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Document Title: Chicago Heights, Illinois, Domestic Violence Unit: A Process Evaluation

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Document No.: 201881

Date Received: September 2003

Award Number: 98-WE-VX-0012

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Chicago Heights, Illinois, Domestic Violence Unit

A Process Evaluation

February 10, 2000

Prepared for
Chicago Heights Police Department
National Institute of Justice
Violence Against Women Office

Prepared by
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This project was supported by Grant No. 98-WE-VX-0012 awarded to the Institute for Law and Justice by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Introduction

The Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies Program encourages jurisdictions to implement mandatory or pro-arrest policies as an effective domestic violence intervention that is part of a coordinated community response. Congress appropriated funds for this program under the Violence Against Women Act (1994). The Program assumes that the arrest of a batterer will leverage the coercive and persuasive power of the criminal justice system to ensure victim safety and manage the behavior of abusive, violent offenders. Ensuring victim safety and offender accountability are the guiding principles underlying the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies. The Violence Against Women Act directs that the Arrest Program funds be used to

- Implement mandatory arrest or pro-arrest programs and policies in police departments, including mandatory arrest programs or pro-arrest program and policies for protection order violations;
- Develop policies and training programs in police departments and other criminal justice and tribal to agencies improve tracking of cases involving domestic violence;
- Centralize and coordinate police enforcement, prosecution, probation, parole or judicial responsibility for domestic violence cases in groups or units of police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers or judges
- Coordinate computer tracking systems to ensure communication between police, prosecutors, and both criminal and family courts;
- Strengthen legal advocacy service programs for victims of domestic violence by providing complete information and support for a victim of domestic violence as the case against her abuser moves through the criminal justice system; and
- Educate judges and others responsible for judicial handling of domestic violence cases, in criminal, tribal, and other courts about domestic violence to improve judicial handling of such cases.

The Institute for Law and Justice, Inc. (ILJ) is conducting a national assessment of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies Program, which is funded by the National Institute of Justice. ILJ is using a three-stage methodology for this evaluation. First is an annual national assessment of all sites that will document the type and extent of projects funded. Second, a process evaluation of twenty sites will examine the process and problems associated with implementation of the project. And third, an impact evaluation of five or six sites will assess the

impact of the project on the agencies involved, victim well-being, offender accountability, and the community.

This report is a process evaluation of the Arrest Program in Chicago Heights, Illinois. The project environment, which details the city history, will be discussed, in addition to criminal justice agencies, the planning process, project goals and objectives, the partnership, implementation, information management, community collaboration, and conclusions and recommendations.

Project Environment

The City of Chicago Heights, Illinois, is located in the southeast corner of Cook County, 30 miles south of Chicago and 5 miles from the Indiana state line. There are approximately 33,000 residents of whom 49 percent are White, 30 percent are African-American and 16 percent Hispanic. Many small villages and towns surround the city.

Brief History

During the early 1990s, the Chicago Heights area was plagued with mob dealings, which resulted in city government and police corruption. The city's closeness to Chicago made it ideal for mob operations. The Police Commissioner, Deputy Chief, and the Mayor were all indicted. Most were found guilty of misconduct. The Deputy Chief was convicted of 13 charges ranging from racketeering and extortion to taking bribes from a drug dealer.

At that time, the "macho" male image was prevalent and police officers were labeled insensitive toward domestic violence matters. Victims were being advised by service providers to leave town because the lack of attention to domestic violence jeopardized victim safety. The local shelter tried to train police officers on handling domestic cases; they gave up and vowed never to return because the officers were so disrespectful.

When the scandal was dissipating in 1994, a new police chief was appointed. The residents in Chicago Heights found themselves with new leadership, which happened to be a woman. She was the first female police chief in Cook County. Needless to say, some individuals with connections to the earlier scandals in the city, didn't like this at all. She was an outsider with no police experience, and some in the all-male department didn't approve. The

new Police Chief, who is a domestic violence survivor, set out to change the attitudes about domestic violence in the police department and the community.

State Legislation

In Illinois, a person commits domestic battery if he intentionally or knowingly without legal jurisdiction by any means:

1. Causes bodily harm to any family or household member
2. Makes physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with any family or household member.

Domestic battery is a Class A misdemeanor, but if a defendant has a prior conviction for domestic battery, it becomes a Class 4 felony. Aggravated battery is intentionally or knowingly causing great bodily harm, or permanent disabilities or disfigurement.

The criminal code (ILCS §5/12-6.3) also makes interfering with the reporting of domestic violence a Class A misdemeanor. A person is guilty of this offense when after committing domestic violence, he or she prevents or attempts to prevent the victim or a witness to the act of domestic violence from calling 911, obtaining medical assistance, or making a report to any law enforcement official.

Protection Orders

An emergency protection order may be obtained just on a victim's testimony and court appearance. Emergency orders can last from 14 to 21 days and may be extended by a judge. Interim protection orders can be obtained in cases where the abuser has been notified of the court hearing but has not necessarily been personally served with all the legal papers. These orders are good for up to 30 days. Plenary or "full" orders of protection are available after all the legal requirements of notice and service of the abuser have been satisfied. A full order of protection can last for up to two years and can be extended by the judge for up to two years. Under section 5/12-30, violating a protection order is also a Class A misdemeanor and occurs when

- A person commits an act that was prohibited by a court or fails to commit an act that was ordered by a court.
- Such violation occurs after the offender has been served notice of the contents of the order, pursuant to the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986 or any

substantially similar statute of any other state, tribe or territory, or otherwise has acquired actual knowledge of the content of the order.

First-time protection order violations may result in contempt of court charges. The court deems all subsequent violations a Class 4 felony and can impose a penalty of 24 hours imprisonment and fines.

Stalking

Unlike other domestic violence offenses, stalking is a Class 4 felony for first-time offenses. For subsequent offenses, stalking is a Class 3 felony. Stalking is defined as knowingly, without lawful jurisdiction, on at least two separate occasions, following another person or places the person under surveillance or any combination thereof and:

- Transmitting threats to that person of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement or restraint; or
- Places that person in reasonable apprehension of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement or restraint.

In aggravated stalking cases, the charge is a Class 3 felony and all subsequent offenses, become Class 2 felonies. Aggravated stalking involves the commission of the above elements and includes violating a temporary restraining order or an order of protection.

Criminal Justice Agencies

Law Enforcement

The Chicago Heights Police Department patrols 30 square miles. The department is fully staffed with 97 sworn officers and 35 civilian personnel (Appendix A). The department is predominately white; however, a civil rights audit was conducted in 1995, and the department has recently made efforts to hire minority officers. Surrounding jurisdictions, within the county and across the state line, have their own law enforcement agencies.

The Cook County Sheriff's Department provides security to court facilities, administers the county jail, polices unincorporated areas of the county, and coordinates the county's emergency response plan. The Department of Community Supervision (DCS) is part of the Sheriff's Department. DCS provides services such as electronic monitoring, day reporting center, community service, drug rehabilitation, and custodial alternatives.

Courts

Cook County has six court districts and is the largest consolidated court district in the United States. The southeast corner of the county, including Chicago Heights, encompasses the sixth district. The courthouse is located in Markham, Illinois, and serves 36 cities, towns, and villages. This district has the highest volume of cases and the least number of courtrooms in the county.

In the early 1990s, a judge in the sixth district felt that suburban practices for domestic violence were questionable. There were no domestic violence cases being filed at that time because it was still “politically correct” not to interfere in family matters. As presiding judge of the district, she recognized a need to create a separate court for domestic violence cases. A specialized court would ensure consistency in handling domestic violence cases and make it easier for the advocates to help victims. In the past, advocates would have to run between courtrooms trying to assist domestic violence victims because the cases were scattered. To accommodate the domestic violence court, the judge moved traffic court to another location so the new court could be highly visible on the main floor with the felony courtrooms.

The judge also arranged for shelters to conduct domestic violence training for judges. During this time, there was tremendous opposition to the changes taking place and for the training itself. Other judges threatened to go to the state Supreme Court because they said that only judges could train judges. Despite everything, the domestic violence court opened on October 1, 1993.

The domestic violence court handles misdemeanors and has two state attorneys assigned to it. Cases have to be approved by the state attorney in order to constitute a felony charge. A judge is assigned to the court, however, other judges preside on occasion. The Sheriff’s Department provides security for the courtroom and directs victims and perpetrators to opposite sides of the courtroom. The courthouse also has a room for children to play in while their parents are in court.

The presiding judge who was the impetus for the new court in the sixth district also made a rule that domestic violence offenders in the district could not bond out at the police department. They had to go in front of a judge. This caught the attention of the state legislature and was made state law.

Project Planning

When the current project director of the Arrest Program was Chief of Police in Chicago Heights, (1994-1996), she noticed there weren't many incident reports being filed on domestic violence cases. If there was an incident report filed, case dispositions were written as "matters adjusted," which meant that officers instructed the parties to stop, made one party leave the home, and no report was written. The Chief started requiring officers to write reports on domestic violence cases no matter what the outcome was. After this policy was instituted, domestic violence cases went from 400 to 1400 in one year.

Supplemental domestic violence reports were also created for the officers to complete. The supplemental reports allow officers to document descriptions of the victims and suspects emotional state and any injuries, medical treatment given, evidence collected, and information about any protection orders issued.

Despite these new procedures, there were still no follow-up investigations being conducted in domestic cases. Detectives in other units were too busy handling other types of cases. The Chief was aware that other jurisdictions (San Diego) were addressing this problem by creating a special domestic violence unit. She felt Chicago Heights could benefit from a similar unit. Her vision promoted her to write the initial arrest grant proposal. Subsequently, she also wrote the continuation arrest grant. She developed the goals and objectives for the Arrest Program and solicited the help of other agencies to collaborate on the project. Getting the support of the domestic violence community wasn't a problem since she was so well known and had worked with these agencies in the past. The service providers were skeptical as to whether the project would work in Chicago Heights.

Prior to the award of the Arrest grant to the Chicago Heights Police Department, the Chief of Police, stepped down to accept the post of Superintendent of Police. This position allowed her to oversee more of the administrative aspects of the grants and to be a legal advisor to the department. However, because of her tremendous dedication to the project, she resigned from the department to become the project director for the domestic violence unit, which is a civilian position.

Objectives of the Project

The overall goal of the project is to develop a coordinated approach to domestic violence by creating a centralized domestic violence unit involving police, legal advocates, and the shelter. The objectives for achieving this goal are:

Objective 1: Creation of a Domestic Violence unit in the Chicago Heights Police Department

The project's first objective is to create a domestic violence unit consisting of four detectives, a project director, and one civilian staff assistant. The detectives in the unit would follow specialized protocols when investigating all domestic violence cases, except homicides and officer-involved cases, and provide victims with assistance.

Objective 2: To provide services for victims by providing legal advocacy

The shelter will provide a court advocate to assist victims with the court process, obtaining protection orders, referrals to support groups, and will assess any other needs such as services for their children, shelter, etc.

Objective 3: To develop policies and procedures, supported by training and protocols, that improves tracking of domestic violence cases.

The Chicago Heights Police Department will develop a domestic violence operations manual to outline officers' responsibility and procedures to be followed in such cases. Statistics will be kept on all cases complete with services provided and disposition of cases. The shelter will also keep statistics on clients and services provided.

The initial grant was awarded for \$478,213 and all first-year goals and objectives were attained. Most of the funding has been allocated for staff salaries. Some computer equipment was purchased and money was set aside to pay for the development of the unit's database. Chicago Heights was awarded \$693,111 in continuation funds. The goals of the second grant proposal were to continue the efforts and request additional personnel for the unit, develop software for case tracking, and to strengthen legal advocacy services for victims.

The staff of the domestic violence unit has remained virtually the same since it's inception. One detective retired and was replaced. Under the continuation grant, an additional detective and another court advocate have been added to the unit. The detective, court advocates,

and staff assistant in the unit have all received domestic violence training through the South Suburban Family Shelter. Detectives are routinely being sent to workshops to improve investigations.

The Partnership

The partnership between the South Suburban Family Shelter (SSFS) and the Chicago Heights Police Department evolved out of a previous relationship the project director had established with the shelter. As a state attorney, she served on the board of the shelter. The SSFS was the obvious choice for non-profit partner because it was close to the Chicago Heights area. Crisis Center for South Suburbia in Tenley Park is another local shelter, but it is located further away from Chicago Heights. The Crisis Center was a little disturbed when they learned that SSFS was going to be the non-profit partner for the Arrest Program in Chicago Heights. There were some concerns that more victims would go to SSFS because of the exposure received through the grant. However, they have since agreed to work together toward the goal of serving victims, and their support has been excellent.

There are no regularly scheduled meetings between the partners. Since court advocates are on-site with the unit, communication between agencies is constant. The shelter director and the project director are available if any problems arise concerning victims or between agencies, and routinely meet to discuss the program.

Implementation

The detectives in the domestic violence unit volunteered for the positions, but they could not be removed from the general police population until replacements could be hired and trained in the police academy. Consequently, the unit started with only two detectives during the first two months, and the number of domestic violence cases was overwhelming. The South Suburban Shelter hired the court advocate.

The unit encountered several problems with handling cases and helping victims once fully staffed and operational. These problems are discussed below.

1. The reports written by patrol officers were poor quality and not detailed enough. Some officers weren't completing the supplemental reports because they felt it was redundant. Older officers were resistant to the change in

policy and wouldn't take the extra time needed to gather information for detectives.

2. Officers weren't enforcing protection orders. They didn't understand that protection orders were enforceable even if the victim invited the perpetrator to her residence.
3. Victims didn't trust the detectives and would not cooperate. This was because of the passive way in which domestic violence incidents were handled in the past and victims were discouraged. It took time to earn the trust of victims.
4. The court advocate was overwhelmed with cases. She would spend mornings in court with victims and the afternoons in the office meeting new clients. This schedule put tremendous strain on the court advocate.
5. The four detectives had overwhelming caseloads. They did not anticipate the number of cases that poured into the unit. Another officer was needed to ensure coverage for the unit during off days, vacation, and court appearances.
6. Once the unit's existence was well known, other jurisdictions asked for assistance. Handling these cases took up a lot of the detectives' time as well.

Operational Description

The domestic violence unit of the Chicago Heights Police Department is in a centralized location. Space was donated to the city, and the mayor authorized the unit to use it. The building houses other community services organizations and provides a secure and neutral location for victims to visit.

The domestic violence unit is part of the Investigations Division of the department. The Chief of Investigations serves as supervisor of the unit; however, the project director is responsible for day-to-day operations. The project director works Tuesday-Saturday and is on call 24 hours a day, two detectives work Tuesday-Friday (1pm-9pm) and Saturday 9am-5pm, three detectives work Monday-Friday (9am-5pm). A detective is on call every Sunday and holidays. The court advocates and the staff assistant work Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. or noon to 8 p.m.

Chicago Heights Police Department

Detectives in the domestic violence unit are assigned cases daily. The unit receives cases whether or not the suspect is in custody. After cases are assigned to the detectives, the 8 a.m.

detective runs background checks. If the perpetrator is a repeat offender, his file is pulled and the information is given to the detective investigating the case. The detectives review the file and contact the victim to interview her. Interviews are done in the office or at the victim's home. During the interview, the detective verifies the contents of the police report, obtains background information, documents any history of abuse, takes photos of injuries and property damage, and gets the names of any witnesses and children present during the incident. The victim is then referred to the court advocates for services.

If no arrest was made but probable cause exists to substantiate a crime, the Domestic Violence Judge issues a warrant for the suspect's arrest. If the suspect is in custody, the detective interviews him in an effort to obtain a confession and to ensure that appropriate charges are filed.

Cases can be closed if an arrest is made and if the investigation proves that no crime has occurred. Cases can also be exceptionally cleared, which usually means that the victim refuses to file charges or testify and there is no independent evidence. If a warrant is issued, a case may not be closed until the suspect is arrested.

South Suburban Family Shelter

The mission of the South Suburban Family Shelter is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services for families in which domestic violence exists. The shelter is a non-profit, social service agency that is accountable and accessible to all segments of the community. The shelter was formed in 1980 as a result of a need assessment survey conducted in the southern suburbs of Chicago. At that time, the survey found that there were between 500 to 600 victims of domestic violence and there were no services available to them.

The SSFS provides court advocacy to victims of domestic violence. Two court advocates work as part of the domestic violence unit; one of them speaks Spanish. The advocates use the office on alternate days. This arrangement allows each advocate to accompany the client she interviews in the office to court (bond hearing) the following day. The advocates contact the victim in every incident report that comes in. At times, they may ride to the victim's home with the detective to make initial contact. Once a victim is contacted and accepts assistance, several

intake forms are completed, including a lethality checklist (Appendix B). The advocates encourage victims to request an order of protection and help them through the process.

Other services provided by the shelter include a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, transitional housing, counseling for adult and child victims, hospital advocacy, mentoring for kids, prevention programs, and abuser treatment groups. Emergency shelter is provided in several hotels and motels throughout the city. This arrangement allows victims with teenage boys to receive shelter. In a traditional shelter setting, teenage boys are sometimes a source of conflict with other victims who may be at the shelter. This arrangement also uses the resources in the community and allows citizens to help combat problems in their community.

Challenges

Since the existence of the domestic violence unit, there have been a few areas identified as gaps in the system or areas where improvement is needed. These areas are the courts handling of felony cases, probation, and collaboration with Indiana.

Felony Cases

The process in which domestic violence felonies are handled is not consistent. The state attorney has to approve cases to be upgraded to felonies. Site interviews revealed that it's very difficult to get a case approved as a felony. This may be a result of the way statutes are written regarding the elements needed to constitute a felony charge. Also, the state attorneys have so many cases, they may be reluctant to approve a domestic violence case as a felony. They may rationalize it can be handled in the domestic violence court.

Dropping felony domestic violence cases when the victim does not want to participate is also common practice. Project staff suggest that more cases need to be prosecuted whether or not the victim makes herself available. Dismissing cases sends a message that domestic violence is the victim's problem and validates any intimidation the victim may have experienced.

Probation

Site interviews revealed that probation officers are not consistently monitoring domestic violence offenders who have been given court-ordered counseling or probation. Probation officers are employed by the county and have not received any training on monitoring domestic

violence offenders. They periodically conduct random checks to see if offenders have violated the terms of their probation. Many times when an offender violates his probation, the probation officer is not aware of the violation. The problem can also be contributed to the agencies that provide counseling services. The court advocates appear to be more informed about which offenders are recidivists than the state attorneys or the probation officers.

Inter-State Collaboration

Chicago Heights has been having problems with Indiana not honoring protection orders and not cooperating with domestic violence investigations. The extent to which efforts have been made to obtain cooperation from these officials is minimal. The cooperation of neighboring jurisdictions is important to the safety and well being of victims.

Information Management

A database was developed to track domestic violence cases. The database is in Microsoft Access and runs on a stand-alone system. It will not be linked to other police databases because of compatibility issues. The former staff assistant and the project director worked closely with the programmer to develop the database. The court advocates were consulted and grant managers at the Violence Against Women Office also expressed their thoughts on useful information to collect. The court advocates will be primarily responsible for entering police information and entering any court-related information, including dispositions.

The majority of fields in the database were taken directly from incident reports. However, there are some fields that were created especially for statistical collection. Variables were created to gather information about the victim, complainant, witnesses, suspect, origin and crime description, evidence collected, and photos. Data from over 2,000 cases handled since the unit was created is currently being entered into the database. Statistics are compiled each month by the staff on the number of cases, race of victims and offenders, convictions, arrest type and clearance, advocate contacts, protection orders issued, and recidivism rates. Progress reports with these statistics are submitted to the Violence Against Women Office on a monthly basis.

Confidentiality is assured between each agency in the unit. The shelter keeps separate client files that is protected by counselor/client confidentiality. The advocates record personal notes in these files. Detectives are not permitted to view the contents. Access to police files is

given to the advocates; however, they don't have access to any law enforcement computer databases.

Support for Project

There has been a great deal of support for the project from community groups, police department leaders, and city policy-makers. Since the unit started operating, a mayoral race has threatened its success. Fortunately, the candidate who supported the unit's leadership and activities won the election by one vote.

There was some resistance by patrol officers to compliance with the new policies for handling domestic violence cases. Resistance has been managed through continued training and by supervisors on a case-by-case basis. Buy-in from officers was obtained when the Police Chief, attended training and made everyone aware that she took the domestic violence seriously. Consequently, officers followed the protocols for handling domestic violence cases even if they didn't believe domestic violence was a police matter.

There have been several newspaper articles written about the unit. Media coverage has been a tremendous outreach tool to inform the community that domestic violence is a serious crime and that Chicago Heights will not tolerate it. The unit also recognizes that the community is a great resource. Many organizations have donated items for children to use in the unit's playroom.

The immense respect that community leaders, agency heads, and citizens have for the unit's project director has been a crucial part of the project's success. Police departments in the area have readily opened their doors for domestic violence training, and the local shelters are willing to conduct training. It's apparent that the project director has served as an impetus to change the way people perceive domestic violence and how cases are handled in Chicago Heights.

Community Collaboration

Everyone involved in the Arrest Program in Chicago Heights believes there is truly a community-coordinated response to domestic violence in the city. However, most of the collaboration is very informal. Churches and several community organizations are taking an

active role in helping families that experience abuse. Each shelter has its own advisory board, which involves community members and former victims.

There is also a coordinating council in the sixth court district. The presiding judge in the sixth district is Chair of the council, which has several subcommittees. There are subcommittees for law enforcement, churches, education, children, businesses, and substance abuse. The council meets regularly to address domestic violence issues and other problem that plague the community.

Two other community organizations have entered into memorandums of understanding with the unit to assist victims. The Miracle Temple has agreed to accept referrals from the unit to provide spiritual and emotional support to clients. They will also assist with any food and clothing that may be needed. The Employment Associates Group, which is located in the same facility as the unit, has agreed to assist clients with job training and seeking employment. Other services include resume writing, interviewing skills, and budget management.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In many ways, Chicago Heights is a typical suburban city and in many ways it is not. Like other suburban cities, it deals with the backlash of crime that occurs when located close to a large metropolis such as Chicago. However, the city's colorful history makes it unique. From the corruption of city officials to the acceptance of Cook County's first female Chief of Police, Chicago Heights has experienced many things other small cities have not. People in the community marvel at how progressive the city has become. A city that used to send battered women packing is now welcoming them with open arms.

Many cities that have invested in new ways to address domestic violence lack the leadership to make it all happen. Chicago Heights is quite the opposite. The domestic violence unit has a dynamic leader who is well respected in the community and has the vision to continue the "movement" long after federal funding has ended. This type of leadership makes the unit very cohesive and members are very committed to combating domestic abuse.

Although the arrest project in Chicago Heights is going well, there are some refinements that could be made to enhance the unit and improve the way other criminal justice agencies

address domestic violence. They include improved monitoring of offenders, designated batterer intervention programs, and practicing victimless prosecution.

Monitoring Domestic Violence Offenders

While visiting the Arrest project in Chicago Heights, the most apparent gap in the system was the monitoring of domestic violence offenders. Unfortunately, most probation departments are understaffed and have more cases than are manageable. With the enormous number of domestic violence cases and considering that a lot of domestic violence offenders are given court-mandated counseling and other conditions, it would be helpful to have designated probation officers to monitor these offenders. Other jurisdictions have probation units that exclusively handle domestic cases. This is a tremendous step in ensuring victim safety as well as offender accountability.

Another alternative would be to monitor offenders through the day reporting center run by the Sheriff's Department. Offenders could be required to report to the center and to provide proof of attendance at counseling sessions. Depending on the staffing level already at the center, this may not require additional staff. However, it will require collaboration with the Sheriff's Department, and the criminal justice agencies involved will have to come to a consensus on this monitoring method.

Designated Batterer Intervention Programs

An alternative to creating a specialized probation unit is to have designated counseling agencies for batterers. Other jurisdictions have an approved list of batterer intervention programs that the court utilizes for batterer treatment. The programs provide counseling to batterers and are responsible for notifying probation or the court of any non-compliance. This mechanism may catch some of the offenders that probation doesn't with the random checks they perform. There should also be guidelines for judges so they are aware of any acceptance criteria used by counseling programs. For example, some programs may only accept first-time offenders.

Prosecution

It's obvious that the first step to addressing domestic violence is to educate the police about the issue and establish procedures for incident handling. After police have accomplished their role, it's up to the prosecutors to make sure the offender is held accountable. However, in Chicago Heights, prosecution of offenders seems to depend upon the participation of the victim. If cases are investigated with the premise that victims are not going to cooperate, prosecutors should be able to go forward with the case. Many jurisdictions are practicing "evidence based" prosecution, which does not rely upon the victim to testify. Insisting that victims participate in this process in order to prosecute an offender is revictimizing. The state attorney's office should consider instituting a "no drop" policy to take this decision out of the victim's hands. The state's attorney's office is moving toward "evidence based" prosecution with the cases from Chicago Heights.

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