

## **THE ILLINOIS FAMILY VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCILS**

### **Annual Report FY 2005**

#### **The Purpose:**

The purpose of the IFVCC's local family violence coordinating councils and its state council is to establish a forum to share and discuss information in order to promote a coordinated response to family violence in our communities. The Councils work to improve the institutional and professional response to family violence issues. The Councils engage in prevention, education, and the coordination of intervention and services for victims and perpetrators of child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse. A goal of the Councils is to contribute to the improvement of the legal system and the administration of justice.

#### **The Background and Development:**

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils (IFVCC) is the only judicially led family violence organization in the country that operates statewide at both the local and state levels. IFVCC was initiated under the auspices of the Illinois Supreme Court in 1990. Judges convene and chair the local councils and the state council, which accounts for the organization's ability to bring leaders of all professions to the table, provide greater access to services, and to inspire others with the possibility for improvements and changes. Local councils emphasize prevention through strengthened services, comprehensive systems, coordination, protocol development, public education, professional training, data analysis, and information exchange.

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils (IFVCC) was convened by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois in 1993 and transferred to the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA) in 2000. The IFVCC's funding comes through the IVPA from an annual appropriation of the State General Assembly. The IFVCC is an organization composed of a state-level Steering Committee; 27 local family violence coordinating councils, with jurisdictions covering the entire state; and statewide projects that address systems improvements through collaborations of partners, professional and community education, and integrated-systems protocols.

Since 1990, twenty-seven (27) local coordinating councils have been formed in 22 judicial circuits, covering 102 counties, which includes Cook County that has 6 councils formed on the basis of its judicial municipal districts. As of 1997, the IFVCC has received funding from the Illinois state legislature, which provides for the allocations, staffing and operations of the IFVCC. Each local council is typically staffed by a part-time coordinator, hired by the chief judge, and funded through an IFVCC allocation of \$19,500, which is managed through the IVPA's grant program.

Local council membership is comprised of policy level and practitioner decision makers, representing the many systems that interact with family violence victims and perpetrators. Professions involved include judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, law enforcement, probation, circuit clerks, victim advocates, nurses, doctors, social services professionals, coroners, animal control officers, clergy, school personnel, businesses, and housing authorities.

#### **Statewide Projects:**

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council administers a range of statewide projects designed to address various issues related to family violence. The projects bring professionals together from judicial, law enforcement, prosecution, defense, circuit clerks, probation, victim advocates, mental health and social service agencies working at the local, state, and federal levels. These are the projects:

- **Domestic Violence Court Systems Project** is for developing a statewide learning network for sharing information, procedures and practices;
- **Schools Respond to Family Violence Project** is for training school based faculty, administration, janitors, cafeteria staff, and bus drivers and developing integrated protocols with community partners;
- **Firearm Laws and Order of Protection Project** is for identifying all relevant state and federal laws, their meaning and application issues, as well as strategies for implementation; and
- **Child Visitation Exchange Centers Project** is for encouraging the establishment of safe and orderly centers and develop suggested procedures, funding approaches, and facilitate networking and training.

### **Summary of Local Councils Activities:**

The past year's work of the Councils with schools, churches, hospitals, social services, businesses, criminal justice agencies, and courts is divided into issue related categories, within each category a summary of numbers attending trainings for professionals and events for multi-disciplinary and community audiences; and of educational materials distributed. Systems improvements are enumerated because they could not be quantified. The areas of activity are domestic violence, law enforcement and prosecution, court improvement, faith community, schools projects, elder abuse prevention, child abuse prevention, teen dating violence, health/medical systems projects, community education projects, and building collaboration.

#### **Domestic Violence**

##### **– Systems Improvement:**

- \* Distribution of protocols for law enforcement, health care professionals, educators, clergy
- \* Collection and distribution of 911 cell phones for victims of violence

**–Trainings for 1,646 participants**

**–Events for 628 participants**

#### **Law Enforcement and Prosecution Projects**

##### **–Systems Improvement:**

- \* Distribution of law enforcement protocols to local law enforcement agencies
- \* Local law enforcement officers participate in training of trainers

**–Trainings for 990 participants**

#### **Civil No Contact Order Training**

**- Trainings for 525 participants**

**- Collaborative effort between ICASA and IFVCC**

#### **Court Improvement Projects**

##### **– Systems improvement:**

- \* State's Attorney's Domestic Violence protocol implemented
- \* Lethality List developed and distributed for use by law enforcement
- \* Animal Abuse Unit created at State's Attorney's office
- \* Circuit wide collaborative review of *nolle prosequi* vs. prosecuted cases
- \* Visitation Exchange Centers started in Kane, DeKalb counties. Safe Havens Grant received by 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit to start Centers in Bureau, LaSalle, Grundy counties. Numerous other counties have begun investigation process to establish centers
- \* Establishment of Family Justice Center in two Circuits
- \* Domestic Abuse Information Network (DAIN) database utilized by several councils to collect data
- \* Space allocated in courthouse for sexual assault advocate to assist victims in completing Civil No Contact Orders
- \* Videos/Brochures to assist victims in navigating the court system as they request OP s
- \* Security measures improved inside Order of Protection Court
- \* Improved and speedy processing of domestic violence cases and orders of protection accomplished through collaborative meetings

**–Trainings for 225 participants**

#### **Faith Community Projects**

##### **–System Improvement:**

- \* Sanctuary, the church's realistic response to domestic violence" - a safe church protocol developed
- \* Clergy Court Observations (domestic violence, drug, juvenile, child custody courts) held monthly in municipal district

**–Trainings for 284 participants**

**–Educational materials for 650**

**Schools Projects** (includes Bullying)

**–Systems Improvement**

- \* Professional/Non-Professional Staff training at schools in 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> Circuits. School-Community Protocols developed in schools having completed the training
- \* Will County received Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant - Council and 3 Joliet High Schools as partners

**–Trainings for 1,970 participants**

**–Events for 5,426 participants**

**Elder Abuse Prevention**

**–Systems Improvement:**

- \* Collection and distribution of 911 cell phones for victims of elder abuse

**–Trainings for 469 participants**

**–Educational materials for 10,300**

**Child Abuse Prevention** (includes Effects of DV on Children, Internet Predators)

**–Systems Improvement:**

- \* Worked collaboratively with Prevent Child Abuse Illinois to distribute Shaken Baby prevention videos throughout Circuits

**–Trainings for 866 participants**

**–Events for 280 participants**

**Teen Dating Violence Projects** (includes Youth Violence Prevention)

**–Trainings for 3,630 participants**

**Health/Medical Systems Projects** (includes First Responder training)

**–Systems Improvement:**

- \* Physicians are participating on local health systems committee focused on universal screening by health care providers for domestic violence
- \* Continued collaboration between Councils and Illinois Health Cares sites on trainings, protocol and materials development and distribution

**–Trainings for 511 participants**

**Community Education Projects**

**–Events for 3,679 participants**

**Building Collaborations**

**– Systems Improvement:**

- \* Countywide collaboration committees addressing family violence issues in counties of eleven circuits
- \* Council members continue to participate in development and implementation of Family Justice Centers, Child Visitation Centers, Safe to Live, Safe from the Start, Illinois Health Cares, IL Teen Dating Violence Stakeholders Group, local healthcare and youth prevention collaboratives
- \* Work collaboratively with areas receiving grants to support the homeless

For more specific information about the IFVCC, go to [www.IFVCC.org](http://www.IFVCC.org).