

## Tri-County Batterer Intervention Provider Network Meeting 12/8/09

Attendance: Chris Huffine (Allies in Change Counseling Center), Dean Camarda (Allies/Men's Resource Center), Ashley Boal (Portland State University), Laura Ritchie (Multnomah County Dept. of Community Justice), Johnnie Burt (ARMS), Guruseva Mason (Choices), Regina Rosann (ARMS), Linda Castaneda (Manley Interventions), Paula Manley (Manley Interventions), Jacquie Pancoast (ChangePoint), Melinda Sherman (Men's Resource Center), Jennifer Warren (Men's Resource Center/Women's Counseling Center)

Minutes by Ashley Boal, edited by Chris Huffine

### Group Discussion: Social Justice, Community Activism, and Batterer Intervention

- June 2009 issue of Violence Against Women- Interview with advocates. Researchers interviewed advocates from multiple agencies in Illinois to get a sense of what they understood about the DV movement- all women, most white. Length of time in movement ranged from 2 months to 30 years, most worked in shelter based agencies.
- Chris read quotes from the article to begin discussion- gist of the article is there is a concern that the movement is becoming about individuals and individual problems and the larger scope of the problem will be lost in the process.
- Society has a focus on individual victims rather than larger social forces and institutions that support domestic violence. How do we change this?
  - A speaker at the last FVSN meeting described a process where men half way through the program bring in a person to be accountable to, at the end they have to bring two men. Makes them get "out", social support, have someone to talk with
- Call to men movement is intended to focus on larger social change
- Roots of Change conference met in Portland in October, sponsored by NOMAS- men interested in making change, men making confrontations instead of women always having to
  - Allows men's voices- undercurrents of resentment- now men are speaking up and we are supposed to be praising them for stepping up when they should have been doing this all along
  - Many young men involved
- Do we need to be pursuing social change in our role working with abusive men? Why? What do we mean by social change?
  - Oppression and lack of equality are two reasons it is important for all of us to be involved in the movement.
  - Some social context to think about: Look at society in which the work is happening- where are the resources? Where is funding available for services for women fleeing DV now? In Portland it is not considered a housing issue rather than a freedom or oppression issue. Focus is on getting women housing because

that is where the funding and resources lie- makes some sense that advocates are in the place.

- Professionalization of work in the DV movement- creates conflict between serving clients and goals of the profession.
- Shelters were founded by women that cared deeply about the issues and the people- may not always be the case now- may be people that have education and credentials to open a shelter.
- Professionalization- makes things more micro- more focus on the individual- problem is that the larger social issues are neglected. Grassroots movements are about going beyond helping individuals and instead looking at making larger change.
- Are BIPs doing a good enough job to educate self and staff about the underlying social issues? Should we be focusing on this more?
  - Not funded to do this specifically
- Universities may be a place to look to see if that is happening? Women's studies programs, women's resource center- typically are talking a lot about social justice and social change- BIPs don't really link up with these though
- Perception that we already have equality that older generations fought for, some maybe feel they have achieved a lot and the pace has slowed? Maybe harder to get buy in. Feeling that as much as can be done has been completed, already, even if it isn't ideal.
- From a perspective of someone working with juveniles- it may be getting worse, lots of sexual and violent behavior that isn't being stopped in schools
  - Girls Strength class through Portland Police- go into girls health classes- teach self defense, about patriarchy, physical skills, how to respond assertively, use popular media (Twilight series), next want to target the boys. Is there a forum for sharing? Seems to be an interest in primary prevention- maybe get speakers from BAM?
- What can happen to make the need for BIPs go away?
  - Communities that really support families
  - Respect
- Power and Control Wheel/Social Justice handout
  - Ecological way of looking at DV- look at larger context that allows violence to occur
  - Duluth model vs. Duluth curriculum
    - Duluth model= community collaborated response
      - How can we take action from different levels?
      - Lead to Duluth curriculum because they needed something to target the men.
      - Doesn't get to the larger cultural level, instead focuses on institutional level
    - Duluth curriculum= actual batterer intervention program

- Only looking at physical abuse can cause huge problems- may look at their behavior and think they are being “good” for not being physical and only being emotionally abusive
- Analogy- analogous to saying we are against torture so we are going find perpetrators and victims of torture and target them. Will this really stop torture? This leaves out all the antecedents to torture. Have to define it. Have to educate the public, have to target institutions that allow it. Unless we start on larger level we won’t be able to actually stop torture.
- 2004-2009 violence on television went up 2%; violence against women went up 120% on television.
- For oppression to exist there must be systematic violence- we have a culture that sexualizes children and targets them for sexual abuse (not only physical but also with things like dress), creates a pattern- what does that do to a person? For boys there is huge desiring a supply of warriors to carry out goals of nation (not just US), society “needs” violent boys- underlying things going on at societal level- more professionalized we are the more we buy in to these societal pressures
- Look at work- employers are going to value employees willing to give up personal life- exploitation at cultural level that is systematic and engrained in our lives
- Accountability for BI providers: Practically what do we have to do to be social change agents?
  - Starting in our own families- look at what is affecting us, examine our own views and biases, raise our own families with our values, be willing to talk about controversial issues (ex-pornography, corporal punishment)
  - We may be too timid, need to be willing to talk even if it isn’t popular
  - We need media to include messages we need to see
  - Contacting outside institutions- for example getting involved with church and talking with the leadership about sexist beliefs, reaching out to community partners, outreach and education- how are we raising awareness and educating the public? Not just about behaviors, you also need to talk about beliefs.
  - Maybe encourage public discourse, not let it be a secret
  - Consciousness raising- challenge ignorance, raise awareness
  - Volunteer
  - Some concrete ways:
    - Are programs represented on DV councils? Are you going to DV council meetings?
    - Are providers forming active working relationships with shelters? Are we doing our best to do this?
    - Attending public events and training. Are you publicly coming out to speak out against DV?
    - Primary prevention- volunteer with schools, speak at events, share our knowledge- two way street: share and learn.

- Make sure we are educating ourselves and staff on what the social justice movement is about
- Working in coordinating councils- play a role in supporting accountable language
- Continuing to talk about oppression in meetings with BI providers- remember larger social context
- Possibly encourage men to be more vocal- positive spin on experience rather than shame, I need to make a change and I am.
- How do we apply this to our work as facilitators?
  - We need to talk about male privilege in ways they can understand
  - Need to stop this multigenerational legacy- father their children differently than they were fathered
  - Look at impact of hierarchy
  - Encourage men to understand this is an ongoing process- not a class that you get a grade at the end or you get to the end and you are fixed
    - Men need to be aware of what is going on around you- take risks, speak up, empower them to communicate about issues around oppression