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Chapter 14

New approaches to assessing effectiveness and outcomes of domestic violence perpetrator programs

Liz Kelly and Nicole Westmarland

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(Chief executive)

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To say that domestic violence perpetrator programs (DVPPs) are still controversial is perhaps to underestimate the strength of feelings held by some, including those quoted above, who attended a recent workshop about DVPPs. As Chung (this volume) notes, despite a four-decade history of such programs, doubts about their effectiveness persist. However, given that many offenders continue to abuse after separation, or abuse new partners, and that most who are fathers will be awarded child contact, there is surely a necessity, rather than an option, to do “something” with men about their violence.

We are in the process of conducting a British evaluation of DVPPs, comparing (amongst other things) women whose partners have been on a program with women whose partners have not been on a program. We do not yet know the changes that such programs make. However, we do know that DVPPs have been held to a narrow and, we argue, unhelpful, definition of what “success” means, while being held to a standard higher and more rigid than most other social and even medical interventions. In this chapter, we describe what we mean by this, outline the indicators we have developed to extend measures of success, and give examples from our ongoing research that investigate what (non-criminal justice) DVPPs "add" to coordinated community responses to domestic violence (DV) using Project Harbal as an example.1

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To say that domestic violence perpetrator programs (DVPPs) are still controversial is perhaps to underestimate the strength of feelings held by some, including those quoted above, who attended a recent workshop about DVPPs. As Chung (this volume) notes, despite a four-decade history of such programs, doubts about their effectiveness persist. However, given that many offenders continue to abuse after separation, or abuse new partners, and that most who are fathers will be awarded child contact, there is surely a necessity, rather than an option, to do "something" with regard to their violence.

We are in the process of conducting a British evaluation of DVPPs, comparing (amongst other things) women whose partners have been on a program with women whose partners have not been on a program. We do not yet know the changes that such programs make. However, we do know that DVPPs have been held to a narrower and, we argue, helpful, definition of what "success" means, while being held to a standard higher and more rigid than most other social and even medical interventions. In this chapter, we describe what we mean by this, outline the indicators we have developed to extend measures of success, and give examples of our ongoing research that investigates what (non-critical) justice DVPPs "add" to coordinated community responses to domestic violence (DV) using Project Minhal as an example.

British domestic violence perpetrator programs

Despite advances in research, policy, and practice, DV shows only minimal signs of abating. It continues to blight the lives of (predominantly) women and children as victims and survivors and men as perpetrators. The focus of much work to date
has been on interventions to improve the safety of women and children: for example, women's refuges and advocacy. It has become clear that to reduce and prevent DV, the spotlight must be placed on men and their behavior, alongside, rather than replacing, interventions for women and children.

One response to DV perpetrators is to refer them to a DVPP (Domestic Violence Prevention Program). In England and Wales (but not Scotland) these have historically been divided into "criminal justice" and "community" programs. However, as "community" programs, which historically took many voluntary referrals, are increasingly being filled with child protection and child contact referrals (from social work and family courts), a more accurate description probably is "non-criminal justice." Most services that run British DVPPs are members of the UK's national voluntary organization, the Respect UK, which, among other things, trains the Respect phoneline, the UK helpline for domestic violence perpetrators, and manages the accreditation of programs. The Respect Accreditation Standard sets out the requirements for organizations to manage DVPPs and integrates support services (ISS) for current and former partners. It is important, for contextual reasons, to understand that having ISS for (ex-)partners is an essential and "normalized" part of running a DVPP in Britain and the rest of the United Kingdom. They are not an "optional extra," for reasons described by Raynor (2012).

Organizations running a DVPP without an ISS cannot be considered for accreditation as they are unlikely to meet the standards. An ISS is an essential feature of a Respect accredited Domestic Violence Prevention Service, for many reasons. An ISS helps to ensure that women's expectations of the DVPP are based on realistic expectations and that they and others do not rely solely on the service to bring about an immediate cessation of violence and abuse. It helps to ensure that women's safety is not stigmatized and kept the highest priority. It also helps to ensure that working with the men attending the program is informed by current understanding of the women's experiences. It is now widely accepted that working with perpetrators of DV can only be undertaken safely if there is an ISS that includes men and ex-partners and provides them with a support service.

British programs vary and are constantly developing, but others take an approach which combines techniques from cognitive behavioral and other therapeutic interventions with awareness raising and educational activities, usually using an understanding of DV which is pro-feminist and based on research evidence about the nature of DV. Most consist of weekly group-work sessions which aim to educate men about how to eliminate their use of violence, abusive, and controlling behaviors and promote the value of gender-equal relationships. Such programs are now widespread within the criminal justice field (through probation for men mandated by the criminal courts) but community-based non-criminal justice programs (for men mandated by family courts, child protection, or self as partner mandated) remain sparse. All of the British non-criminal justice programs that we are aware of are for gay and lesbian men.
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Organisations running a DVPP without an ISS cannot be considered for accreditation as they are unsafe and cannot achieve the standard. An ISS is an essential feature of a Respect accredited Domestic Violence Prevention Service, for many reasons. An ISS helps to ensure that women’s expectations of the DVPP are based on realistic expectations and that they and others do not rely solely on the service to bring about an immediate cessation of violence and abuse. It helps to ensure that women’s safety can be monitored and kept at the highest priority. It also helps to ensure that work with the men attending the program is informed by current understanding of the women’s experiences. It is now widely accepted that working with perpetrators of DV can only be undertaken safely if there is an ISS that contacts partners and ex-partners and provides them with a support service.

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This shortage of programs is linked to a lack of clarity about whether perpetrator programs “work.” In the UK there have been two published evaluations of community-based programs (Dobash et al. 2000; Burton et al. 1996). While both showed program effects, they were largely based on criminal court-mandated men (who previously attended community programs before the expansion of criminal-justice-led programs) and the evaluations had methodological limitations.

In the United States, two contradictory sets of findings are put forward. The first claims to have found a program effect (largely through the work of Gondolf, see for example, 2004) and the second claims there is no program effect (largely through the work of Dutton, see for example, 2006). None of these studies has been accepted universally in the UK as providing evidence as to whether perpetrator programs “work” or not. In addition, most of the studies conducted in the US have also relied on court-mandated research participants and had other methodological limitations. The findings cannot be easily translated to the UK because of the different community contexts. Finally, the UK community-based programs are required to have associated women’s support projects that make proactive contact with all partners and ex-partners of program men, and their work has expanded into undertaking risk and case management as part of multi-agency responses. Neither was generally the case in the projects taking part in the research done in the US. It is this expansion of the work of DVPPs which led us to place them more centrally within coordinated community responses in our research, asking what they contribute to overall responses to DV.

Beyond “no more violence” or “completion”

As part of the Project Mirahal pilot study, we sought to understand how fighters/commissioners, project staff (group-work facilitators, women’s support workers and managers), victim-survivors, and perpetrators who were or had been on programs understood success. We conducted a total of 72 semi-structured interview views from five DVPPs across England and Scotland in 2009–10. Perhaps not surprisingly, given that the stated aim of many programs was to increase the safety of women and children, “no more violence” emerged strongly as a core outcome for fighters, commissioners, some program staff, and wider community partners. For the women we interviewed, though, “success” meant far more than just “ending the violence.” They knew physical violence might stop, but unhealthy atmospheres laden with tension and threat could remain.

Project staff felt that success was seen by fighters and commissioners pre-dominantly as program completion, which they saw as an unhelpful oversimplification of their intervention,
I think funders view success as how many boxes on a form there are. How many people get through a program, you know, how many are completed. How fast you can churn people through a sausage machine really.

(Program worker)

Others described the broad set of changes that could happen if even one man changed his behavior.

"I'm aware of one family, just one guy, he changes radically here; it's not just him, and his partner and his kids, there's all the people that have connections with them. Then there's a whole circle of people that are affected. So, although we don't...you know, we've only run two groups and we get maybe eight, maybe ten guys through, in a 12-month period, because the program's longer than 12 months, but it's how many men we get. Although there's like a lot of people involved there, there's a lot of people, that's not just eight or nine, you're talking lots when you've added the partners, ex-partners, children, other children within family when they're involved, it's about 70 or 80 people very likely.

(Program worker)

As part of Project Merit, we conducted lengthy, in-depth interviews with those who were enrolled in the program at the beginning of their participation, at the point they drop out (if relevant), and at the end point of the program. We also conducted interviews with the (ex-)partners of enrolled men at the start and end point. At the time of writing we are still analyzing these interviews; however, it is clear that some men who attended all sessions and "successfully completed" the program have failed to make significant changes in their behavior, whereas some men who failed to complete the program have been able to make at least some marginal changes. Two examples are given in the boxes below.

In the first example, Steve reports changes and insights which likely led to fairly significant improvements for his ex-partner and their child, despite not completing the program. In contrast, Tony would be able to tick both the "completed" and the "no more violence" boxes, while using the program learning in problematic ways and constructing his ex-partner’s everyday activity in a way that is confusing, fearful, and controlling. There will undoubtedly be examples that show that this is not the case—where completers make more changes than those who leave the program; but we use these two examples above to illustrate the problematic nature of equating either "completion" or "no more violence" with "success."

The place of domestic violence perpetrator programs

Throughout our evaluation, we have heard broad statements such as those that open this chapter. This was evident in our pilot study where program staff were very aware that their service was often seen as a “quick fix.”
I think funders view success as how many burn on seats there are. How many people got through a program, you know, how many sort of completed. How fast you can churn people through a service essentially really.

(Progam worker)

Others described the broad net of change that could happen if even one man changed his behavior.

I’m aware of one family, just one guy changes radically here, it’s not just him and his partner and his kids, there’s all the people who have connections with them, that’s a wide circumference of people usually are affected. So, although we don’t, you know, we’ve only had two groups and we get maybe eight, nine, ten guys through in a 12-month period, because the program’s longer than 12 months, that’s how many men we get. I mean there’s a lot of people involved there, there’s a lot of people, that’s not just eight or nine, you’re talking ... when you’ve added the partners, ex-partners, children, stepchildren, larger families when they’re involved, it’s about 70 or 80 people very likely.

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As part of Project Minstrel we conducted lengthy, in-depth interviews with men who were enrolled in the programs at the beginning of their participation, at the point they drop out (if relevant), and at the end point of the programs. We also conducted interviews with the (ex-)partners of enrolled men at the start and end points. At the time of writing we are still analyzing these interviews; however, it is clear that some men who attended sessions and “successfully completed” the program have failed to make significant changes in their behavior, whereas some men who failed to complete the program have made at least marginal changes. Two examples are given in the boxes below.

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The place of domestic violence perpetrator programs

Throughout our evaluation, we have laid broad statements such as those that open this chapter. This was evident in our pilot study where program staff were very aware that their service was often not seen as a “popular one.”

BOX 1. EXAMPLE OF NON-COMPLETER

Steve (pseudonym) is a white man in his 40s, based in Northern England with a history of DV and police involvement. He was involved with Sarah (pseudonym) for 1.5 years and they had a son together. Following a violent confrontation in public in front of their son, a restraining order was put in place and contact was stopped. When contact re-opened, it was recommended that Steve attend a DVPP. He completed half the program and was not permitted to continue, due to conflict with one of the facilitators, alongside financial problems which he reported made it difficult to travel to the group. Steve gave an example of where he would have used control to get his own way before attending the program, but following the program the couple had their first Christmas without a fight or argument.

Yeah, I’d say when it’s been around Christmas times, I’ve badgered her to bring him round and she hasn’t and it’s ended up in violence [...] This Christmas [...] I didn’t expect her to bring him round because obviously she’s got the family going round there and all that kind of thing, but what’s the point in me saying “ alright I want you to bring him round on Christmas Day or Boxing Day” when I know really it’s a totally unreasonable request [...] before I was expecting Sarah to drop everything and bring Harry to me or whatever ... and I didn’t even care whether it was an unreasonable thing to do, I didn’t care about how she felt or what she thought ... but like now I say, Christmas I didn’t even ask, she only thing I did ask was “Look, can you make sure Harry after he’s opened his presents, make sure he rings me on Christmas Day?” and she went “Yes not a problem” [...] that probably would have been apart from when Harry was probably 3 years old, that’s one of the first Christmases where me and Sarah didn’t have a fight or an argument.

I think there are still significant numbers of people out there working in social care who as far as perpetrators are concerned it’s all “prosecute, hang them up, and throw away the key.”

(DVPP Service worker)

This selection is perplexing, since many of these individuals would be critical of right-wing penal policies in general. As Lewis and colleagues (2001) highlighted, the idea that the law is deterrent to DV offenders is not one that is often supported with sufficient questioning or consideration of other means of intervention. They argue that feminists on the left are generally very mindful of offenders' civil liberties, except when considering men who commit offenses against women and children.
BOX 2. EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETER

Sandra (pseudonym) is a white woman in her 40s living in the South of England with her husband Tony (pseudonym) and her two teenage children from a previous relationship. Two years ago their relationship a neighbor overheard a dispute and rang the police. They went to Relate For Couples counseling, where staff advised that Tony should attend the DVPP. Although Tony went on to complete the program, Sandra gave examples of his ongoing control and micro-management of her household work.

Probably there has been an improvement there, but he still makes his opinions known, but he’ll add at the end of it now. “But I’m not allowed to say that or think that.” [laughs] Erm, he lost it Tuesday morning. [. . .]

I’d swept the kitchen floor. Now I sweep that kitchen floor about five times a day, and I’m not sure if it was on my own I’d do it that frequently to be honest, but I’m always paranoid that I don’t want him to walk in there and see any crumbs on the floor. So I’d swept the kitchen floor, my daughters had got up that morning, had some cereal and as usual, as teenagers do, you know, tipped it into a bowl and some cereal had obviously gone over the top and some had spilt on the floor, and yes it is careless and yes it’s not great, but here’s the thing. Erm, and so he’d walked in, and he’d gone, “There’s crumbs on the floor again.” Can’t you lot—don’t you lot—don’t you just—” and he starts, again in front of the children [. . .] and then I said, “Look I only swept it before we went to bed last night. You know. I’m a rush to get to the train, but I’d— I’d clean it before I go and, you know, I— or if I don’t get to do it then I—I’ll, you know, do it when I get back or whatever.” And here—he was made—I think it was some sandwiches, and here—he’d like just his tuna into a bowl, erm, and he put this bowl of tuna and he threw it on the floor, and he went, “There!” he said, “I might as well do the same as your children, just throw all the food on the floor.” And then he just—then he throws the cup of tea, and then he walks out.

One group of Project Minhal involves interviewing staff employed at other organisations that comprise the Coordinated Community Response that DVPPs are situated within. In one of the areas in particular, this strong belief that the law and perpetrator programs was the way forward was stated very strongly by two police officers.

I’m simply not convinced of its cost-effectiveness and I’m not convinced that on the majority of perpetrators that it works.

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"Probably there has been an improvement there, but he’ll still make his opinions known, but he’ll do it at the end of it now. ‘But I’m not allowed to say that, or think that.’ […] Er, he lost it Tuesday morning […] I’d swept the kitchen floor. Now I sweep that kitchen floor about five times a day, and I’m not sure if I was on my own or I’d do it that frequently to be honest, but I’m always paranoid that I don’t want him to walk in there and see any crumbs on the floor. So I’d swept the kitchen floor, my daughters had got up that morning, had some cereal and so on so on, as teenagers do, you know, tipped it into a bowl and some cereal had obviously gone over the top and some had spread on the floor, and yes it is careless and yes it’s not great, but heh ho, that’s life. Ern, and so he’d walked in, and he’d gone, ‘There are crumbs on the floor again. Can’t you lot—don’t you lot—don’t—’ and he starts, again in earshot of the children . . . and then I said, ‘Look I only swept it before we went to bed last night, you know, I’m in a rush to get to the train, but I’ll— I’ll sweep it before I go and, you know, I—or if I don’t get to do it then I—I’ll, you know, do it when I get back or whatever.’ And he—he was mope—I think it was tuna sandwiches, and he—he’d like put his tuna into a bowl, er, and he got this bowl of tuna and he threw it on the floor, and he went, ‘There!’ he said, ‘I might as well do the same as your children. Just throw all the food on the floor.’ And then he just—then he throws the cup of tea, and then he walks out."

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I’m simply not convinced of its cost-effectiveness and I’m not convinced that on the majority of perpetrators that it works. (Police officer)

The officers said they were very unlikely to refer men to the DV perpetrator program, stating: “We refer people to jail, that’s where they should be!” While this is a statement many, and arguably most, feminists would also make, it is, nonetheless, rhetoric rather than reality. The “tough on DV perpetrators” message has been voiced by many politicians, for example one minister who, when asked at a public meeting whether hostels should be opened for DV perpetrators to be ejected to (instead of women and children needing to leave their homes to go into shelters) and where they could take part in behavioral change work either individually or in groups, replied with just one sentence: “We already have hostels for violent men: They are called prisons.”

Sending more men to prison for DV probably would send a powerful message out both individually and collectively to DV perpetrators. However, the problem with this argument is that: (a) it is not a solution, since many DV victim-survivors do not make a police report, and many of the behaviors that comprise the coercive control which is so destructive for women and children do not currently constitute crimes; (b) of those men who are arrested, a small proportion are prosecuted and hardly any receive custodial sentences (Hester 2006; Hester and Westmarland 2006); and, (c) sending someone to prison is an expensive option that does not necessarily change men’s behavior, nor stop the violence. The reality is that prison, even for a short time, is an unlikely outcome for the vast majority of DV offenders.

Expanding our understandings of “success”

Through our pilot study interviews, we asked what the various stakeholders in DVPPs wanted to get out of programs. Some men were still participating in a program and were talking about their hopes, and others had already completed their program. Some of the female (ex-)partners had separated, others were still living with their partners.

From the thematic analysis of the 73 interviews we developed six measures of success, which we explain below. These measures have provided the framework for the indicators of success that we have used to develop our survey and interview instruments within our full research study. In light of the previous discussion, it is crucial to note that the first two measures were more important to the victim-survivors we interviewed than ending violence.

1. An improved relationship between men on programs and their (ex-)partners which is underpinned by respect and effective communication.

Improved and respectful relationships encompassed changes in relation to (ex-)partners and children whether or not they continued living together as a family; indeed being able to accept separation and make the best of it was seen as being “successful” as remaking relationships within the family. This was particularly the case where communication of one form or another was going to be ongoing for many years because of child contact. Having “honest” communication was mentioned regularly by the men, as being
able to rebuild and sustain it in a context of broken trust. Many recognized
that holding onto previous patterns was not an option if their hope of not
losing their partner was to be an outcome of the program. One run, for
example, explained that he had previously attended a number of anger
management courses but that these had simply taught him to remove himself
from the situation rather than to be able to openly and honestly communica-
ted.

2. For (ex-)partners to have an expanded “space for action” which empowers
through restoring their voice and ability to make choices, while improving
their well-being.
For the female (ex-)partners, this meant no longer living with the shadow of
fear, which in turn created space in which it was possible to think, act, and
express themselves without being scared of what might happen. One woman
put this succinctly as having the option of disagreeing about something that
was important.

Basically the fact that if we argue, it doesn’t end up with physical violence
and that it can be a normal argument and I don’t have to worry about my
safety.
((Ex-partner of DVPP participant))

Qualitative DV researchers have long documented the debilitating impacts it
has on women’s sense of self (see, for example, Hoff 1990; Kirkwood 1993),
narrowing what Nordic researcher Eva Lundgren (2004) has termed their
“life space,” and Liz Kelly (2007) refers to as “space for action.” Women
talked about being able to enter the house without being scared, stay out late
without feeling they would have to “walk on egg-shells” the next day, choose
to spend time with family and friends without being challenged; all are
examples of what we term “expanded space for action,” and which chime
with the limits on freedom that Evan Stark (2007) makes such a core
component of the harms of coercive control.

3. Safety and freedom from violence and abuse for women and children.
Following Stark (2007), we refer here not just to safety but “freedom” from
violence, in recognition that the reduction or cessation of violence and abuse
overlapped with the previous two measures of success. The reduction or
cessation of violence and abuse was discussed more often and more explicit-
ly by men on programs than by the women (ex-)partners, undoubtedly in part
because program content focuses on this. Many maintained they had already
made this change. This was the measure of success most frequently mentioned
by funders and commissioners, and it included the ability both to engage men
who were not in contact with the criminal justice system and to enable safe
child contact to take place. Safety/freedom from violence was also the most
prominent for practitioners. This was generally linked to the stated goals of
programs, and included both being and feeling safer for women and children.
Most emphasized ending violence and abuse, with some offering a more

qualified reduction and reducing fear. One participant said, “I don’t think
overclaiming is ever a good idea.”

At best, you’re still seeing the majority of people... significantly.

Here we see a... considered by

4. Safe, positive, and free from violence for children.
For the women, that children be safe from violence means that it is no longer
something they had to trust the man’s dangerous professional judgment
important to us.

The contributions plans were... extent and length.

Conferences on attitudes and... information on victims and their

5. Enhanced awareness and understanding.
Here we refer to... understanding about its presence. The planning process
reflect[s] on previous

Well, before... about DV by feeling safer for women and children, the
didn’t happen...
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Most emphasized ending violence and abuse, with some offering a more
qualified reduction in violence or risk and others ending physical violence
and reducing emotional abuse. The latter two possibly reflect a desire not to
over-claim what programs could achieve. “Feeling safer” was sometimes
expanded upon through phrases like “no longer living in fear.” While the
majority of practitioners were aiming for a total cessation of violence, a
minority argued that less ambitious changes were more realistic.

At best, you know, no longer abusive, at worst that their abuse has
significantly reduced.

(Practitioner)

Here we see a perspective where a range of changes in the same direction is
considered by practitioners as positive.

4. Safe, positive, and shared parenting.

For the women (ex-)partners, positive parenting refers not only to the fact
that children benefited from the changes noted above, but also that parenting
the children together was enhanced, with family activities more frequent,
men being more attentive to the needs of the children and/or access no
longer something to be dreaded. For both current and ex-partners, being able
to trust the man with the children played a significant part in this. More
accurate multi-agency assessments, which included a report on the
man’s dangerousness and potential for change rather than relying solely on
professional judgments about the woman’s capacity to protect, were seen as
important to some funders/commissioners.

The contribution programs could make to multi-agency risk management
plans was emphasized. For example, a full assessment, which revealed the
extent and length of abuse, can be fed into Multi-Agency Risk Assessment
Conferences or similar forums, family court proceedings, and shift the
attitudes and interventions of partner agencies. In particular, detailed
information on perpetrators had the potential to widen the focus from the
victim and increase the emphasis on addressing the risks posed by the
perpetrator.

5. Enhanced awareness of self and others for men on programs, including an
understanding of the impact that DV has had on their partners and children.

Here we refer to an expanded understanding of what intimate partner violence
consists of and its impact. For both women and men, recognition of what
constitutes violence—or not—emerged as a consequence of being asked
about its presence within relationships, in both risk assessment and safety
planning processes. Some reflected on how the services had enabled them to
reflect on previous misconceptions.

Well, before I went on the course if they’d have asked us that question
[about DV being present in any other relationships], I would have said it
didn’t happen but . . . [I learned a lot] lots from the course that I went to . . .
It’s little things that you don’t realize at the time, like the shouting, the slamming doors, the wailing down, all that’s in a way DV . . . but at the time I didn’t realize it . . . I would say that there had been other relationships where there has been DV.

(Program participant)

Awareness of self and others was a commonly cited desired outcome for men by practitioners, presumably reflecting that they believe this to be the foundation for not only choosing to change, but more importantly being able to maintain this after completing the program. The outcomes they were seeking here included: empathy; the ability to reflect on behavior and feelings; ability to “be in” relationships with others; taking responsibility for their actions and their impacts on others; willingness to seek help; ability to identify what they had changed and why it made a difference; and, capacity to name and discuss problematic behavior.

6. For children, safer, healthier childhoods in which they feel heard and cared about.

While to some extent this overlaps with indicator 4, here the focus is on the children themselves, rather than parenting. This was raised primarily by practitioners and funders/commissioners rather than by the women and men.

For practitioners working in perpetrator programs, children’s safety and well-being has become a more specific focus, both while living with the perpetrator and where child contact is an issue. This is in large part due to increased referrals from social work and Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAPCASS), and being commissioned to do risk assessments with respect to contact hearings. Again the notion of safety encompasses more than physical safety and encompassed: physical and emotional health and well-being; happiness; freedom from fear; and/or having to protect their mother or siblings. Some workers took the risks to children very seriously, making reference to decisions to remove perpetrators from the household if children were “terrified,” and the importance of appropriate child contact decisions being made by the courts and other professionals.

Children’s future relationships were a very strong theme for funders/commissioners, often linked to the ubiquitous, though strongly contested, cycle-of-abuse theory (that children who live with domestic abuse are more likely to be abusive/abused in their own future relationships). Some responses were more immediate and connected to the realities of the everyday lives of children and young people, referring to: knowing violence is wrong; improved and more stable peer relationships; for teenage boys, positive interactions with girlfriends; and, for teenage girls, seeking more equal relationships.

Our research tools that we are currently using in Project Minbal—a qualitative interview schedule and a quantitative telephone survey—allow us to explore changes on all assessments of DV.

Reflections

In this chapter we have discussed the various issues, both in terms of the notion of what we know and the hopes of what we believe we can achieve. By the end of the section, we hope you will have a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding DV, and how they can be addressed.

Notes

1. For updates on the project, see the website at www.projectminbal.org
2. For more information, see the accompanying book, Beyond the Numbers
3. For more information on the role of social work, see Social Work Today
4. For more information on the functions of social work, see the accompanying book, Beyond the Numbers

References

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It's little things that you don't realize at the time. [like] the shouting, the slamming doors, the banging things down, all that in a way DV... but at the time I didn't realize it... I would say that there have been other relationships where there has been DV.

(Program participant)

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Our research tools that we are currently using in Project Mirahal—a qualitative interview schedule and a quantitative telephone survey—allow us to explore changes on all six indicators, thus offering more nuanced measurements and assessments of DVPPs' success.

Reflections

In this chapter we have argued that measuring the success of DVPPs solely in terms of the notion of "completion" and "no more violence" are flawed in terms of what we know about the patterns and harm of DV, the work that DVPPs do, and the hopes and aspirations of victim-survivors. Having described two cases where "completion" and "lack of" did not equal with "no more violence" and "violence" respectively, we then critiqued the "law and order" approach put forward by some community partners and experienced by ourselves as academics while undertaking our current evaluation of British DVPPs through Project Mirahal. Instead, we suggest six more nuanced holistic indicators of success which reflect more accurately both the work of programs and what would make a difference in the lives of women and children.

Notes

1. For updates on Project Mirahal, see www.dur.ac.uk/evsa/projectmirahal.
2. For more information, see Respect website, www.respect.uk.net.
3. For more information about these measures and an analysis of what this means for social work, see Westmarland and Kelly (2013).
4. CAFCASS combines family court welfare service, guardian ad litem, and other key functions where children come within the purview of the family court.

References


Chapter 15

What do we mean by domestic violence?

Mandatory reporting and the impact on people.

Mark Holmes

In 1980, The Canadian Women’s Foundation used the metaphor “the violence outside the home” (MacDonald, 1990). Canada was not alone in encouraging them to recognize the importance of domestic assault cases, and to include them in the statistics. In most cases, cases of wife battering were not reported.

Also in 1982, the Women’s Aid program, I was one of the first shelters for abused women in Canada. I was searching for help. The shelter had a policy of helping abusive men, and programs for “battered women” were not established until 30 years later.

The evolving criteria for reporting

Contrary to what might have been expected, the first 200 men who arrived at our shelter in August 1987 were not accompanied by their partners, family, or friends. However, the criminal justice system took note of this and the Regional Coordinating Committee established a protocol for reporting domestic assault cases.
"This is a timely and extremely valuable edited collection on violence against women... The collection's innovative structure, including learning objectives, questions, and readings for each section, make it essential for all courses and people interested in violence against women."

Dr Miranda Horvath, Reader in Forensic Psychology and Deputy Director of Forensic Psychological Services, Middlesex University, UK

"I recommend that... young scholars start here with this volume, and think critically about how to move forward our initiatives and challenges to violence against women. In this volume researchers share their insight of the state of art in thinking about confronting violence against women."

Professor Betty Stanford, OBE, Head of Evidence and Insight, Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, London and Emeritus Professor of Criminology, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Violence against women is a global problem and despite a wealth of knowledge and inspiring action around the globe, it continues unabated. Bringing together the very best in international scholarship with a rich variety of pedagogical features, this innovative new textbook on violence against women is specifically designed to provoke debate, interrogate assumptions, and encourage critical thinking about this global issue.

This book presents a range of critical reflections on the strengths and limitations of responses to violent crimes against women and how they have evolved to date. Each section is introduced with an overview of a particular topic by an expert in the field, followed by thoughtful reflections by researchers, practitioners, or advocates that incorporate new research findings, a new initiative, or innovative ideas for reform. Themes covered include:

- advances in measurement of violence against women;
- justice system responses to intimate partner violence and sexual assault;
- victim crisis and advocacy;
- behavior change programs for abusers; and
- prevention of violence against women.

Each section is supplemented with learning objectives, critical thinking questions, and lists of further reading and resources to encourage discussion and to help students to appreciate the contested nature of policy. The innovative structure will bring debate alive in the classroom or seminar and makes the book perfect reading for courses on violence against women, gender and crime, victimology, and crime prevention.

Holly Johnson is principal investigator on Canada’s first national survey on violence against women and co-investigator of the International Violence Against Women Survey, and is the author of numerous publications in this area.

Bonnie S. Fisher has authored numerous publications spanning the field of victimology with emphasis on measurement issues, and recently served on the National Academy of Sciences Panel on Measuring Rape and Sexual Assault.

Véronique Jaquier is a violence against women researcher working in Switzerland and the United States.

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