



Engaging Men & Boys as IPV Prevention Allies

Lessons Learned from DELTA FOCUS

June 2019

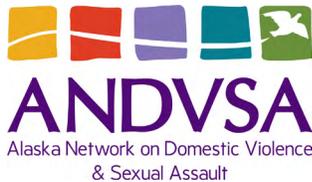
preventIPV
tools for social change



Contents

Introduction	2
Key Lessons Learned	4
We Can Prevent IPV	10

Contributing Organizations



Alaska Network on Domestic
Violence and Sexual Assault

www.andvsa.org/prevention



Ohio Domestic
Violence Network

www.odvn.org



Rhode Island Coalition Against
Domestic Violence

[www.ricadv.org/en/what-we-do/
prevention](http://www.ricadv.org/en/what-we-do/prevention)

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Overview

In recent years, there has been a growing call¹ to identify programs that can have a greater reach in preventing more people from ever experiencing violence. To date, this knowledge gap remains as only a limited number of intimate partner violence (IPV) prevention strategies have been rigorously evaluated for their impact in communities (e.g., neighborhoods, school districts, and cities) and specific settings (e.g., hospitals, schools, businesses). The Centers for Disease

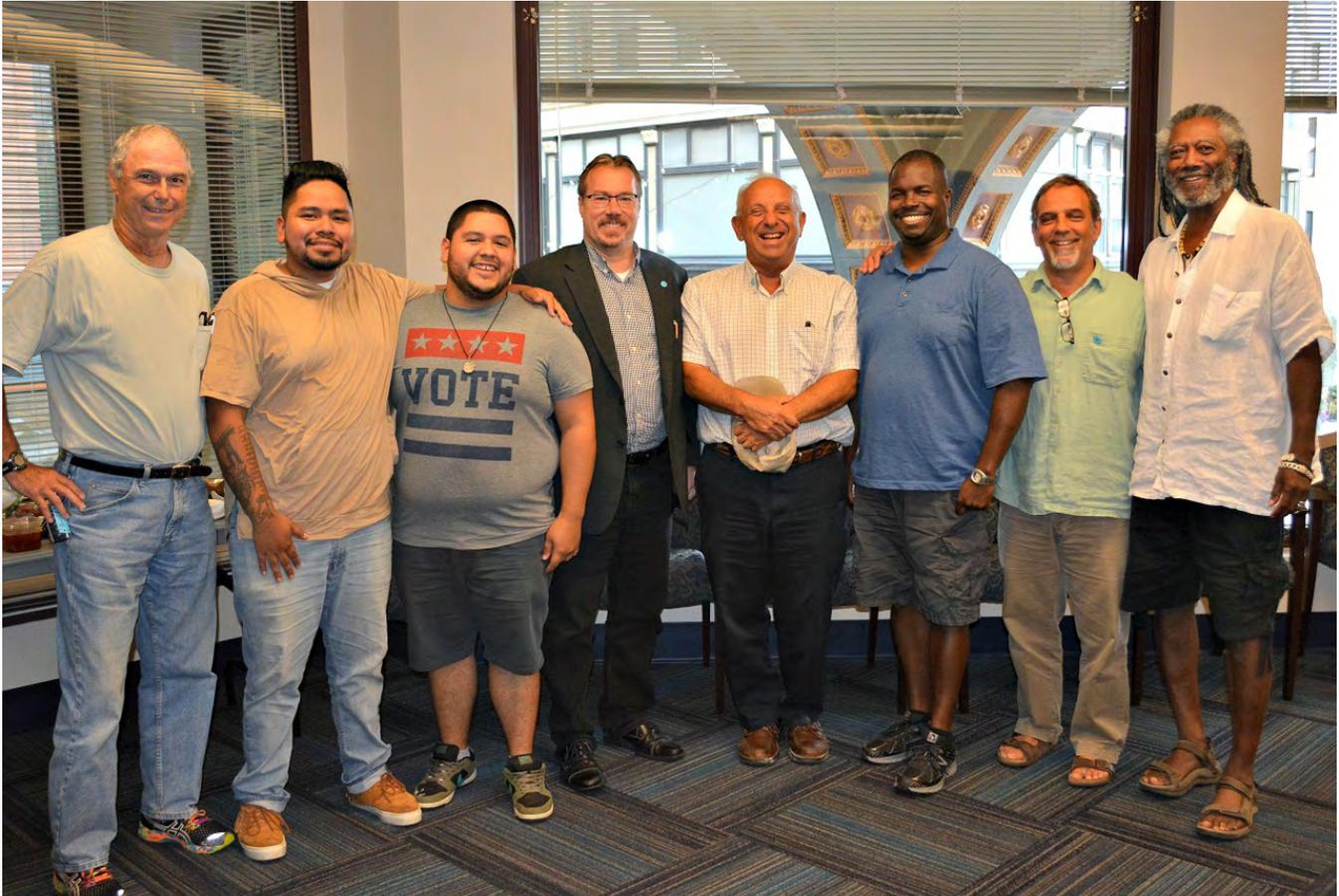
Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances, Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United with States (DELTA FOCUS) program² attempted to fill the knowledge gap by documenting the efforts of domestic violence coalitions to prevent IPV through influencing the environments and conditions in which people live, work, and play. Therefore, the stories from DELTA FOCUS domestic violence coalitions are intended to share lessons learned with other domestic violence coalitions and anyone whose work intersects with preventing IPV.

The DELTA FOCUS program used a learning approach and supported the domestic violence coalitions in casting a wide net to identify, implement, and evaluate programs that are theoretically or empirically linked to reducing IPV, decreasing risk factors for IPV, or increasing protective factors.³ Consequently, the coalitions learned important lessons along the way. The lessons are at times specific to the type of approach, or are more broadly applicable for implementing and evaluating community-based approaches. The goal of sharing the stories is for the violence prevention field to benefit from the coalitions' collective learning. Examples of benefits include learning more about existing field-based programs and practices, discovering what worked or did not work in implementation, and considering how to approach evaluation or develop a more rigorous evaluation of strategies implemented by DELTA FOCUS domestic violence coalitions.



2018 Men's Summit open to all men in the community, convened and facilitated by Ten Men of Rhode Island

- 1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Division of Violence Prevention Strategic Vision. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/strategicvision.html>. Accessibility verified June 26, 2018.
- 2 CDC-RFA-CE13-1302. DELTA FOCUS (Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances, Focusing on Outcomes for Communities United with States). Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=198393 Accessed October 5, 2017.
- 3 Armstead TL, Rambo K, Kearns M, Jones KM, Dills J, Brown P. CDC's DELTA FOCUS Program: identifying promising primary prevention strategies for intimate partner violence. *J Women Health (Larchmt)*. 2017;26(1):9-12.



Members of the 2016-2017 cohort pictured at a Ten Men retreat

Introduction

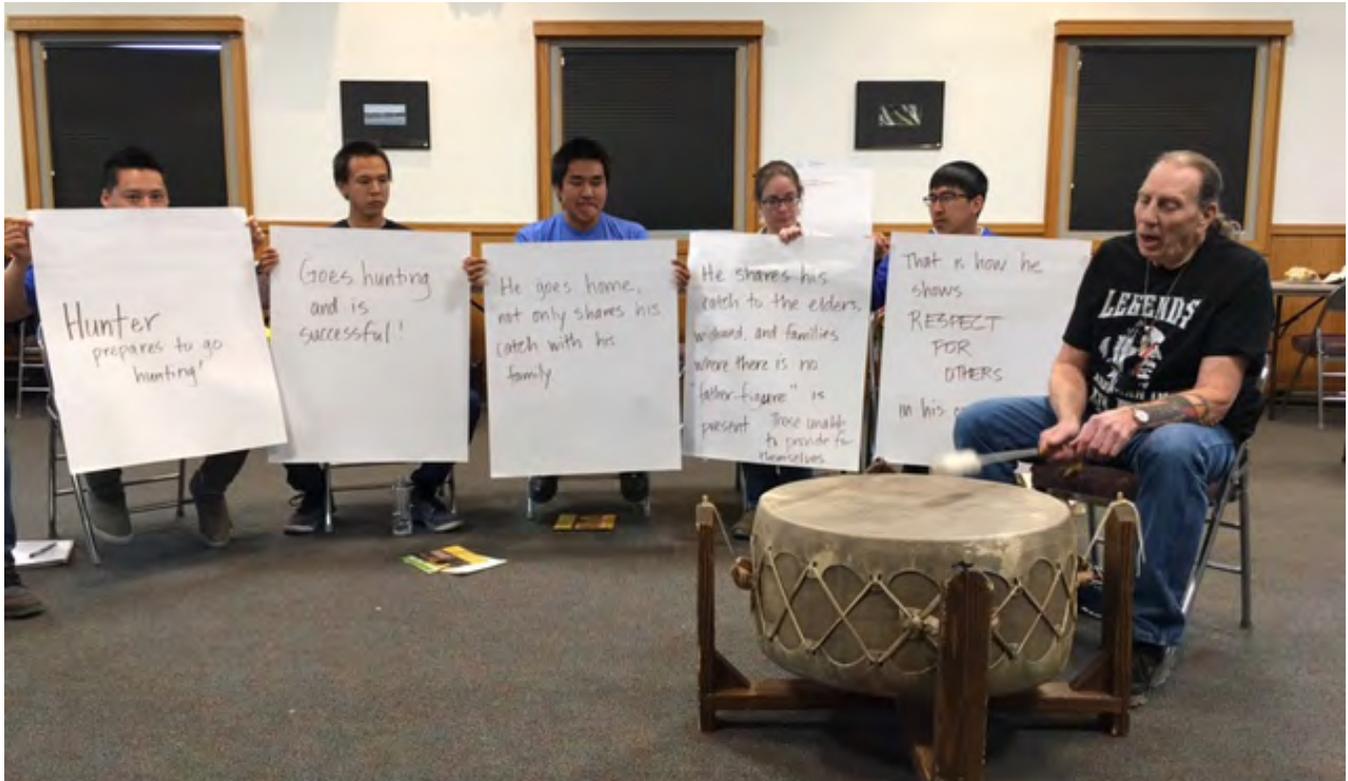
A positive consequence of casting a wide net is that many approaches were implemented by DELTA FOCUS coalitions, such as engaging adults and peers to change social norms (e.g., promoting positive beliefs about gender and healthy relationships). One such approach engages men and boys as prevention allies. While engaging men and boys is a recommended approach for preventing IPV,⁴ there is currently limited information on potential barriers and facilitators to implementing these types of approaches. Therefore, the value of taking a learning approach means, the coalitions learned important lessons worth sharing while collecting evaluation data. This story highlights three coalitions from Alaska, Ohio, and Rhode Island that implemented approaches to engage men (see Table 1) and the key lessons they learned along the way.

⁴ Niolon, PH, Kearns, M, Dills, J et al. Preventing intimate partner violence across the lifespan: A technical package of programs, policies, and practices. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2017.

Table 1. DELTA FOCUS Social Norms Strategies Engaging Men and Boys as Influential Adults and Peers

Coalition	Approach and Goal	Example Activities
Alaska Network to End Domestic Violence’s Juneau Community Coalition⁵	Alaska Men Choose Respect: The goal of this approach is to reach men and boys from multiple sectors, ages, and ethnicities through media messaging and social norms campaigns, coalition work, and opportunities for mentoring.	Juneau launched two local media campaigns (posters, videos, and public service announcements) in every high school in the district to highlight local men who were participating in the statewide initiative.
Ohio Domestic Violence Network	Ohio Men’s Action Network: The goal of OHMAN is to end relationship and sexual violence in Ohio by creating a network of men and women working to promote equitable non-violent relationships and social norms change within their spheres of influence (e.g., male peers, colleagues, and family members).	OHMAN provided skill-building workshops and helped to identify and create resources and tools to assist efforts to engage men and boys in prevention. Participants were linked through a centralized website and state-level steering committee, which provided a structure for exchanging resources and supporting fellow members.
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Ten Men: The goal of this approach is to foster peer support among men and shift unhealthy cultural attitudes and norms around violence and gender.	Participants provided mutual support, hosted annual summits and retreats for men in the state, and launched public awareness campaigns on men’s role to prevent IPV.

⁵ Juneau Violence Prevention Coalition



Training participants explore the topic Respect for Others in Bethel, AK using the drum that was made for the community by Native elder Tom Taylor (pictured playing the drum)

Key Lessons Learned

1. Before engaging men in IPV prevention, it is important to select men that already believe they have a role to play in preventing violence against women.
2. To reach a diverse group of men, it is critical to include participants with established community connections.
3. Evaluating an entirely new approach for which there is no strong precedent, existing format, or guidance requires flexibility and a willingness to embrace uncertainty.

Key Lesson #1: Before engaging men in IPV prevention, it is important to select men that already believe they have a role to play in preventing violence against women.

Research on men’s perceived barriers to participating in IPV prevention demonstrates that although many men want to participate in the movement to end IPV, they may be uncertain as to how to get involved. However, men are more likely to act to prevent IPV if they believe that other men are willing to intervene as well.⁶ The three coalitions’ approaches provide men a clear point of entry in the movement, an opportunity to establish a personal commitment to IPV prevention, and concrete activities to help prevent IPV in their lives and communities. This is important for program sustainability: men who believe they have a role to play in preventing violence against women may be more likely to be engaged and can help keep program activities moving forward.



Participants in OHMAN training

For example, the Rhode Island Coalition learned from the first three cohorts of Ten Men the value of strategically identifying men willing to take action on preventing violence against women. Specifically, they became more targeted in their recruiting and developed criteria and corresponding screening questions to identify male participants that would be a good fit for Ten Men. The criteria focused on recruiting male members who: care about IPV and have a passion for social justice; come from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds; have a diversity of professional connections; possess baseline knowledge of gender violence and oppression; and embrace feminist and non-violence principles. As a result of this change in recruitment criteria, the coalition staff were able to spend more time focused on program activities and less time educating participants about their roles as influential allies in preventing IPV. Also, men recruited under the new criteria sustained participation in the program and remained engaged as mentors for subsequent cohorts of men.

6 Fabiano, P. M., Perkins, H. W., Berkowitz, A., Linkenbach, J., & Stark, C. (2003). Engaging men as social justice allies in ending violence against women: Evidence for a social norms approach. *Journal of American College Health*, 52(3), 105-112.



Youth and adult participants in Bethel, AK participate in a drumming circle

The Juneau Community Coalition had a similar experience with Alaska Men Choose Respect (AMCR). The coalition discovered that, rather than changing men’s attitudes towards violence, they needed to identify men who already have community knowledge of the importance of IPV prevention.

They found that after almost three years of implementation, the approach struggled with decreased leadership, an inability to recruit men to implement the programming, and a general lack of readiness by men to engage in IPV prevention. As a Juneau coalition staff noted:

“ While our outreach is broad and inclusive, we do not have that many men willing or interested in joining with our efforts to be leaders in violence prevention (for example we did not have enough male coaches to adequately cover the Boys Run: I toowu’ klatseen season for spring 2016 implementation). In addition, the men who are interested in partnering with our male engagement initiatives often do not have the depth of knowledge or understanding of these issues to create the impact with boys that we had originally intended. ”

To overcome these challenges, the coalition proposed assessing the readiness of men in Juneau to engage in IPV and sexual assault prevention by administering a community readiness assessment on areas such as perceptions of community awareness of efforts to prevent IPV and community attitudes toward sexual and intimate partner violence.⁷ The coalition sought and received the men’s agreement on administering the assessment and developing assessment tools. As a result, the Juneau Community Coalition reported that it has been helpful to put a process in place for re-assessing their community’s readiness for male engagement strategies and programs. In addition, just putting into place the readiness assessment has already resulted in increased connectedness for the men – which may be useful in engaging the right men for AMCR and ultimately increasing program sustainability.

⁷ Kelly, K. J., Edwards, R. W., Comello, M. L. G., Plested, B. A., Thurman, P. J., & Slater, M. D. (2003). The community readiness model: a complementary approach to social marketing. *Marketing theory*, 3(4), 411-426.

Key Lesson #2: To reach a diverse group of men, it is critical to include participants with established community connections.

Engaging diverse and non-traditional partners is a critical component of increasing the reach of public health programs in order to maximize saturation within the community. The Rhode Island Coalition learned that recruiting Ten Men participants from a broad representation of sectors (e.g., religious leaders, for-profit, non-profit, higher education) was important to expanding their reach to wider audiences. For example, the Rhode Island Coalition found that hiring an experienced Men’s Engagement Coordinator with established connections within the community was particularly important for engaging men in conversations about gender equity and healthy masculinity. A coalition member stated:



Members of the 2017-18 Ten Men cohort during filming for a video project

“ [The Men’s Engagement Coordinator] has helped us reach male networks that Ten Men simply did not have knowledge of nor access to prior to his involvement [and] his skillful facilitation has helped . . . Ten Men members coalesce faster. ”

Similarly, the Ohio Coalition sought to reach new social and professional networks for promoting social norms change and healthy relationships. To achieve this aim they developed a specific objective to increase the number of diverse community partners engaged with *OHMAN*. They found that an effective way to engage potential new partners was through sponsoring community events, such as an Engaging Men of Color Event, a presentation at a faith-based taskforce meeting, and a roundtable discussion at the Ohio Fatherhood Summit. They subsequently arranged meetings with each of the partners to learn more about the different organizations and identify ways to collaborate with them. This process resulted in the new partners promoting *OHMAN* and supporting efforts to engage men and men of color in violence prevention. Developing this larger network of diverse community partners widened the reach of *OHMAN* and created new opportunities and spheres of influence for promoting social norms change.

India Harris-Jones, Clark Echols, and Rico Rice at the Health Masculinity Training Institute in Washington, DC



Key Lesson #3: Evaluating an entirely new approach for which there is no strong precedent, existing format, or guidance requires flexibility and a willingness to embrace uncertainty.

At the outset of developmental approaches – those that are entirely new – it may not always be clear which intervention and evaluation elements will need to shift over time to accommodate the emerging needs of the program and its participants. Thus, it is important to be flexible and open to uncertainty when implementing and evaluating new approaches. The Rhode Island Coalition was challenged by Ten Men because, as a developmental program, there was no strong precedent or existing format to guide the approach. In particular, as the program developed, they found making room for participants to inform the evaluation built community trust and allowed findings to be used for program improvements in a timely manner. For example, the Rhode Island Coalition planned their evaluation approach through a process that involved the real-time sharing of evaluation findings with stakeholders, adjusting evaluation tools as necessary, and using data to make mid-course changes and to inform both future cohorts of Ten Men and related media campaigns. A Rhode Island coalition staff noted:

“ Given how nascent men’s engagement is to IPV prevention, and given the paucity of literature in this area, it is proving very helpful to work closely with . . . Ten Men participants to learn from their experience. At this stage, practice-informed evaluation is critical. ”

Building flexibility into the evaluation approach also allowed the Rhode Island Coalition staff to pivot away from methods that turned out to be infeasible (e.g., large-scale measurement of social norms) or inappropriate for Ten Men (e.g., individual-level changes in beliefs about violence) and toward measurement more aligned with social change concepts (e.g., evidence of mobilization to act to support gender-equitable norms). This resulted in an evaluation that was more likely to yield data for program development and improvement.



Tony Porter of A Call to Men speaking to men of color at an event organized by the Women of Color Caucus at Ohio State University

OHMAN is another example of an evolving program that required the implementers to be open to change. The Ohio Coalition modeled the initial approach for *OHMAN* after Men Can Stop Rape⁸, with an adaptation to include intimate partner as well as sexual violence prevention. One of the first steps in public health program development is to conduct a community assessment. The Ohio Coalition surveyed *OHMAN* leadership and members of their social and professional networks. They used this information to hone in on men's skills in influencing the social norms of their peers and to inform project implementers of the specific context in which they could center *OHMAN*'s efforts. However, well after the initial assessment, the Ohio Coalition continued to seek and use input from partners and *OHMAN* participants because of the early developmental stage of their men's engagement work. For example, as a result of collective learning, consensus decision making, and a willingness to change in response to feedback and data, they revised their mission and vision statements several years after the start of the program.

8 <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/>

We Can Prevent IPV

IPV is a preventable public health problem, and we are continuing to learn more from practice and research about what works to prevent it. In 2017, CDC released *Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices*, which helps states and communities take advantage of the best available evidence on preventing IPV across the lifespan. The technical package identified engaging influential adults and peers as one of six strategies for preventing IPV, and men and boys as allies in prevention was described as a specific approach to advance this strategy. This story offers lessons learned from a selection of coalitions implementing men's engagement approaches. While it is too early to report evidence of effectiveness from these specific approaches, the implementers are willing to share implementation and evaluation elements they found to be practical and useful. For more information, contact:

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OHMAN training

Training participants in AK with facilitator Gene Tagahan (center)

Indigenous practices are incorporated into AK training



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