

Offender Accountability: Working with Men Who Batter

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Battered Women Wanted Men To:

- **Commit to end violence**
- **Not blame**
- **Take responsibility**
- **Empathize - effects on partners and children**
- **Change their beliefs about women, men, children, and relationships (egalitarian relationships)**

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Origins - Batterer Intervention Programs

- Approx 30 years of history, with roots in 1970's battered women's movement
- Traditional mental health responses seen as dangerous and ineffective
- Advocates asked men to work with men who batter
- Battering seen as intentional behavior
- First programs had no links with criminal justice system

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Programs that Shaped the Field

- Emerge in Boston MA 1977
- Amend in Denver CO 1977
- Raven in St Louis MO 1978
- Manalive in San Francisco CA 1979
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth MN 1980
- Men Stopping Violence Atlanta GA 1981

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Brief Timeline of the Duluth Model

- 1980 – DAIP organizes as a non-profit**
- 1981 – Duluth Police issue first mandatory arrest policy in the country**
- 1982 – Duluth Coordinated Community Response is officially agreed to by nine agencies**
- 1983 – Power and Control Wheel developed**
- 1986 – Group formed for Native Men who Batter**
- 1990 – Equality Wheel developed**
- 1994 – Native Men’s Program Coordinator hired**

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Common Aspects of Programs

- Most DV seen as a gendered crime
- Men’s violence against women is a cultural act, not a sickness within offenders
- Men-only group programs are preferred
- Cognitive behavioral approach
- Most programs not clinically-based
- Close relationship with victim advocates, and offer advocacy for partners of men in programs
- Limited confidentiality, accountability to criminal justice system

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BIP Co-facilitators

- Clear understanding of power differentials and how they play out in relationships
- Bring a battered women's perspective into the room
- Create a positive learning environment that promotes critical dialogue
- Model power sharing; women taking the lead; men listening and taking account of women's perspectives, but not patronizing or apologizing for maleness
- Give constructive critical feedback to each other
- Facilitate a curriculum that challenges power-over male identity, and offers specific examples of non-violent male identity; non-controlling alternatives

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Partners and Family of Men in the Class and BIP

- In consultation with victim advocates, arrange partner contact and engagement strategies that prioritize safety and autonomy
- Exchange risk information to hold offenders more accountable and safety-plan with victims
- Caution victims and family member's expectation of offender change
- Ensure BIP facilitators have regular contact with advocates to keep victim issues current
- Encourage victim and family contact with Probation, to share relevant information and strengthen Probation's victim focus

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Battered Women's Advocacy Program and BIP

- Needs to know that the BIP is working **ALONGSIDE** them with shared goals of victim safety and autonomy
- BIP educates advocates on the process of working with offenders, invite advocates to observe classes, curriculum and structure
- Advocates and BIPs collaborate to implement procedures to address victim safety
- Build and maintain relationships with offender agencies, especially BIPs, Probation, Prosecutor and Courts
- Protocols enable quick and effective sharing of safety-related information
- Protocols for contacting and advocating for partners and family of men in the BIP
- Strategizing with BIP staff to improve the CCR response to victim safety and autonomy

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Goals of Partner Contact

- Provide information, advocacy, referrals
- Explore tactics of control, connecting personal, societal, cultural understandings
- Offer a safe place for women to critically examine their lives
- Discuss effects of abuse on children
- Review options for change
- Safety planning: From the batterer, the system, circumstances, culture; Over time-two hours, two years, twenty years...

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BIP Coordinator - Battered Women's Advocates - Criminal Justice System

- See BIPs as one part of a wider systemic intervention
- Provide offender programs that put victim safety and autonomy first
- Build and maintain relationships with victim advocacy programs and referral agencies
- Track and monitor system responses to victims and offenders
- Recruit train, support and supervise facilitators that model non-violent living
- Meet or exceed state standards for BIPs
- Ensure partner contact and victim advocacy are available to families of offenders
- Provide a curriculum that challenges power-over male identity, and offers specific examples of non-violent male identity; non-controlling alternatives

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BIP and Probation Office

- BIPs receive full information about offenders, including past offenses where possible
- BIPs provide routine, timely reports to probation officers on compliance with program and risk
- Facilitate relationships between victim advocacy programs and probation
- Invite probation staff to observe classes
- Support probation efforts to hold offenders accountable, esp.. revocations or further court hearings
- Meet or exceed state standards for BIPs
- In consultation with advocates, problem-solve and strategize with hot list of most dangerous offenders
- Model close and complementary relationships with alcohol and drug treatment agencies who work with offenders

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BIP and Alcohol and Drug Treatment Agencies

- Protocols to share information about offender compliance and risk management
- Coordination of response to manage most dangerous offenders
- Informal agreements to promote consistent messages to offenders about accountability and victim safety and autonomy

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BIP and Child Protection Services

- Protocols to share information about offender compliance and risk management
- Coordination of response to manage most dangerous offenders
- Informal agreements to promote consistent messages to offenders about accountability and victim safety and autonomy

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BIP and Mental Health Agencies

- Identify local mental health agencies that have demonstrated a clear and effective response to battering, and working relationships with other domestic violence specialist agencies
- Develop and maintain information sharing agreements about offenders who have been referred to mental health treatment
- Invite agencies to participate in pragmatic management of most dangerous offenders
- Offer resources to strengthen responses to domestic violence
- Make the most of positive relationships with mental health agencies by seeking out and using forums and trainings to discuss safe practice on domestic violence offenders and victims

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BIP and Faith Communities

- Identify local faith communities that have demonstrated a clear and effective response to battering, and working relationships with other domestic violence specialist agencies
- Develop and maintain information sharing agreements about offenders who have been referred to BIP
- Invite faith communities to participate in pragmatic management of most dangerous offenders
- Offer resources to strengthen responses to domestic violence
- Make the most of positive relationships by seeking out and using forums and trainings to discuss safe practice on domestic violence offenders and victims

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BIP and Marginalized Communities

- Identify marginalized communities in collaboration with other CCR agencies
- Discuss with woman's advocates within the marginalized groups the special issues they face, and strategies to address them
- Invite representatives of marginalized communities to observe and learn about dv intervention, including BIPS
- Where numbers permit, offer culturally specific programs that are co-facilitated by people of that group
- Partner with culturally specific agencies that have the capacity and interest to offer programs for their people
- Advocate for culturally specific practices within the CCR so that cases are responded to fairly and equitably

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BIP and the General Public

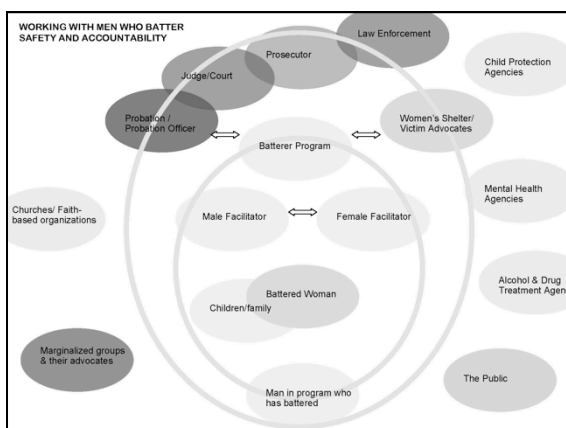
- BIPs & Advocacy Agencies take a lead on public awareness raising on domestic violence and how to respond
 - Produce resources that explain the role of BIPs and Advocacy agencies
 - Promote and respond to media topics that respond to 'gender-related' community events
 - Speak about dv at public and invitation events
- BIPs & Advocacy Agencies participate in lobbying for law changes and political events that relate to domestic violence, sexual assault elder abuse, gay rights

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BIP and Supervised Visitation and Child Exchange

- Identify visitation centers that have demonstrated a clear and effective response to battering, and working relationships with other domestic violence specialist agencies
- Develop and maintain information sharing agreements about offenders who have been referred to BIP
- Invite visitation centers to participate in pragmatic management of most dangerous offenders
- Offer resources to strengthen responses to domestic violence
- Make the most of positive relationships by seeking out and using forums and trainings to discuss safe practice on domestic violence offenders and victims

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Accountable Batterer Intervention Programs

- In what ways is your batterer intervention program *not well* connected to the coordinated community response?
- What ways is it *well* connected?
- What needs to be done to improve the interagency response to men who batter?

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Overview of Research: Effectiveness of BIPs

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Batterer Intervention Program Effectiveness -adapted from Gondolf presentation, June 2007

- A tight coordinated response has an impact on compliance and recidivism (Gondolf)
- 4 yr longitudinal follow-up evaluation shows a clear de-escalation of re-assault and other abuse over time, with the vast majority of men reaching sustained non-violence. At 30 months after batterer program intake, 80% of the men had not been violent to their partners in the previous year, and at 48 months, 90% had not been violent in the previous year (Gondolf, 2000; 2002; 2004)
- Little evidence supporting one model over another (Bennett & Williamson)
- Treated batterers have a 40% chance of staying nonviolent. Without treatment, 35% remain nonviolent (Babcock)

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Batterer Intervention Program Effectiveness

-adapted from Gondolf presentation, June 2007

- Experimental evaluations have major shortcomings that contribute to misleading interpretations
- Longitudinal outcomes suggest de-escalation of abuse following criminal justice/batterer program intervention
- Complex analysis of established batterer programs show moderate "program effect"
- Program context (e.g., court linkages) influences program outcomes, especially "swift and certain" response to non-compliance

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Batterer Intervention Program Effectiveness

-adapted from Gondolf presentation, June 2007

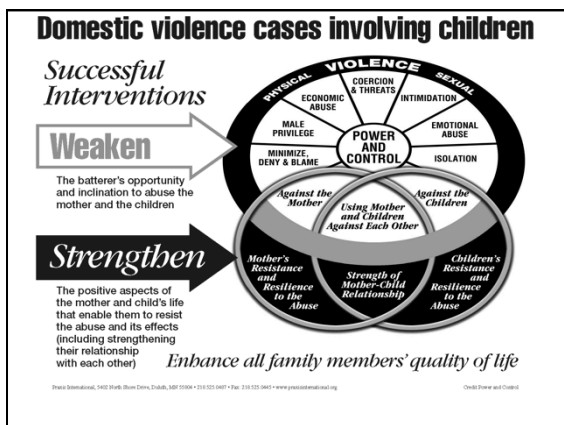
- Cognitive Behavioral Treatment approaches are suitable for the majority of men, according to psychological profiles and criminal justice evaluations
- A core of men warrants risk management which would improve program outcomes
- Risk management requires information sharing and coordinated/integrated services
- Coordinated response with mental health and other referral services requires more than training and protocols (e.g., independent system coordinators and/or case managers)

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Battering

- **Actions:** A pattern of abusive behaviors
- **Intents:** What he wants
- **Beliefs:** The root of his actions
- **Feelings:** Affective emotions
- **Minimize, Deny, Blame:** Justification
- **Effects:** Positive and negative
- **Impact of past use of violence**
- **Non-controlling behaviors:** Alternatives to power and control

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Batterer's Actions

- How do batterers use the children?
- How do batterers alter the relationship of the children to the mother?
- How do batterers use the system to maintain power and control over their victims?

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Using Children as Weapons

- Threats to take children if Mom leaves
- Enlisting children to monitor Mom
- Being abusive to children to punish Mom's failure to comply
- Destroying children's belongings to punish Mom
- Involving children in disputes
- Getting children to take sides
- Threats to report Mom to child protection

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Batterers Use the System to Control

- Report children to child welfare system
- Promote/reinforce victim-blaming theories
- Look good and heap praise on practitioners
- Preemptive use of civil protection orders or mutual restraining orders
- Pretense of devoted father

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The Role of the Educator

- Be authentic
- Promote dialogue without collusion
- Connect ideas to daily life
- Challenge without shaming
- Pose questions (genuine inquiry)
- Explore contradictions (nature or culture)
- Encourage reflective thinking

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Closed/Open Environments

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Banking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teacher has all information ■ Students are empty vessels ■ Teacher talks ■ Students absorb information | <p>Liberating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides framework for creative thinking ■ Raises questions: why, how, who? ■ Participants are active: describing, analyzing, planning |
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Dialogue with Men in Class

DO

- Listen carefully and clarify
- Gently keep men focused on their own behavior and beliefs
- Keep women's experiences present in the room
- Keep linking discussions and themes to other men's, women's and children's experiences
- Encourage discussion to explore new ideas together
- Leave some things unanswered
- Acknowledge your own struggles

DON'T

- Make assumptions about what the man is saying
- Lead men into 'idea traps'
- Allow slogans to replace real ideas
- Assume you know what's best for them
- Assume you understand their lives
- Make proclamations all the time
- Spend more time lecturing than questioning and discussing

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Questions about the process

Did the facilitator:

- Pose questions—deepen understanding about his beliefs?
- Listen?
- Make the connections between feelings and beliefs?
- Challenge in a respectful manner?
- Lead the discussion to "set" answers?
- Collude?

What other strategies can the observer suggest?

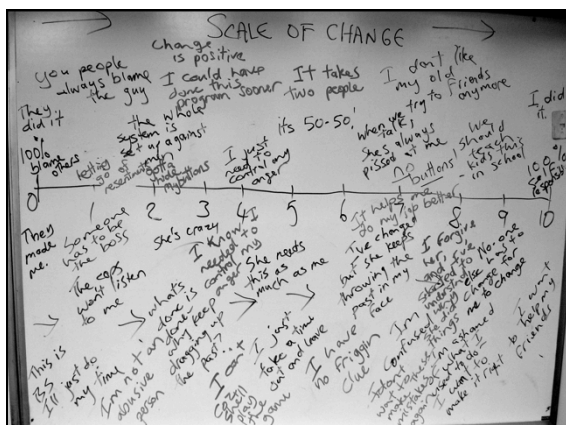
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Education is Never Neutral

Challenge men who batter by inquiring about:

- His beliefs about women, men, children and relationships
- How the culture influences his thinking about entitlement
- How his feelings are tied to his beliefs
- Why he views himself as a victim of his partner
- How he could have responded without being violent or abusive

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Public Policy Questions

- How do BIPs manage financially while balancing service provision with social change work?
- How do we justify the costs of implementing comprehensive batterer assessments and treatment?
- How are BIPs putting victims at risk by the treatment models they use?
- How do BIPs improve their accountability to victims, battered women's programs, the criminal justice system, and offenders?
- How can state standards better support accountability and effectiveness?

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BIP role within a CCR

1. Safety and autonomy of victims takes precedence over offender's change
2. Appropriate information sharing among CCR partners improves accountability (and effectiveness)
3. BIP program is as transparent as possible - CCR partner practitioners can observe classes, review the curriculum
4. Program focuses on identifying belief systems of entitlement and their effects; offers practical change process

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Resources

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Battered Women's Justice Project
(800) 903 0111 www.bwip.org

Praxis International
www.praxisinternational.org

Minnesota Center Against
Violence and Abuse
www.mincava.umn.edu

Resource Center on Child
Protection and Custody
(800) 527 3223

Domestic Abuse Intervention
Project
www.theduluthmodel.org

Mending the Sacred Hoop
www.msh-ta.org

Sacred Circle
www.sacred-circle.com

Office on Violence Against
Women
www.usdoj.gov/ovw

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