

Evaluation of “Domestic Violence”

A series of workshops presented by

The Missouri Training Program for Child Welfare Workers

June, July, August, 2005

David J. Dixon, Ph.D.
Center for Research and Service
Department of Psychology
Southwest Missouri State University

August 16, 2005

Evaluation of “Domestic Violence”

A series of workshops presented by

The Missouri Training Program for Child Welfare Workers

June, July, August, 2005

During June, July and August of 2005, The Missouri Training Program for Child Welfare Workers (MTP) presented four workshops to Missouri Children’s Division employees entitled “Domestic Violence.” The first workshop was presented on June 27 in Houston, MO to Division employees of Circuit 3 of the MTP project. Nine employees attended. The second workshop was presented on July 8 in Nevada, MO to Division employees of Cluster 1. Twenty employees attended. The third workshop was presented on July 11 in Lebanon, MO to Division employees of Cluster 4. Forty-one employees attended. The fourth workshop was presented on August 3 in Monett, MO. Twenty-two employees attended (while some 22 additional employees received last-minute instructions to attend a state training which conflicted with this training).

Prior to the workshop, five competencies were anticipated to be addressed in the workshop. These competencies came from the an analysis of the proposed objectives of the workshop and are closely related to some of the 140 child welfare worker competencies identified through the work of the MTP to date. These competencies were worded for use in a retrospective pre-test-post-test design using a self-report questionnaire. (In addition, a competency not associated with this specific training inadvertently entered the list and was used as a sixth question in the June training. Because that issue was reported upon in a prior report, it is not dealt with in this report.) Attendees were instructed to complete the questionnaire at the end of the program. The questions directed attendees to identify their level of agreement with statements asserting knowledge of the field of domestic violence. An additional closed-ended question probed the degree to which workers believed that the information in the workshop could lead to positive cultural change at the workplace. In addition, three open-ended questions were asked, and attendees were asked to indicate whether they had received substance abuse training in the past. Finally, respondents were requested to identify their job classification and work specialization. Responses to all of these questions form the basis of this evaluation. (Please see Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaires.)

At the end of the workshop, questionnaires were collected and submitted for analysis. Eighty-eight questionnaires were returned (95.65 % of the 92 attendees) with whole or partial responses.

Characteristics of Respondents

Job Classification: Respondents were offered six closed-ended alternatives and an “other” alternative for to report their job classification. Of the 86 respondents who responded to this question, 55 (64.0%) clearly identified themselves as Social Services

Worker II, and 16 (18.6%) identified themselves as Social Services Worker I. Of the remaining 17.4%, seven (8.1%) responded Supervisor I, five (5.8%) responded Circuit Manager, and one each (1.2% each) responded Social Work Specialist, Regional Staff and “Other” (CSWII).

Work Specialization: Respondents were offered four closed-ended alternatives and an “other” alternative for to report their work specialization. However, the evaluation form for the third training failed to include all but the first two options (Investigations and Family Permanency). Of the 83 respondents to this question, 38 (45.8%) identified themselves as Family Permanency workers, 25 (30.1%), identified themselves as Investigations workers, eight (9.6%) identified themselves as Generic workers, eight (9.6%) identified themselves as Other workers (with two each noting “Management” or “Administration” and five noting “AC,” “FCS,” or “AC/FCS”), and three (4.8%) identified themselves as Adoptions / Licensing.

Prior training in self-care: Of the 88 respondents, 69 (78.4%) indicated that they had received previous training in domestic violence and 16 (18.2%) indicated that they had not received previous training in domestic violence. Of those who indicated receiving prior training, responses to the question of when they had received this training included “Approx 1 month ago,” “meth summit,” and “15 Years [ago].”

Responses to the Closed-ended Questions on Competencies

Data collected regarding the five competencies lent themselves to matched t-test comparisons, comparing self-reported levels before the workshop to those after the workshop. Means, standard deviations, t-test values and levels of significance for each of the six items and for an aggregate of the specific items for this training (Item 1 + Item 2 + Item 3 + Item 4 + Item 5) are displayed in Table 1, below.

Table 1: *Item Data, Contrasts and Statistical Significance by Item*

Item	n for paired contrast	Pretest average	Posttest average	Gain (loss)	standard deviation of gain	t-value (17df)	<i>p</i> ≤
1. I understand the nature of domestic violence including the tension between law enforcement and child welfare.	84	3.62	4.05	.43	.733	5.360 (83df)	.000
2. I am better able to assess for domestic violence in the adults and children I serve in my position with the CD.	86	3.60	4.17	.57	.744	7.100 (85df)	.000
3. I understand typical dynamics of families experiencing domestic violence.	86	3.90	4.40	.50	.822	5.638 (85df)	.000
4. I understand the plight of victims of domestic violence, and I feel I can intervene with more sensitivity after today’s presentation.	85	3.72	4.31	.59	.849	6.386 (84df)	.000

5. I am able to use family centered tools, including safety plans, to help family members remain safe and free from domestic violence.	86	3.77	4.08	.31	.724	4.023 (85df)	.000
Column averages (Item 1 through Item 5)	85.4	3.72	4.20	..48			
Aggregate scores (Item 1 + Item 2 + Item 3 + Item 4 + Item 5)	83	18.61	21.00	2.39	3.084	7.048 (82df)	.000

There is evidence, trusting the methodology, of a statistically significant gain on each of the Items 1 through 5 and on the aggregate scores. On average, as a group, respondents reported a level somewhat below “agree” (value = 3.72, with “neither agree nor disagree” = 3.00 and “agree” = 4.00) with the positive assertions associated with each question presented in the pre-workshop condition, and respondents reported a level somewhat above “agree” (value = 4.18, with 4.00 = “agree” and 5.00 = “strongly agree”) with the positive assertions presented in the post-workshop condition.

In addition, the aggregate scores were subjected to a 4 x 2, Group (workshop administrations 1, 2, 3 or 4) x pre-/postmeasure repeated measures ANOVA to determine if the workshops differed in terms of their overall effectiveness. Only the pre-measure / post-measure factor achieved significance while the effects of Group and of Group x pre-/postmeasure failed to achieve significance. This indicated that the four workshops were roughly equivalent in their overall effectiveness.

Looking at individual profiles, a majority of respondents indicated that they had not gained from pre-workshop to post-workshop on Item 1, Item 3 and Item 5. A slight majority indicated gain on Item 4, and almost half indicated gain on Item 2. Table 2 presents information on the number of respondents who indicated no change from pre- to post-workshop, the number who indicated favorable change (gain) and the number who indicated unfavorable change (loss).

Table 2: *Value Changes (No Changes, Gains and Losses) by Item*

Item	n for paired contrast	# no change	% no change	# gain	% gain	# loss	% loss
1. I understand the nature of domestic violence including the tension between law enforcement and child welfare.	84	54	64.29%	19	22.62%	1	1.19%
2. I am better able to assess for domestic violence in the adults and children I serve in my position with the CD.	86	43	50.00	42	48.84	1	1.16
3. I understand typical dynamics of families experiencing domestic violence.	86	49	56.98	36	41.86	1	1.16
4. I understand the plight of victims of domestic violence, and I feel I can intervene with more sensitivity after today’s presentation.	85	36	42.35	45	52.94	4	4.71
5. I am able to use family centered tools, including safety plans, to help family members remain safe and free from domestic violence.	86	53	61.63	28	32.56	5	5.81

Responses to the Closed-ended Question on Culture Change

One additional closed-ended question (Question 10) probed attendees' reactions to the feasibility of the workshop supporting culture change in the workplace environment. This was asked as a post-workshop question only. Summary data appear in Table 3.

Table 3: *Frequency and Percentage of Responses to the Item of Culture Change*

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
6. I believe I can use the information from today's workshop to "change the culture" of the workplace environment (i.e. in my office, among my colleagues) for the better.	Post-workshop only	0 0.0%	2 2.4%	18 21.2%	44 51.8%	21 24.7%

Judging by these findings, 76.5% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the information acquired from the workshop would support culture change at the workplace.

Responses to Open-ended Questions

Three open-ended questions assessed respondents' views of the value of the workshop. Results are arranged by question and summarized below. A full display of the responses, verbatim (except for changing all capitalizations to standard upper and lower case), appear in Appendix B.

11. *What is the one principle you learned today that you will immediately apply to your job?*

Of the 88 response sheets returned, 60 (68.18%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 60 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- How to talk to victims; ask good questions (including asking about dog abuse (14 responses)
- Safety plan, including what needs to be taken (13)
- Better understanding of situations and victims (9)
- Signs of domestic abuse situations (5)
- Domestic violence as other than an anger management issue (3)
- Police officers' views of domestic abuse (2)
- Resources and services (2)
- Not classified above (22)

12. *What part(s) or topic(s) of the workshop did you find helpful and why?*

Of the 88 response sheets returned, 63 (71.59%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 63 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- “In her shoes” / walkthrough demonstration (32 responses)
- Police officer’s presentation (7)
- Effects of domestic abuse on children (5)
- Items to take with one when leaving (4)
- All was good / helpful (3)
- Handouts (3)
- Statistics (3)
- Not classified above (15)

13. *What part(s) or topic(s) of the workshop did you not find helpful and why?*

Of the 88 response sheets returned, 38 (43.18%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 38 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- None / all was helpful (20 responses)
- Many attendees have had a lot of experience in this field / Might have been more appropriate for a less experienced audience (3)
- Could have used more detail, more examples (2)
- Not classified above (17)

Conclusions

The domestic violence workshops presented during the summer of 2005 appear to have been effective in an overall manner and were well received. When attendees were asked to rate the effectiveness of the workshop, statistically-significant gain was evident on each of five evaluation questions and on an aggregate variable measuring the intended outcomes of the workshops. While there is evidence that a majority of attendees failed to demonstrate gain on four of the five items, the gain was sufficient to bring group values up to statistically significant levels. In addition, attendees agreed that the information gained at the workshop could be used to facilitate a “culture change” in their workplaces.

In addition, on open-ended items, attendees reported value derived from the workshop, in spite of the fact that the vast majority had received previous training on domestic violence.