**MN Child Response Initiative**
*Community Needs Assessment Results*

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# Introduction and Background

The Minnesota Child Response Intitiative (MCRI) is a partnership of the following of domestic violence programs, mental health agencies, and child-serving systems: African-American Family Services, CornerHouse, Domestic Abuse Project, Family and Children's Services, Eastside Neighborhood Services, Washburn Child Guidance Center, Hennepin County Department of Child, Families and Adult Services, Minneapolis Public Schools and the Minneapolis Police Department. The project is administered by the Tubman Family Alliance . The primary goal of the MCRI is to identify and intervene with children exposed to violence. The MCRI project has been organized into three primary components in order to facilitate this mission: intervention, system change, and research. The research component will be underway in the fall of 2003.

*Intervention*

The intervention component of the project involves the pairing of mental health professionals and family violence advocates with law enforcement officers to offer a voluntary, acute advocacy and crisis response to families who have called 911 for help with domestic violence incidents, or other incidents involving children's exposure to violence. These visits are meant to provide additional resources to children and families dealing with the difficult physical and emotional issues associated with domestic violence. Follow-up visits are made when necessary, and the clinicians and advocates make referrals to meet the court advocacy, mental health, and social service needs of the families.

*System Change*

Central to identifying and intervening with children exposed to violence is a better understanding of the system and community barriers that exist to working with these children. This is the motivation for the system change component of the MCRI project. The system change component is comprised of a geo-mapping project to identify gaps between need and available resources for children exposed to violence, a policy analysis committee that attempts to establish a picture of how key elements of the social system work together to serve children and make recommendations about more efficient collaboration and service delivery, and the community needs assessments, which are the focus of this report.

## *Community Needs Assessments*

The primary goal of the community needs assessments is to gain more information about how particular communities perceive the problems of violence and how these perceptions relate to the needs of children. Within this context, the needs assessments attempt to identify what barriers exist in terms of service delivery and collaboration with mental health workers. A prominent theme of the community needs assessments is the effort to understand culturally specific needs with regard to children and violence. MCRI's focus on partnership is also exemplified in this piece of the project. Each community needs assessment has been developed in close collaboration with key stakeholders and leaders in the communities. (See Appendix 4 for the list of working groups). The goal has been for each community to establish the best method(s) for obtaining this information. The communities have varied somewhat in their original approaches but, somewhat surprisingly, short surveys have proved the most effective method for gathering this information. To date, needs assessments have been conducted in the African American, African immigrant, and mainstream or

Caucasian communities. Grant support for this project offers the opportunity to expand this work to include other communities in the Twin Cities in the future. What follows is an overview of the research methodologies used in the needs assessments that have been conducted to date.

## Methodology
### *African American Community*
A small working group of service providers and experts (see Appendix 4) within the African American community in Minneapolis were the first to be involved in developing a needs assessment plan. They began by holding a focus group to determine what kinds of questions might be most useful to get at the issues surrounding children's exposure to violence. A survey was developed based on the results of this focus group. The survey was first piloted with a domestic violence group at Tubman Family Alliance. Following that, the surveys were conducted with participants in similar groups at the Domestic Abuse Project. Additionally, surveys were done on a more random basis throughout neighborhoods in Minneapolis. A total of 41 surveys were collected.

### *African Immigrant Community*
The needs assessment in the African Immigrant community was initially centered around focus groups. The survey used in the African American assessment was adapted into a set of focus group questions deemed appropriate to the African immigrant community (see Appendix 1). While the focus groups did glean a great deal of useful information, recruiting participants for additional groups proved extremely difficult. As a result, the survey from the African American community was used in the African immigrant needs assessment as well. Survey participants were recruited at local restaurants and coffee shops. A total of 71 surveys were collected through this process.

### *Mainstream Community*
The community needs assessment in the mainstream community was developed in order to gain more information about needs specific to Caucasian Americans in northeast Minneapolis. This area consists of a predominantly Caucasian population with low to moderate incomes and has historically had relatively low reported rates of domestic violence. Stakeholders in the community have hypothesized that the low rates of domestic violence *police calls* are not necessarily an indication that children in this area are unaffected by exposure to violence. Members of the community believe that many families look primarily to their churches for assistance with such matters. As a result, a survey project was developed with St. Mary's in northeast Minneapolis. The goal was to gain more information about how clinicians and advocates could most effectively engage with the needs of this population. The partnership was facilitated through East Side Neighborhood Services. The MCRI project was explained during a Sunday service St. Mary's, and MCRI staff members then hosted a "coffee and cookie" hour following the service for people to fill out surveys.

## Key Findings & Comparisons
### Areas of Consensus
A comparison of the findings indicates consensus across the three communities on a broad range of issues related to violence and children. Strong majorities in all three communities indicated that violence is *learned* behavior (see Figure 1). Very small numbers of respondents in each community

believed that "people are born violent." Additionally, respondents in all three communities displayed an understanding that violence has a clear and negative impact on children and families. Most salient for the MCRI project, majorities in each community also agreed that children *witnessing* a violent act is a form of violence (see Figure 2).

In terms of communicating about violence, majorities in each community felt comfortable talking with their own children about violence, but were more hesitant about their children discussing such issues with other people. Majorities in each community also displayed a belief that domestic violence is an issue that requires outside intervention. There was consistent disagreement across communities (responses were split within each community) about whether violence should be responded to by leaving the situation. Most parents in each community felt that their parenting strategies were effective, and primarily used disciplinary methods that focused on "talking about the behavior" and "positive reinforcement".
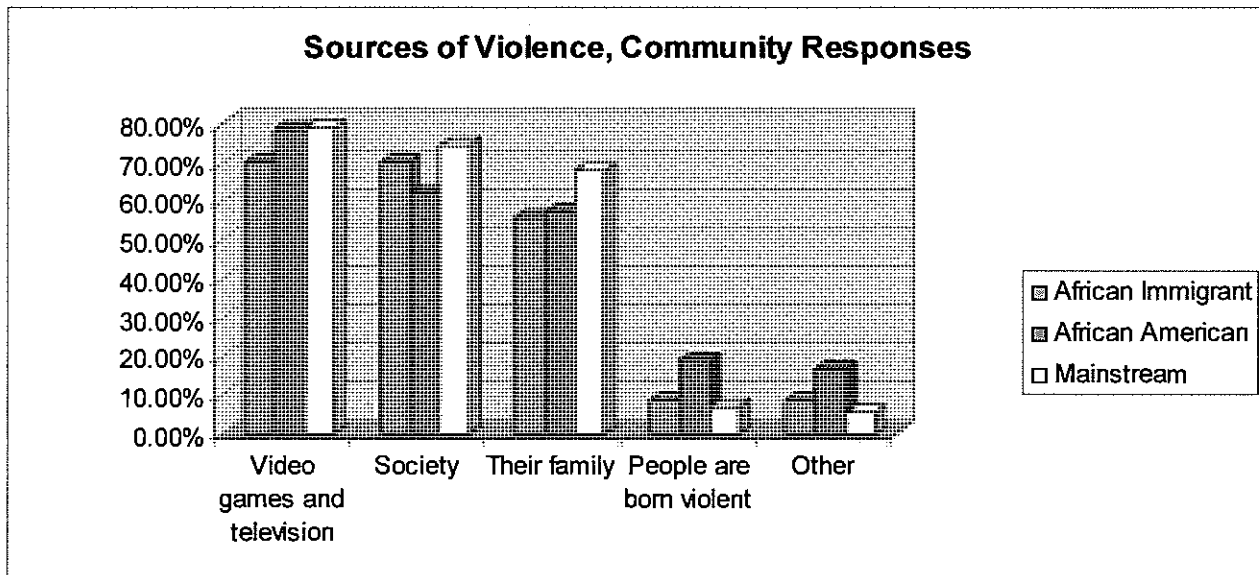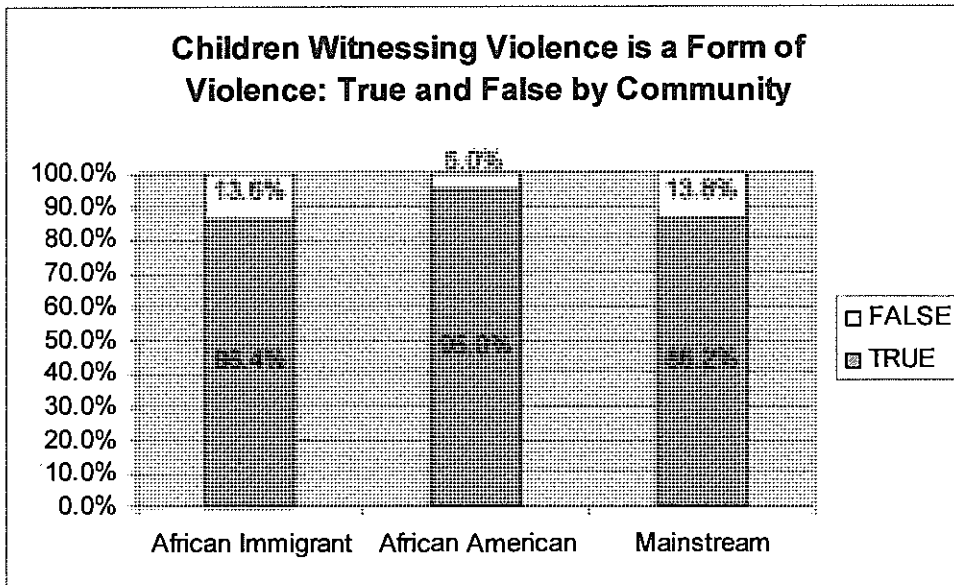
*Figure 1*



Sources of Violence, Community Responses

*Figure 2*



Children Witnessing Violence is a Form of Violence: True and False by Community

**Differences**

The surveys were conducted in slightly different ways within each community, and simple random sampling was not used consistently in any community. As a result, differences in responses between communities cannot be assumed to be statistically significant. However, the results do display some differences that may be informative for shaping education and intervention efforts.

The respondents in the communities differed somewhat in their demographic characteristics. The most marked difference was age---respondents in the mainstream community were, on average, twenty years older than their counterparts in the African American and African immigrant communities (see Figure 3). Both the African immigrant and mainstream community respondents were on the whole more suburban than the respondents in the African American community. Men outnumbered women in the African immigrant respondent pool only (see Figure 4).

One of the most distinct differences between the communities is the extent to which respondents indicated their families had been impacted by racism. For example, 56.1% and 69.2% of the respondents in the African American and African immigrant communities respectively said that their families had been impacted by racism. Only 20.3% of the respondents in the mainstream community reported similar experiences. Also worth noting are the differences between communities in the number of people that feel their children are cared about and welcomed within their communities. Although majorities in each group said that they felt this was true, the agreement was much stronger within the mainstream community (where 97.7% agreed with the statement). 72.2% and 72.7% agreed with this statement in the African American and African immigrant communities respectively. Understanding the reason for the discrepancies might warrant further inquiry; for example, the discrepancies may be attributable to the generation/age differences between the two minority groups (both groups of respondents being, on average, of childbearing

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age) and the mainstream group (average age 53, close to a generation older) more than any other factors.

While majorities in each community thought that social service agencies are helpful, there was some variation in the percentage of people that felt such agencies were "overly involved". Only 10.4% in the mainstream community felt that social service agencies were "overly involved", as compared to 27.7% and 20.5% in the African immigrant and African American communities respectively. Relatedly, respondents in the mainstream community were much more likely than respondents in the other communities to perceive mental health service providers as "helping to deal with issues of domestic violence".

Finally, although majorities in each community felt that people victimized by violence should contact the police, the results indicate more hesitation about this within the African immigrant community. 73.4% of the respondents in the African immigrant community felt that victims should contact police, as compared to 89.8% in the mainstream and 92.7% in the African American community.

These results are not necessarily representative of each community. However, some of these differences in perceptions of social service agencies and police officers indicate a need for more trust building within communities of color.
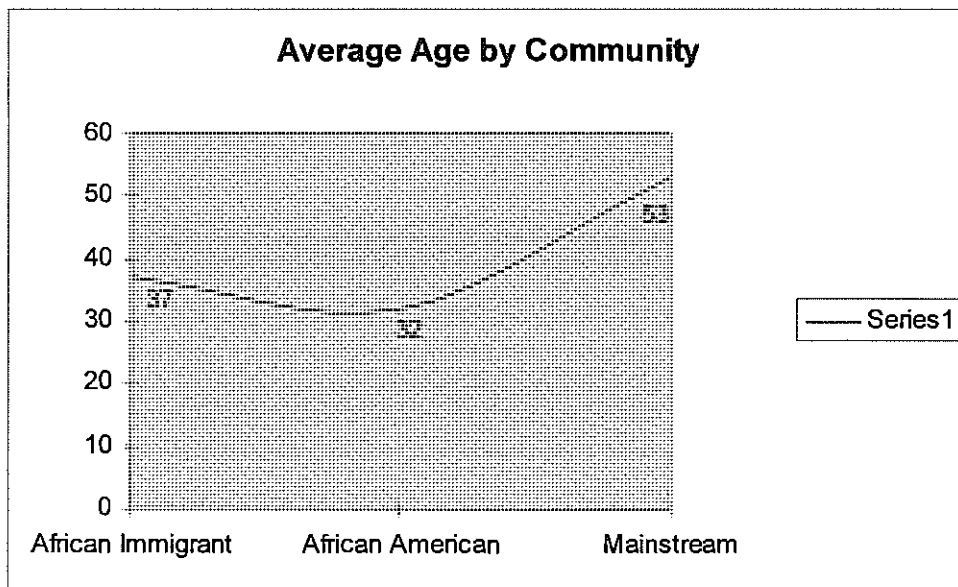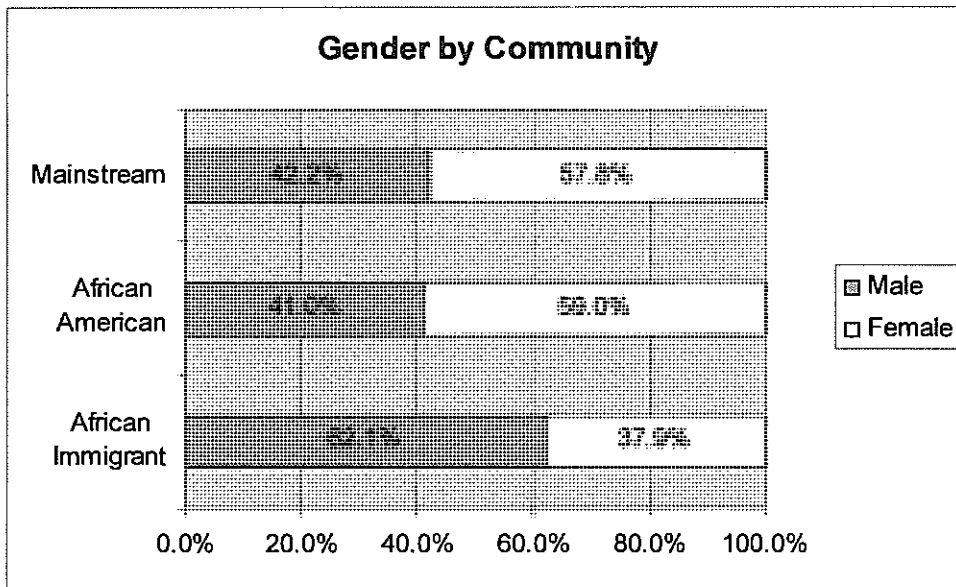
*Figure 3*

*Figure 4*

## Gender by Community



Mainstream — 57.6%

African American — 58.0%

African Immigrant — 37.5%

Legend: ▦ Male  ☐ Female

0.0%  20.0%  40.0%  60.0%  80.0%  100.0%

## Community Specific Findings

### African American Community Survey Results

A total of 41 surveys were collected in the African American community. Detailed data tables can be found in Appendix 2. The following summarizes key themes from the survey results in the African American community.

**Demographics**
The vast majority of the respondents (84.2%) in the African American community needs assessment lived in Minneapolis and cited their race as Black or African American (83.8%). 59% were female. 60% were single, 25% were married, and 15% were divorced/separated or widowed. The mean age for the respondents was 32. 76.9% of the respondents had children.

**Perceptions of Violence and Its Impact on Children**
One of the key objectives of the community needs assessment was to gain a better understanding of how people conceptualize violence and its impact on children. The manner in which people define and perceive violence is partly determined by what they consider to be the sources of violence. There seemed consensus among the African American survey respondents that violence is *learned* behavior: 57.1% said that people learn violence from video games and television, 61.9% said that violence is learned from families, and 78.6% cited "society" as a source of learned violent behavior. Only 16.7% thought that people are "born violent".

The perception that violence is learned behavior was also reflected in the responses to questions about the impact that violence has on children. For example, only 9.5% of respondents said that it was true that "violence does not affect children". 100% of the respondents agreed with the

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statement that "violence at home interferes with a child's performance at school." There was also broad consensus that children witnessing a violent act is a form of violence (95% of respondents agreed with that statement). Overall the responses indicate that respondents believed exposure to violence is harmful for children. There was somewhat less consensus, however, about whether this meant that violence was always to be avoided. 22% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "violence is sometimes necessary".

**Understanding and Communicating About Violence**

Central to effectively advocating for children exposed to violence is getting people to talk about the problem. From this perspective, it is important to understand what people perceive as appropriate or effective venues for communicating about violence in both the public and private spheres. When asked about the most effective way to get information about domestic violence out to the community, there was most consensus (83.3%) that groups and seminars were effective methods. Support for more passive approaches to distributing domestic violence information, such as advertisements and pamphlets, was less strong (64.3% and 59.5% respectively). When asked with whom they feel comfortable sharing information more generally, there was most consensus (82.9%) around family. Friends and people in the community (65.0% and 68.9% respectively) came in close "seconds".

The survey also asked questions about how and whether people discuss violence at home. Generally, there was consensus that it was appropriate to talk with children about domestic violence at home (90.5% agreed with that statement). However, only 46.3% said that "other people talk to my kids about domestic violence". Of the people with children that answered the survey, 100% agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence", whereas only 65.5% agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence."

**Responding to Violence**

Tailoring domestic violence services and education requires information about how people currently feel violence should be handled. The responses from the African American survey participants displayed a general feeling that domestic violence is a public issue that requires outside intervention. For example, 90.5% of the respondents did *not* agree with the statement that "When couples hurt each other, it is their own business." 95.2% also disagreed with a similar statement about harming children. Additionally, 92.7% agreed with the statement that "People who are victimized should involve the police." There was less agreement about whether "violence should be responded to by leaving the situation". 62.5% agreed with this statement, 37.5% did not.

**Perceptions of Social Service Agencies and Other Public Advocates**

Trust is an extremely important factor in developing effective intervention and advocacy systems for children exposed to domestic violence. A few of the questions on the survey tried to get a feel for how social service agencies and their capacity to deal with the problems of domestic violence were perceived. These responses are potentially biased because all respondents knew that the survey was being conducted by a group of domestic violence advocacy agencies. As a result, people may have been less willing to express unfavorable opinions about such organizations. 79.5% of the respondents considered social service agencies to be "helpful". 20.5% considered

them "overly involved". Only 10.3% said that social service agencies are "unnecessary". While this response had the least support among respondents, the perception that social services are unnecessary may warrant further exploration.

When asked about who or what helps address domestic violence in the community, there was most consensus (68.3%) that domestic violence advocates served this purpose. Neighborhood community organizers and churches were also cited as entities that address domestic violence in the community. There was least consensus (29.3%) that mental health service providers served this purpose. 82.9% of the respondents indicated that activities in schools were an effective way to help kids deal with domestic and community violence. Trainings about domestic violence for people that work with kids on a daily basis was also commonly cited as an effective way to help children deal with violence (70.7% of the respondents selected this option).

**Parenting Strategies**
A set of questions on the survey were only asked of people with children. A few of these questions dealt with parenting strategies. 87% of the respondents with children felt that their parenting strategies were effective. When asked about parenting techniques, the most frequently cited methods were talking about the behavior (90.3%) and positive reinforcement (74.2%). Physical punishment and negative reinforcement were much less frequently selected (45.2% and 41.9% respectively).

**Feelings of Inclusiveness and Security**
An important component of successful intervention is helping families feel more secure and connected to their communities. Most (87.8%) of the respondents felt that their basic needs in terms of clothing, shelter, and food were being met. 74.2% of the respondents with children agreed with the statement "I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my children." 85.7% of all respondents felt welcomed in the community. However, 56.1% stated that their family had been impacted by racism.

## Mainstream Community Survey Results

A total of 71 surveys were collected in the mainstream community. Detailed data tables can be found in Appendix 2. The following summarizes key themes from the survey results in the mainstream community.

### Demographics

The majority of the respondents (61.9%) in the mainstream community needs assessment lived in suburbs, 31.7% lived in Minneapolis. All of the respondents that answered the question about race/ethnicity listed either White or a European ethnicity. 58% were female. The majority of the respondents (71.6%) were married. 20.9% were divorced, separated, or widowed. The mean age for the respondents was 53. 86.2% of the respondents had children.

### Perceptions of Violence and Its Impact on Children

One of the key objectives of the community needs assessment was to gain a better understanding of how people conceptualize violence and its impact on children. The manner in which people define and perceive violence is partly determined by what they consider to be the sources of violence. There seemed consensus among the mainstream survey respondents that violence is *learned* behavior: 78.9% said that people learn violence from video games and television, 74.6% said that violence is learned from families, and 67.6% cited "society" as a source of learned violent behavior. Only 5.6% thought that people are "born violent".

The perception that violence is learned behavior was also reflected in the responses to questions about the impact that violence has on children. For example, only 4.3% of respondents said that it was true that "violence does not affect children". 100% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "violence at home interferes with a child's performance at school." There was also consensus that children witnessing a violent act is a form of violence (86.2% of respondents agreed with that statement). Overall the results indicate that respondents believed exposure to violence is harmful for children.

### Understanding and Communicating About Violence

Central to effectively advocating for children exposed to violence is getting people to talk about the problem. From this perspective, it is important to understand what people perceive as appropriate or effective venues for communicating about violence in both the public and private spheres. When asked about the most effective way to get information about domestic violence out to the community, there was most consensus (74.6%) that groups and seminars were effective methods. There was less support for more passive approaches to providing information about domestic violence, such as advertisements and pamphlets (56.7% and 53.7% respectively). When asked with whom they feel comfortable sharing information more generally, there was most consensus (77.6%) around family. Friends and people in the community (70.1% and 68.7% respectively) came in close "seconds".

The survey also asked questions about how and whether people discuss violence at home. Many of these questions suffered from relatively low response rates in the mainstream community (see data

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tables in Appendix 2 for details). This was possibly due to a perception among respondents that discussing violence at home or with others meant that they had experienced domestic violence. Among those that did respond to the questions, there was consensus that it was appropriate to talk with children about domestic violence at home (88.7% agreed with that statement, with a response rate of 87.3%). 67.3% said that "other people talk to my kids about domestic violence"(response rate 73.2%). Of the people with children that answered the survey, 93.8% agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence". A somewhat smaller number of respondents (80%) agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence."

## Responding to Violence
Tailoring domestic violence services and education requires information about how people currently feel violence should be handled. The responses from the mainstream survey participants displayed a general feeling that domestic violence is a public issue that requires outside intervention. For example, 88.9% of the respondents did *not* agree with the statement that "When couples hurt each other, it is their own business." 100% also disagreed with a similar statement about harming children. Additionally, 89.8% agreed with the statement that "People who are victimized should involve the police." There was considerably less agreement about whether "violence should be responded to by leaving the situation". 52.5% agreed with this statement, 47.5% did not.

## Perceptions of Social Service Agencies and Other Public Advocates
Trust is an extremely important factor in developing effective intervention and advocacy systems for children exposed to domestic violence. A few of the questions on the survey tried to get a feel for how social service agencies and their capacity to deal with the problems of domestic violence were perceived. These responses are potentially biased because all respondents knew that the survey was being conducted by a group of domestic violence advocacy agencies. As a result, people may have been less willing to express unfavorable opinions about such organizations. 83,6% of the respondents considered social service agencies to be "helpful". 10.4% consider them "overly involved". Only 1.5% said that social service agencies are "unnecessary".

When asked about who or what helps address domestic violence in the community, there was most consensus (70.6%) that domestic violence advocates served this purpose. Mental health service providers, churches, and child protection workers were also cited as serving this purpose. 80.9% of the respondents indicated that activities in schools were an effective way to help kids deal with domestic and community violence. Trainings about domestic violence for people that work with kids on a daily basis was also commonly cited as an effective way to help children deal with violence (66.2% of the respondents selected this response).

## Parenting Strategies
A set of questions on the survey were only asked of people with children. A few of these questions dealt with parenting strategies. 93% of the respondents with children felt that their parenting strategies were effective. When asked about parenting techniques, the most frequently cited methods were talking about the behavior (89.4%) and positive reinforcement (78.7%). Physical punishment was much less frequently selected (25.5%).

**Feelings of Inclusiveness and Security**

An important component of successful intervention is helping families feel more secure and connected to their communities. Most (96.8%) of the respondents felt that their basic needs in terms of clothing, shelter, and food were being met. 97.7% of the respondents with children agreed with the statement "I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my children." 98.4% of all respondents felt welcomed in the community.

## African Immigrant Community Survey Results

*Focus Groups*
Initially, focus groups were the primary research method used in the African immigrant community needs assessment. Four focus groups were conducted with African immigrants in Minneapolis. See Appendix 3 for the full focus group report and transcripts. Overall, the focus groups included 16 women and and 9 men. The following African nations, regions and ethnicities were represented: Somalia, Ethiopia, Togo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Kenya.

Participants provided a wide range of responses regarding the definitions and sources of violence and how best to discipline children. There was consensus, however, that children learn violence at home and that exposure to violence is harmful for children. Another common theme was the frustration that comes with attempting to navigate a system that doesn't engage effectively with cultural differences. A frequently cited example of this was the manner in which 9-1-1 has become, in some families, a bargaining chip that children can use against their parents. This is made especially problematic because of generational differences in English proficiency (i.e. kids speak the language better so they are more able to manipulate the system).

*Surveys*
Although the focus groups provided very important insights about the needs of children exposed to violence in the African immigrant community, it proved extremely difficult to recruit participants. In order to reach a broader spectrum of the community, surveys were conducted. A total of 70 surveys were collected in the African immigrant community. Detailed data tables can be found in Appendix 2. The following summarizes key themes from the survey results in the mainstream community.

### Demographics
The majority of the respondents in the survey component of the African immigrant community needs assessment lived in Minneapolis (43.3%) or the suburbs (29.9%). All of the respondents that answered the question about race/ethnicity listed Black, African, or a particular African ethnicity. 7 respondents listed multiple races/ethnicities. The majority of the respondents (62.1%) were male. The respondents were pretty evenly split in terms of marital status (46.3% were married, 50.7% were single). The mean age for the respondents was 37. 51.6% of the respondents had children of their own.

### Perceptions of Violence and Its Impact on Children
One of the key objectives of the community needs assessment was to gain a better understanding of how people conceptualize violence and its impact on children. The manner in which people define and perceive violence is partly determined by what they consider to be the sources of violence. There seemed consensus among the African immigrant survey respondents that violence is *learned* behavior: 70.0% said that people learn violence from video games and television, 55.7% said that violence is learned from families, and 70.0% cited "society" as a source of learned violent behavior. Only 8.6% thought that people are "born violent".

The perception that violence is learned behavior was also reflected in the responses to questions about the impact that violence has on children. For example, only 8.6% of the respondents said that it was true that "violence does not affect children". 92.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "violence at home interferes with a child's performance at school." There was also consensus that children witnessing a violent act is a form of violence (86.4% of respondents agreed with that statement). Overall the results indicate that respondents believed exposure to violence is harmful for children.

**Understanding and Communicating About Violence**
A big part of advocating for children exposed to violence is getting people to talk about the problem. From this perspective, it is important to understand what people perceive as appropriate or effective venues for communicating about violence in both the public and private spheres. When asked about the most effective way to get information about domestic violence out to the community, there was most consensus (81.4%) that groups and seminars were effective methods. There was less support for more passive approaches to providing information about domestic violence, such as advertisements and pamphlets (47.1% and 35.7% respectively). When asked with whom they feel comfortable sharing information more generally, there was most consensus (80.9%) around family. Friends came in a close "second" (67.6%). Only 47.1% said that they feel comfortable sharing information with "people in the community" more generally.

The survey also asked questions about how and whether people discuss violence at home. Some of these questions suffered from relatively low response rates in the African immigrant community (see data tables in Appendix 2 for details). This was possibly due to a perception among respondents that discussing violence at home meant that they had experienced domestic violence. Among those that did respond to the questions, there was consensus that it was appropriate to talk with children about domestic violence at home (80.0% agreed with that statement, with a response rate of 92.9%). 58.0% said that "other people talk to my kids about domestic violence"(response rate 71.4%). Of the people with children that answered the survey, 80.0% agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence". A somewhat smaller number of respondents (64.7%) agreed with the statement "I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence."

**Responding to Violence**
Tailoring domestic violence services and education requires information about how people currently feel violence should be handled. The responses from the African immigrant participants displayed a general feeling that domestic violence is a public issue that requires outside intervention. For example, 87.5% of the respondents did *not* agree with the statement that "When couples hurt each other, it is their own business." 89.4% also disagreed with a similar statement about harming children. Additionally, 73.4% agreed with the statement that "People who are victimized should involve the police." There was considerably less agreement about whether "violence should be responded to by leaving the situation". 46.8% agreed with this statement, 53.2% did not.

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**Perceptions of Social Service Agencies and Other Public Advocates**
Trust is an extremely important factor in developing effective intervention and advocacy systems for children exposed to domestic violence. A few of the questions on the survey tried to get a feel for how social service agencies and their capacity to deal with the problems of domestic violence were perceived among the respondents. These responses are potentially biased because all respondents knew that the survey was being conducted by a group of domestic violence advocacy agencies. As a result, people may have been less willing to express unfavorable opinions about such organizations. 81.5% of the respondents considered social service agencies to be "helpful". 27.7% consider them "overly involved". 9.2% said that social service agencies are "unnecessary".

When asked about who or what helps address domestic violence in the community, there was most consensus (62.3%) that churches served this purpose. Neighborhood community organizers and domestic violence advocates were also perceived as serving this purpose. Mental health service providers were least frequently cited (26.0%) as addressing domestic violence in the community. 81.4% of the respondents indicated that activities in schools were an effective way to help kids deal with domestic and community violence. Community agencies and trainings about domestic violence for people that work with kids on a daily basis were also commonly cited as effective ways to help children deal with violence (58.2% and 56.7% respectively).

**Parenting Strategies**
A set of questions on the survey were only asked of people with children. A few of these questions dealt with parenting strategies. 93.8% of the respondents with children felt that their parenting strategies were effective. When asked about parenting techniques, the most frequently cited methods were talking about the behavior (84.4%) and positive reinforcement (71.9%). Physical punishment was much less frequently selected (15.6%).

**Feelings of Inclusiveness and Security**
An important component of successful intervention is helping families feel more secure and connected to their communities. Most (83.3%) of the respondents felt that their basic needs in terms of clothing, shelter, and food were being met. 72.7% of the respondents with children agreed with the statement "I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my children." 86.2% of all respondents felt welcomed in the community. The majority of the respondents (69.2%) said that their family has been impacted by racism.

**Appendix 1**
**Survey Instrument**

**Survey Administrator fill out this table:**

| Code: | Location: |
|---|---|
| Community: | Survey Administered by (initials): |
| Date: | Written/Interviewed |

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. Your answers will help us better understand the needs of the community in regards to violence. All of your answers are anonymous—meaning that all information you provide WIL NOT be associated with you. The survey is being conducted by East Side Neighborhood Services and the Minnesota Child Response Initiative (MCRI).*

### *Community Response to Violence*

1.) People learn violence from (circle all that apply)
      a) Video games and television
      b) Their family
      c) People are born violent
      d) Society
      e) Other (write in your response):_____

2.) Who/what helps address domestic violence in the community? (circle all that apply)
      a) Mental health service providers
      b) Neighborhood community organizers
      c) Churches
      d) Police intervention
      e) School social workers
      f) Child protection workers
      g) Domestic violence advocates
      h) Other (write in your response):_____

3.) Who/what might help kids deal with domestic violence and community violence? (circle all that apply)
      a) Activities in the school (ex: support groups)
      b) Mental health service providers
      c) Community agencies
      d) Trainings about domestic violence for people who work with children
      e) Other (write in your response): _____

4.) Information about domestic violence could best be provided to the community by: (circle all that apply):
      a) Groups and seminars

b) Advertisements
c) Pamphlets
d) Other (write in your response):_____

5.) I feel comfortable sharing information and getting help from: (circle all that apply)
    a) My friends
    b) My family
    c) People in the community (i.e., social services, church)
    d) Other (write in your response):_____

6.) I perceive social service support agencies as: (circle all that apply)
    a) helpful
    b) overly involved
    c) unnecessary
    d) Other (write in your response):_____

**7.) Please circle either T (True) of F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false.**

|  | True | False |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Violence is sometimes necessary. | T | F |
| Violence does not affect children | T | F |
| Violence is the only way to make children obey. | T | F |
| Violence makes children fearful of the violent person. | T | F |
| Violence at home interferes with a child's performance in school. | T | F |
| Family relations are hurt by violence. | T | F |
| Children witnessing a violent act is a form of a violence. | T | F |
|  |  |  |
| We can talk about domestic violence in my family | T | F |
| Other people talk to my kids about domestic violence. | T | F |
| Domestic violence should not be discussed with children. | T | F |
| When couples hurt each other, it is their own business. | T | F |
| When parents harm children, it is their own business. | T | F |
| Violence should be responded to by leaving the situation. | T | F |
| People who are victimized should involve the police. | T | F |
|  |  |  |
| I don't talk to anyone about domestic violence. | T | F |
| I talk to family and friends about domestic violence. | T | F |
| I talk to people from the community about domestic abuse. | T | F |
|  |  |  |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| My basic needs (clothing, shelter, food) are met. | T | F |
| My family feels welcomed in the community. | T | F |
| My family has been impacted by racism. | T | F |
| | | |

Please complete the following for our demographic information:

8.) City of Residence

_____

9.) Gender:
    a) Male
    b) Female

10.) Age:_____

11.) Race/Ethnicity:

_____

12.) Marital Status:
    a) Single
    b) Married
    c) Divorced/Separated/Widowed

13.) Do you have children?
    a) yes
    b) no

**Please answer the following questions only if you are a parent:**

14.) My parenting strategies are effective (circle one)    True    False

15.) The parenting techniques I use are: (circle all that apply)
    a) talking about the behavior
    b) negative reinforcement (timeouts, etc.)
    c) positive reinforcement (special privileges, etc.)
    d) physical punishment (spanking, etc.)
    e) other (write in your response)_____

_____

**16) Please circle either T (True) of F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic vio | T | F |
| I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence. | T | F |
| I don't mind my children talking about domestic violence. | T | F |
| I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my child. | T | F |

## Appendix 2
## Data Tables

Frequency refers to the number of individuals that responded in a particular category. Respondents did not always answer every question. The percentages are based on the total number of individuals that responded to each question, not the total number of returned surveys. This is referred to as a valid percent. Additionally, all multiple choice questions allowed for more than one response. As a result, the percentages for these questions do not add up to 100%. Multiple choice responses are listed in order of descending frequency.

## African Immigrant Survey Responses

1.) People learn violence from:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Video games and television | 49 | 70.0% |
| Society | 49 | 70.0% |
| Their family | 39 | 55.7% |
| People are born violent | 6 | 8.6% |
| Other | 6 | 8.6% |

Response rate 100%, Average number of responses: 2.1

2.) Who/what helps address domestic violence in the community?

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Churches | 43 | 62.3% |
| Neighborhood community organizers | 42 | 60.9% |
| Domestic violence advocates | 38 | 55.1% |
| School social workers | 33 | 47.8% |
| Police Intervention | 26 | 37.7% |
| Child protection workers | 22 | 31.9% |
| Mental health service providers | 18 | 26.0% |
| Other | 6 | 8.7% |

Response rate: 98.6%, Average number of responses: 3.3

3.) Who/what might help kids deal with domestic violence and community violence?

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activities in the school (ex: support groups) | 48 | 71.6% |
| Community Agencies | 39 | 58.2% |
| Trainings about domestic violence for people who work with children | 38 | 56.7% |
| Mental health service providers | 13 | 19.4% |
| Other | 6 | 9.0% |

Response rate: 95.7%, Average number of responses: 2.1

4.) Information about domestic violence could best be provided to the community by:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |

| Groups and seminars | 57 | 81.4% |
|---|---|---|
| Advertisements | 33 | 47.1% |
| Pamphlets | 25 | 35.7% |
| Other | 10 | 14.3% |

Response rate: 100%, Average number of responses: 1.8

5.) I feel comfortable sharing information and getting help from:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| My family | 55 | 80.9% |
| My friends | 46 | 67.6% |
| People in the community (i.e. social services, church) | 32 | 47.1% |
| Other | 3 | 4.5% |

Response rate: 97.1%, Average number of responses: 1.9

6.) I perceive social service support agencies as:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Helpful | 53 | 81.5% |
| Overly involved | 18 | 27.7% |
| Unnecessary | 6 | 9.2% |
| Other | 1 | 1.5% |

Response rate: 92.9%, Average number of responses:1.1

7.) Please circle either  T (True) of F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false. *Frequencies are noted beneath each valid percent.*

| | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence is sometimes necessary. | 12.9% 9 | 87.1% 61 | 100% |
| Violence does not affect children | 8.6% 6 | 91.4%% 64 | 100% |
| Violence is the only way to make children obey. | 8.6% 6 | 91.4% 64 | 100% |
| Violence makes children fearful of the violent person. | 78.6% 55 | 21.4% 15 | 100% |
| Violence at home interferes with a child's performance in school | 92.6% 63 | 7.4% 5 | 97.1% |
| Family relations are hurt by violence. | 91.2% 62 | 8.8% 6 | 97.1% |
| Children witnessing a violent act is a form of a violence. | 86.4% 57 | 13.6% 9 | 94.2% |
| We can talk about domestic violence in my family | 80.0% 52 | 20.0% 13 | 92.9% |
| Other people talk to my kids about domestic violence. | 58.0% 29 | 42.0% 21 | 71.4% |

21

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Domestic violence should not be discussed with children. | 24.2% 16 | 75.8% 50 | 94.3% |
| When couples hurt each other, it is their own business. | 12.5% 8 | 87.5% 56 | 87.5% |
| When parents harm children, it is their own business. | 10.6% 7 | 89.4% 59 | 94.2% |
| Violence should be responded to by leaving the situation. | 46.8% 29 | 53.2% 33 | 88.6% |
| People who are victimized should involve the police. | 73.4% 47 | 26.6% 17 | 91.4% |
| | | | |
| I don't talk to anyone about domestic violence. | 12.3% 8 | 87.7% 57 | 92.9% |
| I talk to family and friends about domestic violence. | 87.7% 57 | 12.3% 8 | 92.9% |
| I talk to people from the community about domestic abuse. | 64.6% 42 | 35.4% 23 | 92.9% |
| | | | |
| My basic needs (clothing, shelter, food) are met. | 83.3% 55 | 16.7% 11 | 94.3% |
| My family feels welcomed in the community. | 86.2% 50 | 1.6% 1 | 82.9% |
| My family has been impacted by racism. | 69.2% 45 | 30.8% 20 | 92.9% |

## Demographic Information

8.) City of Residence

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Minneapolis | 29 | 43.3% |
| Suburbs* | 20 | 29.9% |
| St. Paul | 15 | 22.4% |
| Other | 3 | 4.5% |

Response Rate 95.7%
*suburbs included: Burnsville, Falcon Heights, Fridley, Lauderdale, Maplewood, Oakdale, Roseville, Shoreview, St. Louis Park, Woodbury

9.) Gender

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 41 | 62.1% |
| Female | 25 | 37.9% |

Response Rate: 94.3%

10.) Age

| | |
|---|---|
| Mean | 37 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Median | 35 | |

11.) Race(s)/ Ethnicity(ies)

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Black/African American | 36 | 53.7% |
| African | 20 | 29.9% |
| Ethiopian | 7 | 10.4% |
| Somalian | 7 | 10.4% |
| Other | 2 | 3.0% |
| Abysinian | 1 | 1.5% |
| Eritrean | 1 | 1.5% |

Response Rate 95.8%; 7 people listed two races/ethnicities

12.) Marital Status

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Married | 34 | 50.7% |
| Single | 31 | 46.3% |
| Divorced/Separated/Widowed | 2 | 3.0% |

Response Rate 95.7%

13.) Do you have children?

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 32 | 51.6% |
| No | 30 | 38.4% |

Response Rate 92.9%

*The following questions were only asked of people with children. Valid percents and response rates were calculated assuming 36 people with children eligible to answer these questions (32 that answered yes to 13 plus 4 that don't have children of their own but care for relatives' children)*

14.) My parenting strategies are effective:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 30 | 93.8% |
| No | 2 | 6.2% |

Response Rate 88.9%

15.) The parenting techniques I use are:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Talking about the behavior | 27 | 84.4% |
| Negative reinforcement (timeouts, etc.) | 14 | 43.8% |
| Positive reinforcement (special privileges, etc.) | 23 | 71.9% |
| Physical punishment (spanking, etc.) | 5 | 15.6% |
| Other | 7 | 21.9% |

Response Rate 88.9%,

16.) Please circle either T (True) or F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false.
*Frequencies are listed beneath each valid percent.*

|  | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence. | 64.7% 22 | 35.3% 12 | 94.4% |
| I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence. | 80.0% 28 | 20.0% 7 | 97.2% |
| I don't mind my children talking about domestic violence. | 65.7% 23 | 34.3% 12 | 97.2% |
| I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my child/ren. | 72.7% 24 | 27.3% 9 | 91.7% |

## Mainstream Survey Responses

1.) People learn violence from:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Video games and television | 56 | 78.9% |
| Their family | 53 | 74.6% |
| Society | 48 | 67.6% |
| People are born violent | 5 | 7.0% |
| Other | 4 | 5.6% |

Response rate 100%, Average number of responses: 2.3

2.) Who/what helps address domestic violence in the community?

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Domestic violence advocates | 48 | 70.6% |
| Churches | 44 | 64.7% |
| Mental health service providers | 43 | 63.2% |
| Child protection workers | 43 | 63.2% |
| Police Intervention | 42 | 61.8% |
| School social workers | 40 | 58.8% |
| Neighborhood community organizers | 38 | 55.9% |

| Other | 2 | 2.9% |
|---|---|---|

Response rate: 95.8%, Average number of responses: 4.2

3.) Who/what might help kids deal with domestic violence and community violence?

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Activities in the school (ex: support groups) | 55 | 80.9% |
| Community Agencies | 45 | 66.2% |
| Trainings about domestic violence for people who work with children | 45 | 66.2% |
| Mental health service providers | 38 | 55.9% |
| Other | 10 | 14.7% |

Response rate: 95.8%, Average number of responses: 2.7

4.) Information about domestic violence could best be provided to the community by:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Groups and seminars | 50 | 74.6% |
| Advertisements | 38 | 56.7% |
| Pamphlets | 36 | 53.7% |
| Other | 6 | 9.0% |

Response rate: 94.4%, Average number of responses: 1.8

5.) I feel comfortable sharing information and getting help from:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| My family | 52 | 77.6% |
| My friends | 47 | 70.1% |
| People in the community (i.e. social services, church) | 46 | 68.7% |
| Other | 3 | 4.5% |

Response rate: 94.4%, Average number of responses: 2.1

6.) I perceive social service support agencies as:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Helpful | 56 | 83.6% |
| Overly involved | 7 | 10.4% |
| Unnecessary | 1 | 1.5% |
| Other | 1 | 1.5% |

Response rate: 94.4%, Average number of responses:1

7.) Please circle either T (True) of F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false. *Frequencies are noted beneath each valid percent.*

| | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence is sometimes necessary. | 16.2%<br>11 | 83.8%<br>57 | 95.8% |
| Violence does not affect children | 4.3%<br>3 | 95.7%<br>66 | 97.2% |
| Violence is the only way to make children obey. | 2.9% | 97.1% | 97.2% |

|  | 2 | 67 |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence makes children fearful of the violent person. | 94.0%<br>63 | 6.0%<br>6 | 94.4% |
| Violence at home interferes with a child's performance in school. | 100%<br>67 | 0%<br>0 | 94.4% |
| Family relations are hurt by violence. | 98.5%<br>67 | 1.5%<br>1 | 95.8% |
| Children witnessing a violent act is a form of a violence. | 86.2%<br>56 | 13.8%<br>9 | 91.5% |
| We can talk about domestic violence in my family | 88.7%<br>55 | 11.3%<br>7 | 87.3% |
| Other people talk to my kids about domestic violence. | 67.3%<br>35 | 32.7%<br>17 | 73.2% |
| Domestic violence should not be discussed with children. | 6.2%<br>4 | 93.8%<br>61 | 91.5% |
| When couples hurt each other, it is their own business. | 11.1%<br>7 | 88.9%<br>56 | 88.7% |
| When parents harm children, it is their own business. | 0%<br>0 | 100%<br>64 | 90.1% |
| Violence should be responded to by leaving the situation. | 52.5%<br>31 | 47.5%<br>28 | 83.1% |
| People who are victimized should involve the police. | 89.8%<br>53 | 10.2%<br>6 | 83.1% |
|  |  |  |  |
| I don't talk to anyone about domestic violence. | 13.8%<br>8 | 86.2%<br>50 | 81.7% |
| I talk to family and friends about domestic violence. | 83.6%<br>46 | 16.4%<br>9 | 77.5% |
| I talk to people from the community about domestic abuse. | 69.8%<br>37 | 30.2%<br>16 | 74.6% |
|  |  |  |  |
| My basic needs (clothing, shelter, food) are met. | 96.8%<br>60 | 3.2%<br>2 | 87.3% |
| My family feels welcomed in the community. | 98.4%<br>60 | 1.6%<br>1 | 85.9% |
| My family has been impacted by racism. | 20.3%<br>12 | 79.7%<br>47 | 83.1% |

8.) City of Residence

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Suburbs* | 39 | 61.9% |
| Minneapolis | 20 | 31.7% |
| St. Paul | 4 | 6.3% |

Response Rate 88.7%

*suburbs included: Andover, Blaine, Coon Rapids, Crystal, Eagan, Edina, Elk River, Fridley, Lakeville, Mahtomedhi, Maple Grove, Maplewood, Monticello, New Brighton, Ostego, Robbinsdale, Shoreview, St. Anthony, White Bear Lake, and Woodbury

9.) Gender

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 37 | 57.8% |
| Male | 27 | 42.2% |

Response Rate: 90.1%

10.) Age

| Mean | 53 |
|---|---|
| Median | 50 |

11.) Race(s)/ Ethnicity(ies)

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White | 50 | 92.6% |
| Croatian | 1 | 1.9% |
| Greek | 1 | 1.9% |
| Swedish | 1 | 1.9% |
| Yugoslavian | 1 | 1.9% |
| Italian | 1 | 1.9% |

Response Rate 76.1%, 1 person listed multiple races/ethnicities

12.) Marital Status

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Married | 48 | 71.6% |
| Divorced/Separated/Widowed | 14 | 20.9% |
| Single | 5 | 7.5% |

Response Rate 94.4%

13.) Do you have children?

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 56 | 86.2% |
| No | 9 | 13.8% |

Response Rate 91.5%

*The following questions were only asked of people with children. Valid percents and response rates were calculated assuming 56 people with children eligible to answer these questions.*

14.) My parenting strategies are effective:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 40 | 93.0% |

27

| No | 3 | 7.0% |
|---|---|---|

Response Rate 76.8%

15.) The parenting techniques I use are:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Talking about the behavior | 28 | 90.3% |
| Positive reinforcement (special privileges, etc.) | 23 | 74.2% |
| Physical punishment (spanking, etc.) | 14 | 45.2% |
| Negative reinforcement (timeouts, etc.) | 13 | 41.9% |
| Other | 1 | 3.2% |

Response Rate 96.9%,

16.) Please circle either T (True) or F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false.
*Frequencies are listed beneath each valid percent.*

| | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence. | 80.0%<br>36 | 20.0%<br>9 | 80.4% |
| I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence. | 93.8%<br>45 | 6.3%<br>3 | 85.7% |
| I don't mind my children talking about domestic violence. | 87.5%<br>42 | 12.5%<br>6 | 85.7% |
| I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my child/ren. | 97.7%<br>43 | 2.3%<br>1 | 78.6% |

**African American Survey Responses**

1.) People learn violence from:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Society | 33 | 78.6% |
| Their family | 26 | 61.9% |
| Video games and television | 24 | 57.1% |
| Other | 8 | 19.0% |
| People are born violent | 7 | 16.7% |

Response rate 100%, Average number of responses: 2.3

2.) Who/what helps address domestic violence in the community?

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Domestic violence advocates | 28 | 68.3% |
| Neighborhood community organizers | 23 | 56.1% |

| Churches | 21 | 51.2% |
|---|---|---|
| School social workers | 17 | 41.5% |
| Police Intervention | 14 | 34.1% |
| Child protection workers | 14 | 34.1% |
| Mental health service providers | 12 | 29.3% |
| Other | 9 | 22.0% |

Response rate: 97.6%, Average number of responses:3.3

3.) Who/what might help kids deal with domestic violence and community violence?

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Activities in the school (ex: support groups) | 34 | 82.9% |
| Trainings about domestic violence for people who work with children | 29 | 70.7% |
| Community Agencies | 18 | 43.9% |
| Mental health service providers | 11 | 26.8% |
| Other | 2 | 4.9% |

Response rate: 97.6%, Average number of responses: 2.2

4.) Information about domestic violence could best be provided to the community by:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Groups and seminars | 35 | 83.3% |
| Advertisements | 27 | 64.3% |
| Pamphlets | 25 | 59.5% |
| Other | 7 | 16.7% |

Response rate: 100%, Average number of responses: 2.2

5.) I feel comfortable sharing information and getting help from:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| My family | 34 | 82.9% |
| People in the community (i.e. social services, church) | 27 | 68.9% |
| My friends | 27 | 65.9% |
| Other | 5 | 12.2% |

Response rate: 97.6%, Average number of responses: 2.2

6.) I perceive social service support agencies as:

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Helpful | 31 | 79.5% |
| Overly involved | 8 | 20.5% |
| Other | 5 | 12.8% |
| Unnecessary | 4 | 10.3% |

Response rate: 92.9%, Average number of responses: 1.1

7.) Please circle either T (True) of F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false. *Frequencies are noted beneath each valid percent.*

| | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence is sometimes necessary. | 22.0% 9 | 78.0% 32 | 97.6% |
| Violence does not affect children | 9.5% 4 | 90.5% 38 | 100% |
| Violence is the only way to make children obey. | 0% 0 | 100% 42 | 100% |
| Violence makes children fearful of the violent person. | 88.1% 37 | 11.9% 5 | 100% |
| Violence at home interferes with a child's performance in school. | 100% 42 | 0% 0 | 100% |
| Family relations are hurt by violence. | 97.6% 41 | 2.4% 1 | 100% |
| Children witnessing a violent act is a form of a violence. | 95% 38 | 5% 2 | 95.2% |
| | | | |
| We can talk about domestic violence in my family | 90.5% 38 | 9.5% 4 | 100% |
| Other people talk to my kids about domestic violence. | 46.3% 19 | 53.7% 22 | 97.6% |
| Domestic violence should not be discussed with children. | 9.5% 4 | 90.5% 38 | 100% |
| When couples hurt each other, it is their own business. | 9.5% 4 | 90.5% 38 | 100% |
| When parents harm children, it is their own business. | 4.8% 2 | 95.2% 40 | 100% |
| Violence should be responded to by leaving the situation. | 62.5% 25 | 37.5% 15 | 95.2% |
| People who are victimized should involve the police. | 92.7% 38 | 7.3% 3 | 97.6% |
| | | | |
| I don't talk to anyone about domestic violence. | 9.5% 4 | 90.5% 38 | 100% |
| I talk to family and friends about domestic violence. | 90.5% 38 | 9.5% 4 | 100% |
| I talk to people from the community about domestic abuse. | 52.4% 22 | 47.6% 20 | 100% |
| | | | |
| My basic needs (clothing, shelter, food) are met. | 87.8% 36 | 12.2% 5 | 97.6% |
| My family feels welcomed in the community. | 85.7% 36 | 14.3% 6 | 100% |

| My family has been impacted by racism. | 56.1% 23 | 43.9% 18 | 97.6% |
|---|---|---|---|

## Demographic Information

8.) City of Residence

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Minneapolis | 32 | 84.2% |
| Other Suburbs* & St. Paul | 6 | 15.8% |

Response Rate 90.5%
*suburbs included: Brooklyn Park, Cottage Grove, Eden Prairie, Richfield

9.) Gender

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 23 | 59% |
| Male | 16 | 41% |

Response Rate: 92.9%

10.) Age

| Mean | 32 |
|---|---|
| Median | 32 |

11.) Race(s)/ Ethnicity(ies)

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Black/African American | 31 | 83.8% |
| White | 6 | 16.2% |
| American Indian | 1 | 2.7% |
| Ethiopian | 1 | 2.7% |

Response Rate 88.1%, One person selected two races/ethnicities

12.) Marital Status

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Single | 24 | 60.0% |
| Married | 10 | 25% |
| Divorced/Separated/Widowed | 6 | 15% |

Response Rate 95.2%

13.) Do you have children?

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 30 | 76.9% |
| No | 9 | 23.1% |

Response Rate 92.9%

*The following questions were only asked of people with children. Valid percents and response rates were calculated assuming 32 people with children eligible to answer these questions (30 that answered yes to 13 plus 2 that left 13 blank but answered the rest of the survey fully)*

14.) My parenting strategies are effective:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 27 | 87.0% |
| No | 4 | 12.9% |

Response Rate 96.9%

15.) The parenting techniques I use are:

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Talking about the behavior | 28 | 90.3% |
| Positive reinforcement (special privileges, etc.) | 23 | 74.2% |
| Physical punishment (spanking, etc.) | 14 | 45.2% |
| Negative reinforcement (timeouts, etc.) | 13 | 41.9% |
| Other | 1 | 3.2% |

Response Rate 96.9%

16.) Please circle either T (True) or F (False) to indicate your opinion about whether the statement is true or false.
*Frequencies are listed beneath each valid percent.*

|  | True | False | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable with others talking to my children about domestic violence. | 65.6% 21 | 34.4% 11 | 100% |
| I feel comfortable talking to my children about domestic violence. | 100% 32 | 0% 0 | 100% |
| I don't mind my children talking about domestic violence. | 87.5% 28 | 12.5% 4 | 100% |
| I feel that the community we live in welcomes and cares about my child/ren. | 74.2% 23 | 25.8% 8 | 96.9% |

**Appendix 3**
Focus Group Report and Transcripts

Main Themes from Focus Groups
African Immigrant Community Needs Assessment

**Introduction**
Four focus groups were conducted with African immigrants in Minneapolis. More detailed records of each group follow this report. Overall, the focus groups included 16 women and and 9 men. The following African nations, regions and ethnicities were represented: Somalia, Ethiopia, Togo (?), Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Kenya.

Participants provided a wide range of responses regarding the definitions and sources of violence and how best to discipline children. There was consensus, however, that children learn violence at home and that exposure to violence is harmful for children. Another common theme was the frustration that comes with attempting to navigate a system that doesn't engage effectively with cultural differences. A frequently cited example of this was the manner in which 9-1-1 has become, in some families, a bargaining chip that children can use against their parents. This is made especially problematic because of generational differences in English proficiency (i.e. kids speak the language better so they are more able to manipulate the system).

What follows are the summarized answers to the focus group questions.

**What is violence?**
Examples:
Hitting, name calling (mental or psychological abuse), causing fear, children talking back to their parents, kids that are out of control, drug use/addiction, arguments, abandonment. Abuse comes from many sources (strangers, friends, spouses). One person defined violence as behavior that does not adhere to cultural values and traditional practices.
A few of the groups discussed violence in terms of lack of security, and much of this discussion centered around the feelings of uncertainty and fear that come with living in a new place with an entirely different culture. Some talked about wanting to be "in between" American and African cultures when it comes to defining and resisting violence (they see value in both perspectives) but finding this space very difficult to navigate.

**Where do people learn violence?**

Children learn violence at home. How the victim of abuse reacts to the situation is also an important learning tool for children.

**How do you discipline children/ What effective strategies have you used as a parent?**

Cultures differ as far as what should be defined as abuse; the distinction between abuse and discipline is not clearly defined in Africa. Spanking, hitting, name calling were examples of disciplinary behavior that might be acceptable in Africa but are not in the U.S. *In Africa you can discipline your children and not be afraid to, but in the USA you cannot—they may take them away.*

Telling children the facts, being open, and helping them understand the bad consequences of their actions through things like time outs and taking away privileges were cited as effective parenting strategies.

**Do you think it is violence when children are exposed to violence?**
This question was not asked and answered directly every time, but when it was answers varied from yes to maybe. Answers were brief.

**What is the impact of children exposed to violence?**
Respondents indicated that children witnessing abuse was harmful, and would result in the children needing support and possibly counseling. Some said that exposure to violence can result in children developing problematic behaviors—running away, being out of control, becoming disrespectful, stealing, etc. Others mentioned that witnessing violence causes children to be fearful and less confident.

**Who do people go to in order to talk about issues in the family?**

Church, friends, and family were mentioned. Some said that they go nowhere. Although many saw the value of discussing problems with a professional or even a friend, confidentiality and embarrassment were consistently mentioned as important barriers to doing so. Respondents discussed the tension between cultural competency on the part of the mental health worker and fear that problems will be communicated back to a small, highly connected community. Somewhat in contrast, others said that their communities were not organized with regard to resources for violence (or community resources in general).

**Other Issues:**

**How should police and other advocates behave when they are called to a house because of violence (system effectiveness)?**

Many stated the need for the police to get the whole story, including talking to parents and recognizing that the children may be manipulating the situation because of language issues (i.e. they speak English much more proficiently than their parents do). Respondents indicated that the threat of calling 9-1-1 has become a strategy for some children to get what they want.

Police and advocates need cultural training. Frustration was expressed about the tendency for intervention and intervention to go hand in hand with attempts at Americanization. Some mentioned the need for "middle" agencies that are rooted in the communities to provide advocacy services (and not just serve as technical interpreters).

Another part of the conversation regarding police and advocates was the impact this has on men. Participants expressed frustration that the current system appears to men to serve only women and children, and men are modifying their behavior (or becoming angrier) as a result of fear rather than a real response to what is appropriate. The system causes men to feel that they are losing ground by losing the right to discipline.

**Why do people stay in abusive homes?**
Economic insecurity. Fear of being deported. It was mentioned that students and other non-refugee populations are particularly worried about engaging with the system because their continued presence in this country is so conditional (i.e. less stable than refugees).

Date: 2/1/03
Community Focus Group
Facilitator: Hannah Negash
Participants: 5 East-African immigrant women

**Attendance:**
Person 1- Ethiopian; has been in U.S. for 21yrs
Person 2- Ethiopian; has been in U.S. for 5yrs
Person 3- mother; Ethiopian; has been in U.S. for 20yrs
Person 4- Ph.D student; Kenyan
Person 5- advocate, Eritrean

**What is violence? (answers paraphrased)**

Person 1- This question can be answered by seeing what is lacking from the answers of this question, **"What makes you feel secure?"**
Some of the insecurities felt when I came here were disconnects from community, culture, and language. Also, the reasons for immigrating to the U.S. brought pain and insecurity.
Differences in culture, such as nuclear (U.S.) vs. extended family structure, hard to handle.

Person 2- There is no sense of security anywhere, there is always a problem. The baby's father was abusive, which was accepted in her native culture. In America there is the struggle between being Ethiopian vs. American, when what one really wants to be is somewhere in between.

Person 1- Can changes occur in some aspects of the culture w/o becoming an outcast?
Agencies that are supposed to help are not compatible w/ this struggle to change.
This is part of the disconnect felt between cultures.

Hannah- Maybe change can occur by redefining right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable for one's self. However, this doesn't fit w/ what culture says, which is that women do not have a voice. Other problems w/ redefinition is a lack of information, learning a new social system, strong beliefs in one's original culture that disconnects generations, and abuse is not a priority issue to be tackled.

Person 1- Community does not know how to begin the movement towards change.

Person 5- The differences between discipline and abuse in the culture are not defined. Men are not changing there ways for the right reasons, they are changing them because of fear of the system. Fear of 911 *(speicifically of women knowing how to use it)*. Men feel they lose there place in society *(because they are losing the right to discipline)* and thus feel frustration and anger that can worsen the problem. The problem also gets worse because the whole community raises the children and teaches

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about the power the system has over their parents. *"Men feel the system is for women and children"*

Person 2- So it is not that there is no information about what there is to help, there just is not enough information or maybe the wrong information which ultimately does not help the community.

Person 1- So though there is a community in place here, there is not a working community in place.
*"It is not a functioning community as it was in Africa"*

Person 4- The Kenyan community in the U.S. is very similar. There are rules given to follow that instill fear, but not information to help give reason for changes. Because of the fear men often use alcohol to escape.

Person 1- The evolution of the community in the U.S. is not occurring. Part of the problem may be that many feel that there situation is temporary, that staying in the U.S. is not long-term. There needs to be a realization that there is a need to create a community here. The community needs to change by not relying on outside help to be told what to do, but instead use it to help begin change.

Hannah- Calling the police is a fear for both parents and not just husbands. Children know of the police and 911. **Is the system helpful or not helpful?**

Person 5- The system fails. The children who call 911 often have to interpret for the parents and then the police and the parents don't get the whole story.
*"Police are splitting the family"*

Person 2- It is not only the system that needs to change, the culture also needs to put less emphasis on the power of the police.

Person 1- The system is harmful, but there is a possibility that it can be helpful by focusing on prevention rather than intervention. If the system helps to facilitate change, then intervention will not be as great of a need. Because by the time intervention needs to be done the damage has already been done.

Person 4- From a student's perspective, one tries to avoid the system by remaining silent about things that happen *(including family violence)* If they get involved in the system then they can get deported.
*Less protection, less stable presence than those here as refugees*
Person 1- That is thanks to the Homeland Act of 1996, which states that domestic abuse is grounds for deportation. There is no woman that wants to deport the father of her children.

Person 5- The culture does not promote violence; there is not a definition of violence.

Person 2- How does one change what has been and is in the culture?

Person 5- The system needs to educate, (but not get involved) *heard as "not Americanize everyone"*.

Person 2- Most Ethiopians want it to be like home, they want to keep the culture but leave out certain aspects.
Person 4- The culture is not all bad or all good. There is part that she would like to teach.

Person 2- Part of the culture that is bad is how women are suppressed, their thoughts are suppressed. *She wants something different for her daughter, e.g.save her from experiences like being blamed for rape*

Hannah- A big issue is how Americanization ostracizes people from the community.
*Isolation in response to violence and cultural disconnects*

Person 4- The system needs to be translated into different cultures, the system should act as more of a mediator rather than a disciplinarian.
*Also, need for middle organizations that are culturally rooted.*

Person 1- The problem with the system is that it is short-sited. What would help in the long-term would be for agencies to be very clear about what they provide, and interpreters and advocates be available to help translate culture, as well as language.

*Emphasis on advocates, need for professionalization in the cultures*
Hannah- **What do we think about children witnessing violence?**

Person 5- Children learn violence at home. That is the way of life.

Person 3- Has no support system. She has friends, but they do not talk about those type of issue. She has not experienced violence. She encourages women to stand-up for themselves *and be independent.*. Women need to be educated about abuse, so they do not accept it as a fact of life. In that way women need to change the culture. It is especially important for new immigrants who can be confused by what is discipline and what is abuse. Parents need to be examples for their children.

Person 1- How do you parent children? Culture has a different view from what the women want.

Person 2- I don't know what the effect is on children.

Person 3- Children learn from what they see in the home.

Person 4- Not all children will follow the parental example. It often depends on how the woman reacts. So, it is not just the male who is an example it is also the responsibility of the female to teach acceptable behavior.

Person 1- No one stops to ask how the men feel.  It is true that it is the responsibility of both parents, the partnership cannot be dissolved.  When it comes down to it, kids exposed to violence will be damaged.

Hannah- **How do we feel about mental health workers?**

Person 1- There needs to be a redefinition of how the MHWs deal w/ children in this culture.

Hannah- Talking with only the children may not give an accurate depiction of the situation.  Plus, in order to change the situation the whole family needs to be involved.

Person 5- Immigrants change for the American culture, but the American system also needs to change (melting pot).  The system needs to look more long-term and what is good for the community as a whole.

Person 4- It is important that the MHWs be knowledgeable of the culture w/in the community.

Person 1- A trust has to established between the MHWs and the community.  The MHWs should also be educated about the language and culture of the community.

Hannah- **Would you see a MHW from your culture?**

Person 3- Yes.

Person 2- No.  Not an Ethiopian, but an MHW that is African.  Would not feel that information would be kept in confidence w/ someone from the same community.

Person 1- Yes.

Person 5- Yes.

Person 4- No. Not a Kenyan, but an MHW that is African.

Hannah- Person 1, please sum up.

Person 1- There is a need for more preventative measures to domestic violence, there needs to be self-reflection on the part of the community and individuals to find out what needs to change, and there is a need for more resources to educated people.

Next meeting- Thursday, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm

Person 1- Culture can evolve. Traditions, however, are stagnant.

Information from meeting held at Brooklyn Park schools on January 30th with Hanna

Total # 11                Men – 3                  Women – 8
                1 – Ivory Coast   1 - Mpls        6 – Liberia
                                  1 - Liberia     2 – Sierraleon

- What is violence? It is having someone beating up on you and staying. Hitting your wife, name calling (mental abuse). Strangers and friends abuse not just husband and wife.

- How do you feel about abuse on children? Police taking a child away from a family is abuse. Children talking back to parents is abuse. Cultures are different on what is abuse. Hitting, spanking, calling names is abuse in USA. OK to spank if showing discipline, but using excessive force is abuse.

It is not OK for children to watch abuse. Children do need support if they see repeated abuse. They need support because they become traumatized.

- Why do you stay in an abusive family? I cannot pay bills if my husband is not with me. Afraid to call police because they may take my child away from me. Parents are also afraid of school system – they do not work with the family. If the school thinks they are being abused or if child tells the school they are it may not be true. They will call police not the parents for an explanation. The police may just take the child without parents talking it over with them. Sometimes child maybe lying.

* Cultures are different. Police in Africa will talk with the child that is misbehaving and tell them they will be in trouble if they do not behave. In Africa you can discipline your children and not be afraid to, but in the USA you cannot – they may take them away.

- How should police respond? Police and schools should talk to parents and find out what is happening. We think the school and police should help in discipline of the children. It is hard to work with the schools. If a child is misbehaving or fighting at school they should work together not just tell the parents to take control of the situation. We want the school to help too. Are afraid to call the police because not sure what they might do? Are unsure of the situation so do not call.
* What should happen when police and advocate comes to the home? Find out what really happened. Police should take mother and child to the hospital so they can talk to them both. The police should talk to the children and not take them away. The child should get counseling. The police should have special training and also cultural training so they know how to better

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understand different cultures. Police should inform or guide abusing family on how to control tempers. Police should know about family issues. It would be good to have counselors to come with the police to home visits. We feel that police and schools take away the power from the parents. Parents cannot take action and are afraid to.

- How can the community help? There is lack of trust in the community if we talk. They may tell others and do not want everyone to know our business. We feel embarrassed to talk with family and friends. We trust counselors because of confidentiality plus they understand and know what to do. There is no love in the community in USA everyone is too busy. Back home we share things and help one another.

Date: 2/12/03
Community Focus Group
Facilitator: Hannah Negash, Mi Mi- immigrant advocate; mother; Ethiopian; has friends and family here and elsewhere in U.S
Participants: 5 East-African immigrant women

**Attendance:**

R- legal advocate for the Domestic Abuse Project (DAP); mother; Somalian; has family and friends here.
S- student; not a mother; Ethiopian ?; has friends and family here and elsewhere in the U.S.
A- expecting; from Togo; only husband here.
A- member of the Tubman transition program; mother; Ethiopian

**What is violence?**

R- Violence is fighting, beating, or being disorderly. In the U.S. being loud is considered disorderly, but in the Somalian culture it may depend on the context of the situation.

S- Violence is disagreements or fights.

A- Violence is what Roda and Sarah said.

H- In our cultures violence is seen as something that happens on the street or between strangers.

R- That is correct, violence happens "out there" not in the home. What happens in the home is not considered violence, but it is also not seen as right.

M- How does this mindset affect people emotionally?

R- Culturally facial expressions, unlike with Americans, are not used to convey feelings. Instead people retain a quiet demeanor around others. People do not show "themselves" to the world.

M- Humbling yourself is culturally correct, as is having a quiet demeanor, which makes it hard to spot an abuser. What is the abuse that is happening in the home?

R- The definitions of discipline and abuse are different in my culture as opposed the American culture. In my culture when discipline goes too far it is considered an accident, but is frowned upon. In my culture spanking your child is an acceptable for of discipline, but Americans see it as abuse. The community needs an outline of what is considered being abusive vs. disciplining. The community needs to be educated to help prevent the system getting involved. Though there are some forms of abuse that are seen in my culture there are not the extreme forms that are seen in the American culture. For instance, in my culture a mother would never kill her child.

M- Is verbal abuse considered abuse in your culture?

A- In Africa it is not considered abuse. Here yes. The family set up is different here. In Africa women are housewives and the men are breadwinners. Here women don't have to accept the abuse.

R- Accepting the abuse can be because of religion, culture, or economics. Family is important, so abuse is accepted rather than break-up the family. Some change has been made here. Women work, there is daycare available, women can receive educations, and because of this women can be self-sufficient.

H- Are the opportunities for self-reliance a double edged sword? Is the high stress life here making it so abuse is not acceptable?

A- Back home people go to school or work or they stay home. Here you have to learn a new language, work, do housework, and get an education. There is isolation here. The community back home is very supportive.

R- The weather here is also stressful. The cold makes it so there is a lot more preparing that has to be done to leave the house. The way people walk here is also very different. Here women walk like men, they hurry everywhere. Back home women walk elegantly.

S- In Africa men work and women keep the home. Because of this abuse is accepted. It is part of the culture and religion. Here there is the opportunity to voice objection. Women can be on equal footing with men. They do not have to accept the abuse when they are also breadwinners.

H- Are we saying that the way abuse is being handled here is better than in Africa?

S- Yes. Here you can get help and you do not have to accept it.

R- Yes and no. The broken families because of the system cause problems for the community. Women feel ashamed sometimes after using 911. They may not understand how to use 911. Some women do not know how to handle their domestic situation there is a miscommunication about what is available.

As- Back home they do not know what abuse is. There is no system to handle it. Here there is a system.

R- Back home with divorce women do not get to keep there children or do not get financial support to help raise the children.

M- The system that was used back home is not working. Women's rights are not looked at.

A- Back home people go to the community when there is violence. They mediate to help solve the domestic problems. Here there is no community or family to help mediate.

M- Why don't people know that they are hurting other people? When I asked a male friend that question he told me that abuse had not always been this bad. What we need is a mix of both the African and the American systems. Are our children learning our practices as being normal?

R- Yes. The parental example is very influential.

As- Here the kids know their rights, and they can at times abuse that knowledge.

S- Children born here want to be American. They do not know the culture back home.

As- Children know how to use the system.

S- Back home things are the way they are, discipline happens. That is the way it is.

As- The concept of orders of protection, and such, are confusing.

R- What orders of protection are is explained when you are served, however the concept can be hard to grasp. It is not something that is done back home.

H- The idea that the system is trying to convey sometimes does not get translated correctly for people. The concept is new and confusing and so is the situation.

R- There is often a language barrier between the police and those involved in the dispute. Often the men know English and the women do not, the women do not get a chance to learn. This allows men to manipulate the system.

M- What does the system ultimately do?  How do you integrate the two systems?

H- In summary, what are we saying about the children witnessing violence?

A- It is bad for children.

R- There are children's programs to help children, but there are trust issues on the part of the parent to have to children see help.  Therapy is not an option because there are trust barriers, language barriers, and cultural barriers.  American women will use the children's programs.  Immigrants are not comfortable with shelters either.  Children end up picking up the abusive habits.