



**Batterer Intervention Program Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
July 23, 2021; 9:00 am to 11:00 am  
Remote video meeting**

**In Attendance:**

Amy Benedum, Melissa Erlbaum, Susana Escobedo, Nathaline Frener, Chris Huffine, Maureen Lowell, Eric Mankowski

**Absent:** Steve Berger, Vivien Bliss, Don Chapin, Aaron Hartman, Shannon Sivell

**Minutes:** Sherree Rodriguez

**Welcome/Opening**

Eric welcomed the group and declared a quorum present.

**Minutes Approval** – The AC approved the minutes of the April meeting, which will be posted to the Department of Justice website.

**New Mexico BIP Conference Update – Chris Huffine**

The New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NMCADV) hosted a Battering Intervention Program (BIP) Conference in June (23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>), attended by participants from the national and international community. Chris Huffine presented at and participated in the conference. Highlights here also reflect information he has gleaned from a weekly Friday meeting hosted by Michigan Battering Intervention Services Coalition. The subject matter was primarily about BIP work post-COVID.

*Key Take-aways include:*

- New Mexico has the third highest poverty rate in the county, yet they also have a very strong Domestic Violence Coalition and fully fund BIP programs.
- Programs have a varied response to COVID – some shut down completely, some met continually in person with and without masking restrictions in place. Some met individually by phone, but the majority have been using video conferencing.
- Video Conference Software (VCS) research was in progress prior to and throughout COVID, with findings of pros and cons of the VCS process. On that subject, Chris provided information from the Family Peace Initiative (of Kansas), Melissa Petrangelo Scaia, the Work With Perpetrators Covid-19 revision of practice toolkit, and a European research group (Bellini & Westmarland, 2021) that conducted a study over a one-year period, beginning in 2019. Sherree sent these reports during the meeting by email.
- The consensus is that in-person classes are superior for this work, without masking if possible.
- VCS allows for national BIP groups that can accommodate various languages.
- Survivor safety is of utmost concern.
- Additional challenges include whether to require masks or not, if proof of vaccination should be required, whether to require people to meet in person and how to manage potential lawsuits.
- Other discussions addressed trauma-informed care, parenting, managing contact with partners, how to label participants, prevention, coordinated community response, and cultural issues including oppression.



#### *Other points made*

- Court groups are working to come up with recommendations around in-person vs remote meetings. Data is not yet being tracked. Judges tend to prefer remote meetings to in-person meetings with masks in order to observe facial expressions.
- There was not general agreement in the BIP AC recommending in-person vs remote meetings as some felt that the programs would be better suited to make those determinations. The group discussed creating a paper that highlights the pros and cons for each type of meeting.

#### **Upcoming Demonstration Project – Eric Mankowski**

Eric noted that the Strength at Home Demonstration Project has not yet been received and encouraged the AC to familiarize themselves with the information sent out after the April BIP meeting.

#### **Group Updates**

- Eric asked Sherree to assist with getting a subcommittee meeting on the calendar.
- COVID – Washington County is surveying programs in the Portland metro area about COVID practices and results. The group suggested adding questions and putting it on the listserv.
- Courts – court cases are now mostly caught up. They have concerns this was because of a lower-than-normal rate of reporting crimes.  
The Domestic Violence Subcommittee is making recommendations to extend the duration of protection orders from one to five years.
- Anger Management – a BIP provider on the coast has been asked by a judge to provide a short-term anger management program. This is of concern because they conflict with BIP best practice.

#### **ACTION STEPS:**

- Sherree will send out an email to the group to determine if moving the October meeting to Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> is feasible.
- Chris:
  - Reach out to Pam Wiseman of the NMCADV about speaking to the AC about how New Mexico secured funding for BIP work.
  - Reach out to Dave Garvin to learn more about states that have taken legal action against websites using asynchronous learning programs.
  - Connect with the coastal BIP provider to learn more details about the Anger Management referral to see ways the AC can support him.
- Chris and Eric will connect to set up the listserv COVID survey.
- The AC will review information Sherree sent out about demonstration project review on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Upcoming meeting topics**

- Strength at Home Demonstration Project (if submitted)
- AC Membership
- COVID updates
- Subcommittee updates

*Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am*

*Remaining Scheduled 2021 Meeting:*

- *Friday, October 22, 9:00-11:30 am*