

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION PROJECT

The King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence coordinates this project to make services more accessible, holistic, and effective for survivors of domestic violence with mental health concerns and to strengthen collaboration among service providers.

The Collaboration Project has 5 phases:

(1) Planning, (2) Implementation, (3) Continuation, (4) Expansion, and (5) Exploration.

Planning Phase and Implementation Phase partners: City of Seattle Human Services Department's Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Division, Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, New Beginnings, Seattle Counseling Service, and Sound Mental Health.

Phase 1: Planning (2007-2009)

Formalized Collaboration
and Documented
Working Agreements

Conducted a
Needs and Strengths
Assessment*

Engaged in
Strategic Planning*

Phase 2: Implementation (2009-2010)

Created More Welcoming Environments

*Our Welcoming Environments Initiative Report** summarizes the changes the partner agencies made to create more welcoming environments for domestic violence survivors with mental health concerns.

Enhanced Knowledge

We created an online Domestic Violence Basics course for Mental Health Service Providers and an online Mental Health Basics course for Domestic Violence Advocates at our partner agencies. Over **500** people have taken one of the courses.

Improved Response

We created an online Domestic Violence Response course for Mental Health Service Providers and an online Mental Health Response course for Domestic Violence Advocates at our partner agencies. Over **500** people have taken one of the courses.

Strengthened Collaboration

We created a liaison system between the partner agencies and a cross-disciplinary case review process. *Our Liaisons and Case Reviews Information Packet** describes both.

Continuation Phase partners: Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, New Beginnings, Seattle Counseling Service, and Sound Mental Health.

Phase 3: Continuation (2011-2012)

Change is Possible

We began this phase with a retreat to reflect on our successes, the challenges we experienced, and the lessons we learned. This is summarized in our *Change is Possible** report. We implemented 4 initiatives that built on the changes we made in the previous phases.

Provided Training and Technical Assistance

We adapted our Online Training Courses* for DV advocates and MH service providers who are not part of our project.

We also shared what we have learned with local and national audiences.

Integrated Trauma-Informed Practices

Our partner agencies received training on trauma-informed care, trauma-informed supervision, and strategies for integrating a trauma focus into their agencies.

They then put these lessons into practice.

Engaged in Reciprocal Consultation

We developed a *Reciprocal Consultation Guide** to strengthen the ability of our partner agencies to provide each other with quality cross-disciplinary consultation.

DV advocates attended staff meetings of MH service providers to consult on multiple cases at once and vice versa.

Offered Co-Facilitated Support Groups

We provided support groups for domestic violence survivors with mental health concerns that were co-facilitated by a DV advocate and a MH service provider utilizing the Seeking Safety curriculum (www.seekingsafety.org).

*These publications and our online courses are available at www.kccadv.org/reports/mental-healthdv-reports/.

Expansion Phase partners: Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, King County Bar Foundation, King County Protection Order Advocacy Program, LifeWire, and Sound Mental Health.

Phase 4: Expansion (2013-2015)

Protection Orders and the Family Law System

The focus of our work expanded to include protection orders and the family law system. We created tools and developed and delivered trainings for: Domestic Violence Advocates, Attorneys, Mental Health Service Providers, and Survivors.

Family Law Toolkit for Survivors*

We created tools to help survivors better navigate protection order and family law processes, to access the resources they need, and to cope with the stress involved.

Tools for Advocates

We created tools for domestic violence advocates to help survivors explore the risks and benefits of disclosing mental health concerns in legal proceedings, and to address the backlash against the use of protective behaviors.

Tools for Attorneys**

We created a safety planning tool and a guide for attorneys on weighing the relative risks of domestic violence, mental health, and substance abuse when developing parenting plans.

We also created a King County supplement to a national handbook on representing survivors who have experienced trauma or other mental health challenges.

Tools for MH Service Providers***

We created a tool for mental health service providers on documenting domestic violence in mental health records.

We also created a guide for them on preparing survivors for mental health and parenting evaluations in family law cases.

*See the Toolkit for Survivors at www.kccadv.org/reports/mental-healthdv-reports/family-law-toolkit-for-survivors/.

**See the Toolkit for Attorneys at www.kccadv.org/reports/mental-healthdv-reports/family-law-toolkit-for-attorneys/.

***See the Toolkit for Mental Health Service Providers at www.kccadv.org/reports/mental-healthdv-reports/family-law-toolkit-for-mental-health-providers/.

The Toolkit for Advocates has been distributed directly to advocates at our partner agencies and is not available online.

Exploration Phase partners: Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, King County Bar Foundation, and LifeWire.

Phase 5: Exploration (2015-2017)

Three New Initiatives!
During our exploration phase, we are delving deeper into the work we began in our expansion phase.

We will evaluate and share our tools

We will:

1. Evaluate their effectiveness;
2. Adapt them if needed;
3. Translate them;
4. Create templates so others can adapt them;
5. Share them; and
6. Provide technical assistance and training on using them

We will enhance coping skills for service providers and for survivors involved in protection order or family law cases

We will:

1. Provide a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) class for providers at our partner agencies;
2. Provide MBSR classes for survivors at our partner agencies; and
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of MBSR for providers and survivors

We will foster dialogue to deepen our understanding of emerging issues

We will hold critical dialogue series on:

1. The role of mental health evaluations in determining custody; and
2. Meeting the needs of survivors who have mental health concerns and are involved with the family law system regarding sexual assault they have experienced.

We will produce reports about each series.

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