


How Community Based Programs Can Improve Organizing Efforts with Government Based Responses to Domestic Assault Cases

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Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP)



A Coordinated Community Response in Duluth

Duluth's CCR was developed using the Duluth Model method of organizing which created an inter-agency approach that brings the justice and human service interventions together with community based domestic violence agencies around the primary goal of protecting victims from ongoing abuse. It was conceived and implemented in a small working-class city in northern Minnesota in 1980-81.

Over the next four decades this continuously evolving initiative became the most replicated woman abuse intervention model in the country and world.

Why Work with Government Systems?

Survivor experience with government systems

- Call as a last resort
- Most abuse/violence goes unreported due to:
 - Fear of consequences from abuser
 - Distrust of what the system will do or not do
 - Survivor history with responses they deem unjust or unreliable
 - History of distrust due to government systems treatment of BIPOC/GLBTQ+ communities.

And yet, many survivors still call or end up in government systems due to ongoing abuse by an intimate partner.

Government Agencies

Tend to work in silos.
 Tend to be cautious with community collaboration.
 Tend to make policy and protocols that improve the goals of government systems rather than the goals of those who try to access those systems.
 Can be over reliant on worker discretion and less reliant on policy, protocols and tools that direct specific actions in domestic assault cases.
 Don't know much about how community agencies operate
 Trust issues with those outside the agency

Domestic Violence Organizations

Tend to work in silos.
 Tend to be cautious in collaborations.
 Separate the world into those who get it and those who don't.
 Are underpaid and overworked. Burn out can run high.
 Frustrated/angry at how much injustice survivors have to live with.
 Are exposed to very little training on community organizing
 Little interest in how government agencies operate
 However, much to say about how they don't work
 Trust issues with those outside the agency

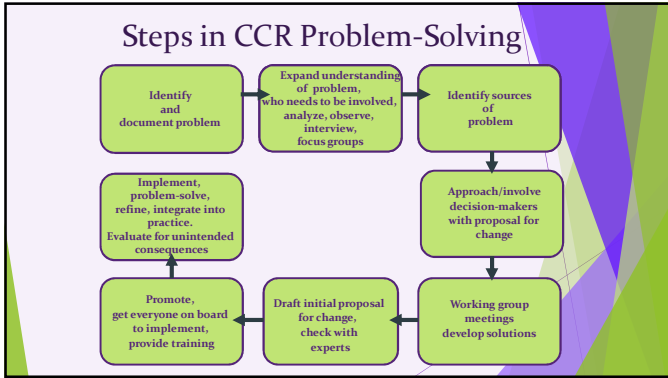
What We Know

There is no government agency or community based program that has the ability to end the social problem of battering/coercive control.

The more coordination, the better the outcomes for survivors and those who batter.

- And, advocates are better because they learn how government works and can help survivors navigate those systems.
- And, government workers are better because they learn from advocates and are better working with/understanding survivors.

Collaboration is essential if we want a safe and just response to domestic assault cases.



Observations as a way to build rapport, trust and discover gaps in a community's response



Learning to See Systems as Opposed to Individuals

In organizing, it's always about the system and never about individuals

While observing a typical sentencing calendar, ponder these questions and try to discover what is behind the matrix.

- How does each practitioner know how to do the job in court?
- What patterns do you notice from one hearing to the next?
- Who has most of the influence in these sentencing hearings?
- Who would you talk to first? Why?
- Regardless of the players (probation, prosecution, judge, defense attorney and defendant), these hearings would play out the same. Why?

Video: A Sentencing Hearing for Mr. James Peterson

Discussion

Benefits of observation:

Map how cases get processed

Get to know agency cultures, find allies and learn why things are done

Find safety and accountability gaps in the response

Start getting an idea of what survivors are asking for when they call

Discover how survivors get caught in systems

Discover how those who batter get through systems
