



Responding to Domestic Violence in Nevada:

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A Plan For Action

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Responding to Domestic Violence in Nevada:

A Plan For Action

A Project of:

*The Nevada State Team
&
The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
2100 Capurro Way, Suite E
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ACQUISITION

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Acknowledgments

This project is the result of the efforts of countless individuals and numerous agencies throughout Nevada. The struggle against domestic violence in the state spans nearly 20 years and was germinal to our work here. While space prohibits a complete list, we would like to thank the following:

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A final thank you to everyone who reads this plan and begins to work towards its implementation. It is through the collective efforts of many individuals that we will begin to solve the problem of domestic violence in Nevada.

Domestic Violence in Nevada

Nevada is the seventh largest state in the union, comprising 70,745,600 acres (110,540 square miles), of which 87.3% is exempted land owned by the Federal government (85.3%), by state and local governments (.3%), and by 22 American Indian reservations (1.6%). Population estimates for 1994 were 1,493,090 with two principal population centers, Clark County 971,680 (65%) and the Eastern Slope of the Sierras (Carson, Washoe and Douglas counties) 337,440 (24%). These two areas are separated by almost 500 miles. The remaining 11% of the population is scattered throughout 86% of the state's geographic area. During the first half of this decade Nevada's growth rate was the fastest in the nation.

Domestic violence is as complex and diverse as the state, but the problems associated with that violence are more alike than different for Nevada's citizens. The focus of this document is not the differences in the state; rather, the focus is on the similarities of problems and solutions.

"Very simply, domestic violence exists because it works; it works because the perpetrators get away with it."

Prosecutor
Reno Town Meeting

Domestic violence is not a new issue; its history is as old as civilization. What is new is the way we are beginning to view and deal with domestic violence; the way we are beginning to confront and combat this age-old problem. This document is a reflection of that change.

In March of 1993, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges convened *Courts and Communities: Confronting Violence in the Family*. Funded by the State Justice Institute, this conference brought together experts in domestic violence from around the country representing a variety of disciplines.

Conference participants were selected by the chief justice of each state's Supreme Court at the request of the Council. These state teams spent four days attending workshops and meeting to develop plans of action for their states to address the issue of domestic violence.

Nevada's team left the conference with new or renewed determination to work on the issue of domestic violence. They made plans to "go on

the road" to share their vision with all communities in Nevada. The first step was to convince the Nevada Supreme Court to develop training for all judges in the state. In October 1993, two identical, day-long trainings were held: one in Las Vegas and one in Reno. The Supreme Court ordered all Nevada judges to attend, making Nevada the first state in the nation to hold mandated domestic violence training for judges.

The second step was the convening of a series of town meetings throughout the state to elicit testimony from individual Nevada citizens about the most serious obstacles and about possible solutions. Five town meetings were held, attended by more than 200 individuals who provided more than 100 pages of testimony. The State Team then reviewed the testimony.

In the following pages we present the third step: recommendations for actions to address the issue of domestic violence in Nevada. This document is a synthesis of the goals and objectives identified at the conference and the obstacles and solutions identified at town meetings. The recommendations were designed with enough flexibility to accommodate the needs of individual communities while focusing on the commonality of needs and solutions. Community-based coordination is stressed.

On June 17, 1994, the day of the first in a series of State Team Meetings leading to this plan, most of the nation watched the slow-speed chase which began a long and intense focus on domestic violence. Media attention on the Nicole Simpson/Ronald Goldman murders and the attendant focus on domestic violence has presented us with an unprecedented opportunity to educate ourselves as a nation about the issue.

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (H.R. 3355), also referred to as the Crime Bill, includes the Violence Against Women Act, the most important piece of national domestic violence legislation ever passed. Funds authorized by the Crime Bill may be a significant vehicle for the implementation of this plan. Applicable sections are referenced throughout.

This is an auspicious time for the first statewide plan to address domestic violence in Nevada. Ultimate success will depend upon the committed action of all Nevada citizens.

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Coordination:

- By June 1995, the Governor should appoint a Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Council to be chaired by the Attorney General and comprised of representatives from governments in Nevada, including Indian tribal governments, civil and criminal justice systems, service providers, treatment providers, educators, healthcare providers, legislators and private citizens. Fifty-one percent of these representatives should be domestic violence survivors and/or advocates. The Council composition should also reflect the state's urban and rural populations whereby at least 20% would be rural.
- By December 1995, the Council should research and make recommendations for improving data collection concerning responses to domestic violence in Nevada including, but not limited to, records of criminal prosecutions and civil protective orders.
- The Council should develop and implement a Nevada "There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence" public information and outreach campaign by December 1995.
- By December 1995, the Council should begin research and make recommendation for the development of multi-disciplinary services, training and public awareness projects.

Law Enforcement:

- The Nevada Sheriffs and Chiefs Association should continue in its efforts to develop comprehensive statewide policies, protocols and services for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to cases involving domestic violence and present completed protocols to the Council by January 1996.
- By January 1996, all law enforcement academies should expand and improve domestic violence curricula to provide a minimum of 20 hours of domestic violence education by certified training officers. Additionally, eight hours of continuing domestic violence education should be required each year for enforcement administrators and line officers.

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- The Nevada Legislature should, no later than the 1997 legislative session, amend NRS 171.137 to eliminate the current provision which does not permit the arrest of the alleged batterer later than four hours after the act of domestic violence occurs.

Prosecution:

- By January 1996, the Nevada City Attorneys, Nevada District Attorneys, tribal prosecutors, the Attorney General and the United States Attorney should meet and adopt statewide protocols to handle inter-jurisdictional domestic violence issues and continue to meet regularly to update and review those protocols.
- The Nevada City Attorneys, Nevada District Attorneys, the Attorney General and the United States Attorney should meet and adopt statewide protocols for the prosecution of domestic violence cases by July 1996.
- The Attorney General's Office, in cooperation with prosecutors and domestic violence experts, should develop an eight-hour training curriculum to be offered to all prosecutors in domestic violence prosecution by December 1996. By July 1997, an additional 20-hour training curriculum should be developed and offered to those prosecutors directly responsible for the screening and prosecution of domestic violence cases.
- By December 1996, all courts should direct prosecutors to conduct pre-sentence investigations in domestic violence cases.

Adjudication:

- The Nevada Judges Association and the Administrative Office of the Courts should review bail schedules and develop recommendations for conditions of pre-trial release in cases involving domestic violence by July 1996.
- No later than July 1996, judges should not permit diversion, deferral or dismissal of criminal domestic violence cases when sufficient evidence exists to prosecute.

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- No later than the 1997/98 legislative session, the legislature should pass legislation to provide for enhanced penalties in cases of second and subsequent convictions for domestic violence by the same perpetrator.
 - By January 1996, all limited jurisdiction courts should develop a protocol of probationer accountability whereby all defendants on probation or suspended sentence for domestic violence offenses are strictly probated to ensure compliance with drug and alcohol treatment, spousal battery counseling, parenting classes, restitution and employment requirements. Courts should work with prosecutors and law enforcement to develop warrant service teams to enforce domestic violence court orders by July 1997.
 - By December 1995, each court system should ensure that victims of domestic violence are not required to participate in mandatory joint treatment or mediation sessions with their abusers in connection with any civil or criminal proceeding.
 - By January 1995, all courts shall prohibit the issuance of mutual protection orders.
 - All courts in Nevada should develop 24-hour access to Protective Orders by January 1996.

Victim Services:

- Nevada's domestic violence programs should conduct a comprehensive analysis of their capacity to meet the increasing demand for services with attention to their effectiveness in serving traditionally under-served populations including racial, cultural and language minorities and geographically isolated victims, and present that analysis to the Council by July 1996.
- In concert with the comprehensive analysis of program capacity, domestic violence programs by June 1996 should compile consumer evaluations to measure availability, accessibility and effectiveness of current services and identify any need for additional services with attention to the needs of under-served populations.

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- By July 1996, domestic violence programs should assess current outreach efforts to determine their effectiveness with attention to reaching traditionally under-served populations including racial, cultural and language minorities and geographically isolated victims.
 - After reviewing these assessments, the Council should develop recommendations for improving services for victims by January 1997, to include developing or strengthening delivery of victim services including shelter, transitional housing, counseling, legal representation and judicial access to racial, cultural, ethnic and language minorities.
 - A plan for strengthening legal advocacy programs for victims of domestic violence through coordinated efforts of the Nevada State Bar Association, indigent legal services pro-bono projects, protective order advocate offices, the judiciary and local domestic violence task forces should be completed by December 1995 and implemented by June 1996.

Batterer's Treatment:

- By July 1996, treatment providers, in conjunction with victim advocates, should develop minimum mandatory treatment standards and a certification process for court ordered treatment providers.
- By October 1997, an application and certification process for treatment providers should be mandated by the Nevada State Legislature as a prerequisite to a court utilizing a treatment provider and directories containing a list of certified treatment providers should be available to justice system officials through the state.

Healthcare:

- By July 1996, the Division of Health should adopt standard healthcare protocols to be used by providers statewide to effectively identify, treat and refer victims of domestic violence.

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- By July 1997, the Division of Health, in cooperation with county health departments and private medical providers, should work with experts on domestic violence to develop continuing education programs for all healthcare providers. Programs should contain information on safety planning, alternatives to returning to an abusive situation and the role of the healthcare provider in charting information for court consumption.

Education:

- In consultation with domestic violence experts, the State Department of Education should develop training for all day care, preschool, elementary and secondary school staff in identifying and assisting with safety planning for children from violent homes for implementation by academic year 1996/97.
- The State Department of Education should develop programs to educate young people about domestic violence and to teach non-violent conflict resolution skills and alternatives to violence, and should implement those programs in Nevada schools by the year 2000.
- The University and Community College System should review domestic violence education curricula in criminal justice, social and health resources, education, guidance and counseling departments and related disciplines and make recommendations for developing and improving those curricula by academic school year 1999/2000.

Children's Services:

- The Division of Child and Family Services should work with state & county welfare representatives and domestic violence advocates to develop or expand domestic violence training programs for state and local child protective workers and administrators for implementation by July 1996; should work with prosecutors, law enforcement representatives and local child welfare agencies to develop or expand procedures to investigate and document domestic violence in child abuse and neglect cases by January 1997; and should develop statewide procedures to identify, investigate, case-manage and provide support services in such cases by July 1997.

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- The Council should recommend and work for passage of legislation by July 1996, to create a presumption against awarding custody of children to domestic violence offenders.
 - The 1997 Legislature should fund pilot visitation and exchange centers in both Clark and Washoe Counties and use that experience to develop such programs statewide by the year 2000.
 - All state and local domestic violence task forces and similar associations should explore having child services subcommittees in place by January 1996.

Coordination

Recommendation:

By June 1995, the Governor should appoint a Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Council to be chaired by the Attorney General and comprised of representatives from governments in Nevada, including Indian tribal governments, civil and criminal justice systems, service providers, treatment providers, educators, healthcare providers, legislators and private citizens. Fifty-one percent of these representatives should be domestic violence survivors and/or advocates. The Council composition should also reflect the state's urban and rural populations whereby at least 20% would be rural.

"Domestic violence cases often fall through the 'cracks' because of lack of communication between different agency responses."

Senate Candidate
Mailed Testimony

Nationally and in Nevada, interaction and unity among agencies and individuals responding to domestic violence have been sporadic at best. "For each family violence case that enters the system, several agencies are involved in the ultimate outcome. These agencies rarely coordinate efforts or even share information. Any state or local jurisdiction attempting to improve the justice system response to family violence should make the establishment of a coordinating council a priority."¹

State domestic violence councils are in operation in a number of states and have developed through executive order, legislative action, judicial order or coalition action.² In order to facilitate the coordination of domestic violence prevention activities in Nevada, we urge the development of this council. Representatives should be chosen through an application process which would assess interest and expertise. Duties of the Council should include:

1. Review existing state domestic violence laws and policies and recommend improvements to the Governor and legislature;
2. Serve as advisory body to the Office of the Attorney General in relation to preparation of a State Plan for access to and dissemination of federal funds under the 1994 Violence Against Women Act.

-
3. Coordinate with local efforts of law enforcement, prosecutors, the judiciary, victim service providers, treatment providers, healthcare providers, educators, the religious community and others to develop local community domestic violence task forces.
 4. Develop a statewide plan to address the needs of populations affected by domestic violence who are underserved because of ethnic, racial, cultural or language diversity or geographic isolation or because of advanced age or health impairment.
 5. Oversee statewide implementation of the State Team's report and recommendations.

Although the State needs to provide funding for the Council's operation, the Council should also be prepared to raise funds through other public and private sources, both cash and in-kind, to ensure that Nevada provides effective enforcement, intervention and prevention services.

Title IV, Chapter 6, Sec. 40261 of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for grants "to establish projects in local communities involving many sectors of each community to coordinate intervention and prevention of domestic violence."

Recommendation:

By December 1995, the Council should research and make recommendations for improving data collection concerning responses to domestic violence in Nevada including, but not limited to, records of criminal prosecutions and civil protective orders.

"A centralized, uniform reporting mechanism for domestic violence should be put in place, allowing us to get a better handle on the extent of domestic violence in the state."

State Senator
Mailed Testimony

Without data to provide us with a picture of the scope of domestic violence in Nevada as well as the effectiveness of enforcement, intervention and prevention efforts, we cannot gauge what, if any, progress is being made to improve our response.

According to NRS 171.137, officers are required to "prepare and submit a written report of the alleged battery to his supervisor or other person designated by his employer...He shall include in his report, if applicable: a) his reasons for determining that one of the persons involved in a mutual battery was the primary physical aggressor; and b) any mitigating circumstances which prevented him from making an arrest."

The Division of Investigation of the Department of Motor Vehicles was given responsibility for compiling statistics from these reports. In the eight and one half years for which we have statistics, 53,675 calls have been made, resulting in 37,351 arrests.

Unfortunately, reporting has been sporadic with less than 75% of Nevada's law enforcement agencies filing reports. The data compiled therefore provide an incomplete picture and efforts should be made to improve and expand data collection in this area. Development of a statewide reporting form along with procedures to ensure that all information relating to domestic violence cases is processed speedily and made available through the Nevada criminal justice system would be invaluable to law enforcement, prosecutors and courts. That information should include records of domestic violence arrests, convictions, sentences and the issuance and service of all temporary and extended protective orders.

Domestic violence programs collect and compile statistics on individuals seeking services. However, not all victims turn to domestic violence programs for assistance. We need to collect data from other service providers, including healthcare, social and other human services to develop a comprehensive picture of who is at risk and of the true scope of the problem. These efforts must include provisions for confidentiality in order to address the victim's need for safety.

There are varying reports on the success of treatment programs for batterers. These variances are, in part, the result of the varying criteria used to measure success. Some programs measure it by completion of the program while others look at recidivism rates over a specified time period. We need to standardize those criteria to effectively measure the efficacy of all treatment programs, and to collect that data as well.

Title IV, Chapter 2, Sec. 2001 (b)(4) of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for efforts that impact data collection and dissemination. As Nevada plans for design and development of data collection systems, we would urge review and follow-up on this important piece of legislation.

Recommendation:

The Council should develop and implement a Nevada "There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence" public information and outreach campaign by December 1995.

"We've got to do what Mothers Against Drunk Driving did: We've got to stigmatize violence."

Assembly Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

Attitudes about domestic violence are deeply rooted in commonly believed myths. These myths often lead to victim-blaming and stand as a barrier to making change in our society. If we want genuine change, we must create a climate where accurate information can change public attitudes. As people come to understand the pervasiveness and potential lethality of domestic violence, we need to provide them with incentive and ideas for becoming involved in efforts to end domestic violence in the state.

Public information efforts have been limited to efforts by domestic violence programs on a local or state level. This is, however, beginning to change. In April 1993, the Family Violence Prevention Fund in San Francisco released a study entitled *Men Beating Women: Ending Domestic Violence, A Qualitative and Quantitative Study of Public Attitudes on Violence Against Women*. In this study, conducted for the Fund by the New York based public opinion research firm EDK, a national sampling of 1000 men and women over the age of 18 were asked a series of questions designed to look at public attitudes about domestic violence.

As a result of this study, in June 1994, the Fund launched "There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence," the first national education campaign to alert the public to the seriousness of domestic violence in the United States. The campaign includes a series of powerful television, radio and print public service announcements (PSA's) designed to alter the climate surrounding domestic violence by making people intolerant of battering.

A New York advertising agency donated services to develop the (PSA's) for the "There's No Excuse" campaign. The Advertising Council, which helps educate the American people about important current issues and

is one of the sponsors of the campaign, estimates that more than \$25 million worth of advertising will be donated during the campaign's first year.

We recommend launching a Nevada statewide "No Excuse" information campaign using the findings of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, building on efforts already in place and enlisting the aid of public relations firms. The campaign must be broad based, utilize all methods of information dissemination, and include efforts to reach previously underserved populations.

Recommendation:

By December 1995, the Council should begin research and make recommendation for the development of multi-disciplinary services, training and public awareness projects.

"The lack of coordination, communication and consistence between agencies significantly limits the resources available to victims of domestic violence."

Advocate
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"Once a (domestic violence victim) is involved in the many systems which impact these cases the communication among these systems is quite poor, and the victim of violence may feel victimized by the systems which are supposed to help."

Health Educator
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"Different criminal justice departments are non-communicative and more sensitive to any potential harm that abusive men could do to police or others, often ignoring the dangers to a woman and her children"

Senatorial Candidate
Mailed Testimony

Given the complexity of the issue of domestic violence, the development of coordinated multi-disciplinary efforts are vital.

The criminal justice system has a profound impact on families where there is violence and can play a very important role in holding perpetrators responsible for their violent acts and providing safety for victims of violence. A 1989 study found that arrest without coordination with other sanctions produced greater subsequent violence. Arrest, in coordination with other criminal justice efforts, was a significant deterrent.³

Victims of violence seek help in three fundamental ways: they appeal to family and friends for assistance, they appeal to the criminal justice system for protection and justice, and they appeal to healthcare professionals, domestic violence programs and other social service agencies for safety, healing and support services.

A great number of agencies and professionals come into contact with victims and yet many professionals do not realize that they are dealing with victims of domestic violence because they don't recognize signs or ask appropriate questions. Some avoid asking those questions because they fear they won't know what to do if the answers reveal violence in the family. Information on identification and appropriate referrals can ease their discomfort.

The Southern Nevada Domestic Violence Task Force, the Washoe County Domestic Violence Task Force and other, less formal organizations have developed in communities around Nevada. The mission of these groups is the development of multi-disciplinary projects. Title IV, Chapter Sec. 40261 authorizes funding for efforts to "establish projects in local communities involving many sectors of each community to coordinate intervention and prevention of domestic violence."

Communities in Nevada and elsewhere have developed a variety of multidisciplinary programs. The Council should consult with local groups and take leadership in ensuring that information about these programs is continually available to all Nevada's communities as they seek to improve their response to domestic violence.

Law Enforcement

Recommendation:

The Nevada Sheriffs and Chiefs Association should continue in its efforts to develop comprehensive statewide policies and protocols for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to cases involving domestic violence and distribute them to law enforcement agencies statewide by January 1996.

"Let's face it, the police typically deal with domestic violence as a nuisance. It's something most cops don't look forward to going to; it's one of the most dangerous calls we can respond to and now the law says we have to make a judgment call when we get there, figure out who the primary aggressor was and take that person to jail. Well, I'd have to guess that not in every case do we do our job so commendably as the law would like us to."

Candidate for Sheriff

Las Vegas Town Meeting

A family's entry into the criminal justice system often begins when the police are called regarding a violent incident. The violence has usually been going on for quite some time by the time the police are called, but this first contact is still crucial. The nature of the police response can determine whether the perpetrator of violence feels safe to continue his behavior and whether the victim will feel safe to call the police again if violence persists in the relationship.

It is important that every police department have written protocols for addressing domestic violence calls. Protocols should include directions regarding the determination of primary aggressor and should strongly discourage "mutual combatant" arrests. Ideally, police administrators would work with prosecutors to develop protocols for the collection of evidence at the crime scene which would facilitate better prosecution of domestic violence cases with or without victim cooperation. This would include the taking of victim, perpetrator and witness statements and photos and recording descriptions of the scene. Policies for the preservation of 911 tapes are also necessary.

State and local law enforcement agencies should develop and review protocols in cooperation with prosecutors, judges, domestic violence advocates and victims to ensure that the protocols address all appropriate issues, both current and future.

Title IV, Chapter 2, Sec 2001(b)(3) of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for “developing and implementing more effective police and prosecution policies, protocols, orders and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence.”

Recommendation:

By January 1996, all law enforcement academies should expand and improve domestic violence curricula to provide a minimum of 20 hours of domestic violence education by certified training officers. Additionally, eight hours of continuing domestic violence education should be required each year for law enforcement administrators and line officers.

"In this day and age, our police officers must deal with a multitude of types of crimes. Law enforcement officers have the very difficult task of trying to approach every criminal situation with the appropriate mix of expertise, professionalism, compassion and toughness. Under these circumstances I know our officers are doing their best, but we have to give them the education and resources to do better."

Congressional Representative
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"(T)raining of law enforcement is critical, not only first response police officers who ride in black and whites, but at mid-management and top executive level. Not only must officers who respond to these violent crimes understand and become aware of the significance of the events, but so must people like myself, the policy-makers who direct the operation."

Police Administrator
Las Vegas Town Meeting

An officer who receives thorough training will understand the need for proper procedures to arrest the perpetrator, give information about safety and Nevada law to the victim, and do a thorough job of documentation, including ascertaining statements from the victim, the perpetrator and any witnesses present. These are the first steps to providing safety for the victim and accountability for the perpetrator within the criminal justice system.

Cadets in two Nevada law enforcement academies currently receive a basic four to eight hours of domestic violence training with practical exercises which can be as brief as 45 minutes at one academy and two hours at the other. Officers are required to complete 24 hours of continuing education credit each year in order to maintain active status as law enforcement officers. Sixteen, and in some cases more, of those hours are required to be in specified topics; domestic violence is not one of them.⁴ Given the number

of cases involving domestic violence that officers will respond to, the amount of time devoted to training in this area should be increased.

Experts recommend that a course of instruction for law enforcement officers include, but not be limited to: (1) the investigation and management of cases; (2) the nature, extent and causes of domestic violence; (3) practices designed to promote the safety of investigating officers and the safety of victims and other family and household members; (4) the legal rights and remedies available to victims; the services available to victims and their children; (5) sensitivity to cultural, racial and sexual issues and the effect of cultural, racial and gender bias on the response of law enforcement officers and the enforcement of laws relating to domestic violence; and (6) the provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes.⁵

Funding has been authorized in Title IV, Chapter 2, Sec. 2001 (b)(1) of the 1994 Crime Bill for "training law enforcement officers and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault." These funds could be one avenue to developing and implementing such training.

Recommendation:

The Nevada Legislature should, no later than the 1997 legislative session, amend NRS 171.137 to eliminate the current provision which does not permit the arrest of the alleged batterer later than four hours after the act of domestic violence occurs.

"Proposed Solution: Develop a pro-arrest policy, requiring the abuser to be arrested each and every time the real crime of domestic battery is committed."

Survivor
Reno Town Meeting

Nevada law states that "a peace officer shall, unless mitigating circumstances exist, arrest a person when he has probable cause to believe that the person to be arrested has, *within the preceding four hours* (emphasis added), committed a battery upon his spouse, former spouse, a person to whom he is related by blood, a person with whom he is or was actually residing or with whom he has a child in common, his minor child or minor child of that person." (NRS. 171.137)

In 1985, "suspect gone on arrival" was given as the reason in 41.8% of the cases where no arrest was made. In 1993, that figure was 59.5%. This could suggest that batterers have figured out an easy way to "beat the system."

The four-hour window gives the batterer this message: if you stay away for four hours after you have beaten her, you can avoid arrest. This does not facilitate holding batterers accountable and it is not the message we want to send. If an officer has probable cause to believe a crime was committed, whether it occurred four minutes or 40 hours ago should not be a determining factor in the decision to arrest.

Prosecution

Recommendation:

By January 1996, the Nevada City Attorneys, Nevada District Attorneys, tribal prosecutors, the Attorney General and the United States Attorney should meet and adopt statewide protocols to handle inter-jurisdictional domestic violence issues and continue to meet regularly to update and review those protocols.

"All the myths and stereotypes surrounding domestic violence and sexual assaults are magnified 10-fold in the Native American Culture... domestic violence is seen more as a personal problem that should be kept secret and out of the public eye rather than a criminal act. Domestic violence falls under the assault and battery laws whose criteria for prosecution require a witness to the violent act. This is contrary to the domestic violence laws in the rest of the state."

Advocate
Elko Town Meeting

Title IV: Violence Against Women Act, Subtitle B: Safe Homes for Women makes it a federal crime to cross state lines to injure a spouse or to violate a protection order. It also requires that all states and tribal entities give full faith and credit to the others' protection orders. This new law will require creative strategies to develop effective implementation procedures.

In Nevada, as with other parts of the country, the bulk of these crimes will not involve people fleeing across the country but will involve the kinds of cases which currently confront border communities: someone who lives in South Lake Tahoe but works in Stateline; or someone who lives on the reservation but whose perpetrator knows that crossing that tribal boundary means he can avoid consequences.

These kinds of jurisdictional issues require that all parties sit down and discuss how best to implement new laws to carry out their intent: accountability for perpetrators and safety for victims. It means setting clear lines of responsibility and communication. Drawing on the experiences of the consolidated narcotics units as a model of inter-jurisdictional cooperation and communication, we can develop appropriate strategies to address domestic violence as both a state and federal crime.

Recommendation:

The Nevada City Attorneys, Nevada District Attorneys, the Attorney General and the United States Attorney should meet and adopt state-wide protocols for the prosecution of domestic violence cases by July 1996.

"But it's my feeling that we need to pass laws that are constitutionally enforceable that we don't have to have the victims testify. I don't see why we can't take police testimony, pictures and things like that, and run these people through the system. These guys that do this, 99% of them are men, they're no dummies and their attorneys are no dummies, that if the victim won't testify and we don't run them through the system, everybody knows that and they know they're going to get away with it."

Assemblyman
Elko Town Meeting

"There's a real lack of consistency between the initial arrest, the prosecution and the court reaction. Sometimes the prosecutors do not prosecute the case at all, even when there is evidence of physical abuse documented by pictures taken at the time of the incident. Battery upon the spouse or partner or any family member or friend is not treated as seriously as battery would be on a stranger."

Assembly Candidate
Yerington Town Meeting

One way to provide both safety for the victim and accountability for the perpetrator is to pursue aggressive prosecution policy which treats domestic violence as a serious crime. This is a strategy being adopted with considerable success in a number of locations around the country. Two examples of aggressive prosecution policies are the programs in place in Duluth, MN. and San Diego, CA.

An aggressive prosecution policy in domestic violence cases requires more than refusal to drop charges at the request of the victim. Written protocols should provide guidelines that address three broad areas.

First, the policy and supporting protocols must give these cases high adjudication priority including the development of vertical domestic violence dockets or calendars for prosecution of domestic violence cases. Second, there must be provision for advocacy as such advocacy increases victim/witness safety and participation throughout the process including trial. And last, there must be provision for working with law enforcement to improve evidence collection and documentation in the event the victim/witness is unable or unwilling to participate.

Such protocols are already in effect in jurisdictions both within and outside of Nevada and can serve as models for development of statewide protocols.⁶ Title IV, Chapter 2, Sec. 2001 (b) (3) of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for “developing and implementing more effective police and prosecution policies, protocols, orders and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying and responding to violent crimes against women, including crimes sexual assault and domestic violence.”

Recommendation:

The Attorney General's Office, in cooperation with prosecutors and domestic violence experts, should develop an eight-hour training curriculum to be offered to all prosecutors in domestic violence prosecution by December 1996. By July 1997, an additional 20-hour training curriculum should be developed and offered to those prosecutors directly responsible for the screening and prosecution of domestic violence cases.

"We hear a whole bunch of silly reasons why victims don't want to go forward and so when we hear these reasons a lot of times we just—it's their request—drop the charges or don't follow through because it's too hard for us to deal with."

Prosecutor
Elko Town Meeting

"Even though I consider myself to be a strong-willed and intelligent person, so intense was the pressure and the guilt laid on me that ultimately at the 11th hour I was coerced into submitting to the DA's office a request to drop the charges. And, of course, they were."

Survivor
Elko Town Meeting

"Generally, we don't file formal charges if it appears it was a mutual-combat situation. After we have filed formal charges, many victims request that the charges be dropped and this is where it gets really frustrating from a prosecutor's standpoint."

Prosecutor
Elko Town Meeting

Unless prosecutors understand the dynamics of domestic violence, they will continue to be confused and frustrated when victims come to them with requests for charges to be dropped against their batterers. The pressure on victims to recant is tremendous and is part of a pattern of control and domination in abusive relationships.

Training must be made available to all prosecutors about both the dynamics of the situation and the ways in which prosecution can facilitate both safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators. It is particularly important that prosecutors directly responsible for prosecuting these cases have an in-depth understanding of domestic violence issues.

There are a number of training programs available on a national level, but it is important that Nevada develop and provide this training to ensure that all prosecutors have access.

Title IV, Chapter 2, Sec. 2001 (b)(1) of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for "training law enforcement officers and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault."

Recommendation:

By December 1996, all courts should direct prosecutors to conduct pre-sentence investigations in domestic violence cases.

"The man had been arrested a number of times for beating my daughter; when the judge set the fine he did not even have his rap sheet before him."

Father of Murdered Victim
Reno Town Meeting

"(O)ne thing that we have to look for before we look at anything else in domestic violence is someone's past when we evaluate what sentence that person's going to get."

Judge
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"A cooperative system needs to be created that combines domestic violence records of abusers with those of law enforcement and courts to track repeat offenders."

Advocate/Survivor
Elko Town Meeting

Courts should not sentence criminal defendants convicted of spousal battery without first obtaining a pre-sentence investigation report on the offender. This will provide the judge with information about a defendant's past history of violence and current injunctions from other courts. This information provides the judge with a much needed tool for assessing the potential for danger to the victim and the community.

The pre-sentence investigation should include, but is not limited to: (1) a thorough review of the defendant's criminal history; (2) family court history, i.e. prior orders of protection, child custody orders, and child abuse or neglect charges; (3) number of police responses involving the family; (4) status report from parole or probation if defendant is on probation; (5) referral to child protective services if the spousal battery involved a family with children in the home; and (6) victim impact statement.

Adjudication

Recommendation:

The Nevada Judges Association and the Administrative Office of the Courts should review bail schedules and develop recommendations for conditions of pre-trial release in cases involving domestic violence by July 1996.

"You see this inequity each time you read the newspaper. For example, in recent police blotters: four dogs released, bail \$600; trespassing at a local casino and obstructing an officer, \$800; No proof of insurance and fictitious plates, \$700; possession of a stolen vehicle, \$2500; domestic violence, \$600. I believe—no, I know—a woman's safety is worth more than a phony license plate, a dog, or even a car."

Volunteer Advocate
Elko Town Meeting

In domestic violence cases, the decision as to whether or not a defendant will appear in court must be balanced with issues of victim safety. Bail schedules are set by the chief judge of each court in Nevada and are not consistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Currently, bail for domestic battery is as low as \$200 in some Nevada courts, while it is as high as \$1200 in others.

The Nevada Judges Association is compiling bail schedules throughout the state and will be making comparisons for the purpose of developing bail schedule guidelines, a project scheduled for completion in 1995. Guidelines will be made public and recommendations will be made to individual courts in an attempt to develop more uniform bail schedules.⁷ We encourage the Association to look closely at bail schedules for domestic violence cases.

Judges should meet with court services personnel and/or jail personnel to develop appropriate pre-trial release guidelines in domestic violence cases. They may wish to consider requiring the appearance of a spousal battery defendant before the court prior to any consideration of "Own Recognition" (O.R.) release. The limited-jurisdiction court judge would then have the opportunity to review bail and consider conditions of pre-trial release as well as determine whether the defendant is on a suspended sentence for prior domestic violence convictions in this or other jurisdictions.

Recommendation:

No later than July 1996, judges should not permit diversion, deferral or dismissal of criminal domestic violence cases when sufficient evidence exists to prosecute.

"So, a first-time offender should receive mandatory sentencing to a batterer treatment program in addition to a mandatory criminal sanction. And a criminal sanction is when the individual is convicted and sentenced."

Assembly Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

"I work with women every day in the shelter and this story is not uncommon. They (batterers) get constant warning, little or no attention, little or no action; they get their hands slapped; they walk out the door; they're free. The women have to worry about feeding their children. They have to worry about looking over their shoulder."

Advocate
Reno Town Meeting

When domestic violence cases are not treated as serious criminal cases, courts reinforce the message that domestic violence is a private issue and not a crime.

Courts hearing criminal domestic violence cases should not resolve cases informally. If a defendant enters a plea of not guilty, the case should be tried to verdict. No case should be dismissed if there is sufficient evidence to proceed. A case should not be dismissed because the batterer has gone to counseling and/or not rebattered the victim for a period of time because this practice sends the message to the perpetrator, the victim and the community at large that courts do not consider this a serious crime.

Courts should permit prosecution of a criminal domestic violence case even in the absence of the victim or if the victim recants the allegation of criminal battery so long as other competent evidence is available to merit prosecution of the case. Judges must understand the victim may be absent from trial due to duress, economic and/or emotional coercion or fear, and that the offense of domestic battery is not to be controlled by the will of the victim but rather by the interest of the state to eliminate domestic violence.

Recommendation:

No later than the 1997/98 legislative session, the legislature should pass legislation to provide for enhanced penalties in cases of second and subsequent convictions for domestic violence by the same perpetrator.

"And that's what I would encourage in my comments: a change in the law that would follow along the lines of DUI laws, that third time offense is a mandatory felony, mandatory prison time."

Police Chief
Elko Town Meeting

Currently in Nevada law, there is no provision for enhanced penalties for second and subsequent domestic violence convictions. Someone committing domestic battery for the second or 22nd time is subject to penalties which are no different from those for a first time offender.

Experts recommend that penalties be enhanced by one degree above the penalty usually provided for the offense in the case of second and subsequent judicial admissions, guilty pleas or convictions for domestic violence within a five-year period.⁸

Enhanced penalties may deter some perpetrators. As the criminal penalties increase, the personal cost to the perpetrator for the violence increases. This is as it should be and sends the message that this is a serious crime and will be dealt with as such.

Eight states—California, Hawaii, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Virginia and Wyoming—provide for enhanced criminal penalties for repeated domestic abuse or harassment.⁹ Nevada should be added to this list.

Recommendation:

By January 1996, all limited-jurisdiction courts should develop a protocol of probationer accountability whereby all defendants on probation or suspended sentence for domestic violence offenses are strictly probated to ensure compliance with drug and alcohol treatment, spousal battery counseling, parenting classes, restitution and employment requirements. Courts should work with prosecutors and law enforcement to develop warrant service teams to enforce domestic violence court orders by July 1997.

"(I)f they drop out of counseling, which my ex did, it should be mandatory to go back to jail and sit there and think about it some more."

Survivor

Las Vegas Town Meeting

"When he went to court he was fined \$250 and told to enroll in an alcohol program which he never did, and the court did not follow up with this."

Father of Murdered Victim

Reno Town Meeting

Most domestic batteries are charged as misdemeanors in Nevada which means that there is no formal mechanism for probation. This allows batterers to ignore the court's orders with little fear of consequences.

Treatment programs are often the sentence of choice if an abuser is found guilty. A long-standing Denver treatment program for abusers, AMEND, reports a 75% dropout rate after the first one or two sessions. Generally, counseling programs for abusers have 33% to 50% drop-out rate.¹⁰ This would strongly suggest the need for close monitoring of batterers ordered to treatment programs.

In Duluth, Minnesota, judges have made arrangements with the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, a program which provides counseling and educational programs for batterers, to monitor the behavior of respondents ordered into the program by the courts. Procedures include reviewing police records, contacting victims monthly and noting failure to attend counseling sessions.¹¹ This is one possible model for developing monitoring systems in Nevada's courts.

If domestic violence offenders fail and/or refuse to comply with court orders and terms and conditions of suspended sentences, there should be swift, firm enforcement of court orders by way of arrest, incarceration and revocation of suspended sentence.

Recommendation:

By December 1995, each court system should ensure that victims of domestic violence are not required to participate in mandatory joint treatment or mediation sessions with their abusers in connection with any civil or criminal proceeding.

"Intervention programs for men who batter women should be committed to the safety of battered women and their children."

Assembly Candidate

Las Vegas Town Meeting

According to Samuel C. Klagsbrun, M.D., Executive Medical Director of Four Winds Hospital in Katonah, N.Y., an approach based on psychotherapy alone is inapplicable to battered women, and family therapy is dangerous for battered women.¹²

Laurie Woods and Joan Zorza of the National Center on Women and Family Law state that mediation is inappropriate where there is domestic abuse. They say that mediation is without a mechanism to hold batterers accountable for past or future violence, that victims are likely to be intimidated by the abuser and make compromises not in their interests, and that abusers often turn mediation into another forum to further harass victims. They point out that "(m)ediation requires good faith bargaining by persons with equal bargaining power," which is not the case when domestic violence is present.¹³

Courts in Nevada should not require victims and offenders to participate in joint treatment or mediation sessions. In relationships where there is a history of domestic violence, treatment counselors and mediation facilitators may not, despite professional training, have sufficient insight into the power and control nuances of a couple's abusive relationship to create a safe and secure environment for balanced treatment or mediation sessions.

Based on studies done in 1990 and 1991 by Michele Harway and Associates, Harway states that therapists as a group are not sufficiently knowledgeable about how to identify violence in families; and even when they are able to spot violence, half do not respond in an appropriate crisis intervention mode to ensure the safety of their client. She makes recommendations that mental health professionals receive training in identifying and responding to the special needs of battered women.¹⁴

Persons who have been abused often do not feel able to reveal true feelings or concerns in the presence of their abuser. And abusers sometimes use statements made in counseling sessions as justification for further abuse. Courts, therefore, must have a heightened awareness of the intimidating dynamics of joint treatment or counseling sessions and refrain from requiring joint sessions in any case where there is a history of domestic violence.

Recommendation:

By January 1995, all courts shall prohibit the issuance of mutual protection orders.

"What I would like to see is a court system that holds the batterer accountable for beating her...These orders are not being enforced...If we are going to give a woman hope and encourage her to leave and put herself in danger by doing that, we have got to back her up by saying; 'If he violates this and you are in danger, we will put him behind bars.' I see this as fundamental."

Survivor/TPO Advocate
Reno Town Meeting

"If you give somebody a restraining order, he violates it and you don't put him in jail, you've just told her he has two free shots at her."

Concerned Citizen
Elko Town Meeting

NRS 33.070 reads: "Every temporary or extended order must include a provision ordering any law enforcement officer who witnesses a violation of any provision of the order to arrest the adverse party." Yet, we are told by town meeting participants, this does not happen in many instances. In some cases failure to arrest comes as a result of actual or *de facto* mutual orders of protection in which a victim requesting protection is issued an order which imposes the same sanctions on her as on the perpetrator. This creates a situation in which a woman could be arrested for violating her own order when her batterer pursues her in violation of that order. This is victim blaming at its worst.

In her book, *Next Time She'll Be Dead*, Ann Jones states: "When women apply for protection orders, judges should not issue 'mutual protection' orders to both parties, thereby suggesting that the woman is as blameworthy and as dangerous as the violent man. And when a batterer persuades or forces a woman to let him in to her premises again, judges should not pronounce the restraining order 'waived' or charge the woman as an 'accessory' or 'co-conspirator' in the violation of the protection order."¹⁵

According to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, mutual orders raise issues of due process, enforcement, and gender bias. They therefore recommend against the issuance of such orders.¹⁶

Protective orders are an important tool in the fight against domestic violence, but they could be a better tool if violations were regularly met with arrest. A batterer who violates an order and suffers no consequences or is successful in shifting the blame to the victim feels free to continue to violate that order. A victim who has attempted to have an order enforced and has been told that it cannot be done or that she is the one to be arrested will quite logically conclude that this order offers her no real protection.

In situations where the facts support the issuance of orders against both parties, both parties should be required to complete the application, interview and service procedures.

Recommendation:

All courts in Nevada should develop 24-hour access to Protective Orders by January 1996.

"Another item would be telephonic restraining orders that could be issued by an officer per a telephone approval by a judge. This would greatly benefit law enforcement on weekdays, holidays, and where appropriate"

Law Enforcement Officer
Winnemucca Town Meeting

Timely access to orders of protection has been a problem for many victims. In most locations in Nevada, orders of protection are not available after business hours or on weekends and holidays, presenting an increased danger for victims. Battering is not a nine-to-five business. Partly because battering is likely to occur in the evenings and on weekends when couples generally have more time together, and partly because many Nevada casinos and businesses are open 24 hours a day, it is crucial that orders of protection be available on that same 24-hour basis.

In 1993, Nevada passed State Assembly Bill 540 which amended the temporary protection against domestic violence law (NRS 33.0017) to authorize orders granted via FAX if the batterer is in custody.

In Las Vegas, an emergency evening/weekend FAX protective order project was initiated in May 1994. Protective orders are made available on a 24-hour basis to victims whose batterers are arrested. This facilitates serving the batterer with the order before he is released from custody.

The orders are made possible by a cooperative effort between Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis (TADC) and the 8th Judicial District Court, Family Court Division. The victim makes application with the assistance of TADC staff and the application is then faxed to one of six family court judges who utilizes a portable FAX machine to transmit the order to the detention facility where the batterer is in custody.

In May 1994, seven orders were procured in this manner. In June there were 30 and there were 30 again in July. At the end of July, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) conducted a training. In August that number rose to 107. The number tapered off and remained constant at 70-75 orders/month in September through December of 1994.

The Protective Order Office reports no drop in the rate of office hour orders during this time.¹⁷ Metro reports a reduction in the number of domestic violence arrests for September through December 1994. Because these orders are only available when the perpetrator has been arrested, this reduction in arrests could explain the corresponding reduction in orders beginning in September.¹⁸

Utilization of this emergency protective order program is much greater than was initially expected and clearly demonstrates the need for such programs in Nevada.

Victims Services

Recommendation:

Nevada's domestic violence programs should conduct a comprehensive analysis of their capacity to meet the increasing demand for services with attention to their effectiveness in serving traditionally under-served populations including racial, cultural and language minorities and geographically isolated victims, and present that analysis to the Council by July 1996.

"In the many conversations I've had with victims of domestic violence, one significant fact continues to surface: once the woman has been battered, the burden of leaving the abuser becomes hers along with the financial responsibilities of food, clothing and shelter, not only for herself but also for her children. I continue to hear the following comments: 'Restraining orders don't work.'; 'I have no money to leave.'; 'I have no family to turn to.'"

Congressional Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

"I would also like to see the Legislature earmark funds for CADV (local domestic violence program) groups throughout the State of Nevada that will assist them in putting on the programs...We certainly thank them from a law enforcement standpoint of being a valuable resource. But I also know they're operating on a shoe-string budget and could do a much better job simply if they had the funds to do it."

Police Chief
Elko Town Meeting

In 1980, there were four programs dedicated to providing services to victims of domestic violence in Nevada. In 1994 there were 14, and two communities are in the process of forming new programs. These programs developed within the communities they serve; therefore, services vary from program to program based on need and funding. They provide a variety of services including, but not limited to 24-hour hotlines, peer counseling, food, clothing, shelter, transitional housing, advocacy in the courts, emergency

transportation, adult and children's support groups, child care, and professional counseling for victims and perpetrators.

These organizations are private non-profit organizations and receive funding from a variety of sources, but primary funding for most programs comes from the portion of the marriage licence fee designated for domestic violence programs. While there have been significant increases in the level of that funding, those increases are offset by increased use of program services.

In 1989, domestic violence programs in Nevada provided services to 10,340 victims of domestic violence. In 1994, that figure rose to 24,442. This represents a 136% increase over a five-year period. If outreach efforts suggested in this plan are successfully carried out, those figures can be expected to grow at an even more accelerated rate.

Some programs are operating with the same number of personnel and in the same physical space as five years ago. Although the demand for service has doubled, funding has not. Nor have the costs of providing shelter, counseling, legal assistance, child care or emergency transportation remained static. Programs have been very creative in attempting to meet victim needs, but they need more help.

A statewide analysis will allow us to develop a comprehensive picture of the services that are available and areas where the need for additional services is greatest. There are a number of such assessment tools already in place in Pennsylvania and other states; adaption for use in Nevada will take minimal time and resources.

Recommendation:

In concert with the comprehensive analysis of program capacity, domestic violence programs by June 1996 should compile consumer evaluations to measure availability, accessibility and effectiveness of current services and identify any need for additional services with attention to the needs of under-served populations.

"(O)ne of our clients was terminally ill with cancer. She went to try to get low-cost housing; she was told that she had a year's wait. She died six months later; was never able to get out of that situation."

Advocate

Yerington Town Meeting

"A victim of domestic violence should not have to choose between further violence and finding a way to survive a 30-day deprivation. These women and their children are in dire circumstances, often with nothing more than a few clothes to call their own. There must be changes in current regulations governing social services that will afford victims of domestic violence immediate qualification for AFDC, food stamps and other programs that will allow them to leave the violence behind without stepping out of the frying pan into the fire."

Survivor

Yerington Town Meeting

In a position paper distributed by the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Pamela Johnston points out that while early services to battered women focused on emergency shelter and support services within shelters, the vast majority of abused women using domestic violence programs today never see the inside of a shelter.¹⁹

She lists advocacy, counseling, specialized counseling (i.e. when the batterer is in a treatment program), crisis intervention hotlines, children's services, parenting support, legal services, drop-in childcare centers and services for non-English speaking clients among the services needed by battered women.²⁰ Subsidized housing, food, clothing, job training, and financial assistance for such things as rental and/or utility deposits and emergency relocation could be added to that list.

Clearly, domestic violence programs alone cannot possibly supply survivors with all these things yet, a battered woman will generally need a number of these services in order to live free of violence.

To develop a more complete picture of the scope and complexity of the needs of survivors and to what extent they are or are not being met, we need to ask the victims themselves. Elderly women may be especially vulnerable to violence and especially reluctant to report that violence when it occurs. They may feel it is too late to seek safety for themselves or sanctions for their partners. They may be embarrassed about having stayed in an abusive situation for so long. They may have attempted to leave in the past and found services geared to younger victims.

Victims with physical handicaps may not know that facilities for survivors are accessible or may have discovered that they are not completely accessible. Consumer evaluations will help us to understand both their needs and areas where needs are not being met.

A number of programs already utilize such evaluation tools and use the results to expand and improve current services. We need to ensure that all programs participate. We also need to include other service providers to assess the needs of victims who do not utilize domestic violence programs.

These evaluations will provide a picture of what does and doesn't work and what is and is not available. It will allow us to begin to develop new services and improve or expand existing services to meet the needs of all victims and survivors.

The 1994 Crime Bill, Title IV, Subtitle B, Chapter 4, Section 40241 authorizes funding for battered women's shelters in the amount of \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 1996, gradually increasing to 72,500,000 by fiscal year 2000. This funding could be instrumental in developing, improving or expanding services for victims of domestic violence.

Recommendation:

By July 1996, domestic violence programs should assess current outreach efforts to determine their effectiveness with attention to reaching traditionally under-served populations including racial, cultural and language minorities and geographically isolated victims.

"At our church, we find that women are afraid to speak out only because they think that they are the only ones going through this difficulty or that there is no one who will listen to them."

Pastor
Mailed Testimony

"We must work to ensure that victims of domestic violence feel safe enough to come forward and say that a crime has been committed. Too often, they think that it is their fault and they will be ridiculed and/or condemned for reporting this crime. We need to dispel these notions and create a more positive and comfortable atmosphere for these victims."

Senate Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

"Our society is composed of many different cultures, backgrounds and people of different educational levels. The beliefs of what is right, what is wrong, are widely varied. The roles of men, women and children within a family-like structure are likewise widely varied."

Law Enforcement Officer
Yerington Town Meeting

Isolation is very common among survivors. It is crucial that we reach out to victims of domestic violence and let them know that the violence is not their fault and that there are services available to assist them.

First we need to identify the effectiveness of outreach efforts by analysing state demographic data in comparison to demographic data collected by domestic violence programs. As under-served populations are iden-

tified, outreach strategies could be developed in conjunction with the Nevada "No Excuse" public information campaign to ensure that all victims are aware of services available.

Victims of violence within the gay and lesbian communities may be reluctant to report violence for fear that it will reflect badly on their community and contribute to increased homophobia, or for fear of having their lifestyle publicly revealed if they have chosen not to do so themselves. They may be much more reluctant than other victims to utilize criminal justice or other systems which cannot provide confidentiality. We must be sensitive to these concerns.

"In addition to sexist and racist attitudes within the general society, an abused black woman has to deal with the complexity of her position within the black community...The image of black women as long suffering victims can keep us passive and confused about the abuse in our lives."²¹ Outreach to African American victims will be more effective if it is planned with an understanding of this dynamic.

Immigrant women may be unaware that violence against them in their homes is a crime in this country, and may be even more isolated than other survivors. Although provisions of the newly-passed Violence Against Women Act now allow immigrant survivors to apply for citizenship on their own, immigrant women may well be unaware of this fact and feel they must endure the abuse in order to gain American citizenship. This is important information and it is crucial that it reach immigrant and service providers.

We need to be aware that violence occurs in all cultural and socioeconomic groups, and we need to seek counsel from individuals within underserved groups as we develop outreach strategies. We must, however, plan outreach efforts with some caution. If we are to offer safety to victims of domestic violence, we must be scrupulously honest with ourselves and with them about what they can realistically expect from criminal justice and victim service organizations. We expose victims to even more danger when we lead them to expect actions or services which are not truly available to them.

Recommendation:

After reviewing these assessments, the Council should develop recommendations for improving services for victims by January 1997, to include developing or strengthening delivery of victim services including shelter, transitional housing, counseling, legal representation and judicial access to all victims, with emphasis on racial, cultural, ethnic and language minorities.

"It is an outrage that this country has more animal shelters than there are for human beings."

Assembly Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

"It is essential for the Native American community to have access to facilities that are sensitive to the differences in standards of living and promote education that will enable families to deal with domestic violence."

Social Service Worker
Reno Town Meeting

Recognizing that domestic violence programs do a great deal with very little funding, a number of participants included increased funding for domestic violence programs in the state among their recommendations. There is, as well, a need to look at additional financial support for other agencies providing services for victims of domestic violence if we are to provide safety for those victims and their families.

If a victim has no income and is told that she has to wait 30 days before she can qualify for AFDC, it is unlikely she will see leaving her abusive situation to become the sole support of herself and her children as a viable option. If a victim is assured that housing assistance is available for her and her children only to learn after she has left that the waiting list is two years long, she may have no option but to return to a situation made more dangerous by her leaving. Similarly, she may be forced to return when she discovers the cost of child care is more than she can manage and that the list for the child care assistance she was told about is also two years long.

We need to be especially sensitive to issues affecting the many and diverse populations in which domestic violence occurs. In many cultures including those of Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans, very strong emphasis is placed on family unity, and individuals from these cultures may be suspicious of systems perceived as a threat to that family unity. We must

be sensitive to these values while continuing to focus on safety for victims and accountability for batterers.

Studies which focus on high school students show that dating violence is almost as widespread as in adult relationships.²² Teenagers are especially vulnerable because of their minor status under the law. Many teens view violence as normal and will not seek help without a great deal of encouragement. It is especially important that we extend outreach efforts to teenagers because we can reach these young people before the patterns of violence in relationships become habitual and therefore more difficult to alter.

A woman from a higher socio-economic group sometimes has more resources than a poor woman, but it is an error to assume that this is always true. Many times her husband has control of all financial resources and has isolated her from family and friends. She may also be more concerned about disrupting his career and position, especially if he is the father of her children. Outreach efforts should include all such women and should be sensitive to their situations.

Studies show that women are the victims of violence in 94-95% of domestic violence cases.²³ Some suggest that the statistics are low for men because gender roles make it embarrassing for men to admit to being abused. It may also be true that men do not report abuse because they are less often physically harmed by being hit by their female partners. We must plan outreach with the understanding that men too can be victims of abuse.

Recommendations based on the assessment of service capacity, consumer need and gaps in outreach will provide the necessary direction for strengthening assistance to survivors and their families.

In addition to funding for domestic violence shelters in Title IV, Subtitle B, Chapter 4, Section 40241 of the 1994 Crime Bill, funding is also authorized "to provide treatment and counseling to victims of domestic violence and child abuse" in rural areas under Title IV, Chapter 10, Section 40295.

Recommendation:

A plan for strengthening legal advocacy programs for victims of domestic violence through coordinated efforts of the Nevada State Bar Association, indigent legal services pro-bono projects, protective order advocate offices, the judiciary and local domestic violence task forces should be completed by December 1995 and implemented by June 1996.

"Victims of violence face a very intimidating judicial system, and they very frequently need advocates who are accessible, responsive and sensitive to their needs. There is a serious shortage of such advocates in the community, both among lawyers and among non-lawyers."

Attorney
Reno Town Meeting

"And that's real important (access to the courts) because oftentimes the financial difference, the economic disparity between a woman and a man, and when you're facing somebody who works out at Barrick or Newmont pulling down \$55,000 a year and a woman (who's) got three kids, no job skills and no money, it's very difficult for them to find attorneys and to stand up and fight."

Attorney
Elko Town Meeting

A recurring theme in town meeting testimony was the need for legal representation for victims of violence. The Nevada Supreme Court Gender Bias Task Force report confirms that lack of financial resources and the cost of legal assistance limit access to legal remedies for Nevada's domestic violence survivors.²⁴

Battered women who are without legal representation are extremely vulnerable in the areas of child custody and visitation. They often risk losing their children because they have no legal counsel to protect their interests when batterers file for custody. They also need legal advice to see that visitation is set up in such a way as to provide maximum safety for themselves and their children.

Court-based victim assistance programs are part of the solution. Advocates who provide information about the processes of the court can be a tremendous asset for women unable to afford legal representation. There are a number of such advocacy programs both in Nevada and in other parts of the country which can serve as models.²⁵

Despite court-based advocacy programs, the needs of women who are unrepresented and women who wish to divorce their batterers but are unable to do so because they cannot afford an attorney remain unmet. Clearly, this is a problem requiring creative solutions and the combined efforts of all parties listed in this recommendation.

Batterers' Treatment

Recommendation:

By July 1996, treatment providers, in conjunction with victim advocates, should develop minimum mandatory treatment standards and a certification process for court ordered treatment providers.

"It's better if he doesn't go to counseling if you're going to send him to counseling that just reinforces or minimizes that this is really no big deal, just sort of a class that you sit in and then we'll sweep it under the carpet and we'll drop the charges and everything will be okay. It will not be okay."

Counselor

Las Vegas Town Meeting

Batterers treatment programs are important in a total community response to violence, because batterers often have multiple victims throughout their lives. If we provide safety for a victim and ignore the perpetrator, we leave him free to victimize others. It is important that we provide not only incentive for change with appropriate sanctions, but also appropriate tools to facilitate that change. If batterers are to be court ordered to counseling, it is important that we look at the nature and quality of that counseling.

There is considerable controversy regarding the efficacy of batterers' treatment. This is due, in part, to the varying nature and duration of programs which present themselves as batterers' treatment. It is unrealistic to expect a few weeks of anger management classes to change attitudes and behaviors developed over a lifetime.

In the absence of established batterers' treatment programs, programs which have little or no expertise in the field of battering have been developed to meet the needs of courts who wish to sentence to batterers treatment.²⁶

Experts identify inappropriate approaches to batterers' treatment as those which orient themselves towards the couple before dealing with the batterers' criminal behavior, focus on anger control without dealing with underlying issues, or place the batterers' needs before the needs of the court system for accountability and victim safety.²⁷

Standards for court ordered batterers' treatment are an important tool for ensuring the quality of treatment programs. In some parts of the country, therapists and domestic violence experts are working together on standards designed to provide safety for victims while giving perpetrators effective treatment. Three states: Colorado, Iowa and Massachusetts, and three California counties: San Diego, Santa Clara and Orange Counties currently have batterers' treatment standards in place. New York State and Minnesota have drafts awaiting approval. Pennsylvania and Florida have established coalition standards.²⁸ Existing models should be utilized to create similar standards for Nevada.

Recommendation:

By October 1997, an application and certification process for treatment providers should be mandated by the Nevada State Legislature as a pre-requisite to a court utilizing a treatment provider and directories containing a list of certified treatment providers should be available to justice system officials through the state.

"There's also a need for more effective domestic violence treatment programs; there is also a need for monitoring of each individual that is in treatment for domestic violence and also a follow-up on the victim."

Counselor

Las Vegas Town Meeting

"The abuser should be ordered by the court to go to violence impulse classes counseling, and if he doesn't go; if he quits, he is found in contempt of court. There are no excuses. None."

Survivor

Las Vegas Town Meeting

"We have to take a realistic look, too, at the financial problems of the family, and, yes, we can order counseling but there's nobody out there that's going to do counseling for nothing, so we're going to have to look at the State for some kind of help on that issue."

Attorney

Reno Town Meeting

Treatment providers, to be eligible for court referrals, should undergo an initial application process, agree to abide by established standards and provide sliding-scale or pro-bono services to indigent perpetrators. To ensure compliance with these standards, annual on-site visits should be conducted. Once standards are established, developing a certification process for adherence to those standards should include how and by whom site visits will be conducted.

Programs providing court-ordered batterers' treatment must report to the court and the victim any assault, failure to comply with or participate in the program, failure to attend the program, or threat of harm by the perpetrator.

The certification process could be funded by application fees paid by treatment providers.

Healthcare

Recommendation:

By July 1996, the Division of Health should adopt standard healthcare protocols to be used by providers statewide to effectively identify, treat and refer victims of domestic violence.

"Furthermore, medical systems, including hospitals, clinics and private offices have no uniform policy to document or to photograph domestic and family violence cases."

Health Educator
Las Vegas Town Meeting

The American Medical Association estimates that more than one third of all women seeking emergency care are victims of abuse, yet very few are identified as such. Using current diagnostic and identification procedures, physicians identify approximately one abuse victim in twenty-five, and mental health practitioners, perhaps as few as one in thirty. In addition, both review of records and observation of clinician-victim encounters indicate that health providers are more likely to refer battered than non-battered women to psychiatry, to apply either traditional female labels (such as "hysteric") or other denigrating labels ("crock"), to prescribe tranquilizers and pain medication or to institutionalize them in mental hospitals.²⁹

In 1991 the Public Health Service released their Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives which has as one of its objectives for the year 2000 that at least 90% of hospital emergency departments have protocols for routinely identifying, treating and referring victims of sexual assault and spouse abuse. In 1992 the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Hospitals and Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) established requirements that all accredited emergency departments have policies and procedures, and a plan for education staff on the treatment of battered adults.³⁰

In August 1994, the Nevada State Attorney General's Office, the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV) and the Nevada Emergency Room Nurses Association sponsored a day-long training in domestic violence for healthcare providers in Nevada. Model healthcare protocols were presented at the training and participants were asked to use them to create protocols for their own institutions.

The Division of Health could use these or other protocols as models to develop standard protocols for use by healthcare providers statewide. Protocols should be designed for hospitals, clinics and private practices. Emphasis must be placed on safety issues for both provider and patient.

Recommendation:

By July 1997, the Division of Health, in cooperation with county health departments and private medical providers, should work with experts on domestic violence to develop continuing education programs for all healthcare providers. Programs should contain information on safety planning, alternatives to returning to an abusive situation and the role of the healthcare provider in charting information for court consumption.

“(P)hysicians and medical students may be unprepared to recognize the more subtle signs of domestic violence or family violence. They treat the results of the violence, but they are often unprepared to intervene or to even consider violence in their assessment of their patient. “

Health Educator

Las Vegas Town Meeting

In order for protocols to be successfully implemented, they must include development of comprehensive training in identification, treatment and referral and should include development of safety strategies for the victims.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund in collaboration with the San Francisco Injury Center for Prevention and Research conducted a study which revealed that battered patients are not being identified by emergency department staff and most staff are not trained in identification and referral procedures. The majority of respondents expressed the need for additional training.³¹

Model training materials and implementation strategies are being pilot-tested in six California hospitals and six Pennsylvania hospitals and will be disseminated in the spring of 1995.³² The results should be evaluated and could possibly be adapted for use in Nevada.

Education

Recommendation:

In consultation with domestic violence experts, the State Department of Education should develop training for all day care, preschool, elementary and secondary school staff in identifying and assisting with safety planning for children from violent homes for implementation by academic year 1996/97.

"Too many times I've seen children come into my classroom that have been victims along with their mother or father."

Teacher
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"At this point, I have a lot of students, female students who either themselves have been battered by boyfriends or their sisters have been or their brothers in some cases have been...domestic violence against dating teenagers is very much a problem and needs to be addressed."

Classroom Teacher
Las Vegas Town Meeting

Teachers at all levels of education systems need to be informed about identification and referrals for survivors and their children. Often, children will confide in a trusted teacher when they will confide in no one else. A teacher who knows how to deal with the situation can do much to enhance the safety of the family, while a teacher who doesn't may inadvertently place a child at greater risk by passing on misinformation. An informed teacher can create a safe space for a child to share the reasons for his or her problems, can reassure the child that s/he is not responsible for the violence and can assist with safety planning or refer the child to someone who can.

Violence among teenagers in dating relationships is a serious problem throughout the country. According to one study, 12% of high school daters reported experiencing some form of dating violence. The same study interviewed survivors who sought shelter and reported that 51% of these women said they had been abused in a teen dating relationship.³³ Another study reports that approximately one of every five college students experiences violence in dating relationships.³⁴

Teachers can be instrumental in helping teens recognize and begin to deal with violence in relationships.

Experts suggest that any courses include the following: the nature, extent and causes of domestic violence; practices designed to promote safety of the victim and other family members; issues of domestic violence concerning children; sensitivity to gender bias and cultural, racial and sexual issues; and the lethality of domestic violence.³⁵

To keep costs within reason, a one-day in-service training for educators could provide the mechanism for providing this information utilizing local service providers, law enforcement officials and treatment providers as presenters.

Recommendation:

The State Department of Education should develop programs to educate young people about domestic violence and to teach non-violent conflict resolution skills and alternatives to violence, and should implement those programs in Nevada schools by the year 2000.

"In many homes children are being beaten and being told that being beaten is happening because their parents love them. It sends a strong message that hitting equals love and if you love somebody enough it's OK to hit them...There is a need for more information for children of all ages about what healthy, non-violent relationships look like, consist of."

Nurse

Elko Town Meeting

"We need to develop a social relations skills curriculum for all grade levels which will assist our children to deal with the daily trials and tribulations of life. We need to prepare our children for the real world, not only academically, but assist them to survive in the world they were born to."

Daughter of Victim

Las Vegas Town Meeting

Children who witness violence in their homes frequently experience problems in school.³⁶ While educators make a justified point in saying that schools cannot be expected to teach the three R's and preventive education for all of society's ills, schools are a place where children can receive important information about the world in which they live.

Programs such as the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) and Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Project have been welcomed into the educational system. We need to develop similar programs/curricula dealing with domestic violence. Any curriculum must include non-violent conflict resolution skills and alternatives to violence, and must be especially sensitive to safety issues for children living in violent homes.

Information about domestic violence is generally available in Nevada's schools on a sporadic basis, often at the invitation of an individual teacher and in many cases only in high school classes as a way of helping students already

involved in violent relationships. There are potential models in a number of curricula spanning K-12 currently being used throughout the country.³⁷

Title IV, Chapter 5, Sec. 317 of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for "model programs for the education of young people about domestic violence and violence among intimate partners." The Council needs to monitor this provision of the Crime Bill closely with the ultimate goal of implementing curricula in Nevada's schools.

Recommendation:

The University and Community College System should review domestic violence education curricula in criminal justice, social and health resources, education, guidance and counseling departments and related disciplines and make recommendations for developing and improving those curricula by academic school year 1999/2000.

"Domestic violence awareness educational programs are really needed and should be designed, I think, for both public and private schools, businesses, state, county and city government agencies, civic groups, hospitals and various clinics. Whatever we can do to provide more information and training, we need to get involved."

Counselor
Las Vegas Town Meeting

As our understanding of the impact of domestic violence on all sectors of society grows, we must translate that understanding into action. The role of post-secondary education is to prepare students for careers. Where applicable, that preparation should include instruction about the issue of domestic violence and about effective intervention and prevention strategies.

Community colleges, universities and graduate schools in Nevada, including the Schools of Medicine and Nursing, need to develop programs that meet the future professional needs of graduates by including instruction on domestic violence in varying subject areas including, but not limited to: criminal justice, social and health specialties, education, guidance and counseling.

Individual professors currently invite experts to their classes to speak about the issue, but it is not an ongoing part of curricula. To ensure that all students receive this information, regular and ongoing curricula should be established.

Title IV, Chapter 5, Sec. 317 of the 1994 Crime Bill authorizes funding for model education programs in four areas including institutions of higher education.

Children's Services

Recommendation:

The Division of Child and Family Services should work with state & county welfare representatives and domestic violence advocates to develop or expand domestic violence training programs for state and local child protective workers and administrators for implementation by July 1996; should work with prosecutors, law enforcement representatives and local child welfare agencies to develop or expand procedures to investigate and document domestic violence in child abuse and neglect cases by January 1997; and should develop statewide procedures to identify, investigate, case-manage and provide support services in such cases by July 1997.

"I would like for the state plan to address the needs of children: specifically I recommend that number one, the plan that is currently being developed by the state to spend two and one quarter million dollars of new federal money for family preservation and support services must absolutely include services for battered women and their children."

Advocate/Administrator
Reno Town Meeting

Studies show a high correlation between woman battering and child abuse.³⁸ Some experts suggest that domestic violence is the single most important predictor of child abuse.³⁹

As these findings indicate, effective intervention strategies must include child protection and family preservation services. These agencies need to ask questions about other forms of violence in the family during their investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect cases. Authorities should make removal of the perpetrator rather than the child and the non-offending parent from the home part of regular procedure. Services should also be provided to the non-offending parent that will strengthen their ability to maintain a violence free home for their children.

As Susan Schechter and Jeffrey Edelson point out, "supporting the remaining family unit—mother and children—in the aftermath of violence is consistent with current thinking in the area of family preservation."⁴⁰ A policy of family preservation to protect and strengthen families has been a priority in this state and should include a definition of family to include a single non-violent parent and children.

There are several sources of support and information pertaining to domestic violence and child protective services. Massachusetts is among the first states to develop written domestic violence protocols for children's protective services. The Family Violence Project of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has been designated to provide technical assistance and training in this area.

Recommendation:

The Council should recommend and work for passage of legislation by July 1996, to create a presumption against awarding custody of children to domestic violence offenders.

"(W)here evidence established that a parent engages in physical abuse of a spouse a statutory presumption that it is detrimental for the child to be placed in the custody of an abusive spouse needs to be explored by the State Legislature."

Concerned Citizen
Yerington Town Meeting

"Any parent that is the abuser should not be able to win any custody case."

Assembly Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

Children are always the victims of violence in their homes, even if that violence is not directed at them. Contrary to popular beliefs that violence can be kept from children, as many as 90% of children from violent homes witness their fathers batter their mothers. Children witnessing the violence of their fathers against their mothers experience problems similar to children who are themselves abused. Boys become aggressive, fight with siblings and other children and have temper tantrums. Girl children are more likely to become passive, clinging and withdrawn.⁴¹

"Moreover, research confirms that the post-separation adjustment of children is not facilitated by joint custody or frequent visitation arrangements when there is chronic conflict and violence between the parents."⁴²

"The presumption of granting custody to the victim in a violent relationship should be more widely understood and used by judges" according to panel members at the "Courts and Communities" Conference held in San Francisco in 1993.⁴³

The United States Congress in 1990 passed House Concurrent Resolution 172, a resolution that "expresses the sense of the Congress that evidence of spouse abuse creates a statutory presumption that it is detrimental to the child to be placed in the custody of an abusive parent."

Legal experts have concluded that “determination by the court that domestic violence has occurred raises a rebuttable presumption that it is not in the best interest of the child and is in fact detrimental to that child to be placed in sole custody, joint legal custody or joint physical custody with the perpetrator”.⁴⁴

There are at least eight states which have established that presumption.⁴⁵ Nevada needs to review current legislation and strengthen the courts ability to protect both the child and the victim from future violence.

Recommendation:

The 1997 Legislature should fund pilot visitation and exchange centers in both Clark and Washoe Counties and use that experience to develop such programs statewide by the year 2000.

"We also need to allow protective orders to supersede visitation rights. That's very important because what happens is the woman will have an order and the abuser will come with his visitation rights papers and say, 'I'm taking the kids away and you may never see them again.' They use this as a form of psychological abuse, and then, of course, the children may be in jeopardy as well."

Assembly Candidate
Reno Town Meeting

"The attorney may not be particularly sensitive to the fact that the woman is afraid to leave her children with the batterer, nor is she willing to have to meet him face to face on a regular basis in order to transfer the care of the children from one to the other."

Advocate
Winnemucca Town Meeting

The exchange of children for visitation is often a time of great danger. In an address to the "Courts and Communities" conference, Sarah Buel discussed visitation centers as one solution to these problems. "(A)s long as we're going to order that batterers have a right to visitation, we need to make sure that it is occurring in a safe place."⁴⁶

In 1992, the Minnesota Legislature authorized funding for the development of five pilot safety centers for supervised visitation and for the safe exchange of children for visitation. Between September 1992 and June 1993, these five centers served 267 children and 215 families. The programs conducted 1,230 supervised visits with only 46 (3.75%) requiring staff interventions due to abusive behaviors demonstrated between parents and children.⁴⁷

A number of such sites are being developed around the country. Some use only professional staff while others operate primarily with volunteers. Many of these programs are relatively inexpensive to operate due to using existing facilities such as YMCA's, YWCA's and churches which

already have established children's areas. Some operating expenses are covered by charging the parent being supervised for use of the center. This is often done on a sliding scale to avoid discriminating against less affluent parents.⁴⁸

A national "Supervised Visitation Network" had been formed to aid in providing for safe visitation and exchange. Their headquarters are located at 222 South Downey Street, Rm. 260, Indianapolis, IN, 46219. This network can be a valuable resource as we plan for visitation centers.

One cautionary note: Martha McMahon and Ellen Pence, in their article "Doing More Harm than Good? Some Cautions on Visitation Centers," advise that the role of the visitation center can be more complex than anticipated due to the complexity of the involved systems (courts, child protection, battered women's advocates) who sometimes have competing interests.⁴⁹ This article should be read by anyone planning to create a visitation center in their community.

Recommendation:

All state and local domestic violence task forces and similar associations should explore having child services subcommittees in place by January 1996.

"Like many other survivors of domestic violence, I too witnessed my father's verbal and physical abuse towards my mother and other family members...I feel we need to look at and give special attention to the development of more domestic violence programs for children of all ages."

Daughter of Survivor
Las Vegas Town Meeting

"In a recent case, a young man of 14 years told his mother that everybody had these problems, so 'What's the big deal?' They were discussing his father's violence against his mother."

Attorney
Reno Town Meeting

Even if children living in violent homes are not abused, the effects of witnessing and living in a violent home are harmful. In her book *Terrifying Love*, Lenore Walker reports that in one study, battering was reported to have been present in 67% of battered women's childhood homes, 81% of batterer's and 24% of non-batterers.⁵⁰ Men who saw parents attack each other were almost three times more likely to have hit their own wives during the year of a study conducted by Murray Straus, Richard Gelles and Suzanne Steinmetz and reported in their book *Behind Closed Doors*.⁵¹

Of 42 characteristics of female victims investigated by researchers, only one—witnessing violence between parents or caregivers while growing up—is consistently related to future wife abuse.⁵²

These and related findings tell us that the next generation of batterers is currently being trained in violence by their families. We must counter the reality of their surroundings with information about how they can make better choices in their own lives. To break the generational cycle of violence, we need to begin to reach children at a very early age with information about family violence and about ways to peacefully resolve conflicts.

In order to work towards the elimination of future violence, domestic violence task forces and similar associations should ensure that issues surrounding children in violent homes are addressed as an important consideration in all discussions and plans.

Conclusion

Notes

Resources

Conclusion

The Future: Coordinated Community Response

The key to waging a successful campaign against domestic violence and moving toward a more healthy, violence-free Nevada is a coordinated community effort based on certain enforcement, effective intervention and strong prevention. Concern for the safety of victims and their children must be central to all efforts.

It takes all three arms of the criminal justice system working together to ensure uniform enforcement of the law. Law enforcement must make arrests when laws are broken. Prosecutors must aggressively prosecute violations of the law once arrest is made. Judges must impose sentences appropriate to the seriousness of the crime.

While intervention by the criminal justice system is key to the fight against domestic violence, all agencies and individuals who provide services to families where violence occurs must also work to provide safety for victims and to hold batterers accountable.

This plan presents specific action steps, provides supporting rationale and identifies existing resources to assist in their realization. Implementation will inevitably lead to other obstacles and solutions not mentioned or even considered. We must continually evaluate and update as need and opportunity arise.

This plan is part of a process aimed at eliminating domestic violence in Nevada. We encourage you to be part of that process by using the plan as a guide to action.

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Resources

National

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| National Resource Center on Domestic Violence | 800-537-2238 |
| Battered Women's Justice Project | 800-903-0111 |
| Resource Center on Child Protection and Custody | 800-537-3223 |
| Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence | 800-313-1310 |

State

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| Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline | 800-500-1556 |
| Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence | 702-358-1171 |
| Southern Nevada Domestic Violence Task Force | 702-225-4113 |
| Washoe County Domestic Violence Task Force | 702-334-2050 |

Local

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|---|--------------|
| Carson and Storey Counties | |
| <i>Advocates to End Domestic Violence</i> | 702-883-7654 |
| Churchill County | |
| <i>Domestic Violence Intervention</i> | 702-423-1313 |
| Clark County | |
| <i>Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis</i> | 702-646-4981 |
| Douglas County | |
| <i>Douglas County Family Support Council</i> | 702-782-8692 |
| <i>Stateline, Zephyr Cove, Glenbrook</i> | 702-588-7171 |
| Elko County | |
| <i>Committee Against Domestic Violence</i> | 702-738-6524 |

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| Humboldt County | | |
| <i>Committee Against Family Violence</i> | | 702-623-6429 |
| Lander County | | |
| <i>Lander County Committee</i> | | |
| <i>Against Domestic Violence</i> | | 702-635-2500 |
| Lincoln County | | |
| <i>Family Crisis Center</i> | | 702-962-5888 |
| Lyon County | | |
| <i>Alternatives to Living in a Violent Environment</i> | | |
| Yerington | | 702-463-4009 |
| North Lyon County | | 800-453-4009 |
| Mineral County | | |
| <i>Mineral County Advocates</i> | | |
| <i>to End Domestic Violence</i> | | 702-945-2472 |
| Nye and Esmeralda Counties | | |
| <i>Intercept</i> | | |
| Pahrump | | 702-727-0818 |
| Tonopah | | 702-482-2273 |
| Pershing County | | |
| <i>Pershing County Domestic Violence Intervention</i> | | 702-273-7373 |
| Washoe County | | |
| <i>Committee to Aid Abused Women</i> | | 702-358-4150 |
| White Pine and Eureka Counties | | |
| <i>Support, Inc.</i> | | 702-289-2270 |

