



Initial Findings on
the Effectiveness of
Maine's CBIPs

Karen Wyman
February 2021



MCEDV.

The Maine Coalition
to End Domestic Violence

Connecting people, creating frameworks for change.

mcedv.org

Background

- 128th Legislature directed the MDOC to provide a report regarding the effectiveness of Maine's Certified Batterer Intervention Programs, including any suggested implementing legislation
- This funding allowed significant work to happen:
 - Statewide CBIP coordination, including needs assessment
 - Training of CBIP staff, monitors, and community partners
 - Develop and administer partial reimbursement of reduced fees for indigent participants and mileage for staff to travel to court and training
 - Compile data to assess effectiveness: Survivor Impact Survey, site visits, and class observations.

What you will find in our report

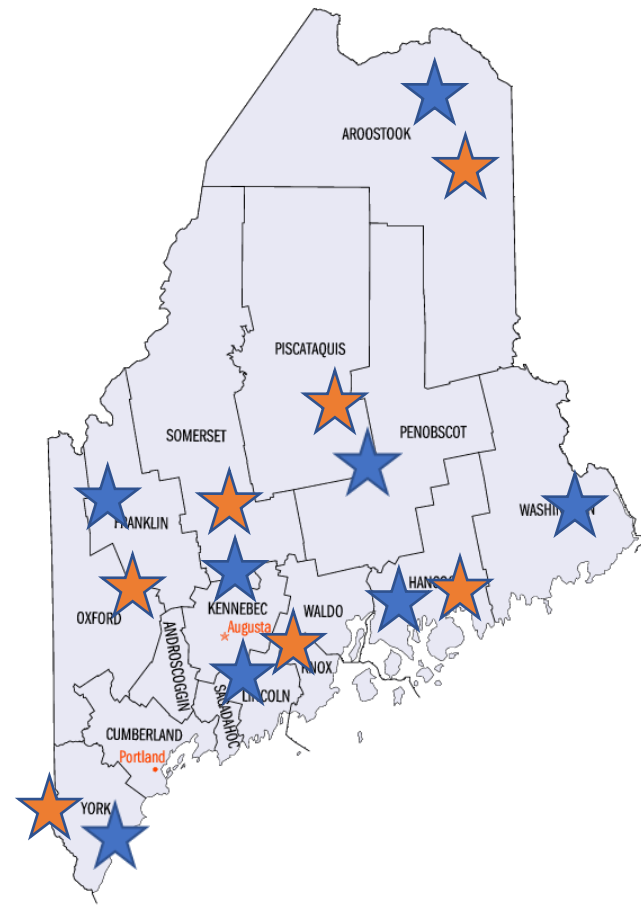
- Legislative Charge
- Overview
- Accomplishments
 - Reduced Fees for Indigent Participants
 - New Programs
 - COVID-19 Response
 - Training
 - Survivor Survey
 - Site Visits and Class Observations
- Recommendations
- Supporting Documents
 - Survivor Survey Questions
 - Coordinated Community Response by County
 - CBIP Listing
 - Expenditures to Date

Maine’s Certified Batterer Intervention Programs

- 9 CBIPs for male offenders serving all 16 counties ★
- 7 for female offenders serving 14 counties ★

Currently providing classes via videoconferencing

New programs!
 Men’s program - Washington County
 Women’s program – Hancock County



One CBIP Director Reflects on “Success”

The difficulties in assessing success in a CBIP are challenging. Can we count it as a completer’s success if they are never again arrested for domestic violence? Or does that just mean there were no future arrests because they became smarter about how they batter? Or were there no future arrests because their victim grew weary of reporting the abuse and carrying the burden of having to testify in court against the person who, in a complex way, was both a loving partner and an abuser?

The truth of the effectiveness of CBIP... is in its relationship to the Coordinated Community Response to domestic violence.

Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

CBIPs are most effective when functioning as part of a Coordinated Community Response which may include task forces, high-risk response teams, or other multi-disciplinary structures.

An effective CCR, however, is more than a monthly or quarterly meeting; it is a community that comes together to say:

- Abuse will not be tolerated,
- Victims will be kept safe and free, and
- Those who abuse will face meaningful accountability.

Fees, Safety, and CBIP Completion

- Funding of this kind available for the first time. CBIPs rely almost entirely on participant fees. CBIPs are prohibited from seeking funding that would compete with victim services.
- CBIP is safest and most effective when participants complete the full 48 weeks. Survivors reported no improvement in safety if their participating partners dropped out or were expelled from CBIP.
- CBIP want their programs to be affordable to make completion feasible – and need to cover their costs.
- Criminal consequences should be due to criminal behavior, not due to poverty.

Helpful but Expensive – Survey Response

“[CBIP] has been a good program for him... [He] has been good at identifying and analyzing what he is doing in relation to what he is learning about his behavior at class. This was a positive experience for him and for them as a family... The financial burden of the class has been a strain on both their resources and would be very effective if assistance was provided or costs were lower.”

Roughly 1/3 of CBIP participants eligible for reduced fees.

“CBIP was really expensive for our family.”

- Partner of CBIP Participant

A significantly higher proportion of CBIP participants are indigent or low-income as compared to the poverty level of the population at large in the respective geographical area.

This was true for every county.

Source: United States Census Bureau Poverty Rate by County, accessed 10/22/2020:

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Poverty%20rate%20by%20county&g=0400000US23.050000&tid=ACST5Y2018.S1701&hidePreview=false>

Survivor Impact Survey – Fall 2020

Demographics

- Gender: 41 female; 1 male
- Race:
 - 1 - Black/African-American; 3 - Multi-race; 36 - White; 1 - Other – Mexican-American; 1 – Unanswered

Logistics

- All DVRCs participated
- 42 Responses
- Administered in 3-week period

What We Gained

- Valuable information about the impact of CBIP participation on survivors
- An opportunity to test the survey tool
- Insight about how our systems both succeed and fail survivors

Completion is safest for survivors.

Survey results support existing research that **domestic violence intervention programs are safest and most effective when participants complete the full program.**

Survivors reported **no improvements in safety and autonomy when their partners did not complete the program.**



Survivors are aware of this connection, **“There should be a way to warn people if he doesn't do CBIP.”**

Survivors reported increase in overall safety since partners attended CBIP.

How safe did you feel?	Before CBIP - #	Since CBIP - #	Before %	Since %
Not at all safe	25	10	60%	24%
A little safe	1	4	2%	10%
Somewhat safe	9	13	21%	31%
Very safe	5	9	12%	21%
N/A	2	5	5%	12%
Unanswered	0	1	0%	2%
	42	42	100%	100%

Project Mirabal Measures

- Respectful Communication
 - Expanded Space for Action
 - Safety and Freedom from Violence
 - Awareness of Self and Others
 - Shared Parenting
 - Safer and Healthier Childhoods
- Project Mirabal researchers found that survivors valued any degree of improvement, even if abuse didn't completely end.
 - Questions asked if, since attending CBIP, specific things in these areas had:
 - Gotten better
 - Stayed the same
 - Gotten worse
 - Not applicable
 - Unanswered
 - **For CBIP participants still attending, status unknown, or completed, results were mixed.**
 - **For CBIP participants who dropped out or were expelled, no improvements were noted in any areas.***

*exception re: sexual coercion

Survivors attributed changed behavior to a variety of factors.

“He is a different person today than he was when he assaulted me and got arrested. VIP, his stopping using (drugs and alcohol) and attending church, have made him into a better man and husband. I knew when he stopped using that things would get better, but every night he came back from class he just seemed energized.”

Factors impacting safety:

- Fear of arrest
- Fear of incarceration
- Probation
- CBIP
- Protection orders
- Sobriety
- Personal Motivation

Factors in combination – personal motivation, systemic interventions and monitoring, legal orders, and fear of consequences – create stronger likelihood of changed behaviors.

Since he attended CBIP, has he been arrested for other offenses?

	Total	Completers and Current Participants	Non-Completers	Participation Status Unknown
Yes, DV	11	1	6	4
Yes, Other	4	2	1	1
Both	5	-	3	2
Don't Know	8	5	-	3
None	6	3	2	1

When survivors reached out, they tended to find helpful and effective assistance.

Resource	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	A little helpful	Not at all helpful	Survivors Seeking Help
DVRC	27*	7	1	0	35*
Police	7	12	4	3	25
Friends/Family	6	9	1	2	19
Legal Aid	11	1	2	2	16
MH Provider	8	2	2	1	13
Healthcare	6	2	2	1	10
Helpline	3	3	1	0	8
Social Services	6	0	1	2	8
Religious Group	3	2	1	1	7

Key Themes

- Survivors need accurate information and clear lines of communication to plan for safety.
- Survivors often found value in protection orders and probation.
- Survivors want meaningful accountability and consequences for non-compliance.
- Survivors want a coordinated community response.
- Survivors attributed behavior change to a variety of factors.
- Survivors need practical help that addresses their needs.
- Survivors who engaged with victim advocacy services found those services helpful, and, in some cases, life-saving.
- Survivors want their partners to get the help they need.
- Survivors care about the harm done by people who abuse – to themselves, to their children, and to other survivors.

Recommendations

- Continue statewide coordination, technical assistance, and support
- Continue and expand funding
- Change the culture that supports abuse
- Address victim safety risks re: noncompliance/noncompletion
- Strengthen connections between survivors and advocacy services
- Strengthen statewide CCR
- Improve program evaluation and data collection
- Review standards – safety, accountability, equity

People can change.

“He went all the time, he showed up, he was ready. Life was so different after that. But he used to mention there were people there who weren't ready to change and that it wouldn't work for them. It made him a changed man. If you aren't ready, you're not ready.”

Thank You.

Karen Wyman

Violence Prevention &
Intervention Coordinator

Karen@mcedv.org



PO Box 5188
Augusta ME 04332
207-430-8334