Neighborhood Project Update

Yes, there IS PROGRESS at Roosevelt Garden! Several tenants took the lead and created what they call the “leadership group”. These individuals are committed to networking with their neighbors.

In December, Catlin Fullwood returned to Lane County for her second site visit with N2N. She met with the RG Leadership group to evaluate, provide support and help plan their next phase. Drawing on her experiences in other communities, the group decided to distribute bottles of sparkling cider and a winter greeting as a way to begin to re-introduce themselves to the neighbors in their building. At the same time, the leaders engaged in conversation about a few key questions from their earlier survey - with grand results! The cider was a hit, as was the simple act of meeting and greeting.

Folks are quite interested in sharing their views and hopes related to improving the neighborhood, and eager to participate in activities. Safety and supervision of children emerged as a common concern, and an area where people wanted to become involved. So, they are planning activities and strategies to address the quality of life issues that were identified. Other strategies include creating a neighborhood “Code of Ethics” and a “welcome packet” to distribute to current residents and well as newcomers. This will provide a continuing opportunity to gather information from neighbors and brainstorming future activities to keep their community together.

Next steps:
Working with Sandra Koubele, Community Service Officer with Eugene Police Department, the (Continued on page 5)
Funded by a federal Children’s Justice Act (CJA) grant, the Dept. of Human Services designed a pilot to provide specialized technical assistance to county-level child abuse Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs).

Every county MDT in Oregon was notified of the opportunity and nine counties chose to participate (Clackamas, Curry, Coos, Grant, Union, Douglas, Lincoln, Tillamook, and Polk.) Consultant Elaine Walters worked with each of communities to assess readiness, determine key areas of concern or interest, and to build a well-supported and effective process for the planning retreats which she facilitated.

Ms. Walter’s final report on the pilot was completed in January. The report details the process, profiles each participating MDT, and offers observations and recommendations. Not surprisingly, the MDT’s experienced challenges that will sound familiar to those working on the Greenbook Initiative. Here are some highlights of the observations and recommendations:

- “In over half the counties, historical tension across disciplines continues to impact their ability to trust one another and provide the best response to families. Even in those communities where relationships across disciplines are working well, a lack of understanding regarding history, philosophy and mandates still interferes with their work.”
- “Most team members … had training had training in either domestic violence or child abuse … very few had training in the overlap between the two or on the impact of domestic violence on children.”
- The statute that defines Oregon MDT’s should be revised to
  - require representation from the domestic violence advocacy agency on the MDTs
  - require training regarding the dynamics of domestic violence and it’s impact on children
- Teams should review and revise their protocols on an annual or bi-annual basis and orient all members to the protocol
- Teams need to clarify confidentiality issues and mandates
- Quality assurance and accountability measure need to be in place

The report validates that there are no easy answers to collaborative work, but that we are addressing the right problems and doing so in a powerful way. As the report says, “cross pollination and sharing of strategies across sites sparked new ideas and inspired good discussions” A lesson the Greenbook demonstration sites have learned well. See you at the All Sites Conference!!

Train the Trainers April 10th

On Thursday, April 10th, the Family Violence Response Initiative will sponsor a free session for those who provide training on domestic violence related topics. This is the second in the series of sessions for trainers.

Description:  This workshop will explore the different origins of the child welfare movement and the domestic violence movement. Presenting and training on this information is an important part of understanding the different approaches and philosophies that can sometimes lead to conflict and confusion in collaborative efforts.

Instructor:  Verna Tuesday, M.C of Court Appointed Special Advocates

Logistics:  Workshop to be held from 9-11:30 on Thursday, April 10th, 2003 at the Lane County Mental Health Building in Eugene, OR. Contact Rebecca.Smith@co.lane.or.us to RSVP.
The Family Violence Response Initiative Question and Answer Project—getting accurate information to difficult questions out to a wide range of staff and volunteers across agencies.

Q. When should domestic violence be reported as child abuse or neglect?

A. Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors including physical, sexual and emotional abuses, as well as economic coercion that adults use against their intimate partners to gain power and control in that relationship. Domestic violence is present in all cultures, socio-economic classes, communities of faith, etc. Domestic violence almost always increases in intensity, severity and/or frequency.

The presence of domestic violence is a risk for children. However, not all situations of domestic violence require a report to DHS or law enforcement. DHS’s authority to intervene with families is based on whether a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, neglected, suffering mental injury, or is being subjected to an activity or condition likely to result in substantial harm.

A report to DHS or law enforcement is necessary when there is reasonable cause to believe

1. There is current domestic violence or the alleged abuser has a history of domestic violence.

AND

2. One of the following:
   - There is reason to believe the child will or is intervening in a violent situation, placing him at risk of “substantial harm.”
   - The child is likely to be “harmed” during the violence (being held during violence, physically restrained from leaving, etc.)
   - The alleged abuser is not allowing the adult caregiver and child access to basic needs, impacting their health or safety.
   - The alleged abuser has killed, committed “substantial hard,” or is making a believable threat to do so to anyone in the family, including extended family members and pets.
   - The child’s ability to function on a daily basis is substantially impaired by being in a constant state of fear.

If you know a child is witnessing repeated or serious domestic violence and you are unsure of the impact on the child, call and consult a child protective services screener.

The Family Violence Response Initiative Question and Answer Project—getting accurate information to difficult questions out to a wide range of staff and volunteers across agencies.

Q. How does dependency court hold batterers accountable?

A. Accountability for batterers in dependency cases is a by-product of what must be done to protect children. The court's focus in dependency cases is bifurcated with the immediate concern for what must be done to keep a child safe and the longer view of attempting to facilitate the work needed to strengthen the family and address the presenting issues. This approach may or may not involve holding the batterer “accountable.” Accountability may be left to another forum or agency. For example, the court may take jurisdiction over a family in which there is clear unprovoked violent behavior by a parent without other complicating issues. The action of the court may be to make the child a ward of the court, committed to DHS and placed with the non-offending parent upon the condition that contact with the batterer be only as authorized and/or supervised by DHS. The court may order the batterer to comply with services such as counselling, anger management, the Man Alive program, etc. The batterers’ participation with the services is essentially voluntary, in that the only sanction for failure will be decreased or no visitations. In the this situation the concept of accountability becomes one of perception by the batterer. He/she may or may not feel accountable, but “accountability” is not the goal. Child safety is the target. “Accountability” may come in criminal court if charges are filed, but that is a different place and the issues are different as well.

Dependency court certainly may provide the feel of accountability for batterers who feel responsibility for their actions. When that occurs it would be a positive indication that the batterer may be receptive to help. It may be a motivator to be successful.

Accountability as a broader concept may be provided in dependency cases in that the filing, prosecution and disposition of these cases may offer the impression of demanding societal accountability to batterers. My experience, however, is that this “accountability” is not felt by the offending population.

Answer provided by Hon. Kip Leonard, Lane County Juvenile Court

This is part of a series of questions to our Greenbook Initiative partner agencies about working with families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment. You can find this and previous Questions & Answers at the FVRI website at http://www.co.lane.or.us/CCF_FVRI/ . You may submit a question by emailing FVRI Program Assistant, Rebecca Smith at Rebecca.Smith@co.lane.or.us.
OUTSIDE THE BOX...

Cultural competency concepts to consider:
We’re not a homogenous, but a culturally pluralistic county.
Develop culturally validated and appropriate practices and test with culturally competent evaluation.
Many subgroups are disproportionately at risk.
Begin to collect data on accessibility stratified by relevant cultural variables...conduct research across cultural variables.
Do tools and practices reflect understanding of risk and protective factors from different cultural perspectives?

Dr. Charles Martinez, Oregon Social Learning Center
Jan. 27, 2003 ~ Report to SB 555 Planning Group

ON THE ROAD AGAIN....

San Diego Conf. on Child & Family Maltreatment
February 4-7, San Diego, CA
Jennifer Inman

National Community Partnership Conference
February 20th-21st, New Orleans, LA
Diana Avery

Greenbook Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC)
March 27th-29th, Chicago, IL
Grant Nelson

Neighbor to Neighbor continued from page #)
Leadership Group is developing a “welcome packet”, to include information on local services and amenities, important information, some “goodies”, and a “code of conduct” - guiding principles for neighborly actions.

One of the activities for springtime, in response to children safety concerns, will be a gathering of kids and parents to put their talents to work creating an artistic sign reminding folks to take care while driving in the parking area. These won’t be just any old signs!

And, the leadership group decided to invite Community Mediation Service staff come to the next meeting to help design a training on peer mediation. The goal is to learn communication skills and techniques to help neighbors work out issues positively. They will also learn more about community resources available to help resolve disputes early on.

It has been very exciting to see the leadership group come together and take this project over -- calling their meetings, including creating the agenda and facilitating the conversation. We, the “staff group” of N2N, would like to thank and acknowledge Peggy, Rita, Dee, Lois, Mark, Dyanne, Jade, Vonnie, Jim, and Brittany for their hard work!

Jennifer Inman will be presenting “Discussion of Policies and Work to Date on the Greenbook Project” at the 2003 San Diego Conference On Child & Family Maltreatment that will be held February 2nd—7th.

Diana Avery will be attending the National Community Partnership Conference “Embracing the Future” in New Orleans, LA on February 20th-21st with representatives from the other Greenbook demonstration sites.

This project is supported by Grant No. 2001-WE-VX-K004 awarded by the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official
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