

Reading the Signs

For participants in the MNADV's Lethality Assessment Program for First Responders

LAP Expansion

National

Byrne Initiative. In the last newsletter we reported on the selection of 8 jurisdictions in five states involving 26 law enforcement agencies and 8 domestic violence programs—**Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, New Hampshire, and Oregon**—to implement the LAP. After we traveled to the locations in April and May to meet and train the participating agencies and programs, the five states implemented the LAP in June and all participated in an evaluation roundtable at the Maritime Institute in September. They have been gathering and reporting on the same data that we have in Maryland. What we see in these reports from different jurisdictions is consistency in outcomes, and results indicating high levels of performance.

Participants	Population	Screens	'Spoke to'	Services
Byrne States	1.6 million	1,127 screens (1/360 people per year, 12.3 screens/day)	73%	31%
Maryland	4.1 million	2,672 screens (1/377 people per year, 24.1 screens/day)	65%	33%

Other States. In addition, we have provided training to the following jurisdictions in 5 states:

- **Delaware** State Police and People's Place
- Barre City, **Vermont**
- Alachua County (including Gainesville and the University of Florida PDs, **Florida** (see related article)
- 12 of 13 programs and a number of law enforcement agencies in **Mississippi**
- 7 law enforcement agencies, including Oklahoma City and Tulsa PDs, and 8 programs in **Oklahoma** as part of a research grant to validate the Lethality Screen.

In Maryland

Law Enforcement. We now have **95** law enforcement agencies that have either implemented, involved in training, or committed to the LAP. That's **85%** of the agencies that respond to calls for service. Over the coming year we will work in Prince George's County with the Family Crisis Center to bring the municipalities in that county on board. This would virtually complete the law enforcement phase of the LAP.

Other Disciplines. As we reported in the last newsletter, we have now moved to the next phase of LAP development. Over this past year we have worked with **Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin and Frederick Memorial Hospital, the Faith Community in Montgomery County, and the Department of Social Services in Harford**. In all cases we have completed protocol development and have either trained or preparing to train so that all these entities can implement the LAP in their communities in the very near future.

How are We Measuring Up ?

2009 Objectives through June:

- ✓ **90** screens, average per agency: **123**
- ✓ **60%** "spoke to" percentage: **62%**
- ✓ **29%** of victims who spoke on the phone would go in for services: **32%**
- ✗ **04%** of victims did not answer the screen: **08%**
- ✗ **50%** of agencies below screens/population: **48%**
- ✗ **53%** of agencies at or above "spoke to" average of 60%: **52%**
- ✓ **70%** of agencies at or below "Did Not Answer" avg. of 04%: **71%** (34 with 0%)

LAP Annual Award Winner

In October, the **Westminster Police Department** was given the LAP Award at the MNADV's 2009 Annual Awards Luncheon! Why did they win? Among other reasons, two points stand out boldly: Westminster officers successfully encouraged 93% of High Risk victims to speak to a hotline worker. And of those victims from Westminster who spoke on the phone, 56% of them, through the mutual encouragement of both the officer and the hotline worker, went into services! We would like to pay special tribute to the men and women of the **Westminster Police Department and Chief Jeff Spaulding** for their commitment to saving lives.



Congratulations to the **Alachua County Sheriff's Office and Peaceful Paths, Gainesville, Florida** for becoming the first non-Byrne jurisdiction to implement the LAP. The ACSO/Peaceful Paths started, after 2 months of in-service training, on September 1st. Laura Knudson of the ACSO, the LAP coordinator, reports they have done about 50 screens, with a high "spoke to" rate, and 8 victims going into services. The screens, which are computerized, are sent immediately after the call to Peaceful Paths, the ACSO domestic violence unit, and the prosecutor's office, and follow-ups are done shortly after administration.

Hotline Guidelines



After a year of development, we completed the **"Guidelines for Conversation between the Hotline Worker and Victim"** in March. The purpose of the

guidelines is to improve the effectiveness of the brief communication between the hotline worker and the victim at the scene of a domestic call. Because of the training schedule we were on, we taught the guidelines in 10 other states before having the opportunity to train our own program staffs. We conducted three train-the-trainer sessions and trained 37 advocates from 19 Maryland programs and People's Place in Delaware and two other agencies. All participants were provided with training materials to train their own staffs. We are hopeful that the use of the guidelines will improve our "services" rate. An evaluation by our Byrne partners revealed the guidelines have been constructive.

Important Dates:

- **11/20/09:**
"Follow-up" Practices Roundtable
- **6/10/2010:**
Statewide LAP Conference

Both are FREE!

Administering Screens After TPO Hearings



Four counties are now administering screens after Temporary Protective Order hearings: Harford, Montgomery, Carroll, and now Frederick. In two quarters the **Carroll County Sheriff's Office** and **Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland** have partnered to compile the following remarkable numbers:

Total Screens: 132 (.7/day)
High Danger: 088 (67%)
"Spoke to": 074 (84%)
"Services": 042 (58%)

How Are We Really Doing?

Pretty good!

It is often difficult to gauge how well a program is doing in terms of results, success. Those are often elusive goals. But we do measure and we see from those measurements that as a state, with all the individual law enforcement agencies and domestic violence programs partnering and contributing, we are doing exceptionally well. How could we think otherwise:

- when, in the second quarter of 2009, we achieved the highest "spoke to" rate ever at 65%,
- when over the first six months of the year, 532 High Danger victims (nearly 3 a day) went into services,
- When more and more people are looking at the LAP as a legitimate, effective tool.



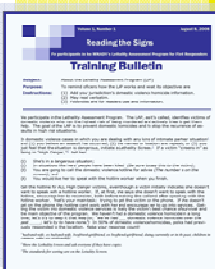
Room for improvement.

That isn't to say we are doing perfectly, however. We're seeing perhaps two trends: (1) when a High Danger victim initially declines to speak with the hotline, the officer is sometimes not making the call; and (2) our "spoke to" rate in the third quarter declined significantly. We need to improve in these areas to get more High danger victims into services.

Still impressive nonetheless!

And in two larger agencies to whom the "no call" matter was raised, this is how they improved in one quarter: one agency went from a 53% call rate on High Danger cases to 79% when the matter was called to their attention; the other agency went from a 57% rate to 79%. Dramatic increases in both agencies, allowing for many more victims to go into services since both jurisdictions usually achieve about 50% of their victims going into services! What impressive responses by these two agencies!

Training Bulletins



- **Training Bulletin, Vol. 2, No. 2** (August) addressing when to administer the screen and when to call the hotline.
- **Training Bulletin, Vol. 2, No. 3** (November) about getting High Danger victims to speak with the hotline.
- Go to www.mnadv.org, at the lethality assessment link.

Great Read!

For advocates and others trying to better organize their community's response to domestic violence. **"Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond,"** Ellen L. Pence and Melanie F. Shepard, Editors, Sage Publications, 1999.

