



Inspire

Summer 2010

Dear Inspire Readers,

The men's batterer intervention program is unique in many ways. It is one of the oldest batterers' intervention programs in the country, is the oldest of only eight batterers programs in Indiana certified under rigorous standards set by the Indiana Coalition against Domestic Violence *and* the only certified program in Northeast Indiana. Men's program staff are nationally recognized and provides training for other DV professionals.

The work we do here not only touches the men involved with groups, but extends to their family members and the community at large. The statistics show us that 1 in 4 women will suffer an act of violence from an intimate partner. Because of this, we must find a way to work with these men using the proper mix of compassion for them as human (and often victims of violence themselves) and accountability for the violence they have used. The men who come to the Batterer's Intervention Program (BIP) are men that we all know, they are our fathers, brothers, uncles, they are men we attend church with, or we buy our groceries from. These are men who become involved in intimate relationships with people that we care about. We work with them and live along side them. They date our friends, our daughters and they raise the next generation. Ignoring them means to turn our back on all the people who will cross paths with them throughout the rest of their lives.

As a woman working in the men's program, I find very few of my sisters working with men who have used violence both here at the Center and statewide. I would be remiss if I said that this work was always easy, but what I can say is that this work is inspiring, humbling and important. It's imperative that we have women working in the men's program. Men need to hear a woman's voice, and share a woman's perspective as they struggle towards creating equality and sharing power in their homes. It's equally important that we model that not only *can* men and women work collectively and as equals, but that the results of that shared work is better for both parties involved.

At the beginning of each group, each man states his partner's name and the violence he inflicted, along with the effect of that violence on that person or others. Recently, after his check in, a young man, who has been involved in the group for a month, completed his check in and then asked if he could share something with his group members. He proceeded to say that his 7 year old son told him that he likes his "nice daddy," and asked his daddy to keep going to that school.

So that is our ultimate goal—for every child to have "nice daddy." This program is making a difference in this child's life, but as we all know, all too soon this young boy will also become a man with a family of his own. What a gift that he has "nice daddy" as the role model for raising his own children!

Robin James, Men's Program Coordinator

John Beams, Men's Program Coordinator

Inspiring Change. One person...One family...One world



**CfN's
Coordinating
Panel**

Kim Miller

Brindha Hariharan

Susan Minke

Alan Hoffer

Sherwin Kepes

Barbara Linden

Laurie Weier

Laura Boyer

Men's Program Offers:

Men's Violence Intervention Program The Men's program provides 29 sessions of information and dialogue for men who acknowledge they have used violence. Our program is one of eight in Indiana certified under rigorous standards of the Indiana Coalition against Domestic Violence. We are the only in Northeast Indiana.

Men Served in 2009 : 372

Men served so far in 2010: 224

Outcome:

96% of male clients agree that they can apply the things they learned at the CFN in their own lives, with 77% strongly agreeing

Jan '10-April '10

Feedback from clients.....

"I think the biggest change I've made in my beliefs is that even if I've been done wrong that still does not give me the right to react with violence."

"I want to see the good in myself. The little boy who wasn't good enough for his mom and dad not to beat him."

"It's a life alter[ing] experience. Everything we learn or recognize can be the taken home and applied to everyday life. Also we can teach other people what we have learned. I don't think anyone really wants to be here but can't help not to feel wanted and changed."

"She paid the price for me not being able to communicate like an adult and I'm very sorry for that."

"Its not the one incident that got me into this group, it's all the years of doing everything off the power and control wheel that landed me here."

Program Features...

- ◆ Program is committed to strict accountability. We provide monthly progress reports to referral sources and interim reports where there is noncompliance.
- ◆ Victim safety and access are our first priority. Partner/victim contacts are attempted by women's advocates at least three times during program. Victims are informed of program status of the participant.
- ◆ Facilitators are supervised by senior staff and "monitored" by victim advocates who give ongoing feedback on their effectiveness in keeping proper focus with participants.

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Inspiring Change

Inspiring Change through repetition and routine...this may seem a contradiction to many, but to quote John Beams “perhaps the biggest factor in men’s changing is the constant drip, drip, drip of ritual activity, week after week” that inspires growth. “Check in” is one such ritual. The starting point of each group, a statement of accountability for the violence that they’ve used; a constant reminder that his actions were serious and had real consequences and effects on those he used violence against. The intention of the routine of the “drip” is to slowly erode the blaming and rationalizing statements from the men’s re-telling of the incident just as slow drips of water erode the densest of rocks. The constant drip sets a tone of accountability for the rest of the group, normalizing accountability so that hopefully the blaming and justifying statements become as glaring as the sun reflecting off a newly formed puddle. The check-in also allows men to see that admitting their flaws is a normal and healthy practice that we can all learn from. Below is a reflection of this process...

Excerpt from an interview with Sox Sperry, one of our founders, teachers and committed friend.

“I remember a guy who was in group, I don’t remember his name but, I remember he was an angry man like so many men who come in and his “check-in” in his first phase one group and into phase two was: “I’m here because I hit my wife when she cheated on me.” And, over and over he’d say that. And it always rang with resentment and justification. And I remember when the guy checked out, seven months or more later, after lots of work, lots of challenge to his check-in and his story, he said: “I’m here because I hit my wife with a bat and beat her with a bat because she had gotten shelter in the arms of somebody else after I had abused her so much for so long that she couldn’t take it any more.” He’d never really said it just like that before—and he really meant it. And people heard it, and those of us who heard it, remembered all the other check-ins where he’d started by blaming her, and we thought, well, if the Center for Nonviolence in that moment, can help this guy really change his “check-in”, by his own hard work and fellowship and challenge with other guys over these months, then, that means that a little bit of change is possible, maybe.”

Inspiring Growth



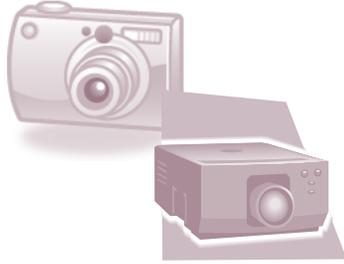
Embarking on new ground: On May 20, the men’s program began to conduct batterer intervention groups for men in Kendallville. This was the result of the enthusiastic invitation of Judge Kramer of the Noble Superior Court, who has followed our work for years and understands the importance of having a competent, accountable batterer intervention program in his county. We met with the staff of the Noble County Probation Department to establish a protocol for referrals and information exchange. Pastor Jim Kane of the First Church of God kindly agreed to donate space for our group in the church basement. Tony Acosta and John Beams lead the weekly groups. To date, there are four participants, but we anticipate the group growing rapidly, and are planning to open a second group by fall.

A starburst graphic with a jagged, multi-pointed border. Inside the starburst, the text "Our new website launches in September" is written in a simple font. Below this text is the website address "www.centerfornv.org" in a smaller font.

Be watching for the new website ...<http://www.centerfornv.org>

Center's Wish List

- Digital camera
- Instrumental CDs
- Projector (for computer-Microsoft compatible)
- Laminator
- Diapers & Wipes
- Bubbles
- Markers
- Clay
- Construction Paper
- Playground balls
- Office supplies
- Boxes of Kleenex
- Book shelf
- (3) 5 gallon bucket of asphalt
- Gift Certificates to...
 - Lowes
 - Home Depot
 - Meijer
 - Target



Services of the Center

All services are also available in Spanish

- Adult Violence Intervention Programs
- Support Groups
- Mother's Intervention Program
- Child-Centered Parenting After Divorce
- Violence Intervention for Youth
- Thinking Errors Intervention for Youth
- Community Nonviolence Initiative (school-based programming)
- Trainings

Mission: To provide education, support, and advocacy to end domestic and other forms of violence while modeling equality and power sharing



Check us out on

235 W. Creighton Ave.
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
www.centerfornv.org



Center for Nonviolence