

**Minutes of the National Advisory Committee
on Violence Against Women
Santa, Fe, N.M
April 3-4 2007**

Location:

Eldorado Hotel, Santa Fe, N.M.

Meeting Participants (in attendance)

Advisory Committee Members

Jeanette Adkins
Christine Barr
Esther Lee Bearden
Scott Berkowitz
M. Jane Brady
Tiffany Carr
Sheryl Cates
Anne Crews
Casey Gwinn
Melissa Hook
Susan Howley
Suzanna Hupp
Pamela Iron
Susan Reed
Jane Root-Sylvain
Renee Schulte
Larry Tackman
Scott Wyatt

Federal Employees

U.S. Department of Justice

Mary Beth Buchanan
Kiri Rowe
Susan Williams

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Marylouise Kelley

Guest Speakers

Sue Else
Leon Geter
Rita Noonan
Cindy Southworth

Members of the Public Who Presented Oral or Written Statements

Oral Statement
Stanley Green, SAFE International (Stop Abuse for Everyone, Inc.)

Matters Discussed

Tuesday, April 3

1. The Honorable Mary Beth Buchanan, Acting Director of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), welcomed the committee members and thanked them for their service. She spoke about several issues that OVW expects to focus on in the next several months, including reaching out to teenagers in a more targeted way to prevent dating violence. She also spoke on the need to educate the public about domestic violence in the workplace, so that an employee is more likely to offer assistance to, than to shun, a coworker who has been the victim of such violence.

Acting director Buchanan also addressed a Congressional proposal to create a single funding stream for grantees. It is still unclear whether this would be more beneficial or problematic for grantees. On one hand, it will allow for more collaboration among grantees; on the other, it will create more competition.

2. Dr. Marylouise Kelley, Deputy Director, Family Violence Prevention & Services Program, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services told the committee members that later in April they could expect to receive a compendium of updated research on such topics as the overlap between substance abuse and trauma, and the cost benefits of providing domestic violence programs in a healthcare setting.

She talked about the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program (FVPSP). The

program, originally authorized in the mid-1980s, was one of the first dedicated funding sources for domestic violence shelter and support services. The program provides formula grant funding for state domestic violence coalitions and Indian tribes, as well as the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. Dr. Kelley also spoke about several discretionary programs planned under the FVPSP this year and noted several grants that had been used, for example, to work with children who have witnessed domestic violence. She provided the panel with contact information for resource centers within the Domestic Violence Resource Network.

3. Public Comment Period: Stanley Green, International Victims' Resources Advocate, SAFE International, Stop Abuse for Everyone, Inc. addressed the committee. Mr. Green told the panel he was a survivor of domestic violence perpetrated by his wife. He recounted how law enforcement in California, and domestic violence programs he had contacted, had not taken his case seriously when he first reported abuse. He said that his wife had received custody of their children from a gender-biased court system and he spoke of how abusers can acquire more power if they are awarded custody of children.

Mr. Green said that California's health and safety code still defined domestic violence in a way that excludes anyone other than a male abuser and a female victim. He encouraged the advisory committee to exert leadership in calling upon local, state and federal governments, as well as private organizations, to make language and imagery more inclusive in research and policies regarding domestic violence and sexual assault.

4. The committee members took turns introducing themselves.

5. The four subcommittees gave reports on their progress. Each report was followed by discussion among the entire panel.

- **Teen Dating Violence Subcommittee**

Melissa Hook and Susan Howley, co-chairwomen of this subcommittee, said that the subcommittee was focusing on school response. Many schools now have in place programs on the prevention of bullying, drugs, etc. The subcommittee would like to expand this general approach to safety concerns to also include teen dating violence. What protocols, if any, are in place now to respond to dating violence in schools? The goal should be guidelines for schools on a state and local level for responding to dating violence. The subcommittee plans to look at examples of responses developed by school nurses and counselors.

The subcommittee suggested that students be taught about safety planning; what to do if they are abused in a dating violence relationship. It plans to review state laws regarding protection orders for teens. It was noted that Rhode Island senators recently introduced a bill that mandates teen dating violence education in all health education curriculums for grades 7-12; and requires each school district to develop dating violence policies, including issuance of a "no tolerance" statement and disciplinary procedures for dating violence on school grounds.

Accountability and rehabilitation are also important. Punitive school policies should be put into place before violence escalates to criminal behavior.

The subcommittee would like to see a cross-agency effort to address the teen dating violence issue. Along with DHHS and DOJ, the Department of Education should be actively involved with the initiative, probably through the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, as it already is in place. DHHS and DOJ should also play a role.

Most programs on teen dating violence have looking into the issue of adolescent development. Successful programs have learned that it is key to involve teens in this work; teens need to hear from their peers what a healthy relationship looks like. Ideally, any program addressing teen dating violence would involve teens during planning, development, and implementation.

The subcommittee would recommend a survey of OVW/VOCA grantees and other groups such as school counselors. Are they now serving victims of teen dating violence? If so, how many? What services are they providing? Are victims of teen dating violence eligible for victim compensation within their state?

Jane Brady said she was optimistic that funds specifically for teen dating violence prevention would be made available. This is a hidden domestic violence issue that is extremely under-reported.

Mary Beth Buchanan said she has asked Deputy Attorney General Paul McNulty to lead a meeting of all federal agencies with any input on issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and teen dating violence. The work of the National Advisory Committee will allow him the opportunity to point out that the committee has studied these problems and stress the importance of federal agencies working together to help solve them.

- **Outreach to Faith-Based and Community Organizations Subcommittee**

Renee Schulte and Esther Lee Bearden next spoke on the progress of this subcommittee. They said they had found that large, denominational faiths (Catholic, Mormon, etc.) with national oversight groups were much more likely to have current policies in place on assistance to members dealing with domestic violence situations. Non-denominational evangelical groups without national leadership were much less likely to have such information available to them. Information could perhaps be given to these groups by visiting theological seminaries and through attendance at national conferences. The idea is not to create new material but to find the best material already available for dissemination. One roadblock is that many religious groups want information that is geared specifically toward their own denomination; this can make it hard to find something acceptable to every religious organization.

The subcommittee is also looking into how to get more faith-based organizations to apply for grants. The process for applying for grants needs to be made clear to these groups and the process simplified. Many groups feel they don't qualify for grants; the perception is that the same groups get funding over and over. Perhaps, there should be a peer review

system in place for monitoring to make sure the same groups aren't repeatedly receiving grants.

Mary Beth Buchanan noted that this year an instruction manual for solicitation was sent out to tribal communities, since they are a community that has traditionally not been part of the grant process. The manual explained how the grant process worked. Perhaps such a manual should be distributed to all grantees.

The panel also discussed the possibility of using a mini-grant system to fund travel, legal services and other needs. Another suggestion was for smaller faith-based organizations to apply for grants in partnership with an established service provider with considerable experience serving the community.

- **Child Witnessing Subcommittee**

Subcommittee Chairwoman Jane Brady noted that the focus of this subcommittee – children who witness domestic violence – is a relatively new area of concern and she thanked DOJ for identifying it as an area of concern.

Children advocacy centers have begun interviewing children who have witnessed either a serious crime or domestic violence in their homes on a repetitive basis. Legislation in some states now says that the crime of committing domestic violence in the presence of a child makes him or her a primary victim. And the Violent Crimes Compensation Board has begun identifying these children as victims and providing mental health services.

There is a clear coincidence between the incidence of domestic violence in the home and low self-esteem and learned patterns of behavior that generate violence by these children against peers and as adults.

The subcommittee has studied a number of programs. It believes that there is a need to look beyond the traditional mental health services and their manner of delivery, into programs that work better for a variety of youth. Some programs have shown success with mentoring retreats/camps, sports and peer support.

The subcommittee recommended that OVW provide the leadership on the coordination and consolidation of services between the domestic violence and child abuse prevention communities.

The entire panel discussed how best to get organizations to partner. There was also much discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of the Congressional proposal to create a single funding application for grantees.

- **Expanding the Reach of Victim Services Subcommittee**

The current focus of this subcommittee is on outreach to the immigrant and Native American communities. There has been a lot of response from these two communities.

Subcommittee Chairwoman Jane Root-Sylvain read from a statement by Cordelia Clapp, a subcommittee member who could not attend today's meeting. Ms. Clapp wrote that incidents of sexual victimization among American Indian and Alaska Native women exceeded those of any other U.S. racial or ethnic group according to the National Violence Against Women Study. Many barriers face not only American Indian women who have been sexually victimized but also agencies seeking to improve services to them. On one reservation, patients reported poor experiences with providers, stating that they used confusing terminology and avoided the reservation outside working hours. Lack of telephones in tribal communities is another problem. Some American Indian women may have difficulty exposing intimate details about victimization, especially given that many American Indian cultures value privacy about sexuality and family problems. Indian women are also stalked at more than twice the rate of other women.

Ms. Root-Sylvain outlined the subcommittee's preliminary recommendations: Implement Title IX of VAWA. Support administrative streamlining. Support government-to-government. Fund research in Indian Country. Ensure that all money designated to tribes actually goes to those tribes. Fund more shelters in Native American communities (There are very few and most Native American women won't go to a non-native shelter).

Also: Greatly expand the sexual assault response in Indian Country. Prioritize grants to tribes for release, as they lack other funding resources to support the programs while waiting for these grants. Expand services to include mental health and trauma issues. Fund options for traditional healing and spirituality. Fund translators for elders who only speak their native language. Collaborate with Indian health services. Support an increase in the IHS budget to fund domestic violence/sexual assault response in all IHS health facilities. Create affordable transitional housing. Develop PSAs with key messages tailored toward the various immigrant populations. Encourage more interpreters and resources in rural areas.

One of the other charges of the subcommittee is reaching out to and serving members of the military. Several members of the committee as a whole said that there has been a fair amount of work on reaching this population in the last few years. Mary Beth Buchanan noted that the Department of Defense had recently convened a task force addressing domestic violence/sexual assault issues in the military.

Marylouise Kelley said that, as with faith-based groups that don't have the capacity to apply for federal grants, there are some racially- and culturally-specific organizations that have done a good job of serving the community and want to provide sexual assault/domestic violence services but don't have the capacity to apply for federal grants. She suggested that these groups could partner with an established sexual assault/domestic violence organization that people already trust and are willing to visit for services. These small community groups might also benefit from mini grants.

6. Sue Else, Executive Director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and Cindy Southworth, NNEDV's Director of Technology and Director of the Safety Net Project spoke on the National Census of Domestic Violence Services. The National Census was a census last November of domestic violence shelters and services across the U.S. The aim of the project was to safely, and non-invasively, count the total number of people served in domestic violence programs across the country during a single 24-hour period.

The need for such a census was discussed over a period of several years. Planning began in March 2006, with Radha Iyengar of Harvard University serving as a health policy scholar. A pilot census was conducted in May 2006 involving local programs and state coalitions in Georgia, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah and Washington state. NNEDV received feedback from the 255 local advocacy programs participating in the pilot.

The census began 8 a.m. EST on Nov. 2, 2006 and ended 7:59 a.m EST on Nov. 3. (The count was adjusted for time zones from the Virgin Islands to California to Hawaii.) 1,243 out of 2,016 identified local domestic violence programs (62%) participated in the census. Through the census 16,644 hotline calls were answered; 40,120 attendees at community programs were educated; and 47,864 survivors were assisted through shelter, transitional housing, and advocacy (12,093 children and 10,117 adults were served in emergency shelter and transitional housing). 5,157 requests for assistance went unmet due to lack of staff, resources or bed space.

Twenty-one states had 80% or more participation rates and nine had 100% participation rates. NNEDV also collected "usual day" numbers; these were highly correlated to numbers on the survey day (.77). NNEDV also looked at non-responding programs. These programs, often with small staffs, may slightly disproportionately represent rural communities.

NNEDV is looking at how to improve process and participation rates for the next count. It is hoped this will be an annual survey. NNEDV will begin conversations with others in the sexual violence prevention field to possibly conduct a dual count in 2008. An outreach to rural programs will be conducted to improve participation rates among those programs. While NNEDV may add one or two questions, it is believed that too many questions will lower the response rates.

More information on the census can be found at www.nnedv.org/census. State summaries are available for each state.

7. Dr. Rita Noonan from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gave an overview of the CDC's Choose Respect initiative. The goal of Choose Respect is to help adolescents form healthy relationships to prevent dating abuse before it starts. The initiative was developed from evidence-based research and involves a multi-level approach to implementation, reaching out to parents, teachers and other caregivers.

A CDC survey found that about 1 in 11 high school students reported being a victim of physical dating abuse in the year preceding the survey. Choose Respect reaches out to adolescents 11-14 because at this age they are still forming attitudes and beliefs that will affect how they are treated and how they treat others. The objectives with reaching these youth are to encourage them to develop and maintain healthy relationships; recognize and avoid abusive relationships; increase bystander intervention; and know where to go for help. The secondary audience includes parents and teachers. Goals for this audience are promoting positive relationship behaviors (talking, role modeling, monitoring); recognizing warning signs of dating abuse; and knowing where to go to for information.

Research included focus groups testing that suggested that the campaign should be targeting a younger audience – ages 11-14. Boys and girls in this age group can relate to dating but are not in serious relationships yet. The focus groups also suggested that messages should focus on changes in attitudes about verbal and low level physical violence.

Concept testing found that messages should encourage positive behavior, as opposed to telling adolescents what they should *not* be doing. The theme of “respect” seemed to resonate with these youth.

For a pilot test in 2005, four middle schools in Kansas City and Austin, Texas were chosen. Mass media materials were used, including video games, educational videos, posters and brochures. A video rental store promotion was developed. Boys & Girls Clubs worked as partners and community events were leveraged.

The target audience found the messages of the pilot test appealing. Parents, however, were not very aware of the initiative and this made the CDC recognize the need for a stronger call to action to parents. “Hands on” school-based efforts worked best. Mass media provided mixed results. And community partnerships were critical to successful implementation. Testing also found that tweens are willing to take action within circles of close friends; that tweens are literal and cynical; and that resolution tactics add value to messages.

Media and materials developed included a Website in English and Spanish; a teen video with discussion guide; a video for parents with discussion ideas; and a music video game, TV and radio ads and posters all in English and Spanish.

Choose Respect was launched nationally in May 2006 in 10 major US cities. Launch events were locally-based events such as game nights with the Women's National Basketball Association. Community partners also organized events such as rap sessions

and pledge drives. Through these activities, they were able to raise awareness and reinforce Choose Respect's message. Committed prevention partnerships were developed.

Television and cable connected Choose Respect with over 92 million people and about 5.8 million people heard about the initiative through a national radio media tour. There were many feature stories written in publications and on Websites. Over 450,000 English materials and 80,000 Spanish materials were distributed to youth in the 10 launch sites. The Choose Respect Website received over 1 million hits and over 450,000 adolescents have played the Choose Respect video maker game online.

Dr. Noonan said that communities had asked for more direction with the initiative. She outlined several other challenges: integrating "healthy relationships" into the infrastructure in communities; encouraging the use of Choose Respect in a broad range of community efforts, not just in schools; reaching youth and others with sustained, consistent messaging; and meeting the needs of diverse communities.

The CDC is considering about developing "Respect Zones," to reinforce messages with youth and those who influence youth. The zones would mirror the social influences in a life of a person: friends, family and caring adults; youth-serving organizations; partnerships; and government. The CDC is also establishing a "playbook" of activities for Choose Respect. Short-term, medium-term and long-term goals have been set. More information on the initiative can be found at www.chooserespect.org.

8. Leon Geter, Client Services Representative for the National Criminal Justice Reference Service spoke about NCJRS and how committee members could leverage the service for their research.

NCJRS is administered by the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Dept. of Justice. It is a nationally, federally-funded clearinghouse. Its role is to respond to and reach an international community of researchers, policymakers and practitioners; serve as a central repository for justice and substance abuse information; identify trends and information gaps related to justice and substance abuse; and promote and brand the sponsoring agencies' activities and initiatives.

The clearinghouse is sponsored by 14 federal agencies, including OVW, OJP and the COPS office. NCJRS works to bridge the sponsors with the field. Among its activities are research; reference and referral; conferences; and development of products. NCJRS through the OJP has the largest criminal justice reference library in the world.

NCJRS allowed organizations to tap into an established network of criminal justice professionals; there are partnerships with 120 organizations reaching 1.5 million members. Millions of professionals nationwide are reached through listservs, blogs and Websites. There are over 18,000 subscribers to the JUSTINFO electronic newsletter. Conference support is also available.

The NCJRS Website is popular, with 8.5 million user sessions and 19 million page views. It is a source of information and primary referral in criminal justice. Among its features are a comprehensive question-and-answer database related to juvenile and criminal justice, victim assistance, drug policy, and NCJRS services. NCJRS also distributes 1 million publications and products annually. Its communication products include brochures, bulletins, and reports; and DVDs, CDs, and videos. It does marketing and outreach through high-impact emails (eblasts); and PSAs, Web banners, products and print ads. Electronic products include informational Websites; e-magazines and e-publications. NCJRS also develops training materials, including online training which may be appropriate for those without the time or funds for travel. Mr. Geter said that NCJRS is available to help committee members develop projects that will have utility in the field for victim advocates, service providers, and others.

A Web-based toolkit is another option. It can include Web-based courses plus training aids and downloadable materials; recorded videos; Webcasts; interactive instruction; learning games and tests; and more. Mr. Geter spoke about the steps involved in developing a toolkit, including the development of curriculum and courses and a framework for registration, course information, etc. He addressed the importance of promoting the product and getting feedback about it.

8. For the remainder of the day, the panel broke into subcommittee working groups to discuss the four priority issues of the charge and refine their reports. The meeting then adjourned for the day.

Wednesday, April 4

1. Kiri Rowe, Principal Deputy Director at OVW noted that Mary Beth Buchanan had to leave early this morning but had enjoyed meeting the committee members and thanked them for their work.

The next meeting of the advisory committee is tentatively scheduled for December 3-4 in Washington, D.C. Since this will be the last meeting of this panel, it is hoped that the Attorney General and Secretary of HHS, or their principal deputies, will be able to attend. This will allow the committee to present their final reports and recommendations to Cabinet-level officials.

Ms. Rowe asked each subcommittee to present its thoughts on a final product (report, online training tool, etc.) If any subcommittees feel they need to meet again before December, she said there would probably be enough money available to arrange for travel.

- Expanding the Reach of Victim Services

Jane Root-Sylvain said the end product of this subcommittee was to be a report. The subcommittee planned to focus its recommendations on two of the populations highlighted in the charge: American Indian/Native Alaskan communities; and immigrant communities. It has gathered a lot of information and plans on compiling more. The subcommittee tentatively is planning a meeting July 23-24 to put the report together.

- Outreach to Faith-Based and Community Organizations

Esther Lee Bearden explained that this subcommittee will be creating a Website addressing faith-based training. The purpose will be to provide information to diverse religious groups with very different doctrines. University professors will review the contents of the site in order to ensure it is objective. The subcommittee is trying to collect mailing lists for people in rural areas to inform them about the training Website and plans to reach out to seminaries and at conferences to promote the Website. The subcommittee tentatively plans to meet in Chicago in May.

- Child Witnessing

This subcommittee has tentative plans to meet in June and has asked NCJRS for a variety of information that it hopes to review before that meeting. NCJRS has been asked to provide information on various state victim compensation programs' policies in regard to mental health services for children who witness domestic and other violence. The reference service will also report back on what experiential mental health programs, such as mentoring retreats and camps, for children exposed to violence are available; and on the effectiveness of evaluative materials, particularly compared to the traditional mental health counseling models.

In addition, NCJRS has been asked for: a compilation and evaluation of the research that shows the importance of a parent in counseling and nurturing a child during his or her recovery from trauma; statistical data on the co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic partner violence in the same family or home; and outcome analysis on the use of child endangerment charges for domestic partner violence that occurs in the home.

- Teen Dating Violence

This subcommittee plans to meet in Washington, D.C. this summer. It plans to focus on school and system response to dating violence.

2. Kiri Rowe said she would provide current contact information for all committee members and DOJ staff. Marylouise Kelley said she would provide current HHS contact information and asked the panel to let her know if she could help them tap into any national resources.

The panel also agreed that there is a need to educate the public about domestic violence in the workplace and discussed ways to go about doing this.

The meeting adjourned.