

# ***The New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women***

## **Batterer's Program Standards**

### **Goals of Batterers Program**

*To promote equality and non violence as a valued alternative*

- 1) To protect victims and their children.
- 2) To hold perpetrators accountable for their violent and abusive behaviors towards family/community and self.
- 3) To teach alternatives to power and control

### **Program Standard**

- 1) Group format is preferred.
- 2) 26 weeks is the minimum: A length of 52 weeks, or longer, is preferred.
- 3) Each group should run from a minimum of 1.5 hours.
- 4) 8-12 people are the ideal number for a group.
- 5) Programs will contact the courts regarding compliance with court ordered attendance and participation requirements including fees.

### **Staff**

- 1) Co –facilitation is preferred, ideally by a male and female team.
- 2) A Masters level program *supervisor* with a NJ Domestic Violence Specialist certification and a license in a preferred professional discipline is preferred; otherwise the supervisor should have the equivalent 180 hours of DV education (see certification at [www.njcbw.org](http://www.njcbw.org)) and 2,000 hours of experience working in the domestic violence field.
- 3) Experience working with victims and children should be a prerequisite to working with batterers.
- 4) BIP facilitators should be comprised of people who represent as much of the cultural diversity of the community as possible.

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- 5) Bilingual staff must be provided where needed.
- 6) All group facilitators are entitled to appropriate supervision.
- 7) BIP staff should meet regularly with the lead county domestic violence program. Ideally all BIP staff should have the opportunity to collaborate with victim services programs.

### **Duty to Warn**

- 1) Batterers Service Providers have a duty to warn victims based on the 1976 Tarasoff decision, (a therapist's duty to protect the victim through both warning the victim and notifying the law enforcement authorities).\*

### **Victim Contact**

Service Providers must remain cognizant that batterers programs can never promise to protect victims, and should encourage victims to have a safety plan.

- 1) When victim contact occurs, either through outreach by the domestic violence program or the victim,
  - a) Information about services available for the victim should always be provided, (victims however, should never be pressured to attend domestic violence programs).
  - b) Limitations of the batterers program should be discussed.
- 3) While victims may be strongly encouraged to report further violence to the batterers program, police and the legal system; victims should never be pressured to divulge information which they are not comfortable revealing.

### **Batterers Confidentiality**

- 1) Batterers programs should **require** a specific waiver of confidentiality from the batterer in accordance with the requirements of the BIP as a part of their program admissions.

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## **Community Response**

1) Therapist working with batterers and/or victims of domestic violence are encouraged to develop a strong working relationship with a domestic violence program and/ or professionals who have extensive education and experience in domestic violence which is imperative for supervision and support.

## **Education**

To Probation  
To Judges

\* A copy of the *duty to warn* mandate must be attached.

## **BIPs Curriculum vs. Anger Management**

It is the NJCBW position that Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIPs) must recognize that domestic abuse is most often a sustained pattern of coercive control of one partner by the other that exists in the absence of any anger provocation. The NJCBW believes that Batterer Intervention Programs are distinct from anger management programs. While anger management programs do teach their participants important behavioral skills regarding the identification of anger triggers and the development of alternative coping choices, BIPs are more comprehensive. BIPs may include but must not be limited to material related to anger management and other important social-emotional skills such as communication and conflict resolution.

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The theoretical foundation of NJCBW approved programs must include the recognition of the historical legacy of centuries of male domination of females. Therefore, a BIP program will address faulty expectations of male entitlement on the part of the abuser. Further, BIPs seek to break the generational cycle of domestic violence. Thus, the curricula must address current issues related to the abuser's parenting, as well as an exploration of the abuser's own socialization in regards to learned patterns of domination and submission. Because of the breadth and depth of material that is important to address in a BIP, the time length of a BIP is necessarily longer than the typical time-frame of a specifically focused anger-management program.

**10/5/04**

### ***Addressing the Batterer's Behavior with respect to the Parental Role***

Batterers programming must include a component to address the batterer's abusive/violent interactions exhibited within the children's purview as well any specific abusive, manipulative behavior directed toward the children.

Programming must educate the batterer about the harms that come to children from being exposed to violent and abusive behaviors. This education should address the fear and terror children experience during and after the violent events as well as their coping responses. Programming components should address the batterer's manipulative and controlling behavior that involves the use

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of the children as a weapon as well as the direct attacks that undermine parenting ability and effectiveness.

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