

Practical Applications for Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Connecticut



Statewide Primary Prevention Plan
2017-2019

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Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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Statewide Primary Prevention Plan 2017-2019

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[Executive Summary]

One of priority goals of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is the prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV). In 2014, CCADV developed Connecticut's first statewide plan designed to address the factors that increase risk for the perpetration of IPV and to promote factors that create healthy, sustainable families and communities. The plan reflected our core commitment to reach out to all residents of Connecticut to help foster the attitudes, skills, behaviors and norms that lead to healthy relationships. In 2016, CCADV convened a multi-disciplinary team of individuals to assess the original plan's outcomes as well as define new approaches for moving forward over the next three years. Team leadership recognized early on that by combining collective resources, a more consolidated and efficient plan for primary prevention would be developed. The plan includes intentional/meaningful collaboration as a key approach folded under these goals, including non-traditional partners and other sectors working toward health promotion and community development. The following outlines the strategic directions, goals and objectives for preventing intimate partner violence for 2017-2019.

Strategic Direction One: Broaden the focus of prevention education by:

- Increasing healthy relationship education in schools and youth serving organizations
- Developing and disseminating prevention focused strategies for faith based communities
- Identifying a unified strategy for reaching underserved communities

Strategic Direction Two: Accelerate the function of the bystander in preventing IPV by:

- Developing and distributing resources to promote bystander intervention
- Engaging college campuses with bystander approaches
- Engaging influencers of youth to promote bystander intervention
- Educating businesses to support constructing bystander interventions as part of positive employee relations and upstanding customer service

Strategic Direction Three: Reinforce the responsibility of men and boys in preventing IPV by:

- Expanding the 10X10 Campaign
- Fostering the next generation of male youth prevention leaders
- Screening adolescent boys to prevent the first time perpetration of intimate partner violence

Strategic Direction Four: Disseminate information about the prevention of IPV via the use of technology by:

- Increasing positive messaging on dating relationships through the td411 application
- Conveying educational information about the prevention of intimate partner violence through online webinars and social media
- Developing strategies and toolkits for using social media to engage bystanders

[Introduction]

According to the Centers for Disease Control, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, nearly one in three women and men in Connecticut have experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

While comprehensive intervention programs throughout Connecticut address the effects of intimate partner violence after it occurs, prevention is the first step in the process of addressing intimate partner violence so that we can stop the abuse before it begins. *Intimate partner violence is in many cases predictable and therefore preventable.* The question is, what actions, by whom, will reframe and prevent intimate partner violence in Connecticut? The key is to recognize and join forces with natural allies whose work has an impact on violence prevention but whose motivation or interest may not be specifically about violence prevention.

This plan, *Practical Applications for Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Connecticut* reflects our core commitment to reach out to all residents of Connecticut to help foster the attitudes, skills, behaviors and norms that lead to healthy relationships and deter violence. The plan articulates strategies that will increase state and local capacity to plan, implement, evaluate and support strategies that prevent first perpetration of intimate partner violence. Accomplishing the goals and objectives of this plan will require true and significant social change – a shifting of people’s attitudes and beliefs to shape a more positive outcome.

Included in the plan are the four strategic directions, which form the basis of the plan as well as an overview of prevention accomplishments from the 2014-2016 plan. These new strategic areas, of which goals and suggested action steps are included with each, are:

1. Broadening the focus of prevention education.
2. Accelerating the function of the bystander in preventing intimate partner violence.
3. Reinforcing the responsibility of men and boys in preventing intimate partner violence.
4. Disseminating information about the prevention of intimate partner violence via the use of technology.

These strategic directions are meant to serve as an organizing and technical assistance tool rather than watertight recommendations for all who will engage in the prevention of intimate partner violence in Connecticut.

We invite you to read this plan, find something that resonates with you and become involved at the local, organizational or state level.

[Definitions]

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a behavior used by one person in a relationship to control or harm the other. These behaviors may include physical or sexual assault, emotional, financial, and/or technological abuse, threats, stalking, or intimidation. This violence can happen once or repeatedly between same-sex or heterosexual couples and can be deadly. IPV knows no boundaries of age or income, race or culture, religion, or ethnicity.

Primary Prevention reduces the incidence of intimate partner violence by changing attitudes, behaviors and norms that support the perpetration of violence and abuse. Such changes can include the following activities and strategies:

- Raising awareness of abuse and violence in relationships and the role we all play in making it stop
- Promoting healthy behaviors in relationships
- Instituting programs that teach young people skills for dating
- Providing opportunities for positive social interactions
- Creating community conditions where healthy, respectful and equitable organizations and institutions thrive

Risk Factors are associated with a greater likelihood of intimate partner violence victimization or perpetration. A combination of individual, relational, community and societal factors contribute to the risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of IPV. Understanding these factors can help identify various opportunities for prevention.

Protective Factors are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that, when present, mitigate or eliminate risk of IPV in families and communities and increase the health and well-being of children and families. Protective factors help parents to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. Protective factors also provide individuals with the skills they need to be resilient when confronted with obstacles and challenges throughout their life.

OUR VISION

We envision a Connecticut that promotes healthy relationships for all ages that are violence free.

1 Broaden the Focus of Prevention Education

While crisis intervention is a necessary response to domestic violence, there is also a strong need for proactive prevention education. Schools and faith organizations are ideal places to introduce primary prevention programs to a wide range of individuals—primarily because they are large institutions where people congregate on an on-going basis. If we can reach people with learning plans that appeal to all types of youth and adults, they can adapt routines that promote healthy living and appropriate behavior towards others.

[Goal 1.1]
Increase healthy relationship education in schools and youth serving organizations.

Outcomes:

- 10 new agencies or institutions will adopt evidence-based or best practice primary prevention curricula for middle and high school students.
- 5 mentoring programs will be trained in teen dating violence and promoting healthy relationships.
- 10 school systems or youth serving organizations will facilitate evidence based violence prevention programs with students.
- Prevention strategies and training for teachers and community based youth providers covering grades K-5 will be researched and facilitated.

CONNECTICUT SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

In the 2013 Connecticut School Health Survey Youth Behavior Component Report, **26.3% of students** surveyed reported that they had been **emotionally or verbally abused** (e.g., called names, made fun of in front of others, ridiculed about their body or looks or told they were worthless) one or more times by a boyfriend or girlfriend and **9% of high school students** were hit, slapped, or **physically hurt** on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend. There is no clear consensus as to how well we are reaching our youth broadly around issues of teen dating violence and youth exposed to domestic violence. While many groups in Connecticut are doing something, specific goals were established through 2019 that address ways to keep youth and teens safe.

Goal 1.2]

Develop and disseminate prevention focused strategies for faith based communities.

Outcomes:

- Talking points for discussing healthy relationships and intimate partner violence prevention by faith leaders as well as a list of evidence-based programs endorsed for faith communities will be developed and disseminated.
- 5 faith organizations will increase collaboration with their local domestic violence organization.

[Goal 1.3]

Identify a unified strategy for reaching underserved and underrepresented communities.

Outcomes:

- Domestic violence organizations and community providers will be provided with opportunities in community mapping to identify underserved and underrepresented communities.
- Best practices for public awareness initiatives targeting underserved and underrepresented communities will be developed and distributed.

"Gang violence is connected to bullying is connected to school violence is connected to intimate partner violence is connected to child abuse is connected to elder abuse. It's all connected."

Deborah Prothrow-Stith, MD, Adjunct Professor, Harvard School of Public Health

2 Accelerate the Function of the Bystander in Preventing Intimate Partner Violence

Every person in this state has the ability to be an active bystander in preventing intimate partner violence. The bystander approach removes the pressure people feel to single-handedly respond to intimate partner violence by giving them a specific role, with which they can identify and adopt to meet their own comfort level. This role includes interrupting situations that could lead to violence before it happens, speaking out against intimate partner violence and having the skills to be an effective and supportive ally to survivors. Working with bystanders focuses on building skills and developing empathy for others, which is critical to changing social norms.

[Goal 2.1]

Develop and distribute resources to promote bystander intervention.

Outcomes

- A Bystander Toolkit will be developed and disseminated to help individuals, organizations and institutions build their capacity to engage in bystander interventions.

[Goal 2.2]

Engage college campuses with bystander approaches.

Outcomes

- Each college/university campus will develop and maintain an active Campus Response Team to increase IPV prevention and healthy relationship building programming.
- A college/university training and technical assistance team will identify and select evidence-based prevention programs which may be appropriate for IPV prevention in college/university settings.
- A minimum of 6 prevention trainings will be facilitated to assist campuses in establishing communities of responsibility and promoting bystander interventions.

[Goal 2.3]

Engage influencers of youth to promote bystander intervention.

Outcomes

- Each domestic violence organization will have in place training and professional development programs designed to improve the skill sets of influencers of youth to increase IPV prevention and bystander programming.
- A minimum of 10 prevention trainings and/or webinars will be facilitated to assist school personnel and youth serving organizations in establishing communities of responsibility and promoting bystander interventions.

[Goal 2.4]

Educate businesses to support constructing bystander interventions as part of positive employee relations and upstanding customer service.

Outcomes

- 10 bar/restaurant owners will be educated on how to create effective bystander intervention as the atmosphere of the establishment.
- An effective guide with information on intimate partner violence and what every employee can do to prevent and address it will be developed and distributed to a minimum of 50 workplaces.

3 Reinforce Men & Boys' Role In IPV Prevention

Violence prevention requires a change in the social conditions that make violence normal and acceptable. It's important that men and boys come together to talk about and learn new ways to get involved in preventing dating and intimate partner violence. As fathers, brothers, uncles, teachers, coaches and friends, men have a lot to gain by engaging in the prevention of violence and helping to bring safety to their communities and loved ones.

[Goal 3.1]

Expand the men's engagement 10X10 Campaign.

Outcomes

- 100 additional men will be trained and actively involved with the 10X10 Campaign.
- 20 men engaged in the 10X10 Campaign will be showcased on the CCADV website on a rotating basis.
- "Te Invito," a Latino men's engagement campaign will be unveiled.

[Goal 3.2]

Foster the next generation of male youth prevention leaders.

Outcomes

- A minimum of 30 male youth will be trained to provide leadership and prevention education with their peers and male counterparts.
- Male youth leaders will provide prevention education through a sustainable young men's speakers' consortium.
- Youth leaders will showcase their prevention efforts through an engaging men and boys symposium.

[Goal 3.3]

Screen adolescent boys to prevent the first time perpetration of intimate partner violence.

Outcomes

- Develop and validate a screening tool to be used with adolescent boys in a pediatric setting.
- Identify and expand available services to refer youth who may be at risk for perpetrating violence.
- Train a minimum of 25 healthcare providers on the prevention screening tool and referral services.

4 Raise Awareness of IPV & IPV Prevention via the Use of Technology

The use of technology—including social networking sites, storytelling, webinars and on-line learning—offer many new and exciting ways to support, invite participation and advance intimate partner violence prevention efforts. Technology and social media can provide a way to facilitate an awareness of IPV at a much larger scale which can encourage people to take action. Prevention is not all facts and figures. Underneath this data lies the stories of caring individuals who have reached out to prevent intimate partner violence. Their stories must be brought to the forefront to give others tips, ideas and encouragement to join them. When used toward these ends, social media can help raise awareness, promote healthy norms and behaviors, and advocate for policy changes related to intimate partner violence prevention.

[Goal 4.1]

Increasing positive messaging on dating relationships through the td411 application.

Outcomes

- A minimum of 250 students will download the td411 application.

[Goal 4.2]

Convey educational information about the prevention of intimate partner violence through online webinars and social media.

Outcomes

- A public education campaign will be launched to challenge existing norms and promote the development of healthy and safe relationships.

[Goal 4.3]

Develop strategies for using social media to engage bystanders.

Outcomes

- A toolkit and training with examples of and opportunities to frame social media messages aimed towards intimate partner violence prevention will be developed and distributed/facilitated.

[2014-2016 Outcomes Report]

This section serves to highlight the achievements, per strategic direction, that have taken place from 2014-2016 in reaching our overall aim of preventing intimate partner violence throughout Connecticut.

The initial primary prevention plan, *From Planning to Practice: Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Connecticut* included five strategic directions as follows:

1. Engaging youth in IPV prevention
2. Involving men and boys in IPV prevention
3. Raising public awareness about IPV and IPV prevention programs
4. Strengthening and increasing available IPV prevention programs
5. Incorporating Results-Based Accountability in IPV prevention programs

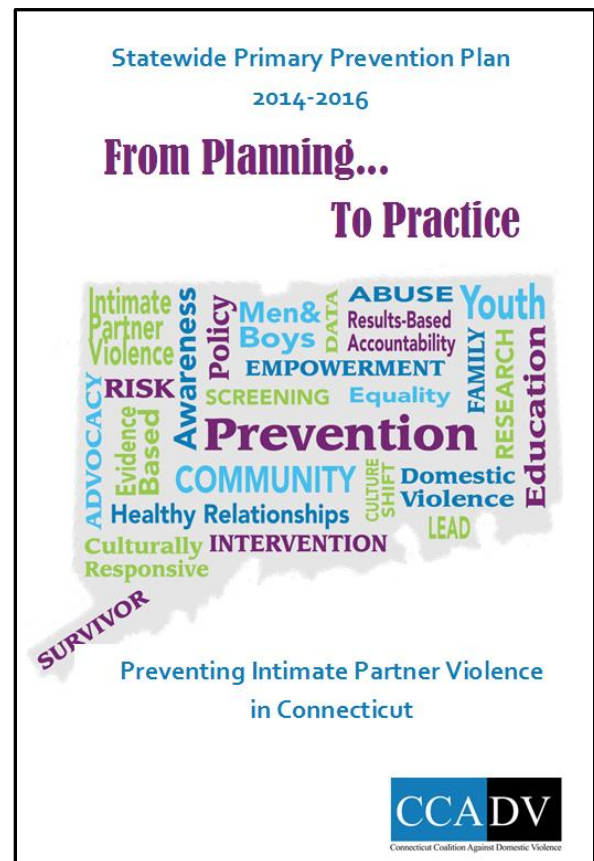
Direction One: To engage youth in IPV prevention by:

- a. Increasing healthy relationship content in youth oriented agencies and institutions.
- b. Increasing youth involvement in primary prevention.
- c. Increasing positive messaging through the use of social media and the td411 app.

Interpersonal Violence Prevention Curricula

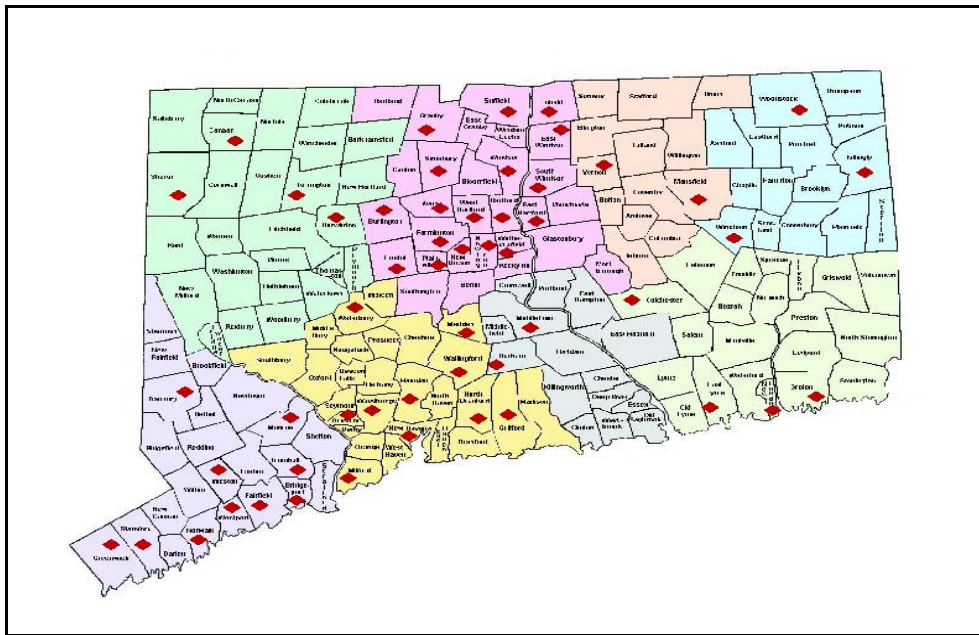
Several curricula came forward and were recommended for their sound practices and compliance with the State Department of Education's Framework for Health and Physical Education:

- Safe Dates
- Shifting Boundaries
- Second Step
- In Their Shoes



- Dating Matters
- Girl's Circle
- The Council for Boys and Young Men

Twenty one school systems and community based organizations took advantage of the opportunity to become trained on the facilitation of the Shifting Boundaries curriculum, while 76 schools and organizations learned to teach Safe Dates. Both programs stress the importance of personal accountability and boundaries to avoid intimate partner violence. The following represent the cities and towns in Connecticut that have received training:



Over the three years, well over 100,000 youth were educated about healthy relationships, conflict resolution, developing healthy boundaries, teen dating violence and family violence using these evidence-based curricula.

td411

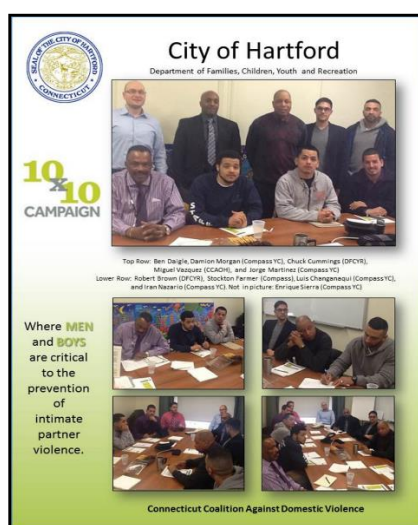
In 2015, *td411* was updated and re-launched. The *td411* application (app) provides essential information to teens in a manner that makes sense for them- through their phone or mobile device. The app answers questions that they may be too afraid to ask and includes interactive tools to help them learn about their relationship and to connect with a counselor if they need someone to talk to about their relationship.

El contenido ahora también disponible en español. The content of this app is now also available in Spanish.

Direction Two: To reinforce men and boy's role in the prevention of IPV by:

- a. Increasing male involvement in IPV prevention initiatives throughout Connecticut.**
- b. Involving youth in developing IPV prevention strategies using Positive Youth Development approaches.**
- c. Implementing evidence-based practices for IPV prevention for boys or men in multiple settings and regions across the state.**

10x10 Campaign



In February 2014, the 10X10 Campaign: Where MEN and BOYS are Critical to the Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence was launched. The 10x10 Campaign is open to any man or boy who wants to take action to prevent intimate partner violence in Connecticut. The 10X10 Campaign is staffed by a three person team who travel throughout Connecticut, training men and boys on how to 1) talk about the prevention of intimate partner violence and 2) engage other men in the 10X10 Campaign. To date, approximately 350 men have participated in the Campaign, representing 25 businesses and organizations, including 5 police departments, 4 college campuses, 4 municipalities and several state agencies and non-profit organizations.

Engaging Men and Boys as Allies Project

Through a three year Engaging Men and Boys as Allies Project, CCADV has partnered with the Connecticut Youth Excellence Project and the Connecticut Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs to provide opportunities for teenage boys to develop their leadership skills and facilitate a Youth 10X10 Campaign among their peers and younger boys. In year one, 5 Boys and Girls Clubs and the Youth Excellence Project chose a minimum of two adult male leaders who were trained on the principles of primary prevention, the 10X10 Campaign and teen dating violence. Through October 2016- February 2017, each club will select a minimum of 10 male youth who will trained on violence prevention through CCADV and Mentors in Violence Prevention. After training, the clubs will develop the youth 10X10 campaign in alignment with the men's 10X10 campaign. Each club will determine their own strategies for engagement within their community. By mid-2017, the teenage boys will be prepared to embark on their own campaign.

Direction Three: To raise awareness of IPV and IPV prevention by:

- a. Establishing a Speaker's Bureau including men from CCADV's *First 100 Plus* honorees to provide IPV prevention education among their peers.**
- b. Identifying best practices for public awareness initiatives targeting underrepresented, under-served and not served populations.**
- c. Advancing the profile of primary prevention as a priority policy issue for lawmakers and other public officials.**

Speaker's Bureau

In addition to establishing the 10X10 Campaign, several local domestic violence organizations have their own men's engagement campaigns that had led to the addition of many more men promoting the prevention of intimate partner violence:

- Interval House: Men Make A Difference, Men Against Domestic Violence™
- The Women's Center: The Men's Initiative
- Domestic Abuse Services/Greenwich YWCA: Men Can Take a Stand
- The Center for Family Justice: White Ribbon Campaign
- Chrysalis Domestic Violence Services: Real Strength
- Safe Futures: Men Against Domestic Violence Campaign

Underserved Communities

A Spanish hotline was launched in 2014 for monolingual Spanish speaking individuals or those more comfortable speaking Spanish, who either need support or information. The National Latin@ Network partnered with CCADV to hold two trainings in preparation for the unveiling of "Te Invito" a Latin@ men's engagement campaign, which will occur in 2017. *Engage Me Respectfully* invited participants to think critically about their approach to engagement in Latin@ communities and how it differs from outreach. *Engaging Media to Increase Domestic Violence Messaging in Latin@ Communities* brought together media professionals who will share their experiences shaping traditional and challenging topics for distribution in Latino communities. Representatives from print, television and radio platforms will discussed effective techniques utilized within these venues to increase domestic violence awareness in the Latino community. Discussions included fortifying domestic violence messages in cultural specific ways, developing strategic partnerships and collaborations to increase awareness, using social media, and effectively capitalizing paid and unpaid media opportunities.

Policy Issues

A report on state statutes and policies has been prepared but has not been presented to the Connecticut General Assembly. This report will be distributed when legislative changes are proposed regarding primary prevention and dating violence. There are four policy recommendations as follows:

1. Amend the statute's definition of Teen Dating Violence to include control
2. Improve language regarding school districts' policies on teen dating violence
3. Specify topics to be included in school districts' training on teen dating violence
4. Mandate inclusion of teen dating violence in the educational curriculum

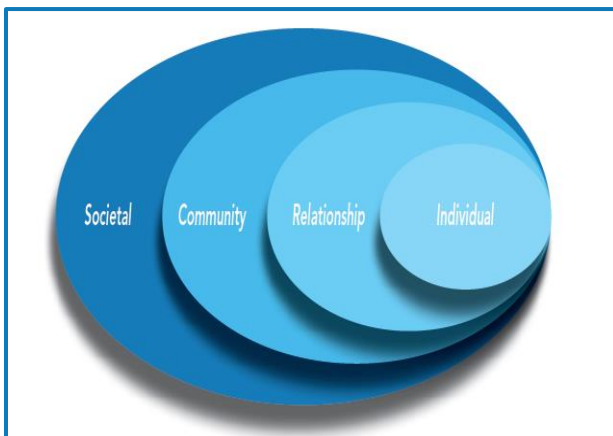
The Healthy Youth Coalition is now working to have the State Department of Education's Guidelines for the Sexual Health Component of the Comprehensive Health Education be required statewide for grades K-12. As these Guidelines include strategies to prevent dating violence and promote healthy relationships, present recommendations are to support the initiatives of the Healthy Youth Coalition.

Direction Four: To strengthen and increase IPV prevention programs by:

- a. Provide trainings in IPV primary prevention for diverse professionals in social services, health care and education.**
- b. Making evidence-based practice IPV primary prevention curricula and resources more accessible to professionals, agencies, schools and institutions.**
- c. Ensure that programming for IPV is culturally responsive.**
- d. Establish regional IPV prevention coalitions and locate them in cities/towns with the highest incidence of IPV.**

Primary Prevention Training

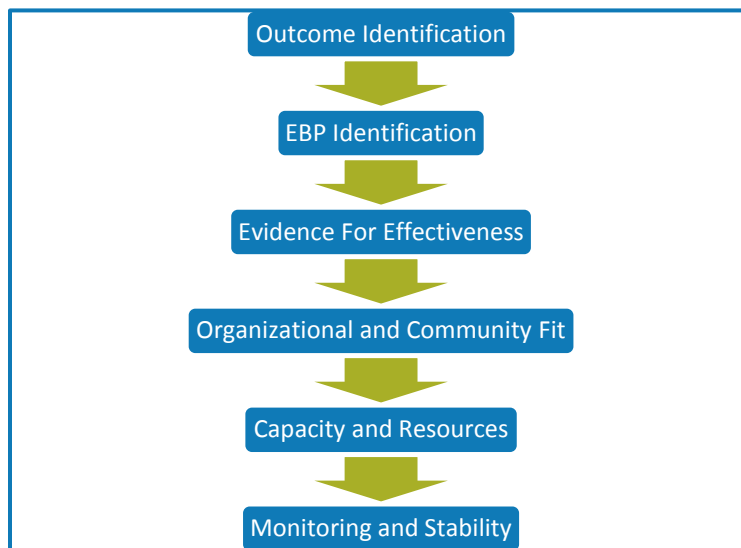
A basic training in primary prevention was developed in 2014 and facilitated on three occasions to 61 participants. The Principles of Primary Prevention is designed for those working to stop violence from ever happening. It helps professionals move from the problem to the solution by teaching the fundamentals of effective violence prevention methods and incorporating the growing body of research on what works. Through this training, attendees are able to:



- Comprehend the benefits of primary prevention in domestic violence work
- Distinguish primary prevention from secondary and tertiary prevention
- Define the 4 levels of the Social Ecological Model
- Understand social change theory
- Identify programs and strategies that adhere to the primary prevention approach

Cultural Responsiveness

All prevention programs have been evaluated for cultural responsiveness. *Evidence Based and Best Practice for Primary Prevention*, a binder with the evidence based evaluations of all primary prevention programs has been created and is housed at CCADV. The binder uses the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs (EBP) and Practices Key Questions Guide as it includes the following key areas:



Through this process, there were two areas that clearly ask questions to identify the need to address cultural responsiveness.

1. Evidence for Effectiveness:
Has the EBP been implemented successfully with a similar setting and population (age, gender, ethnicity)? If not, are the difference likely to compromise the results?
2. Organizational and Community Fit:
Is the EBP culturally feasible, taking into account the mission, vision, values and culture of the community or organization?

Prevention Toolkits

Toolkits for the Spanish hotline and td411 have been developed. Underway are toolkits for services providers as well as to address teen dating violence.

[Acknowledgements]

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