



# **Batterer Intervention: Program Approaches and Criminal Justice Strategies (Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement and Corrections)**

*Kerry Healey, Christine Smith, Chris O'Sullivan*

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In the late 1970's, activists working with battered women realized that, although they might help individual victims, no real progress could be made against the problem of domestic violence unless actions were taken to reform perpetrators and challenge the cultural and legal supports for battering. Batterer intervention was initiated as a first step toward changing batterers and raising cultural awareness of the problem. Criminal justice agencies have responded by referring an increasing number of batterers to interventions via pretrial or diversion programs or as part of sentencing.

Among the programs contacted for this report, court-mandated batterers accounted for approximately 80 percent of all batterers attending programs.

To be effective, an integrated criminal justice response to battering must include all branches of the criminal justice system, from police to pretrial screeners, prosecutors, judges, victim advocates, and probation officers. This report provides information that these professionals need to work effectively and knowledgeably with batterer intervention staff and to make informed choices about program referral. Program staff will find information on the responsibilities and concerns of criminal justice personnel who prosecute, sentence, and supervise batterers. The primary goal of the report is to improve the working relationship and mutual understanding between criminal justice personnel and batterer program staff. A secondary goal of the report is to expand the debate about innovative batterer intervention approaches to include criminal justice personnel who work with batterers daily and criminal justice policymakers who are concerned with domestic violence.

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