



**Conversations**

**With**

**Mothers Of Color**

**Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence**

**Regarding**

**Working With Men To End Domestic Violence**

**January 2003**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Using focus group research, *Conversations with Mothers of Color Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence Regarding Working with Men to End Domestic Violence* explored the attitudes and perceptions of women of color survivors with children. The overarching objective was to hear what these women had to say about efforts to engage men and fathers of color as allies in stopping intimate partner violence and restoring health in partnership and parenting. The research was undertaken by the Family Violence Prevention Fund as part of the development of our national violence prevention campaign.

Thirty-two domestic violence survivors recruited from community organizations and battered women's shelters participated in the groups, which were held in Boston and San Francisco. The themes that emerged during the focus group discussions centered on the value and necessity of engaging men in violence prevention, the long-term effects of abuse on survivors and their children, the impact of traditional interventions against domestic violence, how societal norms contribute to violence, and how witnessing violence affects children's development.

The focus group findings validated a growing trend within the domestic violence prevention field to search for solutions beyond institutional responses.

Participants expressed deep concern about the severe limitations of criminal justice interventions and about our society's failure to consistently condemn domestic violence, while at the same time advocated healing for all those affected by abuse. These concerns seem to challenge those committed to ending domestic violence to develop community-driven solutions that rely less on criminal justice responses and instead mobilize family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, civic groups and faith communities to take a stand against abuse. The Family Violence Prevention Fund promotes these types of strategies through our efforts to enlist the public – with a special emphasis on men – in the movement to end abuse.

The focus group research revealed other important findings. Among them were:

- Committing resources and time to engaging men in domestic violence prevention is a valuable investment.
- Law enforcement's inconsistent and sometimes harmful response to domestic violence makes some survivors – particularly those from communities of color -- less likely to rely on the police for help.
- Domestic violence shelters, while presenting challenging living situations, provide critical safe havens for women and their children.

- Batterers intervention programs often do not meet their intended effect of stopping abusive behavior and could benefit from having more contact with survivors in the community.

The following recommendations emerged from the groups:

- Non-violent men should help end abuse by providing crisis intervention services and leading support groups for men who use violence.
- Formerly abusive men who have renounced violence against women and children could serve as powerful anti-violence spokespersons that effectively discourage boys and young men from adopting abusive behaviors.
- Service providers and activists should help parents who have been victims or perpetrators of abuse talk to their children in order to reduce the effects of violence on them.
- Formerly abusive fathers who have taken responsibility for their violence could, for the sake of their children, seek to establish emotionally supportive relationships with them.
- Community members should be educated about available services for and how to intervene with families experiencing domestic violence.

## INTRODUCTION

The objective of the project was to examine how and why anti-domestic violence activists and service providers should engage men and fathers of color as allies in stopping intimate partner violence and restoring health in partnership and parenting.

More specifically, these focus groups sought to explore three major questions:

*What do mothers of color who have experienced domestic violence think about how service providers can help abusive men change their behavior?*

*What do these women think about how service providers can help engage non-abusive men in violence prevention activities?*

*What do mothers of color who have experienced domestic violence think about how service providers have worked with men historically?*

Exploring these areas led to discussions on how women felt about the efficacy of traditional methods of domestic violence intervention as well as the damaging effects witnessing domestic violence can have on children.

Although the scope of this project was narrowly focused on a small sampling of 32 women in San Francisco, California, and Boston, Massachusetts, it provides potentially valuable insight relevant to violence prevention efforts nationwide.

Survivors of domestic violence who participated in these focus groups seemed to appreciate the opportunity to share their experiences and perspectives. Their discussions were varied and rich with narrative detail and insight.

Overall, the conversations were infused with five overlapping themes:

**Engaging Men in Violence Prevention**

**Long Term Effects of Abuse**

**Impact of Traditional Interventions**

**Societal Norms**

**Child Development and Witnessing Violence**

The concepts that emerged from this study will be used to help develop violence prevention messages that practitioners can deliver to men and fathers.

## METHODOLOGY

From August through November 2002, the Family Violence Prevention Fund commissioned a series of focus groups with mothers of color who have experienced intimate partner violence. To improve responses to domestic violence, we chose to seek out the opinions of women of color as a part of our effort. It is our hope that these findings will be useful to the larger domestic violence community searching for new ways to prevent domestic violence and to nurture familial bonds.

Four, two-hour focus groups were conducted by Gabriele Atchison, a researcher with a doctorate in Women's Studies. The focus groups were guided discussions among individuals with first hand experience of the issues we wished to explore. We documented the opinions and experiences of participants in their own words. Direct quotes are woven throughout this report and are indicated by the use of italics.

Participants were recruited from community organizations and battered women's shelters. The researcher collected demographic information (Appendix A), and focus groups participants received modest financial compensation for their time and contribution to the discussions.

The researcher and Family Violence Prevention Fund staff worked collaboratively to develop the focus group discussion questions and questioning route (*Appendix B*).

The researcher relied on audio recording and notes to reconstruct the content of the discussions. This raw data was then used to highlight recurring themes of the conversations.

Additionally, the researcher interviewed one key informant whose community-based organization facilitates visitation services between fathers who have used violence and their children. The former staff person shared her observations and opinions about men who have used violence and their relationships with the children in their lives.

It is not the aim of this report to be comprehensive or impartial. Instead, we wish to represent the spirit and major themes of the conversations realizing that written text is a poor substitute for the lived experiences of the women who contributed their time and experience to this research.

## ENGAGING MEN IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The participants probed several aspects of this multi-layered subject. They grappled with the necessity for abusive men to claim responsibility for the effects of their violence, discussed their opinions on what actually causes violence in the home and voiced their thoughts concerning the importance of fathers and other mentors for children. The themes that were discussed centered on responsibility, healing and caring for children.

The women articulated several factors they believed contribute to men's violence, and some of their reasoning was self-blaming. For instance, some women talked about ways in which they were dominating, controlling or verbally abusive to the men who abused them.

The women concurred that non-violent men could potentially be powerful allies in the struggle to end domestic violence. Non-violent men were seen as valuable partners especially in terms of talking to other men about the effects of domestic violence and as mentors to young people.

### Responsibility

The focus group participants emphasized that abusive men need to take responsibility for their violence. Several participants described the shame that abusive men feel but also their unwillingness to assume responsibility for their violence and to make associated changes in their behavior.

Women recounted stories of their abusers beating them and then begging them not to leave the house so people would not know what they had done. One participant remembered her abuser asking her not to hold their child because her eye was bruised as a result of a beating he had inflicted on her. He also asked her not to go outside because her injury was visible. He said,

*"People are going to think I'm trying to kill you."*

And she said to herself,

*"But you are killing me."*

The former staff person of a visitation program interviewed for this project remarked that during intake sessions with non-custodial fathers who had used violence she found that many men felt that women had the upper hand and that the men did not have control over what was happening. She thought that these men tended to blame women (including female judges and social workers) for their inability to see their children instead of viewing the situation as a result of their own violent behavior.

## Healing

Many of the women believed that men needed to heal in order to have healthy families.

*“When you heal the man, you heal the conversation.”*

The women talked about abusive men getting help for their violent behavior, real help that would make them stop being violent. The women identified some factors they felt perpetuated men’s use of violence, such as men’s misdirected anger and substance abuse.

*“Some of these men are victims themselves. Because of their childhoods, they are dealing with their issues in a round about way, and you have to address what is going on with them at the same time.”*

Many participants suggested that it might be helpful if a mechanism existed, such as a 24-hour, peer-led hotline, that men could access when they were starting to feel enraged or grappling with control issues. Presumably, the hotline would provide counseling, referrals and interventions when needed.

In addition to discussing the importance of individual healing, the women were asked to define what a healthy family was. One participant explained that this was hard to imagine since she had never been exposed to a healthy family. Other participants explained that for them, a healthy family was about

*“Communication and respect”*

*“Giving your best to your kids”*

*“Being taught values, aware of your culture, loved unconditionally, taught responsibility.”*

Participants elaborated by defining healthy families as ones where parents and children feel comfortable communicating and feel safe and at peace. They explained that being able to trust one another and having respect for each member of the family was essential.

## Caring for Children

Most women said that, although they were not in a relationship with their children’s fathers, they would like the fathers to be there for their children.

*“I want him to support his daughter, no matter what.”*

*“(I want him to) spend quality time with my son.”*

*“I just want him to be there for them.”*

*“As a male figure, they need to be involved. They play just as big if not a bigger role than we do, and they just don’t understand that.”*

Only one participant added that financial support of the children was also important.

Another participant explained that since her son’s father was still violent and destructive she did not necessarily need him to raise their child.

*“It takes love to raise a man. You don’t necessarily need the father.”*

The key informant observed that some of the men she had worked with had not made much progress, yet other men who had renounced violence went on to become loving, caring and nurturing fathers.

## LONG TERM EFFECTS OF ABUSE

The participants agreed that in order to truly renounce the use of violence, men must be made to understand the effects of abuse beyond physical violence. The women emphasized the long-term emotional and financial devastation caused by domestic violence.

Many of the women spoke of the difficulties they faced while seeking help for the emotional abuse they suffered. They explained that shelters and the police are hesitant to intervene unless physical abuse was present. Yet, they explained that emotional abuse and financial considerations were what keep many women in dangerous situations.

*"[There was] financial violence....He took the money away, my relatives names were on the community property. He took control of me this way."*

*"Domestic violence is an awful thing; it strips you of everything you ever believed in. It's not only a physical thing. It's everything."*

*"I know men who think they are not abusing their women because they are not touching them. They are talking down to their partner so they think because they are not going to hit on someone, that [their partner is] not being emotionally destroyed."*

Participants discussed defining domestic violence as fundamental to stopping it. Naming domestic violence for what it is helped many of these women understand the larger implications of their pain. The term helped these women understand that they were not alone.

*"There was never no name for it, and when I called the police it was called 'assault and battery,' but now its 'domestic violence'. So many women, and men I have to say, have lost their loves because there was no help back then."*

The women pointed out that, unfortunately, many men think of domestic violence as a woman's issue and belittle the severity of its long-term physical, emotional and financial effects.

## IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL INTERVENTIONS

Over the last 25 years, service providers and law enforcement have responded to domestic violence with some version of the following approaches:

1. Protect survivors of abuse through shelters and protective orders.
2. Arrest and incarcerate abusive men.
3. Mandate abusive men to attend some type of intervention program.

As we consider new ways to reach men, it seemed appropriate to ask participants about their perceptions of how traditional interventions have been helpful and harmful. The topics that women discussed included shelter life, interventions with men and criminal justice system.

### Shelter Life

Many of the women interviewed had experience with shelters for battered women. Several participants had positive things to say about shelter life. One participant told the story of how she left home with nothing but a backpack and a plastic bag. Shelters saved many of these women from having to decide between lives on the streets with their children and staying in an abusive relationship.

*"I am glad to know they are here."*

*"I am glad to know I am not alone. There are other ladies to vent and laugh with."*

*"I feel calm, because I am in a safer place. I can have a better relationship with my son."*

On the other hand, most survivors agreed that shelter living was very difficult. They found the short turn around time stressful. Women were required to get a job, find childcare and try to move through some sort of healing process simultaneously.

*"Sometimes you just want to lie down and you don't have time for that. You are always focused on the next move, the next step."*

*"You have no time to recover emotionally. It's hard and it makes you want to go home."*

One participant said that she had been to four different shelters before finally getting into transitional housing.

Some of the women felt that shelter staff needed more extensive training. They thought shelters should recruit more women who are survivors of domestic

violence so the staff could better empathize with what the residents were experiencing.

Participants explained that most shelters and women's organizations they were familiar with did not have interventions aimed at helping violent men, and they lacked programs to help heal families and nurture healthy relationships.

*"It's all about the woman, but he's the one that needs help. They offer counseling to women but men need some help as well."*

Participants felt that, by focusing services on women, service providers and activists can have the unintended effect of holding the survivors more accountable for the situation than the abusive man. One participant suggested,

*"Organizations need to show commercials showing men getting help, not just the women."*

Several women mentioned that they did not go to shelters for fear of losing their children.

*"My cousin told me to call the hotline. Then I went to the shelter, but I was scared that my children would be taken from me."*

Overall, the shelter experience was positive and supportive for those who sought help there, but most participants felt that shelters and other organizations should do more to help families heal and should assume some role in reaching out to violent men.

### **Interventions with Men**

Participants also discussed the effectiveness of service providers' traditional methods of dealing with abusive men. Most of the survivors believed that these intervention strategies are not effective at changing the behavior of violent men or at healing families and communities.

Participants explained that though many of their abusers were mandated to attend either batterers intervention programs and/or anger management classes, these services did not decrease their violent behavior.

*"He would be drunk before, during and after the meetings, and then he would blame me."*

*"He missed classes because he was home beating me, he told me not to say anything because it could get him kicked out of the class."*

Furthermore, many participants felt that abusive men were not required to attend batterers intervention and/or anger management programs long enough for them to be effective. The women agreed that other strategies for encouraging men to stop their violence would be beneficial.

### **Criminal Justice System**

The focus groups generated much discussion on the topic of whether law enforcement and criminal justice interventions were helpful or harmful.

Several participants explained that police officers had helped them by referring them to shelters and women's organizations, however the majority reported negative interactions with police.

Several participants talked about being treated like criminals by the police. For instance, one survivor reported that although her partner beat her head against the floor until she was almost unconscious, police accused her of engaging in "mutual combat."

The women agreed that, in many cases, they were as afraid of police violence and the threat of their children being taken from them as they were of their abuser. Some women explained that they would stay in abusive relationships rather than call the police. Many women were afraid that the police would hurt them.

*"They're all men. They harass you and grab you."*

*"My experience with the police started at an early age because my abuse started at an early age. I don't trust them because they were supposed to help me, but they gave my abuser the means to hurt me. So my trust for the police is gone. If I call the police it's got to be life or death."*

*"If a man can present a good argument, especially if you don't have money, you don't have a chance. And there are cops that abuse their wives. It's a no-win situation sometimes."*

Participants explained that abusers would often disappear once the police were called. When the police arrived before they could get away, the men would be arrested and taken to jail. Participants stated that though they usually bailed the abuser out of jail, he returned home even angrier.

*"The whole process makes them (abusive men) more angry really because they don't give them any help. They (the police) come and drag them out of the house in front of their kids. Next thing you know, he calls you asking "How could you do this to me?" I'm sitting there going "I don't know why I did this to you." The law don't do nothing but make it worse."*

In one case, a stay in prison was effective.

*“My brother, he ran his girlfriend over with a car, hit her with a frying pan. She’s running around crying, seeing stars. What made him stop? When they said, ‘Clink. Clink.’ [sound of prison bars] he wanted recovery. He wanted to stop drinking. He wanted to stop drugging. He wanted to find God. He wanted anything that would get him out of where he was going.”*

However, the majority of participants expressed the opinion that law enforcement interventions needed substantial improvement. Most believed that when the police were involved, the situation would only stay the same or worsen.

*“I think (domestic violence survivors) should be able to go their families as well. None of them (going to shelters or going to the police) will protect you for a length of time. I haven’t had a man yet who was abusive to me who wouldn’t beat up the police.”*

Participants recognized the limitations of even the best traditional interventions and acknowledged that individuals and communities have a critical role to play in stopping domestic violence.

## SOCIETAL NORMS

A number of women explained that apathy on the part of people in their communities had the effect of supporting violence against women. One survivor explained that her neighbors would hear the abuse and see her come outside with blood all over her clothes but do nothing.

Participants discussed the failure of their close friends and family members to intervene in violence. One participant recounted that, after beating her, her abuser would often go out and “hang with his boys” as if nothing had happened. Another woman elaborated,

*“His friends encourage him to beat me. They ask him, ‘Why are you with that bitch?’”*

Survivors felt that society teaches girls from a young age that they are less valuable than boys and that their primary worth is sexual. Participants explained that feeling confident and self-assured was a constant struggle for most young women. The participants talked a lot about believing that abuse meant love.

*“I thought, ‘If he doesn’t hit me, it means that he doesn’t love me.’”*

Eventually, some kind of intervention in their lives taught these survivors that love should not hurt, but until that lesson, many women suffered a great deal.

Women in the focus groups were critical of a society that equates being a man with being violent. One participant said,

*“(We should) stop making men think that they have to beat women to be a man, ‘Mr. Tough Macho!’ It starts early.”*

Survivors believed that society, in general, accepts violence against women and encourages men to batter. Survivors felt the silence of community members and extended family condoned the violence they endured.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND WITNESSING VIOLENCE

The mothers that we interviewed discussed their own experiences of witnessing domestic violence and expressed concern about their children's exposure to abuse.

In all four groups, these formerly abused mothers talked about not initially understanding that their children were witnesses to the violence and not fully understanding its effect on them. One participant said she had not realized that her son had been affected by the violence because he was only two years old when she left her abuser. Later, she involved him in a protest against domestic violence. He was four years old and very excited about participating and shouting out "It's your business!" That night she asked him if he knew what domestic violence was. When he said no, she defined it for him. Then he said,

*"Oh, like when Daddy used to punch you in the eye?"*

Another participant told the group a story about a time when her daughter was helping her put lotion on her legs. The daughter said,

*"That looks like when daddy used to beat you."*

The majority of participants agreed that it would be very difficult for a boy to overcome witnessing the violence of their fathers without any intervention. One woman explained that she hopes to teach her son about the realities of violence and that he does not have to use violence to be a real man. Several participants talked about wanting their children, especially their boys, to have a positive male role model in their lives. This discussion led to a consideration of the potential for men to help prevent boys from following examples set by abusive fathers.

Participants also felt that it was vital to make sure that girls were aware that domestic violence is something that can happen to anyone. Participants emphasized that part of the reason they found themselves trapped in abusive relationships was because they lacked an awareness of domestic violence. These mothers also wanted to make sure that they were raising strong daughters - girls who were self-assured and well loved - so that they would not look outside themselves for acceptance. A few participants brought up the corrosive effects of witnessing domestic violence for girls.

Several women explained that intimate partner violence started for them when they were teenagers. One participant, who lost a sister to domestic violence, said that her first abusive relationship started when she was 15 or 16 years old. The abusive man was 27 and already married. He encouraged her dependence on

drugs and then used drugs as another way to control her. He beat her up in her parent's house.

Another participant shared her perspective on the abuse as a young woman.

*“(He) had me down on my knees begging for my life. When I was younger I thought that was love ... My drug use was about sexual abuse that happened from the age of eight to eighteen.”*

This survivor explained that she had witnessed violence against women in her life for years.

*“I seen my father do it. I seen my sister's boyfriends do it. I thought, ‘If he doesn't beat me then he doesn't love me.’ My mother always told me, ‘Love is not pain. Control is not love.’ Even though she raised me that way, I still learned behaviors from my mom.”*

Participants felt that after getting the child away from the violent situation, mothers and fathers need help to learn how to talk to the children about the violence they witness.

*“I hope he doesn't get another girlfriend that he abuses, so his son doesn't have to hear it [again].”*

*“I would like someone to talk to my son.”*

*“I want to talk to her [daughter] about what happened. She needs to understand that's not the way [all relationships are].”*

*“If a child has seen their father being abusive, I think that the adult ought to be the one to say I know what I did was wrong, and I know you have seen things you shouldn't have seen as a child.”*

The participants thought that children would not grow up thinking that violence was a normal part of how families demonstrate love if they were given a different message. The women thought that family members, practitioners and activists could take the lead in delivering these messages to young people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The women who courageously told their stories bring strong and clear voices to the field of domestic violence prevention, particularly regarding strategies to engage men and help heal children and families. The women offer valuable insight to the world of service delivery and law enforcement.

Although focus group discussions varied and participants did not reach a consensus on every issue, several important recommendations emerged:

- Participants felt that communication and networking between men could have a powerful impact in the struggle to end domestic violence. Two of their recommendations concerned ways to facilitate communication between men.

For example, participants suggested that a 24-hour hotline for men who need to talk, problem solve and find appropriate ways to express their anger might help to end domestic violence. Men who are anti-domestic violence allies would staff the hotline.

The women also recommended peer led support groups for men who have been abusive. In particular, these women saw a need for support groups to be culturally appropriate in terms of class and ethnicity.

- Participants were hopeful about the potential for positive, non-violent men to help prevent domestic violence by reaching out to boys in their communities.

Participants also thought that men who have been abusive in the past and have renounced the use of violence could have a powerful effect by giving presentations in schools and reaching out to children through mentorship programs such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters. These programs could also adopt a domestic violence curriculum to raise awareness and help children who have witnessed violence.

- The women brainstormed several messages that they thought service providers could give to the men they work with:
  - *Be your best for your children.*
  - *You do not have to beat a woman to be a man.*
  - *Showing respect for women is the definition of being a good father.*

- *Take responsibility for your violence.*
  - *Support your children no matter what your relationship is like with their mother.*
  - *Understand that your violence has detrimental effects on all aspects of women's lives.*
  - *Understand that your violence towards your partner permanently damages your children, whether you are violent towards them or not, no matter how old they are, and whether they are witnesses to the violent acts or not.*
- Participants recommended that service providers and activists help parents, both women and men, talk to their children about the violence they may have witnessed at home. To be able to do this, they felt that it was imperative that mothers and fathers receive guidance on how to respond to their children once the violence has ended or the child has been removed from the violent situation.
  - The women felt that it is in the best interest of children for service providers to support fathers who have renounced the use of violence and would like to make amends with their children. Additionally, most participants felt that shelters and women's organizations should do more to help families heal and should assume some role in reaching out to abusers for the sake of the children involved.
  - Supplying community members with information about services available for families experiencing domestic violence, as well as helping individuals intervene safely with these families, could be lifesaving. The women's stories about the inaction of their neighbors, friends and family, as well as the women's gratitude to police officers, who provided them with referrals, strongly suggest this.

## CONCLUSION

The Family Violence Prevention Fund believes that soliciting the stories and perspectives of mothers of color who have experienced domestic violence will increase the effectiveness of current interventions and help craft more creative solutions for the future. The opinions and perspectives of those who participated in the focus groups and interviews have validated our commitment to find community driven solutions to domestic violence. Overwhelmingly, the women with whom we spoke endorsed the development of new strategies to engage men in domestic violence prevention.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund will continue to promote alternative methods of ending abuse in intimate partner relationships that support restoring health in families and communities. An initiative to help men and fathers prevent domestic violence does not mean we should lessen our commitment to supporting and helping to empower women and children. Instead, it is a challenge to us as activists and practitioners to concentrate more deliberately on a multi-layered approach to ending abuse.

# APPENDIX

## A.

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

#### *Marital Status*

Twenty-three of the thirty-two participants were single women and had never been married.

Single	23
Married	1
Divorced	4
Separated	2
Widowed	0
Living with a partner	1
No answer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

#### *Race/Ethnicity*

Seventeen of the thirty-two women were African Americans. Of the eight Latina women, two identified themselves as Puerto Rican, one identified herself as Central American; the rest did not specify their ethnicity. The women of mixed race wrote that they were “Spanish/Black/White, Portuguese/,French Canadian/Indian,” and “Japanese/Indian/German.” The Asian-Pacific Island woman identified herself as Chinese.

African American/ Black	17
Latina	8
Asian-Pacific Islander	1
European Descent	1
Mixed Race	3
Indigenous	1
No Answer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

#### *Class/ Source of Income*

Twenty-one of the women identified themselves as working class, and eleven said they were middle class. Eleven out of the thirty-two participants said they were receiving Social Security Income (SSI).

One woman indicated that she was unemployed. The other women had a number of different sources of income including full time work, child support and financial aid.

***Level of Education***

The highest level of education that ten of the participants reached was some high school. Five of the participants earned a high school diploma. One of the women earned a graduate degree; one of the women earned a bachelor’s degree. Six of the women had completed some college.

Some High School	10
High School Diploma	5
GED	3
Trade School	3
Some college	6
Associates Degree	3
Graduate Degree	1
Bachelor’s Degree	1
No answer	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

***Age***

Ten of the thirty-two women were between the ages of 35 and 44. Only five participants were under 25.

Under 25	5
25-34	9
35-44	10
45-55	7
No answer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

***Children and Grandchildren***

In three of the four focus groups, participants were asked about their children and grandchildren.

Seventeen of these twenty-seven participants had one or two children. Fourteen of these women had no grandchildren.

***Children***

No children	1
One child	8
Two children	9
Three children	3
Four children	1
No answer	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

***Grandchildren***

No grandchildren	14
One grandchild	4
Four grandchildren	1
Six grandchildren	1
No answer	7
<b>total</b>	<b>27</b>

## **B.**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Round Robin: Name three things you want from your children's father, whether you are in a relationship with him or not.
2. Should we involve men in the struggle to end intimate partner violence? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. When a woman is being battered, where can she go for help? [create a big paper list]
  - a. What do these organizations do with the men who are violent?
  - b. How do you feel about the way violence between partners is handled?
  - c. Is this way of dealing with violent men preventing them from being violent in the future? Do these ways of dealing with men help families and communities?
  - d. What are other ways that agencies can work with families that have been split up by violence?
  - e. How can agencies help heal families and communities?
4. How can we get men to talk to boys about respect for women and building healthy relationships? What would these new conversations look like? How can organizations and agencies support the men who would be willing to have these conversations with boys?
5. Does distrust of the police and the legal system make it difficult for battered women, who are trying to get help? What are some other ways that communities can end violence against women without involvement of law enforcement?