



Prevention Primer An Overview of Prevention for Elected Officials and Policy Makers

Introduction

This brief primer is meant to provide an overview of prevention strategies for use by elected officials and other policy makers who serve the Metro Louisville area. Although the focus of this primer, and of MensWork, is the prevention of sexual and domestic violence, the key lessons and strategies discussed herein can be applied to all forms of violence. It is the hope of MensWork that this primer can be used as a means to develop a comprehensive and strategic plan for Metro Louisville to prevent all forms of sexual and domestic violence, and perhaps, all forms of violence.

MensWork

MensWork: eliminating violence against women, inc. is a local community-based nonprofit organization that focuses on preventing all forms of sexual and domestic violence. Founded in 2007, MensWork is unique in two ways: we are the only community-based organization focused on engaging *men* to end sexual and domestic violence (in Metro-Louisville as well as in the entire multi-state region); and we are the only community-based organization that focuses on the *prevention* of sexual and domestic violence. MensWork provides no direct services, there are a variety of other agencies and programs that provide services directly to women or men who have been victimized, and/or who work directly with men or women who have perpetrated. Rather, MensWork focuses on developing the skills and capacities of individuals and groups to prevent sexual, domestic, and dating violence from occurring in the first place.

Impact of Sexual, Domestic, & Dating Violence

Violence in general and in particular domestic, dating and sexual violence, have long-term and multi-layered consequences. For victims, violence has a series of long-term health consequences (depression, PTSD, poor self-esteem, gastric-bowel diseases, high blood pressure, and heart disease have all been associated with experience of domestic or sexual violence)ⁱ. Secondary consequences (reduced school and work performance, lack of community involvement, increased risk of subsequent problem pregnancies, smoking, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and moreⁱⁱ.) have also been associated with sexual, dating and domestic violence.

Finally, domestic, dating and sexual violence impacts on our communities as a whole. Not only do these forms of violence impact on women in our communities (women report being less able and willing to use public transportation, public parks, go shopping at night, attend public events at night, etc as a result of the threat of sexual or domestic violence)ⁱⁱⁱ, but sexual and domestic violence has been found to correlate with diminished worker productivity, decreased social and civic involvement, reduced participation in public involvement, etc^{iv}.

Sexual, domestic, and dating violence impact our communities as a whole and call for a comprehensive prevention strategy. Increasingly, Mayors and Chiefs of Police are recognizing that we cannot arrest our way to a solution to violence in general, and to sexual, domestic, and dating violence in particular^v. While arrests, detention, and other criminal legal sanctions are a



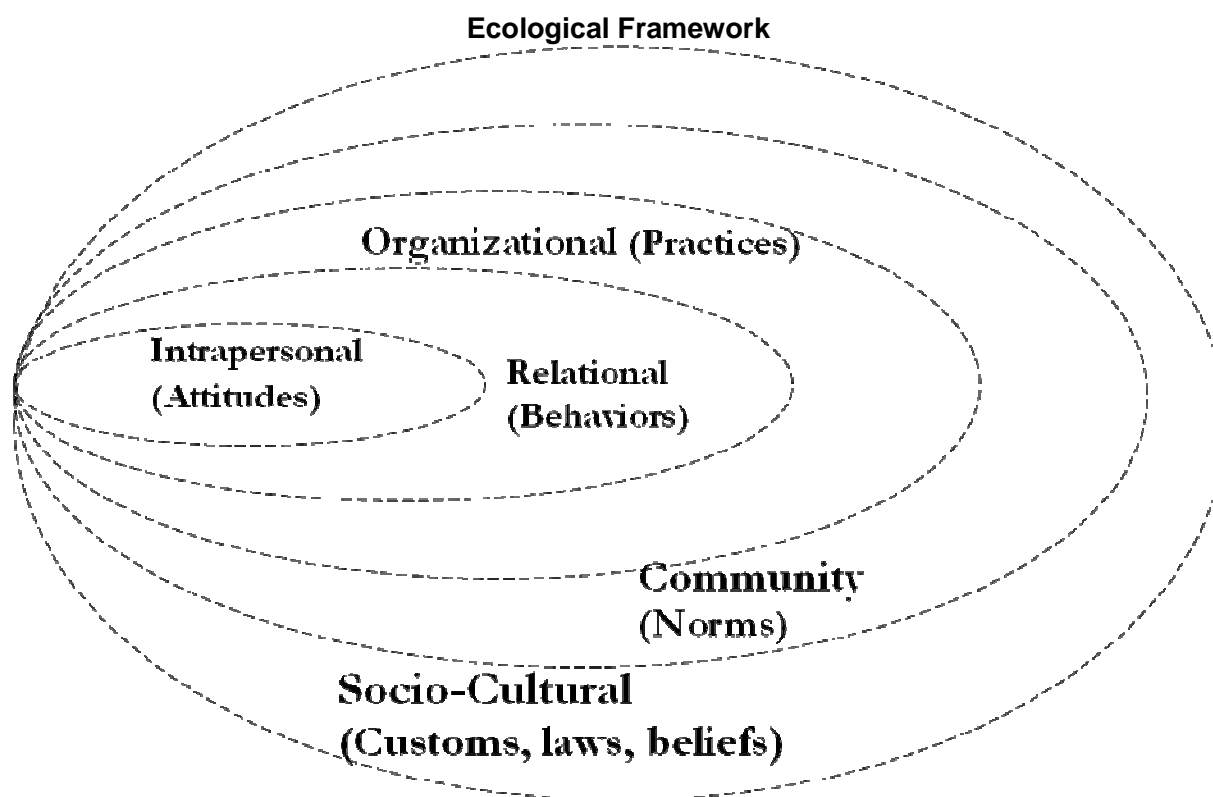
critical aspect of responding to and addressing sexual, dating and domestic violence, focusing on these efforts alone, or even primarily, are not sufficient.

Prevention

Prevention strategy includes three key components that we will discuss briefly in this primer: the ecological framework, the spectrum of prevention, and the levels of prevention. All prevention activities have a shared goal: eliminating the problem. For example, if the problem being addressed is teen smoking, then the goal of prevention is that no teenager smokes. This means working to affect the decision-making process of teenagers to reduce the likelihood that they will choose to smoke, as well as working on the environment in which teens hang out in order to reduce the access to smoking.

This same analysis applies to domestic, dating and sexual violence. Prevention efforts focus simultaneously on individual decision making coupled with changing the social environment.

The Ecological Framework depicts how various factors across levels of culture impact an individual's attitudes, decision making and behavior. Prevention strategy seeks to identify the factors that support violent behavior, then works to change or eliminate those factors across all levels of the social ecological framework. The model used by MensWork is a five layer model incorporating the individual, relationships, organizational, community, and social-cultural.





Prevention, based on this analysis, relies on initiating multiple strategies at every level of the ecological framework in order to support the changes necessary to reduce the likelihood that a person will perpetrate, or become a victim of domestic, dating or sexual violence. A main point of this understanding is that providing education at the individual level alone, even with the best, newest and empirically researched curriculum, is insufficient for preventing sexual, dating and domestic violence. At the end of this document is a model developed by MensWork, to depict the kinds of efforts and activities that would be offered at every level of the ecological framework.

The Ecological Framework provides a means for recognizing how behaviors (both those that we want to promote and those that we are striving to prevent) are impacted by a host of factors at various levels around us every day. We are influenced by the people we interact with (friends, family, coaches, teachers, etc.), the organizations that we are a part of and the “culture” and practices within those organizations (churches, synagogues, mosques, school, jobs, associations, clubs, etc.), the communities that we are a part of (both geographic and identity communities) and the social norms that are supported within those communities, plus the larger socio-cultural environment (as exemplified by areas such as laws, media, and other larger social forces). Factors at each of these levels impact on the options we identify, the decisions we make, and the behaviors we engage in.

The *spectrum of prevention* adds to the ecological framework by describing what kinds of activities and efforts are provided in a coordinated manner at various levels. In effect, the spectrum of prevention provides an outline of the kinds of efforts and initiatives that are recommended at each level of the ecological framework. A depiction is provided below:

Spectrum of Prevention^{viii}

Level of Spectrum	Definition of Level	Examples
1. Increase individual knowledge & skills	Build individual's capacity to prevent violence & enhance safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations in Health Class • Bystander training
2. Community Education	Reaching groups with programs designed to promote safety	Performances by “Blue Apple Players”
3. Educating/Training Providers	Training providers to transmit knowledge and skills to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train youth service workers to promote respectful flirting • Train Clergy to respond to domestic or dating violence
4. Fostering Coalitions/Networks	Organizing groups and individuals to increase impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen Dating Violence Prevention Coalition • L'ville InterFaith Taskforce to Eliminate Domestic Violence
5. Improve Organizational Practice	Adopting regulations and practices to enhance safety	Implement and enforce sexual harassment and teen dating violence policies
6. Community Organizing	Influence social norms	Develop grassroots efforts to highlight and promote social norms which encourage healthy relationships & gender respect
7. Policy & Legislation	Develop policies and laws to influence outcomes	Establish policies at schools to provide sexual violence prevention



		curriculum to all students and training to all staff
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The spectrum of prevention, then, provides a clear blueprint of the kinds of efforts needed to be offered within a community as part of a prevention effort.

As policy makers, you have the greatest opportunities for action at the 7th level of the spectrum. The areas where you can have the greatest impact would be related to developing and enforcing policies, and models; helping to provide and secure funding for these efforts. In order to be most effective, your efforts should be developed and offered in coordination with efforts that are underway at the other levels of the spectrum. As such, staying in touch with the Center for Women and Families, MensWork, the PEACC Program on the University of Louisville, the Coalition to Prevent Teen Dating Violence, Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, Planned Parenthood of Kentucky, Our Lady of Peace, Kentucky Domestic Violence Association, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs and other organizations and efforts who are working on other levels of this spectrum is critical.

Finally, *the levels of prevention* illustrates how different prevention efforts intersect in relation to the occurrence of violence – either primary prevention (before the violence occurs), secondary prevention (in the midst of the violence or impacting those at greatest risk for perpetrating or being victimized) or tertiary prevention (programming or services provided after the violence has occurred).

Preventing Violence

Raising Awareness

Treating Victims/Offenders



Tertiary prevention includes those efforts that focus on individuals who have already engaged in, or been impacted by, the violence. Tertiary prevention efforts are those that are designed specifically to 1) reduce the harm caused by the behavior, 2) provide a means of accountability, and 3) reduce the likelihood of repeat violence. These are those efforts provided in our community to support people who have been victimized in a way that reduces their likelihood of being re-victimized, and working with those who have perpetrated these forms of violence in a way that reduces their likelihood of re-abusing.

Secondary prevention focuses on those in the population who are assessed to be at higher risk for either perpetration or victimization. The strategy then focuses on developing specific, targeted efforts for this population to help mediate their increased risks, by increasing the protective factors around them.

Primary Prevention focuses on broad-based efforts that are designed to ensure that the violence is never perpetrated. This means initiatives that are community-based and population wide to make sure no one in our communities is ever victimized, and no one in our communities ever perpetrates.



The Role of Gender in Prevention

Most theory and research in the area of primary prevention of sexual and domestic violence indicates that these efforts should be gender specific – meaning that primary prevention strategies should include a mix of programs specific for males, specific for females, and others that are designed for mixed gender situations. This perspective results from a recognition that males and females understand, experience, and relate to violence in general differently, and certainly in regards to sexual, domestic, and dating violence.

Data from general violence and gender indicates that men tend to experience violence differently than do women. For example men tend to experience more physical violence (including the more frequent use of weapons and larger numbers of perpetrators in an experience of violence), more typically experience this violence in public, and the violence is typically perpetrated by acquaintances, strangers, and friends in that order. Women, on the other hand, tend to experience violence more often in private environments, the violence tends to be more sexualized in nature, and the violence tends to be perpetrated by intimates, acquaintances, and then strangers. As such, general violence prevention efforts need to recognize and respond to these differences if they are to be effective for both women and men.

Sexual, domestic, and dating violence are similarly recognized, understood and experienced differently depending on gender. There is substantial data that suggests women hit as often as men, for example. But if we examine the impact of that violence we find that men tend to respond to being hit by their girlfriend or wife very differently than women respond to being hit by their boyfriends or husbands. In addition, on a more social level (as opposed to this interpersonal level), it is rare for women to plan for a first date without some level of “safety planning”, whereas it is rare for men to plan for their first date with any thought to their safety in case the date becomes problematic.

This information suggests that our efforts to develop, implement and sustain a comprehensive, coordinated prevention strategy in Louisville should keep gender in mind throughout our planning and implementing. This information also suggests that you, as policy makers, keep gender in mind as you consider policy initiatives to prevent sexual, domestic and dating violence.

From a Public Health perspective, the most effective community-wide prevention initiatives are those in which primary, secondary and tertiary programming are provided in a coordinated manner that is comprehensive in scope. So, for example, if primary, secondary and tertiary prevention initiatives are strategically organized and implemented within a community. This programming would thus allow for some overlap of efforts, programming, and population served.

An integrated approach^{viii}

Primary Prevention	Secondary Prevention	Tertiary Prevention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Green dot” efforts • “Promoting Gender Respecttm” Model • Youth leadership development’ • Social marketing campaigns (e.g. “Men4Womentm”) • Policies mandating educational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational/Awareness Raising efforts • Mental health services • Family support services • Mentoring programs • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batterer’s Intervention • Pro arrest policies and practices • Victim Counseling Services • SANE program • Children who witness Services



<p>programs in all Middle & High Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified dating violence expert in all youth service agencies • “pro-social” theatre programs • Male-led initiatives (e.g. “White Ribbon Campaign”) • Economic development initiatives • “social connector” efforts at the neighborhood level • Bystander –to-ally efforts • Parent Involvement 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual level advocacy efforts •
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Currently, in Metro Louisville, and throughout both Indiana and Kentucky, the vast majority of efforts and resources are focused on tertiary prevention efforts. In terms of budget, the Ms Foundation, in 2010, found that nationally, approximately 2.5% of funding focuses on primary prevention (this includes all federal, state and private funding provided to address domestic or sexual violence^{ix}). When we get serious about preventing sexual and domestic violence, this funding discrepancy will no longer exist. The adage that we’re all aware of – “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” certainly applies here. As policy makers, you can help us significantly move to the point where we actually are providing an ounce of prevention.

Conclusion

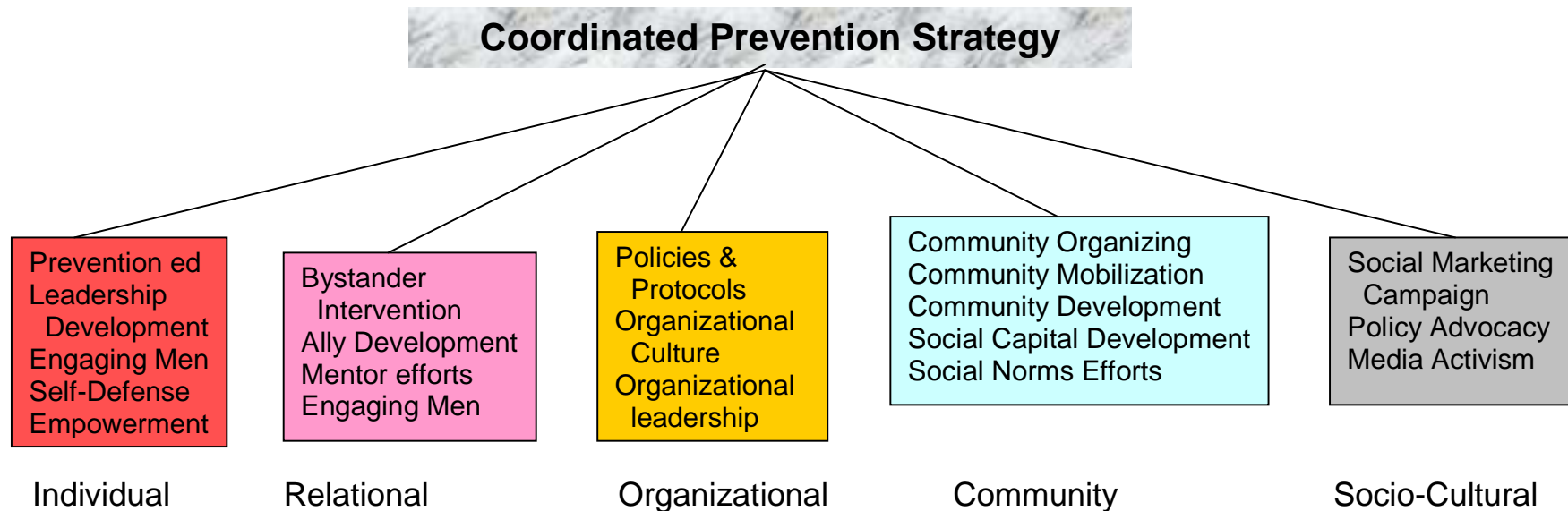
Preventing sexual, domestic and dating violence *is* possible. There is every reason to believe that by developing a strategic, comprehensive, initiative that includes elected officials and other policy makers, we can be as effective in preventing sexual, domestic and dating violence as we have been in reducing drinking and driving, increasing seat-belt use, and increasing the safety and use of child safety seats.

Preventing Sexual and Domestic Violence: An Overview of Strategies and Key Activities

Primary Prevention: Working to address the root causes of sexual and domestic violence, and stop the abusiveness before it occurs.

Two main foci: prevention of 1st time perpetration, and prevention of 1st time victimization

Levels of Prevention: individual, relational, organizational, community and socio-cultural



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