

Batterer Programming & Standards: A Connecticut Perspective



CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence

18 member agencies provide services to **57,785*** victims of domestic violence:

- 24/7 Hotline
- Emergency shelter
- Court advocacy
- Children and youth services
- Information and referral

* 2012 figures

- ❑ Currently 1/3 of all criminal court cases are domestic violence offenses
- ❑ In 2012 CCADV's 52 FVVAs directly assisted 42,923 domestic violence victims referred by the courts

Restraining & Protection Order Numbers in Connecticut

Year	Applications	ExParte	Civil Restraining	Criminal Protection
2012	8,937	5,328	3,234	30,398
		= 59% applications	= 36% applications	
2011	8,862	4,975	3,024	31,770
		= 56% applications	= 34% applications	
2010	9,112	5,094	2,809	31,349
		= 55% applications	= 30% applications	

Source: Judicial Branch, Court Operations Division

Domestic Violence Fatalities in CT

2012	11 deaths
2011	15 deaths
2010	18 deaths
2009	12 deaths
2008	13 deaths

* In 2013 CCADV will initiate near-death IPV case reviews.

Batterer Programming in CT

Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch funds three program options for domestic violence offenders:

- Family Violence Education Program
- Explore Program
- Evolve Program

See attached chart for details

Batterer Intervention Programming

Unknown numbers of providers and agencies outside of CSSD funding stream are engaging in individual counseling and group work with domestic violence offenders in Connecticut

Batterer Intervention Programming

- According to research by Michigan Batterer Intervention Service Coalition, 44 states have program standards
- Connecticut is listed as not having standards in comparison to other states
- CSSD maintains standards for batterer programs through the RFP/contract process

Batterer Intervention Programming

70% of states with standards have a legislative mandate to support & enforce their standards

Common Elements of State Standards

- Ethical Code
- Independent Monitoring
- Curriculum Prohibitions
- Exclusion and Dismissal Conditions and Procedures
- Victim Accountability Strategies
- Lethality assessment/reassessment throughout program participation

Certification of Providers

By agency or individual professional

- Qualifications, licensure, and continuing educational requirements
- Service standards and code of ethics
- Conditions and terms for/against victim contact
- Complaint procedures

Certification of Providers

Agencies commonly assigned responsibility in states with standards:

DHS/DSS/DPH/DCF: 9 states

DOC/Probation: 9 states

DV Coalition/Council: 8 states

Offender Entity: 6 states

CSSD Guidelines

As set by the RFP funding FVEP, Explore and Evolve:

- Class Details: size, location, security
- Class Policies: absences, termination, completion requirements
- Agencies: staffing, training, reporting
- Facilitators: expertise, degrees, cultural competence

CSSD Successes

- Programs performing at or above the majority of their risk reduction indicators
- Strong program completion rates
- Clinical oversight and training provided for facilitators
- Collaborations between probation and family relations officers support offender accountability

CT Challenges

For program providers operating outside CSSD funding stream, questions about:

- Approach(es)
- Accountability
- Content
- Policies
- Oversight
- Data/Outcomes

CT Challenges

Misuse/Misunderstanding of Batterer Programs result in defendants being:

- returned to programs after failure to comply
- ordered to attend class previously completed
- granted FVEP on multiple files
- deemed eligible for programs through the dismissal or substitution of charges

CT Challenges

- A lack of clear standards disadvantages judges and probation officers when dealing with offenders and attempting to hold them accountable.
- Providers should be engaged with local victim service agencies and advocates as part of victim accountability measures.

Key Strategies

- Allow outside independent monitoring of programs
- Establish uniform FVEP and Explore curricula across state
- Certify programs/facilitators
- Incorporate victim/victim advocate input

CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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