Organizing a Coordinated Community Response Using the Duluth Model
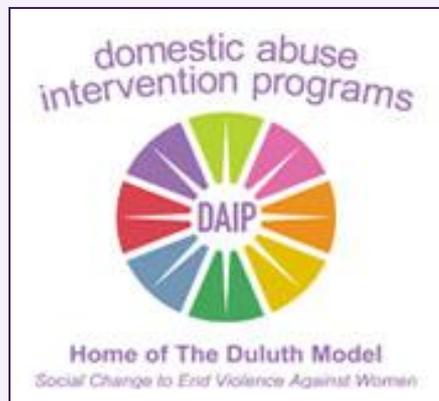
Scott Miller

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP)

Melissa Scaia

Global Rights for Women

The Duluth Model

The Duluth Model is an organizing method that prioritizes victim safety and offender accountability within a social change framework.   The model guides organizers to build interventions within systems that are aligned with the lived experience of victims.

The Duluth Model

The Duluth Model creates a distinctive form of organized public response to domestic violence. It is characterized by:

➢ Clearly identifiable and largely shared assumptions and theories about the source of battering and the effective means to deter it.

➢ Empirically tested intervention strategies that build safety and accountability into all elements of processing cases of violence.

➢ Well defined methods of inter-agency cooperation guided by advocacy programs.

The Duluth Model:
A Guide for Organizing

▶ Victims and their experience provide the framework for designing and advising the work of the CCR.

▶ Interventions need to enhance and be linked to the work of the next agency processing the case.

▶ The focus is never on the individual worker. It's on the policies, protocols and practices that inform the workers actions.

The Duluth Model:
A Guide for Organizing

▶ Each intervention needs to balance prioritizing victim safety and offender accountability with improving the work experience of the practitioner.

▶ Risk and contextual information must be collected, analyzed and distributed at the outset of a case so that all agencies are making decisions based on consistent data to manage the offender.

▶ Practitioners work together in a strategic manner to resolve problems. Most work is done in small groups or individual meetings rather than large monthly meetings.

The Duluth Model:
The Importance of Advocacy and Victim Input

The Duluth Model provides communities with an approach to coordinating a response to domestic violence.

A process that places the needs of victims at the center of a community's coordinated response.

▸ Advocates are organized to prioritize safety for victims

▸ Advocates are linked most directly with the lived experience of victims of battering.

▸ Advocates are best positioned to organize victim input to identify system gaps, and gather feedback on intervention design and implementation (focus groups or advisory teams)

The Duluth Model: Principles

A process that utilizes a consistent set of principles, and a shared understanding of battering to guide the design of each intervention.

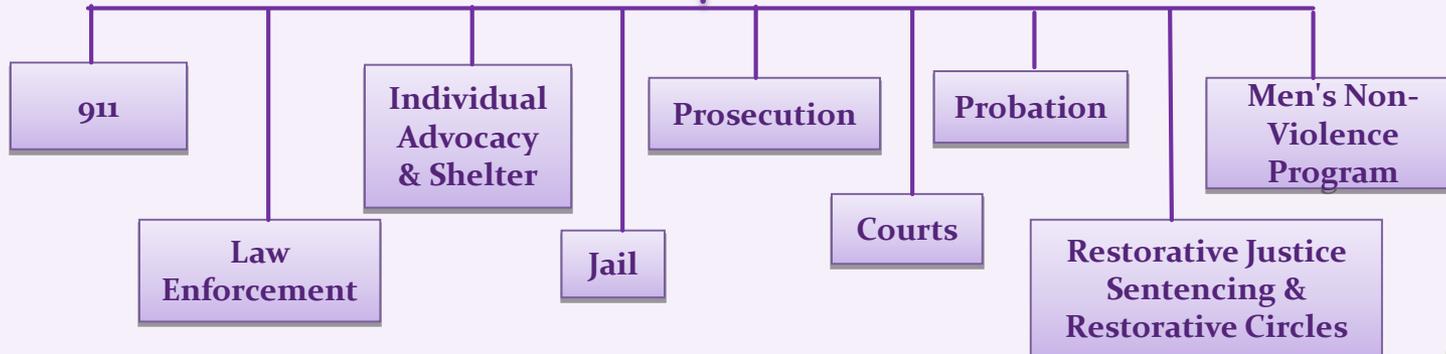Six Blueprint for Safety Principles:

- Adherence to an interagency approach
- Attention to context and severity of the violence
- Recognition of domestic violence as a patterned crime requiring continuing engagement
- Providing swift and sure consequences
- Sending messages of help and accountability
- Reducing unintended consequences and disparity of impact

www.praxisinternational.org

The Duluth Model: A Shared Understanding

- There are three types of domestic violence: battering, resistive and non-battering violence.

- The power of the state should be restricted to controlling the illegal activity of the offender.

- Victims are rarely free to cooperate with the system to hold offenders accountable.

- Account for power differences between victim and offender.

- Batterers are responsible for stopping their violence.

The Duluth Model Approach

Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

- 911
- Law Enforcement
- Individual Advocacy & Shelter
- Jail
- Prosecution
- Courts
- Probation
- Restorative Justice Sentencing & Restorative Circles
- Men's Non-Violence Program

Coordinated Community Response

An interagency effort to change the climate of tolerance of battering by:

Institutionalizing practices and procedures which centralize victim safety and offender accountability in domestic assault cases.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs

Activities of a Duluth Model Coordinated Community Response

Discover the problems in a system's response to domestic assault that diminish safety and fail to hold offenders accountable.

Organize with agencies to solve those problems using victim experience as the starting point.

Track the impact of the interventions to see if the results match the desired intent of the changes.

CCRs Organize interventions accounting for:

- Safety and Accountability.

- Policy, protocols and practice that are consistent with organizing principles.

- Investigate possible unintended consequences toward those who are victimized.

- Account for the social conditions and culture in which victims experience the violence.

- Respect for practitioner discretion in these cases.

Making the Violence Visible

One of the main outcomes of coordinated community response work is making the violence visible at each point of a criminal justice intervention:

- ▶ Building administrative tools that direct workers to document context that includes the current incident, risk and relationship history.

- ▶ Build a way to analyze and distribute the risk information to all points of cases processing.

- ▶ Done effectively, this can reduce judgment and increase the ability of a CCR to identify systemic problems and high risk individual offenders.

Individual vs. System Issues

Individual case issues:

- ► Lack skills or training

- ► Is not following existing policy or competent practice

- ► Is not typical of accepted practices within the agency

Systemic issues:

- ► Problematic practices resulting from the way the agency organizes workers to do their jobs.

The Role of Interagency Meetings in a Functioning CCR

Large CCR meetings:

▸ Get input on systemic changes.

▸ Announcements like trainings, job shifts, successes, launches and event planning.

Small CCR meetings:

▸ Organize policy, practice or protocol changes

▸ Review data tracking results

▸ Strategize institutional change approaches

▸ Case review

Systems of Accountability in a Coordinated Community Response Organized with the Duluth Model

Three types of accountability:

▶ To the victim

▶ To each intervening agency

▶ To holding the offender accountable

Accountability to the Victim

- Interventions are aligned with the needs and experiences of victims.

- Interventions are generally predictable due to interlocking policies, protocols and procedures for each intervening agency.

- The primary question asked in each step of case processing is: how does this make the victim safer?

Interagency Accountability

- Policies, protocols and practices that are linked and complimentary between intervening agencies.

- Methods of supervision and review in place to ensure adherence to policies.

- Agreed upon methods of interagency cooperation.

Accountability to Holding the Offender Accountable

- Strengthening the ability of practitioners within each agency to hold an offender accountable.

- Building interventions that impact an offenders inclination to abuse.

- Respecting the offender's right to due process.

Scott Miller

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs

smiller@theduluthmodel.org

Melissa Scaia

Global Rights for Women

mscaia@grwomen.org