



*Center on Violence Against Women & Children  
(VAWC)*

Innovative Community-Based Approaches to  
Addressing Violence Against Women

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Sara-Beth Plummer, Ph.D., MSW - Rachel Schwartz, MSW



# Overview

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- ▶ Introducing the Center on Violence Against Women & Children (VAWC)
- ▶ Discussing our partnerships with different community sectors around research, teaching, and training
- ▶ Presenting 3 innovative techniques as examples of our partnerships
  - ▶ Engaging Bystanders Approach – Dr. McMahon
  - ▶ Evaluating financial empowerment – Dr. Plummer
  - ▶ Providing continuing education – Ms. Schwartz
- ▶ Encouraging discussion with conference participants



# Introduction to VAWC

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- ▶ The mission of the Center on Violence Against Women and Children is to strive to eliminate physical, sexual, and other forms of violence against women and children and the power imbalances that permit them.
- ▶ The mission will be accomplished through the use of a collaborative approach that focuses on multidisciplinary research, education, and training that impacts policies & communities in New Jersey, the U.S. and throughout the world.





# Our Core Values

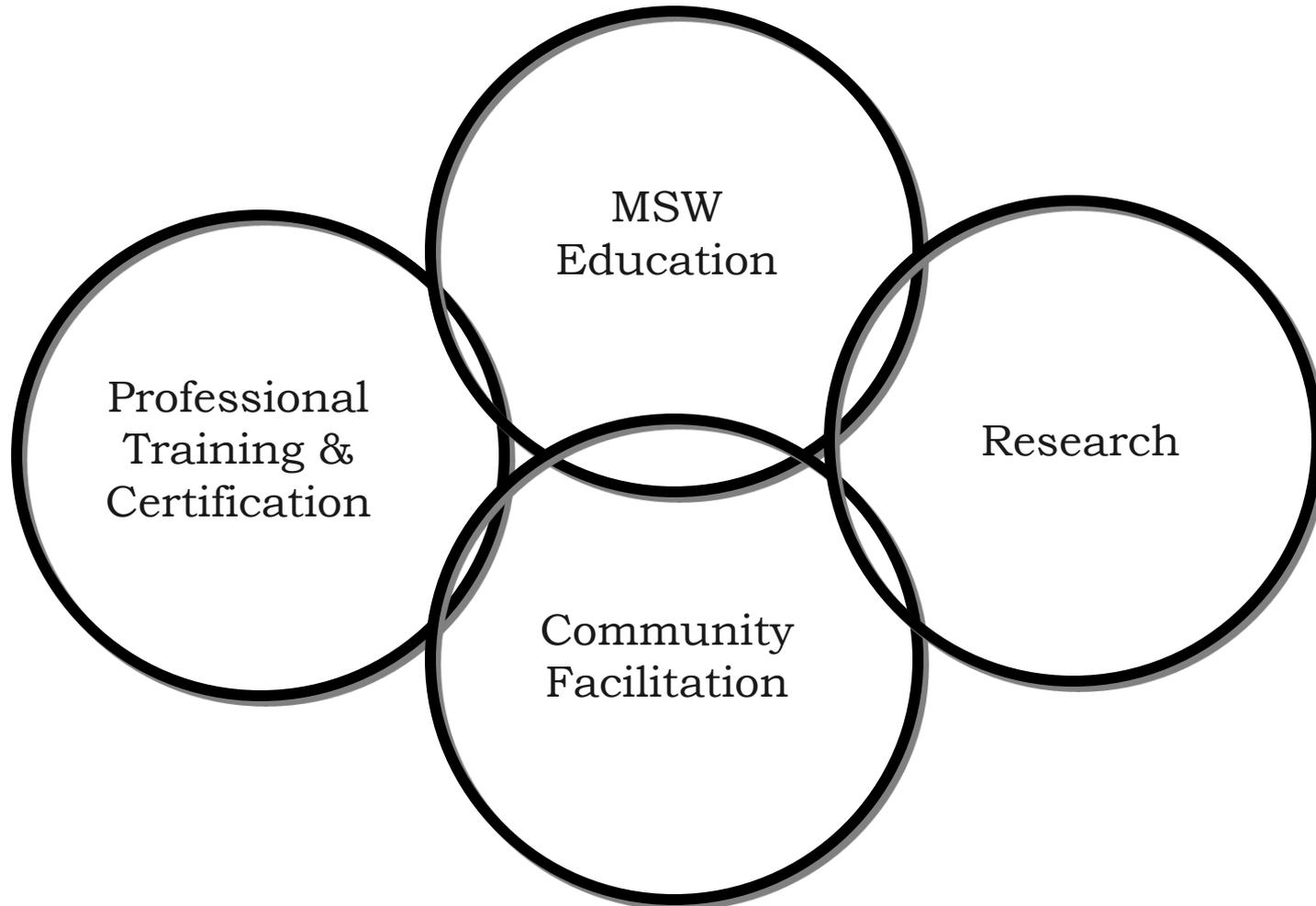
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- ▶ Feminist ideology driving our work
- ▶ Strong belief that violence against women & children is a “multi-level” based problem needing “multidisciplinary” and “multi-faceted” solutions
- ▶ Importance of partnering with community groups representing different sectors
- ▶ Work closely with organizations to empower them to identify and evaluate prevention and intervention services
- ▶ Provide education and training that challenges professionals to be socially active and engaged bystanders



# VAWC Components

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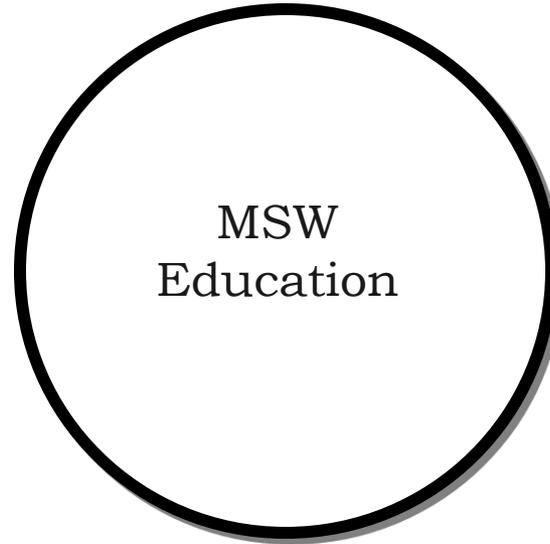
Professional  
Training &  
Certification

- ▶ Instructor-led and interactive, web-based continuing education of professionals
- ▶ Conducted multiple workshops with 754 participants representing various type of professionals
- ▶ Have 4 additional workshops scheduled for summer (see packet)
- ▶ 10 more workshops scheduled for Fall 2009
- ▶ Seed funding from Verizon Foundation

❖ Created the only advanced degree in Social Work specializing in violence against women and children



❖ Prepares future executives and advocates working in domestic violence, sexual assault, or child welfare organizations.



❖ Provide endowed scholarships for 3 students; funded by the Verizon Wireless Hopeline Project

❖ Had 21 students in 08-09

❖ Currently have 13 MSW students participating (09-10)

❖ Specialized curriculum offered for both Advanced Clinical and Non-profit Management concentrations.

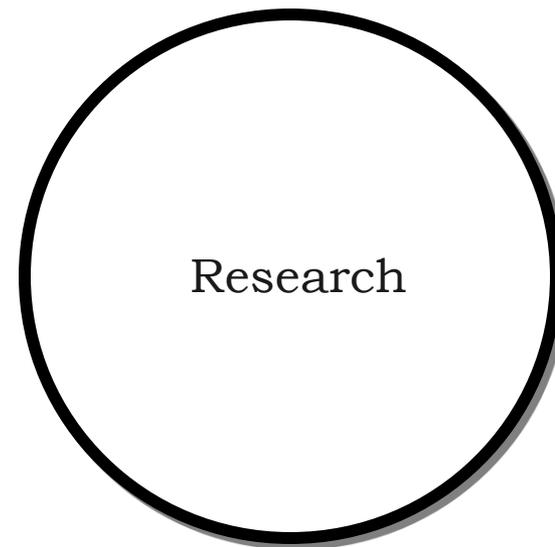


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- ❖ Venue for collaboration among academic, government, corporate and nonprofit groups nationwide.
  - ❖ Participate as Advisory Board or Steering Committee members
  - ❖ Partner with us on grant applications and research projects





- ▶ At the individual, family, organizational, community and policy levels
- ▶ In collaboration with multidisciplinary community partners
- ▶ Currently funded by corporate and state level funding
- ▶ Looking for federal funding from several different sources
- ▶ Evaluation and prevention / intervention based research





# Examples of current projects

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- ▶ **Bystander Approach to Sexual Violence Prevention**
  - ▶ Putting theory into action in collaboration with state, nonprofit, & academic entities
  - ▶ Sarah McMahon, Ph.D., MSW
- ▶ **Financial Empowerment & Domestic Violence**
  - ▶ Collaboration between academic, corporate, and nonprofit groups to create, implement, and evaluate an economic literacy program for battered women
  - ▶ Sara-Beth Plummer, Ph.D., MSW
- ▶ **Continuing Education: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Addressing Violence Against Women**
  - ▶ Working with all sectors to create, implement, and evaluate training for professionals
  - ▶ Rachel Schwartz, MSW



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The Bystander Approach to Sexual Violence  
Prevention

Dr. Sarah McMahon

Center on Violence Against Women and Children



# Today's presentation

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- ▶ Sexual violence prevention as a community issue
- ▶ Bystander approach
- ▶ Samples of bystander studies
- ▶ Future directions
- ▶ Q & A



# Sexual assault

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- ▶ Many of our clients will have experienced rape
  - ▶ Lifetime estimates: 17.6% women & 3% men *National Violence Against Women Survey 2006.*
- ▶ Rape committed by someone known to victim 75 – 85%
- ▶ Devastating short and long term impact on mental & physical health
- ▶ Need for victim services as well as prevention



# Violence against women

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“...We have become so accustomed to living in a society saturated with misogyny that violence against females is more or less to be expected. Stories about the rape, murder, and mutilation of women and girls are staples of the news, as familiar to us as weather forecasts....why aren't we outraged?”

-Bob Herbert, The New York Times, Op-Ed Column,  
October 16, 2006





# Sexual violence prevention

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- ▶ Shift from potential victims to perpetrators
- ▶ Focus on education: knowledge, attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Most people are not victims and not perpetrators; how can we involve them in prevention?



# Bystander intervention

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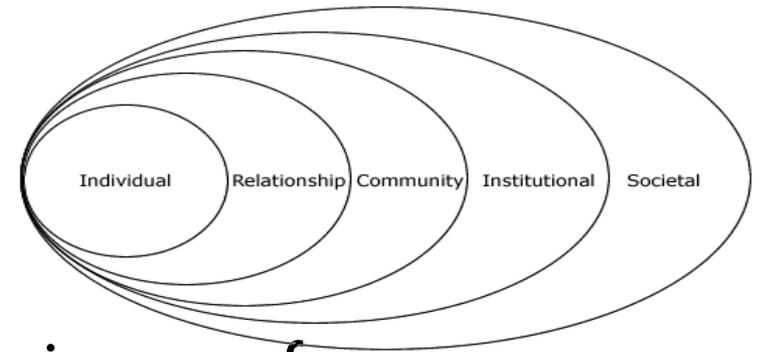
- ▶ Looks at reactions to witnessing crimes and emergencies (Darley & Latane, 1968)
- ▶ Well established in the field of social psychology
- ▶ Recently applied to the field of sexual violence prevention (Banyard)
- ▶ Sexual violence as a community problem
- ▶ Bystanders can intervene:
  - ▶ Before an assault occurs
  - ▶ During high-risk situations
  - ▶ After an assault



# Ecological framework

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- ▶ Behavior shaped through various levels of interactions between individuals and their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)



- ▶ Applied to understanding other issues of interpersonal violence
  - ▶ Child abuse (Belsky, 1980)
  - ▶ Domestic violence (Carlson, 1984; Heise, 1998; Edelson, 2000)
  - ▶ Sexual violence (CDC, 2004)
- ▶ Multiple explanations for the etiology – and prevention-of sexual violence



# Culture of violence theories

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- ▶ Rape is not just a function of individuals, but also of community (i.e. Brownmiller, 1978; Kurz, 1989).
- ▶ Attitudes and values are supportive of gender stereotypes and violence against women (Buchwald, Fletcher, and Roth, 1993).
- ▶ Certain “rape prone” cultures where rape is acceptable or tolerated and others where it is not (Sanday, 1981, 1990)
  - ▶ High school and college students (1/5-1/4 experience rape);
  - ▶ “Masculinist” subcultures including fraternities, athletic teams, & military



# Diffusion of Innovation

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- ▶ Community level social change theory
- ▶ Based on the work of Rogers (1983, 1995)
- ▶ Explains how ideas (or “innovations”) are accepted by communities.
- ▶ “Opinion leaders” spread ideas to others and thereby diffuse the information throughout the community → “ripple effect”
- ▶ Idea to saturate a community to influence norms
- ▶ Evidence-based support from HIV prevention & peer education



# Many questions....

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- ▶ What bystander behaviors are realistic for which populations?
- ▶ How do we conceptualize these behaviors?
- ▶ How do we measure these behaviors?
- ▶ How can we teach individuals to act as bystanders?
- ▶ How do individuals translate bystander skills into action?
- ▶ Does this approach impact both the individual and community level?



# VAWC studies on bystander

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- ▶ **Values underlying studies**
  - ▶ Commitment to partnering with communities
  - ▶ Prevention as community issue
  - ▶ Tailoring programs & measurement to specific communities
  
- ▶ **3 current studies at VAWC:**
  - ▶ Student-athletes
  - ▶ Incoming college students
  - ▶ Men from the New Brunswick community



# Study #1: Student-athletes study

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## ▶ Objectives:

- ▶ To gather information from members of an "at-risk" community to better understand the potential for bystander intervention & inform intervention efforts
- ▶ Collaborative effort with athletes, athletic department and sexual assault services
- ▶ Strengths-based, solution-focused approach

## ▶ Methods

- ▶ Three pronged approach: surveys with 205 student-athletes, focus groups with 9 teams, individual interviews with 22 student-athletes

# Student-athlete study: Findings

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- ▶ Survey : overall willingness to intervene; greater for females, those who know someone who was sexually assaulted, and members of contact sports
- ▶ Qualitative results showed the following themes:
  1. Team bond related to bystander attitudes
    - Holding one another accountable (men)
    - Support for victims (women)
  2. Already taking action
  3. Influence of coaches & captains
  4. Willingness to use athlete status on campus & within community
  5. Unclear understanding of sexual assault

# Study #2: Incoming college student study

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## ▶ Objectives

- ▶ To improve measurement of subtle rape myths & primary prevention bystander attitudes and behavior
- ▶ To test incoming college students' acceptance of subtle rape myths and bystander attitudes & behaviors
- ▶ To evaluate effectiveness of SCREAM Theater, a peer educational theater program at Rutgers

## ▶ Methods

- ▶ Year 1: 3 focus groups & 951 pre-test surveys collected & analyzed to validate instruments
- ▶ Year 2: 2,448 pre-test surveys & 1,000 post-test surveys- finishing data entry & cleaning

# Incoming College Students: Findings

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- ▶ Gender significant for bystander attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ “At risk” groups (fraternities and athletic teams) had less positive bystander attitudes than their counterparts
- ▶ Knowing someone who was sexually assaulted related to engaging in more positive bystander behaviors (not attitudes)
- ▶ Previous rape education did not produce significant differences in bystander attitudes or behaviors
- ▶ Greater belief in rape myths was correlated with less positive bystander beliefs and actions

# Study #3: 100+ Men Against Domestic Violence

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## ▶ Objectives

- ▶ Gather feedback on pilot bystander training program designed to engage men from diverse racial and acculturation backgrounds in New Brunswick
- ▶ Explore the *process* by which participants translated their skills to actual bystander behavior in their own communities

## ▶ Design

- ▶ Post-test administered to 50 men; increases in knowledge and sense of empowerment reported
- ▶ Individual interviews currently being conducted with sample of 15 men



# Future directions

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- ▶ Further conceptualize bystander intervention; defining behaviors that are realistic before, during and after
- ▶ Determine what factors facilitate or hinder positive bystander attitudes & behaviors
- ▶ Replicate and refine measurement instruments for both process and outcomes
- ▶ Evaluate effectiveness of bystander skill development programs
- ▶ Further explore nuances of community contexts & impact on willingness to engage as bystanders



*Center on Violence Against Women & Children  
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Financial Empowerment and Domestic Violence

Sara-Beth Plummer, PhD, MSW  
Center on Violence Against Women and Children



# Overview

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- ▶ Economic abuse and dependency
- ▶ Description and goals of the Moving ahead Through Financial Management program
- ▶ Description of the evaluation of the economic empowerment curriculum
- ▶ Preliminary results
- ▶ Suggestions on how to engage communities to promote financial literacy



# Power and Control Wheel



**DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT**

202 East Superior Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
218-722-2781  
[www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)





# Economic Abuse

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- Definition of Economic abuse
- Forms of economic abuse
  - Prevent her from acquiring employment and resources
  - Prevent her from using resources
  - Prevent her from maintaining resources
- Effects of economic abuse
  - Creates economic dependence on the abuser
  - A lack of resources will hinder her ability to leave
  - Will significantly lower her standard of living

Adams, Sullivan, Bybee & Greeson (2008)



# Service provision

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- There appears to be a lack of attention to this type of abuse based on research done by VonDeLinde
- Historical resistance to incorporate economic education
  - Long term financial planning vs crisis intervention
  - Information provided is inconsistent and incomplete
  - Concern over lack of funding (VonDeLinde, 2002)
- Yet recent research suggests clients desire increased attention to their economic needs (Bonica, 2000; Postmus, et al., 2009; VonDeLinde, 2002)
- Concerns include: healthcare, childcare, impact of batterers' behaviors (lack of job skills, or poor credit history), employment, child support, housing, utilities, and transportation (VonDeLinde, 2002)



# Financial literacy

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- ▶ **Creation of financial literacy programs**
- ▶ **Economic education programs have been designed for individuals in the workplace** (Garman, Kim, Kratzer, Brunson, Joo, 1999), **Native Americans** (Malkin, 2003), **college students** (Borden, Lee, Serifo, & Collins 2008; Perry & Morris, 2005) **high school students** (Bernheim, Garrett, & Maki, 2001), **low income individuals** (Zhan, Anderson, & Scott, 2006)

# Moving Ahead Through Financial Management

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- ▶ The Allstate Foundation collaborated with the national Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)
- ▶ Goals of the economic empowerment curriculum
- ▶ Implementation of the curriculum
- ▶ Hired VAWC for evaluation



# Values Driving our Evaluation

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- ▶ **Active collaboration between researcher and advocates**
- ▶ **Site of in person interviews**
  - ▶ Completed at agencies, library, workforce center
- ▶ **Gift cards**
  - ▶ Locally bought
- ▶ **Scheduling of interviews**



# Evaluation of the Curriculum

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- Outcome and Process evaluation using mixed methods
- Outcome evaluation with participants
  - Interview participants X 3
  - Provided financial incentive (\$25- \$35 - \$50)
  - Primarily used validated and reliable surveys with some open ended questions
  - Translated materials to Spanish
- Interviews with stakeholders X 2
  - 13 open ended questions for advocates



# Instruments

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- ▶ **Financial Literacy**
- ▶ **Economic Empowerment - Family Empowerment Scale (FES)**  
(Koren, DeChillo, & Friesen, 1992)
- ▶ **Financial Abuse – Scale of Economic Abuse (SEA)** (Adams, Sullivan, Bybee, & Greeson, 2008)
- ▶ **Intimate Partner Abuse – Abusive Behavior Index (ABI)** (Shepard & Campbell, 1992)
- ▶ **PTSD - National Comorbidity Survey** (NCS, 1992)
- ▶ **Depression - Center for Epidemiologic Studies - Depressed Mood Scale (CES-D)** (Frazier, 1977)
- ▶ **Quality of Life - adapted version of the Andrews and Witeys' (1976) Scale of Well-Being** (Sullivan, 2005)



# Results from First Round

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- 121 participants  
(120 females and 1 male)

- **Age**

- 18-30 33%
- 31-40 20%
- 41-50 34%
- 51-60 8%
- 60+ 5%

- **Race or Ethnic Group**

- Caucasian 55%
- African-American 21%
- Latina or Hispanic 17%
- Asian/Pacific Islander 1%
- Native American 2%

- **Education**

- Grade school 3%
- Some High School 18%
- Graduated High School 32%
- Some College 39%
- College 9%

- **Average Annual Income**

- 0- 10,000 - 50%
- 10,001 – 15,000 – 12%
- 15,001 – 25,000 – 24%
- 25,001 – 35,000 – 10%
- More than 35,000 – 3%

64% were employed at the time of the first interview





# Financial Abuse

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- ▶ 89% had partners who demanded to know how the money was spent
- ▶ 88% said their partners decided how the money could be spent instead of letting the participant decide
- ▶ 87% had partners who did things to keep them from having money



# Intimate Partner Abuse

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- ▶ 95% of women were called names or criticized
- ▶ 93% had partners who put down their family and friends
- ▶ 92% had partners who tried to keep them from doing things they wanted to do
- ▶ 92% had partners who push, shoved or grabbed them

# Preliminary Paired T test Result

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- ▶ Results of paired t tests from round one and round two
- ▶ Physical IPV, Psychological IPV, PTSD, Economic control, Economic exploitation, Depression decreased by significant amounts
- ▶ Quality of life, and the family level empowerment increased

# Results from interviews with advocates

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- ▶ **19 advocates were interviewed**
  - ▶ 13 open ended questions
- ▶ **The majority of advocates....**
  - ▶ Were comfortable with the curriculum
  - ▶ Increased their own awareness of finances
  - ▶ Questioned own spending habits
  - ▶ Have used it in their own life



# Advocate results

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- ▶ **Clients who gained the most?**
  - ▶ Individuals who were motivated to learn the topic
- ▶ **Clients who gained the least?**
  - ▶ A variety of answers (unmotivated, did not generate or had a lack of income, previously incarcerated, in crisis, etc.)

# Suggestions based on First Round of Data Collection

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- ▶ **Adapt and translate the content**
- ▶ **Include information on:**
  - ▶ estate planning, college tuition plans and budgeting for multiple children
  - ▶ medical care and social services
  - ▶ Employment services and job training

# Suggestions based on VAWC values

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- ▶ Programs should regularly seek information from battered women about their economic needs and concerns
- ▶ Increase collaboration with other community agencies
- ▶ Including social services, housing and non traditional collaborations such as banks, insurance companies and long term investment organizations



# Closing

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- ▶ Discussion/Questions



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Continuing Education: A  
multidisciplinary approach to  
addressing violence against women

Rachel Schwartz, MSW  
Center on Violence Against Women and Children



# Overview

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- ▶ **Violence Against Women Continuing Education Program**
  - ▶ Values of the VAW continuing education program
  - ▶ Steering Committee
  - ▶ Instructors
  - ▶ Curriculum development
  - ▶ Workshop format
  - ▶ Participants
- ▶ **Evaluation**
- ▶ **Next steps**

# Purpose of the VAW Continuing Education Program

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## ▶ Purpose:

- ▶ To provide a wide range of professionals the knowledge and the practical skills they need to understand and effectively address the issues faced by women who are victims of violence.
- ▶ The continuing education program is designed to reach members of communities that may not typically receive education on violence against women, such as members of the corporate world, healthcare providers, educators, and other professionals.
- ▶ **Initial funding provided by The Verizon Foundation**
- ▶ (Danis, 2003; O'Keefe & Mennen, 1998; Payne, Carmody, Plichta & Vandecar-Burdin, 2007; Sugg, Thompson, Thompson, Maiuro & Rivara, 1999)

# Overarching Ideas/Values for VAW Certificate Levels and Workshops

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- ▶ Empowerment & Feminist Theories
- ▶ Professional Ethics and Confidentiality
- ▶ Cultural Competency and Social Diversity
- ▶ Social Justice
- ▶ Ecological Perspective
- ▶ Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- ▶ Community Partnerships with all sectors



# PTCE Steering Committee

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- ▶ Professional Training and Continuing Education Steering Committee made up of members from the corporate, government, nonprofit and academic sectors.
- ▶ Committee involved in:
  - ▶ Creating values for the program
  - ▶ Choosing workshops offered each session
  - ▶ Recommending trainers and curriculum developers
  - ▶ Creating learning objectives

# Instructors and Curriculum Developers

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- ▶ Collaboration with community agencies to secure instructors with a variety of knowledge and experience in the VAW field
- ▶ Instructors come from academic, nonprofit, government sectors
- ▶ Some members of the steering committee are also instructors/curriculum developers for workshops

# Curriculum Development – Using Adult Learning Techniques

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- ▶ **Adults must be treated with respect.**
  - ▶ More attention should be given to the quality of the learning environment.
  - ▶ Adults should be allowed to discover their own needs for learning.
  - ▶ Adults should be involved in planning and conducting their training.
  - ▶ Adult learners can evaluate their own progress.
- ▶ **Adults learn from their own experiences.**
  - ▶ Emphasis should be placed on tapping their experiences.
  - ▶ Special attention should be given to introductory activities to help adults “unfreeze” their fixed habit of learning.
- ▶ **Adults need application.**
- ▶ **Learning is problem centered rather than subject centered.**



# VAW Certificate Structure

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- ▶ 4 level certificate program
  - ▶ Foundation
  - ▶ Advanced
  - ▶ Clinical
  - ▶ Nonprofit Management, Advocacy & Policy
- ▶ Certificates made up of required and elective workshops
- ▶ Workshops can be taken individually or as part of a certificate program



# Workshop Format

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- ▶ **Instructor-led, in-person workshops**
  - ▶ 1 day, 5 hours
  - ▶ Interactive - include lecture, group exercises and discussion, videos
- ▶ **Web-based workshops**
  - ▶ Participants review lecture, handouts, additional readings, video clips and have the opportunity to interact with the instructor and other participants through discussion questions and chat sessions.
  - ▶ Workshops run for 4 weeks, approx. 1.25 hours/week. Participants can complete work on their own time each week.



# Participants

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- ▶ Social workers, human service professionals, healthcare workers, criminal justice professionals, and corporate professionals
- ▶ LCSW, LSW, LPC's and Teachers looking to obtain Continuing Education Hours
- ▶ NJ Domestic Violence Specialists looking to obtain DVS credits for certification
- ▶ Clinicians
- ▶ Nonprofit directors, policy makers, advocates, and supervisors



# Evaluation

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## ▶ Purpose

- ▶ To measure the impact of the workshops on participants' attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors about violence against women

## ▶ Methods

### ▶ Pre-Post-Post

- ▶ Pre-test – 1 week prior to workshop
- ▶ Post-test – 1 week after workshop
- ▶ Post-Post test – 6 months after the workshop



# Measures

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- ▶ **62 question survey with topics such as:**
  - ▶ Their knowledge/attitudes about violence against women
  - ▶ How they ask clients about domestic violence or sexual assault
  - ▶ Their work environment
  - ▶ Their professional and personal experiences violence against women
  - ▶ Demographic information
- ▶ **Majority of the questions taken from MSW survey and standard scales**



# Data Collection

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- ▶ Participants are sent a link via email to participate in the survey
- ▶ Online survey via Zoomerang
- ▶ Email link is sent 3x – once each for pre, post, and post-post
- ▶ Added incentive in Spring 2009 to encourage participation
- ▶ Survey takes approximately 25-30 minutes to complete



# Sample

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- ▶ **Fall 2008 workshops**
  - ▶ 101 participants in workshops (8 workshops)
  - ▶ 75 participants received link to survey (no email for remaining)
  - ▶ 16 responded to the Pre-test
    - ▶ Of those who completed the pre-test:
      - 5 completed the post-test
      - 1 completed both post-tests
      - 2 completed pre-test and post-post
  - ▶ 3 responded to the post-test (no pre)
    - ▶ Of those who completed only the post-test:
      - 1 completed post-post
  - ▶ 1 responded to the post-post test (no pre or post)



# Evaluation Challenges

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- ▶ **Participation is low**
  - ▶ Not reaching all workshop participants - email addresses are not required for registration
  - ▶ Link is sent out only once per survey session
  - ▶ Participants may register for multiple workshops and receive the survey for each one, may not want to complete multiple times
- ▶ **Added incentive**
  - ▶ At this point, does not appear to be encouraging additional participation
- ▶ **Length of survey**



# Next steps

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- ▶ Increase number of survey participants
  - ▶ Incentive added
- ▶ Review frequencies/descriptive stats
  - ▶ Revise the instrument
- ▶ Review /revise data collection
  - ▶ Increase number of email reminders sent to participants to complete the survey
- ▶ Data analyses
- ▶ Discussion of results with steering committee



# Conclusion / Summary

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- ▶ **Evaluation is still in-process**
  - ▶ Year I primary focus on workshop program development
- ▶ **Workshops continue to be developed each session**
  - ▶ 10 scheduled for Fall 2009
  - ▶ 15-17 for Spring/Summer 2010
- ▶ **Continue to build relationships with community agencies as part of the steering committee, instructors and curriculum developers**
  
- ▶ **Questions?**

# Discussion

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How do you see yourself  
partnering with community  
organizations?





# Contact information

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