

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Family Violence Prevention and Services

IMPACT OF TRAUMA

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Program (FVPSP) encounters trauma and violence against women in every aspect of its work, with each individual the program serves. Each year, FVPSP programs serve more than 1.2 million survivors of domestic violence (DV) and their children. Nationwide, approximately 15.5 million children are exposed to DV annually, and nearly half of all residents of FVPSP DV shelters are children. DV has been associated with a wide range of mental health consequences, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and a range of behaviors related to trauma reactions. For many survivors, these issues may resolve with increased safety and support, but others may benefit from additional resources and treatment. Additional statistics and further information about family violence can be found in the first Federal Partners Report on Women and Trauma <http://nicic.gov/Library/025082>.

How a Trauma-Informed Approach Can Make a Difference

The traumatic impact of domestic violence is often enduring; regardless of how much time has passed since the abuse, a domestic survivor's social and emotional wellbeing can be deeply affected. The FVPSA Program supports national training and technical assistance (TA) to build and sustain organizational capacity in delivering trauma-informed, developmentally sensitive, culturally relevant services for children, individuals, and families affected by domestic violence and other trauma. Trauma-informed domestic violence services are sensitive to the traumatic impact of violence and abuse, including how it affects a domestic violence survivor's ability to cope, to access services, and to feel safe both physically and emotionally. Such services are strengths-based and non-pathologizing; take steps to identify potential trauma triggers, reduce re-traumatization; and attend to the quality of interactions for survivors and program staff.



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Major Accomplishments 2010-2013

FVPSP's grantee the National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (NCDVTMH) provides comprehensive, accessible, and culturally relevant TA on trauma-related issues. NCDVTMH: 1) promotes dialogue between domestic violence and mental health organizations, policy-makers, and survivor/advocacy groups about the complex intersections of domestic violence, trauma and mental health; 2) builds capacity among local agencies, state domestic violence coalitions, and state mental health systems; and 3) recommends policies, practices, and collaborative models to positively impact survivors and their children.

NCDVTMH offers a wide range of trainings, materials, and tools for practitioners. For example, 800 people participated in a 2012 webinar series; a handbook for attorneys was jointly authored with OVW; a series of tip sheets and conversation guides were published for domestic violence staff, and a new literature review provides an analysis of trauma-based treatments for survivors of DV. NCDVTMH also offers an online resource library, a searchable collection of materials, and an archive of research-based resources. www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org

In 2010, FVPSA began an initiative to support four statewide capacity-building projects and a national TA provider to expand support for children exposed to domestic violence. Products include an online resource center and a guide for advocates working with children.

New Directions and Collaborations

NCDVTMH works with FVPSA's state domestic violence coalitions and culturally specific resource centers to build capacity to deliver culturally relevant, trauma-informed care www.dvinstitute.org, www.apiidv.org, www.nationallatinonetwork.org.

In 2012-2013, NCDVTMH is working to build partnerships among domestic violence, mental health, and substance abuse providers to improve trauma-informed services for survivors and their children.

In 2012, NCDVTMH collaborated with the National Network to End Domestic Violence to assess the training and TA needs of state and territory domestic violence coalitions, and to gather information on trauma-informed work in coalitions and programs.

With the Institute for Domestic Violence in the African American Community, NCDVTMH is hosting community forums in the Detroit area to determine strengths, disparities and gaps in the current system and addressing unmet trauma and mental health needs.

The Battered Women's Justice Project, a FVPSP resource center, promotes trauma-informed services for the military community through online trainings and webinars.

Additional Resources

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www.VAWnet.org
www.futureswithoutviolence.org
www.bwjp.org