

*Department of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs*

# Annual Report Vermont - SIU Grants Program ~January 2017~

*Progress Report for the establishment and sustainment of Special  
Investigation Units established pursuant to 24 VSA§1940.*

*Marc Metayer, SIU Grants Program Manager, VT Dept. of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs*  
1/20/2017

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Current Status:** County-based Special Investigation Units (SIU) are supported in twelve (12) counties; Essex County and Grand Isle County are supported by SIUs in neighboring counties. **Program Support Grants** are approved for the SIU administrative and operational expenses to sustain the core structure of the respective units. Nearly all of the SIUs are co-located or closely affiliated with the existing Child Advocacy Centers in their counties. This affiliation allows the SIUs and CACs to minimize duplicative administrative functions while strengthening the ability to provide a coordinated response for Vermont citizens.

**Law Enforcement Support Grants** are approved for eleven (11) law enforcement investigators around the state. Addison, Bennington, Orange (x2), Orleans, Rutland, Washington, Windham, and Windsor counties receive this supplemental funding resource at the maximum funding level of \$60,000 per grant award. This funding supports the services of a full-time investigator from a municipal or county law enforcement department. Caledonia County receives a reduced award amount (\$54,000) to support a combined investigator resource provided by two local police departments in the county (St. Johnsbury PD – ½ time/Hardwick PD – ¼ time). Lamoille County receives a reduced award amount (\$30,000) divided among three law enforcement agencies within the county (Lamoille Sheriff's Department/Morristown PD/Stowe PD). When combined with the services of investigators assigned by the Vermont State Police, these positions represent the core of the specialized law enforcement investigators who directly support the SIUs.

**Law Enforcement Reimbursement Grants** are awarded to Essex County and Grand Isle County, as provided for in 24 VSA§1940. The Essex County Sheriff's Department provides investigative services to support investigations coordinated by the Caledonia SIU and the Orleans SIU, while the Grand Isle Sheriff's Department has established a working partnership with the Northwest Unit for Special Investigations in Franklin County.

**Training:** **NCAC Forensic Interview** training was conducted in two sessions during May. Each session was conducted over three days with the basic class held in South Burlington and the advanced class held in Rutland.

**Sexual Assault: Naming the Unnamed Conspirator** – a one-day seminar conducted in conjunction with the annual State's Attorneys' conference in June.

**Crimes Against Children: Investigation to Suspect Interrogation** presented by Wiclander-Zulaski in June. The three-day session was held in June in South Burlington for SIU investigators.

***Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Investigation Training*** was sponsored by UVM and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services. This was a two-day event conducted in August. SIU investigators from around the state attended along with colleagues from a variety of disciplines.

***NCATrak User Orientation*** was conducted in December. This two-day session was presented in Montpelier with representatives attending from each of the twelve SIUs. Basic and advanced concepts were presented for those responsible for maintaining this unique records management system.

## **SCOPE OF REPORT**

This report covers major activity and current operational status for the Special Investigations Units in Vermont during the calendar year 2016.

Statistical reporting reflects activity during the State Fiscal Year 2016, which encompasses the time period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

Grant Awards documented in this report are for FY17 award amounts (current fiscal year).

## **CURRENT STATUS**

Special Investigations Units (SIUs), as authorized by Title 24 VSA § 1940, are operational in all Vermont counties. Each SIU has an executive director responsible for the administrative duties of the respective SIU. ***This enabling section was amended significantly during 2015 to provide more clear definition to the scope of responsibility for SIUs.***

<http://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/055/01940>

In collaboration with the Vermont Children's Alliance, all SIUs are partnered and co-located with Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) throughout the state.

<http://www.vtchildrensalliance.org/>

The accreditation body for the CACs is the National Children's Alliance (NCA). NCA provides detailed criteria for CAC accreditation and provides the professional standards for multi-disciplinary team operations, as adopted by Vermont SIUs.

<http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/index.php?s=24>

In addition to providing professional performance standards, the affiliation with NCA and the Vermont Children's Alliance has been an excellent conduit for obtaining the specialized training required by the units. This affiliation has also provided access to a records management system (NCATrak) that provides consistent statistical information from each of the operating SIUs. The newly introduced Outcome Measurement System (OMS) is another example of leveraging the resources of partner organizations.

The State of Vermont currently provides Program Support Grant funding to SIUs in twelve counties. For the two remaining counties; Essex County is supported by SIUs in Caledonia and Orleans Counties, while Grand Isle County has an active partnership with the Northwest Unit for Special Investigations located in Franklin County.

Additionally, Law Enforcement Support Grant funding is provided through grant awards to SIUs for support of investigation resources provided by local police departments and Sheriff's departments. Grant funding awards to support law enforcement investigators are currently active in twelve counties (Addison; Bennington; Caledonia; Essex; Grand Isle; Lamoille; Orange; Orleans; Rutland; Washington; Windham; and Windsor). Eleven grant

awards support law enforcement investigators by providing supplemental funding to the respective departments. Essex and Grand Isle Sheriff's Departments are reimbursed on an hourly basis for their services, as mandated by statute.

### **TRAINING**

During 2016, a continued focus of training effort was in the development of forensic interview skills. Continuous turnover for law enforcement and DCF partners working with the SIUs has created the need for ongoing training offerings in this area.

May 2016: One session of ***Forensic Interviewing of Children*** was conducted in South Burlington. A total of 39 students attended this three-day training session. This course is the baseline training for investigators who conduct interviews with children. Participants were primarily law enforcement and DCF personnel. See link for sample description of course: <http://www.nationalcac.org/forensic-interviewing-of-children-training/>

May 2016: One session of ***Advanced Forensic Interviewing*** was conducted in Rutland. A total of 32 students attended this three-day training session. This course is designed as the follow-up instruction for attendees of the initial Forensic Interviewing of Children training that have had the opportunity to use these skills in field practice for at least a year. See link for sample description of course: <http://www.nationalcac.org/advanced-forensic-interviewing-training/>

June 2016: One day seminar entitled: ***Sexual Assault: Naming the Unnamed Conspirator*** was conducted in Jay. In collaboration with the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, the seminar was conducted as part of the annual training conference for State's Attorneys with a primary audience of prosecutors, victim advocates, and law enforcement investigators. The session was presented by Anne Munch, Esq. See link for description of this topic: <http://annemunch.org/bio.html>

June 2016: A three-day seminar entitled: ***Crimes Against Children: Investigation to Suspect Interrogation*** presented by Wicklander – Zulaski Associates. The session was conducted in South Burlington and presented for law enforcement and DCF investigators with a specific focus on interviewing suspected offenders. See link for description of course: <http://www.w-z.com/police/crimes-against-children/>

December 2016: ***Training on the use of NCATrak*** was a two-day session conducted in Montpelier as a refresher for experienced NCATrak users as well as basic training for new administrative staff. The session was a collaborative effort between the Vermont Children's Alliance and the SIU Grants Program.

**Grant Award Summary – FY17**

<b>County</b>	<b>Program Support</b>	<b>Law Enforcement</b>	<b>Total Grant Awards</b>
<b>Addison</b>	<b>\$73,031</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$133,031</b>
<b>Bennington</b>	<b>\$98,359</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$158,359</b>
<b>Caledonia</b>	<b>\$60,441</b>	<b>\$54,000</b>	<b>\$114,441</b>
<b>Chittenden</b>	<b>\$97,308</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$97,308</b>
<b>Essex</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$20,000*</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Franklin</b>	<b>\$92,988</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$92,988</b>
<b>Grand Isle</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$20,000*</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Lamoille</b>	<b>\$100,956</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$130,956</b>
<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$81,993</b>	<b>\$120,000**</b>	<b>\$201,993</b>
<b>Orleans</b>	<b>\$72,755</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$132,755</b>
<b>Rutland</b>	<b>\$123,265</b>	<b>\$80,000***</b>	<b>\$203,265</b>
<b>Washington</b>	<b>\$104,211</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$164,211</b>
<b>Windham</b>	<b>\$106,443</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$166,443</b>
<b>Windsor</b>	<b>\$112,160</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$172,160</b>
<b>Total Awards</b>	<b>\$1,123,910</b>	<b>\$684,000</b>	<b>\$1,807,910</b>

**Program Support Grants support** the local SIU administrative and site operational expenses.

**Law Enforcement Grants support** the participation of SIU dedicated law enforcement investigators from municipal police departments and/or county sheriff’s departments.

Both types of grants limit the amount of salary funding to the 50% of total salary expense for each SIU, as provided in the enabling legislation.

\* Essex County Sheriff’s Department and Grand Isle County Sheriff’s Department are covered by a reimbursement for services process; up to \$20,000 is reserved for each department as outlined in 24 VSA §1940 (c). A 50% matching funds element is included in these grant awards, and the respective counties are paying half of the personnel expense related to providing investigation services.

\*\* Orange County receives two law enforcement support grants to provide for the assignment of two deputies as dedicated SIU investigators in lieu of an assigned VSP investigator.

\*\*\* Rutland County received a one-time increase to address a transition among participating departments. Future awards will remain at the \$60,000 maximum.

<b><u>SIU/CAC by County - 2016</u></b>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Addison County</u></b>  Addison County Unit for  Special Investigations  Fred Saar  Executive Director  35 Court Street  Middlebury, VT 05753  802-274-5724  <a href="mailto:Fred.saar@partner.vermont.gov">Fred.saar@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p>NCA status: Associate member February 2014</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Bennington County</u></b>  Bennington County Child  Advocacy Center/ SIU  Joy Kitchell  Executive Director  P.O. Box 163  129 Elm Street  Bennington VT 05201  (802) 442-5107  <a href="mailto:Joy.Kitchell@partner.vermont.gov">Joy.Kitchell@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p>NCA status: Fully accredited 2008; reaccredited 2014</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Caledonia and Southern Essex Counties</u></b>  Caledonia Children’s Advocacy  Center/SIU  Carolyn Brown  Interim Director  PO Box 272  Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819-0272  (802) 274-5724  <a href="mailto:cbrowncsiu@gmail.com">cbrowncsiu@gmail.com</a></p> <p>NCA status: Associate member December 2013</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Chittenden County</u></b>  Chittenden Children’s  Advocacy Center/CUSI  Veronica Rathgeb</p> <p>Executive Director  50 Cherry Street, Suite 102  Burlington, VT 05401  (802) 652-0991  <a href="mailto:vrathegb@bpdvt.org">vrathegb@bpdvt.org</a></p> <p>NCA status: Fully accredited 2003; reaccredited 2009; reaccredited 2014</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Franklin &amp; Grand Isle Counties</u></b>  Northwest Unit for Special  Investigations NUSI/CAC  Robert White, Executive  Director  5 Lemnah Drive  St. Albans, VT 05478  (802) 524-7961  <a href="mailto:Robert.White@vermont.gov">Robert.White@vermont.gov</a></p> <p>NCA status: Fully accredited 2000; reaccredited 2005; reaccredited 2010; reaccredited 2015</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lamoille County</u></b>  Lamoille County Special  Investigation Unit/CAC  Karen Garbarino  Executive Director  P.O. Box 16  Hyde Park, VT 05655  (802)-851-8116  <a href="mailto:Karen.garbarino@partner.vermont.gov">Karen.garbarino@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p>NCA status: Associate member 2016</p>

<p><b><u>Orange County</u></b>  Orange County SIU/CAC  Monique Braman  Executive Director  354 VT Route 110  PO Box 254  Chelsea, VT 05038  (802) 685-4712  <a href="mailto:mbraman@orangecountyvt.gov">mbraman@orangecountyvt.gov</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Associate member October 2013</b></p>	<p><b><u>Orleans and Northern Essex Counties</u></b>  The Orleans County Child Advocacy Center/SIU  Cher Smith  Executive Director  55 Seymour Lane, Suite 2  PO Box 1133  Newport, VT 05855  (802) 334-6002  <a href="mailto:Occac.ex.dir@gmail.com">Occac.ex.dir@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Not recognized at this time</b></p>	<p><b><u>Rutland County</u></b>  Child First Advocacy Center/  Rutland Unit for Special Investigations  Wendy Loomis  Executive Director  80 West Street  P.O. Box 6822  Rutland, VT 05702  (802) 747-0200  <a href="mailto:wendy@childfirstadvocacycenter.org">wendy@childfirstadvocacycenter.org</a>  <a href="mailto:wendy.loomis@partner.vermont.gov">wendy.loomis@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Fully accredited 2004; reaccredited 2010; reaccredited 2015</b></p>
<p><b><u>Washington County</u></b>  OUR House of Central Vermont, Inc. CAC/SIU  Rebecca Duranleau  Executive Director  38 Summer Street  Barre, Vermont 05641  (802) 476-8825  <a href="mailto:ourhousebarredirector@gmail.com">ourhousebarredirector@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Fully Accredited 2016</b></p>	<p><b><u>Windham County</u></b>  Windham County Safe Place CAC/ SUSI  Alyssa Todd  Executive Director  112 Hardwood Way  Brattleboro, VT 05301  (802) 579-1358  <a href="mailto:Alyssa.todd@partner.vermont.gov">Alyssa.todd@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Fully Accredited 2016</b></p>	<p><b><u>Windsor County</u></b>  The CACs of the Family Place/  Windsor County SIU  Julie Gaudette  Director  319 US Route 5, South Norwich, VT 05055  (802) 295-3882  <a href="mailto:julieg@the-family-place.org">julieg@the-family-place.org</a>  <a href="mailto:Julie.gaudette@partner.vermont.gov">Julie.gaudette@partner.vermont.gov</a></p> <p><b>NCA status: Fully accredited 2001; reaccredited 2006 and 2012</b></p> <p>2 Main Street  North Springfield, VT 05150  (802) 295-3882  <a href="mailto:julieg@the-family-place.org">julieg@the-family-place.org</a>  <b>NCA status: Accreditation Pending 2016-17</b></p>

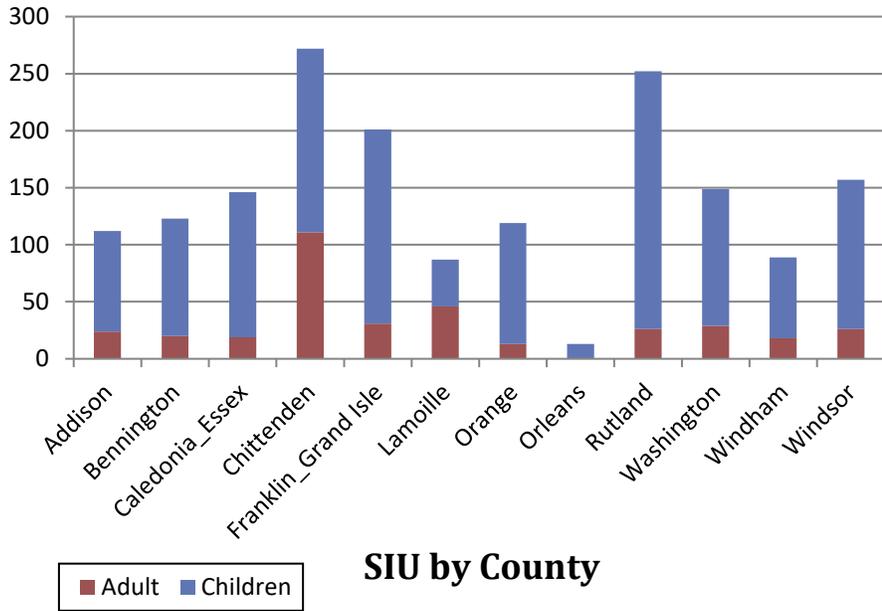
## **STATISTICAL OVERVIEW - FY16**

Program, financial, and statistical reporting from the SIUs are required on a quarterly basis throughout each fiscal year. Beginning with FY13, all SIUs receiving VT SIU Grant Program funding are required to use NCATrak as the standardized statistical reporting system. Although there will be some minor modifications of reporting categories, the basis of reporting will be overall caseload per SIU with breakdown categories to establish age and gender grouping for victims and offenders, as well as victim support services provided and summary of court action undertaken.

Specialized reports have been created in NCATrak that will provide the SIUs with two types of reports: the first is a statistical count report for the unit, while the second report is designed as a management tool to track case progress. It should be noted that with the combination of SIU/CAC functions, the reporting of clients served (adult/child) is often higher than law enforcement cases with charges or prosecutions reported. Primarily, this is due to the mission of the units to serve all victims when sexual violence or abuse may be suspected. Until a determination can be made concerning allegations, support for victims and non-offending family members is the primary focus with court action undertaken only when merited.

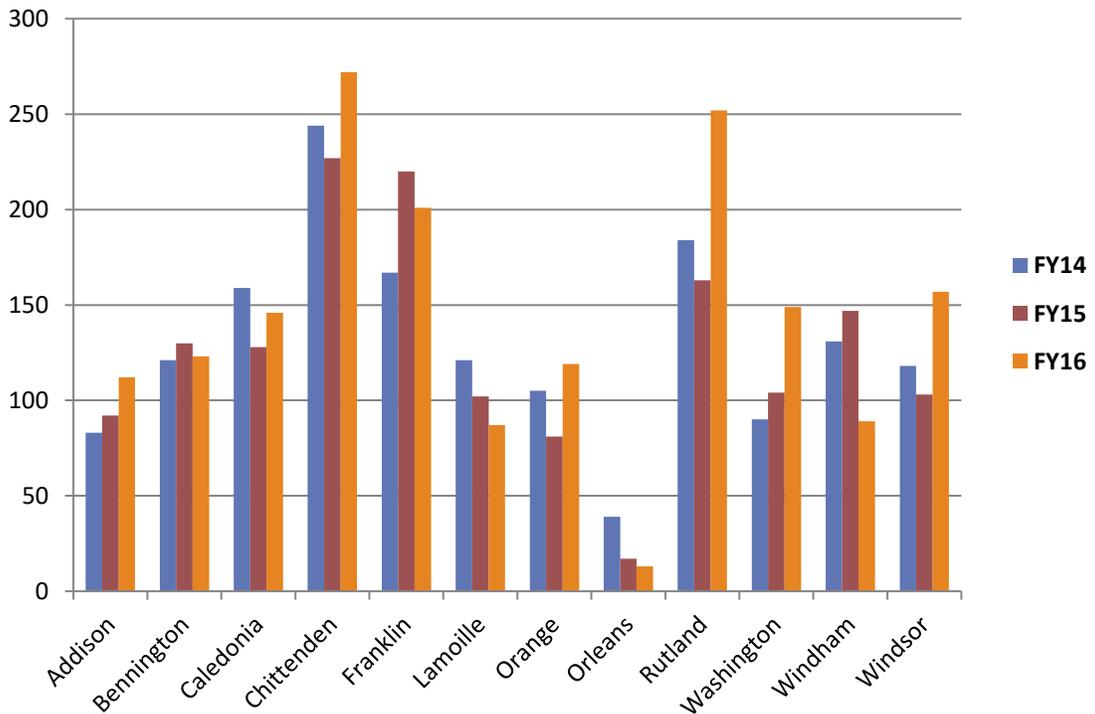
This section contains chart and graph depictions of the caseload and demographic makeup of victims and offenders that comprise the workload of the SIUs. Now, with the compilation of data over a minimum of three full years, it is possible to provide a glimpse of workload trend by county. Trend charts for the most recent three-year period are provided to illustrate the client count by county and the relative provision of specialized services for those clients.

### FY16 SIU - New Cases by Victim Age Grouping

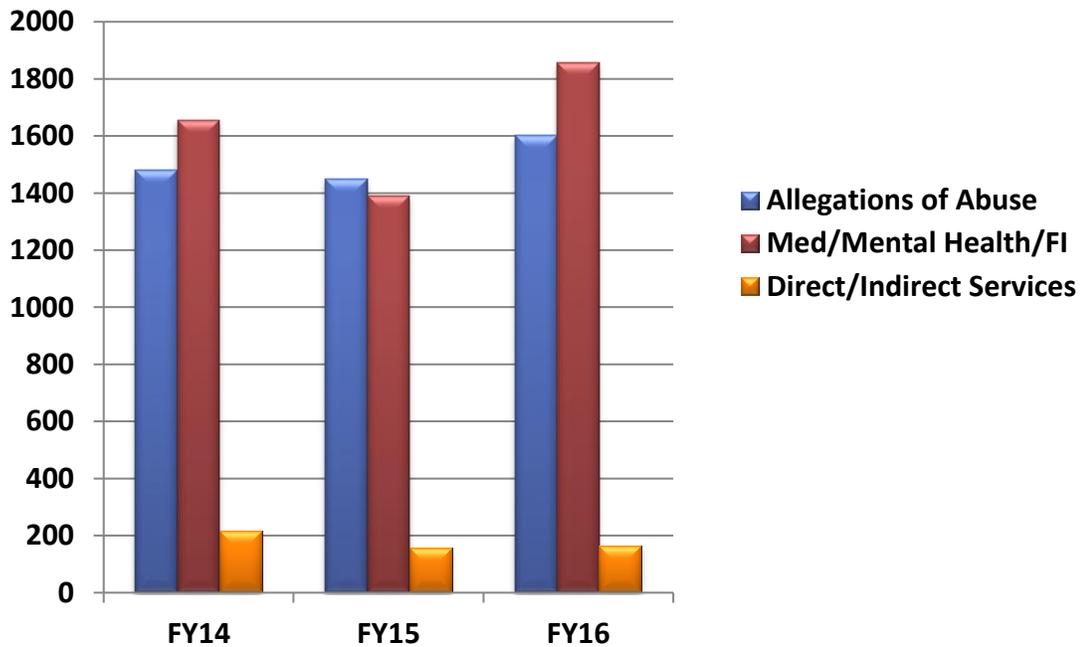


SIU by County

### SIU Client Count 3 - Year Trend



### Allegations of Abuse Specialized Services Provided 3- Year Trend

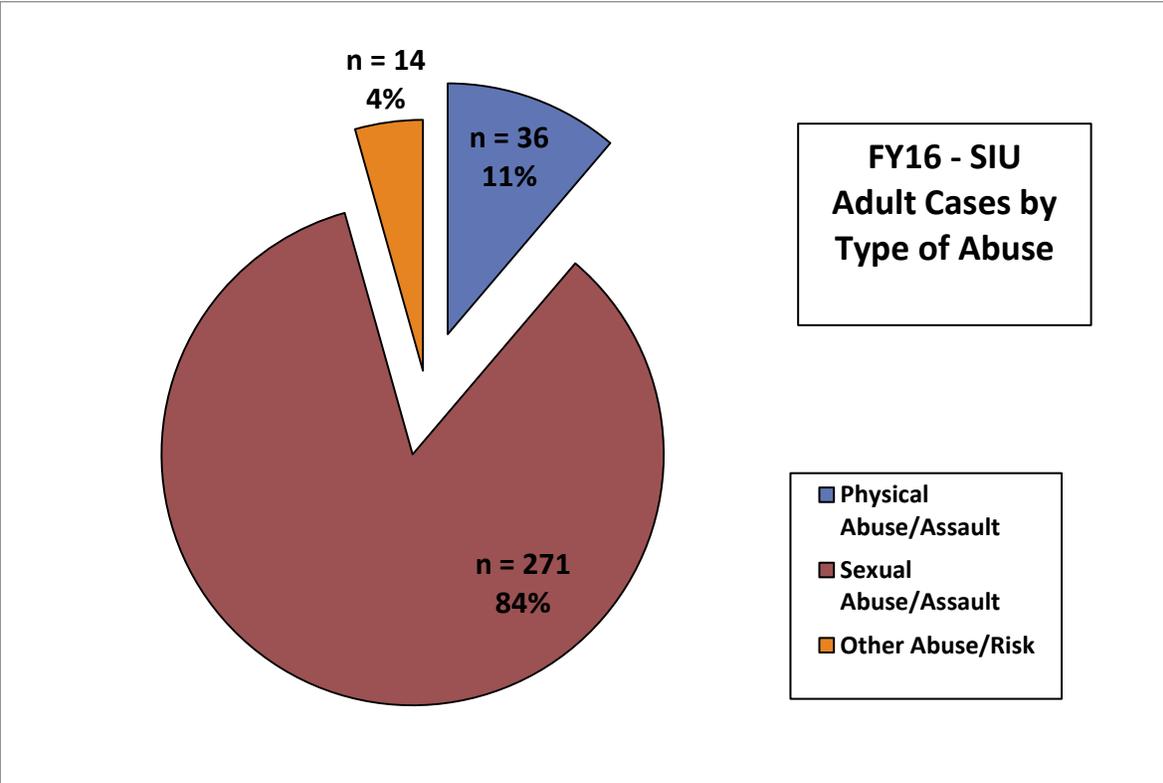
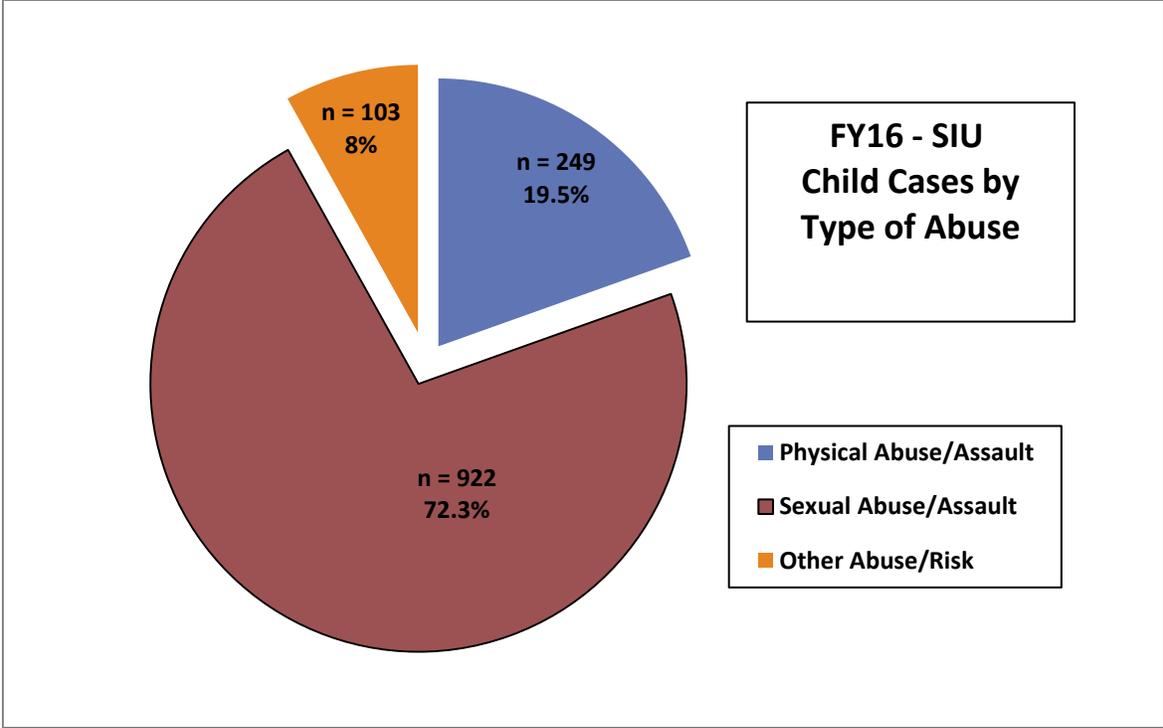


In managing the referred *Allegations of Abuse*, specialized services can vary according to the needs of the individual client(s). The provision and coordination of these specialized services are at the heart of the mission of the SIU model.

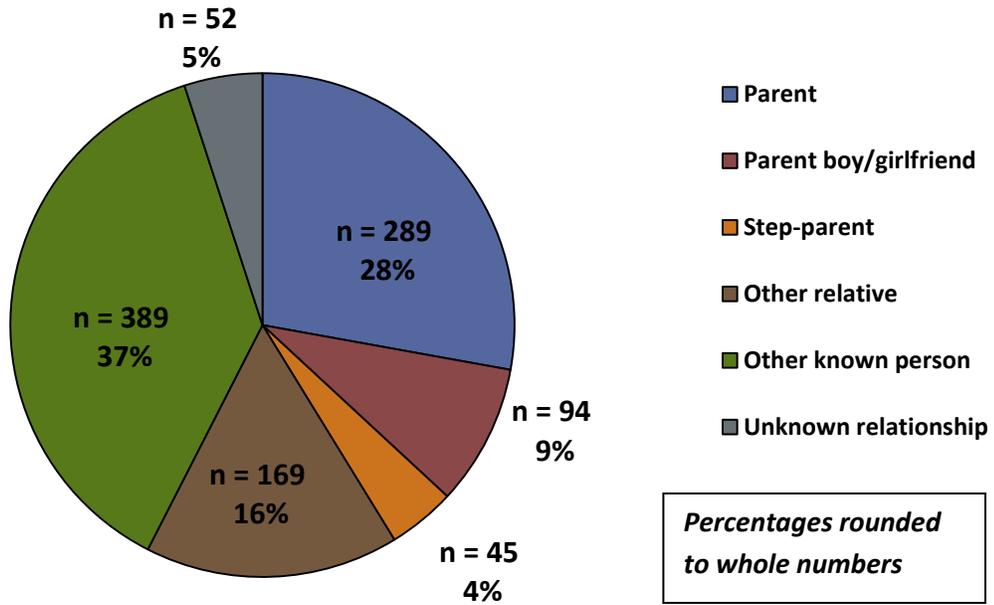
**Direct Services** provided include forensic interviews of siblings, courtesy interviews conducted on behalf of other SIUs or agencies, and educational presentations. These are services which may, or may not, be related to an active case of the SIU, but involve direct services provided because of the expertise of SIU staff.

**Indirect Services** are primarily sex offender registry checks and violations, child pornography cases which do not involve a locally identifiable victim, and review of DCF intakes that are not accepted for further action by DCF.

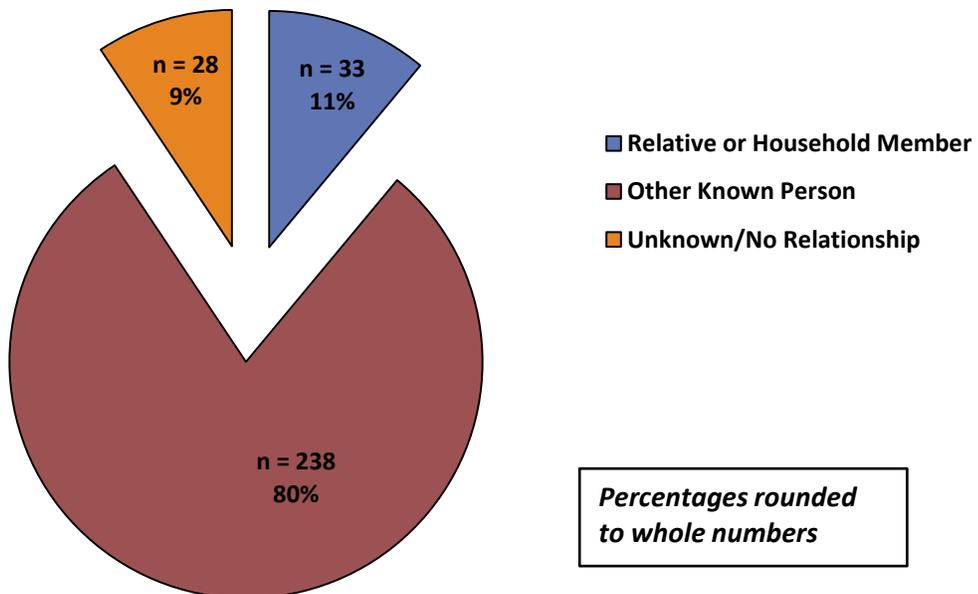
**Medical Screening/Examinations; Mental Health Counseling/Referrals; and Forensic Interviews** are the specialized services which are provided or coordinated by the SIU/CAC in order to assist victims and non-offending family members. The need for these services can vary by individual circumstance, but the goal is to provide for the appropriate assistance in a timely and seamless manner.

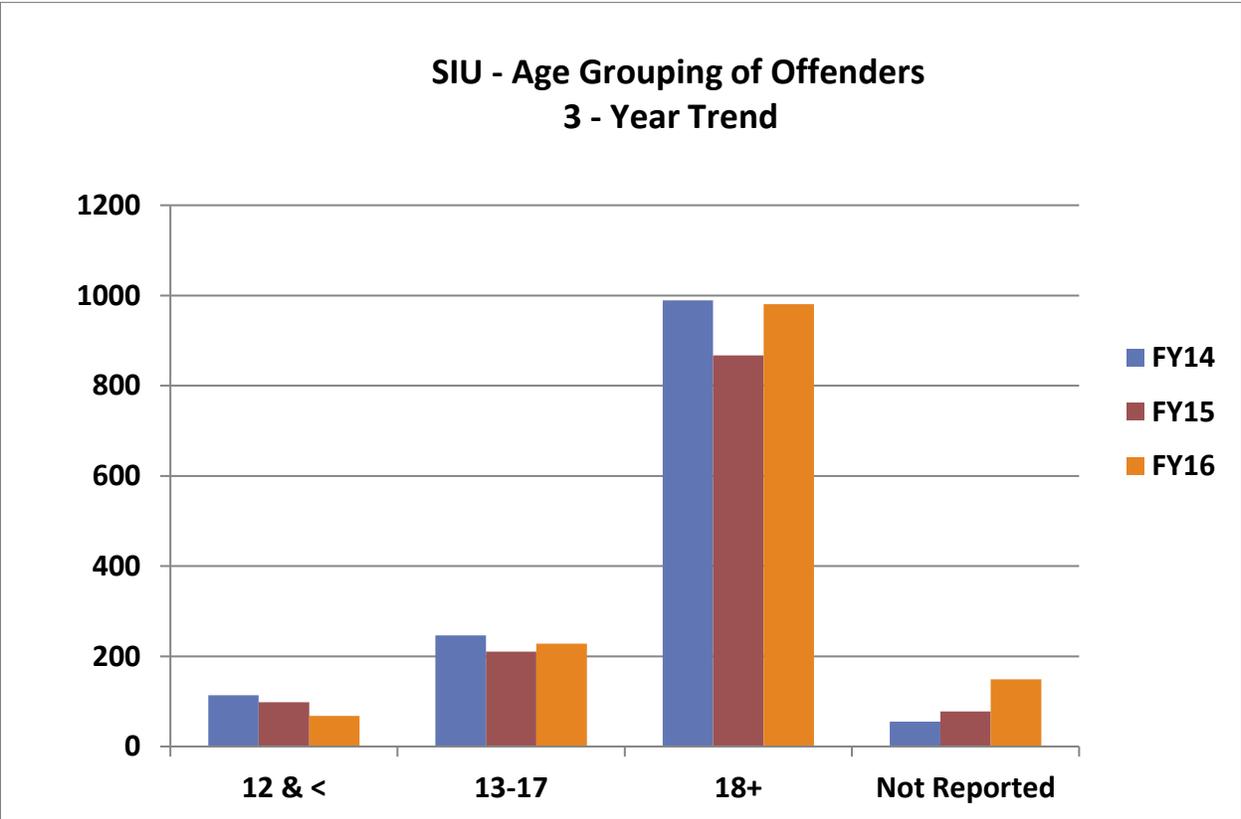
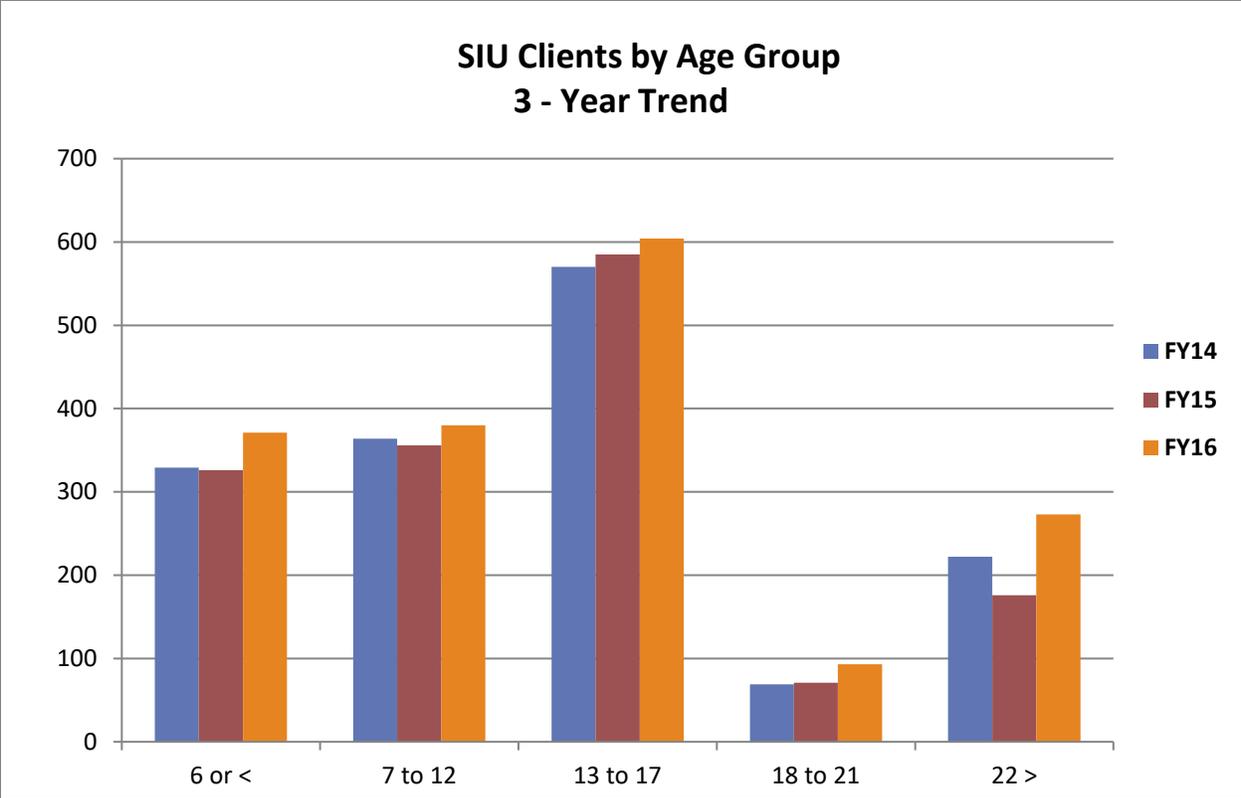


### FY16 SIU- Offender Relationship - Child Victims



### FY16 - Offender Relationship - Adult Victims





## SUMMARY

Although the maturation of each SIU is still evolving, the citizens of the state have access to the specialized services offered by the SIU model, regardless of geographic location. The goal remains to strengthen the operations of each SIU for consistency throughout the state.

Early on, the SIU Grants Program partnered SIU operations with existing Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) as a means of leveraging mutually beneficial aspects of each endeavor. One of the key aspects of that arrangement has been the CAC accreditation process. The National Children's Alliance (NCA) is a nationwide organization which provides for the objective review of CAC structure and operation. The multi-disciplinary team approach of the CAC organization is the very same model upon which the SIUs are based.

Vermont currently has seven (7) fully accredited CACs (with active SIUs), with another four CACs (with active SIUs) having an associate level status denoting their ongoing efforts to achieve full accreditation. The one (1) remaining SIU/CAC does not have a current status with NCA, but is actively working on applications for recognition by NCA. This SIU has experienced significant turnover in the directorship position and has recently contracted with someone to fulfill this role in a more dedicated manner. The goal of the accreditation process is to have an independent, objective review of unit operations to ensure appropriate structure and functionality. Access to this feature is possible due to the close working relationship between the SIU Grants Program and the Vermont Children's Alliance (which is the VT chapter sanctioned by the NCA). Accreditation status is one of the performance measures used to assess the functionality of each SIU.

Established SIUs provide a one-stop opportunity for victims and families to receive, or to access, specialized child interviewing techniques, medical and mental health services, and a variety of victim support services. Law enforcement, DCF, and prosecutors are active partners working within the SIUs to provide for the best possible victim support, even if court action is not possible.

Law enforcement participation is still dependent upon continued grant funding to support the presence of an SIU-dedicated investigator from local or county police agencies. Current funding supports eleven grant awards which provide investigators in ten counties. Two additional reimbursement based awards are provided to Essex County and Grand Isle County for investigative services provided by the Sheriff Departments in those counties (mandated in statute). Chittenden County and Franklin County are the only two counties not reliant upon SIU Grant funding for law enforcement investigators.

The specialized services provided by, or through, the SIUs (CACs) are also another significant performance measure for assessment. A main premise behind the establishment of the SIUs was to provide for a safe, victim-friendly environment that could

provide for the needs of victims in a supportive manner. Adoption of the *Outcome Measurement System* (a feature available through NCA membership) will provide feedback from clients and SIU/CAC partners to measure this component. The Outcome Measurement System (OMS) was instituted in early 2015 and is still being implemented by the individual CACs.

Training efforts in 2016 focused on continued development of interviewing skills for investigators as well as specialized training for prosecutors and victim advocates. Administrative staff received training in the use of the primary records management system (NCATrak) to ensure the data quality of statistical reporting. The SIU Grants Program, the Vermont Children's Alliance, and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services continue to work in close collaboration with other partners to strengthen the response to sexual and physical abuse in Vermont.