

Coordinated Community Action Model



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INSTITUTE OF MICHIGAN

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Who responded to the first draft?

We sent out over 450 letters soliciting feedback on our original wheel. We received responses from approximately 115 people. The respondents included batterer intervention specialists, judges, state coalitions against domestic violence, family therapists, public health workers, centers for nonviolence, mental health workers, battered women, battered women's service agencies, researchers, police, sheriffs deputies, battered women's advocates, nurses, mayors, social activists, feminists, drug and alcohol treatment therapists, family service staff, university professors, probation officers, high school teachers, photographers, ministers, attorneys, prosecutors, state attorney generals, family study centers, batterers, legal aid workers, social workers, psychologists, men's nonviolence centers, police trainers, authors, sociologists, sexual assault prevention and intervention center staff, physicians, expert witnesses and battered women's legal defense organizations.

Breakdown of responses:

Reviewers had the fewest comments regarding what employers should be doing, and the most for the justice system. The breakdown of comments is as follows (although "women" and "health care" were not on the original wheel, we received comments about them): Justice System=49, Education=47, Men=40, Government=36, Social Service Providers=32, Clergy=26, Media=25, Employers=24, Women=23, Health Care=16.

Concerns voiced by reviewers of the first draft:

Feedback was mostly in agreement with our ideas, but there was concern that the original wheel was unclear, inconsistent and not understandable. There was also feedback that the wheel was "sexist" (meaning men-hating), contained "politically charged" terminology, "individualized" the issue of battering inaccurately, only addressed men's violence against women, was not "practical," was not framed in a manner which said what people can do, instead of what they shouldn't do, did not address cultural diversity, "was a poor illustration of this concept," did not "appear to represent the complexity of system reform and community organizing behind accountability," "contained all kinds of buzzwords or just vague enough formulations to keep women hanging, hoping and battered for another 20 years," did not include many institutions in the community, and illustrated the invisibility of lesbian and gay battering by not mentioning it.

Below are additional idea's for each system to consider.

MEDICAL SYSTEM:

1. Routinely screen for family violence at annual visits of women and children.
2. Establish guidelines for care regarding family violence within hospitals, clinics and offices.

JUSTICE SYSTEM:

1. Insert questions on domestic violence into bar exams.
2. Commute sentences of battered women who kill in self-defense.
3. Provide mandatory intervention for incarcerated batterers in jails and prisons, with accountable aftercare conditions upon parole/probation.
4. Make battery and rape criminal, as well as civil, violations of civil rights laws.
5. Enforce custody orders/injunction violations, etc.

6. Hold itself accountable by publishing statistics on numbers of domestic violence incidents such as # of arrests made, # of cases made, # of cases successfully prosecuted, # of cases resulting in incarceration, treatment, fines, and community service.
7. Hold attorneys ethically bound to refrain from persuading battered women not to prosecute.
8. Enforce all laws related to protecting battered women and children, and holding batterers accountable for their behavior.
9. Acknowledge the role of judges as the controlling power in the justice system and hold the judges accountable for their systems.
10. Refer batterers to long-term batterer intervention services. One year intervention programs seem to be the appropriate term.
11. Adopt a policy of mandatory arrest when probable cause exists that an act of domestic violence has taken place.
12. Charge and prosecute batterers in a manner that does not rely on the victim signing a criminal complaint.
13. Impose conditions on bond designed to promote the safety of the victim.
14. Refer batterers to specialized intervention programs.
15. Provide easy access to legal recourse for victims when a violation of a conditional bond takes place.
16. Send an offender to jail when he repeats, fails to complete intervention, or violates a conditional bond.
17. Investigate domestic violence cases as if victims will not cooperate.
18. Protect victims and their children, including with custody and supervised visitation orders.
19. Provide the mechanisms to legally retain batterers in intervention programs.
20. Develop and enforce accountability/ethics actions when victims rights are violated by the system.
21. Ensure gender fairness in courts.
22. (Civil justice system) Accountably place restrictions on child custody awards to batterers, and understand the need for supervised visitation.
23. Increase the number of hours of domestic violence intervention training received by police.
24. Allow testimony of prior history of assaults in court proceedings.
25. Require training on domestic violence for judges, attorneys, probation officers and court clerks.
26. Root out gender and racial bias toward women, African American attorneys, and battered women.

GOVERNMENT:

1. Pass laws which vigorously and progressively punish all forms of men's violence (sexual harassment, etc.).
2. Pass laws which define battering as criminal behavior without exception.
3. Create mechanisms for speedy responses to violations of injunctions or court orders.
4. Monitor and enforce accountability to their own laws.

EMPLOYERS :

1. Hold women's jobs for them even though being stalked may make them less productive.
2. Clarify the need to support women who are being battered and stalked on the job.

3. Prevent punitive action against, and protect the right to work of, survivors who are stalked in the workplace (that is, women get threatened with disciplinary action when their batterers phone/assault them/enter the workplace).
4. Negotiate flexible hours and leave for battered women in crisis.
5. Develop accountable employee assistance programs for batterers they employ.
6. Develop policies and protocol to assist battered women who are employed and hold batterers accountable when they are employed.
7. Train supervisors to recognize signs of battered women in their employ.

SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS:

1. Create accountable standards for batterer intervention services.
2. Not participate in conducting couples/marriage counseling in domestic violence cases.
3. Ask questions on violence between intimate partners as a regular part of interviewing/intake.

EDUCATION SYSTEM:

1. Provide mandatory classes on conflict resolution and communication in elementary and secondary school (at appropriate developmental stages).
2. Create curriculum to address violence in homes and sex role stereotypes.
3. Provide students with a means to critically analyze battering within the context of our male dominated society, thus promoting future research, activism, and education about the issues of violence against women.
4. Redesign curriculum to include antisexist/nonsexist subject matter, information about gender roles/oppression/etc., and health and sex education.
5. Educate teachers, staff, and administrators in order to facilitate their delivery of information to students about what domestic violence is (it is not O.K. for dad to rip the wires out of mom's car) and when clearly defined, that domestic violence is a crime!!
6. Develop policies within the environment of the school which reinforce that battering is not tolerated and "young" batterers will encounter consequences on a school level regardless of whatever steps are taken, or not taken, through the legal system. These policies would keep in mind the priority of ultimately protecting the victim and to not re-victimize her in any way.
7. Educate students about dating violence and date rape.
8. Require teachers and professors to receive training on recognizing the signs of domestic violence in students.

MEN :

1. Stop controlling women.
2. Make peace, justice, dignity and equality virtues shared by men.
3. Be willing to learn from women about what constitutes abusive and disrespectful behavior.
4. Cease the practice of accepting male privilege in all its forms.
5. Train their sons that being gentle, refraining from fighting and sharing equally in domestic chores is masculine.
6. Tithes to battered women's shelters and rape crisis centers.
7. Stop violence period.
8. Vigorously confront misogynist (women hating) behavior, including jokes and language.
9. Support, financially and otherwise, the battered women's movement.
10. Seek out, accept and support women's leadership.

11. Not “take over” the systems which respond to battered women’s needs.
12. Acknowledge gender bias in the world.
13. Refrain from corporal punishment of children.
14. Encourage their daughters toward nontraditional careers and roles.
15. Play sports with their daughters, not just their sons.
16. Confront their gender bias toward their children.
17. Refuse to laugh at sexist jokes.

WOMEN:

Many people noted the lack of sections on the first draft for “women”. We purposely left a section for women off the original wheel for numerous reasons, including our concern that we would be colluding with our community’s desire to blame women for their victimization.

1. Support, not blame, other women in abusive situations.
2. Confront women who blame or victimize domestic violence victims.
3. Acknowledge the vital role women play in supporting each other’s safety and empowerment, and back each other.
4. Band together to support each other from acceptance of victimization.
5. Do for themselves by creating their own rituals which indicate they won’t tolerate abuse.
6. Speak out against violence; educate, not victim, blame. Women play a critical role in the process.
7. Emotionally support other women; get involved in domestic violence prevention; remain encouraging and acknowledging of battered women’s needs.
8. Have a part in ending their own victimization.
9. Acknowledge that all women suffer from male violence, not just the obvious victims.
10. Assist in providing safety and support to victims of violence.

Many ideas we received related to all the sections on the wheel. Below are those ideas.

DYNAMICS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1. Educate about the power and control issues involved in all domestic violence, not just the physical violence.
2. Dispel the myths regarding cultural diversity as causes of and/or the myth of cultural validation for intimate violence.
3. Educate systems about the causes and dynamics of domestic violence.
4. Receive mandatory education in basic curricula regarding family violence.
5. Stop blaming domestic violence on myths such as mental illness and “provocation” - it is a conscious choice.
6. Educate on issues of women’s self-defense, and The Battered Woman Syndrome.
7. Be alert to whether an apparent perpetrator (meaning victim) was acting in self-defense.
8. Do not discriminate against women, that is, falsely accuse them when they were defending themselves.

PROVISION OF SERVICES

1. Provide a safe environment for women to discuss their experiences.
2. Acknowledge that agency structure must change, not just workers.
3. Serve as a domestic violence advocate through the legal and community service system.
4. Fund women's shelter programs, transitional housing, child care programs, preventive education in schools, etc.
5. Fund supervised visitation centers in every county, insuring adequate training of everyone involved.
6. Provide services to inform and support survivors through all social systems.
7. Develop and implement prevention programs for children who are or have lived in violent homes.
8. Provide adequate services to domestic violence victims of all ethnic backgrounds.

RESOURCES FOR WOMEN

1. Devote resources and efforts to seek out victims and make them aware of resources.
2. Provide education and assistance to victims of domestic violence regarding resources to help them now.
3. Pass the Equal Rights Amendment.
4. Adopt policies of equal pay for equal and comparable worth.
5. Enhance data collection systems on domestic violence.
6. Provide women equal pay and child care so they are not so economically vulnerable.
7. Develop statistical research models which produce realistic state-by-state and national statistics on the incidence of domestic violence.

COORDINATED COMMUNITY ACTION

1. Be knowledgeable and utilize local referral resources for the victims and perpetrators of abuse.
2. Emphasize coordination of services -- providers need to work together.
3. Provide mechanisms to coordinate between departments and systems to hold batterers accountable.
4. Implement local and state interagency councils.
5. Maintain contact and support with local domestic violence programs.

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Document abusive episodes in records to promote prosecution.
2. Acknowledge and include the participation and leadership of battered and formerly battered women in all policy-making, training and boards.
3. Require licensing boards to require domestic violence training for license renewal for providers (including clergy, psychologists, attorneys, social workers, etc.).
4. Name violence between an intimate couple as domestic violence and refrain from diminishing the violence with euphemisms such as "lover's quarrel, spat or crime of passion"
5. Require social workers and domestic violence advocates to receive training on domestic violence, including questions on licensing exams.
6. Stop blaming and punishing the survivor by taking her children away, making her responsible for 100% of the child care responsibility and saying she is responsible for the abuse the children are suffering.
7. Speak out publicly against battering.

8. The United Nations will pass a worldwide resolution banning domestic violence.
9. Do not aid and abet batterers by applying additional burdens on battered women.
10. Do not allow batterers to harass victims, including by telephone.
11. Have domestic violence protocols that support and not penalize victims for using courts, domestic violence advocacy and services.
12. Provide prompt consequences to batterers.
13. Hold batterers directly accountable, for example, do not provide for them a character witness when they go to court. Also, refer them immediately to a batterer's intervention service.
14. Challenge institutional sexism within all social systems.
15. Hold violent men accountable for their actions.
16. Have procedures for holding batterers accountable among the clergy and congregations.
17. Do not encourage women to remain in abusive situations.
18. Vigorously confront misogynist (woman hating) behavior including jokes and language.
19. Call police on batterers whenever possible, and follow through with charges against them.
20. Gently remind possible victims that their safety is important to us and how they can seek help.

TEACH

1. Promote egalitarian models of sex roles in intimate relationships since the stopping of violence is accompanied by the honoring of equality and the dissolving of patriarchal ideas about men and women.
2. Cease racist reporting of violence that characterizes African-Americans as disproportionately violent.
3. Understand the link between battering and child abuse.
4. Recognize that child abuse is the best indicator of woman abuse, and provide services for mothers when they try to protect children.
5. Eliminate mother blaming.
6. Acknowledge that sexual harassment and domestic violence are closely related.
7. Understand how serious a crime domestic violence is. For example, The National Crime Survey indicates that 50% of all "domestic assaults" are more injurious than felonious assaults on strangers.
8. Acknowledge that all women suffer from male violence, not just the obvious victims.
9. Accept self-defense as a necessity when battered women kill their assailants.
10. Learn how children in domestic violence families will show signs that may mimic learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder.
11. Questions about domestic violence in the home should be asked of children.
12. Teach violence prevention, conflict resolution and communication skills.
13. Teach girls/women self-defense skills, including martial arts and the use of weapons.
14. Educate people to recognize, understand, and appropriately intervene in domestic violence.
15. Support counseling services for children who have lived in violent homes.
16. Recognize that symptoms children exhibit as a result of witnessing domestic violence often interfere with their learning abilities.
17. Teach peace and equality as important values.
18. Give up submission and obedience demands on women.
19. Refrain from corporal punishment of children.

20. Encourage girls toward nontraditional careers and roles.
21. Make “strong, capable and assertive” feminine virtues.

Our sincere thanks to these reviewers:

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