

**WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT OF PROVIDING DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE EDUCATION TO SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN IN THE  
CITY OF BREA BY THE YEAR 2005?**

JOURNAL ARTICLE

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**This Command College Independent Study Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.**

**Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.**

**Managing the future means influencing the future--creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.**

**The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).**

## INTRODUCTION

The screaming and sobbing of the six year old girl almost made the information she was relaying to the police dispatcher unintelligible. Between sobs you could hear "Please, please daddy no, you'll hurt the baby," and "Oh please help me, my daddy and mommy are having a fight." The dispatcher attempts to keep her composure, but it is nearly impossible given the heart rending pleading coming from the little girl. In the background an adult male and female can be heard fighting, both verbally and physically, as well, the sounds of a crying infant are apparent. This situation was tape recorded from the police dispatch center in the San Diego Police Department. Six year old "Lisa" had called 9-1-1 when her father had begun to strike her mother during a verbal argument. By the end of the tape, it seems as though the only responsible person present at the scene is Lisa as she attempts to get both parties to stop the violence and to think of the baby who is being held by the mother. Eventually, police officers arrive, the father is arrested for domestic violence and the mother is transported to the hospital for head injuries suffered during the fight.

Similar scenes are played out frequently throughout the country, in fact a woman is beaten in her home every 15 seconds.<sup>1</sup> Some of these incidents have seemingly lesser consequences (from a physical injury standpoint) and some result in permanent injury and even death. In the majority of these cases there is one serious consequence that has not been sufficiently addressed, the psychologically damaged children. We, as a society, have brought domestic violence issues to the forefront of public concern. Laws have been passed to insure that violators are arrested even in the

absence of a “willing victim”. Research has shown that victims (women are victims in 95% of all domestic violence crimes)<sup>2</sup> are not willing or able to press charges against violators for a variety of reasons. This means that the children who are exposed to domestic violence are usually repeatedly exposed over a long period of time. One study indicates that 63% of batterers came from families where the father had beaten the mother.<sup>3</sup> This indicates a learned behavior pattern that is sometimes carried from generation to generation. Couple this with the fact that children are present in 41-55% of homes where police intervene on domestic violence calls, and the widespread impact is staggering.<sup>4</sup> The effect of this violence is not only felt in the home, it is reflected in our crime rates as a whole. 38% percent of youths from non-violent families reported involvement in some type of violence. However, 78% of youths exposed to violence at home participated in violent acts.<sup>5</sup> There have been numerous studies documenting the effects of children’s exposure to violence, both in and outside the family environment. The following list shows thirteen of the most common effects:

#### CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN A VIOLENT ENVIRONMENT

1. Learn to accept violence as a means of conflict-solution and often fail to develop inner controls.
2. Learn to maintain control of others by using threats of violence.
3. Learn that loved ones have the right to hurt one another.
4. Often feel guilty for the violence between their parents or for the violence toward themselves.
5. Feel angry toward one or both parents.
6. Experience anxiety and fear.
7. Often “protect the abuser in the face of outside intervention.”

8. Have sleep disturbances such as bed-wetting problems, nightmares, and insomnia.
9. Have difficulties in school such as staying awake, concentrating on work, playing with peers.
10. Have poor appetites.
11. Often confuse love and violence.
12. Learn unhealthy sex-role stereotypes from parents.
13. Grow up to be abusers of their own mates or children.<sup>6</sup>

This journal article focuses on the issue of providing domestic violence education to school aged students for the purpose of ending the cycle of family violence. Surely, a society has no greater calling than to care for it's children. This study focuses on the Brea Police Department, an Orange County California municipal police agency, serving two cities with a combined population of 90,000 residents. The Brea Police Department is contracted by the City of Yorba Linda for police services. For the purposes of this study only the City of Brea was considered.

## **BACKGROUND**

Although the purpose of this journal article focuses on understanding the potential impact of domestic violence education on young people, it is important to begin by reflecting on the history of domestic violence. Domestic violence involves the use of force, threats and intimidation by one partner upon another in order for the dominating partner to exercise control over the victim.<sup>7</sup>

Historically, domestic violence has roots that begin with the laws of chastisement dating back to mid 700 B. C. These laws basically made it legal and correct for a man to beat his wife for various and often unspecified reasons. Domestic violence has been greatly influenced by religion in most societies. Many religions have gone as far as condoning physical abuse of women by their husbands or partners. Much of the domestic violence issue has to do with gender issues and the way society views the relationship between the sexes. In the Christian church the man is often times viewed as the ruler of the house and the woman plays a more subservient role. By accepting male domination, the Christian church has, for centuries, contributed to social and legal systems which have served to hold women in lower regard than men.<sup>8</sup> In society women have been subservient to their fathers until they were married and then continued that role with their husbands. English common law allowed a man to beat his wife as long as the stick or rod had a circumference that was no greater than the girth of his thumb [this is where the phrase 'Rule of Thumb' originated].<sup>9</sup> The Church's role in the issue of domestic violence has varied from encouraging abuse of women to recommending moderation in administering physical punishment. Although the recommendation of using physical violence against women may be unacceptable in our society today, it still occurs in many other places around the world. Many cultures still view women as personal property for men. For a man to use intimidation and abuse to control a woman is therefore perfectly acceptable. Laws that were designed to deal with domestic violence, even as far back as the times of the Plymouth Colony, were thought of as nothing more than a method to differentiate between "the correct amount of force" and actual abuse. However, there were only 12 cases of domestic

violence prosecuted in the Plymouth Colony between 1633 and 1802.<sup>10</sup> By these figures one can only imagine the amount of physical violence that was necessary to warrant the involvement of the legal authorities. In 1871, Alabama became the first State to rescind a husband's right to beat his wife, noting that the "wife had the right to the same protection of the law that the husband can invoke for himself...".<sup>11</sup> Reality was that there were very few prosecutions under this or any other laws passed by the States mainly due to the fact that family violence, especially as it pertained to women, was considered a private matter that was best handled within the family. Although the first half of the twentieth century included changes in the legal system in our country to address the issue of domestic violence, many factors made them ineffective. Women were discouraged from bringing any abuse situations to light in order not to jeopardize the family unit. Those women who opted to press charges had no protection and were usually left homeless or at best with a considerable reduction in their style of living.

In the 1960's the domestic violence issue was brought to the forefront as a result of the women's movement which sensitized women to many gender related inequities. In 1964 Haven House, the first shelter for battered women and their children opened in Pasadena, CA. Also, the mid 1960's saw the first published works on the battered child syndrome, which increased public awareness of violence in the family. The growth of victim assistance groups in the 1970's also worked to bring the issue to light for mainstream society. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration played a lead role in encouraging States to get involved with the domestic violence problem to a greater degree. This organization provided funding for 23 programs between 1976 and 1981 for services including, shelters for women and children,

special prosecution units, treatment facilities and programs for batterers, mediation units, and civil legal interventions.<sup>12</sup> Although treatment programs became more widely available, the majority were voluntary and did not address the most violent offenders (these offenders typically do not believe they have a problem). These programs had ludicrously low attendance rates and did little to impact the domestic violence problem. Some activists believed that the mere existence of these programs and the subsequent publicity at least served to keep the topic of family violence in the public eye. The general public was further educated regarding the level of domestic violence in society by the release of epidemiological data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA, regarding the level of violence within adult relationships.<sup>13</sup>

The criminal justice system continued to treat domestic violence as a family problem, and police officers were trained to separate the couple for the time being without any regard for the long term consequences. Any steps necessary to avoid arrest or formal involvement in the system were taken. Many police manuals actually stated that arrest of the batterer was to be avoided whenever possible in responding to family violence.<sup>14</sup> In fact, police training in domestic disputes had nothing to do with long term problem solving and rather dealt with the potential violence officers might encounter in family fights. It was during this time in history that officers began to be criticized for their lack of concern for victims of domestic violence and the subsequent lack of information regarding referral services.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1980's there were a number of successful lawsuits filed against police departments by battered women who alleged a lack of enforcement of laws and failure

to protect.<sup>16</sup> Because of these situations special units were developed in police agencies and district attorney's offices for the sole purpose of providing better service to the victims of family violence. In the court systems, violators were ordered into treatment and counseling programs as part of convictions or plea bargains. The court system also saw the first successful defense cases in which women were found not guilty of murdering their partners due to demonstrated histories of domestic abuse.

It wasn't until the 1990's that domestic violence was seen as a problem that permeated our society. There were record numbers of studies and surveys that indicated the depth of the family violence issue. One overriding theme to this research was that women were the victims of abuse in the vast majority of the cases. Studies also began to look at the fact that many cases of "family abuse" were in situations where the batterer and the victim were not married or living together. Even though most States had laws that dealt with the growing problem of domestic violence, there was only one facet of these laws that involved education and that was mandated treatment programs for batterers (virtually all of whom were male). These programs have varied reputations as to success, and recidivism rates still run high in many programs even after treatment.

It is the focus of this research to concentrate on the long term benefit of domestic violence education for young people to effect positive change in this very serious and difficult problem. Historically, there has been no wide spread attempt to lessen the prevalence and impact of domestic abuse through the long term approach of educating the young people of our society.

## Findings

Trend and event analysis was conducted prior to developing a strategy and planning for transition management issues. Personal interviews with experts in the fields of domestic violence, professional educators, law enforcement, city government and members of the public were conducted in order to clearly understand what the future might hold in regard to the focus of this study over the next eight years.

In discussions with noted domestic violence expert and co-author of “It Could Happen To Anyone-Why Battered Women Stay” Alyce D. LaViolette, she was asked her opinion as to the solution regarding the continued high recidivism rate among batterers who attend mandatory therapy after offending. Without hesitation she responded, “The answer is the children, we must begin some form of domestic violence education if we are going to positively effect the future of the family violence problem”. She added that it was important to continue to try and help the current batterers, but that their “socialization” or lack of proper socialization had already occurred. Further, she stated that much of the problem is related to the way the genders see and deal with one another. There is, according to LaViolette, no gender and role re-socialization occurring in the home and currently none being conducted in the schools.

Lengthy discussions were also held with Leah Aldridge, M.F.A. project director for the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women (LACAAW). Aldridge related that in her work with teens she has seen that much of the relationship problems experienced by adults is already occurring. These include assault, power and

control issues, and rape. She agreed with LaViolette's opinion that we must begin to teach young people proper relationship skills, and we must do it at ages prior to the formation of dating relationships. In her experience much of the teen dating problems she encounters are related to or have been effected by poor or non-existent relationship role models in the home.

These two experts were in agreement that the future of the domestic violence issue is tied to the successful proper socialization of our young people. In order to assess the possible future of this issue, forecasting was utilized.

Trend and event forecasting is arguably one of the most effective methods used by organizations to identify issues and assist in developing plans that are relevant and timely.

In this study, in addition to personal interviews, group discussions and readings, the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was used for achieving consensus on the answer to a single question. The NGT process is, for lack of a better description, a structured brain storming session. The process includes both individual and collaborative work in a group setting. The group is comprised of experts in fields related to the issue, but not necessarily related directly to the issue. In the case of this study there were experts in education that had no special knowledge in the field of domestic violence. The focus of the group is to develop emerging trends that will effect the issue and to evaluate and rank those trends according to the degree of impact that is anticipated.

The panel agreed on several emerging trends and events that would have a great deal of impact on the issue and reached consensus as to the rank order of these trends and events. The trend of increased level of student knowledge and understanding of

domestic violence was identified as being very important to the issue. The panel related this trend along with the trend of increasing reported cases of domestic violence. With the increase in substance abuse comes increased violence, both within and outside the family unit. The panel cited the level of substance abuse as being very important to the issue.

Cultural diversity within the City of Brea was important to the panel since there are increases expected in the Asian and Hispanic populations which are traditionally patriarchal-based cultures. Since women's rights are not necessarily respected in the native countries of these cultures, the panel saw these gender and relationship differences as being important to the issue. The children of these families will have to contend with conflicting information and cultures in the event that domestic violence education was implemented.

The panel saw an emerging trend of further legislative involvement relative to domestic violence as being critical to the issue. The continued enactment of domestic violence laws and the level of support systems were seen as two trends that would greatly effect each other, as well as the issue. The panel discussed current legislation intended to mandate domestic violence education. This process is to be carried out in a collaborative environment between schools and police. The panel also felt that there was little chance of this legislation passing.

Another important emerging trend identified by the panel was the level of institutional policy changes in the school board and the department of education. The panel felt that the past had indicated a desire on the part of these institutions to become involved in "quality of life programs" (these have included DARE and teen pregnancy

prevention classes). This trend was seen as having a positive influence on the issue of providing domestic violence education to school age students. The panel felt that even if such a program could not be implemented within the school system, the support from these institutions for the subject matter being taught in another environment would be beneficial.

In the area of events the panel recognized several key one time occurrences that could greatly impact the issue. They identified the event of a prominent community figure being involved in or charged with domestic violence creating a scandal within the community. This event would cause the citizens of the City of Brea to be more aware of the issues revolving around domestic violence and the need for education. The panel also saw the potential for a radical change in the political environment from liberal to conservative (within the City Council) as being an event that could reduce the support for an educational program that focused on domestic violence and young people. The panel felt that more conservative governments are less likely to become involved in quality of life issues as they may see these subjects as being best taught in the home.

Three fictitious scenarios were developed from the forecasting efforts of the NGT panel process. The scenarios were a compilation of the emerging trends and events that were identified by the panel. The theme of these scenarios were representative of the “most feared” the “most desired” and the “most likely” future. The purpose of scenario development is to assist the organization in planning for the future by making better decisions today. These scenarios, or future stories as they have been called, are tools for identifying forces that move the future in different

directions. A future that has been planned for and anticipated is always more desirable.

The scenario chosen for this paper was representative of the “most likely” to occur and the setting is the year 2003. The scenario takes place in a school classroom where an officer of the Brea Police Department is beginning a class in domestic violence education. The scenario chronicles the history of the program and tells of one child’s response to the material taught in the “Domestic Violence Education Program”.

### SCENARIO

Officer Willie started his teaching day at 8:00 am this morning. It was now 10:05 am and he was about to begin his core class at Faircrest Elementary School. He stepped into Mrs. Bond’s sixth grade class and headed eagerly towards the smiling faces that greeted him. The date was February 10, 2003, and Officer Willie had been a school resource officer for the city of Brea for three years.

It was only two years ago that the “ Domestic Violence Education Program” had been adopted into the Placentia Yorba Linda Unified School District. It was adopted into the existing school curriculum as a pilot program to increase the student knowledge and understanding of domestic violence. The chief authored this idea of domestic violence education training back in 1997. It took nearly six years for our program to be accepted into the teaching curriculum of the public school system.

It started back in 1998 when we first brought our idea to the Brea Community Center. Here we targeted “at risk” kids. An “at risk” child is one who displays behavior and discipline problems, poor social skills, low self esteem, possibly

committing crimes, and does not have any positive role models. The program got a lot of attention from the media, praising it as a success. As a result of the rising notoriety, this program was brought to the attention of the "Shortstop" program. We invited members of their staff to review our curriculum and consider including it into their already existing program. "Shortstop" is an alternative to immediate punishment for the first time juvenile offender. It is a training process where the offender and their parents are required to attend a training seminar discussing ethical dilemmas, choices, feelings, emotions, and consequences of behavior. After careful review, it was accepted and immediately implemented into their program. We considered this an immediate success for the community, as well as our department. The media continued to follow our program which brought us to a national level.

Initially, the police department made attempts to have DARE America add these lessons into their already existing curriculum, but this suggestion was rejected by DARE America officials. Domestic violence training was seen as being beyond the scope of their existing curriculum. There was extensive domestic violence research conducted by the State and the Brea Police Department. It revealed that the training was desperately needed. This, combined with a study by the Rand Corporation with similar results, cemented our resolve to continue with our domestic violence curriculum. We were seeing a slow increase in the level of violence in our society since 1997, and the lessons that were created addressed this issue also. In spite of all the facts, DARE America still refused to add the suggested lessons to their curriculum.

This did not discourage our attempts to get this curriculum into our own school system within our district. As a matter of fact, when this idea was presented to our

local city councils, it was met with unanimous support. This support was fostered by the arrest of the local president of the Brea Chamber of Commerce for a particularly brutal attack on his wife. This caused a chain reaction, and before we knew it, our chief was in front of the local and State education boards lobbying for this program. The state decided to use the Brea Police Department as a pilot program in domestic violence education training. This caused a shift in funding priorities for our city, and soon we were on the cutting edge of law enforcement with our fledgling program.

All the lobbying before the school boards and local and State government finally paid off. The school district granted three additional lessons into the general school curriculum and agreed to allow our School Resource Officers to teach them. This was done after the students' regular DARE program was completed.

Officer Willie reached into the daily question box to find numerous questions and notes addressed to him. He only had time for three questions. As he held the pieces of paper, some torn and some neatly wrapped, he saw one folded in light blue paper. On the outside was scrawled, "To Ofc. Willie - PRIVATE" He knew from prior classes that this was one note not to be read out loud, so he carefully placed the note into his back pocket. He quickly read and answered the other questions and after a little giggling, he started into the lesson.

It was the second lesson in a series of three on domestic violence. Forty five minutes later the lesson was done and this week's homework was assigned. Officer Willie packed up his things and walked out of class. He walked around a corner out of sight of the students, reached into his back pocket and pulled out the neatly folded blue note. He opened it, and it read, "Ofc. Willie, what should I do if my dad keeps

yelling and sometimes even hitting my mom? Sincerely, Billy Hatfield.” This was not an uncommon occurrence in Willie’s day ever since the Domestic Violence Education program had been started. Students were actually recognizing violence in their homes and seeking a safe person to tell to get help.

In the past, what occurred in the home remained a private ordeal; not just because of embarrassment but because children were learning to accept this type of violence. They grew up seeing it everyday, so it was believed to be natural behavior in their eyes. Ever since the implementation of this added curriculum more and more students were recognizing illegal acts of violence in their homes. Their relationship with their school resource officer gave them power to act upon and report these violent episodes occurring in their homes. We were beginning to see that we were reaching a number of students. The cycle of violence that was being embedded into their young and impressionable minds was starting to slowly melt away. The level of intervention in domestic violence cases originating in schools was on the rise ever since we began two years ago. It was almost time for recess and Officer Willie was waiting as the students streamed out onto the playground. The younger kids ran to greet him. He could barely move from all the clinging little hands. However, his attention was directed to one person, Billy Hatfield. He scanned the playground till he spotted him on the basketball courts. He caught up to him and began shooting baskets. He told Billy he read his note and wanted to know if he would meet with him. Billy idolized Officer Willie and of course agreed to the meeting.

They walked towards the offices and found a private empty room. Willie counseled Billy for the next 30 minutes. Billy related stories that were similar to the

ones being taught in their lessons. Willie asked if he could go over and possibly meet his parents and see if he could offer additional help to their unraveling situation. Billy willingly agreed again. Billy felt a sense of security and that someone actually cared enough to help him. As a result of their home meeting, an appointment was scheduled for the family by the local church. They had joined our department in the collaborative effort by our community to reach troubled families.

In 1998 when our program began at the Brea Community Center we decided to start our research of our success by testing our youth on their basic knowledge of violence in general and then narrow it to domestic violence. Statistics were being gathered from those initial test results. From this data we were able to make adjustments to our initial base curriculum and address key issues and facts to better educate our youth. At the end of their training they were re-tested to ascertain the level of knowledge gained. Teaching methods were reviewed as well as the curriculum. It was found that since the implementation of the program there was a 15% increase in domestic violence reports with 60% of them initiated by children between the ages of 10 and 15. Research also indicated that the remaining 40% was at least partially due to discussions between the domestic violence educated child and their battered mothers. Many hours of research continued as our program flourished. All statistics were meticulously being compiled, good and bad. The Brea Police Department was finally on the map paving the way to a more educated public regarding the importance of domestic violence in our society.

**A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE**  
**A STRATEGIC PLAN**

Strategic planning allows an organization to plan for, as well as manage, a desirable future in a systematic fashion. The strategy allows the organization to use anticipated trends and events of an unknown future in order to make better decisions today.

Domestic violence has long been a part of our past and will continue to be a part of our future. Education has been deemed one of the best ways to prevent an action or behavior from beginning. The process of providing domestic violence education cannot be complete without discussing acts of violence in general. The nature of domestic violence in our society has been punctuated with random acts of violence by our youth; including the increased use of guns. The youth of the 90's have been a central theme of major acts of violence against our society. With this in mind, it is essential to look into the future.

Change is synonymous with the challenge of violence that faces our future. Education is the catalyst to this change. With more blended families, single parent households and increased ethnic diversity it is essential to address the issues of differing view points for handling conflict. It is essential to develop and implement a domestic violence education program that encompasses many variables of violence. The total strategic plan process includes several action oriented activities crucial to success.

There must be a careful review of information resources, such as the level of understanding our youth possess of domestic violence and violence in general. We

must organize a curriculum that best suits the child, addressing cultural diversity, gender issues, demographics, differing value systems, and diverse life experiences. The direction and ultimate goal of our education must be clearly defined. A measuring device must be created in order to measure the success or failure of the program.

A strategic plan will allow an organization to look toward and plan for the future, as well as, be used as a guide to make the necessary changes when obstacles come our way. It allows for adapting and improvising for possible future trends or events. This adaptation is much easier when these trends and events, or variations of them, have been anticipated.

Factors such as; social trends, political issues, cultural diversity and demographics were considered in the development of strategies and implementation plans. The plan presents strategies that support the desired goal of education as a deterrent to future acts of violence against society and in familial relationships. It also identifies obstacles that can and will slow the implementation process down. The use of the trend and event forecasting by the NGT panel, and those identified in the other research methodologies, were also used as developmental aids. The scenario that was given was used to give a visual groundwork for the planning process.

## **THE STRATEGY**

The Brea Police Department currently deals with the issue of domestic violence with enforcement as the primary tool. The Investigation division has one detective who is assigned to work all domestic violence cases and follows each case through to sentencing. This investigator works closely with two additional detectives, area

shelters and the District Attorney's Office to ensure that all cases are taken as far as legally possible. The investigator also collaborates with shelters, volunteer groups and other care providers to assist victims of violence and their children. Education is part of the assistance that is provided, but it is intended for the adult victims of abuse and does not address the children.

The domestic violence unit also provides training to other members of the police department regarding domestic violence issues. This training helps field officers and other police employees to recognize and understand the cycle of violence that is indicative of serious abuse situations in the community. Officers have received training, facilitated by the domestic violence unit in conjunction with the District Attorney's Office, on a periodic basis for the past three years. This training has resulted in a heightened awareness among police employees and also an increase in reported domestic violence cases.

Although this enforcement/victim education strategy has assisted in increasing the number of prosecutable domestic violence offenses in the community, there is no apparent long term identifiable prevention benefit. The future on the issue of violence in the community and specifically incidents of familial violence can be addressed in the long term with a strategy of educating young people about violence, gender role relationships and other re-socialization issues. A program of education must include dating relationship violence and power and control issues as they relate to the dating environment. Experts agree that these are the seeds for future violent relationships and they must be addressed if there is any hope for a long term solution to domestic violence. Even more important is to reach young people prior to the dating age and

when they are not in crisis in their existing families. This situation provides the greatest opportunity to instill strong relationship values with long term positive results.

This educational strategy must also include a collaborative effort by other related agencies and organizations within the community. These include shelters, schools, the court system, churches, boys and girls clubs, city community services department and volunteer organizations. The strategy is geared toward providing this education through community youth projects and high risk youths targeted by police or referred by other outside agencies and individuals. Currently police are referring less serious youthful offenders to a mediation program called "Shortstop". The domestic violence education program should be utilized with these youths given the fact that history has proven that young people that become involved in crime are very likely to be living in an environment that is abusive or has some negative power and control issues present. The program must be flexible enough to transition into the formal educational environment (public and private schools) in the event that situation becomes feasible in the future. This possibility will be closer to a reality when and if successes are realized and quantified.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

In order to realize success in the implementation of this project, the client or target of the intended educational process must be identified. In this case, it is the children of our community. With the client defined it is easier to direct an implementation strategy. The role that the police department will take is that of educator and facilitator. However, the overall success of this project lies in the ability

of the police department to effectively collaborate with other community stakeholders. It will only be successful if we can present our strategy in a way that gains the confidence of the outside organizations and agencies that are needed to achieve the goal of breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

In the first phase of our implementation plan the focus should be on awareness. Awareness that young people hold the key to the future with reference to family values and acts of violence in the home. A survey must be collaboratively created to test the knowledge of the children in our community regarding domestic violence. This survey should encompass three age groups with the questions geared to their level of understanding. The age groups to be surveyed are kindergarten through second grade, third through fifth grade, and sixth grade. Once the survey is developed, it can be administered immediately. The data gathered from the answers will provide assistance in creating an appropriate curriculum.

The surveys can be administered at community centers, boys and girls clubs, local elementary schools, and shelters. School resource officers can be utilized immediately to accomplish this task. These surveys will be of great benefit to the department as well as the outside community groups. It will show the areas of greatest need, concern and lack of understanding.

Once this data is collected and put together in an organized fashion, it can be used to further the cause for an educational program for children.

During phase one it will be important to gain support from organizations that share the goal of stopping the cycle of domestic violence and that will share the responsibility of achieving success in implementing this project. These groups include:

The Women's Transitional Living Center, Shortstop, Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Woman (LACAAW), Orange County Juvenile Justice authorities, and Brea Community Services Department representatives. A meeting should be organized inviting these concerned agencies, and the vision of the domestic violence education program should be presented along with the statistics gathered from the surveys. At this stage, members of these groups should be encouraged to participate in the development of curriculums and other related project issues. Expectations and philosophies about the program should be shared. We want to convey that we would like to continue a partnership with them in an effort to stop domestic violence from repeating itself. Since several key members of these organizations were part of the NGT panel used for researching the subject of this project, achieving buy-in from them should be relatively easy. At this initial meeting, the groups should be made to understand the necessity and benefit of shared responsibility. The police department will have the main leadership role but must successfully delegate authority and responsibility to other groups and individuals.

The central theme throughout this implementation phasing is that children are the key to solving this problem, and education is one of the best tools for changing behavior patterns.

A team needs to be established to facilitate the creation of a curriculum for the domestic violence training. During phase one, there should be at least one lesson completed. This information can be supplemented with the data we gather from the surveys. The goal is to have three 45 minute lessons completely ready for teaching by phase three.

In phase two, our focus should be on actually providing domestic violence education at the Community Center, local shelters and the Brea Boys and Girls Club. School resource officers should be utilized to teach these lessons. Eventually, patrol officers can be trained to teach these special lessons. This will benefit the community by having area officers involved with the youth of their specific geographic assignments. The department will benefit by increased officer awareness and buy-in regarding the issue of domestic violence. By having more officers involved, it will enhance community oriented policing by presenting a more positive image of officers, and it will increase the stakeholder involvement.

The team that was established to create a curriculum should complete this assignment by the end of phase two, which would include three 45 minute core lessons designed for use in public and private schools. There should also be lessons that are specific to one time visits for situations where the full formal educational curriculum cannot be covered due to time restrictions.

As the curriculum develops and is eventually established, problems will be addressed and corrected along the way. The program needs to be closely monitored for successes and failures in all areas. It is essential to critically analyze the curriculum for improvements. This should be accomplished by the curriculum team to keep the momentum moving forward.

The media should be contacted by the police department and press releases formulated. The goal is to create positive media attention and notoriety for future support on a larger scale.

In phase three, the Brea school district as well as the Placentia Yorba Linda Unified school district, should be contacted. The idea of a domestic violence education program should be presented. It can be added to the end of their DARE curriculum, but not in conjunction with it. The ultimate goal is to incorporate the three 45 minute lessons into the regular school year, utilizing the school resource officers to teach these lessons.

It is important to recognize the barriers to implementing this project. There are likely to be community members who feel that the subject matter is best left in the home. There may be no sure fire way to address these beliefs since they are likely seated in religious ideologies. Truly, the most powerful persuader will be successes in the early phases where there is more freedom outside the public school environment.

There may be slight opposition from members of the police department assigned to the detective division. DARE officers currently are assigned to assist the detectives during the summer months when school is not in session. Since DARE will play a critical role in this project (even in the summer months at local youth clubs) there will be less coverage for the detectives. This impact will be minimal since the summer months should only involve two to three DARE officers for the youth project, allowing the rest to assist the detectives.

In the final phase, public and private school implementation, it is possible that conservative beliefs may create a political issue. Again, the reason for phase two is to allow the program to initially start out in a relatively "safe" environment. The local youth clubs will afford the opportunity for successes to be realized and will serve as a powerful tool to achieve the expansion of the project coverage.

It is felt that the media will present a positive picture of the goal of this project. To ensure that outcome, local shelters and groups such as the “Nicole Brown Foundation” should be utilized to assist in providing the press with a clear and positive picture of what this program is all about.

### Conclusion

The results of research into the issue question, including the NGT panel forecasting, strongly indicate that the future struggle in society against family violence cannot be successful without re-socializing young people. There have been numerous laws passed geared toward punishing offenders and providing counseling to batterers and victims. These laws have not, to any large degree, reduced recidivism rates and have in no way addressed the silent victims, the children. Experts are unanimous in their belief that there is a definite need for a program that provides domestic violence education for children. This program must be approached with an eye on the future. There will be no immediate widespread impact observed until those children that receive the training begin to date, and to later, raise families of their own. In the short term there may, in fact, be a rise in reported cases of violence as children become more aware of unacceptable behavior and have resources available to assist them in reporting that behavior.

The police department has the opportunity to take the leadership role in the development of a policy that takes into account the long term impacts on family life in our community. Although this is a leadership role, it is not the role of sole provider. The approach of educating young people must be done in a collaborative environment,

and the many stakeholders must share responsibility for providing a comprehensive program. Still, the leadership implications should not be underestimated, as they are significant. This project allows the police department to play the role of community activist in an effort to create a vision of the future that could change the culture of entire generations. By providing this leadership with a politically controversial subject such as domestic violence education, the police department has the opportunity to demonstrate commitment to quality of life issues in spite of political influences. This commitment will ultimately give the agency the honor of playing a vital role in shaping a desirable future.

This program can have a significant impact on the community, not only in reducing family violence, but also in creating an environment where children learn to develop a strong positive self-esteem. The families of the future will have a solid foundation on which to raise the next generation of individuals who solve disputes while keeping anger in check. The overall success of a program that provides this type of results will be measured in reduced family and other forms of violence, reduced calls for service to police and other community resources and an increased quality of life for community members.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> Douglas, H., "Assessing Violent Couples", Families in Society, 1991.
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- <sup>4</sup> "Children: Forgotten Victims of Marital Violence", Virginia Child Protection Newsletter Vol. 19, Spring, 1989.
- <sup>5</sup> "Violent Families and Youth Violence" Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Fact Sheet, No. 21, 1993
- <sup>6</sup> "Group Treatment of Children in Shelters for Battered Women", J. Alessi and K. Hearn.
- <sup>7</sup> Allison Proctor "Domestic Violence Information"  
[www.en.com/users/allison/dvpage.html](http://www.en.com/users/allison/dvpage.html) 12, July 1997
- <sup>8</sup> Family Violence Professional Education Taskforce, 1991, p.4
- <sup>9</sup> IBID.
- <sup>10</sup> Pleck, Elizabeth 1989, "Criminal Approaches to Family Violence, 1640-1980." Pp. 19-57
- <sup>11</sup> Fulgham v. State, 46 Ala. 146-147
- <sup>12</sup> Fagan, Friedman, Wexler, and Lewis, 1984, Final Report: National Family Violence Evaluation Grant 80-JN-AX-0004.
- <sup>13</sup> Straus et al., 1980; "Behind Closed Doors: Violence in American Family.
- <sup>14</sup> IACP, 1967, "Training Key 16: Handling Domestic Disturbance Calls."
- <sup>15</sup> Caplan, Paula J., Ph.D., "The Myth of Women's Masochism", 1985, p. 49
- <sup>16</sup> Thurman v. City of Torrington 595 F. Supp. 1521 ([1984]), Scott v. Hart U.S. District Court for the Northern district of California, C76-2395