

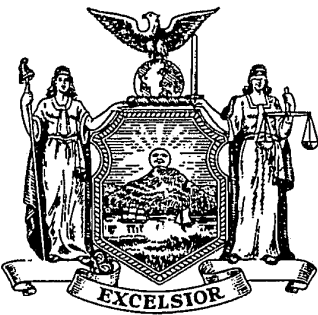
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State of New York
Department of Correctional Services

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Albany, New York 12226

**A SOURCE FOR EMPOWERMENT:
The Family Violence Program At
Bedford Hills Correctional Facility**

149051



Mario M. Cuomo
Governor



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A SOURCE FOR EMPOWERMENT:
The Family Violence Program at Bedford Hills
Correctional Facility

The report provides a description of the therapeutic program for survivors of family violence. Eight of the participants are profiled, and statistics are presented comparing demographic characteristics of the program participants with other inmates who have not been involved with the program.

DIVISION OF PROGRAM PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

1994

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SUMMARY

1. In December 1993 there were 137 participants in the Family Violence Program.
2. Eighty-two percent were committed for felonies vs. 40% of the other inmates at Bedford Hills, the only maximum security prison for women in New York (Table 1, p.3).
3. Sixty-four percent were convicted for homicide vs. 22% of the other inmates (Table 2, p.4).
4. Fifty-eight percent had no prior arrest or conviction vs. 34% of the general population (Table 3, p.5)
5. Forty-two percent had minimum terms of 15 years or more vs. 19% for the other inmates (Table 4, p.8).
6. Forty-six percent were received before 1990 vs. 13% of the other inmates (Table 7, p.10).
7. Sixty-percent of the current participants were from New York City vs. 71% of the women in general population (Table 6, p.11).
8. Whites were over represented among the current participants compared to the overall population at Bedford Hills. Still, over two-thirds of the participants were African-Americans or Hispanic (Table 8, p.13).
9. Twenty-seven percent were married vs. 18% of the other inmates (Table 9, p.13).
10. In addition to the current 137 participants, 293 had been in the program.
11. Former participants on average stayed in the program for a year (Table 14, p.20).

A SOURCE FOR EMPOWERMENT: THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM AT BEDFORD HILLS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

We are mothers, sisters, lovers, daughters -- We are women, not just a person who committed a crime and now an inmate. We were not born criminal. We are certainly not who you think we are -- we're not cold blooded, we are not vicious.

• • •

The way we grew up we were in prison in our homes and all our lives. No one listened and when we spoke up it was turned against us. There was never anyone to trust, no confidentiality, no one cared. We're human beings; who, in spite of it all, survived.¹

INTRODUCTION

One does not normally associate trust and safety with living in a maximum security prison. For a number of prisoners at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility a haven has been established. It is the Family Violence Program.

Societal stereotypes do not allow women to act out in a violent fashion as that image is normally associated with males. It has been contended by some advocates that when women act out aggressively they are sanctioned disproportionately, particularly if the violence is directed at a male or toward their children. There is increasing public attention to the issue that many of these women, incarcerated for all kinds of crime, are in fact victims of societal sexism.

In 1985 the Women's Division of the Governor's Office, the Department of Correctional Services, the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Office for the Provention of Domestic Violence sponsored an unprecedented hearing at Bedford Hills. Twelve of the prisoners gave testimony about their own experiences. Their stories raised the consciousness and the concern of many in the criminal justice system. Understanding the phenomena and the manner the criminal justice system deals with the individuals enabled policy makers and practitioners to advocate changes in social and criminal justice policies and procedures.

¹The quotes cited in this report are taken from a December 1992 unpublished paper authored by the participants in the program entitled "Voices From a Community of Women in the Family Violence Program".

The program in Bedford Hills evolved in 1988 due to the continuing interest from the Division for Women and the recruitment of staff and inmates committed to helping the prisoners work through the therapeutic steps required for recovery. Today the program has been institutionalized at the facility, including assignment of permanent staff, the formulation of viable programs, and the experience gained from the involvement of hundreds of women in the program.

The program is based on the concepts of Dr. Angela Browne and Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, both of whom have considerable experience treating trauma victims. Dr. Herman teaches that there are substantial similarities between rape survivors, veterans, battered women, political prisoners, and concentration camp survivors. Individuals who have experienced significant trauma adapt emotionally in order to survive the ordeal. Their behavior is pragmatically adaptive and unconscious. The extent of the trauma and the individual's resilience determine how the mind adapts and the resulting difficulty in the recovery process.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The Family Violence Program encompasses a combination of individual and group therapy sessions conducted by staff and interns and educational/orientation/support groups lead by staff and program aides. The program aides are inmates who are clients in the program who have demonstrated their leadership ability and have achieved an associate's degree in the college program. The staff is composed of the director, a supervising social worker, and two counselors. The program has an internship component consisting of second year graduate interns in social work (for academic year 93-94, 5 interns were on staff). Organizationally the program is part of the Family Services Program of the Department of Correctional Services, a component of the Division of Ministerial Services.

The staff have a combination of professional, clinical training and substantial experience working with trauma victims. There is some differentiation in the groups which is determined by the interest of the particular group members.

The program has established considerable presence among the inmate population and with the staff. The participants as well as the supervisory staff, whether they be in security or in the counseling program areas, all acknowledge that the program has had a positive impact on the participants and has made a substantial contribution to the improvement in staff and inmate relationships.

Through the program the participants have developed insight into the cause or nature of their self-destructive behavior. They have gained the strength and ability to redirect their lives into more appropriate, goal-directed activities. A solidarity exists among the participants. A special rapport has been developed with the staff.

We were not silent victims, we were not passive victims, and we learned our strength and anger very young. We not only learned it in our homes, in foster care homes, in orphanages, we learned it from the thousands of "professionals," "agencies", "systems" we dealt with through the years. Striking out did us no good, but then nothing else did either: we went for help and no one listened.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

There were 137 women in the program on December 10, 1993. This section compares these program participants to 460 other inmates at Bedford Hills on that date who had never been in the program. The comparative data suggest some similarities and some interesting, although not surprising differences.

COMMITMENT OFFENSE TYPE

Eighty-two percent of the participants were committed for Violent Felony Offenses compared to 40 percent in the general population of the women at Bedford Hills, the only women's maximum security prison in New York State. Only 13% of the program participants were sentenced as drug offenders compared to 49% of the other Bedford Hills inmates.

TABLE 1

Program Participants			General Population		
Offense Type	Frequency	Percent	Offense Type	Frequency	Percent
Violent Felony	113	82.5	Violent Felony	182	39.6
Other Coercive	6	4.4	Other Coercive	13	2.8
Drug Offenses	18	13.1	Drug Offenses	226	49.1
Property and Other	0	0	Property and Other	33	7.2
Youthful Offender	0	0	Youthful Offender	6	1.3
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

COMMITMENT OFFENSE

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the program participants were sentenced for homicide in contrast to 22% of the general population at the facility.

TABLE 2

Program Participants			General Population		
Offense	Frequency	Percent	Offense	Frequency	Percent
Murder	52	38.0	Murder	61	13.3
Attempted Murder	0	0	Attempted Murder	9	2.0
Manslaughter	36	26.2	Manslaughter	30	6.6
Rape	1	.7	Rape	3	.7
Robbery	6	4.3	Robbery	41	8.9
Assault	9	6.5	Assault	19	4.1
Burglary	4	2.9	Burglary	20	4.4
Arson	4	2.9	Arson	6	1.3
Sodomy	3	2.2	Sodomy	2	.4
Drugs	18	13.1	Drugs	226	49.1
Kidnapping	3	2.2	Kidnapping	1	.2
Weapons/Offenses	0	0	Weapons/Offenses	1	.2
Other Coercive	1	.7	Other Coercive	4	.9
Larceny	0	0	Larceny	11	2.4
Forgery	0	0	Forgery	12	2.6
Stolen Property	0	0	Stolen Property	3	.7
Drive Intoxicated	0	0	Drive Intoxicated	1	.2
Other Felonies	0	0	Other Felonies	2	.4
Youthful Offender	0	0	Youthful Offender	6	1.3
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

BETTY²

Betty is a 36 year old serving a twenty-five to life sentence for robbery and murder. She agreed to back up a male who robbed and stabbed to death an intoxicated male.

Betty she was raised in a large, intact dysfunctional family where the mother was extremely abusive, both physically and verbally. The father, however, was quite caring and supportive. An older brother sexually abused her from ages 4 to 12 as he had her older sister. Recently, she elicited from her sister that the sister was relieved when the brother turned his interest toward Betty as it provided her with relief.

Betty indicates that she was an excellent student but could not meet the expectations of her mother. When she was 14 she became pregnant. The father removed her from public school to a parochial school. However, she dropped out at age 16. At ages 16 and 18 she was raped. At 18 she started using drugs and began to party. One year prior to the instant offense, she commenced to participate in muggings to support her lifestyle.

Coming to prison in 1982 was very difficult. She couldn't adjust to the authoritarian structure and spent the first 2 years locked up for one infraction or another. A lieutenant reached out to her when she was experiencing a crisis, the imminent death of her father, and Betty dramatically improved her conduct. Somewhat later, upon learning that her then 15 year old son was involved in drugs, she became hysterical and highly agitated. The Superintendent referred her to the Director of the Family Violence Program. She had begun to remember earlier experiences of abuse in her life - the time her mother burned her hand with an iron; the times her brother would grab her, cover her mouth, threaten and rape her at night. Betty has completed her bachelor's degree, is a tutor for other inmates, and has been a facilitator for the AIDS support group.

MOST SERIOUS PRIOR ADULT RECORD

Fifty-eight percent of the program participants had no prior arrest or no prior conviction. Only 34 percent of the general population met that criteria.

²Names in this report are pseudonyms.

TABLE 3

Program Participants			General Population		
Prior Record	Frequency	Percent	Prior Record	Frequency	Percent
No Prior Arrest	54	39.4	No Prior Arrest	108	23.5
No Prior Conviction	25	18.2	No Prior Conviction	47	10.2
Conviction No Jail	19	13.9	Conviction No Jail	66	14.3
Prior Jail Term	16	11.7	Prior Jail Term	132	28.7
Prior Prison Term	13	9.5	Prior Prison Term	68	14.8
Missing Data	10	7.3	Missing Data	39	8.5
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

VALERIE

Valerie is a 38 year old who has been at Bedford Hills since 1987, serving a fifteen to life sentence for murder. She relates that she was raised in a very strict, religious family where one was to become responsible at age 10. She married an individual selected by her parents and moved with her husband to the United States.

Valerie indicated that her husband started to beat her brutally in 1984. The beatings would be intermittent but vicious. She was too ashamed to tell her neighbors or co-workers. When she took flight to her sister, the husband located her and brought her home. She became a captive in her own house and lived in constant fear of the beatings. Coming to prison provided her with the degree of safety she was unable to find in the community. It took her almost two years to settle down as she didn't know whom to trust. She began to join the self help groups, became involved in the Family Violence Program where she learned to open up and make her own decisions. It was there that she learned that she was not alone as the other participants were all survivors. Valerie achieved her associate degree recently and expects to complete her bachelors in 1995.

LAURA

Laura has been at Bedford since 1983, serving a life sentence for murder. She was one of the inmates who testified before the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence when they held hearings at Bedford Hills.

Laura relates a history of being physically, sexually, and emotionally abused by a man who became abusive within a month of when they married. She states that as the relationship progressively deteriorated, she sought and obtained orders of protection, then the separation agreement, and then a divorce. Her way of coping with the abuse was to take the responsibility for not pleasing him or not appreciating his increasing bizarre demands and accusations. She states that she had her own family's support until she was convicted of contracting for the murder of her husband. Thereafter, her own family turned on her, sought and obtained custody of her child, and has denied her any contact with her son.

Laura is one of the original participants in the Family Violence Program which was a spinoff of the self-help support group the inmates had developed on their own initiative. She relates that it took her almost four years to learn to trust others as she, and many of other women, had had the experiences that the people whom they trusted were the ones that abused them. Learning to trust again proved to be very difficult. She feels that the program helps the women gain their self-esteem. They learn to make decisions; and, that it is the source of their empowerment. Moreover, the women do not involve themselves in the program for self-serving purposes; rather, they are committed to helping other women learn that they do not have to go through the patterns of abuse that the participants did.

MINIMUM SENTENCE

Forty-two percent (42%) of the program participants had minimum sentences of 15 years or more; another 30% had minimum of 6-15 years. Of the women in general population only 19% had terms of 15 years or more; only 15% had minimums of 6-15 years.

TABLE 4

Program Participants			General Population		
Months	Frequency	Percent	Months	Frequency	Percent
12-23 Months	0	0.0	12-23 Months	109	23.7
24-35 Months	13	9.5	24-35 Months	102	22.2
36-47 Months	14	10.2	36-47 Months	42	9.1
48-71 Months	10	7.3	48-71 Months	51	11.1
72-119 Months	34	24.8	72-119 Months	56	12.2
120-179 Months	8	5.8	120-179 Months	12	2.6
180-239 Months	32	23.4	180-239 Months	40	8.7
240 + Months	26	19.0	240 + Months	48	10.4
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

LAYSA

Laysa is serving 15 to life for the sale of a controlled substance. During her earlier years she lived with her grandmother and then went to live with her aunt upon the death of the grandmother. Her aunt's husband sexually abused her when she was 8 years old and thereafter as he did her sisters. Although the aunt supported her, she never exhibited any warmth, was very demanding, physically abused her, and would accuse her of being sexually promiscuous when she wasn't. Moreover, the aunt would always tell her that she would end up like her mother, whom she never knew. She feels that she was rejected by the mother, but then feels that the mother may have been trying to protect her from some abusive relationship the mother was involved in.

When she was almost 20 she came to live in the New York area with friends. She attended a community college and obtained her associate's degree. After a brief period of employment and after being laid off, she started to work as a runner or mule for a drug dealer, who was an undercover police officer romantically involved with her sister. When she was arrested, she took the weight rather than implicate her sister's boyfriend. Although she had protected her sister during the trial, the sister never visited her in all the time that she's been confined.

In addition to the physical, sexual and emotional abuse she experienced as a child, she was raped while she was in college and was mentally abused by her boyfriend. It wasn't until she was already in prison that she started to have nightmares about the rape. Being sent to prison had a traumatic effect on her as she felt very guilty and sublimated her guilt by frequently taking showers. She learned of the Family Violence Program through another inmate, became involved, and learned to take charge of her life. She became a peer counselor and has become very goal-directed.

• • •

How can you "change" when you're always looking over your shoulder, when you are always living and reliving trauma? How can we even know who we are or what we are in this life in the midst of all the incest, abuse, foster homes, jails and turmoil. How can we know who we really are when we were always told we're nothing, a piece of dirt, we'll never amount to anything and should have never been born, we never did anything right.

YEAR RECEIVED

Many of the program participants are long termers. Nearly half (46%) of the program participants were committed before 1990 as compared to only 13% of the women in the general population at Bedford Hills.

TABLE 5

Program Participants			General Population		
Year	Frequency	Percent	Year	Frequency	Percent
1978 - 1984	19	13.9	1974 - 1984	26	5.7
1985 - 1989	44	32.1	1985 - 1989	33	7.2
1990	18	13.1	1990	20	4.3
1991	33	24.1	1991	54	11.7
1992	21	15.3	1992	110	23.9
1993	2	1.5	1993	217	47.2
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

• • •

Understand what "fear" and "terror" do to a woman's life - when we feel safer turning tricks on the streets than going home at night to our families, when the dope fiend friends are safer than our fathers, when the gangs and drug dealers treat us better than our mothers. When we look at the terror in our eyes, reflected in the terror of our children's eyes, when we hear our children begging us not to leave them, not to do any more drugs, fighting off those that hit us and crying, always crying.

LORRAINE

Lorraine is a 44 year old serving an indeterminate sentence with a maximum of 30 years for a variety of sex abuse offenses. For her entire life she had been a victim of sex abuse by most of the adults with whom she had contact. The boyfriend of her alcoholic and schizophrenic mother introduced her to sexual and physical abuse at age four. He continued to abuse her until she was placed in foster care when she was nine years old after her mother's suicide. For the next nine years she was placed in ten foster homes. She was sexually abused in eight of them. Thereafter, she was committed to two training schools. In one of these schools she was sexually abused by a therapist. During adolescence, she learned to act out aggressively and to sedate herself with alcohol and pills. Moreover, she would mutilate herself. She married twice, in both cases to physically large men who were compulsive in their preoccupation with deviant sexual behavior. Her first husband was sentenced to prison for the sexual abuse and murder of an adolescent male. She married again at age 30 to her late mother's boyfriend, the man who had sexually abused Lorraine from age four. He was the co-defendant in the instant offense for which Lorraine is currently was incarcerated.

Although Lorraine entered Bedford Hills in 1986, it was only in the last year she started feeling good about herself. She was finally able to accept responsibility for her own actions rather than always projecting on her husbands and others who contributed to her pattern of abuse. She had been very guarded in the initial years in prison as it was very difficult for her to learn to trust anyone. Nonetheless, she feels that being in prison has been the only place where she found any stability. She has completed her bachelor's degree and is coming to terms with the rejection of her 21 year old daughter.

REGION OF COMMITMENT

The geographic origin of the two groups was not dissimilar. Sixty percent of the program participants came from New York City versus 71 percent of the general population. Fourteen percent of the program participants and ten percent of the general population came from the New York City suburbs; and, seven percent of the program participants and six percent of the general population came from areas considered rural.

TABLE 6

Program Participants			General Population		
Region	Frequency	Percent	Region	Frequency	Percent
New York City	82	59.9	New York City	326	70.9
Suburban New York	19	13.9	Suburban New York	46	10.0
Upstate Urban	26	19.0	Upstate Urban	55	12.0
Upstate Rural	9	6.6	Upstate Rural	27	5.9
Missing Data	1	.7	Missing Data	6	1.3
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

CURRENT AGE

The age distribution of the two groups was similar: Program participants' ages range from 18 to 70; general population ages range from 17 through 66. Also, most program participants were in the 26 to 45 year age range and general populations' ages, in general, range was between 21 and 42.

TABLE 7

Program Participants		General Population	
Mean	35.6	Mean	32.8
Median	34.6	Median	31.2

ETHNIC STATUS

Ethnic distribution of the program participants was 31 percent white, 44 percent black, and 24 percent hispanic. Women in general population who were not involved with the program were 15 percent white, 53 percent black, and 31 percent hispanic.

TABLE 8

Program Participants			General Population		
Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
White	42	30.7	White	69	15.0
Black	60	43.8	Black	242	52.6
Hispanic	33	24.1	Hispanic	141	30.7
Other	1	.7	Other	8	1.7
Unknown	1	.7	Unknown	0	0
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

MARITAL STATUS

Marital status of the program participants and general population differed. Over one-third (35%) of the program participants reported they were married or divorced while only 22% of the women in general population said they were married or divorced.

TABLE 9

Program Participants			General Population		
Status	Frequency	Percent	Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	71	51.8	Single	317	68.9
Married	37	27.0	Married	82	17.8
Divorced	11	8.0	Divorced	19	4.1
Widowed	7	5.1	Widowed	11	2.4
Separated	7	5.1	Separated	13	2.8
Common Law	4	2.9	Common Law	17	3.7
Not Stated	0	0	Not Stated	1	.2
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

While a smaller percentage of women in general population were married, they nonetheless had more children than did the participants.

TABLE 10

Program Participants			General Population		
Children	Frequency	Percent	Children	Frequency	Percent
0	35	25.5	0	110	23.9
1	37	27.0	1	116	25.2
2	30	21.9	2	88	19.1
3	17	12.4	3	61	13.3
4	5	3.6	4	32	7.0
5	6	4.4	5	24	5.2
6	4	2.9	6	8	1.7
7	3	2.2	7	7	1.5
8	0	0	8	3	.7
10	0	0	10	3	.7
Over 10	0	0	Over 10	8	1.7
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

GLORIA

Gloria, age 33, serving three to six years for assault, began her acting out in kindergarten, resulting in a suspension. She continued her acting out throughout her juvenile years and into her adult years. Prior to coming to Bedford Hills, she compiled nine arrests and had served two short terms of incarceration.

Gloria was traumatized throughout her infancy and thereafter. Her mother would beat her with anything she could get her hands on until she grew tired. Moreover, she would lock her in the basement. She began to run away from the mother's house to her stepfather at age 12 and eventually moved into the biological father's house at age 14. Then, he tried to initiate sexual relations with her. When she complained, no one believed her. She began to abuse alcohol and marijuana at age 14, and was arrested for the first time at age 15 for stealing. Her substance abuse and acting out illegally increased as did her contact with law enforcement agencies.

Gloria had a child out of wedlock at 17 and agreed to foster placement. She eventually surrendered the child for adoption in 1986. At age 21 she married a man 24 years her senior, but separated after 5 months as he was an abusive alcoholic. The following year she was raped. Her efforts to adjust on the street continued to deteriorate, intensifying her substance abuse despite the efforts of social services and probation staff to involve her in substance abuse treatment programs. She was on probation when she became involved in the instant offense.

At Bedford Hills Gloria's adjustment has been uneven but improving. She has been participating in alcohol and substance abuse treatment programs for 18 months and the Family Violence Program for one year. She is learning to develop socially appropriate coping skills and, for once, is learning to trust others. She realizes that other women have experienced similar trauma and that they are all working to improve themselves.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The substance abuse histories were similar as 64% of the program participants were alcohol abusive compared to 60% of those in general population. Only 30% of the program participants acknowledged use of illicit drugs whereas 49% of the women in general population admitted such usage. However, nearly one quarter of the program participants refused to discuss their drug use (if any) at reception. These findings are consistent with the facts that the participants are older, have served longer, composed of fewer women committed for drug offenses, and are committed from counties outside of metropolitan New York City.

**TABLE 11
ALCOHOL USAGE**

Program Participants			General Population		
Group	Frequency	Percent	Group	Frequency	Percent
Non Alcoholic 0-4	34	23.5	Non Alcoholic 0-4	129	28.0
Suggestive Abuse 5-8	28	20.9	Suggestive Abuse 5-8	101	22.0
Alcoholic 9+	32	24.3	Alcoholic 9+	94	20.4
Unknown	43	31.3	Unknown	136	29.6
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

**TABLE 12
DRUG USAGE**

Program Participants			General Population		
Drug	Frequency	Percent	Drug	Frequency	Percent
Cocaine	15	10.9	Cocaine	54	11.7
Crack	8	5.8	Crack	87	18.9
Heroin	5	3.6	Heroin	50	10.9
Cannabis	6	4.4	Cannabis	16	3.5
Other drugs	7	5.1	Other drugs	19	4.1
No drugs used	60	43.8	No drugs used	193	42.0
No answer	33	24.1	No answer	34	7.4
Missing data	3	2.2	Missing data	7	1.5
TOTAL	137	100.0	TOTAL	460	100.0

JENNIFER

Jennifer is serving 15 to life, convicted for being involved in a sale of cocaine. She is a predicate felon, having been convicted earlier for the sale of cocaine. According to Jennifer, in both cases, she was a passive participant in the drug dealings being conducted by men.

For the first nine years of her life, Jennifer was raised in her grandmother's home. Her grandfather was an abusive drunk who beat his wife and daughters who were in the household. Her mother took her back although Jennifer would have preferred to live with her father. When she was 14, the father made a commitment to take her but he never showed up.

When Jennifer was 12 her mother's boyfriend commenced a pattern of sexual abuse which he continued until she left home. She reported it to her mother and grandmother, but they did not believe her. Eventually the grandmother believed her.

She did well in school, but dropped out in the eleventh grade to have a baby at age 16. The father of the child was a 21 year old drug user, who would beat her. Her own mother stomped her when she was pregnant.

She began to drink beer and smoke marijuana at age 18 to become mellow. She supported herself as a bookkeeper which she continued after she married at age 20 an immigrant in order to give him citizenship. He was a drug dealer who beat her and would bite her. She reported the incidents to the police and then obtained an order of protection. Once the order of protection expired, he would go after her again. In one incident he tried to force her out a window necessitating her to stab him to save herself.

Jennifer has been involved in the program since January 1990. Although she is still uncomfortable in talking in groups, the one-on-one therapy has been a considerable help to her in gaining her self-esteem. She states that she had always felt like dirt. Her recovery has reached the point where she has developed sufficient coping skills to be able to communicate with her mother and to forgive her. She is now able to set goals for herself, one of which is to obtain her bachelor's degree.

CARLA

Carla was 24 years old when she came to Bedford Hills to serve nine to 27 years for the homicides of a woman and the woman's seven year old son. Carla and her unindicted male accomplice were charged with repeatedly stabbing the victims during the commission of a burglary. However, Carla claims that she was very high on crack, that the woman was her friend and she had gone out to buy more crack, and brought the "dealer" back. After hours of continual smoking of crack, the "dealer" got into an argument with her friend and stabbed her and her son while Carla sat on the floor in trauma.

Both Carla's parents were alcoholic. She was raised by her grandparents until she was 14. Then her mother removed her to her own home located in a drug infested area of the Bronx.

Her grandparents had Carla attend Catholic schools. She was an honor student and a member of the band. Her mother placed her in the public school. She dropped out at age 16. Her mother told her she would never amount to anything. She would beat her with an electrical cord. The boyfriend of the mother would like to sexually exhibit himself to her and her younger sister, and tried to increase the contact, only to be interrupted by the mother. On her 17th birthday Carla met her father for the first time. She then moved in with her father and his family. In contrast to the mother's home, her father's was very permissive and very supportive.

Prior to dropping out of school, Carla started to date her future husband. They courted for five years, she became pregnant, and they married. They moved into the mother's place where she charged them excessive rent. Moreover, she would interject herself in their relationship. Carla began to drink and use crack. Her behavior deteriorated dramatically, placing considerable stress on their marriage. She had sought out treatment when she was pregnant as she saw that she was becoming increasingly like her own mother. However, she was unable to stop her deterioration. Her substance abuse and violent acting out progressed to the point where she was incarcerated.

Her adjustment to prison was very turbulent. She acted out aggressively against others and herself to the point where she was considered to be suicidal. Therapeutic intervention by the mental health staff in conjunction with staff from the Family Violence Program provided her with the stabilization she required. She was able to be an inmate who converted from one who had spent 300 days in special housing (disciplinary segregation) to one who was able to give the graduation speech upon receiving her high school diploma. Currently, she is enrolled in the college program. She feels that the program was able to break through her bravado defenses and assist her to learn to love herself and others.

Reason for Termination and Time in Program

In the five years it has been functioning, 293 women have left the program. Twenty-five percent were paroled; 38 percent transferred to another facility; 10 percent withdrew; and, 27 percent were removed for a variety of reasons.

TABLE 13

Termination Reason	Frequency	Percent
Parole	74	25.3
Voluntary Withdrew	30	10.2
Non-Participant	22	7.5
Transfer	112	38.2
Program Change	5	1.7
OMH/Medical	3	1.0
No Show	7	2.4
Inactive	3	1.0
Other Release	5	1.7
Discipline	1	.3
No Record	1	.3
Missing Data	30	10.3
TOTAL	293	100.0

The average amount of time spent in the program before termination was twelve months with 50 percent leaving before 9 1/2 months and 50 percent thereafter.

TABLE 14

Time in Program	Frequency	Percent
1-6 Months	108	36.9
7-12 Months	74	25.3
13-18 Months	56	19.1
19-24 Months	22	7.5
25-30 Months	14	4.8
31-36 Months	8	2.7
37-42 Months	2	.7
43-48 Months	4	1.4
49-54 Months	1	.3
55-60 Months	1	.3
Missing Data	3	1.0
TOTAL	293	100.0
MEAN	11.98	
MEDIAN	9.40	

At the request of the facility staff, the feasibility of a follow-up study of program participants is being explored at this time. Assuming the availability of a sufficient number of released program participants for follow-up purposes, an analysis will be conducted of the return rates of satisfactory and unsatisfactory program participants according to the standard methodology. One proposed focus of this analysis is a comparison of the return rates of women who satisfactorily participated in the program for six months or more as compared to women who withdrew or were removed from the program in less than six months.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The program participants profiled are representative of the women who have become involved in the program. They have come to terms with their incarceration and are developing a solid basis for the future. They have survived horrendous experiences and are willing to help other trauma victims as they continue their own struggle for self-worth.

Now we're convicts, some of us are very young, some of us have long histories of coming to institutions -- orphanages, training schools, psychiatric facilities, prisons. We've been told time and time again that we were no good, we had nothing to offer society, told we're nothing but a number. And then had a correction officer tell us we're only here to do time, not to change, just to be punished.

But for those of us that have found programs and people that struggle with us and our lives, we are discovering that every day we're finding out more and more about who we are and before we weren't even looking. We're looking toward not away from who we are. We feel, we struggle, we cry, we hurt. We make mistakes. We love our children and believe us when we say that for the most part foster care has not done a better job with our kids.

Choices weren't ever available before -- we either did what they told us, did what we had to do to survive - you made it through each moment the best way you could (and each moment was a long, long time). The options, weren't really options at all, sometimes they were simply going from the frying pan to the fire. Our lives have always been ruled -- on the outside we were told to do negative things or else, on the inside we're told to do positive things (or else?) - but we still can't make choices and we need to know "how" to make choices.

We are terrified of the day we leave and having all the choices come at us at once.

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