

# **Batterer Programming & Standards: A Connecticut Perspective**

- ❑ Currently 1/3 of all criminal court cases are domestic violence offenses
- ❑ In 2014 39,373 domestic violence cases involving victims were heard in civil & criminal courts

## Intimate Partner Fatalities in CT

|      |           |
|------|-----------|
| 2014 | 13 deaths |
| 2013 | 12 deaths |
| 2012 | 11 deaths |
| 2011 | 15 deaths |
| 2010 | 18 deaths |

# Batterer Programming in CT

The Judicial Branch-Court Support Services Division funds three program options for domestic violence offenders:

- Family Violence Education Program
- Explore Program
- Evolve Program

# Judicial Branch-CSSD Guidelines

As set by the RFP funding FVEP, Explore and Evolve:

- Class Details: size, location, security
- Class Policies: absences, termination, completion requirements
- Agencies: staffing, training, reporting
- Facilitators: expertise, degrees, cultural competence

# Judicial Branch-CSSD Successes

- Programs performing at or above the majority of their risk reduction indicators
- Strong program completion rates and low re-arrest rates post-program completion
- Clinical oversight and training provided for facilitators
- Collaborations between Judicial Branch probation officers, family relations counselors, and the contracted service provider supports offender accountability

# Batterer Intervention Programming

- According to research by Michigan Batterer Intervention Service Coalition, 43 states have program standards
- Judicial Branch-CSSD maintains standards for offender programs through the RFP/contract process
- Connecticut is listed as not having standards (outside of Judicial Branch programs) in comparison to other states

# Batterer Intervention Programming

Unknown numbers of providers and agencies outside of the Judicial Branch-CSSD funding stream are engaging in individual counseling and group work with domestic violence offenders in Connecticut



# CT Challenges

For program providers operating outside the Judicial Branch-CSSD funding stream, questions about:

- Approach(es)
- Accountability
- Content
- Policies
- Oversight
- Data/Outcomes

# CT Challenges

Misuse/misunderstanding of batterer programs result in defendants being:

- returned to programs after failure to comply
- ordered to attend class previously completed
- granted FVEP on multiple files
- deemed eligible for programs through the dismissal or substitution of charges

# CT Challenges

- A lack of clear standards disadvantages the response of the court system when dealing with offenders and attempting to hold them accountable.
- Providers should be engaged with local victim service agencies and advocates as part of offender accountability measures.

# CJPAC Subcommittee

- Board of Pardons and Parole
- CCADV
- Judicial Branch-CSSD
- DCF
- DOC
- DPH
- Family Re-Entry
- Office of the Victim Advocate
- Office of Chief Public Defender
- Chief State's Attorneys Office

# CJPAC Subcommittee

- Formed October 2013
- Met monthly through May 2014
- Working Group met every 2 weeks to draft each standard
- Reviewed by professional disciplines represented on subcommittee
- Feedback reviewed and draft revised
- Standards submitted to CJPAC Sept.2014

## Program Standards: Presented CJPAC Sept. 2014

- Guiding Principles
- Definitions
- Program Content
- Prohibited Approaches
- Program Intake
- Program Rules
- Program Completion

## Program Standards: Presented CJPAC Sept. 2014

- Victim or Partner Contact
- Duty to Warn
- Participant Agreement
- Participant Accountability Plans
- Participant Records
- Provider Agreement
- Provider Ethics
- Outside Collaboration/Observation

# Common Elements of State Standards

- Ethical Code
- Independent Monitoring
- Curriculum Prohibitions
- Exclusion and Dismissal Conditions and Procedures
- Victim Accountability Strategies
- Lethality assessment/reassessment throughout program participation