



Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

2010-2012 Biennial Report

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence is a statewide multidisciplinary group created by Vermont statute. The Council's broad representation from state and community stakeholders allows us to provide leadership for Vermont's statewide effort to eradicate domestic violence. The Council facilitates opportunities for dialogue, advocacy, education and support among state agencies, advocacy groups, and the public.

State of Vermont Leads Efforts to End Domestic Violence in the Workplace

By: Heather Holter

Domestic Violence: A Workplace Issue

Domestic violence occurs between people of all racial, economic, education and religious backgrounds; in heterosexual and same sex relationships; while living together or separately, married or unmarried; and in short or long-term relationships.

Domestic violence doesn't stay at home when victims go to work. In fact, 74% of employed battered women say they are harassed by their partner at work.

Nationally, 1 in 4 employees reports working with a co-worker who has been a victim of domestic violence.

Collaboration between the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence collaborates with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission (Commission).

Each year, the Commission publishes an annual report identifying statewide recommendations. The Council identifies specific recommendations for collaboration with the Commission, in order to develop strategies for implementation.



From Left to Right: Autumn Barnett, Governor Peter Shumlin, Attorney General William Sorrell, and Heather Holter speak at a press conference held at the offices of Women Helping Battered Women, announcing the State's adoption of a domestic violence and the workplace policy.

In Vermont, at least 4 domestic violence related homicides have occurred in connection with the victim's employment.

As a result of these homicides, the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission made a recommendation that Vermont employers adopt domestic violence policies for their employees.

Domestic Violence and the Workplace Committee

In response to a recommendation by the Commission, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence (VCDV) formed a committee to examine the issue of domestic violence in the workplace. The DVWP Committee includes the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Spectrum Youth and Family Services, Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, Vermont Attorney

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General's Office, Vermont Commission on Women, the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Vermont Department for Children and Families, Vermont Department of Labor, Circle, and Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility.

Vermont Study

In 2011, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services funded a statewide survey of male batterers enrolled in Batterer Intervention Programs in Vermont. *"Effects of Domestic Violence on the Workplace: A Vermont survey of male offenders enrolled in batterer intervention programs"* was conducted in collaboration with the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont and DV Solutions at Spectrum Youth and Family Services.

State Policy

In May of 2012, following the recommendation of the Council's Committee, Governor Peter Shumlin announced the state of Vermont's adoption of a Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Policy for all state employees.

Governor Shumlin and Attorney General William Sorrell pledged their support for the State of Vermont's Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Policy in a press conference at Women Helping Battered Women in Burlington.

The State of Vermont's Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Policy provides employees subject to domestic and sexual violence with an opportunity to simultaneously address their personal needs and work obligations. The State's policy will assure victims/survivors that they will not be subject to discipline or discriminated against because they are victims/survivors of domestic or sexual violence.



Did You Know?

Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive and assaultive behaviors that may include actual or threatened physical injury and sexual assault, psychological abuse, economic coercion and various other sexual and psychological tactics. These behaviors are perpetrated by someone who is, was, or wishes to be involved in an intimate or dating relationship with an adult or adolescent, are aimed at establishing control by one partner over the other and result in an atmosphere of fear and/or terror for the victim.

VT Agency of Human Services
Policy on Domestic Violence 2007

Study Recommendations:

Private, nonprofit and state employers must be responsive and proactive. Employers can play an integral role in providing clear guidelines and creating a supportive and productive workplace by implementing model practices and policies that respond to domestic violence.

During 2012, the fourteen member programs of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (the Network) responded to 12,507 hotline and crisis calls, an increase of 22% over last year.

Altogether, 8778 victims of domestic violence and 1527 victims of sexual violence reached out to the Member Programs of the Network over the course of the year. 1370 children, 233 Vermonters over the age of 60, and 1417 Vermonters with disabilities received services from Network Programs in 2012. All of these numbers represent an increase from the previous year.

About the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

Council History

The Governor's Council on Domestic Violence was created in 1993 by Governor Howard Dean and Chief Justice Frederic W. Allen. For fifteen years, the Governor's Council provided a forum for the discussion of strategies for improving the statewide coordinated response to domestic violence and addressing systemic obstacles to victim safety and offender accountability.

Vermont Statute

In 2008, the Vermont Legislature re-created the Council. Vermont Statute 15 VSA chapter 21, subchapter 4, 1171-1173 created the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence with broad representation from state and community stakeholders in order to coordinate statewide responses to domestic violence, and give the Council expansive authority and responsibility.

Council Committees

In order to carry out its roles and responsibilities, the Council has established a Consultation Committee, a Batterer Accountability Committee, Task Force Liaisons Committee, Judicial Caucus, Domestic Violence and the Workplace Committee, Supervised Visitation Services Committee, Legislative Review Committee, and a collaboration with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

Council Collaborations

The Council engages formal and informal collaborations with individuals, organizations, coalitions, state agencies, and policy makers to provide leadership in the effort to eradicate domestic violence in Vermont.

Council Recommendations

The Council is charged with providing assistance in developing effective responses to domestic violence, including model policies and procedures, prevention and education initiatives, and domestic-violence-related programs for the criminal justice and human services sectors. The Council may make recommendations for changes in state programs, laws, administrative regulations, policies, and budgets related to domestic violence.

Council Funding

During 2010-2012 the Council was supported by grant number 2004-WE-AX-0028 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

The grant was not re-authorized in 2012.

The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services now funds the Council with state dollars.

Effects of Domestic Violence on the Vermont Workplace:

A Vermont Survey of Male Offenders enrolled in Batterer Intervention Programs

The study:

- Interviewed 193 male participants in Batterer Intervention Programs.
- Examined the impact of domestic violence on the perpetrator and victim's workplace.
- Examined the workplace response to domestic violence.
- Gathered offenders' perspectives on useful measures employers can implement to improve the workplace response to domestic violence.

Findings:

- Offenders lost a total of 52,731 **unpaid days of work**—equivalent to 27 years of full time employment—because of consequences related to domestic violence.
- Estimated wages **paid** by employers for time out of work related to domestic violence totaled \$37,564.
- 49% of men in the study spent time (while at work) keeping track of where their partner was and what she was doing.
- 29% contacted her to say something intended to scare or intimidate her.
- 80% said their job performance was negatively affected because of their abuse.
- 93% of respondents suggested it would be helpful for supervisors to confront an employee whom they suspect is abusive toward their intimate partner. Confronting the abuser includes: offering counseling, resources, help and support, and warning about the consequences of domestic violence.

Web Links to Domestic Violence and the Workplace Documents

Full report

http://www.uvm.edu/crs/reports/2012/VTDV_WorkplaceStudy2012.pdf

Executive summary

http://www.uvm.edu/crs/reports/2012/VTDV_WorkplaceStudy2012_ExecSummary.pdf

Presentation

http://www.uvm.edu/crs/reports/2012/VTDV_WorkplaceStudy2012_Presentation.pdf

Model Policy

http://www.uvm.edu/crs/reports/2012/Model_Policy_2012.pdf

Sample Brochure

<http://women.vermont.gov/sites/women/files/pdf/dvinwkpl2011.pdf>

Employer Training Packet

<http://www.atg.state.vt.us/issues/criminal-law/domestic-violence/>

Council Recommendations for All Vermont Employers

The Council recommends that Vermont Employers take the following actions to address the impact of domestic and sexual violence on their workplace :

Protocols and Policies: Adopt a protocol and implement leave, benefit, and referral policies that address domestic and sexual violence in the workplace.

Train: Mandatory domestic and sexual violence trainings for managers, supervisors, and human resources staff raise awareness and sensitivity, making the workplace safer and more productive. Training ensures that supervisors give the right messages to employees who are victims or perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence.

Educate and Inform: Educate staff through brown bag lunches, workshops, and newsletters. Inform employees who may be victims or perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence about resources available to them. Post and distribute resource and referral information in areas of high visibility and on websites. Ensure that human resource and/or Employee Assistance Program staff has updated referral information for employees.

Consider Security: Review worksite security measures to protect employees. Work with victims to address potential safety concerns unique to their situation. Keep requests for assistance confidential.

Work Environment: Create a fair and supportive work environment where it is safe to disclose abuse. Employees should not be disciplined, terminated, or denied opportunities because they are victims of domestic or sexual violence. Respect the authority and autonomy of adult victims to direct their own lives in all responses to domestic and sexual violence. Treat employees who commit acts of domestic or sexual violence at or from the workplace in the same manner as employees who commit other acts of violence at or from the workplace. Be clear that domestic and sexual violence will not be tolerated. View the Futures Without Violence “Pledge to Address Domestic and Sexual Violence in the Workplace” at <http://www.workplacesrespond.org> for more information.

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Council Recommendations for All Vermont Employers

The Council recommends that Vermont Employers take the following actions to address the impact of domestic and sexual violence on their workplace :

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Utilize Community Resources: Taking a stand against domestic violence is not always easy, but we make a difference when we stand together. Learn how employers can connect with community-based efforts to end domestic violence. Contact the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence at <http://www.vtnetwork.org> or at 802-223-1302 to find domestic violence service programs in your area.

Know the Law: Be aware of state laws such as the Survivor Transitional Employment Benefit Program from the Vermont Department of Labor at <http://www.labor.vermont.gov> and statutory protections preventing discharge or discipline if an employee or family member is subpoenaed to court, as described in 13 VSA Section 5313.

Experts in Vermont are available to offer and support training.

Contact the Vermont Attorney General's Office at <http://www.atg.state.vt.us/issues/criminal-law/domestic-violence.php> or (802) 828-5512 for more information.

Did You Know? Vermont Data and Information

The member programs of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence saw 32,390 person nights in shelters and safe homes for 2012.

This represents an increase of almost 45% from 2011; this number has been steadily rising over the past few years as more survivors and their children need to stay in shelter for longer periods of time.

In all, 1065 survivors were housed in shelters and safe homes statewide.

Even more alarming is the fact that 264 people were turned away in 2012 because of lack of room at shelters – almost four times as many as the previous year.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, help is available.

Call: 1-800-228-7395

To be connected to the nearest domestic violence advocacy program.

TOGETHER, WE CAN DO SOMETHING

The 14 Programs of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence have been answering hotlines, providing crisis services, and educating us about what we can do when we witness or experience domestic violence for over 25 years.

Council Collaborations and Recommendations

Protection Order Service Work Group

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence has been pleased to collaborate with the Protection Order Service Work Group, a working group initiated by the Office of the Court Administrator and the VT Attorney General's Office. The group conducted surveys of practices related to protection order service in Vermont, made recommendations on best practices, and offered trainings in each county on best practices related to service of protection orders.

The Council recommends that the Protection Order Service Group convene at least annually to consider the following:

- Whether the Statewide Best Practices identified by the original work group remain in practice statewide,
- Whether the Statewide Best Practices identified by the original work group are consistent with recommendations contained in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' *"Civil Protection Orders: A Guide for Improving Practice"*,
- Whether the Council can work with key stakeholders on the statewide and local levels to support annual protection order service trainings in each county, in order to support the safe and effective service of protection orders in Vermont,
- Ways in which the practice of requiring survivors to be responsible for delivering an issued order to the serving law enforcement agency may be changed, in order to increase safety for victims/survivors.

Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence (Council) collaborates with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission (Commission) to develop strategies for implementing the Commission's recommendations.

Danger Assessment/Homicide Reduction

During 2010-2012 the Council worked with the Commission, the Batterer Accountability Coordinator, and the Council Consultation Committee to research and understand the current best practice in risk assessment/homicide reduction with domestic violence offenders, and to present this information to Council members, including law enforcement and the judiciary, Department of Corrections, and key stakeholders.

Current Practice and Pilots

The Council and Commission worked together to monitor and evaluate a pilot Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) project in Washington County and the risk assessment practice connected with the Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court in Bennington County. Chief Tim Bombardier of Barre City Police Department participated in a mini-training on risk assessment, and presented to the Council on the effectiveness of the LAP tool. The Council also heard from Justin Niles of the Bennington IDV court related to the risk assessment tool the IDV court currently uses.

Council Collaborations and Recommendations

Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission

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This work has laid the foundation for development of statewide practice. The LAP tool continues to be used by law enforcement and advocates in Washington County and is now being piloted in Rutland County. The Council has identified danger assessment as a priority area and will continue to work with stakeholders in Vermont to encourage use of national best practice for assessing risk and reducing domestic violence homicide. The Council will support efforts such as the Vermont Department of Corrections' movement toward implementation of the DVSI-R tool for assessing risk of intimate partner violence.

Protection Orders and Firearms

The Council has recently identified several recommendations of the Commission on which to collaborate, including recommendations related to law enforcement training on the issue of service of court paperwork as defined by Vermont statute.

In its 2011 report, the Commission recommended that the Council collaborate on a review of the firearm relinquishment recommendations contained in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' *"Civil Protection Orders: A Guide for Improving Practice"*.

The 2010 Civil Protection Order Guide published by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges provides guidance for professionals working together to ensure the promise of the civil protection order is realized. The Guide contains specific recommendations regarding firearms and the interplay between the federal and state laws and presents a variety of best practices regarding firearm relinquishment. The Commission concluded that the *Guide* provides a framework for consideration of gun relinquishment issues in Vermont.

In 2013-2014 the Council will continue to facilitate discussion with Council members and stakeholders about how to support and strengthen Vermont's firearm relinquishment and storage capability in cases when a protection order is in effect.

Did You Know? Vermont Data and Information

According to the 2004-2008 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System,
From 2004-2008

- 4.1% of women reported being physically hurt by a husband or partner or ex-husband/partner in the 12 months prior to their most recent pregnancy.
- 2% of women reported being physically hurt by a partner or ex-partner during their most recent pregnancy, while 1.3% reported being physically hurt by a partner or ex-partner after their pregnancy.
- 5.2% of women reported being threatened during pregnancy, while 3.9% reported they were threatened after pregnancy.

Council Collaborations and Recommendations

Intervention Programs Related to Fathering

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence (Council) recognizes a need for men convicted of abuse toward their female intimate partners to engage in an intervention program aimed at increasing men's awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviors and their impact on children.

Washington and Bennington Counties have offered effective programs related to fathering for men who have physically or emotionally abused their children's mothers.

The Bennington community was recently able to secure support and funding to pilot the *Caring Dads: Helping Fathers Value their Children* Program. Support from DCF, DOH and DOC will make this pilot possible.

The *Caring Dads* curriculum prioritizes increasing the safety of children and their mothers, and uses a coordinated case management approach to ensure safety of women and children. The 17-week program is co-facilitated by a male and female co-facilitation team with knowledge and experience in intervention with men, child protection, child development, and women's advocacy.

The Council recommends that Vermont's county coordinated community response groups or task forces consider the advantages of collaborating with community partners to coordinate the development of an effective intervention program related to fathering for men who have physically or emotionally abused their children's mothers, and/or their children. An effective intervention program will :

- Focus on fathers' accountability for abuse,
- Prioritize safety for victims and children through communication with victims and ongoing risk assessment for program participants,
- Utilize a coordinated case management approach, engaging criminal justice partners, advocacy organizations and child protections partners,
- Employ a curriculum that moves beyond general parenting education and addresses men's abuse-related needs,
- Have support from state and local agencies who will invest in such a program because of the value it adds to existing efforts to support men's accountability, process of change, and supervision.

The Council recognizes that funding may be an obstacle for implementing such a program, and we recommend that state and local community funders (DOC, DCF, etc.) consider investing in such programs.

Linking the Faith Community and the Council

In March of 2012 the Vermont Council on Domestic violence was pleased to welcome not one but two new members representing the Vermont Faith Community. Revs. Becca Clark and Krista Beth Atwood made the decision to share a seat on the Council.

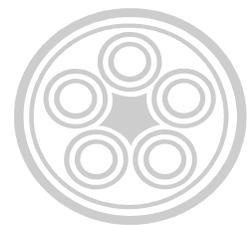
Rev. Clark is the pastor at Trinity United Methodist Church in Montpelier. She is a dedicated advocate for equality. She is passionate about providing safe spaces for all in church and community life.

Rev. Atwood is the pastor at Faith United Methodist Church in South Burlington. She is a survivor of assault and sexual violence. She is also a member of the Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force and the United

Methodist Conference Sexual Misconduct Response Team.

Last January, Rev. Atwood spoke at the Legislative Forum of the CCDSV Task Force and KidSafe as a victim / survivor. She is currently organizing a mandatory reporter training for clergy in Chittenden County and beyond.

As new members of the Council, Revs. Clark and Atwood look forward to increasing connections between member agencies and the faith community. In doing so they hope to spread the important message that God does not wish anyone to experience violence or abuse at the hands of strangers, acquaintances or intimate partners.



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Council Committees

Domestic Violence and the Workplace Committee

Current Members of the Domestic Violence in the Workplace Committee :

Carolyn Hanson, Office of the Attorney General
Heather Holter, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence
Kim Fountain, RU12? Community Center
Karen Tronsgard-Scott, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Cary Brown, Vermont Commission on Women
Andrea Van Liew, Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services
Susan Shattuck, Children Exposed to Domestic Violence
Meg Kuhner, Circle
Ellie Breitmaier, Department for Children and Families
Janice Santiago, Women Helping Battered Women

The *Domestic Violence and the Workplace Committee* is a partnership between the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence. In an effort to study the issue of employment discrimination against victims of domestic violence in Vermont, the Council and the Commission joined forces to build upon the Commission's work in this area.

Over the last two years, the Council collaborated with UVM's Center for Rural Studies and Spectrum Youth and Family Services Violence DV Solutions Program on a statewide study on the effects of domestic violence on the workplace. The study was funded by the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services.

Consultation Committee

The *Consultation Committee* of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence is made up of Council members serving staggered two-year terms as stewards to the vision and long term agenda for the Council.

Co-chairs collaborate with Council staff to gather and make recommendations for priorities to the full Council. Co-Chairs serve two-year terms, providing for effective leadership, and ensuring that Council processes and decision-making structures are followed.

Current Members of the Consultation Committee

Rick Bates, *Council Co-Chair*, Vermont Department of Corrections
Jenny Beaudin, Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs
Meg Kuhner, *Council Co-Chair*, Washington County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
Donna Macomber, Windham County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force
Kelli Prescott, Lamoille County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence
Karen Tronsgard Scott, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Andrea Van Liew, Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services



Council Connections

Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs

What are Batterer Intervention Services?

Created as a response to the need to increase victim safety through enhanced accountability for domestic violence offenders, batterer intervention services offer programs specifically designed to provide education about domestic violence to men who batter and to motivate men who batter to end their abuse and engage in a process of behavior change.

Batterer Intervention Services in Vermont

In 1996, the Vermont Department of Corrections (Corrections) issued the “Statewide Standards for Domestic Abuse Intervention”(Standards). These Standards were developed by a core committee of Corrections staff, domestic violence victim advocates and batterer intervention providers. They were the first effort in Vermont to create a consistent set of expectations for programs that provided services to men who batter and reflected a national trend in this regard. The work of the core committee drew from efforts to develop standards in many other states and from the experience of providing batterer intervention services in Vermont.

In 2001, the Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Services initiated a process of updating the 1996 Standards. The process was a collaboration involving the Department of Corrections, the Vermont Network Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Department of Children and Families, batterer intervention providers and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence. This effort resulted in revised Standards adopted in 2005. These revised Standards included for the first time a requirement for programs to be certified for their compliance. In 2010 the Standards were updated again.

In 2008, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence was established in statute. Amongst other duties, the Council was tasked with developing and maintaining the “Statewide Standards for Programming for Men Who Batter Women” (Standards).

The Standards apply to all programs that provide services to men who batter women in the State of Vermont., including programs provided in the community by independent agencies and programming for batterer intervention services provided by the Vermont Department of Corrections.

Current Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Services Member Programs:

Spectrum’s DV Solutions
Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Franklin/Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans/Northern Essex Counties

Domestic Abuse Education Project of Bennington County
Bennington County

Clara Martin Center
Orange and Windsor Counties

Alternatives
Washington County

BIP of SoVermont
Windsor County

Taking Responsibility
Windham County

Council Committees

Batterer Accountability Committee

The Council's *Batterer Accountability Committee (BAC)* facilitates the process of certifying batterer intervention programs for their compliance with the "Statewide Standards for Programming for Men Who Batter Women" (Standards).

The certification process includes local stakeholders in the review of their regional batterer intervention programs. To be certified, programs must be in compliance with the Statewide Standards or develop a detailed plan for coming into compliance. Only certified programs can receive referrals from the Department of Corrections. Programs must be reviewed every two years to remain certified.

Between 2010 and 2012, the Batterer Accountability Committee oversaw the review and certification of each of the batterer intervention programs currently serving Vermont's 14 counties, and provided training on issues such as *Engaging Men Who Batterer As Parents*, *Assessing Risk in Domestic Violence Cases*, and *Holding Men Accountable and Increasing Victim Safety: Best Practices* for batterer intervention programs.

The BAC recently created a webpage link on the Vermont Network's Website to allow for easier access to certified program information and the Statewide Standards. In 2010, the Batterer Accountability Committee led the Council's regular review and revision of the Statewide Standards.

The Batterer Accountability Committee is staffed by Rebecca Thomforde-Hauser, the Batterer Accountability Coordinator. The Batterer Accountability Coordinator is a contracted position reporting to the Council.

Rebecca facilitates the certification process and provides training and technical assistance to batterer intervention programs, provides a resource for the coordination of batterer intervention services on a statewide level, and provides leadership for the Batterer Accountability Committee.

For a list of certified programs or a copy of the Statewide Standards, contact Rebecca at rebthomforde@hotmail.com or look on the website at www.vtnetwork.org

Current Batterer Accountability Committee Members:

Rick Bates, Committee Chair Vermont Department of Corrections
Ellie Breitmaier, VT Department for Children and Families
Karen Tronsgard-Scott, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Jenny Beaudin, Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs
Heather Holter, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence
Heidi Remick, Department of State's Attorney's Representative
Dawn Matthews, VT Defender General's Office
Amy Messina, Survivor Representative



The 2012 enrollment data for the Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Services (VCBIS) indicates that there were 383 new participants in 2012 and 158 who completed batterer intervention programming.

Council Committees

Council Establishes Legislative Review Committee

The Council has created a Legislative Review Committee, charged with reviewing and making recommendations to the Council regarding legislation relating to domestic violence introduced in the general assembly at the request of any member of the general assembly or on its own initiative.

As the Council on Domestic Violence is statutorily authorized to recommend changes in state programs, laws, administrative regulations, policies, and budgets related to domestic violence, the Legislative Review Committee of the Council is not limited to reviewing introduced legislation, but may review draft legislation, or choose to recommend comment on the work of a summer study committee, or other proposed legislation.

Current Legislative Review Committee Members:

Bob Sheil, Office of the Defender General
TJ Anderson, Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council
Sarah Kenney, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Jenny Beaudin, Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs
Heather Holter, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence
Amy Messina, Survivor Representative



Council Establishes Supervised Visitation Services Committee

By Zoe Gascon

The Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs is the collective voice of the 10 programs in Vermont that work to advance safe contact between children and their non-residential parents and family members in supervised, child-focused environments with equal regard for the safety of children and parent victims.

Each of the ten member visitation centers is separately run, however, each follows the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs Standards for Practice (2007). All of the Visitation Centers provide fully supervised visits and supervised exchange services.

Supervised Visitation programs are unique service organizations in that they are working with parent victims, batterers and their children. Programs of the Coalition work with the whole family to end generational cycles of abuse in the long term and provide safety in the short term.

In 2010 the Council supported the work of the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs (Coalition), in drafting a *Referral Protocol for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services* which was adopted by the Family Court Oversight Committee for use statewide and ensures victims and children have access to safe visitation services from the moment they leave the courtroom.

Council Committees

Representation from the SVP Coalition on the Domestic Violence Council has created opportunities for networking and collaboration with all of the organizations, programs and state agencies, also represented on the Council. Through membership on the Council the Coalition has built and strengthened cross-disciplinary relationships to better serve survivors and their children and comprehensively address batterer accountability throughout Vermont.

The recently published *Review of Vermont's Supervised Visitation Programs for Development of a Multi-Year Action Plan* conducted by the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services contains the recommendation that the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence become the entity responsible for certification of supervised visitation programs.

The Council has accepted the recommendation, as it is well situated to support the development of a process similar to that of the certification of Batterer Intervention Programs for initial and ongoing certification of supervised visitation programs.

The Council recently established the Supervised Visitation Services Committee to lead the process of determining the feasibility of initial and ongoing certification of supervised visitation programs in Vermont. The Council believes that certification will improve consistency and quality of supervised visitation in Vermont while also enhancing credibility and stability.

In 2013-2014 the Supervised Visitation Services Committee of the Council will lead the process of determining the feasibility of initial and ongoing certification of supervised visitation programs in Vermont.

Supervised Visitation Services Committee Members:

Zoe Gascon,
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Ellie Breitmaier,
VT Department for Children and Families

Heather Holter,
Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

Renny Perry,
Court Administrator's Office

Sally Borden,
KidsSafe Collaborative

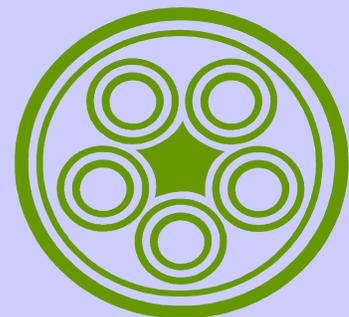
Betsy Gregory,
Guardian At Litem

Christina Grier,
WomenSafe

Nancy Williams
Department for Children and Families

Sharon Davis,
Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services

Jen Potter
Emerge



Council Committees

Domestic Violence Task Force Committee

What is the relationship between local domestic violence task force coordinators and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence?

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence (Council) is charged with the collection, review, and analysis of data and information relating to domestic violence in Vermont. The Council provides assistance in developing effective responses to domestic violence in our state. One of the ways in which the Council carries out these reciprocal functions, is through its connection with local domestic violence task forces.

Each county in Vermont has a local group often referred to as a Domestic Violence Task Force, County Council, or Coordinated Community Response Team. Advocates, members of the criminal justice system, human service providers, and community members meet to engage in dialogue, training and discussion.

Council membership includes a member of each county's local domestic violence task force. The Council's Domestic Violence Task Force Committee (DVTF) is made up of the *se member liaisons* from each county. Member liaisons provide a link between statewide policy and community practice.

Local Task Forces = a Coordinated Community Response at work.

Addison County

The Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence had great success hosting a *Shine a Light on Domestic Violence Awareness Event that simultaneously became a fundraiser.*

Bennington County

The Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Taskforce is a multi-disciplinary group committed to providing coordinated community policy and action to reduce and end domestic and sexual violence in the County. The taskforce is currently updating the Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Protocol.

Caledonia/So. Essex Counties

The Caledonia-Southern Essex Task Force with Umbrella has launched a new campaign. "No Place for Violence" (NP4V) is designed to increase community awareness of the pervasiveness of violence against women in the Northeast Kingdom (NEK) and to emphasize the role everyone can play in reducing and eliminating such violence. Bystander Education Trainings provide participants with the ability to recognize dangerous attitudes and behaviors and skills to safely intervene.

Chittenden County

The Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force (CCDSVTF) has spent the last two years refining its scope and role in most effectively supporting the coordinated community response to domestic and sexual violence. In collaboration with KidSafe Collaborative and other community partners, the CCDSVTF annually hosts a Legislative Forum to inform policy makers on current issues facing victims, survivors, service providers, and the broader community.

Franklin/Grand Isle Counties

The Franklin and Grand Isle Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force has convened a core group of community stakeholders committed to gathering information from local organizations in order to

Council Committees

Domestic Violence Task Force Committee

Franklin/Grand Isle Counties Continued

strengthen and provide new direction for their coordinated community response to domestic and sexual violence.

Lamoille County

The Coordinated Community Response Team of Lamoille Valley meets monthly. Recently, the Response Team surveyed key stakeholders in the community concerned with the safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and stalking violence in order to identify training needs. A new training is being developed. The Response Team has been focused on establishing a new protocol to create consistency throughout Lamoille Valley in response to crimes of domestic, sexual, and stalking violence .

Orange County

The Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force is focusing energy on working with the State's Attorney's office and Department of Corrections to increase offender referrals to batterer intervention treatment programs in their area.

Orleans/Northern Essex Counties

The Orleans/Northern Essex Domestic Violence Task Force ONE DVTF) is updating their protocol. ONE DVTF is also facilitating new conversations about the long standing issue of firearm storage as it relates to relinquished weapons in Relief from Abuse Order cases.

Vermont's County Task Force Member Liaisons:

Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Melissa Deas, Coordinator

Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

Linda Campbell, PAVE

Caledonia-Southern Essex Domestic Violence Task Force

Carolyn Brown, Umbrella

Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

Cathleen Wilson, HOPEWorks (Interim)

Franklin-Grand Isle Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

Kristin Lukens and Gwen LaVoie, VAV

Lamoille County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence

Kelli Prescott, Clarina Howard Nichols Center

Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

Jenny Beaudin, Chair

Orleans-Northern Essex County Domestic Violence Task Force

Amanda Jensen, Vermont State Police

Council Committees

Domestic Violence Task Force Committee

Task Force Member Liaisons Continued:

Rutland County Domestic Violence Task Force

Marianne Kennedy,
Rutland County Women's Network and Shelter

Washington County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response Team

Meg Kuhner, Circle

Windham County Domestic Violence Task Force

Donna Macomber, Women's Crisis Center

Windsor County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

Abby Tassel, WISE

In 2013-2014 the DVTF Committee will focus on crafting a "Best Practices" toolkit for coordinated community response teams, including technical assistance related to responding to domestic violence fatalities, creating services directories, and supporting community partners in responding with consistency to survivors in their community.

And, because so many liaisons identified the challenges associated with lack of funding to support task force coordination—the committee will study and articulate the correlation between stable funding and task force sustainability and success. **The committee will work with the Council Consultation Committee to draft action steps related to securing support for local task force coordination.**

Rutland County

The Rutland County Domestic Violence Taskforce is co-chaired by the Department of Corrections and the Executive Director of the Rutland County Women's Network and Shelter (RCWN&S). The taskforce is a multi-disciplinary group that convenes monthly to identify gaps in services to victims, discuss programmatic needs, and facilitate communitywide domestic violence awareness raising events. Current issues being addressed include a focus on the LAP protocol for law enforcement, Project VISION, and close collaboration on the Rutland Homicide Reduction Demonstration Project.

Washington County

The Washington County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence is working to ensure that all victims receive accurate and coordinated information about domestic violence, especially when children are involved.

Windham County

Windham County's Task Force, *Frontlines* has been airing monthly PSA's on a local radio station. The PSA's are offered up from members of *Frontlines*, and focus on sexual and domestic violence from the perspective of law enforcement, advocates, probation officers, BIP providers and attorneys. It is powerful to hear these potent messages in different voices.

Windsor County

The Windsor County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force maintains a monthly meeting to stay up-to-date on best practices and to network, recognizing that with information and relationships we can work together to be victim centered and hold offenders accountable throughout the county.

Law Enforcement Training

Did You Know?

By TJ Anderson

In 2008, as part of the Domestic Violence Omnibus bill, Section 15 – Law Enforcement Training (20 VSA 2365) was passed. It established a dedicated Vermont Police Academy domestic violence trainer, required all law enforcement officers (full-time and part-time certified) in the state to receive a minimum of 8 hours of training on domestic violence by 2010 in order to maintain their certification, and after, required ongoing training every two years.

The Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council has employed T.J. Anderson as the mandated domestic violence trainer. Per statute, a training curriculum was developed which was approved by the VT Criminal Justice Training Council and the VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Two intensive Train the Trainer seminars have been completed to teach officers, advocates, and prosecutors the approved curriculum and give them the tools to facilitate training around the state.

As we all know, law enforcement officers are often on the front lines regarding responding to domestic violence, serving as the gateway to the criminal justice system and many local and state victim resources. The domestic violence call is one of the most frequent and complicated calls officers deal with and their response to it can have far-reaching positive or negative implications for all involved.

Law enforcement officers need to be well trained in how to respond to domestic violence incidents: knowledgeable in current best practices, changes in the statutes, and relevant case law. This is imperative for the sake of the victim (s), affected children, offender accountability, and for the officer's own safety. Thanks to this statute change, they will receive this vital ongoing training.

During 2012, the Vermont Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division received two thousand six hundred and sixteen (2,616) intake calls that identified co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment. Eight hundred and nine (809) of these intakes were accepted and opened for assessments or investigations resulting in eight-eight (88) substantiations of child maltreatment.

As of April , 2013, a total of 1197 law enforcement officers in Vermont have completed the mandatory domestic violence training.

The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence housed 444 children in shelters or safe homes in 2012.

Network Member Programs' prevention and education work throughout the state reached 20,700 adults and children.

According to the 2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)/Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) **15% of Vermont adults reported that before the age of 18, their parents or adults in the home slapped, hit, kicked, punched, or beat each other up, at least once.**

Of Vermont's 225 adult homicides between 1994 and 2012, half or 112 of them were domestic violence related.

Vermont Courts and Domestic Violence

Judicial Caucus of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

The Members of the Judicial Caucus:

Brian Valentine, Esq.,
Vermont Family Bar

Hon. Barney Bloom,
Assistant Judge

Kathleen Pearl,
Court Clerk

Hon. Thomas Devine,
District Court Judge

Betsy Gregory,
Guardian Ad Litem

Marjorie Stinchcombe, Esq.,
Vermont Legal Aid

Renny Perry, Esq.,
Court Administrator's Office

Hon. Barb Zander, Chair
Family Court Magistrate

Carolyn Hanson, Esq.,
VT Attorney General's Office

Bob Sheil, Esq.,
VT Defender General's Office

Michelle Olvera, Esq.,
VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

The Judicial Caucus (Caucus) of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence (Council) exists as a vehicle to maintain Council access and connection to the Judiciary, and to enhance the relationship between the various arms of the Judicial System, the Council and the community concerned about domestic violence. During 2010-12 the Caucus reported :

- The protocol for Court Ordered Supervised Visitation and Exchange is available on the Judiciary's website.
- It is a goal of the Judiciary that requests for relief from abuse can be filed at any courthouse and sent to whichever county has jurisdiction. Pilot courts are beginning to set up e-filing options in some civil divisions.
- The Vermont Judiciary website has electronic services links.
- The Vermont Judiciary is overhauling case management system with goals of standardizing input and output; capturing data for analyzing statewide trends.
- The Caucus gave Council members an opportunity to comment on a draft of a new enhanced affidavit in support of request for relief from abuse. The enhanced affidavit was approved by Family Court Oversight and a final new form rolled out in 2012.
- The Caucus discussed request for proposals for gun storage facilities from Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, the state of Wisconsin Judicial Procedures for Firearm Surrender for Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, and Harassment Injunctions, protocol, etc.

Vermont Courts and Domestic Violence

The Judicial Caucus has set the following goals for itself for 2012-2014:

1. Analyze the recommendations contained in the National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Report on "Civil Protection Orders: Improved Practices".
2. Review recommendations of the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission to the Judiciary.
3. Collaborate on revisions to the RFA court forms and procedures.

Vermont Superior Court-Family Division										
Relief from Domestic Abuse and Exploitation of Disabled/Elderly										
For Year Ending June 30, 2012										
Court	Petitions Filed During Year			Time of Filing			Method of Disposition			Total
	Abuse	Exploit.	Total	During Court Hours	After Court Hours	No Order Granted	Temp Order Granted	Final Order Granted	Transferred to another court	
Addison	153	3	156	145	11	47	49	58	0	154
Bennington	300	4	304	192	112	54	115	132	5	306
Caledonia	218	5	223	192	31	67	59	96	2	224
Chittenden	630	16	646	473	173	102	314	223	2	641
Essex	25	1	26	24	2	2	13	8	1	24
Franklin	325	3	328	267	61	79	162	93	0	334
Grand Isle	46	3	49	39	10	12	22	17	0	51
Lamoille	160	2	162	111	51	57	52	49	0	158
Orange	144	7	151	126	25	43	52	55	0	150
Orleans	184	3	187	143	44	6	124	62	2	194
Rutland	654	8	662	435	227	87	410	169	1	667
Washington	347	10	357	277	80	82	142	130	3	357
Windham	277	1	278	199	79	83	83	117	0	283
Windsor	344	6	350	230	120	119	133	86	1	339
TOTAL	3,807	72	3,879	2,853	1,026	840	1,730	1,295	17	3,882

RELIEF FROM ABUSE ORDERS From July of 2011 through June of 2012, according to the Office of Court Administrator, 3,879 petitions for relief from abuse and exploitation orders were filed with 1,295 final orders granted, and 1,730 temporary orders issued without a final order, 840 matters resulting in no order and 17 cases being transferred to another court.

STALKING AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ORDERS Title 12 provides for protection orders for non-household and non-family members regarding stalking and sexual assault. From July of 2011 through June of 2012, according to the Office of Court Administrator, in Superior Courts statewide, 414 **temporary** stalking orders were granted, of 651 requested, and 159 stalking **final** orders were granted. In Superior Courts statewide, there were 36 **temporary** sexual assault orders granted of 42 requested, and 22 sexual assault **final** orders granted.

Did You Know? Vermont Data and Information

According to the **Vermont Center for Justice Research** and the **Court Administrator's Office**, a total of 503 domestic violence charges were disposed of during fiscal year 2012. Of the 503, there were 124 felony charges and 379 misdemeanor charges. 119 felonies plead guilty and 367 misdemeanors plead guilty. There were 5 guilty felony verdicts and 12 guilty misdemeanor verdicts.

SENTENCE * Final Charge Crosstabulation					
Count					
		Final Charge		Total	
		Felony	Misdemeanor		
SENTENCE	INCARCERATION	85	68	153	
	SPLIT SENTENCE	19	52	71	
	PROBATION	10	144	154	
	FINE	0	8	8	
	SENTENCE DEFERRED	10	107	117	
Total		124	379	503	
2012 Domestic Violence Charges By County					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Addison	32	6.4	6.4	6.4
	Bennington	49	9.7	9.7	16.1
	Caledonia	41	8.2	8.2	24.3
	Chittenden	90	17.9	17.9	42.1
	Essex	9	1.8	1.8	43.9
	Franklin	51	10.1	10.1	54.1
	Grand Isle	4	.8	.8	54.9
	Lamoille	10	2.0	2.0	56.9
	Orange	20	4.0	4.0	60.8
	Orleans	27	5.4	5.4	66.2
	Rutland	36	7.2	7.2	73.4
	Washington	58	11.5	11.5	84.9
	Windham	47	9.3	9.3	94.2
	Windsor	29	5.8	5.8	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Did You Know? Vermont Data and Information

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

According to the Vermont Department of Corrections, 1676 persons were under the supervision of Corrections as of December 31, 2012 for domestic violence related offenses. Of those offenders, 468 were incarcerated, 815 were on probation, 133 were on parole, 252 were on furlough status, and 8 were on varied other statuses.

Of the overall population of 2037 offenders incarcerated on 12/31/2012, 468 or 22.97% were incarcerated for a domestic violence related offense (all violent offenders accounted for 1266 or 62.15% of the incarcerated population).

Of the overall population of 8974 offenders under community supervision on 12/31/2012, 1208 or 13.46% were under supervision for a domestic violence related offense (all violent offenders accounted for 2821 or 31.44% of the community population).

Female offenders constituted 21.81% of those under field supervision and 6.23% of those incarcerated. Female offenders constituted 13.68% of violent offenders under field supervision and 4.27% of violent offenders incarcerated. Female offenders constituted 11.18% of domestic assault offenders under field supervision and 3.42% of domestic assault offenders incarcerated.

Importantly, these numbers only reflect persons for whom the designated domestic violence offense is the most serious offense. The Department cautions that there are domestic violence offenders with other charges which are deemed more serious by Corrections for classification purposes (e.g. sexual assault, kidnapping, homicide). Thus, the numbers given here are somewhat lower than actual.

1. Under the supervision of the Department of Corrections includes: prison; reentry; pre-approved furlough; home detention; home confinement; supervised community sentence; parole; and probation.

The offenses include misdemeanor domestic assault; misdemeanor and felony violations of abuse prevention orders; 1st and 2nd degree aggravated domestic assault; and misdemeanor and felony stalking.

The percentages given for incarcerated violent and DV offenders are somewhat low, because the total population count is a bit inflated in that it includes federal detainees and others not held in connection with Vermont charges.

Council Goals and Priorities: Criminally Charged Survivors

In 2013-2014 the Council will continue to facilitate discussion with Council members about how to improve Vermont's response to women offenders and criminally charged survivors. This may include conversations with the Domestic Violence Task Force Liaisons Committee about how to better connect criminally charges victims of domestic violence with vital services in their communities.

Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Appointed and Ex-Officio Members

Amy Messina	<i>Survivor</i>
Kim Fountain	<i>Same Sex Domestic Violence Service Provider, SafeSpace</i>
Keri Darling	<i>Deaf and Disability Service Provider, Deaf Vermonter's Advocacy Services</i>
Heidi Remick	<i>Representative of the Department of State's Attorneys</i>
Todd Shove	<i>Prosecutor from STOP Domestic Violence Unit</i>
Rev. Krista Beth Atwood	<i>Representative of the Vermont Faith Community</i>
Susan Shattuck	<i>Representative of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence, VT Children's Aid Society</i>
Hon. Barb Zander	<i>Family Court</i>
Hon. Thomas Devine	<i>District Judge</i>
Hon. Barney Bloom	<i>Assistant Judge</i>
Penny Carrier	<i>Court Manager</i>
Betsy Gregory	<i>Guardian At Litem</i>
Marjorie Stinchcombe	<i>Vermont Legal Aid</i>
Brian Valentine, Esq.	<i>Vermont Family Bar</i>
Renny Perry, Esq.	<i>Court Administrators Office</i>
Karen Tronsgard-Scott	<i>Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
(proxy: T.J. Anderson)	<i>Criminal Justice Training Council</i>
Designee: Rick Bates	<i>Commissioner, Department of Corrections or Designee</i>
Designee: Dixie Henry	<i>Secretary of the Agency of Human Services or Designee</i>
Designee: Carolyn Hanson, Esq.	<i>Attorney General or Designee</i>
Cary Brown	<i>Vermont Commission on Women</i>
Designee: Ellie Breitmaier	<i>Commissioner, Department for Children and Families or Designee</i>
Designee: Ingrid Jonas	<i>Commissioner, Department of Public Safety or Designee</i>
Designee: Bob Sheil	<i>Defender General or Designee</i>

Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Appointed and Ex-Officio Members

Sherriff W. Samuel Hill	<i>Vermont Sheriff's Association</i>
Jenny Beaudin	<i>Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs</i>
Jeffrey Wallin	<i>Vermont Crime Information Center</i>
Connie Button	<i>Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs</i>
Chief Christopher Brickell	<i>Vermont Police Chief's Association</i>
Designees: Mark Oettinger and Barbara Crippen	<i>Commissioner of the Department of Education or Designee</i>
Andrea Van Liew	<i>Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services</i>
Melissa Deas	<i>Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
Linda Campbell	<i>Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
Carolyn Brown	<i>Caledonia- So. Essex Counties Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
Cathleen Wilson (Interim)	<i>Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
Kris Lukens-Rose and Gwen Lavoie	<i>Franklin and Grand Isle Counties Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
Kelli Prescott	<i>Lamoille County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
Kym Anderson	<i>Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
Amanda Jensen	<i>Orleans- N. Essex Counties Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
Marianne Kennedy	<i>Rutland County Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
Meg Kuhner	<i>Washington County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response Team</i>
Donna Macomber	<i>Windham County Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
Abby Tassel	<i>Windsor County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>

Council Contact

**If you would like more information about the
 Vermont Council on Domestic Violence,
 please contact Heather Holter, Council Coordinator at (802) 917-1793
 or heather_holter@tds.net**