

SERVING CHILD WITNESSES & SURVIVORS

Implementing effective prevention and response.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS, CHILDREN WITNESS & LOCAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

CHILDREN & YOUTH SYSTEMS

Training for Social Service workers is crucial to understanding the complex legal issues and special needs of Domestic Violence victims seeking help. This training enables the proper support and service to restore the lives of these clients and their children.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Abuse among teenage dating partners has grown in both prevalence and awareness, yet the resources to serve these victims have not increased. We must focus on preventing this behavior before it starts. This means adopting "primary prevention strategies" to change social norms that allow this violence to occur.

FAMILY LAW

With changing state and federal laws, law enforcement, prosecutors, and court personnel can benefit from on-going training on domestic violence laws, victim rights and victim psychology. This helps the legal system provide effective, compassionate justice to domestic violence victims.

BARRIERS IN DELIVERY OF SERVICE TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

- Children and youth caseworkers not always trained in Domestic Violence
- Child custody disputes occurring between victim and abuser often result in the courts allowing abusive partners to have custody rights to their children
- Victim parents labeled perpetrator of child abuse due to failure to protect and/or intervene

PCADV PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Propose DHS regulation to require CYs training on Domestic Violence in Families with Child Welfare involvement.
- Advocate with PDE to require domestic/dating violence training for staff as defined in PA Act 104 sec. 1553.
- Monitor legislation that would protect and preserve the bond between protective parent and child, and hold abusive parents accountable for financial stability for family.
- Advocate with the PA Court Judicial Education Department to require CLE Domestic Violence training of pertinent Judiciary and court staff.
- Support the expansion of STOP team programs to PA counties.