



Re-Defining Shelter



Washington State's Process to Define a Philosophical
Framework and Service Array for Domestic Violence
Survivors

Wendi Siebold & Susan Hannibal

+ Project Purpose

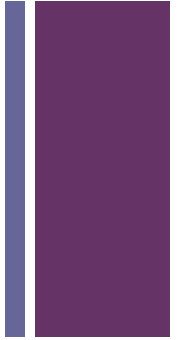


- Update “minimum standards” for domestic violence services funded by state government
- Add philosophy statement – legislative intent for public funds
- Survivor-centered revisions





Collaboration Between Local Providers and Government Funder



- History in Washington State
- Government as steward for public funding for domestic violence survivors
- Why is this a good idea?
- What are the challenges?

+ Key Partners

Advisory Committee of Shelter Directors and Managers

- 4 meetings in person, email contact
- Statewide representation of programs

State Domestic Violence Coalition (WCSADV)

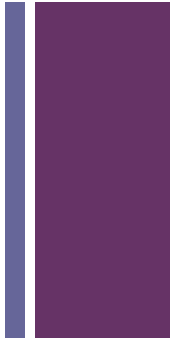
- A statewide voice of local programs
- Technical assistance provider

Consultant/Researcher

- Important to have a neutral and knowledgeable facilitator of this process

State Program Manager

+ Data Collection



- Online Surveys
 - executive directors and advocates
- Focus Groups
 - advocates and survivors
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
 - state and national
- Review existing practice and research
 - national and international
- Including National Shelter Study results
 - WA was one of 8 states

Timeline

Jan 2008 –

Fall 2009

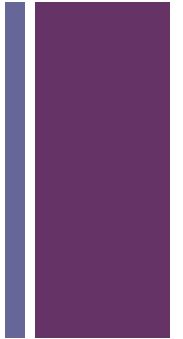
+ Ethical Considerations

- Confidentiality and safety when collecting data from survivors... (Sullivan's article on VAWnet)
- Incentives: for both survivors AND shelter staff
- Continue to keep local programs informed of where we are in this process – avoid the “government mystique”





Online Survey: What We Asked



- Philosophy Statement
- Definitions
- Shelter Facility Requirements
- “Welcoming Environment”
- Essential Services for Residential and Non-Residential Clients
- Advocate & Supervisor Training Requirements (Initial and CE)
- Policies and Procedures
- Community Education & Prevention



Online Survey: Response Rates



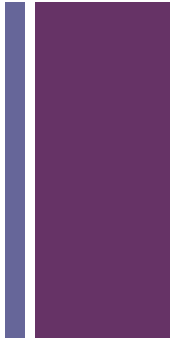
- 66 people responded to the survey
- 81.3% of DSHS-funded emergency domestic violence shelter agencies responded (35 out of 43 agencies; one Executive Director from each agency)
- 32 advocates responded to the survey
- 18 agencies = 1 advocate
7 agencies = 2 advocates
9 agencies = No advocate



Select Findings



The Importance of Language



- Include a philosophy statement, but make sure it's consistent with rest of minimum standards
- “Problem solving” is problematic
- Consider deleting certain terms and making them more culturally responsive
 - “counseling” and “counselor”
 - “advocate” and “advocacy”
- Clarify role of advocate as a “facilitator”

+ Defining a “Welcoming” Environment

- Important to define, but hard without being too subjective
- Next step: ask survivors what they think
- What do you think?

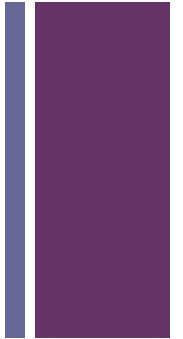


+ Training Requirements



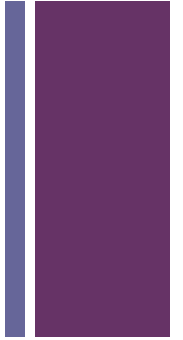
- Supervisor training – suggested a requirement for management training, but may exclude advocates from “moving up the ranks” of the organization
- Quality of training is more important than # of hours
- “Shadowing” or “mentoring” was suggested but seen as too resource intensive
- “Self study” and “distance learning”
 - interchangeable terms or not?

+ Community Education and Prevention



- Example of how a knowledgeable government manager can help prevent overly cumbersome requirements, although local program stakeholders may see the importance of the work (prevention if good, but not funded with shelter \$)
- Should be some min standards for community awareness and activities
- Two reasons NOT to include “Prevention” in state standards for services provision:
 - Lack of clarity about what “prevention” really is
 - Requirement to do prevention work as part of shelter contract? No additional funds?

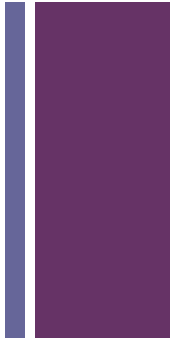
+ Next Steps



- Data collection and analysis continues
- Develop draft documents for public comment
- Adoption as final rules
- Transition process with programs to incorporate changes into their practice

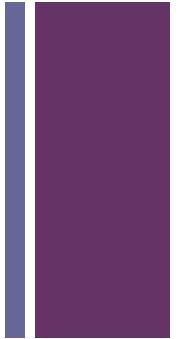
+ Closing Thoughts

- Government can be an ally in the larger movement to end violence against women
- The response from local shelter staff and survivors has been outstanding! People appreciate being part of the government process if they are heard – government must be transparent as much as possible (i.e. don't promise what you can't deliver!)
- Questions?

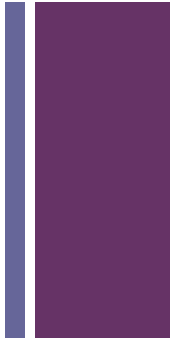


+ Resources

- **Article:** Ethical and Safety Considerations When Obtaining Information From or About Battered Women for Research Purposes (by Cris Sullivan & Debra Cain) accessible at:
<http://jiv.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/19/5/603>
- **Book:** Parenting in Public: Family Shelters and Public Assistance (by Donna Haig Friedman)



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