

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION COUNSELLING SERVICES: PARTNER ASSAULT RESPONSE PROGRAM

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**Hours of Operation: 9:00 am – 4:00 p.m. in Belleville Office**

### Introduction

Conflict Resolution Counselling Services (CRCS) provides Domestic Violence Prevention Treatment groups for men and women. Counselling focuses on awareness, intervention, and prevention of physical abuse and abusive or controlling behavior. Specifically CRCS administers the **Partner Assault Response (PAR) Program** for both men and women. Referrals for this program come primarily from Probation & Parole and the Crown Attorney. However, self referrals and referral from women’s programs, community agencies and health facilities are welcome.

The CRCS programming adheres to provincial standards for the PAR program which have been established by the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The PAR Program:

- provides safety planning, information, individual advocacy, and support services to victims of partner abuse following the court-referral or self-referral of their perpetrators to the PAR program, and
- promotes accountability and education for perpetrators of partner abuse through group intervention with priority attention to myths and misconceptions about partner abuse, issues of power and control, and de-constructing perpetrators’ self rationalizations for violence.

Staff involved in Partner Assault Response Program work together to ensure that victims of partner abuse are aware of the various services available throughout the community with priority attention to confidentiality and safety planning.

The CRCS staff from the PAR Program provide public education presentations and workshops on topics related to partner abuse and healthy relationships; in addition, they

work cooperatively with other anti-violence organizations to help end violence against women.

**It is especially important that victims of partner abuse understand the following in relation to their involvement with CRCS:**

- 1) Victims' participation in the Partner Contact Program, as described below, is voluntary even in those instances when their partner has been ordered to participate in the PAR Program by the Court.
- 2) PAR Program staff direct care and attention to issues of confidentiality and victim safety during all service planning discussions. In keeping with their commitment to victim safety, the intended victim, police and probation & parole services are contacted when a group members behavior or actions are in conflict with his probation orders and/or which place others in danger.

## **Overview of Specific Procedures and Services**

### **1. SERVICES TO PERPETRATORS**

Perpetrators of partner abuse involved in same-sex or heterosexual relationships may be referred to the PAR Program by the Domestic Violence Court or, alternately, perpetrators may self-refer to the Program. Perpetrators must sign a release form to allow contact with their partners/victims in order to participate in the program. Voluntary clients can also participate in the program, as space permits. These are individuals who are not currently involved with the police or criminal court but who are seeking support and assistance before the abuse begins or escalates.

Program participants must be 18 years of age or older; however, clients under the age of 18 years may participate in the PAR program at the discretion of the program coordinator. Services are offered to both male and female perpetrators of abuse in separate group programs.

A sixteen week group, co-facilitated group is available to perpetrators. The group is designed to promote accountability and education through group discussion and exploration of several "key topics" including but not limited to:

- causal factors of abuse and violence
- challenging myths about partner abuse
- the dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships
- behaviour management strategies, and
- de-constructing offenders' self rationalizations for violence and abuse.

The PAR Program adopts a feminist analysis of violence against women. Efforts are made to ensure that all practices and procedures reflect and reinforce this analysis,

including maintaining a priority commitment to victims' safety and directing care and attention to language used when discussing partner abuse.

In keeping with the program's priority commitment to victim's safety, PAR program staff maintain regular contact with Probation & Parole Services in relation to all program participants who have been mandated to attend the program by the Domestic Violence Court.

## **2. PARTNER CONTACT PROGRAM**

As noted above, perpetrators involved with the PAR Program are required to sign a release to allow contact with their partners/victims. Partners/victims receive an information package by mail and a follow-up telephone contact from Partner Contact Program staff after their perpetrator has been enrolled in the PAR Program.

Partner Contact Program staff explore each victim's interest in voluntary participation in the women's counselling programs available in the community such as Three Oaks Foundation Women's Services Program.

PAR Program facilitators and Partner Contact Program staff direct care and attention to issues of confidentiality and victim safety during all service planning discussions.

### **Accessibility**

CRCS is physically accessible to manual and electronic wheelchair users. Interpreter services are provided by the Eastern Ontario Translation and Interpreter Services and Canadian Hearing Society.

### **Accountability**

Complaints or concerns regarding the quality or nature of services received or not received through CRCS are addressed initially with the staff person involved; in the event that the client is dissatisfied with any resolution offered during their conversation with the staff member, they may meet with the Program Director, or, alternately, they may submit a written complaint to the Program Director. The Program Director works cooperatively with the client and involved personnel to resolve the issue.

CRCS participates on the Quinte Coordinating Committee Against Violence and the Dedicated Domestic Violence Court Advisory Committee.