



# Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

## 2010 Biennial Report

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence is a statewide multidisciplinary group created by Vermont Statute. The Council's broad representation from state and community stakeholders allows us to provide leadership for Vermont's statewide effort to eradicate domestic violence. The Council facilitates opportunities for dialogue, advocacy, education and support among state agencies, advocacy groups, and the public.

### Vermont's Response to Domestic Violence: A Message from the Council Coordinator

By: Heather Holter

Over the last two years, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence has undergone remarkable transformation. The changes have not produced the overnight revolution a hurricane leaves in its wake, so that one doesn't even recognize the landscape. Rather, it has been a conversion that has been the result of gradual, yet persistent, change—like the impact flowing water has, as it winds its way over rock and boulder, wearing smooth everything in its path.

The mission of the Council did not change dramatically when it moved into statute—it had already been undergoing a movement toward greater focus, but moving into statute was a vital part of this shift. The focus the Council has gained is a result of the collective determination of a large group of people who have embraced a point of intersection. There exists a juncture, where the relevancy of each Council member's work meets, and is enhanced by the collaboration.

What I have described is the work of a coordinated community response—the effective response of a whole host of systems and community members responding to keep one individual or family safe, and hold one individual perpetrator accountable. Vermont's small, largely rural landscape affords us both great advantages and unique challenges as we craft our statewide response to domestic violence. For our citizens, transportation and access to resources can be great challenges, particularly in

the most rural parts of our state. On the other hand, our communities are small enough to keep trying new things, innovating continually, until they find the right approach, and then sharing the recipe with the county next door.



*Members of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence at their quarterly meeting*

This year I have had the privilege to travel all around Vermont as part of a small training team touring the state's county courthouses to recommend best practices in the service of protection orders. From my car, I have watched winter turn into spring in Vermont's rivers and hills, and I have experienced a new appreciation for the beauty and diversity of our state. Once inside the trainings, I have been continually impressed by the compassion, creativity, and dedication of the people who make up each county's coordinated community response.

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence works to translate the best responses on the local level into statewide practices, and vice versa. This report

represents an overview of the routine functions, special projects, and ongoing collaborations the Council and some of its members have been involved in over the last two years.

It is certainly not an exhaustive inventory of all we are doing in Vermont to eradicate domestic violence—thankfully, that list would fill a volume. However, we have highlighted a number of the ways in which we are building upon the strengths of our small communities by improving the practices of batterer intervention programs, law enforcement, courts, prosecutors, defense attorneys, social service providers, supervised visitation programs, clergy, employers, advocacy programs, and community task forces.

### *History*

The Governor’s Council on Domestic Violence was created in 1993 by Governor Howard Dean and Chief Justice Frederic W. Allen. For fifteen years, the Governor’s Council provided a forum for the discussion of strategies for improving the statewide coordinated response to domestic violence and addressing systemic obstacles to victim safety and offender accountability.

### *Vermont Statute*

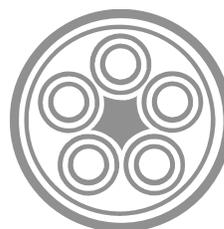
In 2008, the Vermont Legislature re-created the Council. Vermont Statute 15 VSA chapter 21, subchapter 4, 1171-1173 created the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence with broad representation from state and community stakeholders in order to coordinate statewide responses to domestic violence, and give the Council expansive authority and responsibility.

### *Council Sub-Committees*

In order to aid in carrying out its roles and responsibilities, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence has established a Batterer Accountability Committee, a Task Force Sub-committee, a Judicial Caucus, a Domestic Violence and the Workplace Workgroup, and a collaboration through Memorandum of Understanding with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

### *Council Collaborations*

The Council also engages in many formal and informal collaborations with individuals, organizations, coalitions, state agencies, and policy makers to provide leadership in the effort to eradicate domestic violence in Vermont.



### *Did You Know....*

**According to the Vermont Department for Children and Families, the Family Services Division received 1,892 intake calls that identified co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment in 2008. 527 of these intakes were accepted and opened for investigation, resulting in 73 substantiations of child maltreatment.**

**Over the last three years, 60-65% of violent crime in Vermont has occurred in residences which makes the home the most frequent location for violent criminal incidents.**

Vermont Department of Public Safety

**In 2009, the programs of the Vermont Network of Domestic and Sexual Violence provided services to 6,567 victims of domestic violence.**

# Council Sub-Committees

## Consultation Committee

The Consultation Committee of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence is made up of no more than twelve Council members serving staggered two-year terms as stewards to the vision and long term agenda for the Council. Consultation Committee members are representative of the diverse agencies and organizations serving on the Council. The Council Co-chairs collaborate with Council staff to gather and make recommendations for priorities to the full Council.

The Consultation Committee provides an advisory role for second-line emergency decision-making between quarterly Council meetings. The Committee is responsible for making recommendations for appointees to the Council, and the Consultation Committee hires and trains Council staff.

In 2008 and 2009, the Council Consultation Committee was focused on supporting the Council's transition into statute. The Consultation Committee provided guidance to the full Vermont Council on Domestic Violence as it crafted a strong framework for how the Council will carry out new duties outlined in statute. Sustaining the vision and voice of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence as it develops, remains at the heart of the Consultation Committee's work.

### *Consultation Committee Members Who Served Terms Between 2008-Present*

**Kym Anderson,**  
Chittenden County Domestic and  
Sexual Violence Task Force

**Sherry Burnette,**  
Agency of Human Services

**Anera Fočo,**  
Addison County Council Against  
Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Paul Hochanadel,**  
Vermont Coalition of Batterer  
Intervention Programs

**Kelli Prescott,**  
Lamoille County Coordinated  
Community Response to Domestic  
and Sexual Violence

**Jill Richard,**  
Vermont Network Against  
Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Karen Tronsgard Scott,**  
Vermont Network Against  
Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Andrea Van Liew,**  
Vermont Center for  
Crime Victim Services

## Council Co-Chairs

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence elects two Council Co-Chairs to serve two-year terms, providing for effective leadership of the Council, and ensuring that Council processes and decision-making structures are followed.

Council Co-Chairs oversee the development of quarterly Council Meeting agendas and ensure facilitation of quarterly Council Meetings. Co-Chairs may engage in 1<sup>st</sup> line emergency decision making with consensus of Consultation Committee. Co-Chairs supervise the Council staff.

### **2008 Co-Chairs:**

Sherry Burnette, Agency of Human Services  
Jill Richard, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual  
Violence

### **2009 Co-Chairs:**

Anera Foco, Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual  
Violence  
Karen Tronsgard Scott, Vermont Network Against Domestic and  
Sexual Violence.

## Batterer Accountability Committee

### *Batterer Accountability Committee Members:*

**Rick Bates,**  
Vermont Department of  
Corrections

**Ellie Breitmaier,**  
VT Department for Children and  
Families

**Liese Brown,**  
Vermont Network Against  
Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Paul Hochanadel,**  
Vermont Coalition of Batterer  
Intervention Programs

**Heather Holter,**  
Vermont Council on Domestic  
Violence

**Ellen Kryger, Committee Chair**  
Department of State's Attorney's  
Representative

**Dawn Matthews,**  
VT Defender General's Office

**Amy Messina,**  
Survivor Representative

By improving efforts to engage and hold accountable men who batter, we hope to improve the safety of survivors of domestic violence and their children. Ensuring access to quality batterer intervention programs is one part of this effort.

In 2007, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence began a collaborative effort to implement a process of certifying batterer intervention programs for their compliance with Statewide Standards. The Council created the Batterer Accountability Committee to facilitate the certification process.

The certification process includes local stakeholders in the review of their local batterer intervention programs. To be certified, programs must be in compliance with the Statewide Standards or develop a detailed plan for coming into compliance. Only certified programs can receive referrals from the Department of Corrections. Programs must be reviewed every two years to remain certified.

During 2008 and 2009, the Batterer Accountability Committee oversaw the review and certification of

each of the ten batterer intervention programs currently serving Vermont's 14 counties.

The Batterer Accountability Committee is also responsible for the periodic review of the Statewide Standards for Programming for Men who Batter. In 2009, the Batterer Accountability Committee led an inclusive seven month comprehensive review of the Statewide Standards. The revised Standards were approved by the Council in December of 2009. The Standards are also endorsed by the Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs, the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and the Vermont Department of Corrections.

The committee is staffed by the Batterer Accountability Coordinator, Mark Larson. Mark provides a resource for the coordination of batterer intervention services on a statewide level, as well as providing leadership for the committee. For a list of certified programs or a copy of the Statewide Standards, contact Mark at [marklvt@gmail.com](mailto:marklvt@gmail.com).

**Domestic Violence** is a pattern of coercive and assaultive behaviors that may include actual or threatened physical injury and sexual assault, psychological abuse, economic coercion and various other sexual and psychological tactics. These behaviors are perpetrated by someone who is, was, or wishes to be involved in an intimate or dating relationship with an adult or adolescent, are aimed at establishing control by one partner over the other and result in an atmosphere of fear and/or terror for the victim.

VT Agency of Human Services Policy on Domestic Violence 2007

## Domestic Violence Task Force Sub-Committee

The membership of the Council includes a liaison from each county task force or coordinated community response group, across the state. In addition to participating in quarterly Council meetings, task force liaisons meet together several times a year in order to discuss issues of particular concern to local communities. The Council identifies trends and challenges experienced by groups working on the local level and provides technical assistance and support to Task Force Coordinators.

The way each coordinated community response team or task force comes together differs from county to county, but the goals of the groups are often similar; human service providers, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, attorneys, medical professionals, supervised visitation centers, business people, advocates, batterer intervention programs, and community members meeting to engage in dialogue, training, and discussion. At the heart of these teams, is a focus on how the county can respond to the causes and effects of domestic violence, improve the safety of victims, and continue to hold offenders accountable in their community.

The common challenge for local task forces is adequate and stable funding and support for coordination. Only a few task forces maintain grant funding for distinct coordinator positions, most communities rely on their local domestic violence advocacy organization or other grant funded positions in the county to provide facilitation for their group.

Despite chronic under-funding, community task forces get a lot of work done. In 2008 and 2009, local domestic and sexual violence task forces and coordinated community response teams focused on prevention, assessment, resource development, and community response to domestic violence. Task forces undertook projects to collaborate with the department of health in order to collect accurate data about domestic violence, facilitated training for medical professionals and business members, strengthened relationships with local schools and colleges, and fostered improved law enforcement response through cross-training and policy development.

Task forces and teams around the state have been concerned with connections to the special investigative units forming in communities, and many have begun regular dialogue to ensure communication.

Some task forces featured monthly educational presentations by

### *Vermont's County Task Force Representatives:*

#### **Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence**

Naomi Smith, Women Safe  
(Interim)

#### **Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force**

Linda Campbell and Mary Grey,  
PAVE

#### **Caledonia-Southern Essex Domestic Violence Task Force**

Carolyn Brown, Umbrella

#### **Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force**

Cate MacLachlan, Coordinator

#### **Franklin-Grand Isle Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force**

Nancy West, Coordinator

#### **Lamoille County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence**

Kelli Prescott, Clarina Howard  
Nichols Center

#### **Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force**

Jenny Beaudin Ring, Chair

*Continued...*

## ***Vermont's County Task Force Representatives:***

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### **Orleans-Northern Essex County Domestic Violence Task Force**

Amanda Jensen, Vermont State  
Police and Joanne Fedele, North  
Country Hospital

### **Rutland County Domestic Violence Task Force**

Miche Chamberlain,  
Rutland County Women's  
Network and Shelter

### **Washington County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response Team**

Meg Kuhner, Battered Women's  
Services And Shelter

### **Windham County Domestic Violence Task Force**

Women's Crisis Center

### **Windsor County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force**

Terri Fisk, New Beginnings, Inc.  
Abby Tassel, WISE

members in order to foster a deeper understanding of the purpose, services, and constraints of group members in their professional capacities. Some teams sponsored breakfasts with local legislators, roundtable discussions with judges and court staff, or developed memorandum of understandings to govern collaborations.

Coordinated community response teams worked through challenges and came together to mitigate, or modify the effects of budget cuts, position and policy changes, and agency shortfalls. And, some groups spent countless hours working with community members to talk about and try to make sense of tragic crimes that struck their communities.

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence depends on the connections we have, through our task force liaisons, with a clear sense of how statewide policy and practice affect individuals and families in the community.



*According to the Vermont Crime  
Report, published by the Vermont  
Criminal Information Center:*

***Domestic violence incidents  
involving intimate partners in  
Vermont has steadily  
increased from 903 incidents  
in 2006 to 1,025 in 2008.***

## Domestic Violence in the Workplace Council Workgroup

### *The Members of the Domestic Violence in the Workplace Council Work Group:*

**Kym Anderson,**  
Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force

**Amy FitzGerald,**  
Office of the Attorney General

**Anera Fočo,**  
Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Paul Hochanadel/Autumn Barnett,**  
Spectrum Youth and Family Services, Violence Intervention and Prevention Programs

**Heather Holter,**  
Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

**Sarah Kenney,**  
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

**Lilly Talbert,**  
Vermont Commission on Women

**Andrea Van Liew,**  
Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services

#### Consultants:

**Andrea Cohen,**  
Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

**Valerie Rickert,**  
Vermont Department of Labor

Domestic violence often follows people to their workplace. Employers can play an important role in providing clear personnel guidelines and supportive responses.

The *Domestic Violence and the Workplace* Group is a partnership between the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence. In an effort to study the issue of employment discrimination against victims of domestic violence in Vermont, the Council and the Commission joined forces to build upon the Commission's work in this area.

In order to gain an understanding of how domestic violence impacts Vermont businesses, victims of domestic violence, and the safety and productivity of the Vermont workplace, the Workgroup is conducting a survey. The project mirrors a safety and health research project undertaken by the Maine Department of Labor and Maine Family Services. The survey will measure how Vermont businesses and individuals are impacted; through compromised workplace safety, lost productivity, and time lost. The study is a partnership with the Vermont Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs, Spectrum's Violence Intervention and Prevention Program and UVM's Center for Rural Studies.

The group is creating an employer education packet which will include model policies developed by the Office of Attorney General and other state and local groups, as well as information about available training resources for Vermont businesses.

Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking who have left work voluntarily because of the violence they are experiencing and who are ineligible for traditional unemployment compensation benefits, may apply to the Department of Labor (DOL) for benefits through the Transitional Employment Program. Its purpose is to provide temporary, partial wage-replacement to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking who need to leave work because of violence.

<http://www.labor.vermont.gov/>

*According to the American Institute on Domestic Violence, nationally, victims of domestic violence **lose nearly 8.0 million days** of paid work each year - the equivalent of more than 32,000 full-time jobs and nearly 5.6 million days of household productivity.*

# Council Collaborations

## Best Practice for Service of Protection Orders in Vermont

A working group initiated by the Office of Court Administrator and the VT Attorney General's Office met in 2008 and 2009 to review current service practices in both Family and Superior Courts. After collecting data from the courts, law enforcement, holding stations, victim advocacy programs, and the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence, the group drafted a *Best Practice Regarding Service of Protection Orders in Vermont*.

The Department of Public Safety, the courts, and law enforcement agencies have adopted the best practices. A standardized Department of Public Safety Protection Order Service Form is now being used statewide to ensure the safe and effective service of orders, the protection of plaintiffs, and the accurate maintenance of vital databases.

Trainings for court staff, protection order holding stations, law enforcement personnel, and advocates have been offered in each county to support the safe and effective implementation of the best practices. County based liaisons, at the courts and the holding stations have been identified, and the Court Procedure Manuals will be revised to reflect the new Public Safety Protection Order Service Form and the point of contact process.

### According to Court Data...

Approximately 20% of the 1.5 million people who experience intimate partner violence annually **obtain civil protection orders**. Approximately one half of those orders are violated<sup>1</sup>.

Of the 3,614 petitions for relief from abuse filed in Vermont courts 2008-2009, 1,231 were issued a final order. Temporary Orders were issued in 1,650 cases, and 778 received no order.

Last year, 598 families were referred to programs of the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs.

In September of 2008, in the annual study by the Violence Policy Center "When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2006 Homicide Data", Vermont ranked, per capita, sixth in the nation for homicides committed by men against women with single victims in single incidents. The annual study, prepared by the Violence Policy Center, analyzed 2006 Supplemental Homicide Report Data submitted by the states to the FBI. The report breaks down the 10 states that have the highest rates of female victims and male offenders and ranks states based on what they term "female homicides" per capita. In 2006, Vermont had 6 cases that met their criteria which gave the state a rating of 1.9 per 100,000 residents. In 2006, nationally, the rate of female homicides was 1.29 per 100,000 residents.

*(State of Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission Report, 2009)*

## Collaboration with the VT Violence Fatality Review Commission

The Vermont Council on Domestic Violence collaborates with the Vermont Fatality Review Commission to develop strategies for implementing the Commission's recommendations. Each year, Vermont's Fatality Review Commission publishes an annual report identifying statewide recommendations. The Council identifies specific recommendations to collaborate with the Commission on developing strategies for implementation. The Council has

worked on furthering Fatality Review Commission recommendations related to :

- Domestic Violence and the Workplace
- Judicial Caucus training regarding relief from abuse orders and the federal Gun Control Act, and dangerousness and lethality factors in domestic violence cases.

<sup>1</sup>Tjaden, Patricia & Thoennes, Nancy. National Institute of Justice and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, *Extent, Nature and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey, 2000*.

## The Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Centers

The Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs is the collective voice advancing safe contact between children and their non-residential parents and family members in supervised, child-focused environments.

The Council Coordinator, Heather Holter, serves on the Vermont Supervised Visitation Advisory Board, and Stuart Senghas, of the Lamoille County Family Center, and Maureen Lyon of The Family Room are the Coalition liaisons to the Council.

Each of the eight member visitation centers is separately run, however, each follows the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs Standards for Practice (2007). All of the Visitation Centers provide fully supervised visits and supervised exchange services.

For more information on member programs of the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs, visit [www.safevisitsvt.org](http://www.safevisitsvt.org)

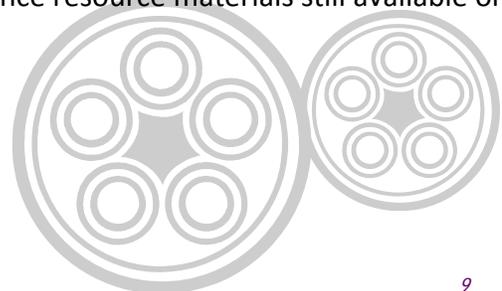
## Facilitating the Development of Effective Responses to Domestic Violence: Conferences

Facilitating development of effective responses to domestic violence through two successful conferences in 2008 and 2009.

In June of 2008, the Council collaborated with the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission, the Vermont Attorney General's Office, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, U.S. Attorney's Office Vermont District, and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services to sponsor: : ***"Before It's Too Late: Taking Action to Prevent Domestic Violence Homicides in Vermont Communities"***. Local and national speakers facilitated discussion on community intervention and safety, violence and danger assessment, informing policy and practice through domestic violence fatality review, and tools for action. The ***Bystander Toolkit*** is still available by request to [heather\\_holter@tds.net](mailto:heather_holter@tds.net).

The Council also participated in the ***9<sup>th</sup> Annual Tri-State Victim Assistance Conference*** ; a joint endeavor of the U.S. Attorney's Office Vermont District, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, Vermont Attorney General's Office, Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, Tri-State Victim's Assistance Consortium, New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, the Council, and the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission. ***"Potential Risks and Consequences: Youth Using Emerging Technology/Examining Gun Violence"*** were the themes of this two-day conference.

Topics included the evolution of on-line contact, child exploitation, social networking sites, suicide prevention and intervention, the impact of federal laws on domestic violence and gun violence, an overview of New Hampshire's gun relinquishment and gun storage practice, and the impact of gun violence in domestic violence related fatalities in VT, NH, and ME. Conference resource materials still available on CD by request to [heather\\_holter@tds.net](mailto:heather_holter@tds.net).



## Law Enforcement Training

In 2008, as part of the Domestic Violence Omnibus bill, Section 15 – Law Enforcement Training (20 VSA 2365) was passed. It established a dedicated Vermont Police Academy domestic violence trainer, required all law enforcement officers (full-time and part-time certified) in the state to receive a minimum of 8 hours of training on domestic violence by 2010 in order to maintain their certification, and after, required ongoing training every two years.

The Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council has employed T.J. Anderson as the mandated domestic violence trainer. Per statute, a training curriculum was developed which was approved by the VT Criminal Justice Training Council and the VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Two intensive Train the Trainer seminars have been completed to teach officers, advocates, and prosecutors the approved curriculum and give them the tools to facilitate training around the state.

As we all know, law enforcement officers are often on the front lines regarding responding to domestic violence, serving as the gateway to the criminal justice system and many local and state victim resources. The domestic violence call is one of the most frequent and complicated calls officers deal with and their response to it can have far-reaching positive or negative implications for all involved.

Law enforcement officers need to be well trained in how to respond to domestic violence incidents: knowledgeable in current best practices, changes in the statutes, and relevant case law. This is imperative for the sake of the victim(s), affected children, offender accountability, and for the officer's own safety. Thanks to this statute change, they will receive this vital ongoing training.

At June 30, 2008, there were 1278 persons under the supervision of the Department of Corrections for domestic violence related offenses. Of those offenders, 300 were incarcerated, 743 were on Probation and 235 were either on Parole or furlough statuses.

**According to the Vermont Department for Children and Families, in 2009, the Family Services Division *received 1,741 intake calls that identified co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment.* 579 of these intakes were accepted and opened for assessments or investigation, resulting in 51 substantiations of child maltreatment.**

As of June 30, 2009, 1240 persons were under the supervision of the Department of Corrections for domestic violence related offenses. Of those offenders, 333 were incarcerated, 664 were on probation, 59 were on parole, and 184 were on furlough.

**In 2009, 345 women, 182 children, and 16 men were housed in shelters or safehomes of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence programs. 142 persons were turned away due to lack of room.**



# Vermont Courts and Domestic Violence

## Judicial Caucus of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence

### *The Members of the Judicial Caucus:*

**Stephen Blodgett, Esq.,**  
Vermont Family Bar

**Hon. Barney Bloom,**  
Assistant Judge

**Penny Carrier,**  
Court Manager

**Hon. Thomas Devine,**  
District Court Judge

**Betsy Gregory,**  
Guardian Ad Litem

**Marjorie Stinchcombe,**  
Vermont Legal Aid

**Sandra Siedel, Esq.,**  
Court Administrator's Office

**Hon. Barb Zander,**  
Family Court Magistrate

The Judicial Caucus of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence coordinates conversations between Council members from various aspects of the legal community concerning domestic violence and community response. The Caucus focuses on issues raised by Council membership related to the improvement of the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice.

The Judicial Caucus has provided feedback to Council member representatives from the Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Centers on their proposed Court Protocol for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services. The Caucus also met with Council liaisons from local community domestic violence task forces to discuss strengthening connections with local courts.

The Caucus reviewed recommendations made by the Vermont Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission, including a recommendation that the Office of Court Administrator consider providing judicial education regarding dangerousness and lethality factors in domestic violence cases. Subsequently the Court Administrator announced that Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD., RN, a nationally recognized trainer in domestic violence lethality assessment will be presenting her Danger Assessment instrument training to the Vermont Judiciary in April of 2010.

A uniform litigant education class for all Relief from Abuse litigants has been developed, and is mandatory in all courts.

The Family Court Oversight Committee is reviewing the Relief from Abuse complaint and affidavit forms with an eye towards improving presentation of relevant elements Judges needs to consider when determining eligibility for Relief from Abuse. Family Court is reviewing ways to get all Family Court documents available online.

*The Judicial Caucus provided leadership around how to document "constructive notice" in Relief From Abuse hearings. The recommendation was that the Court Administrator add a check box on the Final Relief from Abuse form for Judges.*

*This recommendation was implemented.*

**In response to a nationwide effort to create some consistency among all states' protection orders, the Vermont Family Court adopted a new first page (cover sheet).**

**Certain important information necessary for easy law enforcement access, and for courts of another state to use is now easily ascertainable from the front sheet.**



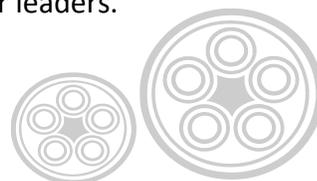
## The Faith Community Responds to Domestic Violence

Ann Larson is a Lutheran pastor with a long history of volunteer work in domestic violence. She has been a member of the Chittenden County Domestic Violence Task Force since 2005 and worked under contract as its Outreach Coordinator to Faith Communities in 2008.

Under that grant she participated in a *"Faith in Violence-Free Families"* workshop as part of the *Leadership + Systems Change = Sustainability* pilot program funded by the Office on Violence Against Women and administered by Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training, and Resource Center in California's Bay Area. As a result of that experience, Ann came back to Vermont intent on bridging the gulf between DV advocates and

religious readers.

One prong was to bring representatives from domestic violence agencies to regular, local, ecumenical meetings. The clergy proved to have substantial knowledge of domestic violence but had had minimal contact with people directly involved locally. Most of the clergy members were unfamiliar with batterers' intervention programs and other local resources, so having this program made valuable connections. Ann also organized and led a training workshop for DV advocates about practicalities of relating constructively with diverse faith communities and their leaders.



## Vermont Council on Domestic Violence Appointed and Ex-Officio Members

Amy Messina	<i>Survivor</i>
Ann Atkins	<i>Same Sex Domestic Violence Service Provider, SafeSpace</i>
Keri Darling	<i>Deaf and Disability Service Provider, Deaf Vermonter's Advocacy Services</i>
Ellen Kryger	<i>Representative of the Department of State's Attorneys</i>
Todd Shove	<i>Prosecutor from STOP Domestic Violence Unit</i>
Ann Larson	<i>Representative of the Vermont Faith Community</i>
Tara Graham	<i>Representative of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence, VT Children's Aid Society</i>
Hon. Barb Zander	<i>Family Court</i>
Hon. Thomas Devine	<i>District Judge</i>
Hon. Barney Bloom	<i>Assistant Judge</i>
Penny Carrier	<i>Court Manager</i>
Betsy Gregory	<i>Guardian At Litem</i>
Marjorie Stinchcombe	<i>Vermont Legal Aid</i>
Stephen Blodgett, Esq.	<i>Vermont Family Bar</i>
Sandra Siedel, Esq.	<i>Court Administrators Office</i>
Karen Tronsgard Scott	<i>Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
James Baker (proxy: T.J. Anderson)	<i>Criminal Justice Training Council</i>
Designee: Rick Bates	<i>Commissioner of the Department of Corrections or Designee</i>
Designee: Patrick Flood	<i>Secretary of the Agency of Human Services or Designee</i>
Designee: Amy FitzGerald	<i>Attorney General or Designee</i>
Wendy Love	<i>Vermont Commission on Women</i>
Designee: Ellie Breitmaier	<i>Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families or Designee</i>
Designee: Ed Miller	<i>Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or Designee</i>
Designee: Bob Sheil	<i>Defender General or Designee</i>

<b>Sherriff W. Samuel Hill</b>	<i>Vermont Sheriff's Association</i>
<b>Paul Hochanadel</b>	<i>Coalition of Batterer Intervention Programs</i>
<b>Max Schlueter</b>	<i>Vermont Crime Information Center</i>
<b>Maureen Lyon and Stuart Senghas</b>	<i>Vermont Coalition of Supervised Visitation Programs</i>
<b>Trevor Whipple</b>	<i>Vermont Police Chief's Association</i>
<b>Designees: Mark Oettinger and Barbara Crippen</b>	<i>Commissioner of the Department of Education or Designee</i>
<b>Andrea Van Liew</b>	<i>Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services</i>
<b>Naomi Smith (Interim)</b>	<i>Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
<b>Linda Campbell and Mary Grey</b>	<i>Bennington County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Carolyn Brown</b>	<i>Caledonia- So. Essex Counties Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Cate MacLachlan</b>	<i>Chittenden County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Kris Lukens-Rose and Nancy West</b>	<i>Franklin and Grand Isle Counties Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Kelli Prescott</b>	<i>Lamoille County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence</i>
<b>Jenny Beaudin Ring</b>	<i>Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Amanda Jensen and Joanne Fedele</b>	<i>Orleans- N. Essex Counties Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Miche Chamberlain</b>	<i>Rutland County Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Meg Kuhner</b>	<i>Washington County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response Team</i>
<b>Women's Crisis Center</b>	<i>Windham County Domestic Violence Task Force</i>
<b>Terri Fisk and Abby Tassel</b>	<i>Windsor County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force</i>

**If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, *help is available.***

Call:

**1-800-228-7395**

To be connected to the nearest domestic violence advocacy program.

The 15 Programs of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence have been answering hotlines, providing crisis services, and educating us about what we can do when we witness or experience domestic violence for over 25 years.

*TOGETHER, WE CAN DO SOMETHING.*



***Council Contact***

**If you would like more information about the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence, please contact Heather Holter, Council Coordinator at (802) 917-1793 or [heather\\_holter@tds.net](mailto:heather_holter@tds.net)**

*Vermont's 24-hour domestic violence hotline: 800-228-7395*

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