

TCBIP Minutes for meeting on 12/14/99

Present:

**Michael Davis**, Changepoint , **Songcha Bowman**, Multicultural Counseling,  
**Kelley Brassaw**, Community Connector Program, **Mark Hess**, Mult. Co. Adult DV, David Houston, Changepoint  
**Chris Huffine**, Men's Resource Center, **Paula Manley**, **Guruseva Mason**, TPI-Batterers Intervention , **Annie Neal**,  
Mult. Co. DV Coordinator's Office , **Bob Torres**, New World, **Lillie Zable**, ASAP Treatment Services,

Facilitated by **Michael Davis**. Note-taker is **Paula**.

### **Topic of the day - parenting.**

Possible topics include: Parenting skills. What parenting components are used in programs. Positive disciplinary methods. Spanking. Impact of domestic violence on children - one way of getting past denial. Appropriate expectations for children. What children learn from domestic violence - and what and how the perpetrator has learned. Help teach empathy. How children are exploited.

Need to assess batterers for child abuse and sexual abuse. Abusive parenting often comes out of the perpetrator's own upbringing. Difficult to assess child abuse with perpetrators as they are fairly savvy as to legal issues and will deny. There is a need to do prevention in this area, as well. How information is packaged is important, so that clients will participate. For example, a "support group for fathers" would be better than a "parenting class."

STEP is one program for parents. Eight week parenting class with videos addressing power and control. The Incredible Years is another program, emphasizing problem-solving and skill development. Chris is working on a handout on parenting tips. Everyone brings your favorite resources.

Parenting issues are dealt with in multiple ways in perpetrator groups. One is through journals. Usually someone will do a journal on an issue with a child. Chris does a teaching piece on parenting. Lists ways of parenting in noncontrolling ways. Spanking issue - provides opportunity for dialog. Last issue: is it possible to parent in a noncontrolling way? Chris committed to making copies of his list after it's refined.

Others mostly have dealt with issues as they come up. Deal with how is this a power and control issue. Talking about damage in viewing domestic violence. Use Patricia Evans' (The Verbally Abusive Relationship ISBN 1-55850-582-2), "Effects of domestic violence" to help educate perpetrators. Adolescents in perpetrator groups are also victims. Showing videos with emotional impact to get clients thinking. Talk about how the perpetrator responded to physical & emotional abuse, and what he would really like in his relationship. The video, The Children are Watching (AGC Ed Media, 1-800-323-9083 or 847-328-6700) was recommended.

What do you do with abusers separate from their partners, and their false sense of victimization? Help them understand the separation may be a good thing. If they plan on reconciling, focus on self now and "getting your ducks in a row." Show how this can be the best thing for the perpetrator. Many have opportunity for supervised visitation. Can emphasize making the best of what they have rather than being miserable about what they can't.

Genograms can help. Taking a family history and discussing how this applies to present family. Discuss the difference between fear and respect. If you get what you want through fear, it won't last. If you get it through respect, it is more lasting. How do they communicate? Can get them to look at ways of communicating with parents even if they avoid discussing the relationship with their partner.

Historical perspective - animal protection laws, then child protection laws and finally, woman protective laws. Cultural/societal expectations change. Behaviors that were accepted before are no longer so. When it was OK to spank, there was also more positive contact (time) with the family, so the spanking was less of an impact. Lost Boys by James Garbarino. How shaming messages and other violence affects. What kids learn about violence.

Paul Kivel has exercises and role plays in Men's Work workbook series. Ask clients to identify with the less powerful group in the workbook exercises, and ask what they want from the more powerful group. That is how they should act when they are in the more powerful group. EMPHASIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RESPECT AND FEAR.

Normalize the setting. Acknowledge we all have strong and weak points. Have parents identify what their children need, what are their strengths, and have the parents say what they have done very well and what they have blown. Discuss challenges as a parent, what they are hoping for, etc. Give scenarios and ask parents to say how they would deal with the situation. Try to see if parents can distinguish between what they want and what their kids may think.

Some programs have a parenting specialist. Look at what parents are teaching their kids. Tell man their daughters are looking to them to see what they should be expected in a relationship. What message are they wanting to give their sons as to how they should be treating people in general. Emphasizes their mother cannot teach them what it is like to be a man. This gives them a sense of power within the framework of personal responsibility. Discussion of family or origin issues and how this distortion is played out in their present family.

You can't intimidate your adolescents into compliance. Key to having relatively reasonable adolescents are in relationships. You can't get away with power and control without them rebelling. Many issues of violence toward women and children are interwoven. If a perpetrator is discussing how he was abusive to a partner, need to address the impact on the children and vice versa.

Manipulation of children within the relationship is very covert and very destructive. Also, he will manipulate her by telling her how she is hurting the children. Need to address in curriculum the use of children as a control tactic. Social learning of gender roles, "control over" relationships. Need to mention sexual abuse of children. Address all issues within a human rights perspective. There is a tendency to imply that some humans are less human than others, as part of the perpetrator's values system. Can address parenting from a human rights perspective. Ask what happened when perpetrator's parents told perpetrator not to associate with someone, and how he responded--usually will rebel.

Custody concerns. Batterers are twice as likely to seek sole custody and whoever has the most \$ to hire a lawyer usually wins. What is the role of intervention provider in these court situations?

There is some concern as to dilution of focus on violence against partner if deal with parenting focus too extensively. How do we avoid colluding with perpetrator in court and custody issues. How is perpetrator using the children as a form of control. We will address custody and child manipulation in a parenting session on 2/8/99. Parenting is suggested as a semi-monthly ongoing topic.