

JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

Batterers' Intervention Program Analysis

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Through the analysis of trends among offenders who have been referred by the Rhode Island District Court to Justice Assistance for batterer's intervention services, it is the objective of this report to establish if such intervention works and to identify which factors most typically predict if or when an offender will reoffend. *It should be noted that the cases referred by the District Court to Justice Assistance are limited to those offenders who received a 1-year filing.*

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Executive Summary

In July 2010, Justice Assistance began the process of analyzing the recidivism history of those offenders referred to the organization by the Rhode Island District Courts for batterers' intervention services. Each offender violated a state domestic violence statute, pled 'nolo contendere', entered into a 'filing' agreement, and was ordered to enroll in a state certified program and complete 40-hours of 'psycho-educational' classes. The analysis covered the period July 2006 through June 2010.

Too often the refrain 'these programs don't work' is heard when discussing batterers' intervention programs. The refrain can trace its roots to a 20-year old study conducted of programs in Broward County, FL and Brooklyn, NY. *This analysis debunks the concept that batterers' intervention programs do not work and illustrates that batterers' intervention programs work with the class of offenders referred to Justice Assistance.*

Of the 2,251 offenders enrolled in the batterers' intervention program (BIP) referred by Justice Assistance, 87.9% successfully completed the requirements. The court's use of 'staying' a sentence was the critical factor in 39.5% of the successful completions, reinforcing the importance of agency and court communication and cooperation. Only 446, or 19.8% of those enrolled in BIPs re-offended – 39.4% of whom re-offended by driving with a suspended driver's license.

The analysis also found that finances matter. At any given time 15% of the offenders enrolled in programs are in need of financial aid. Every program provides some form of sliding scale and only Family Violence Intervention provides a community service option. Any number of enrollees above 15% in need of financial aid jeopardizes the financial health of the service provider.

In short, this analysis clearly represents that batterers' intervention programs work and work well when the supervising agency and the court have open communication and cooperation.

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Statement of Problem

According to statistics provided by Justice Assistance's management information system (MIS), the number of filings with a 'batterer's intervention' order over the past 15-years has totaled 8,479 – a growth from 240 referrals in 1996 to 667 in 2010 with a high of 877 in 2002. The impact of this rise can be seen in every community in Rhode Island. The 6th Division District Court originates 46% of all cases referred to Justice Assistance with the bulk of those coming from the center city corridor – Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket and Woonsocket.

Statistics currently available from our state certified service providers present little more than enrollment, economic and program status data. The scant amount of local data created an environment that led our state to rely upon select national data (i.e. Minnesota's Duluth Batterers' Intervention Model) and what can perhaps best described as unsupported assumptions (i.e. the number of domestic violence incidents on Super Bowl Sunday) when developing both statute and policy. Consequently, this may have led to the development of state law and policy that may or may not be in the best interest of the individual in need of service and may or may not be considered a best practice. National and local data is just now beginning to create a body of work subject to peer review and follow-up that has the potential to broaden the discussion upon what actually works rather than what we think works.

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Justice Assistance, by compiling the re-offense data of this offender population group – ‘filings’ with a batterer’s intervention court order – seeks to; First, provide a ‘snap-shot’ determination of the effectiveness of the programs authorized with the responsibility to change abusive behavior through the use of ‘psycho-educational’ groups; and, Second, begin the discussion of best practices based upon research.

Objective

Justice Assistance has undertaken this research study to analyze the efficacy of court ordered batterer’s intervention ‘psycho-educational’ facilitated groups. Through the analysis of trends among offenders who have been referred by the District Court to Justice Assistance for batterer’s intervention, it is the objective of Justice Assistance to establish which factors most typically predict if or when an offender will reoffend.

Literature Review

The causes and treatment of domestic violence is a relatively new field in the area of social services. The early studies and literature more often than not concluded that more study was needed. The body of work surrounding the effectiveness of batterers’ intervention and the needs of the victim and offender are just now reaching the point of comparative research and peer review. The advent of court ordered intervention with violators of the domestic violence statutes have provided an opportunity to improve the quality of life of those individuals victimized.

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Over the past two decades only two studies have dominated discussion regarding the effectiveness of batterers intervention programming in the United States: First, Broward County, FL, and second, Brooklyn, NY. Both programs, initially studied by A.V. Harrell and E.W. Gondolf ("Patterns of Reassault in Batterer Programs," *Violence and Victims*; and "Evaluation of Court-Ordered Treatment for Domestic Violence Offenders," State Justice Institute), used the Duluth model and were alternatives to jail. The Broward study, "... showed little or no effect while the Brooklyn study found only minor improvement in some subjects. Neither program changed the batterers' attitudes toward women and battering" (Coulter, M. and VandeWeerd, C., University of South Florida, College of Public Health, National Institute of Justice, "Do Batterer Intervention Programs Work? Two Studies," 2003). Later studies, however, using more rigorous evaluation designs, found evidence that, "BIPs had some success in limiting the most violent and threatening behaviors" (Jackson, S., Feder, L., Forde, D.R., Davis, R.C., Maxwell, C.D., and Taylor, B.G., "Batterer Intervention Programs: Where Do We Go From Here?" 2003).

Like Broward and Brooklyn, most Rhode Island batterers' intervention programs are based upon the Duluth model whose underlying theory is that batterers want to control their partners and that changing this dynamic is the key to changing their behavior. Other models are cognitive-behavioral intervention which views domestic violence as a result of errors in thinking and focuses on skills training and anger management. Still others, such as Emerge and AMEND (Abusive Men Exploring New Directions) believe that a more long-term approach is

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appropriate. A controversial intervention is couples therapy, which views "men and women as equally responsible for creating disturbances in the relationship" (Healey, Smith and O'Sullivan, "Batterer Intervention: Program Approaches and Criminal Justice Strategies, Issues and Practices," 1998).

In 2003 The World Health Organization, in a report entitled, Intervention with Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence: A Global Perspective, confirmed a moderate success rate, stating that reviews of batterers' intervention programs, "in the US and UK found that about two-thirds of the people who complete BIPs remain non-violent for up to three years." At least one study found that men who were "required to attend longer programs had significantly fewer complaints lodged against them than those who completed an 8-week program" (National Institute of Justice, Special Report: Batterers Intervention Programs: Where Do We Go From Here? June 2003). More recent studies have, in general, shown that batterers' intervention programs are, "most effective when combined with a *coordinated community response* (emphasis added) that includes accountability to judicial systems" (Adams, Treatment Programs for Batterers, "Clinics in Family Practice, 2008).

In conclusion, the early research indicates little success from batterers' intervention programs but as the programs matured the positive impact upon the batterer has improved.

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Methodology

Justice Assistance conducted a dual component evaluation. The first component was summative to determine the extent to which the batterer's intervention programs achieved their objectives. The second component was formative to determine the relationship of different program activities to its effectiveness.

As a part of the summative evaluation, Justice Assistance reviewed each individual referred to the organization for batterers' intervention services from 2006 through 2010. Each referral was analyzed for the following:

- District Court Division;
- Number of sanctions imposed;
- Agency where offender was referred;
- Criminal history;
- Gender;
- Age;
- Program status; and
- Re-offense rate at 30-days, 60-days, 90-days, 6-months, 1-year, 2-year, 3-year, 4-year and 5-year intervals.

Justice Assistance subsequently conducted a formative evaluation through the use of a randomly selected post-participation survey (see Appendix A entitled, "Post Participation Survey"). The 240 randomly selected participants were asked a series of written questions that included such inquires as:

- Do you feel that you were treated fairly by the staff throughout the time that you were enrolled in a batterers' intervention program?
- Did your facilitator answer your questions directly and clearly?
- What did you like most about the program?

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- What did you like least about the program?
- If you were the director of the program, what would you change?
- Has the program had a positive, negative or no effect upon you?
- What is the single most important thing that you learned from the program?
- Did the program provide you with a comfortable learning environment?

Data Collection

One way to view the goals and activities of a program is to construct a model of the processes and intended results. By creating a model batterer's intervention program, the input of the programs and the steps by which the programs were expected to work should have been identified at the onset. Had Rhode Island specified the program goals and variables at the outset the measurement 'instrumentation' would have taken place at the same time. This "instrumentation normally takes place at the same time program goals are selected – thus the two processes are related inherently to one another" (The Academy of Contemporary Problems – National Training & Development Service, "The Process of Program Evaluation," John Van Maanen – Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology). How the goals become defined has a great deal of influence on the selection of appropriate measures. In Rhode Island, however, the program model can best be described as a 'casual' sequence (See exhibit 1 entitled, "Casual Model"). Furthermore, this model allows for implicit program assumptions to be made explicit. The tracings of the Batterers Intervention Program Oversight Committee, legislated (RIGL 12-29-5) approximately 5-years following the establishment of the state's first program, 'Brother-To-Brother', illustrates the disadvantages of not setting down the expected chain of events which may occur in the program's implementation.

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Exhibit 1: Casual Model

PROGRAM →set in motion →'CASUAL' SEQUENCE →which led to →DESIRED Effect

If a program, in this case a number of discrete programs, fails to achieve its objectives there can be two general reasons why: First, the program set the 'casual' sequence in motion, but the process did not produce the desired results (theory failure); or, Second, the program never actually initiated the 'casual' sequence and the program failed. Behavioral Health Services (MAP-BIP) and Center for Social Work Practices provide examples of theory failure. Examples of the 'casual' sequence program failure would be Feedback and Peace Work. All four organizations had at one time received state certification.

The data collected for this research reflects the time frame of January 2006 through December 2010. While it may appear that these results prove what is most effective, it is important to bear in mind that this data, to be fully analyzed, needs the necessary time to fully develop. It is our belief that a full 5 to 7-year cycle review of all offenders – those filed and sentenced – would be required to draw appropriate conclusions as to the effectiveness of batterers' intervention programs in Rhode Island. It is also our belief that the effectiveness of batterers' intervention programs as a sanction should be measured against other such sanctions as restitution, community service, mental health counseling, anger management and substance abuse treatment. As such, our findings should be considered as an important first step in the evolvement of treatment and intervention. For those clients within the time frame of 2009 and 2010, an updated review at twelve and 24-months would be necessary to reflect

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accurate data depicting those who have reoffended following the timeframe associated with this group.

Since July 2006 three thousand and seventy-three (3,073) defendants who violated Rhode Island's domestic violence statutes were referred to Justice Assistance by the District Court. Of that number, two thousand, two hundred and fifty-one (2,251) defendants were referred to and enrolled in state certified batterers' intervention programs. This research focuses only upon those 2,251 individuals who enrolled.

Two thousand, two hundred and fifty-one offenders – one thousand, six hundred and ninety-one (1,691) male, five hundred and sixty (560) female – have enrolled in the psycho-educational classes since July 2006 (See Chart 1, entitled, "Number of Enrollments by Gender").

Chart 1: Number of Enrollments by Gender

Year	Male	Female	Total
2010	305	114	419
2009	427	149	576
2008	379	123	502
2007	333	95	428
2006	247	79	326
TOTAL	1,691	560	2,251

One thousand, nine hundred and seventy-nine (1,979), or 87.9% of those enrolled, successfully completed their court ordered batterers' intervention program. Within the total number of successful program completions, seven hundred and eighty-three (783) or 39.5% completed after secondary court interaction following a 32-f violation hearing in which the sentence was

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'stayed'. (See Chart 2, entitled, "Number of Successful Outcomes Following a 'Stayed' Sentence").

Chart 2: Number of Successful Outcomes Following a 'Stayed' Sentence

Year	Male	Female	Total
2010	117	33	150
2009	136	54	190
2008	95	48	161
2007	110	33	143
2006	100	39	139
TOTAL	558	207	783

Sixteen (16) or 52.7% females reoffended and subsequently successfully completed their batterers' intervention program while two hundred and seventeen (217), or 52.3% of the males who reoffend go on to complete the program requirements (See Chart 3, entitled, "Number of Clients Who Reoffend").

Chart 3: Number of Clients who Reoffend

Year	Male	Female	Total
2010	17	0	17
2009	52	2	54
2008	87	13	100
2007	139	10	149
2006	121	5	126
TOTAL	416	30	446

Four hundred and forty-six (446), or 19.8% of those enrolled, had reoffended as of the December 2010 completion date of the statistical gathering portion of the research – ninety-

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four (94) individuals had multiple offenses (See Chart 4, entitled, "Recidivism Intervals"). The 446 cases of reoffending are divided among three domestic violence counseling programs – Family Violence Intervention Corporation (FVI), Rhode Island Batterers Intervention Program (RIBIP), and Tri-Hab – a Gateway Healthcare affiliate. Reviewing these figures, FVI experienced a recidivism rate of 8.5%, 10.3% at RIBIP, and 11.2% at Tri-Hab. During this same time frame Vantage Point and Stanley Street Treatment and Resources (now defunct) both achieved perfect success rates with no recidivists, however the referral numbers to these programs are very low – only five and three clients, respectively.

Chart 4: Recidivism Intervals

Year	30-days	60-days	90-days	6-mos.	1-yr.	2-yrs.	3-yrs.	4-yrs.	5-yrs.
2010	7	2	6	4	0	0	0	0	0
2009	5	5	9	12	23	6	0	0	0
2008	14	15	15	36	29	31	0	0	0
2007	14	34	10	29	62	37	65	3	0
2006	5	12	14	25	46	59	39	41	5
TOTAL	45	68	54	106	160	133	104	44	5
Rate	2.0%	3.1%	2.4%	4.8%	7.2%	6.0%	4.7%	2.0%	0.3%

Note 1: Interval percentage rate is based upon incident per 2,250 offenders

Note 2:* 3,073 offenders were referred to Justice Assistance for batterers' intervention services. Eight hundred and twenty-two (822), or 26.7% of those referred, either never enrolled or withdrew from services after intake and were referred back to the court for further action.)

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While compiling this data, many intriguing and noteworthy findings were brought to light. Perhaps not surprisingly, the two most common means of reoffending are driving on a suspended license and violation of a no contact order. One hundred and sixty (160) or 39.4% of those charged with a new offense while enrolled in a program or after program completion, reoffend because of driving while on a suspended driver's license; one hundred and twenty-four (124), or 30.5%, reoffended through a violation of a court ordered no contact order. Of those individuals, the majority had no previous charges prior to referral to Justice Assistance and violated shortly after the original domestic violence offense, most often within 6-months. Offenders with previous charges prior to referral to Justice Assistance who reoffend tend to do so in a more serious manner, such as sexual assaults, assaults, the possession of controlled substances, driving while under the influence, disorderly conduct, and a wide range of non-domestic offenses (See Chart 5, entitled, "Re-offense Charge").

Chart 5: Re-Offense Charge

Charge	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	Total
Aiding and Abetting	0	0	1	0	0	1
Arson	0	0	0	0	1	1
Assault	0	0	0	0	4	4
Assault: Domestic	0	0	3	6	12	21
Assault with a Deadly Record	0	0	1	0	0	1
Breaking and Entering	0	1	0	5	4	10
Child Molestation	0	0	0	2	0	2
Conspiracy	0	0	0	0	2	2
Crank/Obscene Phone Calls	0	2	0	0	1	3
Disorderly Conduct	3	8	7	18	16	52
Disorderly Conduct: Domestic	0	0	13	21	18	52
Driving While Under the Influence	0	2	15	10	17	44

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Failure to Register: Sex Offender	0	0	0	0	1	1
Filing a False Police Report	0	0	1	2	1	4
Fraud	0	1	2	0	0	3
Larceny	1	0	3	6	3	13
Leaving the Scene of an Accident	0	1	3	2	0	6
Loitering for Prostitution	0	0	0	1	0	1
Obstruction	0	0	1	4	2	7
Obtaining Money under False Pretense	0	0	0	1	0	1
Operating with a Suspended License	3	10	23	73	51	160
Possession of Child Pornography	0	1	0	0	0	1
Possession of a Controlled Substance	1	6	14	20	16	54
Receiving Stolen Goods	0	0	1	1	2	4
Resisting Arrest	0	1	1	1	0	3
Robbery	0	1	2	1	1	5
Sexual Assault: Domestic	0	0	20	34	38	92
Shoplifting	1	0	7	4	1	13
Simple Assault	3	12	9	15	12	51
Trespassing	0	1	0	2	1	4
Vandalism	0	3	3	2	12	20
Violation of No Contact Order	8	17	15	54	30	124
TOTAL	17	53	93	153	224	540

NOTE 1: Re-offense data was supplied through the Adult Criminal Information Database managed by the court administrative offices.

NOTE 2: Four hundred and six (446) offenders were responsible for five hundred and forty (540) offenses.

One hundred and eight (108) individuals charged with new offenses had the charges dismissed. Of these, seventy-two (72), or 66.6%, had previous charges prior to the controlling domestic violence offense, as well as previous sanctions imposed by the court such as restitution, drug and alcohol screening or mental health counseling. Eighteen (18) had multiple reoffends of three (3) or more separate incidences, including violation of a no contact order, simple assault and larceny. Finally, research revealed that of the 272 individuals terminated from the various batterers' intervention programs, one hundred and thirty-nine (139), or

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51.1%, had previous charges of domestic violence and one hundred and three-one (131), or 48.1%, had previous non-domestic charges (See Chart 6, entitled, "Previous Offense – Domestic vs. Non-Domestic"). Seventy-one (71), or 26.1%, were already on probation. Awareness that sanctions would be imposed due to their criminal histories and failure to comply with mandated counseling was not enough to stop them from being terminated from the program raises a critical question – are there other approaches to make the state sanctioned batterers' intervention programs effective, worthwhile, and plausible for everyone who is referred? However, the evidence clearly illustrates that the majority of defendants who complete their court ordered batterers' intervention program do not reoffend and when they do it is typically non-domestic in nature. The data also shows a change among age groups. The majority of re-offenders with a new domestic charge ranges in age from 23 - 27 and from 55 – 60. The latter typically re-offends at 2-years while the former re-offends within 90-days.

Chart 6: Previous Offense – Domestic vs. Non-Domestic

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic
2010	19	51
2009	41	81
2008	23	80
2007	26	103
2006	30	88
Total	139	403

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A more thorough examination of those individuals who were terminated will more fully highlight why the current structure of domestic violence counseling programs may or may not be successful. Of the 272 clients enrolled at the various batterers' intervention programs, those who were terminated from the programs were for reasons generally relating to absences or having picked up another charge. According to the data – summative and formative – clients with no previous offenses and with no other sanctions (i.e. restitution, community service, etc.) imposed upon them were terminated at a rate of approximately one-third of those with other sanctions. This leads to the conclusion that the three most likely causes for the termination were indifference, absences – most likely due to finances, or inability to balance multiple court sanctions with the absences due to finances being the leading cause. Even with the sliding scale the programs offer, these services have proven very difficult for many to afford, particularly given these challenging economic times. In fact, it is a recurring theme that clients with no sanctions other than restitution and the counseling program are terminated without any sort of violation from prior charges or a re-offense. It is unfortunate that a variable such as income or lack thereof can impose such a great influence upon a court-mandated sanction.

In order to seek possible answers to some of these questions, Justice Assistance went beyond the simple summative evaluation format and conducted a formative evaluation through the use of a randomly selected post-participation survey. The survey, conducted periodically from July 2010 through November 2010, of 240 randomly selected enrollees in a batterers'

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intervention program had interesting and enlightening results (See Appendix A, entitled, "Post Participation Survey").

The survey, conducted randomly in person, with the program participant asked a series of eight questions – three focused upon program quality such as fairness and clarity, four on program services, and one on program environment. The three program quality issues were statistical, an undertaking quite easy to compile. Using quantitative methods, the information could be measured. The four program service related and one environmental question were developed to explore the impact as well as the quality of the programs. It is recommended that future post-participation surveys or questionnaires be reviewed with specialists in the field for suggestions. It is our belief that specialists in the field would recommend that future research include a larger sample size, be done anonymously and include a larger pool of clients who failed to complete the program requirements.

It should be explicitly clear that despite the sample size and number of questions, the client questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive!

Within the program quality component of the assessment, two hundred and thirty-seven (237), or 98.8%, of the participants surveyed felt they were treated fairly by the staff throughout the time they were enrolled in the program. Two hundred and thirty-eight (238), or 99.2%, felt their questions were answered directly and clearly. Finally, twelve (12), or 5%, of those queried responded that the program had a little or no impact upon them. The program environment question was an issue with only nine (9), or 3.7%, of the participants as illustrated

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by such comments as, "...not at first, I was to (sic) nervous to talk...;" "It isn't supposed to be comfortable;" "Being diabetic would be more comfortable if light quick food might be consumed in class;" "(The facilitator) made me feel uncomfortable all the time...;" "4 hour commute on my only day off;" "No, at 1st it was uncomfortable...;" "Insufficient bathrooms, parking, and sometimes overcrowded students."

The larger issues involving program services is much more telling. Addressing the issues of likes and dislikes about batterers' intervention programs the comments ranged from, "Being able to discuss and learn the skills to resolve conflicts without resorting to abuse" in the positive to "The fee though I know it is necessary for the program" in the negative. Other examples of positive comments were, "Listening to people with the same problems, talking to people;" "It was comforting to know that I could relate to others who were in the same 'boat' as I;" "The people and the ability to speak freely and not feeling like I'm being judged;" and "Learning the proper way to grow in a relationship without anger or stress." The majority of the negative comments were based upon the cost of the programs. The negative comments included, "Money!!!" "Paying \$40.00 per week;" "Too expensive;" "Cost, size of room;" "Honestly, there wasn't enough time in some classes to 'check-in and then learn some techniques;" "Sometimes the classes were too large and I didn't feel like I had enough time to share;" "No perspective from opposite sex;" "I least liked the pressure to attend every Saturday morning;" and "Being 2hrs & \$40."

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When asked about program changes, the respondents offered surprising recommendations with the majority focusing upon post participation follow-up and services. For example, one participant suggested the programs, "Offer follow-up classes if needed at a reduced rate." Another suggested, "Add a program that would bring back the graduates and check in on their progress." While others recommend that, "For the clients who 'slack off' there should be more intensive lessons and questions;" "Have a follow-up a month later for a few weeks – should be able to meet one-on-one with councilor [sic];" "Some perspective from a female point of view;" and "At the end of your classes the other person should go to [sic]."

Finally, when asked to identify the single most important thing they learned in the program, one hundred and fourteen (114), or 47.3%, of those surveyed state self controlling techniques as the most important skill learned. This was followed by accepting responsibility at thirty-one (31), or 12.9%; communication skills at twenty-five (25), or 10.5%; assertiveness and 'animal brain' lessons at nineteen (19), or 7.9%; and respect lessons at seventeen (17), or 5.2%. The remaining eighteen (18) or 7.5% of the respondents identified such varied lessons as judgmental reactions, letting go and looking forward skills, to not biting.

Batterers' Intervention Program Weekly Overview

At the request of Justice Assistance, FVI provided a 1-week 'snapshot' of its program participants. We asked for the number of groups conducted during the week, the gender of the participants, the number of participants receiving financial aid, the number of participants absent during the week, the number of new enrollments, and the number of positive and non-

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positive terminations. We made this request to see if a given week may provide some insight in to the group dynamic. Of particular interest was the number of participants on financial aid in relationship to the number of absentees and the number of program failures. We acknowledge that this is not an appropriate sample size to draw any formal conclusion. It does, however, raise issues for further study.

FVI provided the following data for the period Monday, February 28th through Saturday, March 5th: First, one hundred and forty-seven (147) clients were enrolled, encompassing nineteen (19) groups in the program; Second, thirty-nine (39), or 26.5%, of the enrollments were women; one hundred and eight (108), or 73.5%, were male; Third, eighteen (18), or 12.2%, of those enrolled were on a sliding scale payment schedule – ten (10) female and eight (8) male; Fourth, thirty-nine (39), or 26.5%, of those enrolled were reported absent from their group session; Fifth, two (2) clients had completed intake to enroll in the program; and, Sixth, zero (0) clients were terminated from the program.

Conclusion

The data analyzed in this study support the use of batterers' intervention as a court sanction for those defendants who violate Rhode Island domestic violence statutes. This study can conclude that the majority of defendants referred to Justice Assistance for supervision by the District Court successfully complete the batterers' intervention program and do not reoffend. When a defendant does reoffend it is usually within 6-months or after 2-years. Charges that are picked up within 30-days are typically non-domestic in nature and of those

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charged with domestic related offenses, they were most likely to be a Violation of a No Contact Order. Typically charges that are picked up after 60-days were Domestic Assault, Domestic Disorderly Conduct and Violation of a No Contact Order. Defendants that pick up charges after one year normally do not pick up a new domestic charge, unless they had a prior domestic charge. The programs seem to be most successful with first time offenders and offenders between the ages of 18 – 23 and 28 - 55.

The analysis also leads to two additional conclusions that are in need of further research; First, the importance of the court's use of staying a sentence and allowing an offender to return in his or her batterers' intervention program under the threat of jail time. *This analysis has found the practice to be an extremely effective motivator.* The second conclusion is that the State of Rhode Island needs to develop a funding formula for those clients in need of services but do not have the means to pay the service fee. Approximately 15% of all clients enrolled in programs are receiving some level of financial aid through the structure of a sliding scale payment or community service option – neither of which are long-term business models for the sustainability of the service providers. Approximately 40% of the clients surveyed reported the fee payment as what they "liked least about the program." This did not, however, reflect upon one's ability to pay or not, that issue was found in unsolicited comments to the survey. Comments such as, "I lost my job, my house. How can I pay this?" Or, "I'm on SSI, live in a shelter gut [sic] a bus pass to come here;" "I'm bouncing from house to house, got kids and a dog. The piece of *^#! don't help;" "Put me in the ACI I'll be warm."

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Procedural Improvements

We recommend the following:

- Consistent provision of the Criminal Complaint Forms ('pink slip') to Justice Assistance immediately following a disposition. Rationale: If Justice Assistance is unable to follow-up with the defendant and must wait for the defendant to take the initiative of contacting the organization for program referral and enrollment, motivation quickly declines as does the individual's success rate for program completion. Tangential study data indicates that a large number of the 822 defendants who failed to enroll in a batterers' intervention program were defendants that the organization had to request receipt of the 'pink slip', often being weeks and sometimes months after the defendant's appearance in court;
- Consistent approach to adherence of attendance for the complete schedule of domestic violence classes. Rationale: If Justice Assistance is notified by the service provider of an absence on a daily basis, immediate follow-up and intervention with the offender can commence, letting the defendant know that both organizations are sharing information in a timely manner and looking out for their best interest.
- Eliminate the special arrangements that from time to time occur prior to courtroom proceedings. Rationale: If Justice Assistance is to properly monitor the defendant and insure respect for the court order it must have the ability to

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interview and formally refer the defendant to the appropriate program. Absent that ability allows the defense bar to enroll clients in programs prior to the court hearing and subsequently indicate to the court that their client is enrolled, has attended x-number of classes, and recommend the case be 'passed'. After 'passing' a case there remains little motivation for the defendant to continue in the program and no one to follow-up with the court.

- Amend the controlling oversight rules to allow individual defendants to select a single sex or a mixed-sex group. Rationale: This 'differing point of view' recommendation, by both genders, was raised on numerous occasions during the post-participation formative evaluation. Other treatment models provide this type of service provision (i.e. John Howard Society). The John Howard Society model used in Canada goes even further with a 40-week program that pursues a 20-week single sex program followed with 10-week partner participation and finally coupled with a 10-week child inclusion component.
- Amend the controlling general law to mandate post participation follow-up, or refresher groups. Absent this, it may be worthwhile to provide a 24-hour 'help line' for offenders to use during particularly stressful situations. Rationale: Not only was this a recommendation raised on numerous occasions during the post-participation formative evaluation, it could very well become a vital program component that is a preventative measure in reducing domestic violence.

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Future and Other Necessary Research

Based upon the study outcome, it is recommended that the following areas of interest need to be more fully explored to more thoroughly address issues that surfaced. It is hopeful that after additional research, potential gaps in services and improvements in addressing these areas relating to domestic violence counseling may be addressed, resulting in fewer terminations from programs and a greater level of long-term successes. Areas to explore further are:

1. The feasibility of creating programs more specific to ages, background and potential violation status of offenders;
2. The feasibility of implementing follow-up programs for certain candidates based on their likelihood to reoffend;
3. A comparative study of program reimbursement procedures toward the goal of identifying and implementing best practices;
4. The feasibility of creating a comprehensive database for all activity relating to the status of offenders of the state's domestic violence statues to assist in sentencing and program referral; and
5. A comparative study of recidivism between the batterers' intervention sanction and other sanctions such as restitution and community service.

Appendix A: Post Participation Survey

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Batterers' Intervention Program Post-Participation Questionnaire

Please take a moment to carefully review and respond to the following questions. This questionnaire will be used by Justice Assistance as a part of a study of the effectiveness of batterers' intervention programs. The questionnaire is limited to Justice Assistance clients. It is not necessary to sign your name, as this will not become a part of your client file. **There are no right or wrong answers.**

1. Do you feel that you were treated fairly by the program staff throughout the time you were enrolled? YES _____ NO _____. If no, please explain.

2. Did your program facilitator answer all of your questions directly and clearly? YES _____ NO _____. If no, please explain.

3. What did you like the most about the program?

4. What did you like least about the program?

5. If you were the program director, what would you change?

6. What effect has the program had upon you? Positive _____ Negative _____ No Effect _____. Please explain.

7. What was the single most important skill that you learned from this program?

8. Did the program provide you with a comfortable learning environment? YES _____ NO _____. If no, please explain.

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Question	What is the basic assumption underlying the reason for this question?	How does the question relate to the research problem?	How do you expect the respondent's answer to this question will contribute to your analysis of the research problem and a broader understanding of the research matter?
1. Do you feel that you were treated fairly by staff throughout the entire time you attended the program?	The respondents are reluctant clients and more likely not to trust or like the facilitator which would negatively impact upon successful completion.	The answer will be compared with the number of individuals who successfully complete the program requirements.	By comparing the total number of affirmative answers to the total number of successful program completions can determine the significance.
2. Did your facilitator answer all of your questions directly and clearly?	The responses would indicate that the service providers may be in need of additional interpersonal response training.	See above	See above
3. What did you like most about the program you attended?	Most programs follow a regimented schedule and curriculum. If unable to adjust to that routine, the participant may not feel accepted.	The answers may indicate that some participants would adjust more readily to a different program model.	The results may indicate that alternative programming may be needed for some participants of various age, race or gender.
4. What did you like least about the program you attended?	See above	See above	See above
5. If you were the director of the program, what	The responses would indicate that the programs were too	The answers may indicate that economics are the	The results may indicate that an alternative fiscal

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would you change?	costly.	leading cause of program failure.	model may be required.
6. Did the program have a positive, negative or no effect upon you?	The responses would be a predictor of subsequent criminal activity.	The answers may indicate program effectiveness.	By comparing the total number of 'negative' or 'no effect' answers to the total number of re-offenses can determine the significance.
7. What was the single most important thing you learned from the program?	The responses would indicate the retention skills and topic impact upon the offender class.	The answers may indicate program curriculum adjustments and emphasis.	The results may lead to further discussions regarding program design, curriculum and follow-up issues.
8. Did the program provide you with a comfortable learning environment?	The responses would indicate program quality.	The answers may provide insight into group structure (i.e. classroom style, board room style, circle style, monologue or dialogue).	The results may lead to further discussions regarding classroom size, space and method of instruction.

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