



## Domestic Violence Intervention Workgroup

Melissa Bitters, Erin Fordyce, Zoe Meier, Jaime Sherls,  
Ashley Starling<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *In spring 2012, five SPEA students completed a graduate-level capstone project focusing on the subject of domestic violence for Hamilton County, Indiana. The goal of this project was to report the extent of domestic violence in Hamilton County, criminal justice system response, and, finally, to research evidence-based best practices that could better direct response efforts. To determine the extent of domestic violence, data was collected from police dispatchers, Prevail - a local nonprofit organization, and the Hamilton County prosecutor's office. Data was then analyzed to provide Hamilton County officials with statistics showing the number of calls for service, arrest rates, prosecution rates, and court dispositions between January 1, 2009 and January 1, 2010. Key informant interviews were conducted with Hamilton County officials involved in response efforts including police officers, prosecutors, and victim service providers. Best practices interviews were also conducted via phone with those involved in the implementation of successful programs throughout the country which were determined from information gained through the literature review process. Overall recommendations were made such as adopting a zero tolerance policy, requiring police officers to write reports for all domestic violence calls for service, implementing new technology to track indicator crimes, and providing additional, diversified training for not only police officers, but court officials as well. The report begins by providing background information on the project and Hamilton County. This is followed by a detailed methodology outlining the data collection process. Next is a literature review on the problem of domestic violence and re-offense rates along with best practices programs. The report continues with a detailed analysis of primary and secondary data. Finally, recommendations are made for Hamilton County based on all of the information gathered from the aforementioned methodology followed by two key informant interviews.*

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<sup>1</sup>IUPUI SPEA graduate students prepared this final report for Hamilton County Family Violence Project as a part of their final graduate-level capstone class.

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*Dr. Roger Jarjoura*, Associate Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs,  
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

*Teresa Bennett*, Instructor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and Director,  
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*Seth Payton*, Assistant Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana  
University-Purdue University Indianapolis

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## Key Terms

- ***Baker One Project:*** Program used to track indicator crimes and “hot spots” to prevent escalation of crime severity.
- ***Call for Service (CFS):*** Call made to police dispatcher which is then assigned to patrol officers who respond to the scene of the incident.
- ***Case Report:*** The initial report of an offense or incident taken at the scene by a responding officer.
- ***Dark Figure of Crime:*** Unreported crime.
- ***Department of Child Services (DCS):*** Department responsible for protecting children who are victims of abuse or neglect and strengthens families through services that focus on family support and preservation. The Department also administers child support, child protection, adoption and foster care throughout the state of Indiana.
- ***Domestic Violence:*** Any act of violence involving persons in an intimate or dating relationship. This would include cohabitants, boyfriends or girlfriends, separated or divorced couples, and other individuals who have or previously have had a sexual and/or intimate relationship, including same-sex relationships.
- ***Domestic Violence Emergency Response Teams (DVERT):*** A coordinated response program in Colorado Springs that brings together criminal justice agencies, social services, and community-based organizations in order to ensure the safety of the victims of domestic violence.
- ***Domestic Violence Intervention Workgroup (DVIW):*** Group of five students completing a graduate capstone course at Indiana University-Purdue University (Indianapolis), School of Public and Environmental Affairs.
- ***Disposition:*** Final decision in a court case.
- ***Diversion:*** “The purpose of a diversion program is to effect rehabilitation without the stigma of guilt” (US Legal, Inc., 2012).
- ***Harassment:*** Repeated impermissible contact that causes emotional distress for a victim.
- ***Hot Spots:*** In terms of the Baker One Project, hot spots are both victims and offenders involved in domestic violence incidents.
- ***Indicator Crimes:*** Crimes that follow the domestic violence continuum: verbal abuse, harassment, stalking, escalating violence, and eventually death.
- ***Multi-Jurisdictional Court:*** Also known as integrated courts, these courts allow a single judge to preside over multiple case types (family, criminal, matrimonial) that involve the same family.
- ***National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS):*** Detailed crime reporting database created with data generated from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.
- ***National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS):*** National household survey administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics to account for those crimes not reported to law enforcement authorities. “Data are obtained from a nationally representative sample of roughly 49,000 households...on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the United States” (The Regents of the University of Michigan, 2010).
- ***Prevail:*** Victim service provider agency located in Hamilton County, Indiana.

- **Project ASSIST:** Formerly Project DETER; one of four programs implemented by the Pace Women's Justice Center in White Plains, New York. Project advocate attorneys are available 24 hours a day for police to contact when responding to a domestic violence case. Attorneys then provide ongoing representation for the victim to file protective orders, child custody and/or child support.
- **Prosecution Rate:** The ratio of cases filed with the prosecutor's office to the number of cases that are prosecuted in court.
- **Protective Order:** In relation to domestic violence cases; issued in a civil court to prevent further acts of violence and/or stalking by preventing the offender from having contacting with the victim.
- **Reoffend:** To commit an additional offense.
- **Second Responders:** Program established in Richmond, Virginia to provide legal services to victims. Once the police are called to a scene and the officer determines that it is a domestic or family violence incident, a Second Responder is called to the scene. The Second Responder works with the victim to provide services that may be needed in regards to the victim's safety, legal rights, and filing protective orders.
- **Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS):** Computer program used to conduct statistical analysis.
- **Stalking:** Repeated harassment of another individual for the purpose of eliciting fear or intimidation.
- **Uniform Crime Report (UCR):** FBI database containing national crime rates collected voluntarily by law enforcement agencies throughout the United States.
- **uReveal:** Computer technology that allows analysts to fuse resources without written code to conduct timely analysis. Analysts would only read information that has already been identified as meaningful.

## Executive Summary

Chief Kevin Jowitt of the Noblesville Police Department made a proposal to the spring 2012 graduate level capstone class at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI) requesting assistance on a domestic violence project in Hamilton County, Indiana. The Domestic Violence Intervention Workgroup (DVIW) consisted of five graduate students in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) who volunteered to work on the project. DVIW members included Melissa Bitters, Erin Fordyce, Zoe Meier, Jaime Sherls, and Ashley Starling. Specifically, the goals of the project were to:

- Analyze available data to determine the number of reports of domestic and family violence, arrest rates, prosecution rates, and court dispositions for filed cases;
- Identify repeat offenses and analyze handling of the initial incident to identify problems, gaps, and potential remediation/correction steps;
- Research current industry best practices (evidence based when possible) and contrast them with current case handling objectives in Hamilton County; and
- Recommend improvements in current handling methodology.

DVIW gathered data from Hamilton County on domestic violence calls for service (CFS) from police dispatchers, domestic violence prosecution rates and case dispositions from the Prosecutor's office, and victim services data from Prevail. To comprehensively analyze how domestic violence cases were processed through law enforcement and the court system; we tracked the outcomes of individual cases during the 2009 calendar year. DVIW also conducted 27 key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders in Hamilton County and Marion County, Indiana. Finally, DVIW conducted interviews with those involved in the implementation of domestic violence programs or models from around the country including Domestic Violence Emergency Response Teams, Second Responders Program, and the Multi-Jurisdictional Court Model.

In 2009, there were 1,855 domestic violence calls for service in Hamilton County. Overall, the majority of domestic violence cases ended after a call for service was made or a case report was filed (only 220 cases made it to court). Compared to non-re-offenders, a higher percentage of re-offenders had case process endpoints at no charges being filed, being found not guilty at trial, receiving probation, and receiving jail time.

DVIW developed the following key recommendations for Hamilton County starting with recommendations for all stakeholders involved and then broken down by each department.

### All Hamilton County Agencies:

- The purchase of uReveal, a technology that allows for data analysts and domestic violence advocates to quickly scan through relevant police reports that include a domestic violence issue.
- Implementation of Baker One Project to track indicator crimes and hot spots for repeat offenders.

### Law Enforcement

- Require police officers to file reports on all domestic violence calls. Follow-up with patrol officers to account for any calls that did not result in a written report.

- Diversify training for police officers as some officers may require additional training on interactions with victims. Sensitivity training should be provided for officers, as well as training on the complexity of the cycle of violence.

#### Prosecutor's Office

- Distribute detailed outlines for law enforcement with the information needed to file charges.
- Follow through with filing charges and eventually prosecuting cases are a must. To relieve law enforcement frustrations, send notifications to the arresting officer explaining why a case was dismissed or no charges were filed.

#### Court

- Implementation of a Drug Court Model for domestic violence court.
- Require that any judge presiding over a domestic violence court complete additional training to address the underlying psychological issues associated with domestic violence.

#### Victim Service Providers

- Provide detailed monthly or quarterly reports to police departments and the court. Reports should include the number of cases and victims being referred to the victim service provider.
- Provide in-house attorneys to be on-call 24/7 for officers to contact if they feel a domestic call warrants such action. The attorney would immediately contact the victim and set up a meeting the next day to discuss legal action.

## Introduction

Domestic violence in Indiana and the United States is not a new concern, but as we have learned from the many people in Hamilton County working with domestic violence cases every day, over the past ten to twenty years there has been an evolution of thought as to how to approach this situation by law enforcement, the courts and victim service providers. This change includes progressive law making by the legislature to aggressively deal with domestic violence, increased training of officers in the psychology behind this form of abuse, attempts by the court system to expedite cases in order to ensure victim safety, and most significantly, an increase in victim service provider outreach efforts.

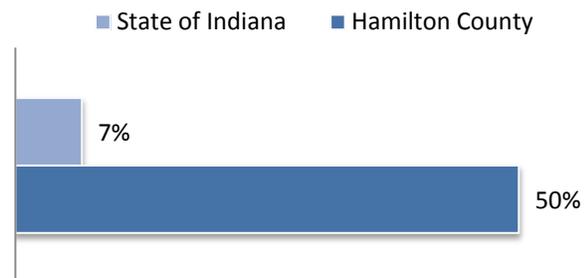
This evolution of thought also refers to a change in mentality by people working throughout the system. Domestic violence used to be considered a private crime, something that people were ashamed to seek help for; thus, people were not receiving help. Victims can be male or female, rich or poor, any ethnicity and from any demographic, but this is only being recently acknowledged.

The Domestic Violence Intervention Workgroup (DVIW) initiative is made up of five graduate students from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Purdue University in Indianapolis. We are all extremely passionate about discovering ways to decrease domestic violence and this case study has allowed us to explore the multi-faceted problems that communities face when trying to deal with this problem.

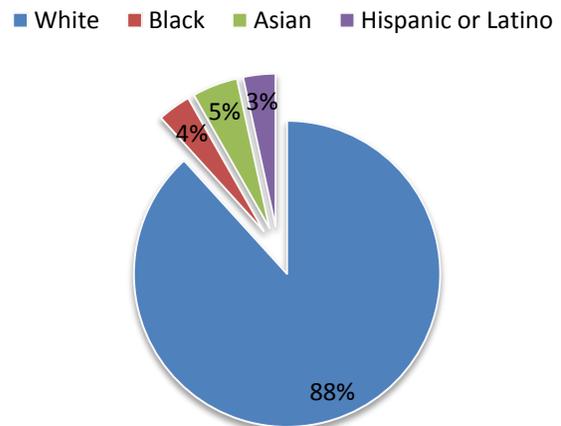
DVIW's project is intended to address issues of recidivism by domestic violence offenders in Hamilton County, Indiana, by providing concrete recommendations based on data gathered from all the agencies and from interviews with key stakeholders in the community. We think the data and feedback received will make the recommendations specific to this community and possibly cross communication barriers between agencies. Finally, we hope our recommendations and data analysis will provide a more effective decision making path for law enforcement, training personnel, prosecutors, courts, and victim service providers.

Hamilton County is the fourth largest county in the state of Indiana with a population of approximately 274,569 in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Figure 1 displays how Hamilton County's population has increased by more than 50 percent since 2000 compared with a 6.6 percent increase for the state overall (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Over 88 percent of Hamilton County residents are white, 3.5 percent black, 4.8 percent Asian, and 3.4 percent Hispanic or Latino (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Population Increase from 2000 to 2010**

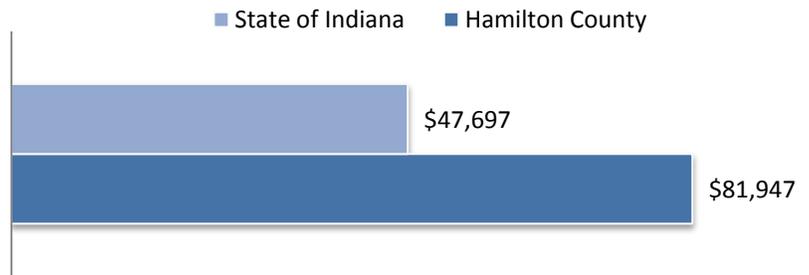


**Figure 1: Hamilton County Race (2010)**



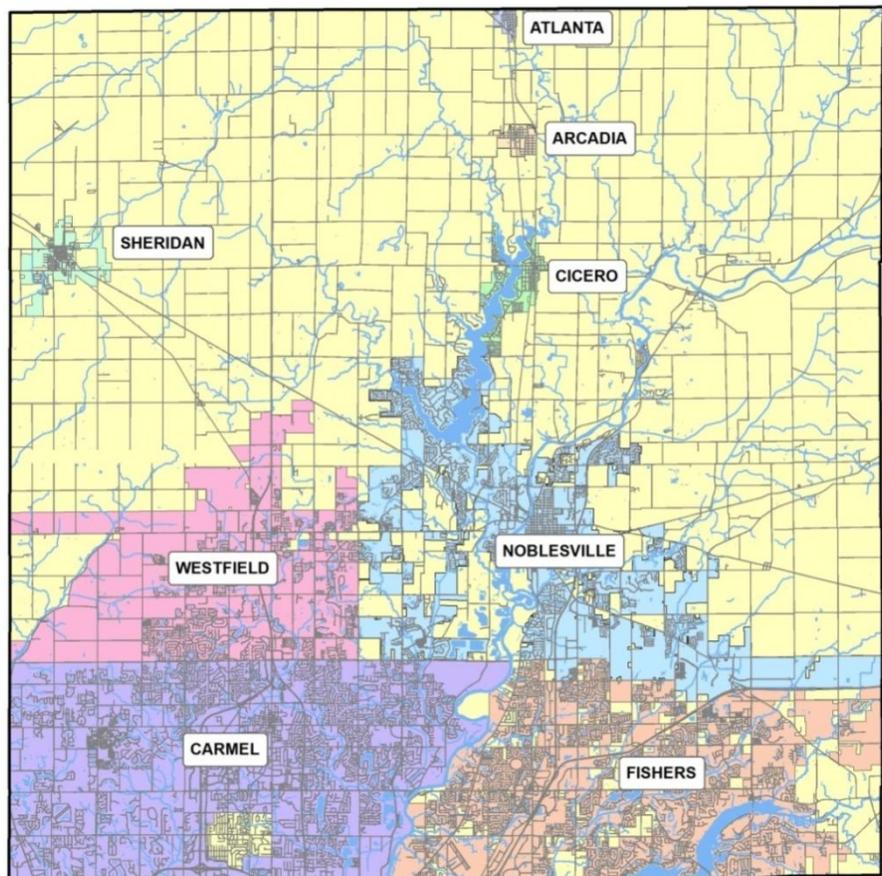
**Figure 3: Median Family Income (2010)**

Figure 3 shows the median household income is \$81,947 compared with \$47,697 for the state average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Because of Hamilton County's above average household income and low poverty rate, it has become a common misconception that domestic violence is not an issue. In reality, domestic violence is a very real concern within the county. Unfortunately, Indiana is one of a few states that does not have a unified response system to collect data for the Uniform Crime Reports; therefore, the occurrence of domestic violence within the county cannot be compared to similar sized cities.



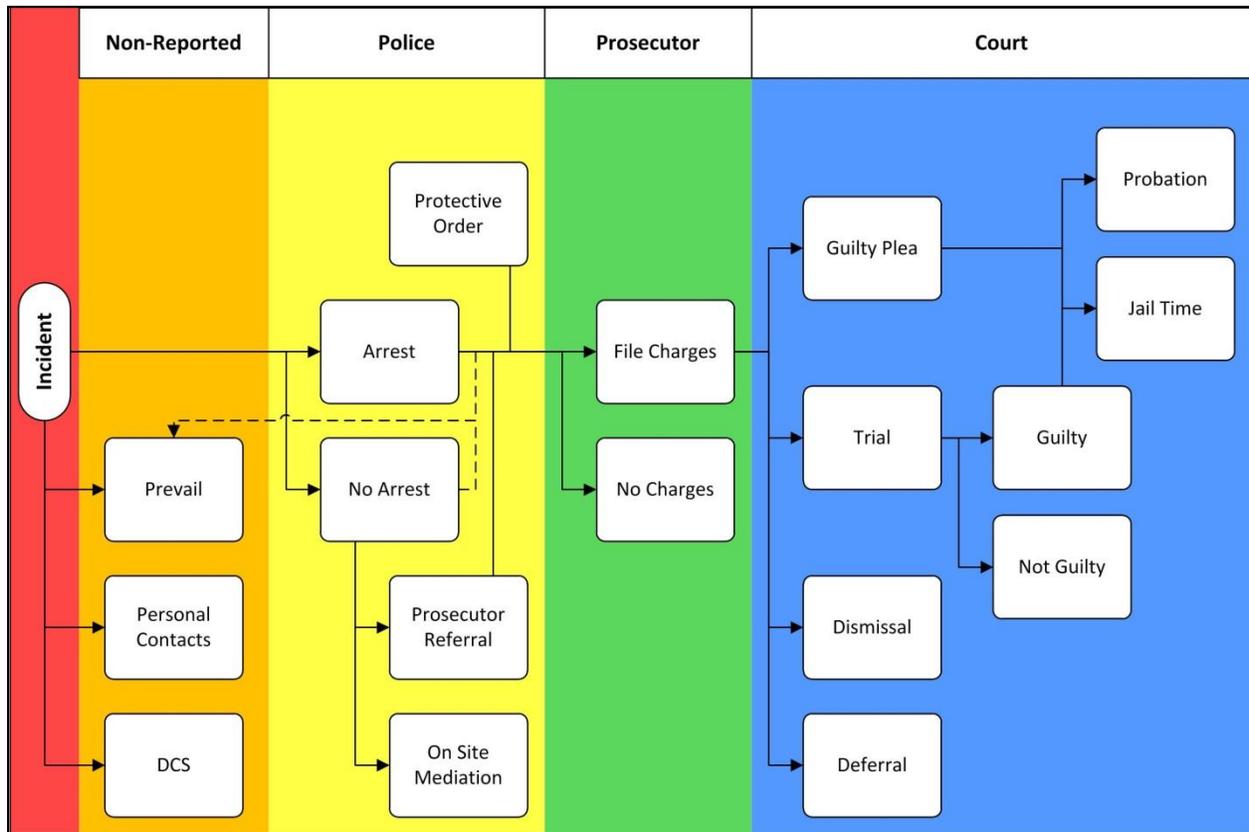
The purpose of the Domestic Violence Intervention Workgroup (DVIW) research, as requested by Chief Kevin Jowitt of the Noblesville Police Department (one of nine law enforcement agencies in Hamilton County; Figure 4 is a map of the different police jurisdictions within Hamilton County) was to determine the effects of different decisions made throughout the period of individual domestic violence cases from the point of report to the end-point or resolution of each case.

**Figure 4: Hamilton County Police Jurisdiction Map**



Further, DVIW sought to determine what could possibly be changed in the process that would affect and reduce offender recidivism. It is therefore the goal of DVIW to determine if current decision making, along the path from law enforcement's first dispatch call to the disposition of an offender's case in the court system (Figure 5), effectively reduces recidivism in Hamilton County, Indiana. This is the first major initiative in Hamilton County to assess their combined agency approach to domestic violence.

**Figure 5: Hamilton County Domestic Violence Case Process Flow Chart**



Based on Figure 5, the parties involved in each domestic violence case can vary and each one plays an important role. We worked closely with Hamilton County’s nine police departments, the prosecutor’s office, the Judge responsible for domestic violence cases and sentencing, the Judge that approves civil protective orders, and Prevail-a victim service organization, in order to clearly understand what they were looking for and what information would be the most useful to provide. This report will explain from the beginning of this project, the methodology we used to: compile all data, conduct key informant and best practices interviews, analyze all results and findings and finally, to explain how this supports the recommendations that were carefully suggested to best aid the Hamilton County community. Through this process we wanted to demonstrate quantitative evidence of the current system’s “status quo” and how the decision making process, demonstrated in Figure 5, inevitably affects recidivism. In order to reach this goal, DVIW analyzed data from the above listed agencies and statistically evaluated the effectiveness created by each decision made. Using this information we supported our recommendations for law enforcement, the prosecutor’s office, the court system and victim service providers with statistics drawn directly from their community and feedback from key stakeholders. These recommendations ranged from more thorough training of law enforcement and Judges to having in-house legal services for victim service providers. This emphasized how each role along the spectrum is extremely important in combating domestic violence.

## Methodology

When analyzing the issue of domestic violence, DVIW evaluated current research practices in place, as to not duplicate existing research. First, DVIW conducted a literature review of domestic violence, examining multiple variables, in an effort to determine the extent of domestic violence throughout the United States. Second, DVIW conducted key informant interviews to supplement the final data and to provide background as to the decision-making process currently in place in Hamilton County. Third, DVIW administered best practices interviews to supplement the final data and to provide background information regarding best practice methods. Finally, secondary data was collected from various departments/organizations to assist in DVIW's analysis of the domestic violence issue in Hamilton County.

### **Literature Review**

DVIW began the research process by searching for background information about domestic violence in scholarly articles and government databases on the Internet. There were no specific criteria applied to the search beyond targeting the most recent and up-to-date information. Best practices and evidence-based programs and methods were then identified based on the frequency at which studies had been completed on the program and the extent to which the program had been replicated in other areas. Additional best practice programs and methods (e.g. Baker One and uReveal) were discovered during the key informant interview process and subsequently followed-up by members of DVIW. Chief Kevin Jowitt also provided research in the form of literary works and journal articles.

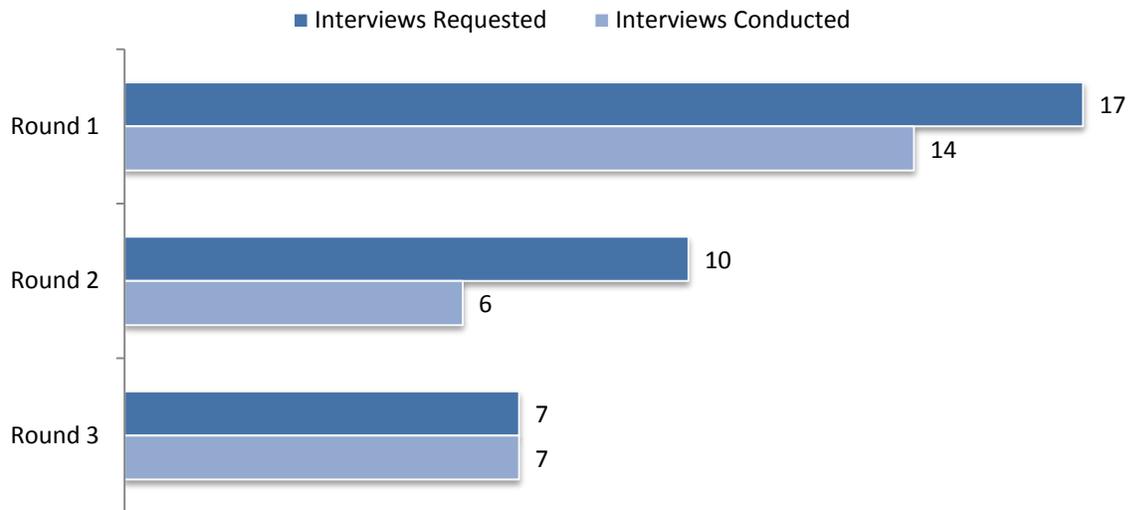
### **Key Informant Interviews**

DVIW decided to interview those individuals in Hamilton County most involved with the overall handling of domestic violence cases. DVIW key informant interviews included representatives from law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, Department of Child Services, Hamilton County court, and victim's service providers in Hamilton County. Two team members from DVIW took part in each interview so that one team member could lead the interview while the second team member transcribed the responses. DVIW developed a standard set of questions to be asked of each key informant in an effort to get his or her current view on the domestic violence situation and to get incite on his or her department or agency's approach to domestic violence. A mass email was sent to an initial list of potential interviewees providing available times to be interviewed. A conference room was reserved at the Noblesville Police Department to conduct interviews. Additional key informants were identified through the snowballing technique.

In the first round, a list of potential interviewees was given to DVIW by Chief Kevin Jowitt based on who he thought would be most knowledgeable about the subject of domestic violence in Hamilton County. DVIW added an additional four people to this list including Chief Kevin Jowitt and members of his steering committee for the domestic violence project. A mass email was sent to 17 Hamilton County employees. All but three law enforcement officers from this list were interviewed for a return rate of 82.35 percent. Follow-up emails were sent between one and three times for some of the interviewees. In the second round of emails, the contact list was developed from a snowballing technique. Emails were sent to ten people with six being interviewed for a return rate of 60 percent. At most, one follow-up email was required. The final round included seven contacts established through the snowballing technique as well as a personal contact with a DVIW team member. Chief Kevin Jowitt made phone calls to two law

enforcement officers to request an interview time with DVIW. All of these contacts were then interviewed and no follow up was required for a return rate of 100 percent. Figure 6 displays the number of interviews requested and conducted for each round.

**Figure 6: Key Informant Interviews Requested vs. Conducted**



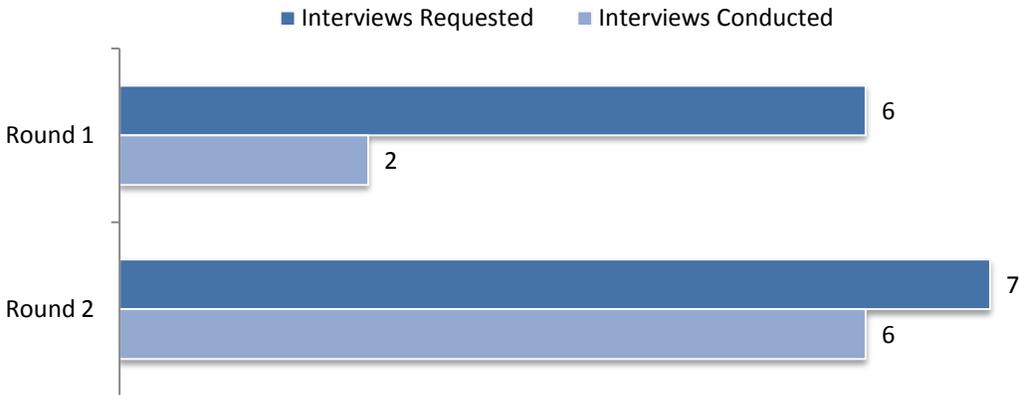
### **Best Practices Interviews**

During the research process, DVIW developed a list of best practice programs currently in place to reduce domestic violence in Indiana as well as other states. Programs or models were selected from the information gained during the literature review and were based on the amount of research conducted about the program and the number of similar programs which have been developed around the country since its implementation. Again, a mass email was sent to potential interviewees requesting a scheduled time to conduct phone interviews. These interviews included questions tailored toward each program in an effort to determine if the program successfully reduced domestic violence and to gain insight on implementation of the program. The interviews were conducted by two team members of DVIW so that one member could lead the interview while the second member transcribed the responses; however, some interviews were conducted by only one group member due to scheduling conflicts.

Eight best practice interviews were conducted. Initially, the mass email was sent to six contacts in which two were interviewed for a return rate of 33 percent. However, three of these contacts referred DVIW to another person they thought would be more knowledgeable about the subject and one contact failed to keep the scheduled interview time due to work conflicts—this contact never rescheduled. Additional contacts were spread out over time and were based on referrals from the first round as well as snowballing from key informant interviews. Six out of seven people contacted were interviewed for a return rate of 86 percent.

Figure 7 displays the number of interviews requested and conducted for each round.

**Figure 7: Best Practices Interviews Requested vs. Conducted**



### Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from the police dispatchers, Prevail, the prosecutor’s office, and the court. All data was presented to DVIW in excel spreadsheets that then was recoded to better conduct analysis in SPSS. First, all of the data were analyzed to determine the number of reports of domestic violence, arrest rates, prosecution rates, and court dispositions for filed cases between January 1, 2009, and January 1, 2010. Second, statistical analyses were performed to identify patterns of repeat offenses and any possible relationships between the handling of cases and the occurrence of repeat offenses. Data from the police, Prevail, the prosecutor’s office, and the court covering cases from January 1, 2009, to January 1, 2012, were used to identify repeat offenders. Individuals were determined to be repeat offenders if their corresponding offender ID occurred once or more after their original 2009 domestic violence incident as an offender in the Prevail, police, and prosecutor data (an arrest did not have to take place).

### Domestic Violence Intervention: A Literature Review

Prior to DVIW conducting this study, Chief Kevin Jowitt of the Noblesville Police Department organized a family violence project steering committee for Hamilton County, Indiana. Committee members include representatives from Hamilton County law enforcement departments, prosecutor’s office, and victim service providers. This committee, in turn, expressed the need for DVIW to identify gaps in efforts to handle domestic violence cases. The current problem in Hamilton County involves the increasing number of domestic violence cases being reported to police, in particular, repeat offenses. There has been extensive research on the impact of collaborative efforts among criminal justice officials and service providers (Uchida, Putnam, Mastrofski, Soloman, & Dawson, 2001; Barasch & Lutz, 2002; Alpert & Gover, 2003) and its impact on domestic violence recidivism, which involved data collection on arrest and prosecution rates as well as case disposition. Although the number of domestic violence incidents reported and processed through the courts may be high, some incidents go unreported since domestic violence is known to be a “dark figure of crime” (MacDonald, 2002). Thus, data collection tools such as the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) that gather data from police reports are complemented by other data collection tools such as the National Incident- Based Reporting System (NIBRS) that gathers specific data on an extended number of offenses, including nonviolent family offenses, and the National

Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). As a part of the NCVS, phone interviews are conducted with a sample of 49,000 households in the U.S. to collect data on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization (The Regents of the University of Michigan, 2010). Therefore, this database can help account for those crimes that go unreported to police, including domestic violence.

### **The Problem**

In 18 states, domestic violence accounted for one-third of all violent crimes reported to the police in 2000 (Durose, et al., 2005). Of those crimes, over half were crimes between married couples. In a nationwide study with 16,000 participants, almost 25 percent of the women and 7.6 percent of men reported being physically or sexually assaulted in their lifetime by a spouse, ex-spouse, cohabiting partner, or someone they were in a relationship with (American Bar Association, 2011). According to the 2000 National Violence Against Women Survey, nine percent of female rape victims reported that their assailant was their husband or ex-husband (American Bar Association, 2011). While many people believe that domestic violence is always between a man and a woman, domestic violence occurs between same-sex partners as well (American Bar Association, 2011). In fact, 39.2 percent of women in same-sex relationships reported being physically assaulted, sexually assaulted, or stalked by a partner in their lifetime, while only 21.7 percent of women in opposite-sex relationships reported the same experiences (American Bar Association, 2011).

### **Arrest and Prosecution Process**

When attempting to implement change within the system, it is important to analyze each step of the process, from the first encounter with police to the sentencing phase and eventually to reentry in order to identify gaps in the system and potential relationships between case processing and repeat offenses. To improve decision-making at each stage of the process, it is imperative that we begin by reviewing prior studies and data on this issue from all those involved including law enforcement, prosecutors, the court, and service providers. Each of these entities plays a significant role in the effort to reduce domestic violence whether it is to punish and/or reform the offender or educate and support the victims.

When police officers are sent to a home on a domestic violence call, they can handle it in several ways depending on department policy or state laws. Hershel et al. (2008) list three specific categories into which arrest policies fall: mandatory (the officer must make an arrest if there is probable cause), preferred (when the state law prefers that an arrest be made), and discretionary (where the responding officer makes the decision whether or not to make an arrest) (Hershel, Buzawa, Pattavina, & Faggiana, 2008). While domestic violence-related calls seem to be the largest “category” of calls received by police (between 15 percent to more than 50 percent of calls), not all calls are for criminal activity and not all result in arrests being made (Friday, 2006; Hendricks, 1991; as cited in Klein, 2009). The New York City Police Department and the Division of Criminal Justice Services and Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence conducted studies in New York showing that of the domestic violence calls received by police, only between 35 percent and 65 percent actually constitute a crime chargeable under their statutes (Klein, 2008). As awareness increases, so do arrests for domestic violence crimes. In the 1970’s and 1980’s, less than 15 percent of cases resulted in arrests, but by 2000, about 50 percent of domestic violence cases resulted in arrests (Hirschel, 2009). A report by Johnson (2008) showed that in 2004, nationwide, more than 1,144,900 domestic violence assaults were reported to police departments, and that 83 percent resulted in arrests being made.

According to Durose, of the 2.1 million domestic violence incidences between 1998 and 2002, 36 percent resulted in arrest (2005). Are there specific factors that lead to an arrest? Table 1 outlines the answer to this question. Gender did not seem to make a difference, as females were no more likely than males to be arrested when they were the aggressor (Hershel, Buzawa, Pattavina, & Faggiana, 2008). Whether the couple was heterosexual or homosexual did not seem to make a difference either as police were equally likely to make arrests during a domestic dispute (Hirschel, 2009). When the offender is over 21 years old, they are much more likely to be arrested during a domestic dispute (Hirschel, 2009). An arrest was more likely if the offender involved in a domestic violence case was white (Hershel, Buzawa, Pattavina, & Faggiana, 2008). Johnson (2010) noted that there are several legal factors that seem to predict arrest during a domestic violence call, as outlined in

Table 2, "...severity of injury, use of a weapon, existence of an order of protection, whether or not the victim is willing to sign a complaint, the presence of witnesses to the offense, the offender's prior criminal history, whether or not an offense was committed in the officer's presence, and whether or not the offender left the scene before the police arrived routinely." Johnson also discovered that the more hours of domestic violence training the responding officer had been through, the more likely an arrest would be made at a domestic violence scene (2010). If an offender was present when the police arrived to a domestic violence scene, an arrest was four times more likely than if they had already fled the scene (Johnson, 2010). On the other hand, if the offender left the scene, it was unlikely for the officers to follow up on the case and attempt to have a warrant issued (Hirschel, 2009).

**Table 1: Offender Characteristics and Likelihood of Domestic Violence Arrest**

Factors That Affect Being Arrested	Factors That Do Not Affect Being Arrested
Age (more likely if over 21 years old)	Gender
Race (more likely if White)	Sexuality

(Hershel, Buzawa, Pattavina, & Faggiana, 2008 & Hirschel, 2009)

**Table 2: Domestic Violence Factors That Predict Being Arrested**

Severe Injury
Use of a Weapon
Existence of a Protection Order
Victim is Willing to Sign a Complaint
Presence of Witnesses
Prior Criminal History
Offense was Committed in the Officer's Presence
Offender Does Not Leave Scene Before the Police Arrive
Higher Number of Domestic Violence Training Hours for Police

(Johnson, Making Domestic Violence Arrests: A Test of Expectancy Theory, 2010)

Prosecution rates for domestic violence cases vary between counties as well as between states. One study found that prosecution per arrest rate varied from 4.6 percent in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to 94 percent in Hamilton, Ohio (Klein, 2008). Of those cities studied, the average prosecution per arrest rate was 63.8 percent and the median rate was just below 60 percent (Klein, 2008). A study done in Sacramento County showed that they filed charges on 82 percent of those persons arrested for domestic

violence and went through with full prosecution on 70 percent of those arrested (Wooldredge & Thistlewaite, 2005). According to Durose et al., federal courts convicted 90 percent of their domestic violence offenders (2005). Of those, almost 80 percent were obtained through plea agreements, while 21 percent were obtained through court trials (Durose, et al., 2005).

Some departments have “no-drop” policies that require prosecutors to follow through with prosecuting offenders even when they do not have victim support to do so (Davis, Smith, & Taylor, 2003). This can have an astounding effect on prosecution success rates and victim satisfaction. For example, a case study in Milwaukee, reviews arrest to prosecution ratios before and after a “no-drop” policy was instituted. Prior to the “no-drop” policy, as many as 90 percent of domestic violence arrests were not prosecuted. After implementation of the “no-drop” policy, the prosecution rate went up to more than 60 percent. They also noted a decrease in convictions by 17 percent after the change was implemented. Victims, of course, many times did not support the prosecution of these offenders. Therefore, satisfaction with the prosecutor and the outcome of the sentence was one-third lower than prior to implementation. After the change was implemented, many victims actually felt less safe, were less likely to call the police if the defendant abused them again, and felt that that the punishment that the defendant received was far too excessive (Davis, Smith, & Taylor, 2003).

### **Re-offense Rates**

In an attempt to assess domestic violence reoffending patterns, policy makers have to determine which offenders are more likely to repeat abusive behavior (Williams & Houghton, 2004). For example, in a study conducted by the Colorado Department of Probation Services, a Domestic Violence Screening Instrument was created after analyzing data collected from more than 9,000 domestic violence cases to determine “common social and behavioral characteristics of perpetrators having a history of repeated history of intimate partner violence” (Williams & Houghton, 2004, p. 439). Questions about how decisions can be made to ensure public safety by protecting victims, supervising and treating offenders, and maximizing the efficient use of scarce criminal justice resources, can be answered once we have established which offenders are more likely to continue this behavior (Williams & Houghton, 2004). The first indicator in determining the risk of re-offense is prior criminal history.

The study conducted by Williams and Houghton occurred in Colorado and consisted of two samples, one focused on male offenders because they are disproportionately represented among cases in the system (Table 3), and the other focused on female victims. The study collected information regarding the offender’s history of domestic violence, driving under the influence, the number of restraining orders and other criminal involvement. From the first sample, Williams and Houghton found that 35 percent of the men had previous domestic violence convictions or restraining order violations (2004).

During the 18 month follow-up period, Williams and Houghton measured arrests for violations of restraining orders and arrests for domestic violence reoffending. They found that 29 percent of the men engaged in either restraining order violations or arrests for partner violence. Furthermore, the total reoffending prevalence in this sample was 53 percent. The results of the victim interviews during the 6 month follow-up period found the following: 35 percent of their partners used some type of physical force; 80 percent of the offenders engaged in threatening or verbally abusive behaviors; 65 percent engaged in controlling behaviors; 60 percent of the victims expressed safety concerns for themselves or their children (Williams & Houghton, 2004).

### **Table 3: Percentage of 1,465 Male Perpetrators Scoring Above 0 on Each Item of the DVSI**

12 DVSI items	% Scoring on the item
Prior non-DV convictions	66%
Prior assault, harassment, menacing	51%
Prior DV treatment	31%
Prior drug or alcohol treatment	39%
History of DV-related restraining orders	29%
History of DV restraining order violation	14%
Object used as weapon in commission of crime	23%
Children present during DV incident	49%
Current employment status (unemployed)	36%
Separation from victim in last 6 months	32%
Did victim have restraining order at time of offense	12%
Defendant under community supervision at time of offense	25%

(Williams & Houghton, 2004)

A second indicator in determining the risk of re-offense is the evaluation of offender characteristics. Morgan (1993) found nine characteristics that were consistently associated with committing new criminal offenses while the offender was on probation (Table 4). These offender characteristics showed men were more likely to be re-arrested than female offenders, younger offenders were more likely to re-offend than older offenders, and unmarried offenders were re-arrested more frequently than married offenders. Education level negatively impacted re-offending, as each year of formal education is reduced the higher the likelihood of a new offense. Members of racial minority groups and violent offenders were more likely to be re-arrested; similarly, the more job changes and criminal convictions the offender experienced the more likely he or she was to re-offend (Morgan, 1993). Johnson (2008) also studied offender characteristics associated with re-offense and found that whether or not the offender had successfully completed a domestic batterer program prior to his current sentencing was not significantly associated with re-arrest.

**Table 4: Indicators That Determine the Risk of Re-Offense**

More Likely to Re-Offend	Less Likely to Re-Offend
Men	Women
Younger	Older
Unmarried	Married
Lower Level of Education	Higher Level of Education
Racial Minority Group	Not in Racial Minority Group
Higher Job Turnover Rate	Lower Job Turnover Rate
Violent Offenders	Property Offenders
Longer Legal Supervision Periods	Short Legal Supervision Periods
Higher Number of Prior Criminal Convictions	Lower Number of Prior Criminal Convictions

(Morgan, 1993)

### Program Evaluation

An important component of a coordinated community response to domestic violence is the treatment of perpetrators. Most states have identified standards governing treatment of convicted

offenders who engage in violent behavior toward a spouse or intimate partner. The treatment philosophy for most state standards is based upon the concept that domestic violence is an abusive form of power and control. Social psychological approaches emphasize the condoning of violence, sexist attitudes, interpersonal and problem solving skill deficits, and faulty modeling in the perpetrator's family of origin. Eberle and Maiuro note that only about 5 percent of the states surveyed in their study have adopted a third treatment philosophy which relies heavily on evidence based cognitive behavior models (2008).

Virtually all state standards require that the treatment provider prioritize the safety of the victim, require that the perpetrator refrain from blaming the victim, hold perpetrators solely responsible for their abusive behavior, have perpetrators understand that they must learn non-abusive behavior alternatives for resolving problems, and teach them alternative non-violent behavior to resolve conflict. The standard length of treatment varies among states, but usually lasts between 12 weeks to one year, with most states requiring treatment to a minimum of 16 weeks. According to Maiuro and Eberle, the preferred method of treatment is group therapy (2008). Intake procedures for treatment of domestic violence offenders include an evaluation used to determine the offenders' appropriateness for treatment and assess the need for other services such as alcohol or drug abuse treatment prior to domestic violence intervention.

Ironically, most intervention programs disapprove of anger management being the primary focus of domestic violence treatment because focusing on anger management does not accurately reflect the cause of battering (Eberle & Maiuro, 2008). Most intervention programs are action-oriented and address the needs of a minority group of offenders, those in later stages of change and those prepared to end violence (Driskell, Levesque, Prochaska, & Prochaska, 2008).

## Best Practices for Domestic Violence Intervention

DVIW pinpointed best practice programs, methods, and models that not only had favorable results, but also seemed feasible to implement in Hamilton County. Listed below are some key programs that should be considered—whether it be agency-specific programs or programs requiring a collaborative effort among several agencies.

### **Baker One Domestic Violence Intervention Project**

The Baker One Project is based out of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina. Officer Keith Way examined case reports for domestic battery cases and determined that many of the cases of violence tended to occur after several escalating events such as vandalism and communicating threats. Furthermore, he found that victims had filed, on average, nine police reports prior to the incident. Officer Way felt that their attention was too focused on what to do *after* an incident of violence occurred and the focus should instead be on preventing domestic violence. Typical crime reduction strategies utilize “hot spots” in neighborhoods, but Officer Way suggested tracking both victims and offenders as “hot spots” instead of geographic areas since victims and offenders involved with domestic violence often moved outside of police districts.

To determine who their “hot spots” were, they completed data analysis to establish indicator crimes, or crimes that typically led to domestic violence. They found that indicator crimes followed the domestic violence continuum – verbal abuse, harassment, stalking, escalating violence, all eventually leading to murder. They found additional indicator crimes such as hit and run, driving without a valid license, and check fraud. Baker One then implemented an automated records management system that

allowed linking of several police department databases in order to catch the “hot spots”. Also, if an address had three or more calls for service, it was flagged for the department as well. An officer then reviewed all cases that were determined to be indicator crimes, involved a domestic relationship, and had repeat calls for service. That officer then conducted interviews and completed referrals for any available programming for the victim, offender, and any children involved. After completing the file review, an intervention plan is made for each case. Every offender involved is notified “that his actions are being monitored and tracked.” The department noticed that many times, once the offender is notified of this, contact with the victim completely stops. One weakness of the project was that offenders and victims moved out of their police districts, making it difficult to track prior and future incidences with other departments not linked to the same system.

After implementing the Baker One project in 2001, they reported seemingly positive results. In 2001, the Baker One officer reviewed 229 cases, 46 percent of which actually had previous indicator crimes. Compared to the National average of 35 percent, Baker One victims reported a re-victimization rate of only 14.8 percent. While domestic battery cases increased almost 30 percent in 2001 in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, in Baker One they stayed the same as the year before. They also reported that after starting the Baker One tactics on seven locations, calls for service were reduced by 98.9 percent at those locations (Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, 2002).

### **Domestic Violence Emergency Response Team (DVERT)**

DVERT is a coordinated response program in Colorado Springs that brings together criminal justice agencies, social services, and community-based organizations in order to ensure the safety of the victims of domestic violence. DVERT in Colorado Springs had their own building, housing 25 employees consisting of a domestic violence shelter, Department of Human Services’ caseworkers, probation officers, a prosecutor, and detectives from several law enforcement agencies. By having all of these agencies in one location, they can easily share pertinent information quickly, create better working relationships, and allow for victims to have easier, more convenient access to available services (such as counseling, shelters, support, legal services, and free cell phones for emergencies). With DVERT, the problem-oriented policing model is utilized. Law enforcement is responsible for making contact with the victim, providing them with a packet that consists of services available and following up with the victim within 30 days of the incident. Once DVERT was implemented, law enforcement felt as though they had increased education and awareness of the domestic violence problem as well as strengthened communications among other agencies. The Department of Human Services was pleased with the link made between domestic violence and child welfare because of the DVERT project. Fast Track, a program made specifically to expedite domestic violence cases, was implemented in the court after DVERT was in place. Prior to implementing the DVERT program, average closure time for a case was 530 days, but after the DVERT program was in place, closure time reduced 60 percent to only 210 days. The DVERT program claims to have “saved lives, reduced violence, improved communication among city and county agencies and service providers, and improved the quality of life in Colorado Springs,” (Uchida, Putnam, Mastrofski, Soloman, & Dawson, 2001).

### **Risk Tool**

A study conducted by Thistlewaite, Wooldredge, and Gibbs (1998) in Hamilton County, Ohio, was completed to determine whether or not the severity of a disposition would reduce domestic violence.

At first, the researchers noted that prior studies that had been done on the subject produced mixed results. In Minneapolis, arresting a domestic batterer showed a lower rate of recidivism than with those who were not arrested. In Milwaukee, Omaha and Charlotte, recidivism actually increased when a batterer was arrested. In the Hamilton County, Ohio, study, it was determined that batterers who received more severe sentences were less likely to reoffend within one year of sentencing than those offenders who received less severe sentences. They pointed out that certain batterer characteristics, such as employment status, marital status, the socioeconomic status (SES) of the batterer's neighborhood, as well as a few other factors could actually determine whether or not being arrested would result in reduced re-offense rates. In the Hamilton County, Ohio, study, they found that recidivism was lowest among those who were employed longer at their job, lived in their current residence for longer, lived in an area with higher SES, and were unmarried (Thistlewaite, Wooldredge, & Gibbs, 1998).

### **Domestic Violence Court**

A study completed in 2003 in Lexington County, South Carolina, was done to determine whether or not a specialized domestic violence court could reduce recidivism. The researchers from the Lexington County project discussed the results from several other specialized domestic violence courts. In Miami, Florida, their domestic violence court actually had almost a 40 percent lower dismissal rate. Miami noticed that almost half of the batterers coming through their court had substance abuse issues and so they enrolled those batterers into integrated treatment. Those batterers who completed the integrated treatment were almost half as likely to reoffend against the same victim from the original arrest as those who did not complete the integrated treatment.

Lexington County, South Carolina, created a "multi-agency" approach for processing domestic violence cases. Specifically, the Lexington County Sheriff's Office appointed a team of two full-time investigators and a full time prosecutor; a court administrator was hired to work on the separate court docket; the Lexington County Department of Mental Health provided two mental health counselors; and a legal advocate from a local domestic violence shelter was also provided. Initially after the multi-agency court was put into place, there was a 10 percent increase in the number of domestic violence arrests that the researchers attributed to law enforcement being more responsive to domestic violence due to the court recently being established. It was noted that prior to the specialized court, the re-arrest rates for domestic violence offenses were almost 8 percent higher than after the specialized courts were established. The researchers also noted that there are three variables that are "significant predictors of recidivism". Previous domestic violence arrests actually increased the likelihood of recidivism by 46 percent. Offenders who had more than one charge against them compared to only one were 77 percent more likely to recidivate. Lastly, they discovered that being processed through a domestic violence court actually decreased the odds of recidivism by half. Within this domestic violence court, judges focused on accountability of the batterer and made it clear that if they did not follow the conditions set forth (mainly counseling and no contact orders), they would receive jail time (Alpert & Gover, 2003).

### **Multi-jurisdictional Courts**

New York embraced the idea of a multijurisdictional court after realizing that many of their domestic violence offenders had open criminal cases, civil protection orders, divorce cases, custody battles and/or visitation hearings. New York decided that in order to make things simpler and more convenient, they would create a court that would handle *all* family disputes. This means that instead of

keeping track of where and when family members need to be for several different court hearings, they can simply go to one location with one judge. This also reduces the risk of receiving conflicting orders from different judges in different court rooms. The multijurisdictional courts focus on victim services, judicial monitoring, accountability, and coordinated community response. When victims receive services early in the process, they are more likely to follow-through with the court process. Multijurisdictional courts have ongoing monitoring for domestic violence offenders so that they can ensure that an offender is following-through with the orders (such as refraining from contacting the victim(s) and attending batterer's intervention programs). In order to have a coordinated response and to guarantee communication, New York also implemented a domestic violence technology application that allows judges, attorneys, community supervision managers, and other community partners' access to information regarding a domestic violence case, the victim and the offender. Not only do they have the technology to make the most informed decisions on each level, but they also meet in-person on a regular basis to discuss issues and clarify each party's role in the domestic violence problem. Since the multijurisdictional court opened in Brooklyn, dismissals have been reduced by half (Aldrich & Mazur, 2003).

### **Second Responders**

The Second Responders Program in Richmond, Virginia, is funded through the Department of Social Services (DSS), which is equivalent to the Family & Social Services Association (FSSA) in Indiana. With this program, once the police are called to a scene and the officer determines that it is a domestic or family violence incident, a Second Responder is called out to the scene. The Second Responder works with the victim to provide services that may be needed in regards to the victim's safety, legal rights, filing protective orders, as well as additional resources that DSS can provide. After the incident, the victim is again contacted within 72 hours to follow up on the services discussed. It was determined that women who received immediate assistance from a Second Responder at the time of the incident experience less repeat violence. In fact, when comparing victimization of any kind within 6 months after the incident, those victims who were a part of the Second Responders program had 15 percent less victimization than those who did not have a Second Responder. The victims involved with Second Responders also felt more satisfied with how law enforcement handled their cases. The researchers for the Richmond Second Responders discussed a similar program in New York that did not have such positive results. The New York responders were not civilians, but instead were police officers, and they did not respond during the incident, but a few days after the incident had occurred. Richmond's program seems to be more successful due to the quick intervention and the second responder not being a police officer (Police Foundation Report, 2005).

### **Project Assist**

Project ASSIST, formerly known as Project DETER, was one of four programs implemented in White Plains, New York, by the Pace Women's Justice Center (PWJC) to provide legal services to domestic violence victims. In 1999, PWJC established a partnership with the White Plains Department of Public Safety to implement training and legal coordination with the support of a grant under the Violence Against Women's Act. The purpose of Project ASSIST was to provide "front-end" services to victims in order to reduce domestic violence (Barasch & Lutz, 2002). When a police officer reports to a domestic violence call and determines that the case requires the assistance of a legal advocate, the police officer will page an on-call attorney who will respond within minutes and will subsequently schedule a meeting

with the victim the next day. Project advocate attorneys are available 24 hours a day for weekly shifts. The attorney will provide ongoing representation for the victim in order to file orders for protection, child custody and/or child support. Results showed that victims who were provided these services at the point of entry (upon calling 9/11) follow-through with obtaining a permanent order of protection between 90-97 percent of the time compared with 25 percent of victims who did not receive the services (Barasch & Lutz, 2002). The success of Project ASSIST is evident in its ability to empower battered women the moment they seek police assistance.

# Research Results

## Secondary Data

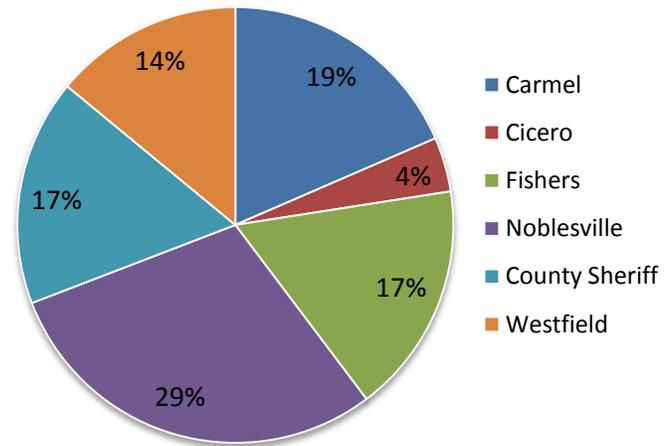
In 2009, Hamilton County had a population of about 274,000 people and a total of 1,484 domestic violence incidents. Thus, the ratio of Hamilton County domestic violence incidents per population was 0.54 percent. The Hamilton County ratio is nearly the same as the 2009 national ratio of domestic violence incidents per population, which was 0.50 percent (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010).

## Hamilton County Domestic Violence Case Process

Data analysis for Hamilton County began by isolating domestic violence cases from 2009 and tracking their outcomes through all the agencies, up until present day. The majority of incidents were reported to the police, but others went to Prevail (victim service provider) or to the Department of Child Services (DCS). However, we were unable to account for domestic violence incidents that went unreported to law enforcement and if they did not go to Prevail. Of the available data in 2009, Hamilton County police dispatchers received 1,855 domestic violence calls for service, and an additional 261 domestic violence victims went only to Prevail. The number of calls for service from Arcadia, Atlanta, and Sheridan is unknown. See Figure 8 for a breakdown of the calls for service by police jurisdiction. Noblesville received the most calls for service (29 percent) while Cicero received the least (4 percent). This disparity can be attributed to population size of the areas. The missing towns of Arcadia, Atlanta, and Sheridan are expected to be close to Cicero's percentage since they have similar populations.

Of the 1,855 calls for service, 1,223 case reports were written by police (66 percent). Figure 9 summarizes the calls for service endpoints as offenders travel through the criminal justice process. A majority of calls for service ended at either the call for service (34 percent) or the written case report (39 percent).

**Figure 8: 2009 Hamilton County Domestic Violence Calls for Service by Jurisdiction (1,855 total calls)**



**Figure 9: 2009 Hamilton County Calls for Service Endpoints (1,855 total calls)**

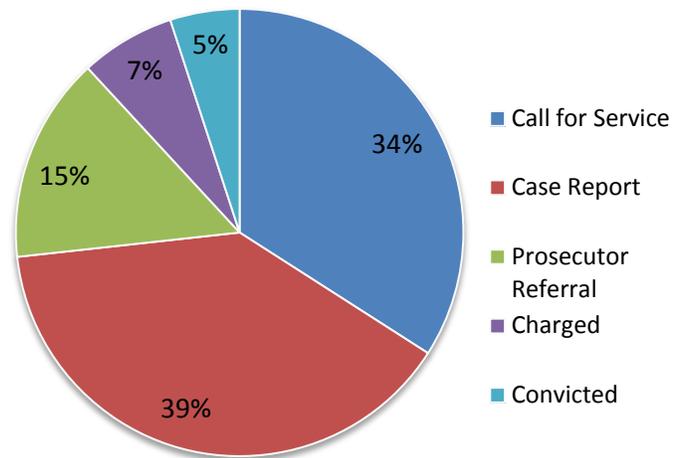
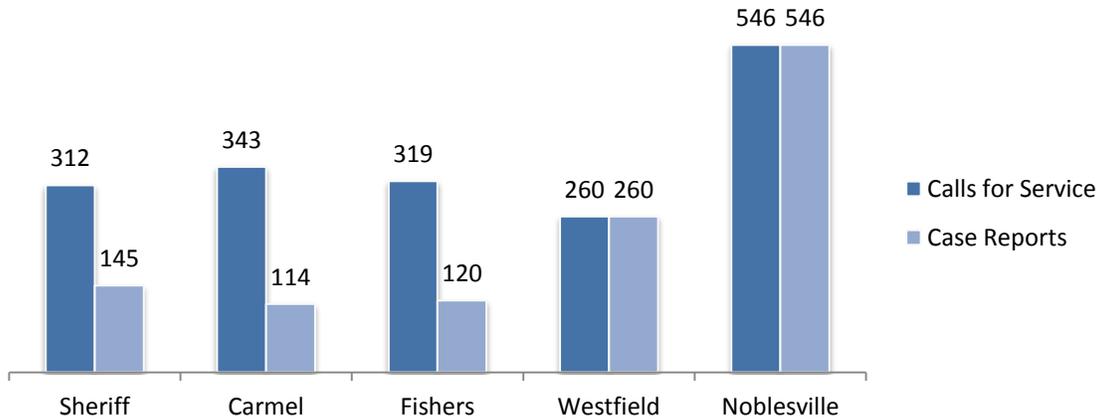


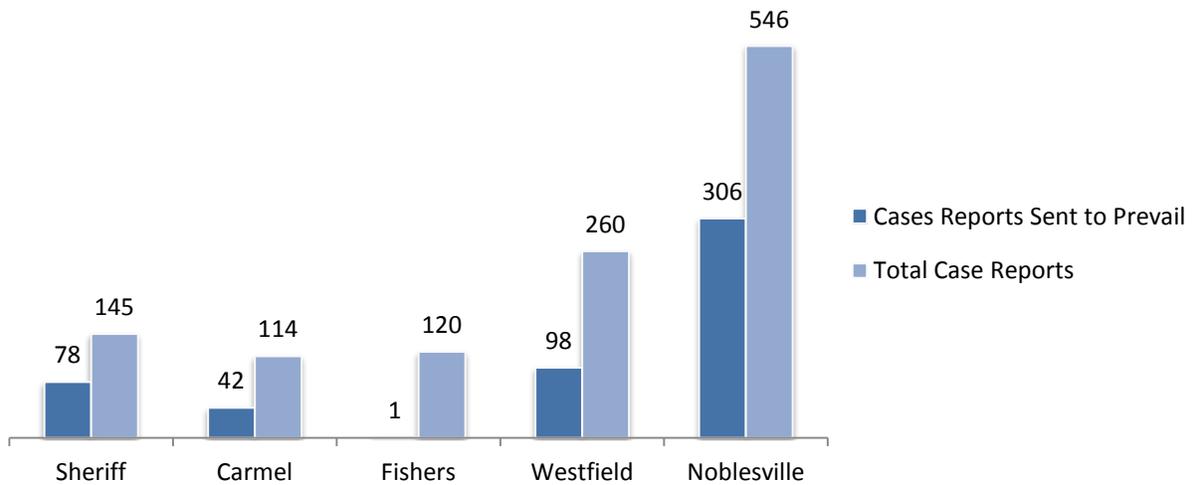
Figure 10 compares the calls for service to the number of case reports written by each jurisdiction. Comparisons with Arcadia, Atlanta, and Sheridan could not be made because calls for service data were not received. Both Noblesville and Westfield had a 100 percent match for the number of calls for service to the number of case reports written. However, the Sherriff’s Department, Carmel, and Fishers all had less than a 50 percent match between the numbers of calls for service to the number of case reports written. These jurisdictions ranged from 33 percent to 46 percent with Carmel having the lowest match.

**Figure 10: Calls for Service vs. Case Reports by Jurisdiction**



For some police departments the police report could also include a separate report that officers need to fill out to send to Prevail. Figure 11 shows the comparison of the number of case reports sent to Prevail compared to the total number of case reports written for each jurisdiction. Noblesville was the highest at 56 percent, and Fishers was the lowest because they do not normally send their case reports to Prevail.

**Figure 11: Case Reports Sent to Prevail vs. Total Case Reports by Jurisdiction**



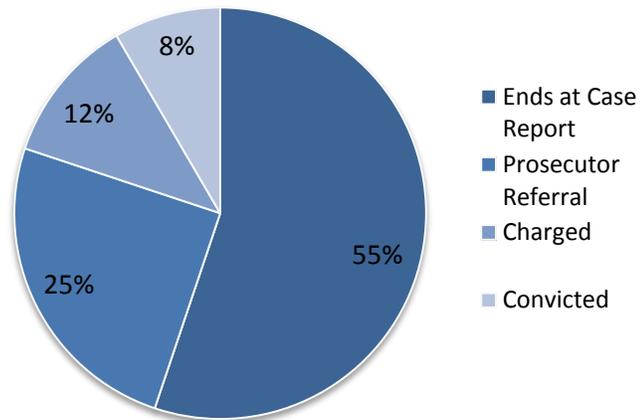
The fact that an officer writes a report, does not guarantee that an arrest is made. When an arrest is not made, the officer has the option to refer the case to the prosecutor's office for review, leaving the option open to filing charges. All 249 arrested offenders, 25 percent of the case reports, were referred to the prosecutor. Also, 23 percent of the 857 non-arrest cases, 18 percent of the case reports, were referred to the prosecutor. In total, the prosecutor reviewed 496 cases, 50 percent of the case reports, before deciding whether or not to file charges.

Of the 496 prosecutor reviewed cases, 44 percent resulted in charges being filed. This also means that only 13 percent of the calls for service and 20 percent of the case reports resulted in charges filed. Figure 12 and Figure 13 further break down the process by showing where case reports and prosecutor referrals end. Of the 220 cases that made it to court, 42 cases went to diversion, 59 cases were dismissed, 27 cases went to trial, 81 cases ended with a guilty plea, and 9 cases are still pending. Figure 14 shows the court disposition break down for Hamilton County. Finally, of the 93 convicted offenders (guilty by plea or trial), 28 served jail time (30 percent) and 65 received probation (70 percent).

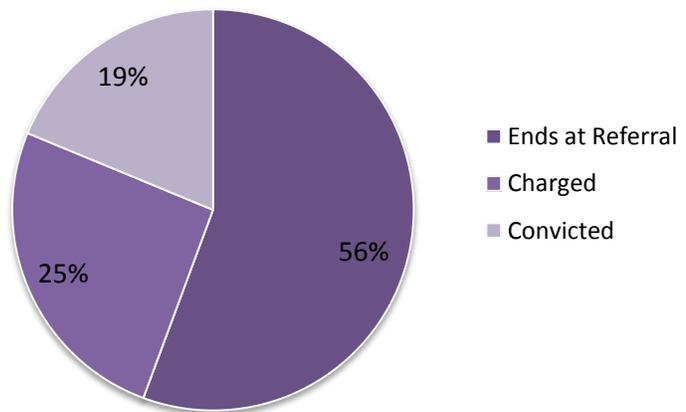
**Offender and Victim Demographics**

Of the 1,484 domestic violence incidents, 822 had complete offender demographic information. At least 14 percent of the 1,484 incidents had female offenders. Of the 1,484 domestic violence incidents, 832 had complete victim demographic information. At least 15 percent of the 1,484 incidents had

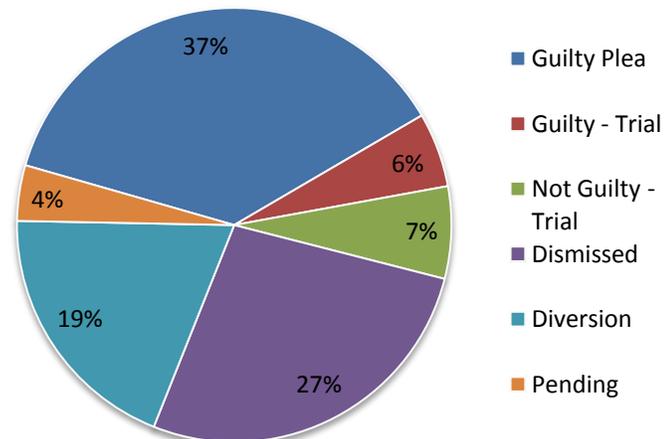
**Figure 12: 2009 Hamilton County Case Report Endpoints (1,223 total case reports)**



**Figure 13: 2009 Hamilton County Prosecutor Referral Endpoints (496 total referrals)**



**Figure 14: 2009 Hamilton County Domestic Violence Court Dispositions (220 total cases)**



male victims. Nationally, 18 percent of domestic violence victims were male in 2009 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010). Therefore, the rate of male victimization in Hamilton County is in line with the national rate.

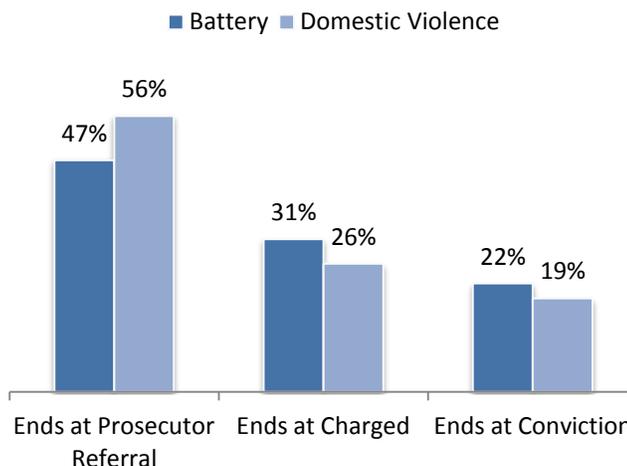
### Battery versus Domestic Violence Prosecution Rates

DVIW also conducted a data analysis of the 2009 prosecutor referrals to compare battery cases with domestic violence cases. For all cases, when an arrest is made by an officer the case is automatically referred to the prosecutor.

Additionally, the officer has the option to send the case to the prosecutor’s office for review even when an arrest is not made. In total, 397 battery cases and 496 domestic violence cases were referred to the Hamilton County prosecutor in 2009.

Of the 397 battery cases referred to the prosecutor, 47 percent ended at the prosecutor referral, 31 percent ended at charges being filed (dismissed), and 22 percent ended with a conviction. Of the 496 domestic violence cases referred to the prosecutor, 56 percent ended at the prosecutor referral, 26 percent ended at charges being filed (dismissed), and 19 percent ended with a conviction. Figure 15 displays the battery percentages compared to the domestic violence percentages. Overall, 53 percent of battery cases referred to the prosecutor resulted in charges being filed while only 44 percent of domestic violence cases resulted in charges being filed. This 9 percent difference is a statistically significant result ( $p = 0.03$ ) and implies that the prosecutor files charges more often for battery cases when compared to domestic violence cases.

**Figure 15: Battery vs. Domestic Violence Prosecution Rates**



### Hamilton County Re-offense Rates at Case Process Endpoints

The data obtained from the police dispatchers, Prevail, the prosecutor’s office, and the court contained 1,223 case reports, and an additional 261 cases only reported to Prevail (1,484 total). As this study looks at how an offender travels through the entire Hamilton County criminal justice system, 295 incomplete files had to be dropped from the re-offense case process analysis. The 295 incomplete files were made of 153 Prevail cases, 114 police reports not containing an offender ID, and 70 unknown case points. Analysis of the incomplete cases revealed no statistical difference between the cases not dropped based on jurisdiction, date, victim, and offense. In the end, 1,189 repeat offender cases were analyzed.

Statistical analyses were performed to identify patterns of repeat offenses and any possible relationships between the handling of cases and the occurrence of repeat offenses. Individuals were determined to be repeat offenders if their corresponding offender ID occurred once or more after their original 2009 domestic violence incident as an offender in the Prevail, police, and prosecutor data.

Figure 16 displays the Hamilton County domestic violence rate of re-offense at case endpoints. Only 10.2 percent of cases that end at Prevail (victim only went to Prevail) have offenders involved in a second domestic violence incident during 2009 to 2011. Cases that end with no arrest (on site mediation)

have a re-offense rate of 22.3 percent. Cases referred to the prosecutor, but with no charges filed, have a re-offense rate of 29 percent. Of the 220 cases with charges filed, 42 offenders took part in a diversion program with a re-offense rate of 21.4 percent. The re-offense rate for dismissed cases (motion) was 14.7 percent, while the re-offense rate for dismissed cases (plea) was 32 percent. The re-offense rate for offenders found not guilty at trial was 46.7 percent. Finally, 33.8 percent of offenders placed on probation re-offended and 42.9 percent of offenders who served jail time re-offended.

**Figure 16: Hamilton County Domestic Violence Rate of Re-offense at Case Process Endpoint**

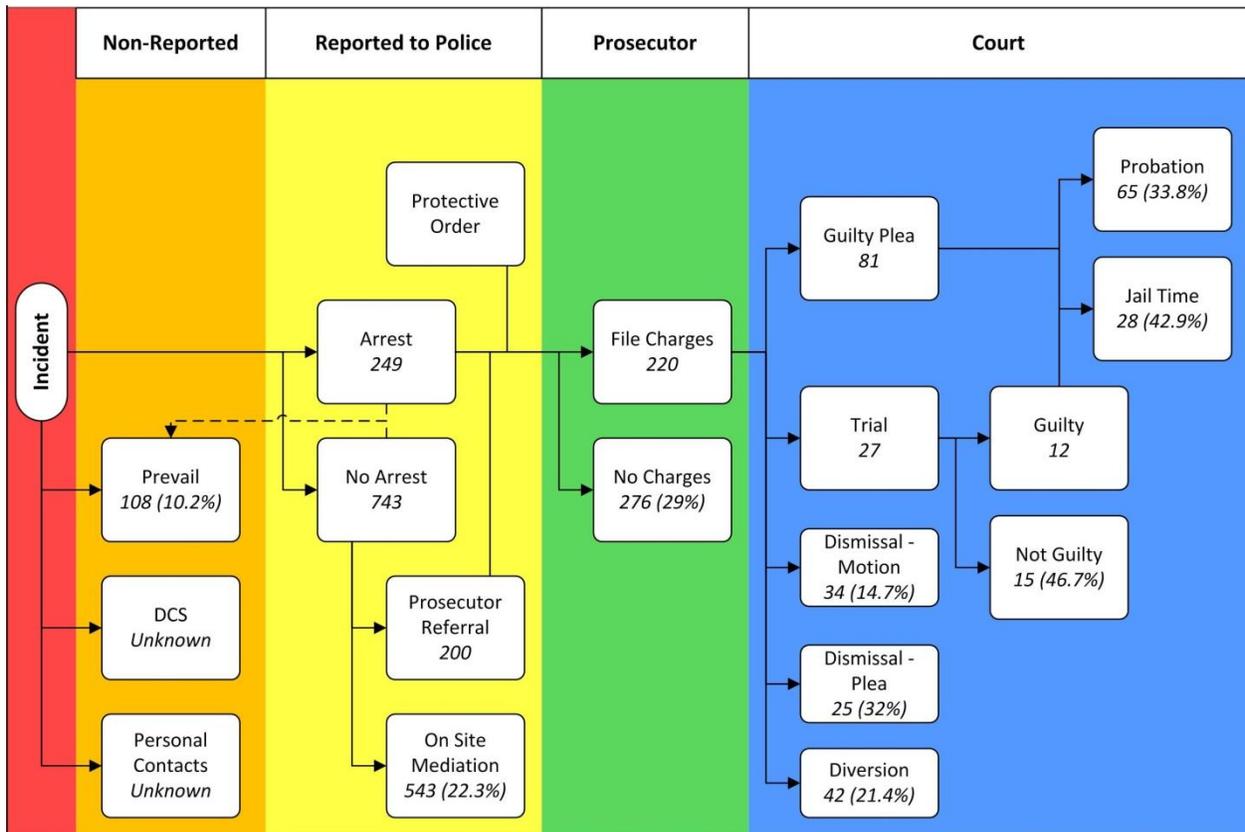
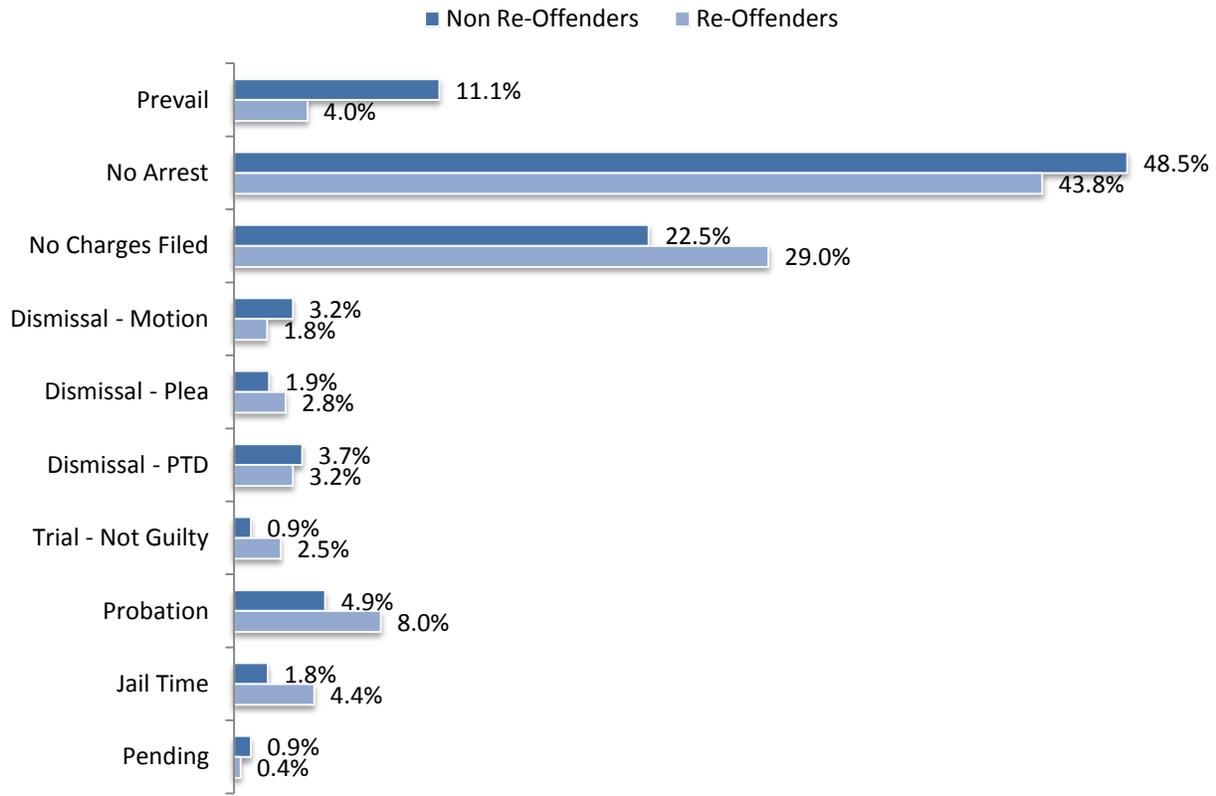


Figure 17 compares the case process endpoints of non-re-offenders to the case process endpoints of re-offenders. In total, there were 285 domestic violence re-offenders and 904 domestic violence non re-offenders from cases originating in 2009. Compared to non-re-offenders, a higher percentage of re-offenders had case process endpoints at no charges being filed (29 percent vs. 22.5 percent), dismissal by plea (2.8 percent vs. 1.9 percent), being found not guilty at trial (2.5 percent vs. 0.9 percent), receiving probation (8 percent vs. 49 percent), and receiving jail time (4.4 percent vs. 1.8 percent).

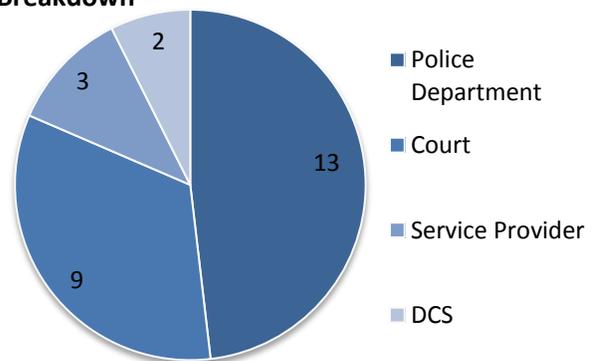
**Figure 17: Non Re-Offenders vs. Re-Offenders at Case Process Endpoints**



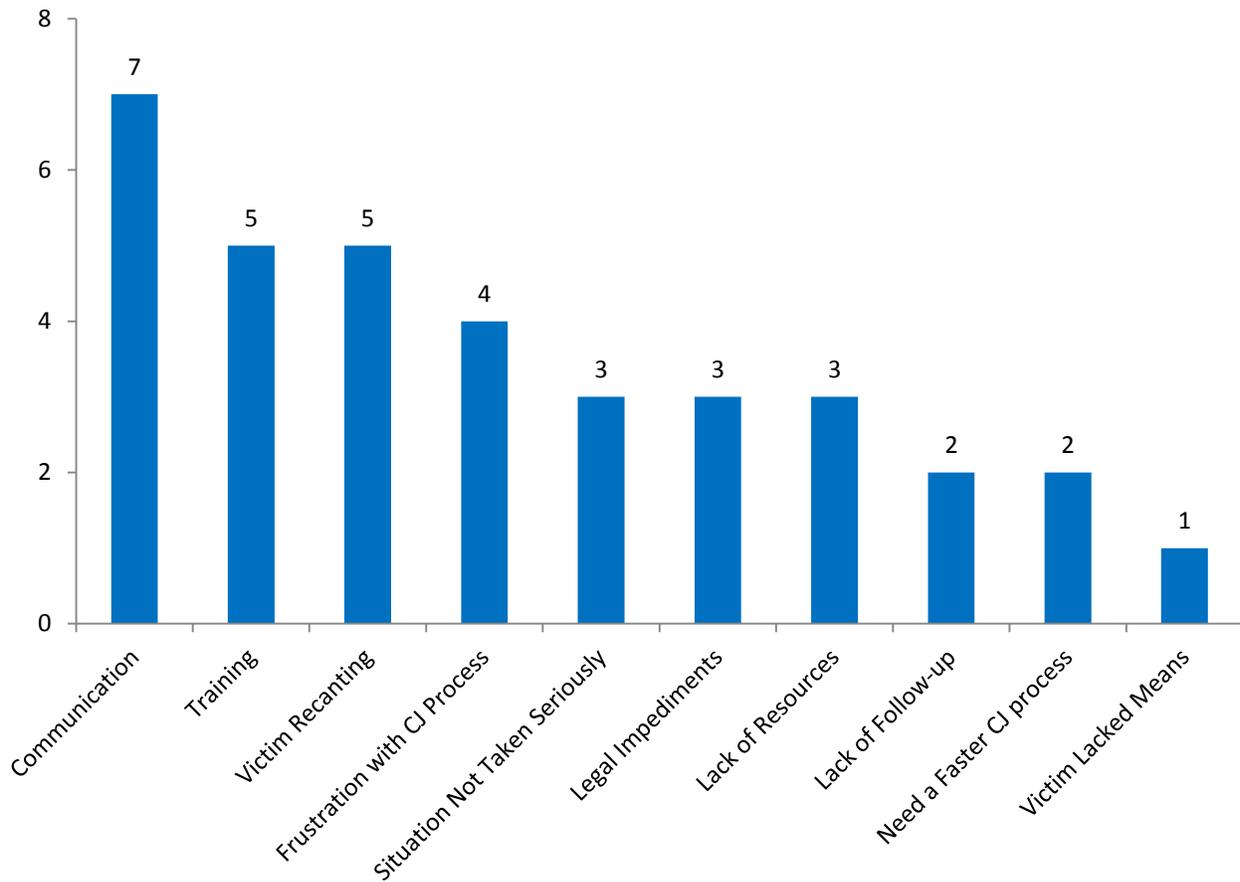
## Key Informant Interview Results

DVIW conducted a total of 27 key informant interviews. These interviews consisted of 13 from the Hamilton County Police Departments, 9 from the courts, 3 service provider interviews, and 2 from the Department of Child Services (Figure 18). First, key informants were asked the main question, “What problems do you see with the system,” in regards to domestic violence. Figure 19 shows the top 10 responses we received. Seven key informants responded that the biggest problem in the system is the lack of communication between agencies, five responded with the problem of training and victim recanting, and four responded with the problem of frustration with the criminal justice process. Two other important problems brought out in our interviews were the lack of resources to help victims get out of their current situation and the lack of follow-up with victims during the criminal justice process.

**Figure 18: Key Informant Interview Department Breakdown**



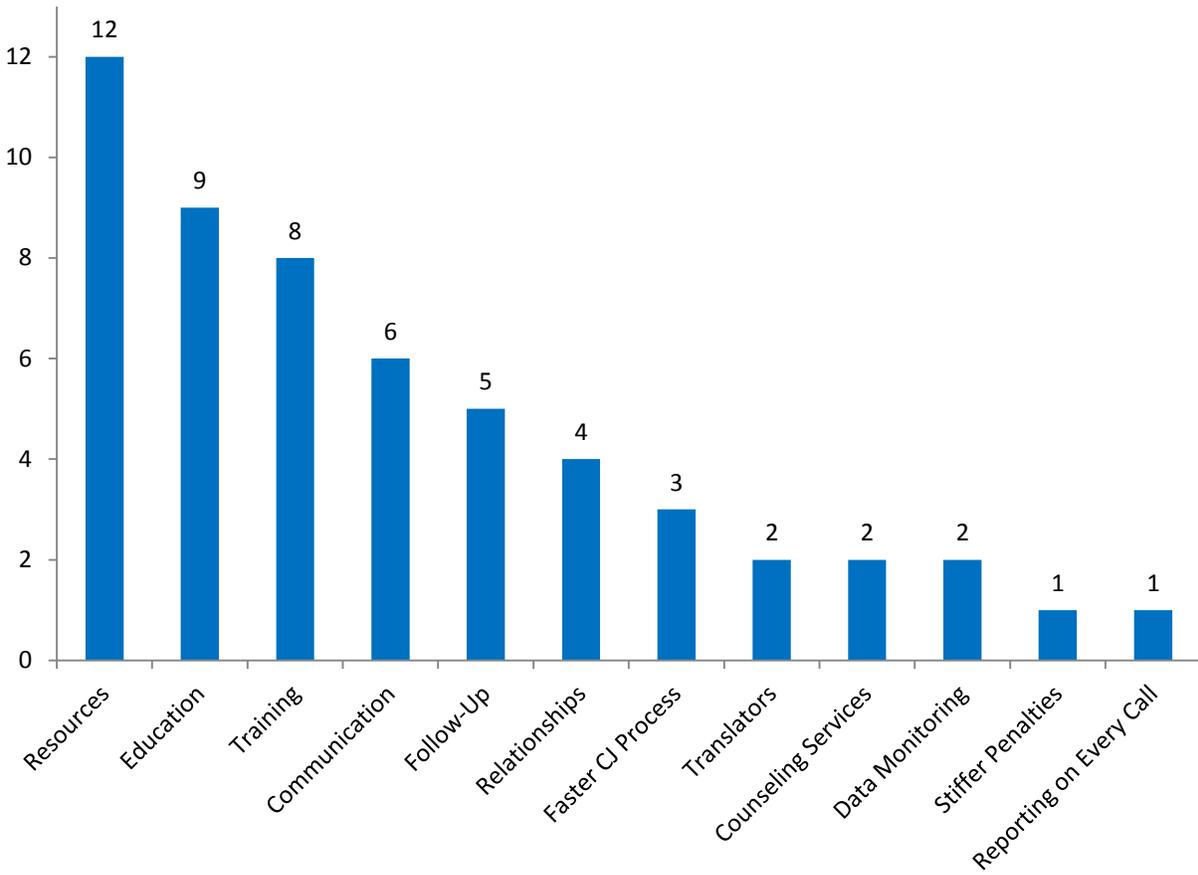
**Figure 19: Key Informant Interviews: Problems**



Second, key informants were asked the main question, “What recommendations would you make for the future within your agency and in the system,” in regards to domestic violence.

Figure 20 shows the top 12 responses we received. The main recommendations made were providing more resources for the victims (12 responses), providing more educational awareness within the agencies (9 responses), providing additional training specific to domestic violence (8 responses), and addressing the communication barriers between the agencies (6 responses). Additionally, key informants also recommended having better data monitoring systems to track the domestic violence issue, providing translators to reach more people in the community, and having stiffer penalties for domestic violence offenses.

**Figure 20: Key Informant Interviews: Recommendations**



## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the previous data analysis, key informant interviews, as well as evidence-based practices and best practices research. Additionally, there will be several recommendations for future research to determine other effective approaches to reduce domestic violence in Hamilton County. Recommendations are separated between all Hamilton County agencies and stakeholder departments. DVIW has made recommendations that we believe are achievable for Hamilton County.

**Table 5: Summary of Recommendations**

All Hamilton County Agencies	Law Enforcement	Prosecutor’s Office	Court	Victim Service Providers
Zero Tolerance Approach	Follow-up	Create Outline for Law Enforcement	Training	Detailed Quarterly Reports
Communication	Education/Training	Follow-Through	Risk Tool	Interpreters
Education	Address Communication Barriers	Consistency	Drug Court Model	Financial Resources
Data System	Written Reports			Expanding Hours
Track Indicator Crimes				Legal Services
Task Force				

## All Hamilton County Agencies

### Zero-Tolerance Approach

During a key informant interview, a Hamilton County Prosecutor stated, “Don’t drive drunk in Hamilton County because you’ll get arrested.” DVIW agrees this same philosophy should be taken towards domestic violence. It needs to be well communicated to residents that violent behavior in a domestic situation is unacceptable and will *not* be tolerated. Consequences need to be clear, that not only will a batterer be arrested, but protective orders will be consistently enforced, and violations of court orders will be taken seriously. Domestic violence cases need to be aggressively prosecuted and sanctions will be punitive.

### Communication

One of the most common recommendations, which surfaced during our key informant interviews, was the need for increased communication among all agencies involved. It is already known that Hamilton County agencies have a good working relationship; however, there appears to be a gap in the knowledge of other agency capabilities. Despite the fact that the prosecutor’s office is consistently providing information to law enforcement officers about the requirements needed to establish a case

against a domestic violence offender, it is evident that this needs to be improved upon (discussed further under prosecutor recommendations pg. 37). Law enforcement officers send referrals to Prevail, the victim service providers, but many officers are unaware of what Prevail does with that information. Officers are unsure of what happens with that case unless they are called to court at a later date to testify.

### **Education**

Communication issues can often be rectified through education. Agencies within Hamilton County need to be educated on the extent of services provided by other agencies. This could be achieved through additional interdepartmental training, newsletters, and/or social media. Furthermore, there is often confusion about the legalities of domestic violence cases. Each agency has their own set of rules or policies that they must follow, which may contradict those of other agencies. Education should not be limited to only the agencies or victims involved, but should also be offered to the offenders early in the process. For example, in Marion County, Indiana, when an officer arrests someone for a domestic violence offense, that individual is given a card, which lists available resources such as employment agencies, batterer intervention programs, and substance abuse counseling so that the offender can take action. Agencies should make it a point to target middle and high school students in order to stop the cycle of domestic violence. It should be demonstrated to the students “that this is not normal. It is not okay to put your hands on people in anger,” as stated by Officer Tom Weger of Fishers Police Department. Social media is a less expensive and more direct approach to reaching this young population. Lastly, Hamilton County residents need to be aware that this is a community-wide issue and to address it as such.

### **Data System**

With thousands of reports being written by police officers each year, it can be time-consuming and inefficient to read through reports to identify relevant information. Marion County, Indiana, is in the process of purchasing a new technology called uReveal, which has already been proven successful in Jacksonville, Florida. The technology allows analysts to fuse resources without written code to conduct timely analysis. Analysts would only read information that has already been identified as meaningful. uReveal can be purchased for \$40,000 and comes with ten licenses, which could be used by each police department within Hamilton County as well as the court and victim service providers. It can hold up to one million records. According to Julie Marsh, CEO for the Domestic Violence Network, “uReveal will allow for an analyst(s) and DV advocates to quickly scan through relevant police reports that include a domestic issue compared to manually reading through the 9,000+ reports that the DV advocates currently have to do. I think if we could get this done in other counties, we could probably do cross-county information.” This last statement is important as it can be difficult to track repeat offenders if they move from one county to another.

### **Track Indicator Crimes**

Much like the Baker One Project, Hamilton County should purchase a data program that will track indicator crimes and flag multiple calls for service at specific locations as well as by offender and victim. This will allow law enforcement officers to take a more proactive approach to domestic violence. Information can easily be accessed, reducing the amount of time a law enforcement officer has to dedicate to each case. Once a location is flagged, the offender is notified that his or her behavior will be

monitored, creating a more severe deterrent. Julie Marsh emphasizes this approach will give offenders the impression they can no longer “fly under the radar”.

### **Task Force**

Although Hamilton County already has a functioning domestic violence taskforce, it is recommended that they be co-located or at least become more active in tackling the domestic violence problem, much like the DVERT program in Colorado Springs. By establishing a task force, police officers, victim advocates, and prosecutors can work together to investigate a case thoroughly, making the task force a powerful machine against domestic violence. The task force should be capable of building a solid case against a domestic batterer. In fact, when DVIW interviewed Detective Howard Black with the Colorado Springs Police Department (DVERT), he noted that defense attorneys opposed the task force because they did not like the thoroughness of the investigations. Josh Kocher, Hamilton County Prosecutor, noted this about task forces, “. . .it is good to get all the agencies together and get people talking about ideas.” Departments must be willing to listen to and consider each other’s perspectives and ideas. Detective Black noted the greatest strength of DVERT was the willingness of those agencies involved to share the power. Amy Durall, Victim Services Manager for the Travis County (TX) Sheriff’s Office, was interviewed about Travis County’s version of a task force, known as the Family Violence Protection Team (FVPT). She reported that the task force has improved collaboration among the agencies involved and a responsibility approach has developed in which everyone involved is willing to work as partners. If Hamilton County determines that a co-location of their task force should be established, funding can be requested from the Office of Violence against Women - a common source of funding reported in best practices interviews.

## **Law Enforcement**

### **Follow-Up**

The literature shows that sufficient follow-up by law enforcement officers not only increased the likelihood that a victim would stay involved in the legal process, but also that it increased the victim’s satisfaction with the services he/she received from the police. Several law enforcement officers from Hamilton County noted during their interview that following up with domestic violence victims was important; however, some felt that this was outside of their job description or that they did not have enough time to follow up. Officer Tom Weger with the Fishers Police Department expressed, “It is difficult to follow up with victims. If, as an officer, you are going to commit to follow-up, you are going to have to make some sacrifice. I mean, I might follow up with a victim on my day off – you can’t always follow up when you are working. You have to change your mentality about when you are following up, whether working or not working.” Departments should consider writing a policy with guidelines and a timeframe for victim follow-up including when additional photos should be taken, further interviews should be conducted, and phone calls should be made to check on the status of the victim, which will show the victim that law enforcement cares about his/her safety. Another potential policy would require that officers make several attempts to make face to face contact with the victim when serving a subpoena, not just leaving it at their doorstep. Melissa Arvin from the Marion County Prosecutor’s Office has found that victims are far more likely to go to court and that there is an increase in arrests for violations of the no contact order or protection order due to officers actually serving a subpoena face to face.

## **Education/Training**

Hamilton County law enforcement officers are required to do mandatory training each year, which is provided by the prosecutor's office, Prevail, and by Act Out. Many officers noted that the training from Act Out is redundant and there is an expressed need to diversify training. Some of the officers felt that the training should be conducted by other police officers in order to make it more relevant. Furthermore, although not applicable to all officers, some may require additional training on interactions with victims. Sensitivity training should be provided for officers, as well as training on the complexity of the cycle of violence and abuse. This training is especially important for those officers who may have experienced burnout from several years of patrolling as expressed in several key informant interviews.

Although Hamilton County does not have a large immigrant or minority population, it has a growing population. It was noted several times in key informant interviews that cultural barriers pose a significant challenge in response to domestic violence situations. Captain Ed Gebhart with the Fishers Police Department suggested, "We need to understand the different cultures and households when approaching them. Police need to understand how to approach those suspects, sometimes we are not highly trained in these areas." Immigrants may be afraid of possible legal ramifications, specifically being deported. Law enforcement needs to be educated on these cultural barriers so that they can overcome these potential issues.

## **Address Communication Barriers**

In order to better serve the immigrant population, additional steps should be taken to reduce communication barriers. One suggestion would be to create forms for victims in additional languages, specifically Spanish. Departments should also provide language lines for officers to utilize during an incident run. Lastly, the department should look into video translator programs that could be accessed via smart phones or laptops in officers' vehicles in order to communicate with the deaf community.

## **Written Reports**

It is recognized that many officers are concerned about the time invested in writing reports for something that at the time seems miniscule. For the purpose of data gathering and record keeping, it would be beneficial to have information regarding prior calls for service. DVIW feels that the advantages of written reports outweigh the disadvantages. For example, previously written police reports are used to track domestic violence offenders as part of the Baker One project. Each department should create a policy that requires officers to make police reports on all "indicator crimes", even verbal altercations. In 2009, both Noblesville and Westfield had a 100 percent match for the number of calls for service to the number of case reports written. However, the Sheriff's Department, Carmel, and Fishers all had less than a 50 percent match between the number of calls for service to the number of case reports written. Andre Miksha, Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Hamilton County encourages officers to, "Document, document, document. If it is not written in a report, it is hard to know what happened."

## **The Prosecutor's Office**

### **Create Outline**

Throughout DVIW's interview process, most law enforcement officers made it clear that the prosecutor's office does a great job providing training to law enforcement. One main concern that did

surface was that officers may need a quick reference outline to determine what information is needed in order for the prosecutor's office to file charges. This form should be limited to one page, basic, but include the most pertinent information needed in order for charges to be filed.

### **Follow-Through**

During a key informant interview, one law enforcement officer expressed a source of frustration that seemed to be a common theme, "They give us guidelines and don't always support what they say later. We are required to do certain things, they should be too." Much like other agencies, the prosecutor's office must make domestic violence cases a priority. In 2009, of the 496 prosecutor reviewed cases, 44 percent resulted in charges being filed. Additionally, charges were dismissed for half of the cases. Following through with filing charges and eventually prosecuting cases is a must. To relieve law enforcement frustrations, notifications should be sent to the arresting officer explaining why a case was dismissed or no charges were filed. This idea ties back into the concept of co-locating task forces. Amy Durall, Victim Services Manager for the Travis County (TX) Sheriff's Department, noted the importance of a task force working in the same location to relieve frustrations by maintaining open communication among all agencies and departments involved. Also, it helps to clarify what everyone's job is in responding to domestic violence cases.

### **Consistency**

By ensuring that the prosecution process is consistent, people in the community will know exactly what happens to domestic batterers, which will hopefully reinforce that domestic violence is absolutely unacceptable in Hamilton County. Also, prosecution staff should be giving consistent feedback to law enforcement officers when they call for clarification about domestic violence cases.

It was discovered through the data analysis process that the rate at which charges were filed for non-domestic battery cases were higher than domestic violence cases (53 percent vs. 44 percent). This information leads DVIW to believe that the prosecutor's office is not filing charges or prosecuting domestic violence cases consistently compared to those cases that do not involve a domestic relationship. These cases should be followed-through regardless of whether the victim is an active participant in the case prosecution. Domestic violence cases should demonstrate a higher percentage of cases filed than non-domestic battery cases because of the no-drop policy for domestic violence.

## **The Court**

### **Training**

One problem that many domestic violence courts have is that the Judge presiding over the court is not always sensitive to the needs of the victim. One law enforcement officer noted, "he [Judge Hughes] knows what the law says but not the family situation that led to the domestic violence situation and the psychology behind the problem." This follows well with what Judge Hughes had to say about his training. Judge Hughes noted that the trainings focus on legal aspects, not how to become a better domestic violence judge. It should be required that any judge that presides over a domestic violence court complete additional training to address the underlying psychological issues associated with domestic violence.

## **Risk Assessment Tool**

Probably the most feasible and least expensive recommendation for the court is implementing the domestic violence risk assessment tool earlier in the court process. Specifically, this risk tool determines whether or not a sentence of jail or prison would be the most appropriate sanction. Much like the Hamilton County, Ohio, case discussed in the literature review, it is important to first know what the risk factors are – who are the batterers who are most likely to be re-arrested in Hamilton County, Indiana? DVIW was unable to collect data on offender characteristics such as highest level of education achieved, employment status, marital status, etc. This information would be important to establish an effective risk assessment tool. Also, according to the information gathered during the literature review, if the offender has prior domestic violence arrests and more than one charge pending, they are more likely to recidivate (Gover, MacDonald, & Alpert, 2003). Creating a risk tool around these characteristics may help better determine the sanctions imposed on batterers, which in turn could reduce domestic violence in Hamilton County, Indiana. This risk assessment should be used *prior* to sentencing (also prior to a plea agreement), but preferably within two weeks of the arrest, to determine bond amounts and which sanctions would be most appropriate for the batterer.

## **Drug Court Model**

Moving towards a drug court model may be a good move for Hamilton County courts. This would work much like a diversion program. By requiring batterers to attend weekly or bi-weekly court hearings, the court is better able to monitor the offender's compliance with program requirements and protective orders. This program model would be offered to those batterers with no prior arrests for domestic battery, battery, intimidation, stalking, or invasion of privacy. It should be focused on first-time offenders only. The batterer is required to successfully complete a batterers intervention program, comply with the protective order, and complete any additional conditions (such as an education program, parenting classes, or substance abuse counseling) as determined by the court. Unlike drug courts, domestic violence courts should not dismiss charges once the batterer completes the programming. This is mainly to continue holding batterers accountable.

## **Victim Service Providers**

### **Monthly/Quarterly Reports**

Victim service providers are recommended to provide detailed monthly or quarterly reports to police departments and the court. These progress reports should include the number of cases referred to the service provider from each department. This information could subsequently be used as a measure to facilitate a more competitive atmosphere between and within agencies to determine who is actually writing reports.

### **Interpreters**

Interpreters should be readily available to help reach more people in the community. If this is not achievable in the near future or on a consistent basis, various technologies should be considered. For example, televisions or computers could be set up, similar to Skype, to allow victims to speak with someone from outside of Hamilton County (this also applies to the deaf community). This technology would allow victims to speak with someone immediately and better establish a rapport with the service provider.

## **Financial Resources**

More financial resources are needed for survivors so they can access temporary housing, where a victim can stay for up to 2 years so that they can become more self-sufficient, begin taking college-level courses, earn stable employment, etc. The Julian Center, which provides a variety of victim services, receives its funding through donations, grants, private donations, and the United Way.

## **Expanding Hours**

Victim service providers should consider doing additional research to determine what hours would be most beneficial for victims who are seeking services. Expanding hours may allow a higher number of victims to receive services. Something to consider would also be to implement a Second Responders Program as mentioned above. This may reduce departmental costs as well as reduce employee burnout.

## **Legal Services**

Many of the articles that DVIW reviewed through the research process highlighted the importance of continued contact with the victim. The initial contact of providing information regarding services to the victim is very important, but follow-up is needed. In reference to Project ASSIST, it would be beneficial if attorneys were on-call 24/7 for police officers to contact if they feel a domestic call warrants such action. The attorney would immediately contact the victim and set up a meeting the next day to discuss legal action. The attorney would then follow up with the victim to ensure that he or she follows through with obtaining a protection order. This recommendation may best be achieved through cooperation between Prevail and the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office. Andre Miksha, Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Hamilton County stated, "In my ideal world, a screener would make contact with the victim immediately, talk to them about the process and what they need." If resources prohibit the availability of attorneys to be on-call 24/7, then paralegals can also be contacted to relay information to the attorney. According to Cindy Kanusher, Deputy Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center in New York, Project ASSIST saw a significant increase in the percentage of victims obtaining temporary orders of protection. Before, it was at 48% and went up to 65% after the program was implemented. More significantly, the percentage of victims who obtained a permanent order of protection (those who followed-through with the civil court process after the initial temporary order of protection was issued, stayed with the process, went back to court and got a permanent order) went from 25% before the program existed to 87% after implementation of the program

## **Additional Research**

DVIW was given the task to make recommendations for Hamilton County law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, the court, and victim advocacy organizations. Throughout DVIW's research of this project, it was determined that additional agencies should be included in the future to fully grasp the problem of domestic violence. Other major stakeholders should include (but are not limited to) Hamilton County Probation, Indiana State Parole, Hamilton County Community Corrections, mental health professionals, healthcare providers, as well as any domestic violence counseling providers. It is a suggestion that additional research be completed within each community supervision agency to determine whether or not their supervision of domestic batterers reduces recidivism. It is also a suggestion that additional research be completed for domestic violence counseling providers to ensure that the programming that is being ordered by the court is actually effective at reducing domestic violence.

Since most projects DVIW researched focused on victim safety and the victim's satisfaction with the process, DVIW recommends that future analysis be done in order to determine what the victims of domestic violence think each agency could improve upon. Victim satisfaction surveys should be completed and focus groups conducted to give victims the chance to provide feedback on the services received.

Throughout DVIW's key informant interviews, several people noted that healthcare providers should be included in the process to reduce domestic violence. One article, ("Coordinated Community Responses to Domestic Violence in Six Communities"), reported that at least one-fifth of women who report to the emergency room show signs of domestic violence. The Center of Hope of Indianapolis provides 24/7 on-call forensic nurses who can testify in court about a victim's injuries. The Center of Hope is used mainly for sexual assault victims, but perhaps this could be broadened to include injuries of domestic violence.

Hamilton County should establish the feasibility of a family justice center like the Julian Center (in Indianapolis). The Julian Center is a "one stop shop" where victims can access legal services, counseling, emergency shelter and a detective. More data needs to be collected to determine what services are currently being accessed by victims and how often. A more central location should be created in Hamilton County as a domestic violence shelter for both the convenience and safety of victims. If a victim is able to stay closer to their comfort zones (work, school, family, friends), it is more likely the victim will be willing to seek help. In order to determine the best location, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) should be utilized. Utilizing outside resources such as the Public Policy Institute and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) could also be useful for future research. A person working with victims of domestic violence advises, when considering a family justice center, that one "do the research and really look at family justice centers around the country and look at what is the best practice, right down to the architecture...The layout makes a big difference...Take plenty of time to do the research and really look at what is working well in other places." It was highly recommended throughout the key informant interview process that a domestic violence shelter or family justice center should be considered:

- Melissa Arvin, Marion County Prosecutor, "If you put people that all care about the issue in one place then that obviously creates better working relationships."
- Dave Hildebrand, Cicero Chief of Police, "Any time a person can go in and get help from different agencies, especially centrally located, I think it needs to be identified what services are needed and how often they are needed. I think it would be hard to facilitate the resources before this information is gathered."
- Josh Kocher, Hamilton County Prosecutor, "If you make a family justice center, we are not going to just have a roof over their [victims'] heads when they need it, they would have [a] roof over their head, legal services, medical services and access to law enforcement. The victim staying involved in cases is much more likely."

## Future Policy Recommendations

DVIW recommends that Hamilton County agencies advocate for legislative action regarding domestic violence. First, in the State of Indiana “it is a higher felony to abuse an animal than it is to abuse a human being in terms of domestic battery,” Julie Marsh, CEO of Domestic Violence Network. Hamilton County should advocate making domestic battery a felony instead of a misdemeanor. Second, it is very difficult to compare Hamilton County’s progress with the rest of the nation due to Indiana being a non-UCR (Uniform Crime Report) state. As one of the few states that do not uniformly collect data for the UCR, there is no way to measure its progress on a larger scale. However, reporting to the UCR is voluntary and not every state defines domestic violence the same way.

## Key Informant Interviews

### Chief Kevin Jowitt

**1. Do you want your name to remain anonymous?**

We can use his name.

**2. Where do you work?**

Noblesville Police Department

**3. What is your job title?**

Basically I am the CEO of the Noblesville Police Department. I have responsibility for every aspect of the police department period. Functionally, I have a great deal of interaction with city government and other governmental units on behalf of the police department. I frequently get called in to make the final decision in administrative decisions; although, this has become less frequent. I am responsible for budgeting, staffing, discipline and policy. I am accountable legally to the Noblesville's Board of Public Works and Safety; realistically my boss is the Mayor, with my statutory boss being the Board.

**4. How long have you worked at your place of business?**

3 years in Noblesville, but law enforcement for over 30 years.

**5. What is your current view of the domestic violence system in Hamilton County?**

I think we could make a lot of improvements in little ways. Processes tend to move more slowly than they should. Everything that I have read says that the more rapidly the legal process moves, the more effective the final result is. We do many things well and we are blessed with people and resources. The nature of government is to have delays. One thing we could do better is remove some delays. We have not done a good job of utilizing the most effective ways to deal with this problem and looking into whether we are meeting victims' needs. The analysis we need after this one would need to come from victims themselves. National research has been done that would suggest what victim needs are. It depends a lot on financial resources and our demographic. Or what they really need from social service agencies. Those would be the big three needs. I don't receive the same amount of training as patrol officers. We are required to receive some training annually. It is usually training through scenarios. Prosecutor's office offers training when statutes change. Prevail does training too and the goal is to provide different training with domestic violence calls. I don't get an operational training from what the State requires. I probably had more experience when I was Police Chief in Westfield, the population was larger; there were cultural differences that officers don't always understand but need to. The cultural differences don't change our laws, but in addition to the language barrier, some of the cultural differences produce different behaviors. Some populations are more prone to domestic violence and they look at it differently than we do. In some cultures, violence against women is much more acceptable than it is in the United States. I don't know if we do a good job in training with that. We do not have a large immigrant population in Noblesville. We have a population in Noblesville that is second generation Appalachian, they come from a part of the country where certain practices were more accepted. These behaviors tend to pass from generation to generation. The firestone plant after World War II brought in many workers from Appalachia, West Virginia, and the people ended up staying here. We have a different regional perspective after dealing with this group. I think our department sees more of that than immigrant population. Another issue with immigrants involves the Hispanic population; police departments in their home countries tend to be very corrupt which is why Hispanics are less likely to call the police making it incredibly difficult to build their trust. Regarding male victims, I don't see this type of victims regularly

anymore; male victims have reluctance to report. Being beaten by an intimate partner is not considered a manly thing.

**6. What problems do you see with the domestic violence system currently?**

I don't think we can say that what we are doing is what actually works best. We don't know this is in line with evidence-based practice. Everything that we are told is that this is a cycle and there are things we can do to help fix it. Most of our actions and policies that we work with now are not really based on any current best practices research. We are not approaching this as a system; there is a disconnect between all the different agencies and organizations working in domestic violence. I think that if we were hitting this well, there would be more interaction between the people working in the system with common goals and common viewpoints. A lot of what we are doing now is based on practices from the 1980s and 1990s and has not really been reviewed in 10-15 years. Can we say that this is the path that we should stay on? We have social service providers that do not even know about each other and really need to be linked up. This is the same problem when it comes to victims knowing what is available.

**7. What positives do you see regarding the domestic violence system currently?**

In Hamilton County, we are fortunate with good hardworking, smart, honest people that are working in the criminal justice system in all levels. We are blessed financially. Government has gotten more austere over the last few years. We are a resource rich county and have organization that do a tremendous amount to help victims. It is more about how to orchestrate what we already have more efficiently and effectively. We are in a good situation; although, I think that the resources we do possess can present problems as well. When you have so much, it takes even more effort to make sure that we know what is available.

**8. Has your department made any recent changes in your approach to domestic violence?**

I don't really know. Not on a policy level. I have tried to change the views in policing. We have lost this mainly as purpose to end police corruption but it also separated them from the community. It did stop corruption; I have never seen real police corruption. One of the ways we fixed it unfortunately resulted in less crime fighting. It is much more ethics based policing. I believe ultimately we should have the same cops working in particular areas with police rotating every night. Nobody ever gets to know the cops in their areas. It is difficult for cops to establish close relationships with areas. Our model of policing is driving around in cars waiting for things to happen. Because we are out of touch with neighborhoods, we are much less likely to be stopped on the street and talked to and trusted. If we were out in the community more and had closer relationships, we would have cops finding out about domestic violence situations more. We are missing some things by policing this way, but it is difficult to make a quick turn and change occurs slowly.

**9. What changes would you like to make in your agency in regards to your approach to domestic violence?**

I think change in emphasis in how we police will change the impact we have on domestic violence in our county. Building repertoire, trust and relationships will help. I would love to see us have our own in-house victim's assistance program where we could have our own people here for the citizens of Noblesville that deal with citizens on behalf of the city. We would be able to be more in touch and more personal. It is difficult to pull resources away from the police department to aid another organization; it is expensive. Different aspects of co-location have been talked about; I don't know if I view that as a good solution though. I think there are other things that we could do that are less expensive and would do more. I like the idea of a detective coming to Prevail; it would take away fear and would provide an informational resource. That is why we are struggling so much with what we need to do. I think there are a lot of things that we could do

better as a criminal justice system that were not addressed by the Family Justice Center. If in fact the criminal justice system is the best way to break the domestic violence cycle, then it is on us to make it better. I would like to do more preventative measures than just victim rehabilitation after the event happens. Follow up issues are important too.

**10. What improvements do you think other agencies could make to improve their approach to domestic violence?**

We have to function as a system and we need to look at it all together. We tend to get focused on individual parts and need to understand how the whole system can function more effectively together. We all need to work to move together.

**11. Are there any policies or laws that inhibit your ability to deal with domestic violence?**

Cops still do their jobs no matter what laws are out there. I do not feel good about Senate Bill 1 at all. I don't think that legislatures are going to realize this until there are dramatic outcomes. I think that the legislative system has done a good job of recognizing needs and rights of victims. Until this bill, most of what has come out of the legislature has been pro-victim.

**12. How do you view your relationships with other agencies?**

Good, we get along pretty well.

**13. How do you think your agency can better ensure victim safety?**

A community focused policing style would make people feel more involved in the community. Police can appear very uncompassionate. I don't want police to view domestic violence calls as just another call. I want police to be able to see the human being and vice versa. We are not social workers, we are police officers and there is a big difference. I think that a compassionate cop is what we are shooting for. Mindset is such an important part of how people do their job; I think rebuilding this would go a long way.

**14. Do you think your agency should have a larger role in working in domestic violence?**

This is difficult to answer. In the nature of what police do, we have to walk a very narrow beam between protecting society and not encroaching on civil liberties. Yet we are the armed component of government, people do not call us on good days and the danger of us getting overly involved in any issue can produce real or perceived non-constitutional government intrusion in people's lives. I think the role we play comes with the nature of our approach to the problem. Are we doing the things that are best for keeping the problem from reoccurring? We have to keep the victim safe, we have to deal with the perpetrator; our objective is not to punish, it is to bring people before the court to answer for violating the law. The goal is to make this stop. Punishment is sometimes what needs to happen, but in some cases what would be meaningful to make the family violence stop. Many children that grow up in domestic violence tend to continue the trend of violence. Our greater role should be to do what we can to "turn crazy back into normal."

**15. Are there any other individuals or agencies that you think we should contact during our research? (Snowballing)**

## **Captain Brad Arnold**

**1. Do you want your name to remain anonymous?**

No, we can quote him.

**2. Where do you work?**

Noblesville Police Department

**3. What is your job title?**

I am in charge of the patrol division. It is broken into 3 divisions (patrol, investigations, support). There are 48 officers in the patrol division.

**4. How long have you worked at your place of business?**

I am in my 18<sup>th</sup> year at Noblesville Police Department.

**5. What is your current view of the domestic violence system in Hamilton County?**

I would agree with chief that there is some recidivism; especially in Hamilton County, I know we have quite a bit of reports we do each year: 60-70 arrests for domestic violence per year. We do a good job of reporting it by using a pro-enforcement approach to domestic violence, and an on-call prosecutor to establish if enough probable cause exists. Male victims rare in domestic violence offenses and I can't say it is on the rise. With domestic violence, it is immediately assumed that the male is the perpetrator, but there are definitely a certain percentage of females committing battery. In regards to diversity, it is across the board with our population predominantly being white but we do have a small Latino population and other immigrant minorities. In regards to training, the state mandates a certain amount of across the board training and it does touch on domestic violence and roll-call status as well. We used to have experts, two officers who had gone to more extensive schooling to pass information on, but I do not think they have done that recently.

**6. What problems do you see with the system?**

I don't know, it's tougher for me. I've been off the road for 11 years. We have a pretty good system. Our reports are thorough six page reports that cover a lot of different risk factors and we track the escalation to see if things are getting worse. Prevail helps and we refer all of our cases to Prevail. We have a prosecutor's office who likes to prosecute when they can, making sure officers can get the best evidence and statements that they can. We don't have too many problems from my perspective.

**7. What positive things do you see in the system?**

Again with at least from our agency we do a good job in the fact that we report every case that we go to. There are some times where officers would know if it was a domestic situation or not. We try to teach them what a domestic relationship is and what qualifies. It is not a discretionary choice by the officer. If there is a disturbance that qualifies as a domestic, we do the report. When there is probable cause we make the arrest. We do a good job to collect evidence and know what it takes to get a conviction. Preferably, we have video cameras in all of our cars. A written situation does not do as much with true emotion; we want to show what the victim is stating and capture their true emotions on video. We follow up and have a separate sheet on the Prevail form that gives lots of options for people. Prevail follows-up and does their job. The people often hate to call the police in the first place; the victim services center shows there is support and additional services. We do not want to have to go back to the address. Making an arrest is our best way of stopping things immediately. We understand the case and what takes place, we try to capture all that information in the evidence. Prevail is sometimes called to the scene if the officer thinks that

something more immediate needs to take place. Some officers have used them. I am off the road so I don't see it first-hand anymore. I don't know how often.

- 8. Has your agency made any recent changes in their approach to domestic violence?**  
No, not that I know of; the thing that we have really implemented is making sure there are more audio and video statements from the victims.
- 9. What changes would you make to your agency to better approach Domestic Violence?**  
In a perfect world, it would be great for us to do what Prevail does and follow up, letting victims know that we care. We just don't have the available people to do that. We take all sorts of calls but we don't have that free time. Chief Jowitt has really tried to get us into the community policing approach and the follow-up would be a great way to do that. Many times by making an arrest or not making the arrest, we are still the bad guy even in our efforts to protect them. It would be nice to do something positive or proactive. When called to the scene everyone is usually upset and it is a no win situation for the police.
- 10. What improvements do you think other agencies could make to better approach domestic violence?**  
I will refrain from saying anything because I do not know what their policies are. I don't really pay attention to what they do. I am too far removed from what is working and what is not.
- 11. Are there any policies or laws that inhibit your ability to deal with the current domestic violence situation?**  
No, however, the recent passage of Senate Bill 1 is going to put a damper on what they do. We obviously know there is probable cause but if they do not agree, they have the right to defend themselves. This will affect many calls in general. The typical citizen does not know what probable cause is, but now they will use this as an excuse. People will get injured on both sides. Up until this point, the law has encouraged us to make these arrests and the courts try to get convictions as best they can. I think it is hard that the victim is the key piece of evidence and it makes it harder when the victim does not cooperate. There are many reasons why they tend to pull back and are less than cooperative.
- 12. How do you view your relationships with other agencies working in domestic violence?**  
I think the relationships are very good. Across the board Hamilton County is blessed in as far as the police departments are tight knit. We are more than happy to assist each other, we share officers when necessary. The county has grown and many borders touch now. The prosecutor's office works well too, we are very open with communication and this is not always the case in other counties. There are turf wars and that does not exist here as much.
- 13. How do you think your agency could better serve to ensure victim safety?**  
Again trying to be more proactive in the community to let people know what we can and cannot do. Something more long-range would be a unit or at least a person to follow up on a lot of these calls, especially the severe ones, to make sure they are in touch with the right people for assistance. That is hampered by budget constraints and it is tough to find those extra people around. We do not do a lot of public education for domestic violence; we have done some education on cybercrimes and things for parents to be aware of and we have had an officer teach self-defense.
- 14. Do you think that your agency should have a larger role in working in domestic violence in Hamilton County?**

We do our part. Each segment has their own role and responsibility but that does not mean that we could not do more. We should be more proactive with community education and following up with victims.

**15. Are there any other individuals or agencies that you think we should contact during our research? (Snowballing)**

Front line officers could tell more day to day action about calls. Officers that work in the night squads could tell you more about domestic violence calls since this is the time of day most of that occurs. A sergeant would be good to talk to as well since they respond to the scenes. This feedback would be useful as I cannot see what shortcomings they are currently dealing with.

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