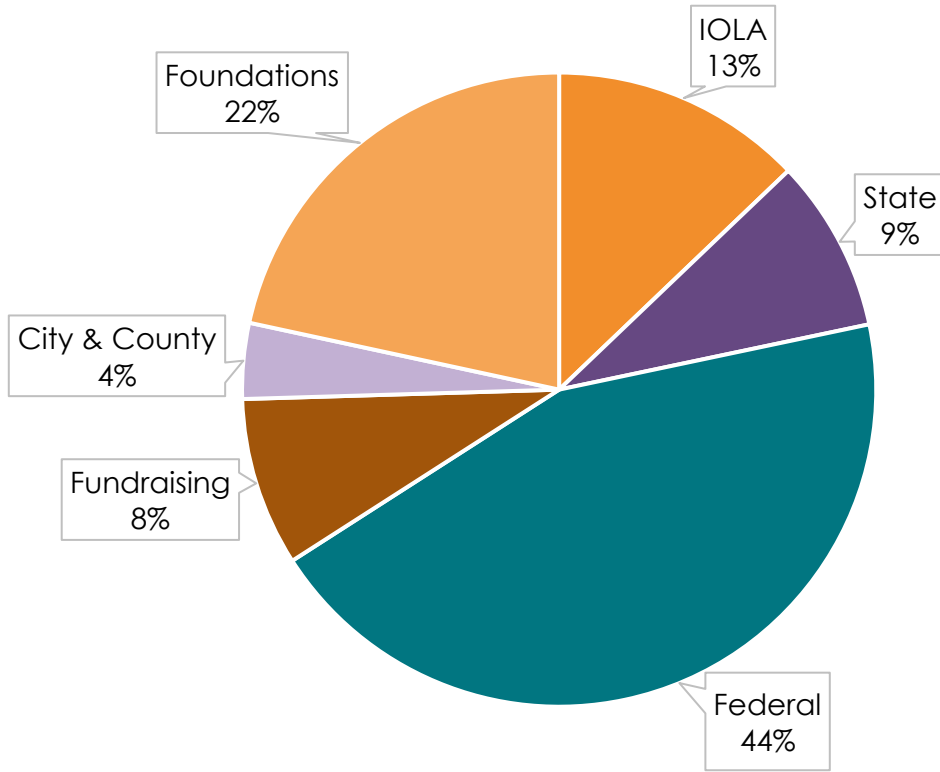
New York City Cyber Abuse Taskforce: Day One also has a strong presence on the New York City Cyber Abuse Taskforce, which brings together survivors, activists, attorneys, and other advocates to address technology-facilitated abuse, including online harassment, stalking, and non-consensual pornography. As this area of the law is developing rapidly, Day One's expertise in youth and technology informs the conversation and serves as a point of referral and technical assistance. Day One Staff have also maintained an active presence on the New York City Bar Association's Committees.

Center for Justice Innovation's Young Parent Initiative: More recently, Day One has begun to partner with the Center for Justice Innovation's Young Parent Initiative (YPI) program. YPI is located within Kings County Family Court assisting young parents with child support applications. YPI has referred a number of service-seekers to Day One who are victims of IPV and seeking legal representation.

Mayor's Office to End Gender Based Violence: One of our strongest, ongoing collaborations is with the Mayor's Office to End Gender Based Violence (EndGBV). As a Family Justice Center partner, we regularly receive legal referrals and provide technical assistance, training, and policy advice. Through our partnership with the FJCs we have access to law enforcement, prosecutors, counselors, case managers, and other civil legal services providers. Our clients can more easily obtain access to holistic services and advocates who can help answer their questions. Since 2018, Day One has been a partner at the Brooklyn, Bronx, and Manhattan FJCs. The FJCs regularly send us counseling and legal services referrals.

CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUNDING

\$ 777,252



IOLA Funding	\$ 100,000
City & County Funding	\$ 30,000
State Funding	\$ 68,626
Federal Funding	\$ 343,770
Foundations	\$ 168,000
Fundraising	\$ 66,856