

Batterers Intervention: Nuts & Bolts

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The NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence



We are a statewide membership organization serving close to 90 domestic violence centers and all 100 counties of NC.

Mission: NCCADV leads the state's movement to end domestic violence and to enhance work with survivors through collaborations, innovative trainings, prevention, technical assistance, state policy development, and legal advocacy.

4 branches:

TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE

TRAINING

PROGRAMS

PUBLIC
POLICY

What is Batterers Intervention?

- Batterers Intervention Programs (BIPs), also known as Abuser Treatment Programs (ATPs), are psycho-educational programs designed to re-educate domestic violence offenders on their behavior and help them to develop new healthy non-violent methods of interacting with intimate partners.



Certification Process

- To receive court referrals, BIPs must be certified by the NC Dept. of Administration Council for Women.
- Programs must submit an application which demonstrates that their policies and procedures adhere to the program rules including three letters of support from the community, one of which must be from the local victim service agency
- After initial approval, programs must be reviewed annually

Methodology

- All certified programs must include:
 - Comprehensive intake & assessment process
 - Lethality assessment at intake and ongoing
 - Good faith effort to contact the victim at intake, halfway through the program, and at client termination
 - Strict confidentiality requirements both re: client and any contact with victim
 - Program structure and curriculum requirements
 - Reporting requirements for court-ordered clients

Certified Program Structure

- Group sessions
 - unless same gender, age, geographic or language restrictions apply
- Each group shall have at least two facilitators per session if the size of the group exceeds eight participants.
 - Best practice is one female and one male co-facilitator
- Max of 16 participants per group.
- Same-gender groups

Certified Program Structure

- Program Length:
 - Mandatory minimum of 39 hours of group treatment over a minimum period of 26 weeks.
 - The 39 hours of group treatment shall be completed within 30 weeks.
 - Each group session shall last at least 90 minutes
 - Translation: Program participants cannot have more than 4 absences or they will be terminated unsuccessfully.

Certified Program Curriculum Requirements

- (1) identification of all forms of physical, emotional, economic, sexual and verbal abuse and violence;
- (2) impact of domestic violence on the victim and the abuser;
- (3) impact of domestic violence on children including children who are abused and children who witness domestic violence;
- (4) emphasis on the responsibility of the batterer for his or her violence and abuse;
- (5) identification of the personal, societal, and cultural values and beliefs that legitimize and sustain violence and oppression;

Certified Program Curriculum Requirements

- (6) alternatives to violence and controlling behaviors;
- (7) identification of healthy relationships;
- (8) promotion of accountability, self-examination, negotiation, and fairness;
- (9) the relationship between substance abuse and domestic violence;
- (10) the relationship between mental illness and domestic violence; and
- (11) identification of the behavioral, emotional, and physical cues that precede escalating violence

Certified Program Curriculum Requirements

- The following methods shall not be used by abuser treatment programs:
 - (1) couples therapy or counseling;
 - (2) any therapy or counseling which places the responsibility for adult behavior on the children or the victim;
 - (3) any theoretical approaches that treat the violence as a mutual process; and
 - (4) any counseling models that identify the violence as an addiction and the children or adult victim as enabling or codependent.

Certified Program Curriculum Requirements

- The following methods shall not be the primary focus of intervention:
 - (1) techniques that lay primary causality on anger;
 - (2) theories or techniques that identify poor impulse control as the primary cause of the violence;
 - (3) methods that identify psychopathology on either parties' part as a primary cause of violence;
 - (4) interventions that base causation on a lack of communication skills; or
 - (5) the gradual containment or de-escalation of violence

Common Models

- Duluth Model
- Emerge Model

Non-Discrimination Requirement

- No approved abuser treatment program shall deny services to any participant or its providers because of age, race, sex, creed, color, national origin, or disabling condition

Costs of Certified Programs

- Costs: Programs can establish locally-determined fees
- Typical fees:
 - Enrollment apx. \$50-75 intake fee
 - Class fee: \$10-\$25/week

Anger Management

- Intervention is generally short term (2-16 hours)
- Problem viewed as “loss of control”
- Primary focus on managing the emotion rather than going deeper to belief systems and behavior
- Viewed as personal mental health issue rather than in context of societal/social issue
- Generally no specific victim identified
 - No victim outreach
 - No victim-empathy building

Batterers Intervention vs. Anger Management

BATTERERS INTERVENTION

- Violence is result of power & control
- Abuser is solely accountable
- Programs certified by CFW
- Programs victim-centered, focusing on victim safety
- Must meet stringent confidentiality requirements
- Reporting requirements under N.C.G.S. 15A-1343

ANGER MANAGEMENT

- Violence is result of impulse control
- Blame placed on others/situation/stress/poor communication
- Programs not certified
- Programs client-centered, not prioritizing victim safety
- No confidentiality requirements since not certified
- No reporting requirements for compliance

Measuring Success

- Success as defined by “reduced recidivism”
 - Ehhh.... Questionable at best
 - The more rigorous the methodology of evaluation studies, the less encouraging their findings.
- Success defined other ways
 - Victim empowerment
 - Holding offenders accountable
 - Anecdotal success cases
 - “Best we have” community intervention for now

When should BIP be ordered?

- Every case where the court finds the Defendant responsible for acts of Domestic Violence unless:
 - 1) There is not a certified program reasonably available or
 - Check at: <http://www.doa.nc.gov/cfw/Dprogramslist.aspx>
 - 2) Court finds it would not be in the best interest of justice
- Regular Condition of Probation (N.C.G.S. 15A-1343(12)).

When else can BIP be ordered?

- Deferred prosecutions (Conditional discharge)
 - Condition of deferral in DV cases
- Active sentences resulting in DOC time
 - STOP and Change Direction Domestic Violence Education and Treatment Program
 - 2014 WRAL Article (<http://www.wral.com/prison-s-domestic-violence-course-the-only-one-of-its-kind-in-nc/14035578/>)

Who should be ordered?

- Most effective for first-time offenders
 - More likely to be receptive to re-education and changing behaviors than repeat and serious offenders

Resources



- NC Council for Women BIP page:
 - <https://ncadmin.nc.gov/advocacy/women/abuser-treatment-program>
- NC Council for Women BIP Interactive Directory:
 - <http://www.doa.nc.gov/cfw/Dprogramslist.aspx>
- NC Providers of Abuser Treatment (NCPAT):
 - <http://www.ncpat.net/links.html>
- BISCMI (lists many resources related to BIP):
 - http://www.biscmi.org/other_resources/state_standards.html

Questions?

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