

## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

(802) 917-1793 [vtdivcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:vtdivcouncil@gmail.com) P.O. Box 405 Montpelier, VT 05609

# Talking Points \$124,000 Domestic Violence Accountability Programming and Statewide Coordination

**To:** Rep. Catherine Toll, Chair, Rep. Peter J. Fagan, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Appropriations

**From:** Heather Holter, Coordinator, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

**Re:** SFY 2017-2018 Budget Request for Domestic Violence Accountability  
Coordinator/Programming

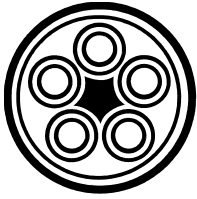
**Date:** 2/16/17

### **What are Domestic Violence Accountability Programs?**

- Domestic Violence Accountability Programs (DVAPs) are community-based, weekly co-facilitated group education programs.
- Individuals need not be charged with any crime, but the wide majority of offenders are court ordered to attend.
- Offenders who have committed misdemeanor level domestic violence offenses gain skills and support to change their behavior, stay out of jail, and stay in the community.
- Group participants understand the impact of their abuse, and learn how to replace tactics of coercive control with respect and nonviolence.
- Partners and children are safer, because a community program connects them with an advocate from the Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- Each program is facilitated by two co-facilitators.
- Programs adhere to the *Statewide Standards for Domestic Violence Accountability Programs* which ensure consistency in approach and effectiveness.

### **How are Vermont DVAP Programs funded?**

- Programs currently receive no state or federal funding.
- Programs currently charge offenders on a sliding scale rate beginning at \$25 per person. All monies collected need to cover facilitators' preparation time, training and professional development, expenses, and facilitation time.



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## Funding History for Domestic Violence Accountability Programs

- While many victims rely on the criminal justice system – especially the courts – to provide safety, the system for providing accountability to offenders has recently undergone significant changes in funding in Vermont.
- In 2013, the Department of Corrections modified all programming in correctional institutions effectively ending corrections-based programming focused specifically on domestic violence.
- In 2014, the statewide appropriation that had traditionally supported community-based domestic violence accountability programs was eliminated.
- Less than a year later, the state’s largest Domestic Violence Accountability Program provider (Spectrum), serving 6 of Vermont’s 14 counties, closed their program.
- In June of 2016, the Department of Corrections grant funding for the contract of the Domestic Violence Accountability Coordinator ended, leaving the Council on Domestic Violence with no staff to conduct certification of programs, sustain technical assistance, or training for DVAPs.
- **As of January 2017, these programs no longer benefit from *any* designated funding, and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence will be unable to fulfill its statutory duty to certify program compliance with *Statewide Standards*.**
- The courts and the Agency of Human Services can only make referrals to certified Domestic Violence Accountability Programs--without sustainable funding in the coming fiscal year all certification processes will end, which means that Domestic Violence Accountability programming will cease to exist.

## How many people benefit from DVAPS?

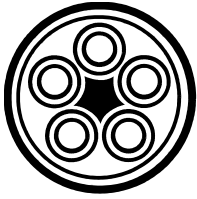
- There are 12 certified programs providing services in Vermont. Two of these programs are in the interim certification process. Without funding, programs will have no support for certification.
- Each year, over 300 individuals enroll in domestic violence accountability programs in Vermont. In 2015, 350 offenders enrolled in domestic violence accountability programs in Vermont. This number is an increase over 2014 (320), even with the loss of our biggest provider in 2015.
- Department for Children and Families has made over 40 referrals to DVAP programs this year.

## How do we know DVAPs work?

- The Mirabal Project Study of similar DVA Programs in the UK found that “Far fewer women reported being physically injured after the programme (61% before compared to 2% after) and the extent to which children saw/overheard violence also dropped substantially (from 80% to 8%).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dur.ac.uk/criva/projectmirabal>



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## How are Vermont DVA Programs monitored?

- DVA Programs are required by statute to be certified in Vermont. They must adhere to *Vermont's Statewide Standards for Domestic Violence Accountability Programs (Statewide Standards)* to receive referrals from the VT Department of Children and Families, the VT Department of Corrections, and the Court. DVAPs accept self-referrals.
- The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence oversees training and certification for Domestic Violence Accountability Programs, through a part-time Coordinator and a Council committee.
- Local coordinated community response teams participate in biennial re-certification of DVAPS. Communities are deeply invested in the quality of this vital programming.
- The standards and certification process in Vermont provide for training and technical assistance and ensure consistency of services throughout the state.

## Why does Vermont need community based DVAPs?

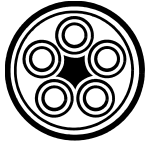
- DVA Programs are part of a continuum of criminal justice system interventions for men who use violence against intimate partners. We need community DVAPs, along with Risk Reduction Programming through the Department of Corrections. Vermont is now well-situated to identify which programming will most benefit perpetrators of domestic violence, since the Department of Corrections will soon implement the DVSI-R (Domestic Violence Severity Instrument-Revised) a tool which allows trained staff to more accurately assess which response from the criminal justice system will effectively hold the offender accountable, and ensure victim safety.
- This Spring, the Vermont Department of Corrections will train three community DVAP sites in the evidence-based ACT-V curriculum. The ACT-V curriculum is designed to reduce/end men's use of abusive and controlling behaviors and to increase men's use of respectful, adaptive, healthy relationship behaviors.<sup>2</sup> A study comparing men who participated in ACT-V programs with men who participated in a traditional DVAP curriculum found significantly fewer participants were arrested in the 12 months following the intervention.<sup>3</sup> However, programs will be unable to take advantage of this opportunity without funding.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.contextualpsychology.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Zarling, A., Bannon, S., & Berta, M. (in press). Evaluation of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for domestic violence offenders. To appear in *Psychology of Violence*.





## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Basic Information

### ***The Vision of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence***

We envision a Vermont where:

- peaceful and safe families are the norm,
- all people are valued,
- everyone feels safe in their community, workplace, school and home,
- and all Vermonters have access to justice and equity.

### ***Council Purpose and Mission***

The purpose of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence is to provide leadership for Vermont's statewide effort to eradicate domestic violence.

The Council supports statewide systems and communities to:

- Be pro-active in their response to domestic violence,
- Craft intervention and support that is immediate, ongoing, survivor-centered, and trauma- informed.

The Council:

- Facilitates opportunities for dialogue, advocacy, education, and support among state agencies, advocacy groups, and the public.
- Works to continuously expand the knowledge of council members about the emotional, physical, psychological and economic impacts of domestic violence on individuals and communities especially in marginalized communities.

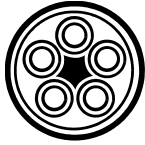
### ***History of the Vermont Governor's Council on Domestic Violence***

The Governor's Council on Domestic Violence was created in 1993 by Governor Howard Dean and Chief Justice Frederic W. Allen. The Council was charged with serving the community domestic violence task forces in their efforts to eliminate family violence by facilitating the coordination of services, information and education. The 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 Council on Domestic Violence in 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.

The Council's mission has been carefully crafted to include specific duties.

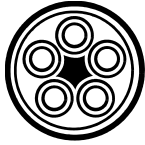


## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Basic Information

### *Duties in Statute*

- **Provide leadership** for Vermont's statewide effort to eradicate domestic violence.
- **Facilitate** opportunities for: dialogue, advocacy, education, and support among state agencies, advocacy groups, and the public.
- **Collect, review, and analyze data** and information relating to domestic violence.
- Provide **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;
- Specifically, the council shall **work with the Department of State's Attorneys and the Department of Corrections** to develop recommendations for practice in: evidence-based prosecution, risk assessment with domestic violence offenders, the use of deferred sentences in domestic violence cases, standardized probation conditions for domestic violence offenders, appropriate programming options for domestic violence offenders, and strategies for addressing victims of domestic violence who commit crimes as a result of the coercion of a batterer.
- **Recommend changes in state programs, laws, administrative regulations, policies, and budgets** related to domestic violence.
- **Establish and maintain standards for intervention programs for perpetrators of domestic violence, and develop a process for certifying that programs are complying with the standards.**
- **Review and comment upon 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; and
- **Study the issue of employment discrimination against victims of domestic violence and suggest model workplace protections and policies.**
- **Collaborate with the Vermont Fatality Review commission to develop strategies for implementing the commission's recommendations.**
- **Make a biennial report to the general assembly, the governor, the supreme court, and the people of Vermont** explaining all relevant data about domestic violence collected by the council, and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of Vermont's current domestic violence intervention response strategies.

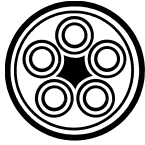
Quarterly Council Meetings are held in March, June, September, and December, and are open to the public.



## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Basic Information

### Current Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Members

Membership Role	Current Member
<i>Survivor</i>	Amy Messina
<i>Same Sex Domestic Violence Service Provider</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
<i>Deaf and Disability Service Provider</i>	Keri Darling
<i>Representative of the Department of State's Attorneys</i>	Erica Marthage, Esq.
<i>Prosecutor from STOP Domestic Violence Unit</i>	Deb Celis, Esq.
<i>Representative of the Vermont Faith Community</i>	Rev. Krista Beth Atwood
<i>Representative of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence</i>	Susan Shattuck
<i>Representative of the Family Court</i>	Hon. Barb Zander
<i>District Judge</i>	Hon. Thomas Devine
<i>Assistant Judge</i>	Hon. Joel Page
<i>Court Manager</i>	Kathleen Pearl
<i>Guardian ad litem (GAL)</i>	Betsy Gregory
<i>Representative from VT Legal Aid</i>	Sarah Kagle, Esq.
<i>Representative of the VT Family Bar</i>	Kathryn Kennedy, Esq.
<i>Representative of the Court Administrators Office</i>	David Kennedy, JD
<i>Representative from the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>	Karen Tronsgard-Scott
<i>Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Training Council</i>	Designee: Jenn Firpo
<i>Commissioner of the Department of Corrections or Designee</i>	Designee: Rick Bates
<i>Secretary of the Agency of Human Services or Designee</i>	Designee: Paul Dragon
<i>Attorney General or Designee</i>	Designee: Carolyn Hanson, Esq.
<i>Representative of the VT Commission on Women</i>	Hannah Myers
<i>Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families or Designee</i>	Designee: Ellie Breitmaier
<i>Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or Designee</i>	Designee: Cpt. Ingrid Jonas
<i>Defender General or Designee</i>	Designee: Marshall Pahl, Esq.
<i>Representative of the VT Sheriff's Association</i>	Sherriff W. Samuel Hill
<i>Representative of the Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs</i>	Melissa Deas
<i>Representative of the VT Criminal Information Center</i>	Jeffrey Wallin
<i>Representative of the VT Supervised Visitation Coalition</i>	Amanda McFarland



## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Basic Information

<i>Membership Role</i>	<i>Current Member</i>
<i>Representative of the VT Police Chief's Association</i>	Chief Tony Facos
<i>Commissioner of the Department of Education or Designee</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
<i>Representative of the VT Center for Crime Victim Services</i>	Cara Cookson, JD
<i>Representative of the Addison County Task Force</i>	Christina Grier
<i>Representative of the Bennington County Task Force</i>	Linda Campbell
<i>Representative of the Caledonia- So. Essex Counties Task Force</i>	Elisa Lucozzi
<i>Representative of the Chittenden County Task Force</i>	Anera Foco
<i>Representative of the Franklin and Grand Isle Counties Task Force</i>	Kris Lukens
<i>Representative of the Lamoille County Task Force</i>	Colleen Twomey
<i>Representative of the Orange County Task Force</i>	Linda Ingold
<i>Representative of the Orleans- N. Essex Counties Task Force</i>	Roxie Rivard
<i>Representative of the Rutland County Task Force</i>	Avaloy Lanning
<i>Representative of the Washington County Task Force</i>	Meg Kuhner
<i>Representative of the Windham County Task Force</i>	Donna Macomber
<i>Representative of Windsor County Task Force</i>	Abby Tassel

### Council Structure

The Council is staffed by a part-time coordinator. Two Co-Chairs support the Council's success in performing its purpose and responsibilities.

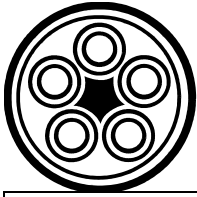
The Council has committees to carry out its duties, including the Consultation/Legislative Committee, Domestic Violence Accountability Committee, Judicial Caucus, and Domestic Violence Task Force Committee. The Council Coordinator works closely with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission, serves on the Mandatory Domestic Violence Law Enforcement Training Committee, and maintains connections with the Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs, and the Coalition of Domestic Violence Accountability Programs.

An employee of the Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence functions as a Supervised Visitation Services Liaison, supporting the Council's connection with the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs.

### Council Contact

Heather Holter, Council Coordinator  
 Vermont Council on Domestic Violence  
 (802) 917-1793 or vtdvcouncil@gmail.com





## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

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# Testimony \$124,000 Domestic Violence Accountability Programming and Statewide Coordination

**To:** Rep. Catherine Toll, Chair, Rep. Peter J. Fagan, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Appropriations

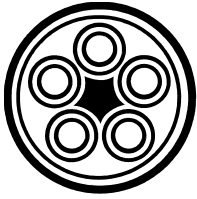
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## How many people benefit from DVAPS?

- There are **12 certified programs providing services in Vermont**. Two of these programs are in the interim certification process.
- Each year, over 300 individuals enroll in DVAP programs in Vermont. **350 offenders enrolled in programs last year**, which was an increase over 320 in 2014.
- The Department for Children and Families has referred over 40 men to programs this year.

## How do we know DVAPs work?

- The Mirabal Project Study of similar DVA Programs in the UK found "Far fewer women reported being physically injured after the programme (61% before compared to 2% after) and the extent to which children saw/overheard violence also dropped substantially (from 80% to 8%).<sup>1</sup>
- Compared to participants in Duluth Model or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy groups, significantly fewer ACTV participants acquired any new charges, domestic assault charges, or violent charges. ACTV participants also acquired significantly fewer charges on average in the one year following treatment.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dur.ac.uk/criva/projectmirabal>

<sup>2</sup> Zarling, A., Bannon, S., & Berta, M. (in press). Evaluation of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for domestic violence offenders. To appear in *Psychology of Violence*



## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Certified Domestic Violence Accountability Programs

County	Program	Contact information	Schedule	Fee per class
<b>Addison</b>	<b>Domestic Violence to Responsible Choices</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Melissa Deas	<a href="mailto:Melissadeas5@gmail.com">Melissadeas5@gmail.com</a> 802-734-9256	Wednesday: 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Middlebury	\$40 (will reduce to \$30 for men on disability or at poverty level)
<b>Bennington</b>	<b>The Domestic Abuse Education Project of Bennington County</b>  <u>Contact person:</u> Jim Henry/Karen O'Malley	36 Munsell St. Hoosick Falls, NY 12090 518-894-4752  <a href="mailto:jameshenrypatrick@gmail.com">jameshenrypatrick@gmail.com</a>	Wednesday: 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Thursday: 6:30 - 8:00 a.m.	\$30 \$15 for men on disability and with approval of referral source
<b>Caledonia</b>	<b>Northeast Kingdom Counseling</b>	Cheryl Bowen nekcounseling@gmail.com	New Group Starting	
<b>Chittenden</b>	<b>Domestic Violence to Responsible Choices</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Melissa Deas	<a href="mailto:Melissadeas5@gmail.com">Melissadeas5@gmail.com</a> 802-734-9256	Tuesday: 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Thursday: 5:30-7:30 p.m. South Burlington	\$40
<b>Franklin</b>	<b>North West Accountability Program</b>	Judy Rickstad 802-355-9931 jricksta@uvm.edu	Thursdays: 5:30-7:30 p.m.	\$30 Intake Groups are \$40 (unless someone is a veteran or on a fixed income)
<b>Grand Island</b>	Currently no program.			
<b>Lamoille</b>	<b>Northeast Kingdom Counseling</b>	Cheryl Bowen nekcounseling@gmail.com	New Group Starting	\$25 intake and \$25 for class
<b>Orleans/ Northern Essex</b>	<b>Northeast Kingdom Counseling</b>	Cheryl Bowen nekcounseling@gmail.com	Wednesday: 5-6:30 pm	\$25 intake and \$25 for class

<b>County</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Contact information</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Fee per class</b>
<b>Orange/ Windsor</b>	<b>The Clara Martin Center</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Renee Davis For intake: (802) 295-1311 Ext. 468	PO Box 816 Wilder, VT 05088 802-295-1311 <a href="mailto:rdavis@claramartin.org">rdavis@claramartin.org</a>	Randolph: Referrals from Orange County are sent to Wilder for programming. Wednesday: 9:00- 10:30 a.m.	Can bill insurance for assessment. \$40/class
<b>Rutland</b>	<b>Alternative Solutions</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Todd Prevost	92 State Street Rutland, VT 05701 <a href="mailto:tprevost153@gmail.com">tprevost153@gmail.com</a> (802) 786-5158	Monday: 8:45 – 10am Tuesday: 5 – 7 pm	\$40 for intake \$35 for class
<b>Washington</b>	<b>Alternatives</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Saul Schoenberg/ Gary Gordon For Intake: Mary Thompson Veren	PO Box 1247 Montpelier, VT 05602 (802) 229-4015 <a href="mailto:resoprogram@sover.net">resoprogram@sover.net</a> <a href="mailto:resomary@sover.net">resomary@sover.net</a> <a href="mailto:garyg@wcmhs.org">garyg@wcmhs.org</a>	Wednesday: 5:30 -7:00 pm Wednesday: 7:15 - 8:45 pm	\$30-\$50 sliding scale
<b>Windsor</b>	<b>Domestic Violence Intervention Program</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Trish LaPlante	P.O. Box 753 Springfield, VT 05156 (802) 376-6046 <a href="mailto:daipvt@live.com">daipvt@live.com</a>	Tuesday: 7:50-9:50 am Tuesday: 10:00 am-12:00 pm Tuesday: 5:30-7:30 pm	\$30 intake \$30/class
<b>Windham</b>	<b>Taking Responsibility</b> <u>Contact person:</u> Bill Pelz-Walsh	167 Main St. #207 Brattleboro, VT 05301 (802) 258-3914 <a href="mailto:billpelzwalsh@gmail.com">billpelzwalsh@gmail.com</a>	Tuesday: 3:30-5:00 p.m. 5:30– 7:00 p.m. Wednesday 9:00-10:30 a.m.	\$75 intake \$30-\$40 sliding scale for class. Can bill insurance