

TCBPIN Meeting Notes-January 25, 2000

Present: Songcha Bowman, David Houston, Michael Davis, Paula Manley, Chris Huffine (notetaker, subject discussion), Guruseva Mason, Marc Hess, Loraina Connelly (SP?), Sandy Bacharach, Devorah Marvin, and Eric Mankowski (notetaker, all notes prior to subject discussion)

Topic: The role of victim's advocates in the statewide batterer's intervention provider coalition.

The issue could be framed in terms of 2 differing opinions:

1. advocates should be centrally involved
2. focus of membership should be batterer's intervention providers only

Two levels of involvement were distinguished

1. membership
2. decision making/voting

There is likely a variety of opinions on this topic among victims' advocates themselves, but that integration and collaboration is important.

Input from the victim advocates present at this meeting included:

-It is important that victim advocates and batterer intervention providers work together, but a set quota of victim advocacy representation doesn't seem necessary. However being exclusionary of victim advocates doesn't seem right either.

-It's still unclear to them what the structure of the organization would be. It would seem that victim advocacy involvement might be self-limiting any way, while some may attend, many would not. Therefore there may not be a need to limit the role of victim advocates in the organization.

-Perhaps victim advocates could agree among themselves who they want to represent their interests/concerns within the organization.

Input from other people at the meeting included the following:

-There should be at least one victim advocate regularly attending the steering committee meetings.

-It is important to note that there is a diversity of victim advocate opinions and perspectives, just as there is a diversity of perspectives among batterer intervention providers. Therefore, it might be important to have enough victim advocate involvement to adequately represent that diversity of opinion and perspective among victim advocates.

-It was suggested that for any batterer intervention provider to be granted voting membership in the statewide group, they would need to have a letter of endorsement from a victim advocacy agency.

-Another suggestion was that any formal decisions made by the statewide organization would be subject to review by a board of victim advocates. An alternative would be to have a victim advocacy advisory council who could do this as well as provide on-going input to the organization.

-It is important that the voices of victim advocates be heard and given serious consideration, not simply token involvement.

-It was suggested that sometimes batterer intervention providers may need to speak up and express victim advocate concerns that victim advocates themselves might be unwilling to say or may not feel safe in sharing.

-It is important that it is made clear and explicit why victim advocates need to attend and what their role will be.

-This discussion will be continuing with a different group at the next statewide batterer intervention provider meeting in February.