

# YWCA Central Massachusetts

eliminating racism, empowering women

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eliminating racism  
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**ywca**

## YWCA Mission

The YWCA Central Massachusetts is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

## Programs

- Children's Services
- Domestic Violence Services
- Economic Advancement
- Health Promotion Services
- Racial Justice
- Residential Services
- Women & Girls Leadership Development
- Youth Development

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the YWCA for hosting us. A special thank you to the YWCA leaders Amarely Gutierrez, Darlene Belliveau, and Patty Flanagan who made this project possible, and to Dr. Heather-Lyn Haley of UMass Medical School for her ongoing support of this project.

## Burnout Study

As many of the employees at the YWCA are in the human services and education professions, employee burnout was brought to our attention as a relevant problem to investigate.

- Psychological burnout= the presence of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy at work. Results from chronic work stressors, both emotional and interpersonal (1).
- Human service professions= occupations involving person-to-person interaction for the purpose of providing health or social care, education, or customer service (2).

### Goals of study:

- Assess the burnout risk of YWCA employees in caregiver roles (e.g. human services & early education).

### Methods of study:

- Online survey including the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), a tool used to assess burnout risk.

Majority of respondents were domestic violence services workers. Results of this study will guide future directions for research, as well as potential initiatives & employee education to decrease burnout risk.

## Clerkship Experiences

### EncorePLUS Support Group

The YWCA provides free membership and a support group to women who are both undergoing treatment for and survivors of reproductive cancers. We had the privilege of meeting with the group and listening to their stories. The women taught us that:

- while some doctors made battling cancer easier, other doctors sometimes made the process more difficult and confusing
- the extra five minutes spent listening to the patient's concerns or responding to an email on a weekend truly makes a difference
- the support they have in one another is invaluable, and programs like this should be more utilized

We hope to put their advice into practice when we have patients that need our support.

### Domestic Violence Shelter Visit

The YWCA has two major domestic violence programs: Daybreak and Battered Women's Resources. We visited a domestic violence shelter and discussed:

- healthy eating on a budget and the prevalence & outcomes of domestic violence in the U.S.
- a discussion about domestic violence as it relates to healthcare, the doctor-patient relationship, and its health effects

### Pay Equity Public Hearing

Hosted by the City Manager's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, this forum presented the opportunity to learn about and new bills that will be heard by our State Representatives in the coming year. Topics included:

- public feedback and personal experiences
- importance of paid sick time
- State Rep. Mary Keefe spoke of her efforts to support bills related to pay equity
- voter's role in pushing bills forward

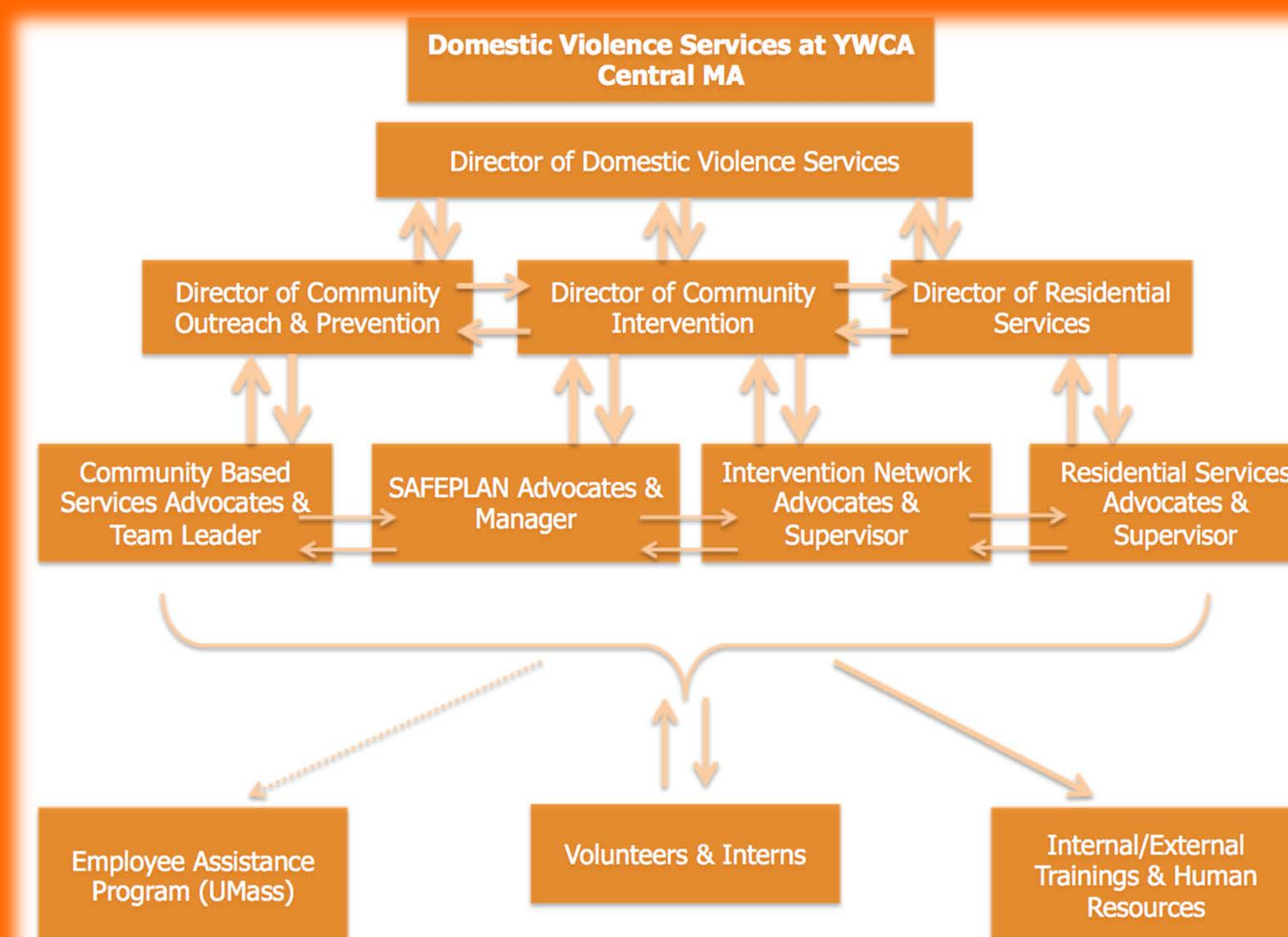
## Notable Preliminary Results of Burnout Study

### Maslach Burnout Inventory Subscale Scores:

- 47 responses to MBI
- Cynicism subscale: 55.3% low, 25.5% moderate, 19.2% high
- Emotional exhaustion subscale: 68.1% low, 17% moderate, 14.9% high
- Professional efficacy subscale: 4.3% low, 25.5% moderate, 70.2% high

### Benefits questions:

- 46 responses to benefits portion
- 73.9% reported having benefits
- 68.3% feel comfortable with understanding of benefits, 26.8% unsure, 4.9% do not feel comfortable with understanding of benefits
- 42.9% do not feel that they use their benefits to their full potential
- 84.4% have never used the employee assistance program



## References

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- Wieclaw, J, et al. (2006) Risk of affective and stress related disorders among employees in human service professions. Occupational and Environmental Medicine. 63 (5), 314-319. doi:10.1136/oem.2004.019398
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