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The Battered Women's Movement -  
Transforming Our Vision to Meet Women's Needs:  
Reflections on Wisconsin's Experience

Kathleen Krenek

# The Battered Women's Movement – Transforming Our Vision To Meet Women's Needs: Reflections on Wisconsin's Experience

by  
Kathleen Krenek

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It is my hope that this piece inspires the movement working to end violence against women to continue to take the risks so necessary to grow and evolve. As Mahatma Gandhi said so eloquently “We must be the change we wish to see in the world.”

## *About the Author*

Kathleen Krenek is currently the director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, a project of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. For the nine years prior to assuming her position with the NRC, she was the policy development coordinator for the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, where she coordinated the efforts described in this paper. In the mid-1980s Ms. Krenek held the position of executive director of the Women’s Resource Center, a large battered women’s shelter in Racine, Wisconsin. Other experiences include involvement with the community health movement in Nashville, Tennessee, the civil rights movement, and other social movements.

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**Introduction**

As with other social justice movements, the movement that began and maintains the domestic violence service delivery system in Wisconsin is evolving. Several years ago, Wisconsin programs serving battered women and their children paused to take stock, to see how well their programs and procedures were meeting the needs of battered women and their children. The self-examination came for the same reasons most change occurs – many unrelated forces pushed and pulled at approximately the same time. Wisconsin chose to seize this opportunity to reflect on its past and begin a new phase of development.

Note to readers from the author: The process and history of the evolution of the battered women's movement in Wisconsin, as in any state, is complex and multi-faceted. Different people have different recollections, perspectives, and analyses of the causes and effects of certain events. The following is my description and view of Wisconsin's process, with a focus on events after the mid-1980s. I wrote this paper to provide advocates nationally with a sense of how one state's movement and domestic violence service system have continued to transform their work to better meet the needs of all battered women.

**Overview**

In 1986, representatives of diverse communities of color recounted incidents in which some women from their cultures received inadequate services and sometimes encountered racially biased attitudes on the part of those who provided domestic violence services.<sup>1</sup> After listening to the communities' feedback, service providers realized that in order to adequately help diverse groups, they had to change. They also discovered that different cultures had established their own mechanisms to serve battered women, and these new groups wanted acceptance and funding.

As new groups made demands for new resources to help battered women – and in some cases received them – the service delivery network expanded. Increased funding, and the expansion of services, brought more people into the work, thus necessitating a greater level of coordination among domestic violence programs. These new partners also had different experiences dealing with families. Through these new liaisons, domestic violence service providers learned about additional needs of battered women and their children. It was apparent that shelters and civil and criminal justice reforms were inadequate by themselves to meet the complex needs of the populations identifying themselves as victims of domestic violence. Research, also, pinpointed needs previously unarticulated. All of this led to the realization that services as delivered by domestic violence programs in the 1970s and 1980s could not respond to the full range of needs presented by battered women and their children.

In 1993, all of this information was fed to a planning committee responsible for recommending changes in Wisconsin's domestic violence service delivery system. This committee first made a series of recommendations to the legislature in 1995, and then again in 1997.

Although the process of self-examination is sometimes painful, it provides many rewards. If change in Wisconsin's service system occurs as planned, battered women previously unserved will receive services, those services will be better and more comprehensive, and new partners will introduce more effective approaches to reach out to women and children.

## **History**

In 1980, the Governor's Task Force on Domestic Abuse presented recommendations for legal remedies, funding, and the formation of a Governor's advisory council on domestic abuse. In 1981, the Wisconsin legislature adopted a statute appropriating \$1,000,000 for domestic abuse programs and creating a permanent Governor's Advisory Council on Domestic Violence (Council). The new Wisconsin law, Chapter 46.95, mandated that organizations which wanted to be considered for shelter funding must provide seven core services. Those services included the following: a 24-hour crisis line, emergency shelter and food, emergency transportation to the shelter, advocacy and counseling, referral and follow-up services, educational arrangements for school age children, and community education. The law required that non-residential programs provide four services: a 24-

hour crisis line, referral and follow-up, advocacy and counseling, and community education. Chapter 46.95 framed the response to battered women's needs and influenced service delivery for almost twenty years. The impact, achievements, and limitations of Chapter 46.95 – and Wisconsin's efforts to overcome the unintended obstacles that it imposed – are examined below.

Mandating specific services intentionally restricted funding eligibility to those organizations that primarily provided advocacy to battered women and their children. Historically, until state funding became available, dedicated women had offered help and advocacy for battered women, often without grant support. In 1981, through the statute, 23 domestic abuse programs received grant awards. Today more than 70 state-funded programs provide help and a safe haven to thousands of women and children every year. The domestic abuse service delivery system in Wisconsin has been largely successful in meeting its original goals.

As it happened, those who helped define domestic abuse services were mostly white women from middle class backgrounds. As with any organized effort, program characteristics reflected the background of those who were involved in decision making, and the service delivery system was designed based on their perceptions of domestic violence. Program advocates assumed that the same type of service met the needs of all battered women. Since domestic abuse services quickly became overutilized, it was easy for funded programs to overlook those who did not use the services.

One of the most significant and lasting results of the narrow focus of Chapter 46.95, and thus of the service delivery system developed by the original group, was the view that battering is a victim's primary problem. Programs aided women with leaving their partners and provided education about what to expect if they stayed. Battered women's advocates believed that the preferable course of action for the battered woman was to leave. They thought that through separation from a battering partner the violence would cease, and this would solve the woman's problems.

Other issues in women's lives were isolated from the violence and were considered to be of lesser importance. Little attention was paid to the ever-present effects of poverty and racism. Even if those problems were noted, there were limited efforts and resources to provide comprehensive services that addressed the multiple obstacles in the lives of

women who were affected by those other issues. It should be noted that the domestic violence movement, in its compartmentalization of the many aspects of a woman's life, followed the traditional social service structure of those days – it addressed one single problem at a time rather than all the complex needs of a particular woman or her family.

The domestic abuse service system first defined battering as a cycle of violence – later as a wheel of power and control. Advocacy and counseling, legislative efforts, and systems reform all focused on the reduction and cessation of partner violence. Unfortunately for many battered women, to leave a battering partner often meant leaving friends, support systems, and cherished activities. Leaving did not necessarily guarantee safety, or eradicate the harm of economic inequity and racism. For many women, particularly women of color who were less mobile, leaving required giving up community support systems which were essential to emotional, financial, and psychological survival. This one-dimensional focus on leaving did not take account of the areas of a woman's life that were unaffected by the violence, or relationships that women did not want to leave behind.

Slowly, Native American and African American battered women began to voice their concerns to Wisconsin domestic violence service providers. In the mid-1980s, battered Native American women identified the need for culturally appropriate services. They charged that the traditional service delivery system was not providing, nor could it provide, the services they needed. They fought successfully to secure funding for a statewide Native American domestic abuse shelter. In addition, many in the Native American battered women's community wanted to use funding for batterers' treatment, with an emphasis on maintaining intact families. However, state law continued to restrict funding to only those seven basic services. This was the first public challenge to the narrow definition of domestic abuse services, and it indicated that those services were insufficient to meet the needs of all battered women. The domestic violence service providers strongly discouraged any effort to change the state definition of services, because they felt that the limited funds should be used to serve battered women and their children. To provide family-based services, Native American programs had to look elsewhere for financial support.

In the late 1980s, African American women in Milwaukee organized to develop new services. That effort resulted in the funding of a culturally specific program serving their

community. Again, in order to qualify for state domestic violence funding, the newly formed battered women's organization had to arrange to provide the four core services required for a non-residential program, whether they were needed or not. The organization had to seek other funding in order to expand programming to meet the other needs of families in the African American community.

The early 1990s brought other groups into view, including battered migrant workers, women in prison for domestic violence-related crimes, families involved in the protective service system, and non-English-speaking immigrant women, specifically Southeast Asian battered women. These groups wanted services with different configurations. Many wanted to develop programs that met the needs of their unique circumstances or cultural values.

An example of a creative idea that could not be funded by Chapter 46.95 was a proposal to develop a statewide, 24-hour, Spanish-language crisis line and to conduct support groups that would meet in large community centers or in homes, where the purpose of the group would not be obvious to outsiders – because many battered Latinas believe that it is unacceptable to take family problems outside the home. For this reason they also did not want an independent shelter, or a non-residential program specific to domestic violence with a separate board of directors. The state funding statute could not accommodate their request.

As the domestic violence service providers began to discuss the new proposals for different types of services, they wanted to offer all new services through existing programs as a way to assure accountability. Advocates had ambivalence about modifying the statute because funding might then be open to large corporate structures that would not maintain an empowering philosophy about service delivery. Service providers believed they could organize the new types of services without changing the law. They believed the state should not provide funding for domestic abuse services unless the core service structure was first in place.

Even when the newly identified groups pointed out that the service system did not meet their needs, the service providers had a difficult time changing their views. The service delivery system has yet to resolve all the debates about whether existing programs sufficiently meet all needs of all victims and their children. However, slowly,



organizations began to reconsider the funding scheme and the philosophy behind it. The new ideas for service brought forward by diverse groups began to open the door to new thinking.

### **The Beginning of Transformation - The Need for Change**

In the early 1990s, aside from diverse communities entering the picture, another development led the battered women's service system to look at the delivery system differently. Programs disagreed about what they should ask for when seeking additional funding. Historically, securing state funding had been a grassroots effort. The statewide Coalition organized programs to submit a single, unified proposal to the state legislature requesting additional funds. Needs were well documented, and the state listened. Efforts were labor intensive for both the Coalition and battered women's programs. Planning began well before the legislative biennial funding session opened. The effort was highly effective, with funding levels increasing from \$1,000,000 in 1981 to \$3,926,212 in 1995.

However, securing the additional funding was not the most difficult aspect of this fundraising endeavor. Determining what the proposal would look like became the bigger issue. The Coalition and Council attempted to maintain an open and accessible decision-making process, but priority setting usually occurred just prior to the budget session in the Legislature and was contentious and clumsy. Most programs were financially unstable and underfunded; therefore, equitable distribution of money was a constant issue. Urban versus rural and shelter versus non-shelter funding debates surfaced during every planning session.

Since battered women's programs were the prime movers in the effort to secure additional funding, meeting their needs became a priority for the Coalition. Justifying the expenditure of the time and energy necessary to mount a successful legislative funding campaign would be difficult if the programs themselves were not a significant part of the proposal. The problem became circular. Domestic abuse services would always look the same if existing programs were the only entities fighting for funding. The dilemma continued regarding how to secure increases for existing services while adding funding for new and different types of programs to meet the needs of diverse groups of women and children.

Finally, in 1993, the tension between competing interests and realities – on the one hand, the need and desire to fund new types of programming, and, on the other hand, the domestic abuse service delivery system’s debate over what to fund within the established network of programs – became almost unmanageable. The Coalition and Council decided to form a committee to review every aspect of funding and services. Its mission was to develop a funding plan that would direct the movement for the next five to ten years.

The planning effort took on a life of its own. For the most part, the Coalition staffed the committee. Meetings took place over the period of a year. The first order of business was to organize a committee that represented a broad spectrum of battered women’s activists as well as persons who did not work in the domestic abuse service delivery system. The committee sought representation from a rural non-residential program, an urban shelter, several Council committees including Finance and Access, the state Department of Health and Social Services, the American Indians Against Abuse, and the Latina and African American communities. The committee also included at least one program representative from each region of the state.<sup>2</sup> The committee requested the participation of regional representatives with the clear expectation that they act as liaison between the committee and the service providers. This structure afforded a continuous flow of information in both directions and kept all programs informed of activities. Thus, the process became less threatening and provided equal opportunity to offer input.

The committee used several tools to assist its members. The Coalition conducted research into how other states provided services to victims, perpetrators, and children; how they were funded; and the new directions in which they were moving. The committee also asked local domestic violence programs to conduct needs assessments by interviewing and surveying many other agencies in their communities.

The surveys asked domestic abuse programs two things: (1) what a comprehensive service system would look like within and beyond their individual programs, and (2) how they would prioritize the following services based on families’ and community needs:

- coordinated community response teams
- supervised visitation centers
- batterers’ treatment
- public awareness campaigns
- hospital-based programs

- transitional living
- culturally specific services
- school-based educational programs
- legal services
- additional legal advocacy
- children's/teens' services
- prevention and public education
- more training and technical assistance

Regional representatives assumed responsibility for assuring completion and submission of all surveys. At least 90% of domestic abuse programs participated in the survey; thus the data were meaningful. The survey was key for several reasons. It laid a foundation that led programs to think about the role of "other services" in aiding battered women and children. Domestic violence service providers had the opportunity to be involved in a process that was objective and that provided assurance that the committee would hear program views. Asking domestic violence programs to prioritize needs resulted in the design of a statewide plan that reflected community concerns.

Survey results indicated that domestic abuse programs remained underfunded for the services they were required to provide; that non-shelter services wanted to expand to shelters because they believed all communities should have shelters; and that none of the programs could meet all of the needs of families. Survey results demonstrated that programs were ready to think outside the needs of their own organizations. The committee used the three highest priorities from each program to begin the development of the plan.

Through a separate needs assessment, the Coalition also examined several years' program data which came from the reports each program had submitted as part of its funding obligation. The data allowed the committee to determine trends in service and to identify who was seeking service and how many women were denied help due to overburdened programs. The committee conducted a comparison of the demographic makeup of each county and its corresponding program to determine whether different racial groups utilized services in their county. This provided another means of determining the need for culturally specific programs and of indicating the level of racial representation among staff and boards of directors.

The needs assessment determined that approximately 4% of women in Wisconsin who were estimated to be battered used domestic abuse services, and that 30 of 72 counties and the 14 Tribal Reservations had no continuous basic service. It found that the racial composition of the counties and the programs were imbalanced with regard to both staff and service recipients. The committee interpreted this to mean that program staffing was not reflective of the communities served and that some communities of color were not utilizing services in proportionate numbers. They were then able to suggest that without both diverse staff and culturally specific programming, the needs of diverse populations of battered women could not be met. The needs assessment also found that fewer women were using shelter services over the years but were staying longer, that for some programs the rate of denial of services due to overcapacity was growing higher because of the longer stays, and that the demand for advocacy services increased almost two-fold and had replaced shelter requests as the preferred service. The assessment also analyzed cost per service; it found that the most expensive service was shelter and, at the same time, that shelters served the fewest people.

Both the survey results and the needs assessment provided an opportunity to think "outside the box." With a high denial rate to victims seeking shelter, long shelter stays, and greater needs for other types of services, committee members were forced to think creatively in order to make recommendations that reflected the findings. The group structured meetings to bring out new thinking, to question assumptions without reprisal, and to think about women whose needs were not being met by the service delivery system. The diversity of the committee led to discussions that would otherwise not have occurred.

Many innovative policy recommendations came from the committee's work. One of the most significant was the placing of a moratorium on the funding of additional shelter beds. Several considerations played a role in this sweeping change of direction.

1. Through data and anecdotal observations, the committee found that at least two types of women secured shelter services – those who wanted to leave their abusive partner but had nowhere to go, and women who needed a temporary reprieve from the violence to attain the safety necessary to think about their dilemma and options. Building more shelter beds was not the answer. If women continued to use shelters because they had nowhere to go, a 30-day stay would not help. Shelter stays would continue to grow

beyond the 30 days and there would always be a need for larger and larger facilities. Longer term solutions – permanent affordable housing and economic supports – were required. Shelters were not meant to be the preferred solution. Women and children had the right to remain safe in their own homes.

2. The findings also pointed to the fact that 30 counties and 11 Native American Tribes had no basic services. The group began to define what essential basic services should be available in every county, and on every Reservation, in Wisconsin. They again questioned whether every county and tribe should have a shelter. After long discussion and debate, the committee decided that every county and tribe should offer at least (1) a crisis line, (2) a walk-in center staffed 40 hours a week with advocacy services available, and with arrangements for immediate shelter in neighboring counties when needed, and (3) a strong community outreach and education program. The committee recognized the need for services designed specifically to serve the needs of Southeast Asian battered women and of mono-lingual Latina battered women, and that a priority must be placed on funding those services. They also agreed that other diverse populations needed to have the leeway to design and deliver their own programming. Finally, through the results of the survey and needs assessment, they identified the general need for additional advocacy staff and services, the need to build children's programming, and the need to stabilize the programs already in existence.

3. Using earlier data, the state provided a fixed base amount which varied only by whether the program was a shelter or non-shelter. The program data showed that the average amount of each program's budget covered by the state domestic abuse funding program was approximately 30%. Program directors spent most of their time soliciting contributions from various sources to meet their budgetary needs. The committee determined that if the state and federal government were really serious about helping battered women access services, they had to provide more funding. As a strategy to determine the amount of funding to request, the committee developed a formula reflecting the real cost of providing shelter and non-residential services and compared that cost figure to the current level of funding.

The final plan, bold and dramatic, was presented to the public and the state legislature for consideration. The proposed plan included adding 70 new non-residential programs for underserved communities, 37 satellite programs, 53 transitional living programs, 72

coordinated community response teams, a broad-based state public awareness campaign, 85 batterers' intervention programs, and much more. (The report is available from the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence; 307 So. Paterson, Suite 1; Madison WI 53703; telephone 608-255-0185.) The additional amount needed to fund this broadened effort toward domestic violence prevention and intervention came to \$21,921,274 for 1995. (In 1995, on the basis of previous projections, the state and federal government was scheduled to provide \$3,926,212.) The committee calculated a yearly increase of approximately 3% to meet general increased costs. In year 2001, the last year covered by the plan, the total additional amount needed to fulfill the plan's goal would be an annual appropriation of \$26,360,698. No program would sustain a cut in funding to reach the committee's goal of building a comprehensive domestic abuse service delivery system. The committee earmarked several sources to fund this endeavor, including the Wisconsin Department of Education, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Justice.

Several strategies were discussed for introducing this proposal into the legislative session. The committee realized that the state legislature was not going to increase funding from \$3,926,212 to \$21,921,274 in one legislative session. The Council and the Coalition established priorities based on program needs and political realities at the time. The first biennial session after the proposal was developed was a particularly difficult year. Welfare Reform led the legislative agenda, and funding for services for marginalized populations was cut, with potential catastrophic results for the disabled, poor, and elderly populations. A section of the proposal was introduced, but the Coalition decided not to compete for the limited funding with the other services that were in such dire need.

Although the Coalition and Council did not aggressively pursue new funding through the state legislature in the first session, the committee, with representation from both organizations, maintained its commitment to follow the plan. Domestic violence services received additional funding because of increases in federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act grants and increased collections in the domestic abuse assessment.<sup>3</sup> A continual delay in receiving federal funds each fiscal year provided an overlap resulting in a surplus in federal funding. Funding not earmarked for basic services provided one-time funding opportunities. This happened several times between 1995 and 1998, and each time the Council followed the funding plan and used the money to assist diverse populations with needs assessments and other one-time expenditures. Therefore, the

Southeast Asian Family Strengthening Project received funding to match its federal grant to develop services targeted for the Hmong community, and the migrant health project received funding for outreach to battered migrant women in migrant camps.

The committee decided to aggressively pursue parts of the plan in the next legislative session, especially the following:

funding to establish basic continuous services for the 30 counties and 11 tribes without programs,

funding for children's programming for all established battered women's programs, and

funding for a statewide culturally specific program to serve settled and migrant Latina/o communities.

This initiative was different from previous years' efforts in several ways. It followed an established plan. As a result, programs spent less time and energy debating what to request funding for; programs committed themselves to a plan that did not include an increase for their organizations, looked beyond the needs of their own programs, and considered the needs of all battered women and children in Wisconsin; and, finally, the domestic abuse service delivery system, in a unified voice, utilized a well-documented plan when discussing funding needs with legislators. The new services cost approximately \$3,000,000, and the initiative was only partially successful in that the legislature and governor approved funding for all but the culturally specific service. The increase almost doubled the current level of funding for domestic abuse services in Wisconsin. As a result, all counties and Native American tribes have at least basic services, and all established programs have state funding for children's services. Unfortunately, state legislators could not understand the need for unique and specific types of services for settled and migrant Latino communities and did not make these services a funding priority, in spite of the Coalition's and Council's advocacy for these initiatives.

### **The Process Continues**

In 1998, after using the plan through two legislative sessions, the Coalition felt the need to regroup and reassess the plan. They saw planning as evolutionary and felt that continued review and updating were necessary to identify emerging issues and new ways to reach populations of battered women and children. As well, new service providers

entered the picture, and many program directors and advocates who originally took part in the process had left their programs, so that the new staff had to be engaged in the process. The Council approved the review, and the Council and Coalition together staffed the process. The committee expanded the structure by requesting representation from an even greater range of systems and players. The group asked others to join, including representatives from the Department of Education, Wisconsin Bar Association, Legal Services, Department of Corrections, Hmong community, Department of Housing and Economic Development, Department of Justice, and Office of Victim Assistance. They developed another survey for service providers. Two issues left undecided during the first planning session were added to the agenda: (1) who should provide services, and (2) what is the ideal collaborative relationship between domestic violence service providers and other providers.

Through participatory exercises and data analysis, members of the new committee articulated a new perspective on needs and services. For example, during the June 1998 meeting the committee envisioned and further defined new service areas. Committee members separated into small groups by type of need and service, including housing and economics, underserved communities, training and technical assistance, schools, public awareness, children and teens, corrections, and legal services. Each group consisted of a combination of types of committee members so that all small groups maintained a balance in representation. Each group was asked to answer the following questions:

- Who is the target population?
- What would the components of the service look like?
- Who would provide the services?
- Where would the services be provided?
- Who should be involved in the program planning?
- How many services should be developed?
- What would be the estimated cost?
- Where will the funding be obtained?

The results were extremely creative. Other systems brought insights to program development which the domestic abuse service delivery system could not envision. For instance, the representative from the educational system could envision the integration of domestic abuse education into that system in a way no one else could. Each group moved beyond the obvious categories of victims and included potential victims of all ages and life circumstances. With allies participating in the same process with domestic abuse providers, program sketches began to look different. Asking small groups to



identify the target population provided the committee with opportunities to look beyond identified victims. For instance, under the topic "Housing and Economics," the small subcommittee listed the following as the groups and sites from which members of the target population might surface:

- low income/poor
- homeless/at risk of homelessness
- domestic violence victims and their children, including singles and families
- non-identified domestic violence victims, found in categories such as welfare recipients, persons with developmental disabilities, gays, lesbians, and older persons
- victims using health and social services, yet not connected to domestic violence services
- employers' associations and membership groups
- landlords' associations and membership groups
- child support agencies
- child care providers and the families whom they serve
- welfare workers, including Medicaid and Financial and Employment Planners
- technical college system
- universities and extension programs
- displaced homemakers
- non-traditional students and programs
- job training sites and job developers
- social service providers working with housing/economic advocates

Listing non-traditional target populations led to discussions of new programming ideas and identification of partners needed in the process to assure quality and relevance. Although they recognized the need to develop a cost analysis and funding formula, all small groups also recognized that planning must take place at the community level, with active participation by those most affected by the service provision.

One of the most significant results of this process was the commitment made by representatives of different systems. Each tried to find areas within his or her own system which could devote more time and resources to solving the problem of domestic violence. The collaborative nature of the arrangement allowed members of the committee to remove territorial boundaries, to again "think outside the traditional box" and create solutions. In this way the committee created opportunities to serve women who are experiencing abuse but who choose not to identify themselves as battered women, and who may not identify battering as their greatest immediate problem. The committee began to see the multiple layers of battered women's lives. They found that

although domestic violence impaired a woman's ability to realize her full potential and achieve self-determination, dealing only with the abuse might not substantially change her life situation. The committee also realized that dealing only with women who approached domestic abuse programs would mean missing the opportunity to help most battered women.

This group found that every system, as a point of service entry, provided an opportunity to assist women if systems and services listened carefully and respectfully to women who request help. If a woman asked for help with a child who was acting out in school, and the educational system understood the dynamics and implications of domestic violence, and integrated services into its system, the school could become the primary service delivery system offering an array of services based on her articulated needs. If a woman needed governmental financial assistance, and that system understood the dynamics and implications of domestic violence, that system could become the primary service delivery system, with referrals as needed.

### **The Future**

What will happen if Wisconsin's planning process and activities continue in the same general direction? This planning process brings several implications for the Wisconsin domestic abuse service delivery system. Projections include the following:

- a. Community-based services will be accessible to diverse battered women and will be able to provide multiple kinds of help in one location, so that women and their children will not have to shuffle from one single-focused program to another. All women's efforts to satisfy their multiple and diverse needs will be more successful.
- b. Domestic abuse programs will become less free-standing and therefore less isolated. The issue will become one which is shared by the community, integrating all systems and partners as equals. All systems, domestic violence programs included, will realize that no individual system has all of the answers. All systems, including battered women's programs, will learn to hold each other accountable to achieve a common goal.
- c. Through collaboration, all participants will learn a more holistic approach. Although advocates may continue to disagree with particular approaches, adversarial relationships with other systems will decrease. Leadership will vary and change with

need. No individual group will hold the key to successful intervention and prevention. Collaboration will be more productive.

d. A much broader and more diverse population of battered women will find help. Assistance will be more in tune with their needs and wishes.

e. If outreach to new social-activist partners progresses, greater practical connections will be made among violence against women, poverty, racism, homophobia, and other oppressions. Common themes will emerge, with more players involved in the discovery. Problem solving will unfold with greater richness and texture and will take a more holistic approach.

f. Shelters and non-residential programs will always be necessary so long as domestic violence exists. Advocates who assist victims to represent their own best interest will play a critical role in a new delivery system. Advocates will be the voice of battered women, articulating their needs and perspectives.

g. Finally, if there is a continued movement forward with a collective new vision, communities will have a broader understanding and recognition of domestic violence. This deeper understanding will lead to greater community ownership and responsibility in the work to end domestic violence.

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper the terms "domestic violence service providers" and "domestic violence programs" are used interchangeably to refer to the network of grassroots battered women's shelters and services that receive state funding to help battered women.

<sup>2</sup> For several years previous to the formation of the committee, programs met on a regional basis, and several of these groups formed cohesive bodies able to identify needs and gaps in response in their specific geographic areas.

<sup>3</sup> Wisconsin enacted a law requiring courts to assess and attach a \$50 fee to all convictions of battering-related crimes. All collected revenue must be used for domestic abuse programming.