

Saint Louis County  
~ **GREENBOOK** INITIATIVE ~  
A Collaboration to Address  
Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment

**Fact Sheet**

*Family violence erupts in a home. A mother is battered. Her children witness the abuse. One child is struck and bruised. A neighbor calls the police, who arrest the batterer. The family enters the court system and the child welfare system. What happens next? Too often, the answer is a disjointed and ineffective set of interventions from several different courts and social service agencies that treat adult domestic violence and child maltreatment as separate and unrelated issues. In worst case scenarios, the children are taken from the battered mother who is blamed for allowing the children to be exposed to violence.*

**What is the purpose of the National Initiative?**

The Greenbook Initiative is a national demonstration project with a total of six sites around the country: Grafton County, New Hampshire; El Paso County, Colorado, Santa Clara County, California; San Francisco, California, Lane County, Oregon and St. Louis County, Missouri. The purpose of the national Initiative is to create community collaboratives that provide coordinated and effective interventions in co-occurring cases of domestic violence and child maltreatment, thus avoiding the fragmented, worst case scenarios described in the above vignette.

**What is the mission of the St. Louis County Initiative?**

To provide coordinated and effective interventions that provides safety, stability, and well being for battered women and their children and to hold perpetrators accountable for ending their violence. This means that Greenbook partner agencies must "do business differently" by making *system changes* (policy and practice innovations) based on best practice guidelines for handling co-occurring cases of domestic violence and child maltreatment.

**Why the name Greenbook Initiative?**

The *Greenbook* (GB) is a short hand manner of referring to a publication by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges: *Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*. The cover of *Effective Intervention* is green, thus the inspiration for the name of the Initiative. The GB provides the best practice guidelines for system change for courts, child welfare, and domestic violence service providers.

**Who are the Greenbook (GB) Initiative Partners?**

The three core GB partners include: the Family Court of St. Louis County, the lead agency for the collaboration; the St. Louis County Children's Division of the Missouri Division of Social (DSS); and 25+ Domestic Violence service providers in the City and County, including agencies serving battered women and their children and those agencies serving batterers. Criminal justice and community partners also participate in the Initiative.

**Who funds the Initiative?**

Funding for the Initiative represents a public/private partnership by the United States Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation provide funding for technical assistance to the demonstration sites. The Initiative was initially funded for three years starting in January 2001, with a two-year extension granted in 2003.

## **Who provides leadership for the Collaboration?**

A Steering Committee (SC) of seven representatives from the three core GB partner agencies provides governance and overall strategic direction for the Collaboration. An Implementation Committee (IC) of 30+ GB partner agency representatives provides the leadership for effecting system changes at the organizational and community levels.

## **What are the core Greenbook principles guiding the work of the Initiative?**

Three core principles are key to providing safety, stability and well being for victims of family violence:

- ***Children in the care of their non-offending parents whenever possible.*** Making adult victims safer and stopping batterers' assaults are two important ways to do this.
- ***Community service system with many points of entry.*** Services should be appropriate, accessible, coordinated and culturally competent.
- ***Differential response.*** Because domestic violence encompasses a wide range of behaviors-from the extremely dangerous to the less serious, families require a range of interventions, some of them voluntary and some mandated.

## **What are the objectives of the Initiative?**

- Educate partner agency staff about the dynamics of co-occurring cases of domestic violence and child maltreatment and cross train about programs, policies and procedures of core partners.
- Develop coordinated policies, procedures, and assessment/confidentiality protocols that will address both domestic violence and child maltreatment in the core partner agencies.
- Create community awareness about the need to provide a comprehensive array of accessible, culturally competent services that will respond to the unique strengths and concerns of families.

## **Are there signs that the Initiative is accomplishing its goals?**

- *Child Maltreatment Guidelines* provide protocols/tools for domestic violence advocates in responding to co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment. (Publication expected in Spring 2005)
- *Child Order of Protection Protocol*, that provides another vehicle for the Court to promote safety of adult and child victims, is in use in the Dependency Court of St. Louis County Family Court.
- *Criminal Court Batterer Compliance* program refers perpetrators to Batterer Intervention programs and holds compliance hearing to enforce the orders in criminal, civil, and the dependency courts.
- *DSS Manual* to assist domestic violence advocates as they help their clients navigate the Child Welfare system. (Publication expected in Spring 2005)
- *Domestic Violence Assessment Protocol* that provides tools and best practices for universal screening for domestic violence in child protection is finalized, with implementation in Spring 2005.
- *Domestic Violence/Child Maltreatment Resource Directory* provides a user-friendly resource for front line workers engaged in service planning for families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment. (Publication expected in Spring 2005)

## **Who can you contact to learn more about the Initiative?**

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