



Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation Phone Conference/Webinar Agenda



May 19, 2021
12PM/11CT

Discussion

1. Welcome and Announcements – Everyone is invited!
2. Check the listings on the website to ensure your program information is up to date and correct for the quarterly report. If you need to add or change anything email Lyndi Bradley at lbradley2@fsu.edu.
3. Questions from Directors
4. May is Water Safety Awareness Month & National Foster Care Month
5. Information about Batterer Intervention in Florida
6. Substance Use Disorder Education Continued: Opioids

May is Water Safety Awareness Month



Statewide Challenge: This week, tell all of your clients about *Safe Swimming* and *Water Safety*. Here are some ways to do it:

1. Tell parents "Florida has had over 30 children die in accidents around water this year. I am telling all my parents about safety tips that can keep your children safe. Here's a flyer about it (print out Water Safety Flyer). Remember: children need adult supervision around ANY kind of water."
2. "Here's our tip for the week: Always supervise you children around water." (to the custodian)
3. "It's Water Safety Season. Did you know that children can drown in even small amounts of water? (If there is a young child) Babies can drown in less than a foot of water."
4. If children are adolescents: "I know (enter name of child here) seems to be very mature, but all children need an adult to watch over them while they are in the pool, lake, or ocean. We are having a statewide water safety campaign. Please keep watch when your child is in the water."

Check out the Prevent Child Abuse NEW Water Safety Toolkit:

https://www.ounce.org/water_safety.html

- ✓ PSA also offers books on learning to swim, Josh the Otter, Sammy Seal, and soon Stewie the Duck. You can order copies [HERE](#). Just create an account to shop around.
- ✓ Mark your calendar! **May 20, 2021 10:30AM EST:** PSA and Diversity in Aquatics will offer a webinar on water safety. Register at the

May is National Foster Care Month

Explore the [resources](#), [stories](#), and [tools](#) provided by the Children's Bureau and read President Biden's [proclamation of National Foster Care Month](#).

May is National Foster Care Month

Foster Care as a Support to Families,
Not a Substitute for Parents

childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth



Information about Batterer Intervention Programs in Florida



A tool that courts can use to hold batterers accountable for their actions and prevent future violence is **Batterer Intervention Programs** or BIPs. According to §741.325(2), F.S., BIPs are intended to “address the perpetration of violence between

- intimate partners,
- spouses,
- ex-spouses,
- or those who share a child in common
- or who are cohabitants in intimate relationships

for the purpose of exercising power and control by one over the other.”

When codifying BIPs into Florida law, the Florida Legislature recognized the need for these specialized programs after finding the high prevalence of domestic violence in Florida, domestic violence homicides, and damaging effect that domestic violence has on children, and that:

- “[T]here should be standardized programming available to the justice system to protect victims and their children and to hold the perpetrators of domestic violence accountable for their acts.” Fla. Stat. §741.32

The Legislature also found that:

- “[I]n order for batterers’ intervention programs to be successful in protecting victims and their children, all participants in the justice system as well as social service agencies and local and state governments must coordinate their efforts at the community level.” Fla. Stat. §741.32

In Florida, courts are authorized to order a person to BIPs as follows:

- Upon granting a final injunction against domestic violence Fla. Stat. [§741.30\(6\)\(a\)5](#):
 - The respondent must pay for BIP services, and
 - The court must provide respondent a [list of BIP programs](#) at the time the final injunction is issued;
- Upon a willful violation of DV injunction Fla. Stat. [§741.31\(5\)](#) unless “unless the court makes written factual findings ... stating why a batterers’ intervention program would be inappropriate”;
- Upon being found guilty of, having adjudication withheld on, or pleading nolo contendere to a crime of domestic violence, as defined in [§ 741.28](#), F.S., [§ 741.281](#), F.S.;
- As a condition of probation, [§ 741.281](#), F.S.

The Florida Legislature also set out the following requirements for BIPs:

§ 741.325(1) "A batterers' intervention program must meet the following requirements:

- (a) The primary purpose of the program shall be victim safety and the safety of children, if present.
- (b) The batterer shall be held accountable for acts of domestic violence.
- (c) The program shall be at least 29 weeks in length and include 24 weekly sessions, plus appropriate intake, assessment, and orientation programming.
- (d) The program content shall be based on a psychoeducational model that addresses tactics of power and control by one person over another.
- (e) The program shall be funded by user fees paid by the batterers who attend the program, which allows them to take responsibility for their acts of violence. An exception shall be made for local, state, or federal programs that fund batterers' intervention programs in whole or in part."

The State of Florida just passes new legislation that requires BIPs to be by the Florida Department of Children and Families. See the new legislation here:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2021/680/?Tab=BillHistory>

The Process of Change for Batterers

Many BIPs adopt a psychoeducational approach, using an evidence-based therapeutic intervention to help batterers accept responsibility for their actions and learn nonviolent attitudes and behaviors. The most commonly used approach for BIPs is based on what is called the "Duluth Model." **The Duluth model** is a cognitive behavioral program that operates on the following philosophy:

1. That violence is intentional, learned and socially reinforced behavior;
2. That battering is used to maintain the male power and control that many societies and cultures traditionally supported; and
3. That those who abuse have the ability to overcome denial and change their behavior.

(Adams, n.d.)

The batterers' intervention program is intended to be only one component of the Duluth Model, which envisions a coordinated community response consisting of law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and human service providers working together for perpetrator accountability and victim safety. It views domestic violence as a social problem that needs to be addressed systemically rather than an individual dysfunction. To be most effective, courts, prosecutors, probation, and human services should all play a role in monitoring and imposing consequences for:

- An offender's lack of progress/dropping out of a BIP.
- An offender's failure to comply with BIP rules.
- An offender's violation of a court order.
- An offender's further acts of violence.
- A BIP's violation of program standards.
- A BIP's failure to have adequately trained staff.

In addition, the coordinated community response initiatives should increase safety for domestic violence victims by providing them needed information, referrals, resources, counseling, housing, and services.

BIPs typically include the following goals:

- Helping perpetrators to stop abusive and/or controlling behavior.
- Prioritizing victim safety: victims told of the progress of BIP treatment, such as if a perpetrator fails to attend or complete it.
- Teaching abusive partners to feel empathy for their victims.
- Teaching perpetrators to identify various forms of abuse and to recognize the types of abuse they have engaged in.
- Requiring perpetrators to take responsibility for their abusive behavior.
- Teaching alternative nonviolent behaviors.

(Stop Violence Against Women, 2019)

Batterer Intervention Program Effectiveness

To attempt to gauge BIPs effectiveness, a number of batterer program evaluations have been published. Although BIPs vary in treatment methods, and the because research is not entirely conclusive, the following information can be gleaned from these studies:

- A recent meta-study of 14 BIP studies found that batterers who completed BIPs were about **3 times less likely to reoffend than batterers who did not receive treatment** (Cheng, et al., 2019).
- BIPs are most effective when they are part of a comprehensive community approach to domestic violence that includes accountability, services, monitoring, and continuous support (Saunders, 2008).
- BIPs that are more culturally sensitive have higher completion rates for minority participants (Saunders, 2008).
- Batterers who were employed, had higher education levels, and did not have previous criminal records were more likely to successfully complete programs. These factors were described as giving them a higher stake in conforming to prescribed behaviors (Cheng et al., 2019; Saunders, 2008).

Researchers' criticism of BIPs:

- Mandated BIP interventions do not always consider the variability of offender types.
- More individually tailored treatment approaches may result in better completion rates and outcomes (Cheng et al., 2019).

Research has not definitively determined the following:

- An adequate, empirically-supported understanding of how and why existing programs work or do not work.

- An understanding of the effectiveness of newer intervention approaches. There is growing research on such approaches as culturally tailored interventions, individually tailored interventions based on personality types, treatments for multiple conditions, such as aggression in the context of substance abuse or mental conditions. However, these approaches have not been properly evaluated to date.

Recent Trends for BIPs:

- More culturally sensitive.
- Courses in multiple languages.
- Courses designed for the LGBTQ community.
- More holistic approach to reduce program dropout - including referrals and support for:
 - substance abuse.
 - mental health problems.
 - unemployment.
- Parenting support.
- Community Partnerships (early intervention, bystanders, faith communities).

(Adams & Scaia, 2018)

Anger Management in Comparison to Batterer Intervention

Even though domestic violence is about power and control rather than anger alone, some domestic violence perpetrators have been ordered to anger management therapy, instead of BIP treatment. Anger management and Batterer Intervention Programs differ greatly in their methods of treatment, program duration, and primary objectives.

Anger management

- is designed for and is only appropriate for a broad range of violent acts against strangers or non-intimate partner violence.
- is appropriate when the primary problem is seen as outbursts of anger, not power and control.
- is focused on a perpetrator regaining control over managing emotions.
- does not address empathy for victims.
- is a non-confrontational treatment.
- pays little attention to the negative consequences of the perpetrator's actions.
- is often brief: typically 8-12 hours of treatment.

Batterer Intervention

- is specifically designed to work with perpetrators of intimate partner violence.
- views the perpetrator's drive for power and control over a victim as the primary problem.
- is focused on changing perpetrator beliefs and building empathy for the victim.
- involves a confrontational approach with the expectation that the perpetrator will accept responsibility for their actions.
- includes a frequent reminder of consequences of one's actions.
- typically requires 26-52 weeks of classes.

For more information about the assumptions and goals that form the basis for treatment in anger management and why it fails to address the complex issues involved in domestic violence, see [The Case Against Anger Control for Batterers](#).

Contact the Clearinghouse
850-644-1715

