

# THE Compiler

Illinois Criminal Justice

Information Authority

Winter-Spring 2008



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## The response to domestic violence

Updated protocol aids law enforcement officials, state's attorneys, and the judiciary in addressing abuse issues

By **Adriana Perez**

ICJIA Research Analyst

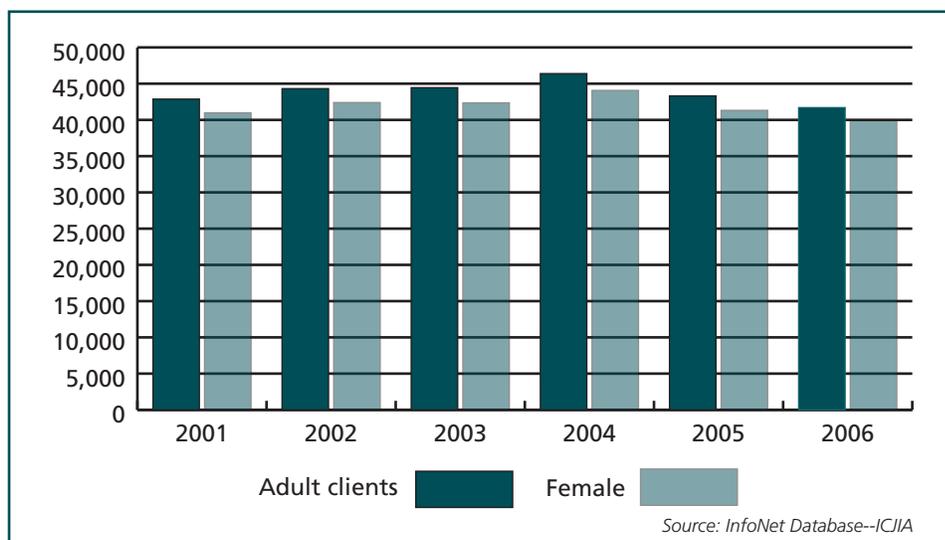
The impact of domestic violence on society reaches far beyond devastation inflicted on the lives of its victims and their children. Its adverse impact extends to the health care, criminal justice, court, child welfare, mental health, and social service systems.

Domestic violence involves a pattern of abusive behaviors inflicted by one person on another within the context of an intimate relationship, such as a family, household, or dating situation. The behavior's purpose, be it physical or emotional abuse, threats, intimidation, forced isolation, or economic coercion, is to exert power and control over another.

Most domestic violence court cases involve men battering women. Statistics in InfoNet, a state victim service database administered by the Authority, indicate that from 2001-06, 94 percent of those seeking services were women. Illinois State Police data for those years show 57 percent of domestic crimes were committed by a boyfriend or girlfriend of a victim, and 54 percent of all violent crimes were committed against a family member.

Over the past 20 years, Illinois has addressed the crisis of domestic violence by enacting model legislation, implementing policies and protocols, creating safeguards for victims, holding abusers accountable, and organizing and co-

**Figure 1**  
Adult clients seeking services in Illinois, 2001-2006



ordinating efforts to combat what has been characterized as an epidemic.

Originally published in 1996, the Illinois Model Domestic Violence Protocol for Law Enforcement, Prosecution, and the Judiciary aimed at serving as a best-practices resource communities could use in drafting their own domestic violence protocols, based on their local needs, systems and resources.

In 2005 the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) convened a group of law enforcement professionals, prosecutors, judges, and service providers across the state to begin the protocol update process. Changes in society and

in case law, and advances in areas relating to domestic violence prevention, indicated the need for a thorough review of the protocol's provisions.

Many recommendations in the updated protocol stem from a greater understanding of domestic violence dynamics, its legal implications, and expanded definitions of this crime. Some recommendations to be discussed in the *Compiler* include: more training for everyone involved in domestic violence cases; stiffer case penalties; more input from community agencies; new guidelines for officer response and behavior; and provision of more effective court procedures and case continuity.



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Created in 1983, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is a state agency dedicated to improving the administration of criminal justice.

The Authority is governed by a 21-member board comprised of state and local leaders from the criminal justice system and members of the public.

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# Law enforcement protocol urges more training, tougher penalties, community input

By **Adrienne Frederick**

*(First of three articles)*

**I**ncreased officer training, heavier penalties for violators, and stronger ties with community agencies are included as recommendations for law enforcement in the newly revised Model Domestic Violence Protocol for Law Enforcement, Prosecution and the Judiciary.

The updated law enforcement protocol endorses training for officers on how to most effectively respond to domestic violence calls, sets specific penalties when violations of provisions in the protocol occur, and provides a greatly expanded role within the criminal justice process for community agencies to serve both victims and abusers as resource referrals.

First drafted in 1996 to guide criminal justice practitioners in enforcing the 1986 Illinois Domestic Violence Act, the protocol has changed focus on domestic violence. While the original protocol characterized domestic violence as “a serious crime against each individual victim,” the updated version deems it “a crime against society, not against an individual.” This slight but important shift in focus allows the revised guidelines to extend the responsibilities of both the criminal justice system and the community in coping with domestic violence.

Courts have placed a special duty on law enforcement officers to affirmatively act to protect victims of domestic violence, and the updated protocol gives them a powerful new tool: the short form order of protection, a one-page summary of a standard order of protection.

“This protocol allows any police officer to serve the short form order of protection instead of requiring a sheriff’s deputy to

serve the long form, as was previously the case,” Heather Dorsey, senior state coordinator for the Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils, explained.

If during any routine police stop an officer determines by a check of the statewide Law Enforcement Agency Data System, which tracks outstanding warrants, that a subject has an outstanding order of protection, the order can be immediately served.

Faster serving of orders of protection will enhance victim safety and, Dorsey said, expedite the processing of cases because court continuance requests due to unserved orders are expected to decrease significantly.

Contempt of court charges will be enforced if offenders violate orders of protection, restraining orders, prohibitive injunctions, or court orders, and child abduction charges can result if orders regarding children are violated. The protocol also specifies how to deal with special population groups, including law enforcement officers accused of domestic violence.

Domestic violence victims are now to be allowed to sue law enforcement officers and agencies if the victims can show they needed, but did not receive, protection afforded under law; if officers’ “willful or wanton acts or omissions” breached their legal duties; and if such conduct caused victim injuries.

Revised guidelines on handling a domestic violence incident are provided to help officers make quality decisions that meet three main goals: to interrupt the cycle of violence, to

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## The Domestic Violence Help Line

Functions as a clearinghouse for Domestic Violence victim services.

Links a victim to a program that meets the victim's needs.

Is staffed by trained domestic violence advocates

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Is multilingual.

*All calls are confidential.*

1-877-TO END DV

[1-877-863-6338]

1-877-863-6339

(TTY)

The Help Line advocates provide victims with immediate information about their options, and directs victims to community-based service providers including shelters, counseling, legal advocacy, and civil legal services.

The Help Line also accepts inquiries from police officers, prosecutors, medical personnel and service providers.

protect the victims, and to hold offenders accountable. The protocol emphasizes that a responding officer's role is crucial in determining whether a victim will pursue criminal charges.

Victims are to be advised verbally and in writing of the many referral services available to them, and abusers are given appropriate referrals for behavior modification programs.

Whether or not an arrest is made in a domestic violence situation, an incident report must be forwarded to the state's attorney. Victims are advised of their right to initiate criminal proceedings through the state's attorney and of the need to preserve evidence for future action.

Officers must ensure that domestic violence victims and any children are transported to a safe place. In the case of an aggressor who has fled, a pursuit procedure would be initiated, including broadcasting the offender's name, description, vehicle used, and type of offense committed. When child and/or elder abuse or neglect situations are part of a domestic violence call, officers on scene must document and report those findings to the appropriate agencies.

The law enforcement community is encouraged by the protocol to view domestic violence as a special type of crime, since in no other criminal situation does the victim live with the offender. Extensive police training is mandated in how to accurately assess a domestic disturbance situation, and annual refresher in-service training is recommended for both officers and 911 operators.

Because of the skewed dynamics of domestic violence, identifying the abuser from the abused can be problematic. Some abusers have the ability to appear

calm and cooperative, lying convincingly about injuries and responsibility, sometimes claiming to be the victims. Victims can appear as irrational and out of control, and can deny abuse has occurred out of fear, dependency, distrust of the legal system, or other reasons.

Additionally, it may be determined that victims themselves are committing other crimes, such as drug abuse, prostitution or immigration violations, while their abuser, who might have been responsible for forcing them into these crimes, may display no criminal behavior at all.

Prior to making an arrest, officers need to assess intent and determine whether either person who used violence continues to be a threat to the other—particularly in high risk situations of extreme danger such as stalking, strangulation, use of firearms, and sexual assault. The following are considered high risk factors and precursors to homicide:

- Stalking and cyberstalking (sending online threats to victims or their family members) are regarded as signs of extreme danger to the life of a person, so stalkers are subject to heightened penalties.
- Since it has been determined that death from internal injuries can occur weeks after a strangulation incident, officers are taught to look for 16 different strangulation symptoms.
- Use of firearms in a domestic violence incident results in confiscation of the weapons and revocation of a Firearms Owners Identification Card if an order of protection is in effect.
- If a sexual assault has occurred, felony criminal sexual abuse or assault charges are added to any others that may be filed.

## Publications

### **Juvenile Justice System and Risk Factor Data: 2004 Annual Report**

The *Juvenile Justice System and Risk Factor Data: 2004 Annual Report* summarizes recent and emerging juvenile justice system trends and issues in Illinois, and provides a compilation of county-level juvenile justice system and risk factor data. Included are balanced and restorative justice efforts, the Illinois Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, disproportionate minority contact, and the Redeploy Illinois program.

### **Peoria, St. Clair counties initiate Redeploy Illinois youth programs**

Redeploy Illinois programs provide state funding for community-based services, including education, recreation, community service, crisis and health intervention, and alternative forms of detention in lieu of incarceration for non-violent juvenile felony offenders. This *Program Evaluation Summary* describes Redeploy programs successfully initiated in Peoria and St. Clair counties.

### **Community re-entry challenges daunt ex-offenders quest for a fresh start**

This *Research Brief* details common experiences of ex-offenders trying to reintegrate their lives into a community after serving prison time. Of 36,000 ex-offenders annually released from Illinois prisons, half return to the greater Chicago metropolitan area, and within three years 40 percent of them face re-arrest and re-commitment. In a 10-month study, 39 ex-offenders discussed their struggles with re-entry, including poverty, lack of job opportunities, and facing the choice of gang membership.

### **State juvenile justice trends can obscure rural county statistics**

Statewide juvenile crime trend studies tend to reflect conditions in highly populated urban areas but not those in rural counties, according to this *Research Bulletin*. Rural county crime trends and risk factors that differ from non-rural county trends across the state between 1993 and 2003 are highlighted in this report.

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Research

### **Four ADAA-funded investigator initiated research projects begin**

**Critical Incident Preparedness and Response on Campus.** An examination of the current state of preparedness, planning, and response activities is to be undertaken through a census of Illinois colleges and universities and a sample of campuses nationwide. Campus crime rates as reported under the Cleary Act will also be surveyed, and the resulting report will provide a national perspective on current campus security practices. Researchers at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale are conducting the study.

**Analysis of Shelter Utilization by Victims of Domestic Violence.** The dynamics of shelter utilization and how it relates to the process of and readiness for change among women victims of domestic violence, is the subject of this study. Undertaken by Loyola University School of Social Work researchers collaborating with the City of Chicago Mayor's Office, the project will attempt to identify stages in the help-seeking process that result in women deciding to ask for shelter, and/or deciding to end an abusive relationship. The study also aims to better identify housing needs, service needs, utilization patterns, and outcomes of women in the Chicago domestic violence shelter system.

**Methamphetamine and Violence.** Researchers at Illinois State University will conduct in-depth interviews with 30 methamphetamine users in downstate Illinois to determine the extent to which methamphetamine use and violence are associated, and to better understand the nature of that association. Findings will inform law enforcement and social service providers about factors that may increase the likelihood of violence by users and manufacturers of the drug, and how methamphetamine-related violence affects communities of varying sizes and rural characteristics across Illinois.

**Impact of Illinois' Truth-in-Sentencing Legislation.** The impact on sentences imposed, projected lengths of time served in prison, and inmate behavior of Illinois' truth-in-sentencing legislation will be studied by Loyola University's Department of Criminal Justice. Findings will allow policy makers to more accurately assess the impact of the law on sentencing practices and inmate adjustment to incarceration. They will also inform practitioners about truth-in-sentencing

*(Continued on page 5)*

# 'Pro-prosecutorial approach' in domestic violence cases holds offenders accountable

*(Second of three articles)*

A strong "pro-prosecutorial approach" by Illinois state's attorneys to bring domestic violence offenders to justice is advocated in the 2007 revision of the 1996 Model Domestic Violence Protocol for Law Enforcement, Prosecution and the Judiciary. The philosophical basis for this approach is that successful court intervention holding abusers accountable for their actions is the key to mitigating domestic violence incidents.

"This is in contrast to 'no drop' policies implemented in many jurisdictions when a victim wishes to drop a case," Bridget Healey-Ryan of the Illinois State's Attorney's Office, explained. "The pro-prosecutorial approach takes into account victim autonomy and victim safety, and evaluates each incident on a case-by-case basis to determine if the case should go forward and be prosecuted, or not."

Illinois has struck back at domestic violence with some of the strongest anti-stalking laws in the country. Illinois is also the only state to have enacted a preventive detention law, by which an accused stalking offender can be denied bail and held for up to 90 days if it is determined the offender threatens danger of harm to a victim.

Major prosecutorial recommendations of the revised protocol include:

- Providing the state's attorney staff with ongoing training, especially in recognizing the sometimes contradictory behavior of domestic violence victims and abusers.
- Practicing vertical prosecution, where the same prosecutor handles a case from beginning to end.
- Training state's attorney staff to handle all aspects of domestic violence prosecutions.
- Establishing a centralized domestic violence court to develop procedures for using evidence-based prosecution rather than victim

testimony, since victims often are afraid to testify against abusers.

A major outcome of the protocol is that it has brought to the table all the players in a domestic violence case, according to Heather Dorsey, senior state coordinator for Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils. "The result is that everyone knows what is needed and fewer people fall through the cracks," she said.

Victim advocates have become key players in domestic violence cases, offering personal support and guidance to victims, helping them see options to their abusive situation, and helping them articulate that situation to the courts. According to Cheryl Howard, executive director of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, advocates often take care of complicated administrative procedures required by a court case.

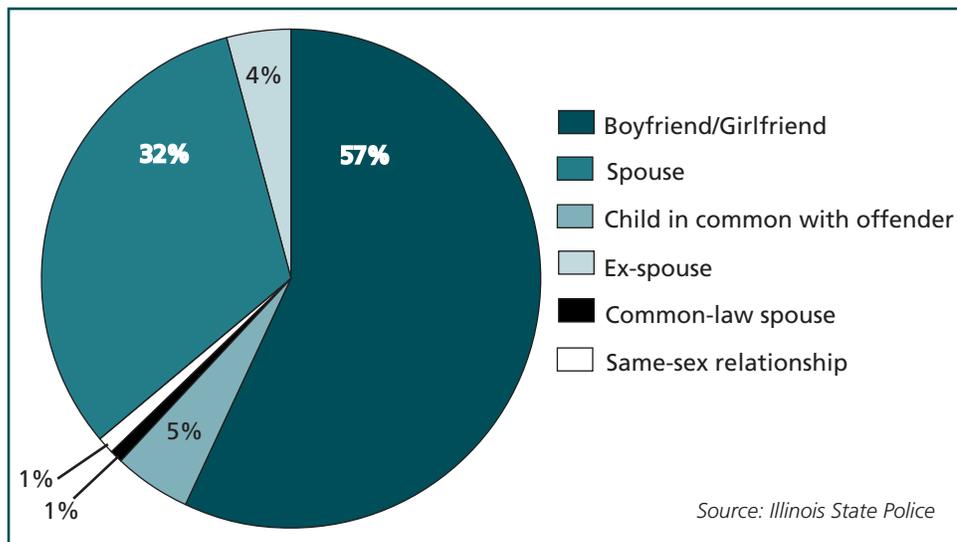
"Court intimidates and confuses many victims," she said. "They are often fearful, and aren't sure they are doing the right thing by going to court in the first place. Their entire case could be sabotaged if just one technical legal provision is not precisely followed, and that's where an advocate can really help them."

The importance of working with victim advocates is particularly stressed in cases involving elderly or disabled people whose abuser is a family member, personal assistant, caregiver or neighbor. Enhanced penalties can be applied in domestic violence cases that involve children, the elderly, and disabled victims.

Because elderly or disabled people are less likely to be able to defend against or flee domestic violence, advocates can ensure this population group receives all rights provided victims under Illinois law, including access to social services, financial assistance, and court protections (such as orders of protection), and are supported throughout criminal proceedings.

These victims often blame themselves for the abuse they suffer and are re-

**Figure 2**  
**Illinois domestic crime relationship categories, 2001-2006**



luctant to testify against their abuser, especially if a family member. Domestic violence advocates work to afford the encouragement, security, and information these victims need to enable them to cooperate in prosecuting offenders.

Prosecutors are encouraged to develop policies promoting the identification and investigation of domestic violence and child maltreatment cases. The protocol shields a domestic violence victim from prosecution for not being able to protect a child from an abusive offender.

All police domestic violence calls are reported to the state's attorney, which is the only authority in domestic violence cases able to bring charges and prosecute cases. Domestic violence cases can originate from police reports, state's attorney review of case reports, or victim complaints directly made to the state's attorney office.

The updated protocol stresses the need for prosecutors to make quality decisions in each individual case, based on a determination of the intent of the aggressor, the meaning of the act of violence to the recipient, and the effect of the violence on the victim's future behavior.

These criteria along with many others—including case histories of the parties involved, injuries sustained, physical characteristics of both parties, fear exhibited by either person, the reasonableness of statements made by either person, and self-defense indicators—try to establish who was the victim

and who the aggressor in a situation. Especially in cases involving battered women, this is not always evident.

In addition to statutory bail provisions that provide immediate relief by ordering released defendants to have no contact with a victim for 72 hours, the revised protocol stipulates specific penalties for violations of any of the three types of court orders of protection.

The protocol also expands the definition of family and household members who are covered by orders of protection, and mandates more severe penalties when high risk indicators are present in a domestic violence incident. These include stalking, strangulation, use of weapons, and sexual abuse, including marital rape.

Offenders may be required to participate in partner abuse intervention programs, receive psychiatric examinations, and participate in other abuser treatment programs such as anger management, in addition to having criminal sanctions and fines imposed in their cases.

According to the model protocol's statement of intent, it was created as an advisory document, presenting a set of guidelines to be adapted by local agencies for their particular needs. Because domestic violence tends to recur within affected families as learned behavior, the protocol's goal is to utilize the justice system to intervene in and break the cycle—and by doing so to reduce and prevent future violence.

## Research continued

laws' effects on issues faced by an aging prison population on reentry, since the law could result in increased lengths of prison stay, with resulting release of inmates from prison at older ages.

### The commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth in Illinois

Overall goal of this Research Report focusing on the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth is to gain more understanding of the problem and how to address it. Commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth is defined as a constellation of crimes of a sexual nature committed against youthful victims, primarily or entirely for financial or other economic reasons.

The Authority received a grant in September 2006 from the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to conduct research on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, also referred to as sex trafficking and modern day slavery. The study includes a review of literature on the subject, and utilizes three research methods: focus groups with individuals who were prostituted as juveniles, interviews with law enforcement officers, and an examination of arrest statistics relating to this crime. A final study report and summary research bulletin have been completed.

### Trends and Issues report examines criminal justice statistics in Illinois

*Trends and Issues*, a report about crime and justice in Illinois, updates in its sixth edition previous issues dealing with the organization and operation of the state's justice system. The report tracks statewide and regional trends in crime and the processing of offenders, and presents important criminal and justice issues that have emerged in Illinois in the past decade. Data contained in the report was derived from numerous criminal justice sources.

Summaries, descriptions, tables, trend graphs, and state maps depict data that displays criminal justice trends between the years 1995-2005. Divided into five sections—law enforcement, courts, corrections, victims, and juvenile justice—the report highlights issues of special significance facing the justice system today. Issues include identity theft, gangs, DNA, specialized courts, substance abuse treatment in prison, human trafficking, and juvenile justice reform initiatives. Publication is anticipated in spring.

## Grants

### **Justice Assistance Grant funds made available for police equipment**

The Authority is making \$820,594 in FFY05 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding available late in 2007 for distribution to Illinois law enforcement agencies to purchase police vehicles and in-vehicle video recording equipment. Three panels of internal and external reviewers with criminal justice expertise will rate applications based on financial need, the agency's need for equipment, completeness of the application, and whether the agency's proposed use of the equipment will contribute to officer safety and public safety. The funds are available to agencies whose units of government did not qualify for direct JAG federal funds but can show financial need for the equipment.

### **Corrections, Youth Centers receive Residential Substance Abuse Treatment funds**

A total \$977,510 in federal funding received by the Authority to administer the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program was allocated to two Illinois Department of Correction (IDOC) facilities, Dwight and Graham, and to four Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) Illinois Youth Centers, in Harrisburg, Joliet, St. Charles, and Warrenville. The IDJJ as implementing agency also allocated over \$62,148 in funds for screening expansion at IYCs, matched by \$20,716 in general revenue funds. Additionally, federal funds totaled \$93,255, and local funding provided \$31,085 for the Franklin County drug program.

### **Authority administers \$2.8 million for in-car police equipment to Illinois law enforcement**

Federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act funding totaling \$2.8 million was made available to 295 municipal police and county sheriff's departments across the state for the purchase of in-car computer data equipment to improve criminal history records and enhance police and public safety.

Administered by the Authority, funding was allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Some agencies that received funding had no in-car computers and relied on radio communication to obtain vital information during traffic stops and other police situations.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Best-practices approach for judiciary: centralized domestic violence courts

*(Last of three articles)*

**E**stablishing centralized domestic violence courts presided over by judges specially trained in domestic violence issues will provide the Illinois legal system a best-practices approach to expediting domestic violence cases, according to the 2007 Model Domestic Violence Protocol for Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, and the Judiciary.

The protocol revision, which updates the 1996 version, recommends that all other participants in domestic violence cases—law enforcement, prosecutors, domestic violence advocates, juvenile court staff, probation officers, elder abuse services, and child protective officials—also receive specialized training in domestic violence dynamics.

Such training is considered necessary because in a domestic violence situation, unlike any other type of crime, a victim and offender live together or are joined in a dependency relationship. Events in a case can be extremely ill-defined, behavioral roles can be ambiguous, and issues difficult to adjudicate. In this protocol, even minors can be held chargeable under the law if it is determined they are guilty of abuse.

The protocol makes specific suggestions to increase the sensitivity of the judiciary and prosecutors in dealing with victims who are from marginalized and "special" populations: persons of atypical gender (the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities), the elderly, people with disabilities, immigrants, illiterates, persons with physical or mental health problems, rural victims, teenagers, persons with varying cultural and religious beliefs, the homeless, substance abusers, gang members, and victims of human trafficking.

It is anticipated that the protocol will continue to be revised and updated over the years, according to Cheryl Howard, executive director of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which helped draft the original protocol. She termed the protocol "a great tool" that

all disciplines involved in domestic violence can use in practical experience.

Domestic violence advocates play a significant role within the court system, she said, providing personal support to victims who are often afraid, find court intimidating, and are wondering if they are doing the right thing. She pointed out that advocates can be a victim's sole source of help, enabling victims to negotiate the complex administrative procedures of a hearing process, and offering them options for their situation.

Based on new information and new technology, four types of domestic violence crime have been redefined. Cases involving strangulation, intimate partner sexual assault, stalking, or use of firearms have always been regarded as signs of a very dangerous relationship, having potentially fatal consequences.

Specific reference is made in the protocol to dangers inherent in cases involving certain factors, such as the following:

- Strangulation victims may show no signs of external injury, yet strangulation may prove fatal up to several weeks after an incident.
- Illinois no longer exempts spouses from being charged with sexual offenses.
- Stalking and its technologically updated variant, cyberstalking, is defined as a series of behaviors rather than one individualized act, and it is partly defined by the repeated effect it has on a victim. Illinois is the only state where prosecutors can request preventive detention when a stalker poses danger to a victim.
- Because firearms were used in 65 percent of all domestic violence homicides occurring between the years 1976-96, status hearings should be held in cases where firearms were ordered surrendered to determine if in fact they were turned in. Also, sentences in cases

where a weapon was used should be more severe.

The protocol stresses the importance of judicial oversight, indicating that the personal involvement of judges in reviewing short and long term compliance with sentencing orders has been proven very effective in securing offender rehabilitation. Judicial monitoring has been credited in many cases as breaking the recurring cycle of violence, with escalating harm to victims, typical of domestic violence situations.

Monitoring by judges also has been shown to encourage compliance with court-ordered partner abuse intervention programs and community-based sentences, such as probation or conditional discharge.

The updated protocol grants additional options regarding orders of protection. Generally, orders of protection provide remedies to victims that instruct abusers to behave in a certain manner toward petitioners. Orders of protection remedies carry time limits, and can instruct respondents to not abuse and stay away from petitioners, their families, pets, and property; can mandate counseling

or court appearances for respondents; can require respondents to pay petitioners for losses resulting from abuse, and for temporary housing; and can prohibit respondents from possessing firearms.

The protocol now specifies enforcement and penalties when offenders violate orders of protection, restraining orders or prohibitive injunctions; court orders (contempt of court); or orders regarding children (child abduction).

More flexibility in serving orders of protection is now allowable, according to the protocol. Orders of protection still can be served formally by a sheriff to an offender, as in the past, but now any police officer can serve an offender the short form order of protection, a one-page summary of the full order, in any encounter with an offender.

In addition, a court recently found an unserved offender guilty of violating an order of protection because he had been previously made aware it was in effect when a police officer had simply told him about it.

*Adrienne Frederick is a public information officer with the Authority.*



## Domestic violence myths ...and their meanings

**Myth:** The violence that occurs in abusive relationships is not that serious.

**Fact:** Domestic violence involves physical violence, ranging from a push or slap to permanent physical disability or death. According to an analysis of FBI homicide data, 1,587 women were killed by an intimate partner in the United States in 2002 (Violence Policy Center, 2004).

**Myth:** Domestic violence is a private family matter impacting only the family involved.

**Fact:** Domestic violence impacts all aspects of social and economic life. The economic impact in the U.S. exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, with \$4.1 billion of that total going directly to health care costs, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Victims of domestic violence miss an estimated 8 million days of work each year and 5.6 million days of household productivity, costing the nation \$900 million each year in lost productivity. (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2003).

**Myth:** Weak, submissive women with low self-esteem tend to become victims of domestic violence.

**Fact:** The only victim precipitant regularly found in research is that the majority of victims are female. Domestic violence victims come from all walks of life, exhibit all personality types, and possess high or low self-esteem and assertiveness levels prior to any abusive relationship. Low self-esteem and submissiveness on the part of a victim can be a result of domestic violence, but they are not precipitating factors (Catalano, 2004; Schechter and Ganley, 1995; Hotaling and Sugarman, 1986).

## Grants continued

Departments will be able use the funding to upgrade equipment they already have or purchase additional systems. With in-car data entry capability, these systems can provide up-to-the-minute access to information. In addition to data access, law enforcement officers can use the terminals for note taking and report writing, as well as wirelessly entering incident, accident, and arrest information. Data entered becomes instantly available to other officers using LEADS.

### **Motor Vehicle Automated Reporting System streamlines vehicle theft reporting**

Development of a data collection system that will allow online motor vehicle theft reporting is being undertaken by Authority staff. The **Motor Vehicle Automated Reporting System (MARS)** will enhance the ability of state-funded anti-theft task forces throughout Illinois to access information regarding stolen and recovered vehicles, arrests, and investigations. The system will provide electronic information access to task forces supported with Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council funding.

Charged with combating motor vehicle theft, insurance fraud, and related crimes statewide, the Council allocates funds and institutes programs aimed at reducing vehicle thefts. Since its inception in 1991, motor vehicle theft in Illinois has dropped almost 50 percent.

### **"Connecting the Pathways" conference focuses on youth**

The Authority awarded Jefferson County a Juvenile Accountability Block Grant to support the three-day Collaborative Juvenile Justice Conference, "Connecting the Pathways," held this fall in Springfield, Ill. Conference goals were to illustrate similarities between the many state juvenile justice reform initiatives and to promote collaboration between five main initiatives—Disproportionate Minority Contact, Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice Initiative, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, Models for Change, and Redeploy Illinois.

The conference joint agenda aimed to encourage further collaboration between juvenile justice reform initiatives, working toward the goals of creating safe communities and engaging youth in activities designed to teach them to become productive citizens. Conference attendees were urged to expand the current success level of their initiatives by engaging a wider spectrum of local and statewide stakeholders.

# Technology

## Authority designs in-house enhanced grants management system

A new in-house grant management information system continues in the development planning stage, to be implemented by FY09. The Authority's grant administration needs have outgrown the agency's current system, first implemented in 1990. The new grant system will eliminate redundancies in the current system and allow users outside the agency to submit grant concepts, applications, reports, and other grant-related information online. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency originally created the Web-based system, **Egrants**, with \$4.5 million in federal funding to meet the needs of the state of Pennsylvania. The Authority received that product and source code at no charge. Staff will tailor the system to fit Illinois' fund planning and grant administration needs. The system also will facilitate transition toward a paperless workflow, efficiently monitor compliance, and generate more detailed grant reports, streamline data entry, and effectively alert staff of upcoming grant-related events.

# Publications, continued

*(State juvenile justice trends can obscure rural county statistics, continued from page 3)*

Researchers found that highly populated urban county crime statistics often masked low density rural county crime trends. The report was compiled to assist juvenile justice policy makers and practitioners in determining overall Illinois crime trends.

Authority staff, in cooperation with the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission and the Illinois Department of Human Services, examined environmental risk factors that correlate with juvenile delinquency potential. Their findings were presented in the March 2006 publication, *"Juvenile Justice System and Risk Factor Data for Illinois: 2003 Annual Report."*

## State criminal justice survey seeks methods to stem drug use, violence

A 2005 statewide needs assessment survey, seeking suggested remedies to the burgeoning problems of drug use and violence, was sent to 1,561 law enforcement professionals. The survey replicated one previously conducted by the Authority in 1996.

As detailed in a **Research Bulletin**, hundreds of responses from eight different criminal justice professional groups identified four major societal problems as becoming worse. These problems included identity theft, drug and alcohol use, drug dealing, and juvenile crime.

Survey instruments with between 19 and 34 questions were designed for each specific professional group, which included police chiefs, court clerks, public defenders, state's attorneys, judges, probation officers, juvenile detention center administrators, and victim service providers.

More youth prevention programs, drug treatment, and offender monitoring were recommended as solutions to the problems of drug use and violence. Also recommended were providing more mental health services, improving DNA testing, and expanding capabilities for drug processing.

Between 19 and 34 questions were designed for each profession, and response rates varied from 65 percent for detention center administrators to 25 percent for judges. Police officers returned the most surveys.

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