ICCR Newsletter

September 2020

WHAT IS THE BEST PRACTICE ASSESSMENT?

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

IN THE NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS

WHAT IS THE BEST PRACTICE ASSESSMENT?

The 2020 ICCR training year began in May, and since that time, teams have been taking a deep dive into their community's systemic response to domestic violence by working through the Best Practice Assessment (BPA). What is the BPA, and why is it an integral piece of the ICCR curriculum?

> For the past forty years, communities across the country have been defining and implementing reforms in the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence. Initiated by the "battered women's movement" in the 1970s, attention to intimate partner violence has become commonplace among law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and many more stakeholders that intersect with the criminal justice system.
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> **The landscape of community response looks very different in 2020 than it did in 1980. Today, there is a standard expectation of coordination and collaboration.** Working relationships between advocates and law enforcement are considered the norm in many communities. Key intervening agencies often have written policies and protocols in place, some mandated by state legislatures. Since 1995, the Violence Against Women Act has provided grants that support a wide range of activities that emphasize "a coordinated community response from advocacy organizations in partnership with the criminal justice system [as] critical to reducing violent crimes of violence against women and enhancing victim safety and offender accountability."[1]
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> Many communities can now look back on a coordinated community response (CCR) that spans thirty years or more. Still others are relatively new to the linkages, communication, relationships, and policy and practice changes that characterize a CCR. **Regardless of where a community sits on this continuum, the ever-present questions are: How are we doing? Are we making things better or worse? Are we centralizing and strengthening safety for victims? Do our efforts enhance or diminish offender accountability? What about the accountability of community agencies and systems for their response? What is the best approach to...?**
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> Excerpted and adapted with permission from Praxis International's *Planning and Conducting a Best Practice Assessment of Community Response to Domestic Violence.*

The Domestic Violence Best Practice Assessment Guides were designed by Praxis International to assist CCRs in answering such questions at specific points in the criminal legal system response to domestic violence and sexual assaults. Using checklists of core best practices, this relatively quick review of systemic responses to domestic violence involves a narrow scope, small number of participants, limited data collection, and some direct consultation with victims of abuse.

The BPA serves as the backbone of the ICCR curriculum and sets this program apart from other, less extensive training programs. This process encourages each team to build upon their community's own unique strengths, rather than employing a "one size fits all" approach, to ensure that the resulting CCR is the best approach for each individual community.

In upcoming issues, we will dive deeper into each step of the BPA process:

- **Step 1** – Organize and Prepare
- **Step 2** – Mapping
- **Step 3** – Review Case Records and Policies
- **Step 4** – Conduct Survivor Focus Groups
- **Step 5** – Develop Findings and Recommend Changes
- **Step 6** – Write the BPA Report

[1] Program Overview, Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program, Office on Violence Against Women, https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/922506/download

OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

DID YOU KNOW?

- **96% of murder-suicide victims are female [1]**
- **Over 43 million women and 38 million men have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime [2]**
- **1 in 2 female murder victims and 1 in 13 male murder victims are killed by an intimate partner [3]**
- **About 71% of female intimate partner victims are victimized before age 25 [4]**

[1] www.vacadv.org
[2] www.ncadv.org
[3] www.ncadv.org
[4] www.rcjp.gov

Resources

Click on the icons to learn more!

- Texas Council on Family Violence
- Databases of Women & Girls Lost to Femicide
- National Domestic Violence Hotline Resources

FELLOWS! Click here to access ICCR Link for more resources on domestic violence.

IN THE NEWS

$18 Million in domestic violence funding from DOJ's office on violence against women

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) will direct over $18 million in grant funding to Texas in order to curb domestic violence throughout the state by enhancing criminal justice response work. 1 in 3 Texas women are affected by intimate partner violence, and Texas accounts for 10% of the nation's DV homicides. The OVW funding will support law enforcement, prosecutors, and advocacy agencies working to end domestic violence.

Read more here

Shooting of Megan Thee Stallion shows how Black women see lack of sympathy as victims of violence

This article discusses the reaction to the shooting of rapper Megan Thee Stallion last month and what it says about how Black women suffer from gender-based violence. The majority of the reactions blamed Megan Thee Stallion for contributing to her own victimization, rather than asking what aspects of our culture contribute to this continual victimization of Black women.

Read more here

Femicide: A pandemic

Maria MacMullin, host of the Podcast on Crimes Against Women, sheds light on a different kind of global pandemic: femicide. While the COVID-19 pandemic is highly dangerous and lethal, femicide often receives little attention in the news, but is responsible for countless deaths each year.

Read more here

SAVE THE DATE

Webinar: Courageous Conversations, Pt. 2: From Trauma to Healing: Finding Common Ground

REGISTER

And learn more about this event!

Presented by Gretta Gardner, Tom Tremblay, & Carolyn West, **October 8th, 10:00 AM-11:30 AM**

"RESTRICTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT" This facilitated conversation, building on the discussion begun in "Courageous Conversations, Pt. 1 - Improving Our Response to the Black Community," will explore the parallels between how trauma shows up in the culture of policing and Black lived experiences. The presenters will discuss the nuances of compound, complex trauma and create common ground on how trauma impacts help seeking, service provision, and resiliency/pathways to healing for both law enforcement and Black survivors. Attendees will be encouraged to actively participate in the discussion and brainstorm with each other to answer the question, "How can we use this information to better our response to survivors in the Black community?"

Virtual Training: Abusive Minds Think Alike

REGISTER

And learn more about this event!

Presented by Lorraine Paschall, Kelly Slaven, & Cary Foreman, **October 29, 10:30 AM-12:00 PM (Pt. 1); 1:00 PM-2:30 PM (Pt. 2)**

Pt. 1: Understanding the Intersections of Intimate Partner & Child Abuse

As professionals responding to intimate partner and/or child abuse, we know that where there is one form of abuse, there may likely be others. Because of this, it is imperative that we recognize the characteristics of the many different crimes and offenders we are investigating, as they often reside in the same home and, often, are the same person. This webinar will discuss some very basic dynamics of child sexual abuse and will correlate the similarities in characteristics of the crime, characteristics of the offender, disclosure process and patterns, victim grooming, recantation, and compliant victim characteristics to those that also exist in intimate partner violence. Attendees will be able to identify multiple similarities between these two types of offenders.

Pt. 2: Working with Children When Responding to Intimate Partner Violence

The story a child tells is often the most critical piece of evidence in a child abuse case. The same is true for children who witness intimate partner violence (IPV). Often, information is not gathered from children during IPV calls because they were either not injured when the IPV occurred or were in another room and allegedly didn't see the incident. Yet, the information that the children witnessed and experienced in the home can ask to gather important information immediately, as well as when to refer children to be forensically interviewed at a Child Advocacy Center (CAC). Using two different case studies with video interview clips, this webinar will demonstrate the power in a child's words and how the complex trauma of intimate partner violence in their home can affect their ability to disclose their own abuse.

Up to 3 hours of accreditation available for LPC, LMFT, Social Work, & TCOLE!

Webinar: Protective Orders in Texas: The Basics & Beyond

REGISTER

And learn more about this event!

Presented by Kim Pischowski, **November 12th, 2:00 PM-3:30 PM**

It is often said that a protective order (PO) is just a "piece of paper." However, effective use of this document is often the key to enhancing investigation, prosecution, and accountability of family violence and other offenders, while also enhancing safety for survivors, their families, law enforcement, and the community at large.

Beginning with the basics, including types of POs available in Texas and how they intersect with civil and criminal law, the presenter will then take a deep dive into tips for effective investigation and documentation when assisting survivors with PO decisions, as well as best practices and pitfalls surrounding state and federal enforcement of firearm prohibitions. The webinar will end with a discussion of the Office of Court Administration's newly-created Protective Order Registery, which can assist criminal justice personnel in preventing the escalation of violence; conducting more thorough investigations; pursuing successful prosecutions; providing more effective safety planning for survivors and their families; and holding more offenders accountable for their crimes.

Apply today for the 2021 ICCR Cohort!

APPLY

And learn more about ICCR!

Applications close in November 2020

Teams of three—made up of a prosecutor, law enforcement officer, and advocate—from rural, under-resourced counties in Texas are encouraged to apply. **Because we are targeting specific geographic clusters in Texas, we encourage you to apply EARLY!**

LINK LEADERBOARD

Congratulations to **Matthew Minick** for being the most active fellow on ICCR Link this month!

Your Amazon gift card will be emailed to you shortly!

1 Matthew Minick

2 Thomas Moore

3 Mariana Garcia

ICCR Link

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