

Honoring their
Lives,

Learning from their
Deaths:

*Findings and
Recommendations from
The Washington State
Domestic Violence Fatality Review
December 2000*

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Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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Against Domestic Violence gratefully
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**Dedicated to the
battered women,
their children, friends,
and family members
who have lost their lives
to domestic violence
and
to the battered women
who struggle to
stay alive every day.**

In This Report

Executive Summary

A summary of the highest priority recommendations.

Overview

An overview of the problem of domestic violence homicide, which describes the Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review, and discusses the data which underlie the findings and recommendations.

Findings and Recommendations

The findings and recommendations are primarily based on the 30 in-depth domestic violence fatality reviews conducted in the past three years in eight Washington counties. Here you will find subsections separated by both issue area and discipline. Some issue areas (the frequency of homicide-suicide, the role of poverty, issues of access and bias, the treatment marginalized women received, guns) were so important they merited focused discussion. Following these sections are several discipline-focused sections: health care and the criminal justice system. These sections focus in on particular aspects of the community intervention in domestic violence.

A note about language used in this report. With one exception, all the individuals who committed homicides in the cases reviewed by the fatality review panels were male. This reflected the fact that most domestic violence homicides are committed by males against their female intimate partners.¹ Also with one exception, all the domestic violence victims in the cases reviewed were female. One case involved a gay man killing his male partner. Thus, we will generally refer to murderers and abusers with male pronouns, and victims with female pronouns.

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While the woman who spoke these words was referring to the “disappeared” in Argentina, her words ring universally true. We say the names of those who were killed in order to draw attention to the institutional and systemic problems which allowed their deaths. This report names and tells the stories of battered woman, their children and family members who died as a result of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Fatality Review honors their lives by ensuring that they are not forgotten and by ensuring we have learned from their deaths.

Throughout this report, you will find the names of the victims of domestic violence homicides. Each name represents a complex story of suffering and abuse, attempts to get help, interactions with friends and family, and contacts with various institutions and organizations. We tell these stories and make recommendations so that a different story may be told in the future. By identifying the factors that allowed their death, we hope that each year will bring fewer and fewer deaths to be remembered.

Below are brief stories about just four of the domestic violence fatalities which have occurred in Washington State since 1997. What cannot easily be conveyed here or in the rest of the report is the pain and fear domestic violence victims suffered prior to these deaths, or the mourning and loss their families and communities felt after the murders. This report is based on over 100 stories like these four. Each is unique in its details, but all share the common element of intimate partner violence.

Sarah became involved with Robert when she was about 19, and they had a son a year later. After three years, she decided to leave the relationship. Over time, she filed two Protection Orders against Robert, and sought support from the local domestic violence program. One day, while she spoke with domestic violence advocates at a community center, Robert arrived there, looking for her. While Sarah hid, terrified, the police were called. They discovered that Robert had a gun in his car. Sarah later told a judge that her “life was in danger” and she was “certain that Robert intended to kill me and anyone else who stood in his way that afternoon.” Robert violated Sarah’s Protection Order several times, and was arrested on several occasions, but never spent significant time in jail. Sara had moved in with her twin sister, Charity, and started court proceedings to clarify custody and visitation. Sarah and Charity were busy pursuing school and work and caring for Sarah’s son. On the day of Sarah’s murder, she and Robert had a court date to resolve visitation issues. Early that morning, Robert broke into Sarah and Charity’s home, and shot each of them multiple times. He then left his two-year-old son unsupervised in the house. A neighbor later found the child wandering around outside. Robert disappeared. Three months later, a hiker found his body. He had committed suicide.

*“Where there are
no names, there are
no deaths,
in every country of
the world.”*

LAURA BONAPARTE,
ONE OF THE
MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA
DEL MAYO OF ARGENTINA,
SPEAKING AT THE
COUCHICHIING INSTITUTE
ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS
IN OTTAWA, CANADA,
SEPTEMBER 1995.

Matthew had dated **Kristine** for about a year before she broke up with him. She had been dating Rodney for about a month, during which time Matthew had threatened Kristine with death at least three times because of her new relationship. The morning of the murder, Kristine had obtained a temporary Protection Order against Matthew. Rodney and Kristine were staying with friends and hiding from Matthew. Matthew discovered their location, and, along with an accomplice, forced his way into the house. His accomplice jumped on Rodney and held him down while Matthew shot him in the back at close range, killing him. Matthew then turned the gun on Kristine and pulled the trigger, but the gun did not fire. He and his friend then ran away. Matthew was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to 41 years in prison. He is currently appealing his case.

Gertrudes was a well-liked nursing supervisor at Harborview Medical Center. After enduring an abusive marriage for 27 years, she filed for a divorce and protection order. Her son also filed for a protection order against his father, Victor, citing threats, his possession of a weapon and prior suicide attempts. Victor violated both his son's and Gertrudes' protection orders, and appeared in court on one of the violations just days before killing Gertrudes. On the day he killed her, Victor attacked Gertrudes in the driveway of his home. Witnesses saw him pull her from her car, yelling "Why couldn't you love me?" before shooting her. He then cried out, "My wife! What have I done" and "I'm sorry" and finally, "I want to be with you!" before shooting himself in the chest in an unsuccessful suicide attempt. After her death, friends and family talked about the years of abuse Gertrudes and her children had suffered, and how Victor was obsessed with and stalked Gertrudes. At the sentencing hearing, his 18-year-old son asked that Victor never be let out of jail. Victor pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in order to avoid a possible death sentence, and was sentenced to 31½ years.

Richard had a history of abusive behavior. He had previously been jailed for threatening to kill a girlfriend's family when she broke up with him. The day before the murders, Richard's wife, Londa, had told him she wanted a separation and Richard made an unsuccessful suicide attempt with pills. He had also threatened to make her life a "living hell" if she took the kids away from him. The next day, his wife called the police early in the morning, saying Richard was acting suicidal and brandishing a rifle. He had probably already killed the two youngest children, **Meghan and Zach**, at that point, and possibly intended to kill the rest of his family. Londa escaped through a window along with her two older children from a previous marriage. Police arrived to find Richard armed and standing on his porch. Eventually an officer tackled him. Soon after, the bodies of the children were discovered. After the murder, neighbors commented on how devoted Richard was to his children. Richard pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree aggravated murder in order to avoid the possibility of the death penalty. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

01/05/1997:

**Joylee Middleworth, age 29,
administered fatal overdose
of drugs by husband**

Since 1976, at least 31,260 women were killed by their current or former intimate partners in the United States. Between 30 and 50% of all female homicide victims are killed by their current or former male intimate partners, compared to less than 4% of male homicide victims killed by an intimate partner.² In Washington, the number of female victims of intimate partner homicide have remained fairly steady through the 1990s, with an average of 25 women killed per year between 1990 and 1999. Consistent with national trends, about 30% of female homicide victims in Washington State are killed by their intimate partners. However, it is not just intimate partners that are at risk when domestic violence abusers become homicidal. Between January 1997 and August 2000, 91 women were killed by their current or former male intimate partners. An additional 35 people were killed in domestic violence-related fatalities. These included the children, friends, and family of the abused women. Two law enforcement officers were killed by abusers as they intervened in domestic violence.

The Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review (DVFR) came about because battered women's advocates were concerned that after 25 years of reforms aimed at improving community response to domestic violence, the death toll arising from this social problem has held relatively steady. The Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review's primary goals are to: promote cooperation, communication and collaboration among agencies investigating and intervening in domestic violence; identify patterns in domestic violence-related fatalities; and formulate recommendations regarding the investigation, intervention, and prevention of domestic violence.

The DVFR seeks to accomplish these goals by bringing together key actors in local social service, advocacy, and justice systems for detailed examination of fatalities. Focusing on public records, fatality review panels analyze community resources and responses to prior violence, and generate information relevant to policy debates about domestic violence.

Domestic violence fatality review panels have conducted 30 in-depth reviews of domestic violence fatalities as of December 2000. The Fatality Review has tracked 130 domestic violence-related fatalities from all over the state between January 1997 and August 2000. This report contains findings and recommendations from the 30 in-depth fatality reviews as well as analysis of the data from the 130 cases.

A summary of the most important recommendations follows. Please be aware that the report contains many more recommendations addressing specific gaps and problems identified by the panels.

² US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends or Girlfriends*, by Lawrence A. Greenfield et al., NCJ-167237 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, March 1998).

02/02/1997:

Richard Beckstead, age 31,
shot by his new girlfriend's
estranged husband

Key Themes

Several themes should be noted which influenced almost all of the findings and recommendations.

- 1) We do not know if a model coordinated response to domestic violence could have saved the battered women, or their children, friends, and family from being murdered. We *do* know that none of the victims experienced a model response to domestic violence.
- 2) When battered women and their violent partners *did* come into contact with social service, civil and criminal justice systems, it seemed that attention to victim safety was minimal, inconsistent, or nonexistent.
- 3) Women of color, women who are limited English-speaking, and women who did not conform to idealized notions of "the innocent victim" were less likely to be the recipients of "best practices" as a result of conscious or unintentional biases on the part of the law enforcement officers, medical professionals, and social service providers they encountered.
- 4) Everyone who makes contact with a battered women should remember that domestic violence is potentially lethal, that they may be the one opportunity the battered woman has to get accurate information and support, and act accordingly.

Public Awareness and Prevention

- 1) Schools should implement violence prevention programs which address domestic violence at every grade level.
- 2) Community education must go beyond the message that domestic violence is bad and actually teach community members how to identify abuse, how to talk to victims, and how to report and stay safe.
- 3) Community education should build a community ethic in which each person feels domestic violence is his/her business, and understands the importance of calling the police when witnessing domestic violence.
- 4) Communities of color, immigrant, refugee and limited English-speaking, disabled, and gay/lesbian/queer communities should be supported financially and otherwise in developing targeted and culturally specific community education campaigns regarding domestic violence.

Suicidal Abusers

- 1) Public education should indicate that intimate partner violence combined with suicidal threats indicates increased danger to the suicidal person's family.
- 2) Professionals in all fields should understand that when domestic violence and a history of suicidal behaviors (e.g., prior suicide attempts, communication of intent or desire to kill oneself) co-exist, this dramatically increases the risk of homicidal behavior toward an abuser's intimate partner and her loved ones.

02/08/1997:

Neva Gallatin, shot by her ex-boyfriend

- 3) Professionals should act on their duty to warn the current or former intimate partner of the increased risk of homicide when they come into contact with an individual whose history of suicidal behaviors co-exists with a history of violence.
- 4) Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, court-based advocates, and judges should all understand the increased danger suicidal threats represent and address battered women's safety appropriately.
- 5) Judges should use all the tools at their disposal to ensure the removal of weapons when abusers are suicidal.
- 6) Suicide specialists (on crisis lines, in hospitals, and mental health settings) should receive training on the relationship between suicidal behaviors and homicide risks when domestic violence is present.
- 7) Mental health and batterer's intervention providers need specialized training in appropriate interventions for multi-problem violent suicidal men.
- 8) Domestic violence advocates, suicide and batterer's intervention specialists should work together to create strategies for responding to suicidal batterers, and recommend legislative changes if necessary.
- 9) Everyone, in any context, who notes the concurrence of suicidal behaviors and domestic violence should take the opportunity to educate the battered woman about the significant danger this represents to her, her children, and other family members.
- 10) Advocates should always ask a victim about the abuser's suicidal behaviors. If there is a history of suicidal ideation, they should inform/educate women about the risk of homicide and intensify safety planning.
- 11) Training for CPS workers, judges, and court evaluators should emphasize that when fathers have a history of abusive and controlling behaviors towards the child's mother, combined with a history of suicidal behaviors, children may be in danger.
- 12) Parents with a history of perpetrating domestic violence and suicidal behaviors should not have unsupervised visitation until they have completed a batterer's intervention program which also thoroughly addresses suicidal behaviors, and have fully resolved both suicidal behaviors and controlling impulses.

Economic Barriers, Education, and Poverty

- 1) All programs serving poor women should:
 - make information about local domestic violence programs available
 - train their staff in identifying domestic violence and providing appropriate referrals
- 2) Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) offices and local domestic violence programs should develop cooperative relationships in order to facilitate getting support, information, safety planning, and services to battered women.
- 3) Funding and support for subsidized housing should be expanded.
- 4) Access to higher education should be made more affordable.
- 5) Women making use of TANF should be supported in pursuing

2/14/97:
Eva Lawrence, age 42,
stabbed by her husband

meaningful educational opportunities, including two- and four-year college degrees, as these dramatically improve earning potential.

Marginalized Women

- 1) Domestic violence programs should create stronger linkages with community organizations serving homeless women, substance abusers, women in the sex industry, and public defenders.
- 2) Domestic violence programs should extend advocacy and education efforts into drug treatment programs, jails, and prisons in order to reach marginalized battered women.
- 3) Domestic violence programs should offer help in resolving outstanding warrants, and become familiar with the processes for doing so.
- 4) Courts should move towards cooperation with domestic violence programs in this arena, recognizing that resolving warrants denies abusers a tool and helps battered women make use of the legal system to resist violence.
- 5) In small towns, professionals and service providers must take extra care to ensure that their familiarity with a victim (either as a result of informal contact, rumors, or stories) does not affect providing the best possible advocacy and intervention.

Teens

- 1) Adults need to recognize that teens may make themselves vulnerable to one another in very short periods of time, and can quickly get into abusive relationships.
- 2) People who work with teens in any capacity should receive training regarding teen dating violence and domestic violence, and teen advocacy resources in the community.
- 3) Communities should ensure that schools can function as a “community resource center” for teens, providing them with more of what they need in terms of support, anti-violence education, and social work resources.
- 4) Schools should:
 - find ways to provide meaningful resources to young people encountering domestic violence at home or in an intimate relationship
 - include teen dating violence in any anti-violence curriculum
 - train adults within the school to respond quickly and decisively with teens who are in danger
 - respond to dating violence in ways which do not stigmatize the victim or place the burden of safety solely on her (i.e., allowing the abuser to continue attendance at school and essentially forcing the victim to leave the school)
 - send a message to all students that violence is intolerable and back it up with action and sanctions against violent youth when it occurs

Access to the Social Service and Justice Systems for Limited English Speakers

04/05/1997:

**Meghan and Zach Morgan,
age 7 and 6, shot by their father
after their mother told him she
wanted a divorce**

- 1) Institutions such as law enforcement, hospitals, domestic violence programs, and TANF offices should create collaborative relationships with grassroots organizations based in limited English-speaking communities.
- 2) Mainstream organizations and funders should work in collaboration, provide resources and expertise, and help build leadership and resources within the limited English-speaking community.
- 3) Mainstream organizations (including domestic violence programs) should also work to make their own programs and services relevant and accessible for battered women with limited English skills.
- 4) Mainstream organizations and community members must make issues of access to justice and services for immigrant/refugee and limited English speakers a priority, and push for system accountability in this arena.
- 5) Children should *never* be asked to translate at domestic violence crime scenes.
- 6) Consistent with our state law, law enforcement agencies should conduct investigations of domestic violence crimes with qualified interpreters.
- 7) Medical providers and others screening for domestic violence should remember that even if a person speaks some English, they may feel more comfortable talking about emotional, sexual, or complex issues (like rape, intimidation, threats, barriers to leaving) in their own language.
- 8) All professionals who intervene in domestic violence should vigilantly examine their own attitudes and biases about women who have limited English-speaking ability and/or come from immigrant/refugee communities.
- 9) Bilingual/bicultural advocates should be supported by their workplaces in efforts to network and connect with others doing similar work.

Children's Safety, Domestic Violence, and Child Abuse Investigation

- 1) The DSHS Children's Administration (which encompasses the Division of Children and Family Services) should engage in community partnerships to develop philosophy, policy, and protocols for identifying and responding to domestic violence between adult intimate partners.
- 2) New policies should be backed up with intensive training for DCFS workers to ensure their appropriate implementation.
- 3) Training should involve locally based domestic violence advocates and emphasize the importance of forging links with local resources.

04/08/1997:

Debennie Bernard, age 23,
shot by her ex-boyfriend

Health Care Providers

- 1) All health care providers should always conduct a domestic violence screen with all of their patients, including teens and the elderly.
- 2) Health care providers should examine all their forms and mechanisms for processing information to ensure that they reflect the organization's concern for appropriate intervention in domestic violence.
- 3) Health care workers should strive to convey to their patients that when an individual wishes to talk about violence in the home, someone in the medical setting will be willing and able to offer resources and help.
- 4) Prenatal care providers should consistently ask about abuse and follow the best practices regarding domestic violence defined in the *Perinatal Partnership Against Domestic Violence* manual.
- 5) Geriatric providers should be especially alert to screening for domestic violence when older men become depressed or suicidal.
- 6) Advocates and medical providers should come together to create best practices for screening for abusive behavior, including protocols, "scripts," and how to respond if violence is revealed.
- 7) If a patient reveals that he is currently violent and controlling towards his current or former intimate partner and is also suicidal (or has a recent history of suicidal behavior), the health care provider should act on their duty to warn by contacting the person's partner to warn her about the risk of homicide.
- 8) Alternative health care providers need to be brought into the dialogue about responding to domestic violence in the health care setting.
- 9) Health care providers need to approach domestic violence screening with cultural sensitivity and thoughtfulness regarding the need for translation.

Guns

- 1) Washington State should bring its laws in line with federal laws which prohibit gun ownership for persons subject to domestic violence-related court orders.
- 2) Weapons removal for domestic violence offenders should be a top priority for everyone in the criminal justice system.
- 3) Judges should order all convicted domestic violence offenders and respondents to Protection Orders to surrender all firearms.
- 4) Consequences for failure to comply with weapons surrender orders should be meaningful, such as revocation of a Stipulated Order of Continuance and/or a night in jail.
- 5) Federal prohibitions on weapons possession after the conviction of a domestic violence crime should be enforced, and known violations should be referred to the federal prosecutor.

Protection Orders

- 1) PO offices should be staffed by well-trained domestic violence advocates who can provide safety planning and education as well as advocacy.
- 2) Translation should be available for PO advocates and/or PO offices should be staffed by bilingual advocates.
- 3) Protection Order forms should ask about the history of homicidal or suicidal thoughts, threats, or behaviors.
- 4) Judges, advocates, and court staff should make an effort to educate women regarding their increased risk of homicide when they note that the respondent to the order threatens homicide or suicide, and urge her to contact a domestic violence program for shelter and/or safety planning.
- 5) Any judge hearing Protection Orders should have adequate training about domestic violence to ensure that the way they handle hearings will not do more harm than good. Training should cover:
 - All provisions of a Protection Order
 - The intent of the enabling legislation
 - The danger that suicide and homicide threats pose
 - Ordering the removal of weapons
 - Creating an environment which conveys a message that abuse and violence are unacceptable, and that the court system will support victims of violence
- 6) Judges, pro-tems, and commissioners should treat all PO petitioners with respect and courtesy, and avoid saying anything that might discourage a domestic violence victim from seeking help from the court in the future.
- 7) Judges should respond to all the petitioner's requests and seek to maximize the usefulness of the PO for the domestic violence victim.
- 8) PO violations should be taken seriously by law enforcement and prosecutors.

Barriers to Accountability and Victim Safety in the Criminal Justice System

Law enforcement:

- 1) Law enforcement agencies should do everything they can to implement the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) *Model Operating Procedures for Law Enforcement Response to Domestic Violence*.
- 2) Police and Sheriff's departments should have mechanisms in place to monitor the quality of domestic violence incident reports.³
- 3) WASPC should expand sections in the *Model Operating Procedures* on screening for suicide and responding to suicidal abusers.
- 4) Officers should attempt to remove guns from the home whenever possible, and particularly when the abuser has a history of homicidal or suicidal threats.

04/10/1997:

**Sheila Slaughter and her boyfriend
Ricky King, age 32 and 30, shot by
her estranged husband**

³ While some departments have instituted specialized domestic violence units, this is not the only alternative for building strength and accountability regarding domestic violence interventions. Establishing specialists within each patrol squad who can serve as a resource for other officers is another alternative. This sort of program provides incentives for patrol officers to learn more about domestic violence and demonstrate excellence in this arena, as it can affect promotion.

04/12/1997:

Tamie Jaramillo, age 32,
shot by her boyfriend

- 5) Officers should routinely ask victims about the abuser's history of making homicidal or suicidal threats. If suicide or homicide threats have been made, officers should educate the victim as to the increased risks the abuser poses to her and her children, and urge the victim to call a domestic violence program for help with safety planning.
- 6) Police and Sheriff's departments should implement mechanisms for tracking patterns in domestic violence calls (i.e., multiple calls from one address) and following up on domestic violence cases.
- 7) Officers should ask victims reporting PO violations about previous reported and unreported violations in order to help assess danger levels and to facilitate tracking patterns in violations.
- 8) Domestic violence victim information pamphlets with up-to-date resources (and in multiple languages, when appropriate) should always be given out.

Prosecutors:

- 1) Prosecutors' offices should organize resources and personnel to ensure that best practices regarding domestic violence prosecution are followed.
- 2) Prosecutors and judges should follow the guidelines for charging and sentencing suggested in *The Final Report of the Washington State Domestic Violence Task Force* and further elaborated in the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA) Handbook.⁴
- 3) WAPA should create a model sentencing grid regarding domestic violence which may be quickly and easily referenced, addressing consequences for multiple domestic violence offenses, noncompliance with sentencing, and PO violations.
- 4) WAPA should make a recommendation to the legislature regarding changing the evidentiary rules to increase the admissibility of prior domestic violence acts in court, as they are for sex offenses.
- 5) Whenever possible, pre-sentence investigations should be conducted.

Sentencing:

- 1) Communities need to engage in serious dialogue regarding the allocation of criminal justice resources, especially prosecutor's time, courtroom/judicial time, jail and prison beds, and post-sentence supervision capacities, and decide if they want these resources allocated to violent or nonviolent offenders.
- 2) The legislature should commission a study of Washington's jail and prison space allocation.
- 3) When domestic violence offenders receive non-jail time sentences, then the conditions of sentencing should be extensive, clear, and enforced.
- 4) The Judicial Association should continue to take an active role in encouraging judges to get more domestic violence training.

⁴ Office of the Administrator for the Courts, *Final Report of the Washington State Domestic Violence Task Force* (Olympia, Washington: June 1991) and Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, *Prosecutor's Domestic Violence Handbook*, by Pamela B. Loginsky (Olympia, Washington: WAPA, 2000).

**05/17/1997:
Rae Custer, age 81,
shot by her husband**

- 5) Prosecutors, judges, and community corrections officers should inform victims that the effectiveness of batterer's intervention programs is debatable, and her partner's attendance at the program is not guaranteed to increase her safety.⁵
- 6) The Judicial Association should study and make sentencing policy recommendations regarding abusers who are not amenable to or appropriate for batterer's treatment.
- 7) Community-based domestic violence advocacy programs should seek resources to set up domestic violence Court Watch programs as an avenue for increasing understanding of the local judiciary's approach to domestic violence.
- 8) Violent offenders, including domestic violence offenders, should be given priority for jail space over nonviolent offenders.

Post-sentence supervision:

- 1) Probation and community corrections officers should expand their bilingual staff and have timely, efficient access to interpreters so that monitoring of non-English-speaking offenders can take place.
- 2) Domestic violence offenders should have active community supervision, regardless of which level court imposes the sentence (municipal, district, county).
- 3) The Criminal Justice Training Commission should include specialized training on how to supervise domestic violence offenders in the standard curriculum for probation and community corrections officers.
- 4) Judges should firmly enforce conditions of probation and impose meaningful consequences for failing to comply (e.g., a night in jail).
- 5) Probation and community corrections officers should routinely ask about depression and suicidal thoughts, and possess a clear protocol for responding to depressed and/or suicidal domestic violence offenders.

⁵ Problems with defining success are well explained in Dr. Jeffrey Edelson, "Do Batterer's Programs Work?" in *Future of Intervention with Battered Women and their Families*, ed. J.L. Edelson and Z.C. Eisikovits (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996). An abbreviated version is available on the web at www.mincava.umn.edu/papers/battrx.htm. In the paper, Dr. Edelson makes the point that from the battered woman's point of view, the only meaningful measure of success is if the abuse stops permanently, not if it is reduced in frequency or no longer rises to the level of criminality. An end to the abuse is rarely the measure used when intervention programs report their success rates.

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