



**PREVENTION  
CONNECTION**  
THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

A Project of  
  
CALCASA

**Prevention Connection Web Conference  
The 'Why' and 'How of Local Policy Change: Exploring Applications for  
Violence Against Women  
Text Chat Q&A  
Friday, May 12, 2006**

**Q1: What are some local prevention policy examples you can think of?**

**NOTE:** Responses to Q1 varied in content, and included examples of local prevention policy and organizational practices, as well as intervention policy and practices. In order to highlight the distinctions between these, we separated responses into the following categories: 1) Intervention Organizational Practices, 2) Intervention Policies, 3) Prevention Community Education, 4) Prevention Organizational Practices, and 5) Prevention Policies. We apologize if we placed some examples in an inappropriate category.

**Intervention Organizational Practices**

**A:** screening for domestic violence in doctors' office and at emergency rooms

**A:** Universal screening for domestic violence in the healthcare setting  
(Cambridge)

**A:** Safe Haven Project in Chicago, City Dept of Public Health

**A:** Seminars requiring students to understand domestic violence as a pastoral issue.

**A:** supervised visitation centers

**A:** court interpreter

**Intervention Policies**

**A:** Requiring police to report presence of children at domestic violence incidents in San Francisco, CA.

**A:** Mandated arrest law- NY State

**A:** We've dealt with our local courts to increase bail amounts for those arrested to make it more difficult for them to bail out and providing greater time for the victim to plan their next move and safety.

**A:** Requiring local and county law enforcement to report to their local domestic

violence center any incidents of DV or Rape

**A:** Marriage License Fees going to local shelters-South Dakota

**A:** Safe Havens Policy for a safe place for domestic violence victims to meet with abuser for custody

**A:** Victims of Crime Compensation that makes perpetrators responsible for med bills.

**A:** Holding Batterer's accountable through court ordering Safe Haven

### **Prevention Community Education**

**A:** There are groups in the DC high schools for teenaged young men sponsored by Men Can Stop Rape.

**A:** Dating Violence in the schools

**A:** Education about Date Rape in Schools for Teens

**A:** The men's program out of William and Mary, I can't remember name

**A:** The White Ribbon Campaign, 3rd Week of October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month), Nassau County NY

**A:** Having seminars with teens in regards to domestic violence

**A:** Re: Heather Powers comments about Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR): MCSR sponsors and leads groups of high school boys called "Men of Strength" Clubs where boys can discuss alternatives to violence and the "counter-story," i.e., ways to challenge the norms you've mentioned

### **Prevention Organizational Practices**

**A:** DELTA Project initiative nation-wide (Holland MI)

### **Prevention Policies**

**A:** The Domestic Violence-Free Zone Initiative of Cambridge, MA

**A:** Zero tolerance for domestic violence among employees of certain state agencies (Oregon)

**A:** State University of New York Violence Prevention Project/policies about domestic violence & sexual assault crimes on campus

**A:** United States Marine Corps Prevention policy against women

**A:** College/University Campus policy change re providing info to all students on sexual assault in California.

### **Q2: Why is local policy change critical in ending VAW?**

**A:** It keeps everyone on the same page.

**A:** It incorporates all systems to work together

**A:** all politics are local

**A:** It holds people accountable

**A:** Every locale has different needs, different circumstances

**A:** Women and children exposed to domestic violence live in localities.

**A:** Auto notification when perpetrator is released from jail.

**A:** Local policy is more specific to the community's needs than state or national policy

**A:** So the message is clear

**A:** It empowers women

**A:** Shows legal and societal zero tolerance

**A:** It connects to/understands local needs

**A:** With policy change it can build more effective collaborative

**A:** Local policy is the first step in facilitating incremental change. And, incremental change tends to last longer and have more impact on the populace.

**A:** Sometimes Federal policy enforcement doesn't trickle down unless there is local policy in place

**A:** Because these are the women that we are providing services to in our local community and policy will have direct impact on their lives

**A:** It sends a message about what is acceptable and not acceptable within a community - sets social norms

**A:** Policy needs to be consistent on every level

**A:** Because, without the one-on-one interaction at the local level, general norms that lead to violence against women will never change

**A:** Violence prevention works best when local systems work together.

**A:** It's unacceptable and people who are undocumented especially are fearful of reporting it.

**A:** It raises awareness about the problems themselves

**A:** without policy change we won't change norms

**A:** Local policy drives the specific actions of law enforcement as well as sets protocol for the process of intervention

**A:** to speak our voices

**A:** it enables us to prove effectiveness before rolling it out nationally

**A:** Changes local norms

**A:** similar local policies run parallel would yield higher efficiencies in the state and national levels

**A:** Local policies can be more tailored to fit the local population and can be applied nationally.

**A:** Micro level changes will have an eventual impact on norms/macro level ideologies

**A:** Encourages collaboration and addressing community needs; beginning of change

**A:** Such policy (a) provides social support for people who want to be active in presenting VAW, and (b) might provide funding

**A:** Shifts responsibility to community level.

**A:** Raises awareness level of community

**A:** Social change comes about through pressure from the bottom to those in positions in power in terms of making change.

**A:** people can know that the policy exists and that there is an expectation.

**A:** It happens to individuals within localities that provide services. Women interact with local officials more than national.

**A:** There is usually a shorter "turn around" time to implementation.

**A:** That it is ok to discuss

- A: Because accountability is better able to be monitored at local levels rather than national levels.
- A: Also networking with other agencies
- A: violence is so "silent" it needs to be "out there"
- A: it causes persons to focus in the community and show appropriate response to DV. Coordinates and maximizes the talents and resources of all local providers and programs working on the same issues
- A: one needs to start at the source so that individuals know the rules.
- A: it allows communities to voice their specific concerns and needs while bringing together community members to share answers/solutions
- A: when you have effective collaborative the message becomes universal in the local community therefore the acceptable norms begin to shift
- A: It really holds accountability to more than just the perpetrator of violence against women
- A: we want policy to make it easier to navigate bureaucracy -- it does not always work that way

**Q3: What are the barriers to doing local policy? Barriers may be individual, organizational or community level barriers.**

- A: Lack of funding.
- A: not enough time in the day
- A: In small communities, lack of resources and the "good old boys" mentality
- A: time, expense, and partisan politics
- A: Lack of support from local officials
- A: lack of collaboration between local agencies
- A: Hard to get community to help
- A: resistance to change
- A: Lack of public education or information about the myths and realities of domestic violence and rape.
- A: political climate of community
- A: Implementation...often due to lack of resources/funding
- A: Getting everyone to the table and buy-in
- A: community denial
- A: heads planted firmly in the sand
- A: the good ole boys
- A: Lack of awareness, money
- A: We need to be aware of unintended consequences of policies
- A: Making a case in a clear, coherent and compelling way that has research to back it up and stories to grab attention
- A: local resistance to change
- A: lack of support
- A: Getting the community to respond
- A: different perspectives on solutions; protectiveness of territory
- A: lack of time and money
- A: difficult to get funding to do local policy work.

**A:** Not clear if federal funding can be used to do this work (at least some types of the work)

**A:** apathy

**A:** Lack of access to community leader to support.

**A:** Community follow-through

**A:** We try to serve multiple rural tribes in California and it becomes difficult to travel to all the locations (i.e. lack of time and money and resources)

**A:** turf wars among local organizations

**A:** Too many focuses needed on too many issues, given the small number of people able to address issues.

**A:** Inertia, fear, lack of models, lack of inspiration, lack of encouragement

**A:** First, I think a lot of us who answered that we work at multiple levels includes local, state and national. Barriers - ingrained system.

**A:** Policy work is viewed as Coalition work, and the member programs, because they are providing services, do not have time to do policy work.

**A:** Developing strategies that grab the imagination of the community. ... this is possible

**A:** Many D V workers are social workers who do not traditionally think about the ways to interface with the legislative systems

**A:** Not acknowledging that there is a problem;

**A:** community organizing

**A:** sense that it is not a community problem

**A:** lack of skills or enough knowledge about how to do effective policy change

**A:** Who has the power? Being a woman is a huge barrier in the "good ole boys" rural areas.

**A:** no understanding of the connection between macro and micro

**A:** ancient patriarchal attitudes

**A:** Overcoming attitudes and biases

**A:** Challenging the people who have been the "decision makers" who have been there too long with stale ideas.

**A:** Lack of confidence in skills to do policy work.

**A:** Successful incorporation of the change by other participants

**A:** disagreements among politicians, no clear presentations

**A:** Bureaucracy is still a factor, culture of the institution may not be supportive, enforcing policy, and it may not be at the forefront of issues (not a hot topic")

**A:** In a small community, there is a "not in this kind of a neighborhood" mentality.

**A:** Part of the battle is getting policy makers to even recognize the prevalence of the problem

**A:** Lack of resources (time, funding) to do the work.

**A:** no collective vision for change (we are too busy addressing system needs to see what we want!)

**A:** lack of understanding the issues

**A:** attention on domestic violence issues is greater than the attention on sexual assault issues

**A:** focus on direct service work with victims/crisis intervention, not always enough time to do education, policy work, etc.

**A:** fear

**A:** If employees are young then ageism could be a factor.

**A:** Denial

**A:** Community organizing skills need enhancement

**A:** a culture of blaming the victims

**A:** the inability to exchange info because of confidentiality. Everyone wants to control the process

**A:** Lack of understanding of what is Domestic Violence

**Q4: If you have ideas at this point of a local policy goal, feel free to text chat them in at this point.**

**NOTE:** The following brainstorm responses include prevention and intervention policy examples, suggestions of prevention programs that could be mandated by a local policy, as well as general suggestions to improve prevention practice at the local level.

**A:** All schools must have a plan to address bullying. School district or State level police sensitivity

**A:** Limit caseloads of probation officers supervising domestic violence offenders

**A:** All hospitals funded in part by public funds must do screening for safety at home.

**A:** Greater communication and networking between helping agencies

**A:** Move control of payment for SARTs from law enforcement to County or State Victim Compensation Boards.

**A:** specialized domestic violence probation caseloads, mandatory sentencing for domestic violence offenders

**A:** Department of Human Services using a screening tool to determine DV/SA DV/SV education for ALL incarcerated males and females

**A:** All school districts should incorporate anti violence curriculums for all students k-12

**A:** mandated healthy relationship classes and communication skills training in all public schools

**A:** The ability to view the court system and jail rosters in other counties.

Implement dating violence/healthy relationships and sexual assault in the school curriculums

**A:** implement ACT (Adults and Children together) Against Violence in all schools k-12

**A:** Court ordering these incarcerated individuals to batterer intervention, and Safe Haven for parenting time

**A:** we should have more prevention programs for teens both in the community and in the school house

**A:** fiscal efficiently at the top will lead to more efficient program on the ground statewide internet availability of domestic violence perpetrators records

**A:** Dedicating a portion of family violence funding towards prevention.

**A:** Integrate emotional language skills into all relevant school subject areas.

**A:** Not just mandated violence prevention in schools but like 1088 that the schools are required to collaborate with CBOs (CBO= Community Based Organization)

**A:** counseling groups and programs at schools for children who are witnessing domestic violence

**A:** County public Health departments dedicate resources towards violence as a public health issue.

**A:** Early intervention self esteem courses for young male separate from girls.

**A:** Public Health degrees require a course on intentional violence prevention

**Q5: In thinking about policy for preventing VAW, who might be some of the people who would be opposed to your policy?**

**A:** NRA

**A:** so-called "father's rights, family values" organizations

**A:** I am concerned that any policies involve both sexual assault and domestic violence prevention. The public doesn't often distinguish between the two and we should focus the discussion on preventing violence against women and not segmenting it. Even in this discussion it seems to me that the focus has been more on domestic violence.

**A:** police departments, judges, county/city budget directors

**A:** abstinence only groups (for sexual assault prevention programs)

**A:** Judges

**A:** self esteem is low with a lot of kids or superficial to put it otherwise

**A:** Sexual Abuse is part of Domestic Violence; however it is its own issue as well.

**A:** Fathers Rights Groups

**A:** Organizations that limit the definition of Domestic violence, for example those that limit DV to married individuals and not cohabitants.

**A:** The local humane society can be a good partner.

**A:** Karen raises an important issue about addressing all forms of violence against women. While Don Gault's efforts highlighted domestic violence, Prevention Connection is committed to addressing all forms of violence against women including sexual assault and child sexual abuse.

**A:** Within The efforts Don discussed were also focused work to address sexual violence. There was a sense that while some strategies overlap, some specific needs were lost. The SV action group thus came about with some specific training and prevention strategies

**A:** I think judges need to be better educated, especially in rural areas.

**A:** I'd like to talk about changing policy with police departments- increasing collaboration with advocates around sexual assault

**Feel free to type in your thoughts, comments, ideas about how to apply local policy to preventing VAW, etc. We will put it into the archive.**

**A:** I think we really have to make sure to find out what are some of the needs for

the community when making a policy

**A:** Suggestion in Response to Cordelia's Comment re unintended consequences: Each community doing a "Safety and Accountability Audit" on the Duluth model.

**A:** Educating judges no why they need to follow the laws that are in a place and why that is important to the survivors that have had the courage to rely on the legal system in place.

**A:** I think that Cordelia point is very important and speaks to the fact that when we devise policies it is really important to have a broad spectrum of people at the table to provide input - and think about some of those unintended consequences.

**A:** the voices of victims of sexual/domestic violence must be represented in developing policies!

**A:** I believe that we really need to show strong leadership and men and women who are going to have the courage to not put their political career before the safety of women.

**A:** I suggest meeting with elected officials identified as friendly to DV issues and forming an ongoing relationship as well as using these relationships to identify and reach out to other legislators

### **Comments about sexual abstinence group**

**A:** sexual assault is NOT about abstinence or non-abstinence...what do you mean?

**A:** abstinence only groups tend to be wary of anything with the word sex in it. I understand that sexual assault is a violent crime and not about sex or sexuality, but a lot of people don't. That misunderstanding creates opposition from a lot of groups.

**A:** many community members are in denial that sexual or domestic violence is problem in their area - people with this view often oppose VAW work

**A:** Thanks, Cordelia for the clarification. We do have major efforts on promoting healthy sexual relationships and preventing sexual violence.

**A:** So, Morgan, you are saying that the Abstinence Only groups need to be educated about what SA is about?

**A:** everyone does, and they are no exception. I singled them out because I have worked with sexual assault prevention groups that encountered resistance from abstinence only groups. But the same phenomenon occurs with other groups as well.