

# A GUIDE TO BECOMING A BLUEPRINT COMMUNITY

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An Interagency Response to Battering and  
Domestic Violence Crimes

October 2015

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**For more information about the Office on Violence Against Women/Praxis International *Blueprint for Safety* and to access training, assistance, and materials, go to:**

Praxis International

[www.praxisinternational.org](http://www.praxisinternational.org)

**For more information about the Saint Paul *Blueprint for Safety*, go to:**

Saint Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

[www.stpaulBlueprintspip.org](http://www.stpaulBlueprintspip.org)



# The **blueprint** *for* **safety**

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU TELLS US THAT JUSTICE DEMANDS THREE THINGS: THAT THE TRUTH BE TOLD, THAT TO WHATEVER EXTENT POSSIBLE THE HARM BE REPAIRED, AND THAT THE CONDITIONS THAT GAVE RISE TO THE INJUSTICE BE FOREVER ALTERED.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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There is a common saying about the great time and distance it takes for a cargo ship to change course. The process of adapting the Blueprint for Safety (Blueprint) is much like turning a cargo ship—in this case, the super-sized vessel carrying the criminal legal system and its response to battering. It requires all hands on deck to make the kinds of changes that position such a large, complex system to establish and sustain the Blueprint’s unified approach to battering and domestic violence. *Becoming a Blueprint Community: A New Response to Battering and Domestic Violence Crimes* is the result of learning from those who have been ‘turning the cargo ship’ since the Blueprint was first launched in St. Paul, Minnesota in 2010. Many communities and individuals have contributed their experience, insight, and expertise to the lessons and tools included in this guide. Praxis International extends its thanks and tremendous appreciation to all involved. We also offer our regrets for being unable to list by name each individual survivor, advocate, practitioner, and community member who has contributed to the Blueprint adaptation thinking and testing in the three demonstration communities and in St. Paul over the past five years. The names would run into the hundreds, if not thousands.

First, we thank the many survivors who have talked with and guided the local coordinators, adaptation teams, and Praxis staff involved in the demonstration initiative and ongoing adaptation of the Blueprint. Their contributions help keep the needs and lives of battered women at the center of the work.

Our appreciation to the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women for funding to support the Blueprint for Safety Adaptation Demonstration Initiative—and for their guidance, curiosity and insight that supports the ambitious endeavor known as the Blueprint.

We cannot begin to adequately acknowledge the communities that have participated in the Demonstration Initiative. We trust that the coordinators who have been charged with the day-to-day challenge of making the Blueprint real in their communities (listed below as of July 2015), will convey our great appreciation and thanks to the police, prosecutors, probation officers, judges, and community members who are working alongside one another to create a unified policy and approach to violence that causes much harm and damage in our communities. Each site has contributed its distinctive experience to the task of understanding how to shape criminal legal system practice around the Blueprint for Safety. To illustrate, we acknowledge one facet of that experience here.

- Duluth, MN, brought its long history and experience with how to establish and sustain a coordinated community response to battering. The Duluth Model CCR is the foundation of the Blueprint.
  - Scott Miller, Blueprint Co-coordinator
  - Tara Haynes, Blueprint Co-coordinator



- Melissa Scaia, Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs
- New Orleans, LA, offered its willingness to try out new ways of involving advocates, practitioners, and the community to expand discussions about disparity.
  - Amalfi Parker-Elder, Blueprint Coordinator
  - Kati Bambrick Rodriguez, City of New Orleans Domestic Violence Program Director
- Memphis and Shelby County, TN, assembled a forum of practitioners, advocates, survivors, and community members to plot out the impact of the intersections of poverty, language, culture, and identity on the system's tendency to rely on the victim to carry the case forward.
  - Lia Roemer, Blueprint Coordinator
  - Martha Lott, Shelby County Community Services

A heartfelt thank-you to our many friends in the City of St. Paul and Ramsey County, MN, for their ongoing commitment to making the Blueprint a living, breathing, sustainable philosophy and approach to battering. St. Paul and Ramsey County have provided invaluable peer-to-peer and technical support to the demonstration site communities, and have continued to experiment with Blueprint implementation and strengthen it.

- Bree Adams-Bill, Blueprint Enhancement Coordinator
- Amy Brown Jensen, St. Paul Police Department
- Shelley Johnson Cline, St. Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

We also want to acknowledge the contributors to the December 2013 Disparity Think Tank organized by Praxis International and held in New Orleans. The rich and challenging discussions helped move forward the effort to actualize the Blueprint's intention to "act in ways that reduce unintended consequences and disparity of impact on victims and offenders" (Foundational Principle #6). Along with our thanks to the Blueprint coordinators and Praxis staff and consultants who participated, our great appreciation to the following presenters and participants:

- Sandra Harrell, VERA Institute of Justice
- David Pate, Center for Family Policy and Practice
- Hillary Potter, Department of Sociology, University of Colorado – Boulder
- Connie Sponsler-Garcia, Battered Women's Justice Project
- Olga Trujillo, Olga Trujillo, Inc.

- Mary Asmus, Duluth City Attorney's Office
- Amanda Crosby, Access North
- Kelly Whalen, Ramsey County Community Corrections
- Ashley Bernal, Women with a Vision
- Dianne Hoofkin, Crescent House
- Gwen Richardson, Ashe Cultural Arts Center
- Yana Sutton, Total Community Action
- Theresa McCusker, Shelby County District Attorney's Office

Praxis staff and consultants have provided ongoing technical assistance to the demonstration sites and continue to guide, refine, and strengthen the Blueprint idea and process.

- The Praxis Blueprint Team: Denise Eng, Blueprint Program Manager, and Julie Tilley, Maren Woods, Cyndi Cook
- Technical assistance consultants: Beverly Balos, Cheryl Beardslee, John Beyer, Marcus Bruning, Colia Ceisel, Kristine Lizdas (Battered Women's Justice Project), Rhonda Martinson, Jane Sadusky

Two of these deserve special recognition and appreciation: Denise Eng, fierce advocate for women and their children, who co-directed development of the original Blueprint in St. Paul, has shepherded the demonstration initiative skillfully from the very beginning, and is arguably the most experienced Blueprint coordinator on earth. And Jane Sadusky—a fierce advocate, too—but also wordsmith extraordinaire. She has taken our collective thinking and learnings, and crafted this guide so that women and children in every community may benefit from the changes the Blueprint creates.

As is common in a multi-year project, faces change when people move on. We would also like to thank the following individuals who contributed to the Blueprint adaptation demonstration initiative earlier in its development: Deborah Clubb, Dottie Jones, Cory Turner, and Dr. Betty Winter.

Finally, we acknowledge our gratitude to Ellen Pence, Praxis International's founding director, who was unable to see and enjoy her vision of the Blueprint tried and tested in such a dynamic way. Her wisdom and humor are greatly missed—she is greatly missed.

*Praxis International, October 2015*

# INTRODUCTION

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## QUESTIONS

*How are we intervening in battering and the unique nature of this particular kind of violence against women, characterized by ongoing coercion, control, and violence?*

*Does our response make people safer? Are we reaching those who are most dangerous and cause the most harm? What messages are we sending and reinforcing? Are we paying attention to how our intervention impacts victims of battering and the community?*

Beginning in 2007—after decades of experience in reforming the criminal legal system’s response to domestic violence crimes and exploring “coordinated community response”—St. Paul, Minnesota, asked such questions of itself.<sup>1</sup> A partnership of advocates, system practitioners, and a faith-based economic and social justice coalition united to examine whether and how the community was meeting these goals. After using a Safety and Accountability Audit<sup>2</sup> to look deeply at current practice, the partnership sought support from the Minnesota Legislature to create a comprehensive, unified framework that would define how the criminal legal



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<sup>1</sup> *Coordinated community response* (“CCR”) is the collective act of ensuring that institutions intervening in violence against women (1) centralize safety and well-being for victims/survivors, (2) hold perpetrators accountable while offering opportunities to change, and (3) seek systemic change that contributes to ending violence against women. In 1980, Duluth, MN, began the groundbreaking work to define CCR in the setting of the criminal legal system. See *Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond*, Melanie F. Shepard and Ellen L. Pence, Eds., Sage Publications, 1999. Praxis International’s founding director, Ellen Pence, was instrumental in developing the CCR idea and approach and drawing upon it in designing the *Blueprint for Safety*.

<sup>2</sup> Developed by Praxis International, the Safety and Accountability Audit is an interdisciplinary self-assessment tool that explores how institutional practice enhances or diminishes safety and accountability. Further information at [http://praxisinternational.org/iata\\_what\\_is\\_a\\_safety\\_audit.aspx](http://praxisinternational.org/iata_what_is_a_safety_audit.aspx).

system should respond to domestic violence-related crimes, particularly those involving the greatest harm. The result was the St. Paul *Blueprint for Safety*, subsequently tailored for broader adaptation by Praxis International as the *Blueprint for Safety* and drawing on the long history of institutional change provided by the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (“Duluth Model”).

## BLUEPRINT DEFINED

The Blueprint for Safety (Blueprint) is a coordinated justice system response to domestic violence crimes that positions this complex system to respond more quickly and effectively and enhance its capacity to stop violence, reduce harm, and save lives. While the Blueprint is applicable to the broad range of domestic violence crimes, its primary focus is on the criminal legal system’s response to battering in intimate partner relationships.<sup>3</sup>

The Blueprint is a distinct blend of approach, document, and process that together fully articulate the idea of a coordinated community response. As an *approach*, the Blueprint is a shared way of thinking about battering and domestic violence. It gets everyone on the same page under a common understanding of the intimidation and violence that characterize battering and how to intervene most successfully. The Blueprint is also a *process* for shared problem identification and problem solving based on regular monitoring and adjustments to practice. As a *document*, the *Blueprint* is a set of written policies, protocols, and training memos drawn from templates that are based on research and best-known practice. While each agency writes its own policy and protocols, the Blueprint framework and templates connect agencies in a unified, collective policy.

The Blueprint grew from conversations and consultation with victims of battering, community-based advocates, system practitioners, defense attorneys, researchers, agency leaders, other community members, and local and national experts. The Blueprint also grew from a recognition that while there had been many improvements and gains in the criminal legal system’s response to battering, the coordinated community response (CCR) sometimes floundered under the realities of making change in such a complex system. In many communities, the CCR pitfalls could be characterized by:

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<sup>3</sup> The Blueprint differentiates **battering**, characterized by ongoing, patterned coercion, intimidation, and violence; **resistive** violence, used by victims of battering to resist or defend themselves or others; and **non-battering** violence resulting from such causes as a physical or mental health condition or traumatic brain injury. The legal system’s category of “domestic violence” includes many types of abusive behavior and relationships. When this guide refers to “domestic violence crimes,” it is primarily concerned with those in the context of battering, although the policies, protocols, and tools included benefit the response to all forms of domestic violence.

- An overall drift from the original purpose of CCR to create systemic change that improves outcomes for victims of violence against women and deterrence for abusers
- Reform replaced by meeting for the sake of meeting, with more emphasis on who should come to the table rather than on what should happen once they arrive
- Problem-solving limited to individual cases rather than a focus on systemic problems
- Policy development in a few agencies (e.g., law enforcement or prosecution), but rarely coordinated across all agencies that intervene in domestic violence cases

In St. Paul, the core organizers—the St. Paul Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, St. Paul Police Department, St. Paul City Attorney’s Office, and Praxis International—guided a process that involved ten agencies and multiple victim and advocate discussion groups. This broad effort resulted in the set of comprehensive policies, protocols, and related training memos—the *Blueprint as a collective policy*—implemented in 2010. St. Paul’s groundbreaking work has continued as it digs deeper into how to sustain a Blueprint community over time, effectively address unintended consequences and disparity of impact for survivors and their communities, and fully actualize the Blueprint’s reshaping of coordinated community response.

In 2011, three additional communities joined St. Paul in adapting the *Blueprint for Safety*: Duluth, Minnesota; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Shelby County/Memphis, Tennessee. Through an Office on Violence Against Women demonstration initiative, the three communities tested the Blueprint under different local conditions, including Duluth and its decades of experience with coordinated community response.

This guide is the result of the experiences and lessons from these four early adapters.

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#### BLUEPRINT FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. Adhere to an interagency approach and collective intervention goals.
  2. Build attention to context and severity of abuse into each intervention.
  3. Recognize that most domestic violence is a patterned crime requiring continuing engagement with victims and offenders.
  4. Ensure sure and swift consequences for continued abuse.
  5. Send messages of help to victims and messages of accountability to offenders.
  6. Act in ways that reduce unintended consequences and the disparity of impact on victims and offenders.
-

## CHANGE

The Blueprint is an innovative approach in its emphasis on self-examination and problem-solving, foundational principles, and the central role for community-based advocacy in its leadership and partnerships. The Blueprint is also grounded in over three decades of community practice, research, and reform related to the criminal legal system's intervention in domestic violence. The early adapters have been able to initiate or strengthen the following kinds of change in their communities:

- Document and communicate the context of the event and the violence occurring across all points of intervention via a series of linked tools: the Blueprint risk questions, 911 call guides, patrol officer's report format and checklist, framework for setting bail and conditions of release, and sentencing framework.<sup>4</sup>
- Anchor criminal case processing in an emergency-911 response that emphasizes a safety-oriented response and reassurance to callers that 911 is available regardless of the number or nature of prior calls.
- Collect and share more detailed information about who was at the scene and what happened, including improved witness interviews and direct observations by officers.
- Assess first for self-defense in cases where both parties are alleged to have used violence; make a predominant aggressor determination when self-defense cannot be established.
- Make more use of previously undercharged crimes, such as stalking or harassment, terroristic threats, witness tampering, crimes involving children, sexual assault, and burglary.
- Set a foundation for advocacy-initiated response by notifying the community-based advocacy program of domestic violence-related arrests and incidents where the suspect has left the scene.
- Set a foundation for advocacy-initiated response by notifying the community-based advocacy program of domestic violence-related arrests and incidents where the suspect has left the scene.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Blueprint risk questions: (1) Do you believe he/she will seriously injure or kill you/your children? Why or why not? (2) Is the abuse becoming more frequent? More severe? (3) What is the worst incident or time you were the most frightened?

<sup>5</sup> One of the riskiest and most stressful times in a victim's life is when the criminal justice system gets involved. Early contact with an advocate can lay a foundation for continued support and contribute to victim safety and

- Strengthen investigation and charging related to suspects who have fled the scene prior to officers arriving.
- Establish a framework for conditions of pretrial release that reflects risk and danger and includes victim input wherever possible.
- Respond to violations of pretrial release and conditions of probation with swift consequences based on graduated sanctions.
- Incorporate risk and danger considerations into prosecutors' charging decisions, bail recommendations, and negotiated plea agreements.
- Respond to domestic violence crimes in ways that are victim safety-centered but not victim-dependent.
- Position probation agencies to be able to differentiate the context and severity of a particular case and provide sanctions and supervision that best fit the case.
- Provide judges with more detail about the pattern and severity of abuse, including more detail on the type, scope, and severity of abuse.
- Establish internal and interagency monitoring of domestic violence policy and practice.
- Engage more directly with victims and survivors to better meet individual needs related to safety, identify any problems in how interventions impact victims and the community, and keep the criminal legal response grounded in awareness of the unique nature of battering.
- Initiate ways to be proactive in identifying and responding to possible unintended consequences and disparity of impact related to Blueprint policies and practice.

The Blueprint for Safety begins with and is ultimately sustained by forging an identity as a Blueprint community. The qualities of a Blueprint community include: (1) a commitment to the Blueprint foundation principles and purpose; (2) a shared, coherent way of thinking about domestic violence cases and the most effective interventions; (3) a central role for community-based advocacy in Blueprint

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well-being. When an advocate calls a victim and offers confidential services—which she can refuse—most victims are willing to talk. Under an advocacy-initiated response, the arresting officer contacts the community-based advocacy program to let them know an arrest has been made and lets the victim know that an advocate will be calling. An advocate then calls the victim to offer confidential services related to her immediate safety needs, information about the court process, and determining what she wants to have happen in court and her wishes regarding contact with her partner. See [http://praxisinternational.org/library\\_advocacy.aspx](http://praxisinternational.org/library_advocacy.aspx).



leadership and partnerships, and (4) a commitment to using the Blueprint's essential elements as a constant reference point for weathering the inevitable changes in local conditions that occur over time in any community and in a system as complex as the criminal legal system.

## TOOLS

Is your community ready to design and implement a Blueprint for Safety? This guide will help answer that question. If the answer is “yes,” the guide and related tools will prepare your community to adapt, implement, and sustain the Blueprint: i.e., to become a Blueprint community.

The **Quick Start Guide** introduces the Blueprint and the roles and activities involved in establishing a Blueprint. It provides a stepping-off point to become familiar with the approach and process and gauge community readiness.

The five sections on Blueprint phases, activities, and tools are the heart of the guide. They include details for what happens, who is involved, and the key tasks, timelines, and tools for each phase in becoming a Blueprint Community. Turn to specific tools as you need them. The sections include:

### **Phase 1: Explore and Prepare**

Secure community will to initiate the development process and establish a Blueprint adaptation team.

### **Phase 2: Assess Practice and Identify Problems**

Conduct an assessment of current policy and practice to identify gaps that the Blueprint will address.

### **Phase 3: Adapt Policy and Adjust Practice**

Use the Blueprint templates to revise and write policies and protocols for each agency and to produce a collective policy.

### **Phase 4: Implement and Institutionalize**

Secure policy approvals, hold a community launch event, conduct internal and interagency training, initiate new documentation and administrative procedures, and establish a process for ongoing monitoring.

### **Phase 5: Monitor and Revise**

Conduct the ongoing data collection and assessment activities necessary to ensure that the Blueprint functions as a “living,” sustainable response to battering and domestic violence crimes.

**Principles and Complex Realities** frames the particular challenge of realizing two of the Blueprints distinctive foundational principles: Principle 2, to recognize that most domestic violence is patterned



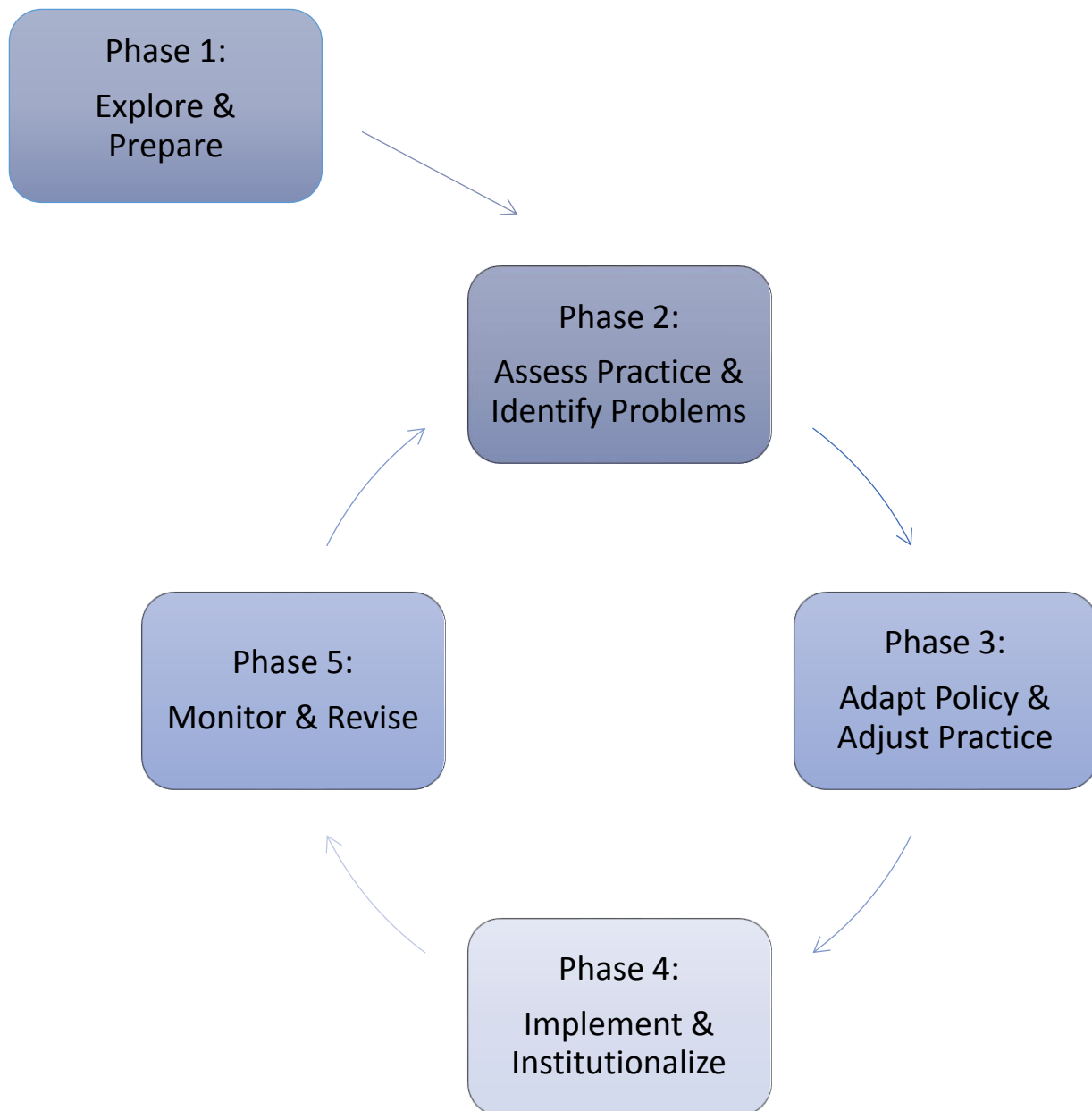
crime requiring continuing engagement with victims and offenders; and Principle 6, to act in ways that reduce unintended consequences and the disparity of impact on victims and offenders. This discussion acknowledges that the Blueprint seeks to address three complex realities: (1) the deep and pervasive harm of violence against women, (2) the deep and pervasive harm of mass incarceration and its impact on marginalized communities, and (3) the ways in which victims of battering are routinely caught up in the criminal legal system. The discussion offers strategies and two case studies to illustrate how such tools might be used.

**Insights from Early Adapters** sums up the major recommendations on how to organize and sustain the Blueprint's sweeping approach to changing the criminal legal system's response to battering.

The **Appendix** includes all of the related tools for each stage of development and others referenced throughout the guide.

This guide rests on lessons from the Blueprint's early adapters and the decades of criminal legal system reform preceding it. As the work of St. Paul, Duluth, New Orleans, and Shelby County continues—and as additional communities gain experience with the Blueprint's approach, documents, and process—further revisions and additions to the tools presented here are likely. The Blueprint is meant to be a dynamic and evolving idea as it seeks to stop violence, reduce harm the caused by battering, save lives, and strengthen our communities.

## THE BLUEPRINT FOR SAFETY: CREATING AND SUSTAINING A NEW PRACTICE



Becoming a Blueprint Community:

## QUICK START GUIDE

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The Blueprint for Safety examines and reorganizes the criminal legal system response to domestic violence crimes. It defines a systematic, unified approach to help stop violence, reduce harm, and save lives. It is grounded in a shared commitment by system agencies, in partnership with community-based advocates, to identify and solve problems within the framework of the Blueprint principles and process.

If you are reading this guide, you most likely have an interest in building your own Blueprint for Safety. Are you:



- A community-based advocate who has been asked to learn about the Blueprint?
- A police officer or a prosecutor who is curious about how to strengthen your agency's policy and practice?
- Members of a coordinated community response (CCR) that is curious about how the Blueprint could renew and strengthen its mission?
- A group of advocates and practitioners preparing to persuade agency administrators or the tribal government to become a Blueprint community?
- Affiliated with a family justice or safety center that wonders how the Blueprint might enhance the community's response to domestic violence?
- Members of a domestic violence fatality review team that is looking for ways to address the gaps that it has discovered in the criminal legal system's response?

- A newly assigned “Blueprint Team” or “Blueprint Coordinator” with the task of making it all happen?

Whatever your role in exploring or adapting the Blueprint, some basic first steps will help you get familiar with the approach and process, gauge local readiness, decide whether to proceed further, and, depending upon that decision, prepare you to begin and manage the day-to-day work of adapting the Blueprint for your community.

1. Spend a few minutes with the Blueprint brochure to get the big picture. You can reproduce the brochure to use in your community.

Find the brochure in **Appendix 3** or see “*Blueprint for Safety Materials*” at [www.praxisinternational.org](http://www.praxisinternational.org).

2. Listen to webinar recordings that present examples of how communities have adapted the Blueprint. The presentations include representatives from St. Paul, MN, where the Blueprint was developed, and New Orleans, LA, the first of the three national adaptation demonstration sites to launch its Blueprint for Safety.

Find the webinars at [www.praxisinternational.org](http://www.praxisinternational.org) under “Blueprint for Safety.”

3. Review the Essential Commitments and Frequently Asked Questions to get familiar with the Blueprint’s overall features and process.

Find these tools in **Appendix 1**, Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community, and **Appendix 2**, Frequently Asked Questions. Or, see “Becoming a Blueprint Community,” at [www.praxisinternational.org](http://www.praxisinternational.org).

4. Complete the Community Readiness Checklist to identify community strengths and pinpoint areas that will need more attention in order to establish the Blueprint.

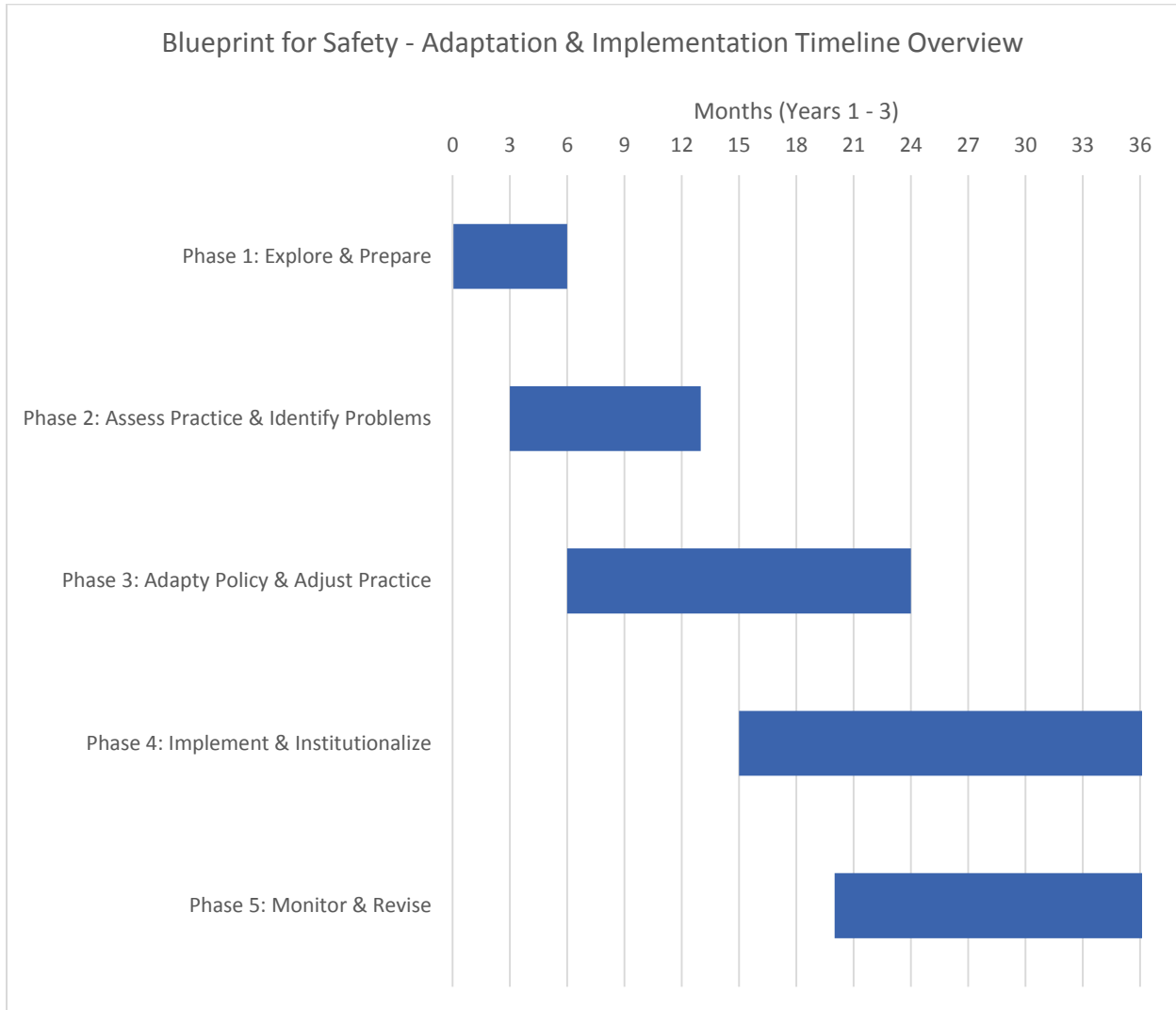
Find the checklist in **Appendix 6**.

5. Get familiar with the contents of this guide, *Becoming a Blueprint Community*, and its tools for adapting and implementing the *Blueprint for Safety*.

A three-year time frame shapes the process of fully adapting and establishing a Blueprint for Safety (see the following overview and the more detailed timeline in **Appendix 20**). Some communities may require less time, particularly those with a well-functioning CCR that has a history of problem solving together and many Blueprint-ready policies in place. The adaptation guide positions a community to develop and sustain the Blueprint as an ongoing, dynamic process rather than a finite set of tasks. While certain steps are required in a certain sequence—e.g., hire a coordinator and select an adaptation team before adapting and implementing new policy and practice—the Blueprint is fundamentally an approach to intervening in domestic violence crimes in a specific way with specific goals. That approach does not end when the last task is checked off, but continues as a new, unified way of working together to identify and solve problems on behalf of victims of battering and the community.

# ADAPTATION TIMELINE

Many activities occur simultaneously to establish a Blueprint for Safety. Particularly in moving from one phase to another, planning steps are likely to overlap. For a more detailed picture, see Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline, [Appendix 20](#).





## WHO'S WHO IN ADAPTING THE BLUEPRINT?

As an approach that rests on partnership and coordination between community-based advocacy and the criminal legal system, the Blueprint involves a broad-based group of agencies, individuals, and roles. An individual can fill multiple roles—e.g., organizer, champion, agency liaison, and member of an ad hoc work group—particularly in smaller communities or agencies.

- **Organizers**

Typically, a mix of community-based advocates and practitioners—often in leadership roles. Blueprint



organizers initiate the exploration and adaptation process, secure support from agencies and champions, write the grants, and manage or participate in activities related to securing a memorandum of understanding, hiring the Blueprint coordinator and advocate, assembling the adaptation and implementation teams, and sustaining the process. Organizers are likely to serve on Blueprint

teams and ad hoc work groups, particularly in smaller communities.

- **Champions**

Advocacy leaders, agency heads, and other influential voices in the agency and the community who support the Blueprint, encourage and promote its development, and help to sustain it over time, although without necessarily being involved in the day-to-day activities of adaptation, implementation, and monitoring. Champions can be agency or organizational leaders or individual practitioners who are influential with their colleagues. A respected 911 call-taker or police sergeant or probation supervisor, for example, can be a Blueprint champion.

- **Coordinator**

Manages the overall process and tasks involved in adapting and implementing the Blueprint. The coordinator provides the glue and guidance that helps the partner agencies and work groups assess current practice, adapt the Blueprint to local conditions, implement and monitor the resulting changes in practice, keep battered women's experiences central to the process. Most communities will require a full-time coordinator.

- **Advocate**

The leadership by and involvement of community-based advocacy are central to the Blueprint for Safety. Through its defined role, the position of Blueprint advocate is one part of advocacy voice and representation, but it is by no means the only avenue. The Blueprint advocate helps ensure the direct participation of community-based advocates throughout all phases of developing the Blueprint. The position of Blueprint advocate means that it is clearly someone's responsibility to engage with a wide range of community members, from victims and survivors and community-based advocates to populations overrepresented and/or underserved in the criminal legal system. The Blueprint advocate fulfills that role in consultation with the coordinator, who may also bring experience or affiliation with community-based advocacy. In some smaller communities, the coordinator and advocate roles may be combined into one position.

- **Agency liaisons**

Representatives appointed by each criminal legal system agency to work with the Blueprint coordinator and participate in all phases of Blueprint adaptation. Under the Memorandum of Understanding, each agency agrees to assign a lead person (or more) as an agency liaison. As members of the adaptation and implementation teams, agency liaisons assist in organizing and conducting the practice assessment, writing policies, collecting data, and overseeing internal agency implementation of the agreed-upon Blueprint policy and practice.

- **Adaptation and implementation teams**

The adaptation team develops the Blueprint for Safety collective policy. Members include the Blueprint coordinator, advocate, and agency liaisons, plus community-based advocates and representatives for organizations working on behalf of marginalized communities. The adaptation team then transitions to an implementation team that puts the local Blueprint into practice and ensures that the intended goals and practices of the collective policy are being met. Most or all of the same individuals and representatives who served on the adaptation team are likely to continue on the implementation team. Both teams convene small, ad hoc interagency groups as needed (typically, two to six members) to complete the tasks involved in developing and sustaining the Blueprint.



- **Agency supervisors**

Once each agency's Blueprint policy is approved and implemented, regular supervisory quality and compliance review of agency practice is crucial to maintaining the Blueprint. Without regular monitoring and oversight, practice tends to drift. Consequently, agency supervisors have a key, ongoing role in sustaining the Blueprint. Beyond their internal role, agency supervisors also contribute to the monitoring, evaluation, and maintenance of the Blueprint as a collective policy by participating in periodic interagency reviews.



## PHASE 1: EXPLORE AND PREPARE

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### WHAT

The first major step in becoming a Blueprint community is to explore whether or not the Blueprint for Safety is even a good fit for your community. Who are the likely organizers and champions? What capacity exists to support the adaptation process, such as a history of coordinated community response and problem-solving? Is there sufficient community will to begin and sustain the Blueprint? If the answer to this question is yes, continue on to develop the necessary framework of people, agreements, and timelines.



### WHO

Community-based advocates and practitioners who are curious about the Blueprint's united approach and collective policy typically

initiate the exploration. These Blueprint organizers explore its features with likely champions and agency heads. The organizers may also be involved in seeking funding, securing a Memorandum of Understanding, hiring the Blueprint coordinator and advocate, and assembling the adaptation team—and perhaps serving on that team. Blueprint organizers promote the approach and the process. When exploration shifts to adaptation, the Blueprint coordinator sets up and manages the process, in partnership with the advocate and adaptation team. The Blueprint advocate ensures that the voices and experiences of battered women are represented at all stages of the process and that community-based advocates have a central role in leading the process. The Blueprint adaptation team adds practitioners to the mix. The adaptation team assesses current practice to identify problems and adapts policies to produce the collective Blueprint for Safety. The first phase concludes with these key roles in place. There is no bright line, however, marking who comes on board when and which tasks they pursue. Some communities may select a coordinator early on and that person will have a central role in assessing community capacity and selling policy makers on the merits of the Blueprint. In other communities, the organizers will complete those steps before hiring the coordinator. Early preparation also includes community consultation to help ground Blueprint policy and practice in the experiences of victims of violence, with particular attention to the complex and often dangerous implications of a victim's

collaboration with the criminal legal system. Community consultation is the process of engaging with and seeking guidance from survivors of battering and others in the community who represent the broadest range of life experiences, circumstances, and identities in order to keep victims' needs at the center and help identify and reduce unintended consequences and realize the Blueprint's commitment to a fair and just response.

## TASKS & TOOLS

While the **Phase 1** chart presents the tasks in sequence, it is a loose sequence and many tasks will be underway simultaneously. Similarly, some tools, such as the Blueprint Essential Elements, will be introduced at a particular step and then used at multiple points throughout Blueprint development. The chart highlights the major tasks involved in the initial phase of exploration and planning, the tools introduced or useful at each step, and the key players involved.

The following tools are referenced in **Phase 1** and located in the **Appendix** (by number):

1. *Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community*
2. *Frequently Asked Questions*
3. *Blueprint for Safety Informational Brochure*
4. *Adapting the Blueprint: Phases & Key Activities*
5. *What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?*
6. *Community Readiness Checklist*
7. *Community Consultation in the Blueprint*
8. *Research Supports the Blueprint for Safety*
9. *The Blueprint Approach to Risk*
10. *Blueprint Essential Elements Annotated*
11. *Foundations of Effective Intervention*
12. *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
13. *Blueprint Coordinator Role, Responsibilities and Skills*
14. *Blueprint Advocate Role, Responsibilities and Skills*
15. *Blueprint Adaptation Team Role and Activities*
16. *Planning a Blueprint for Safety Proposal*

17. *Policy Adaptation Phases*

18. *Adaptation Process and Timeline*

19. *Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward*

20. *Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline*

21. *Presentation Template: Becoming a Blueprint Community*

## PHASE 1: EXPLORE & PREPARE

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. <b>Identify and bring together organizers and key champions to explore the features and goals of the Blueprint for Safety, decide whether or not to pursue the Blueprint, and support the adaptation process and ongoing implementation.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1. <i>Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 2. <i>Frequently Asked Questions</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 3. <i>Blueprint for Safety Informational Brochure</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 4. <i>Adapting the Blueprint: Phases &amp; Key Activities</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 5. <i>What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of Effective Intervention</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 15. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i> | Advocates and community and agency leaders: Blueprint organizers and champions |
| 2. <b>Centralize community-based advocacy leadership and participation in exploration and planning activities and ongoing adaptation and implementation.</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1. <i>Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 2. <i>Frequently Asked Questions</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 5. <i>What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 14. <i>Blueprint Advocate Role,</i>   | Organizers   |

| Key Tasks  | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People  |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Responsibilities and Skills</i>   |  |   |
| <b>3. Assess community capacity and infrastructure to support Blueprint adaptation, implementation, and monitoring.</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1. <i>Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 4. <i>Adapting the Blueprint: Phases &amp; Key Activities</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 6. <i>Community Readiness Checklist</i>  | Organizers<br><br>Coordinator (in some communities) |
| <b>4. Articulate the distinctive response that the Blueprint brings to the community and the problem of domestic violence.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <i>Blueprint for Safety Informational Brochure</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 5. <i>What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 8. <i>Research that Supports the Blueprint for Safety</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 9. <i>The Blueprint Approach to Risk</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of Effective Intervention</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 21. <i>Presentation Template: Becoming a Blueprint Community</i> | Organizers<br><br>Coordinator (in some communities) |
| <b>5. Promote the Blueprint’s distinctive response and benefits to policy makers and agency directors.</b>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. <i>What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint?</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Blueprint Essential Elements</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 21. <i>Presentation Template:</i>  | Organizers<br><br>Coordinator                       |

| Key Tasks  | Key Tools [Appendix]  | Key People                                   |
|--|---|--|
|  | <i>Becoming a Blueprint Community</i>   |  |
| 6. Secure agency participation and seek funding.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Sample Memorandum of Understanding<br><input type="checkbox"/> 16. Planning a Blueprint for Safety Proposal  | Organizers<br>Champions<br>Coordinator       |
| 7. Select the Blueprint for Safety Coordinator.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Blueprint Coordinator Role, Responsibilities and Skills  | Organizers                                   |
| 8. Select the Blueprint for Safety Advocate.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Blueprint Advocate Role, Responsibilities and Skills   | Organizers<br>Coordinator                    |
| 9. Recruit the adaptation team, including community-based advocates and practitioners who are influential in their agencies.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Blueprint Adaptation Team Role and Activities  | Organizers<br>Coordinator<br>Advocate        |
| 10. Develop and complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the roles and responsibilities of each participating agencies.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Sample Memorandum of Understanding   | Organizers<br>Coordinator                    |
| 11. Designate a lead person (liaison) in each agency to work with the Blueprint coordinator, serve on the adaptation team, participate in all phases of development, and oversee internal agency implementation. | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Blueprint Adaptation Team Role and Activities<br><input type="checkbox"/> 12. Sample Memorandum of Understanding<br><input type="checkbox"/> 19. Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward | Organizers<br>Coordinator<br>Adaptation team |

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People      |
|---|--|-----------------|
| <b>12. Establish a plan and timeline for guiding the Blueprint and establishing needed work groups.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. <i>Community Readiness Checklist</i>   | Coordinator     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. <i>Adapting the Blueprint for Safety: Phases and Key Activities</i>                        | Advocate        |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. <i>Policy Adaptation Phases</i>   | Adaptation team |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i>  |                 |
| <b>13. Begin a process and timeline profile for each agency, including and timelines for policy approvals and training.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. <i>Adaptation Process and Timeline</i>  | Coordinator     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i>  |                 |
| <b>14. Use community consultations to discover the needs and lived experiences of victims of battering. Include members from communities overrepresented and/or underserved communities in seeking help from the criminal legal system.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. <i>What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?</i> | Organizers      |
|   |  | Coordinator     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i>   | Advocate        |



## PHASE 2: ASSESS PRACTICE AND IDENTIFY PROBLEMS

### WHAT

The Blueprint for Safety is in large part an ongoing process of finding and fixing problems in the criminal legal system response to domestic violence crimes. Analyzing current policy and practice is necessary in order to identify problems and determine what kinds of local adaptations to make. Most communities will have some aspects of the Blueprint already built into their current practice, although the elements might not be working as assumed. For example, a law enforcement policy defines and requires a predominant aggressor determination prior to making an arrest decision when both parties appear to have used violence.

When you examine what kind of Blueprint-specific policy and practice is actually in place, however, you discover that the predominant aggressor considerations are not



applied in practice as intended. In **Phase 2**, the adaptation team seeks statistical data and first-hand information about victims' experiences with the criminal legal system, including whether and how experiences differ for communities that are over-represented and/or under-served in the criminal system's response. The tasks and tools in **Phase 2** also help practitioners and community-based advocates work together in new ways to identify, document, and solve problems using the Blueprint approach. The practice assessment methods presented here are useful both in the initial policy adaptation and in the subsequent monitoring of changes post-implementation. **Phase 2** develops baseline practice data and a framework for ongoing evaluation of the Blueprint's impact. Ongoing practice assessment, in turn, helps sustain the Blueprint into the future.

## WHO

The Blueprint coordinator, advocate, members of the adaptation team, and other advocates and practitioners as needed form small (typically, two to six members) **internal work groups** to conduct the practice assessment. The work groups gather information by mapping the criminal legal system response and studying case records (e.g., 911 recordings, patrol reports, prosecution case files, or probation risk assessment forms). They may also interview practitioners and community members and observe steps in criminal case processing (e.g., sit with 911 call-takers, ride along with patrol officers, or attend bail hearings). Work groups check what they read, hear, and see against the recommended practice outlined in the essential elements in order to identify gaps that the Blueprint will address. The practice assessment might also reveal that the ways in which cases are actually handled differs from both the essential elements and from common assumptions about what happens. Among the Blueprint **coordinator's** key responsibilities is to organize and guide the practice assessment. The coordinator consults with the Blueprint **advocate** on how to best connect with a wide range of survivors and community-based advocacy organizations to learn about victims' experiences with the criminal legal system response. The coordinator ensures that there are broad-based **community consultations** with survivors, including those from communities that are overrepresented and/or underserved in seeking help from the criminal legal system.

## TASKS & TOOLS

Some of the tools introduced in the early steps of exploring and preparing for the Blueprint continue to be used in **Phase 2**, such as the agency tracking checklist, strategies to stay focused, tasks and timeline, and essential elements. The Policy and Practice Assessment Guide introduced in **Phase 2** will be used at later stages of monitoring the Blueprint after implementation. Again, while the following chart highlights the major tasks, tools, and key players involved, many activities will be underway simultaneously.

The primary tool for **Phase 2** is the Policy and Practice Assessment Guide, **Appendix 22**, which includes the following sections:

- 22-1 *Mapping Domestic Violence Case Processing*
- 22-2 *Source Book Contents*
- 22-3 *Data-Gathering Template*
- 22-4 *Community Consultation*
- 22-5 *Policy Comparison Worksheets*
- 22-6 *Analyzing Case Records*
- 22-7 *Case Review Worksheet*
- 22-8 *Practitioner Interviews and Observations*
- 22-9 *Analysis and Reporting*
- 22-10 *Notes and Documentation*

## PHASE 2: ASSESS PRACTICE & IDENTIFY PROBLEMS

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Identify the needed internal work groups and recruit members.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. <i>Policy Adaptation Phases</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 22. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide</i>   | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team                       |
| 2. Create a source book of local policies, administrative forms and protocols for current criminal case processing of domestic violence cases.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-2. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Source Book Contents</i>   | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons                                   |
| 3. Assemble all materials necessary to conduct the assessment: policies, protocols, forms laws, statistical information, case records (e.g., files, tapes, reports).                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide</i>   | Coordinator<br>Agency Liaisons                                   |
| 4. Schedule activities related to information-gathering activities (case analysis, observations, and interviews) and/or provide the work groups with details on how to make those arrangements. | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 18. <i>Adaptation Process and Timeline</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 20. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 17. <i>Policy Adaptation Phases</i> | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons                                   |
| 5. Compare current policy with the Blueprint essential elements.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-5. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Policy Comparison Worksheets</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Blueprint Essential Elements - Annotated</i>   | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team<br>Ad hoc work groups |

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People   |
|---|--|--|
| 6. Compile baseline statistical data on domestic violence-related cases: e.g., 911 calls, arrests, crimes charged, disposition, sentencing, demographics.       | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-3. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Data-Gathering Template                   | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team                       |
| 7. Map each point of criminal case processing (911 through to probation monitoring), with specific attention to how risk and danger and advocacy are addressed. | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-1. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Mapping Domestic Violence Case Processing | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team                       |
| 8. Analyze case records (e.g., 911 calls, patrol reports, prosecution files, probation records, etc.) to compare current practice with recommended practice.    | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-7. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Case Review Worksheets                    | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team<br>Ad hoc work groups |
| 9. Interview agency directors, supervisors, and practitioners about current practice.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-8. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Practitioner Interviews and Observations  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team<br>Ad hoc work groups |
| 10. Observe current practices via patrol ride-alongs, 911 “sit-alongs,” court observations, and other practitioner observations.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-8. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Practitioner Interviews and Observations  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team<br>Ad hoc work groups |

| Key Tasks  | Key Tools [Appendix]  | Key People                                 |
|--|---|--|
| <b>11. Use information from the Blueprint advocate and community consultation to discover victims/survivors' experiences with the criminal legal system.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-4. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Community Consultation</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team |
| <b>12. Include statistical data and first-hand information about the experiences of victims of battering from communities overrepresented and/or underserved in seeking help from the criminal legal system.</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-3. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Data-Gathering Template</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 22-4. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Community Consultation</i> | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team |
| <b>13. Use community consultations to help guide the practice assessment activities and analysis, with specific attention to communities that are overrepresented and/or underserved communities in seeking help from the criminal legal system.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-4. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Community Consultation</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team |

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]  | Key People                            |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>14. Coordinate and facilitate meetings to review, interpret, and analyze data throughout the assessment process.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-9. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Analysis and Reporting</i>          | Coordinator<br>Advocate               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 19. <i>Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i> | Adaptation team<br>Ad hoc work groups |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. <i>Adaptation Process and Timeline</i>   |                                       |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i>                                 |                                       |
| <b>15. Keep a written record of all discussions, conclusions, and recommendations related to the practice assessment.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-10. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Notes and Documentation</i>        | Coordinator                           |

## PHASE 3: ADAPT POLICY AND ADJUST PRACTICE

### WHAT

The assessment in **Phase 2** identifies where and how the current criminal legal system response differs from the Blueprint's recommended practice. In **Phase 3**, each agency's policy is revised or written to address the gaps in practice and problems identified via the assessment. Through a process of discussion and negotiation, Blueprint work groups and agency representatives reach agreement on recommended



policy language. For some agencies, the Blueprint might be the first time that a written policy is put in place; others will incorporate the Blueprint elements into existing policy manuals. The Blueprint as a collective, unified policy takes shape as agencies incorporate the shared commitments and response reflected in the foundation principles and essential elements.

Published as *The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes*, the templates provide a detailed illustration of policies and protocols that are consistent with the *collective policy* for intervention that is fundamental to the Blueprint for Safety.<sup>6</sup> A Blueprint Community is free to adopt the template language and format as-is or modify them to meet local policy-writing structures and formats. At the heart of the Blueprint, however, are **essential elements of policy and practice that must be incorporated** regardless of how the document looks in its subject headings, layout, and organization. While a local policy might

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<sup>6</sup> PDF versions of the templates are available at [http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp\\_materials.aspx](http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx). Word document versions of the templates are available by contacting Praxis International at [blueprint@praxisinternational.org](mailto:blueprint@praxisinternational.org).



look different on the page in comparison to the Blueprint template, the content—the essential elements—must be the same, to the fullest extent possible.

## WHO

In many communities, those most directly involved in **Phase 3** are likely to be many of the same individuals who participated in the assessment. When an **assessment work group** becomes a **policy work group**, the crossover membership promotes a smooth transition from assessment to policy writing as members bring their shared analysis, familiarity with the essential elements, and experience with the Blueprint. The policy adaptation process benefits from as much continuity and core membership as possible between the phases, with orientation for new participants as needed. Members of the larger Blueprint **adaptation team** continue to participate in the policy writing groups and contribute to the ongoing problem-solving and negotiation of proposed changes. The Blueprint **coordinator** continues in the central role of organizing and managing the policy adaptation process. The Blueprint **advocate** continues as the primary link to ensure guidance from community-based advocates and victims/survivors. Blueprint **organizers and key champions** may become involved if areas of disagreement surface that are difficult to resolve. A Blueprint coordinator and team can also seek outside technical help, such as that provided or organized by Praxis International.

## TASKS & TOOLS

Policy writing groups rely on reports from the assessment to identify specific changes. The extensive Blueprint policy and protocol templates support and expand upon the essential elements. Agencies can elect to use the policy templates largely as-is or fit the Blueprint elements into the agency's policy format, as long as the content does not contradict the essential elements and foundational principles. Published as *The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes*, the templates have a common structure: a framework statement that provides an overview of key aspects and rationale for agency and practitioner roles, followed by one or more policies and related protocols and supplemental material such as training memos, checklists, and other background relevant to the agency's response. Again, agencies are free to use the templates as-is or to adapt them to local conditions, within the overall framework of Blueprint principles and essential elements. In **Phase 1** the coordinator will have determined the specific policy approval process for each agency and incorporated needed steps and timelines into the overall Blueprint plan.

Tools introduced in the first two phases continue to support the overall coordination of the adaptation process, such as the tracking checklist, timeline, strategies to move forward, reporting and documentation tools, and community consultation guidelines. The Essential Elements Annotated (**Appendix 10**) and Research that Supports the Blueprint (**Appendix 8**) are particularly useful in **Phase 3** to address confusion or disagreement about policy language and why specific elements are included or worded in a specific way.



The Blueprint coordinator and team members continue to utilize many tools introduced in previous **Phases 1** and **2**. The primary **Phase 3** tools include:

- Summary of policy and practice assessment findings for each agency, utilizing the notes and documentation tool.
- Blueprint policy templates and related supplemental material and training memos located at [http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp\\_materials.aspx](http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx).

The templates are published as *The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes*.

## PHASE 3: ADAPT POLICY & ADJUST PRACTICE

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools  | Key People   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Use small, agency-specific work groups (e.g., 911, patrol response, prosecution, etc.) to develop local adaptations to the Blueprint policies and protocols.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. <i>Policy Adaptation Phases</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 19. <i>Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 20. <i>Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline</i>   | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team<br>Policy-writing work groups |
| 2. Use results of the practice assessment to identify policy revisions and additions to current practice.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-7. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Notes and Documentation Tool</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 19. <i>Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i> | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Policy-writing work groups |
| a. Highlight and discuss questions and concerns; agree on policy changes.<br><br>b. For areas of continuing disagreement, summarize options and barriers and propose solutions; use the Blueprint Essential Elements Annotated as a reference; seek outside technical assistance as needed. |  |  |

| Key Tasks  | Key Tools   | Key People  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>3. Adapt from Blueprint policy templates to incorporate essential elements, with adjustments to reflect local conditions and laws.</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Templates and supporting material published as <i>The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes</i> <sup>7</sup><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>10. Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>11. Foundations of Effective Intervention</i> | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Policy-writing work groups                                      |
| <b>4. Present recommended changes to the full Blueprint adaptation team and agency directors for review and feedback.</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>10. Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>19. Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>8. Research that Supports the Blueprint for Safety</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Policy-writing work groups<br>Adaptation team                   |
| <b>5. Brief criminal legal system agency heads, interagency/CCR group, and other relevant community agencies and organizations on agency-specific changes and the Blueprint collective policy.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>22-5. Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Policy Comparison Worksheets</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>19. Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>10. Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i>                                | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Policy-writing work groups<br>Adaptation team<br>Organizers and |

<sup>7</sup> Available online [http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp\\_materials.aspx](http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx)

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools  | Key People  |
|---|--|---|
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>8. Research that Supports the Blueprint for Safety</i>   | champions   |
| 6. Assist agency directors in the process of accepting or modifying the recommended language changes to Blueprint policies, protocols, and memos.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>10. Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>8. Research that Supports the Blueprint for Safety</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>19. Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward</i> | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons<br>Adaptation team                 |
| 7. Secure approvals and adopt all Blueprint policies and protocols.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy draft in each agency's format  | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons<br>Adaptation team<br>Agency heads |
| 8. Document all work group and adaptation team discussions and decisions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>18. Adaptation Process and Timeline</i>  | Coordinator<br>Policy-writing work groups                         |
| 9. Keep the experiences of victims of battering visible and central throughout the policy adaptation process.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>7. Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>11. Foundations of Effective Intervention</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team                        |
| 10. Use community consultations to help guide the policy adaptation, with specific attention to communities that are overrepresented and/or underserved communities in seeking help from the criminal legal system. | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>7. Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> <i>11. Foundations of Effective Intervention</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Adaptation team                        |

**The Blueprint for Safety Policy Templates & Supplemental Materials**

| <b>Policy</b>                                      | <b>Supplemental Material</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Chapter 1:</b><br><b>All Agency Foundations</b> | 1A Practitioners' Guide to Risk and Danger in Domestic Violence Cases               |
|  | 1B Training Memo - Risk and Dangerousness   |
|  | 1C Training Memo - Intervention with Victims of Battering as Suspects or Defendants |
|  | 1D History of Domestic Violence Summary Instructions and Sample                     |
|  | 1E History of Domestic Violence Summary   |
|  | 1F Justice Involved Military Personnel and Veterans                                 |
| <b>Chapter 2:</b><br><b>911</b>                    | 2A Protocol 1 - Card 1 Caller Safety Unknown  |
|  | 2B Protocol 1 - Card 2 Unsafe for Caller to Speak Freely                            |
|  | 2C Protocol 1 - Card 3 Caller Safe to Speak Freely                                  |
|  | 2D Protocol 2 - Card 1 Safety Oriented Dispatching                                  |
|  | 2E Protocol 4 - Card 1 Call review checklist  |
|  | 2F Training Memo - Accurate Coding of 911 Domestic Abuse Calls                      |
|  | 2G Training Memo - 911 Attention to Violence  |
|  | 2H Training Memo - Recognizing Signs of Strangulation                               |
|  | 2I Training Memo - Suspect on the Line  |
|  | 2J Training Memo - Open-line and interrupted calls                                  |
| <b>Chapter 3:</b><br><b>Law Enforcement</b>        | 3A Training Memo - Law Enforcement Response to Persons with Disabilities            |
|  | 3B Training Memo - Gone on Arrival (GOA) Cases                                      |
|  | 3C Training Memo - Making the Arrest Decision                                       |
|  | 3D Training Memo - Miranda Rights and Domestic Violence Cases                       |
|  | 3E Training Memo - Implications of Crawford and Forfeiture by Wrongdoing            |

| Policy                                       | Supplemental Material  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>3F Training Memo - Law Enforcement Response to Strangulation</p> <p>3G Training Memo - Law Enforcement Response to Stalking</p> <p>3H Training Memo - Response to Children in Domestic Violence Related Calls</p> <p>3I Training Memo - How a Defense Attorney Reads a Police Report</p> <p>3J Training Memo - How a Prosecutor Reads a Police Report</p> <p>3K Training Memo - Victim Engagement and the Law Enforcement Response to Domestic Violence</p> <p>3L Domestic Violence Patrol Report Checklist</p> <p>3M Supervising Domestic Violence Investigations - Case Review Checklist</p> <p>3N Supervising Patrol Response to Domestic Violence - Patrol Report Checklist</p> <p>3O Follow Up Investigations and Expanded Attention to Risk</p> <p>3P-Training Memo-Working with Immigrant Victims of Battering</p> |
| <b>Chapter 4:</b><br><b>Sheriff's Office</b> | <p>4A Training Memo - Safety Considerations in the Management of Domestic Violence Cases</p> <p>4B Training Memo - Receiving and Processing Warrants in Domestic Violence Crimes</p>   |
| <b>Chapter 5:</b><br><b>Prosecution</b>      | <p>5A Training Memo - Implications of Crawford and Davis for Prosecution of Domestic Abuse Cases</p> <p>5B Training Memo - The Implications of Forfeiture by Wrongdoing for Prosecution of Domestic Abuse Cases</p> <p>5C Training Memo - Use of Expert Witnesses in Domestic Violence Cases</p> <p>5D Sample Policy Language - When to Compel a Victim to Testify</p> <p>5E Guide to Bail Setting Conditional Release and Enforcement</p> <p>5F Training Memo - Addressing Uncharged Sexual Abuse in Domestic Abuse Cases</p> <p>5G Framework for Recommending Time to Serve and Length of Probation</p>  |

| Policy   | Supplemental Material   |
|--|---|
|  | 5H Sentencing Guidelines Departure in Domestic Violence Cases   |
| <b>Chapter 6:</b><br><b>Victim Witness</b>     | 6A Training Memo - Victim Impact Statements<br>6B Training Memo - Responding to Persons with Disabilities<br>6C Victim Witness Advocacy in Domestic Violence Cases  |
| <b>Chapter 7:</b><br><b>Probation and Bail</b> | 7A Rehabilitation Program Considerations in Domestic Violence Cases<br>7B Training Memo - Conditions of Probation<br>7C Training Memo - Supervised Release in Domestic Violence Cases<br>7D Firearms Prohibitions<br>7E Monitoring Conditions of Probation in Domestic Violence Cases<br>7F Domestic Violence Resources<br>7G Training Memo - Probation Violation Law<br>7H Training Memo - Legal Considerations in Probation Violations Based on a New Offense<br>7I Training Memo - Probation Transfer in Domestic Violence Cases |
| <b>Chapter 8:</b><br><b>The Bench</b>          | 8A Training Memo - Use of No-Contact Orders in Domestic Violence Criminal Cases<br>8B Memorandum on Consecutive Sentencing in Domestic Abuse Cases<br>8C Weekend Post-Arrest Procedures<br>8D Court Administration in Domestic Violence–Related Cases   |
| <b>Chapter 9:</b><br><b>Bibliography</b>       | N/A   |

## PHASE 4: IMPLEMENT AND INSTITUTIONALIZE

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### WHAT

**Phase 4** is the process of making the Blueprint real in everyday practice. **Phase 4** helps institutionalize and sustain the Blueprint once the policy adaptations have been approved. Blueprint policies are integrated into each agency's practice via new and revised administrative practices, such as new report formats, checklists, forms, and supervisory review.

An interagency communication strategy is established to share information about risk, history, context, and severity of violence. Agencies participate in events that officially launch the Blueprint as the new way of working together in response



to battering and other domestic violence crimes. Training occurs as needed for individual agencies. Interagency training reinforces the Blueprint as a unified policy and practice. The Blueprint coordinator and adaptation team design a monitoring plan specific to individual agencies and to the collective response. Community-based advocates and law enforcement agencies establish the Blueprint's advocacy-initiated response to victims.

### WHO

A Blueprint implementation team and the coordinator have key roles in managing **Phase 4** and ensuring that the collective Blueprint policy is meeting its intended goals and function. The adaptation team transitions to an implementation team that includes the Blueprint coordinator and advocate, a designated Blueprint agency liaison from each criminal legal system agency, and other practitioners, community-based advocates, and representatives from organizations working on behalf of marginalized communities. In most communities, members of the implementation team are likely to have participated in the assessment and adaptation phases. The implementation team convenes ad hoc work groups and invites others to participate as needed. While established in **Phase 4**, the implementation

team continues on to conduct the ongoing monitoring and assessment needed to maintain the Blueprint into the future. Agency supervisors, some of whom may have involved in earlier phases, work the coordinator and agency liaisons to become familiar with their role in monitoring the new Blueprint policy and practice.

## TASKS & TOOLS

The Blueprint coordinator sets the stage for implementation from the beginning of the process, back in **Phase 1**, by determining each agency's policy and training development process and incorporating any necessary steps and due dates into the overall plan. An implementation plan template guides the Blueprint coordinator, agency liaisons, and designated work groups through the key steps. The monitoring chart provides a foundation for identifying key activities and establishing a timeline for instituting both internal and interagency monitoring. The coordinator and implementation team continue to utilize tools introduced in the previous phases, such as the agency tracking checklist, timeline, strategies to move forward, and community consultation guidelines.

The Blueprint coordinator and team members continue to utilize many tools introduced in previous phases. New **Phase 4** tools (listed by Appendix number) include:

- *23. Blueprint Implementation Team: Role and Activities*
- *24. Launch and Interagency Training Planning Checklist*
- *25. Presentation Template Launch & Interagency Training*
- *26. Agency Implementation Plan Template*
- *27. Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid*
- *28. Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities*
- *30. Agency Training Slide Presentation Template: 911*
- *31. Agency Training Slide Presentation Template: Patrol*



## PHASE 4: IMPLEMENT & INSTITUTIONALIZE

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People  |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Transition the adaptation team to an implementation team that will put the local Blueprint into practice.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 23. <i>Blueprint Implementation Team: Role and Activities</i>   | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons  |
| 2. Plan and initiate the administrative practices necessary to implement Blueprint policy, such as new documentation procedures, forms, checklists, database revisions, etc.      | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. <i>Agency Implementation Plan Template</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> Templates and supporting material published as <i>The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes</i> <sup>8</sup> | Coordinator<br>Implementation team<br>Agency liaisons<br>Ad hoc work groups |
| 3. Promote a Blueprint-informed Advocacy-Initiated Response.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. <i>Blueprint Advocate Role, Responsibilities and Skills (Attachment 2: Overview of Advocacy-Initiated Response in Phase 1 Tools)</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Implementation team           |
| 4. Launch the Blueprint with specific events that announce the implementation and convey the meaning and intent of the Blueprint (i.e., what the Blueprint will address and how). | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. <i>Launch and Interagency Planning Checklist</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 25. <i>Presentation Launch &amp; Interagency Training Slide</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Implementation team<br>Blueprint champions       |

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp\\_materials.aspx](http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx)

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]  | Key People  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>5. Conduct training: (1) internal and (2) interagency.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. <i>Launch and Interagency Planning Checklist</i>                                     | Coordinator   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. <i>Presentation Launch &amp; Interagency Training Slide</i>                          | Advocate  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. <i>Agency Implementation Plan Template</i>   | Implementation team                                       |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 30. and 31. <i>Agency Training Slide Presentations: Samples for 911 and Patrol</i>       | Agency liaisons and directors<br>Blueprint champions      |
| <b>6. Design monitoring activities: (1) internal and (2) interagency.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i>                                    | Coordinator   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 28. <i>Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities</i> | Advocate  |
|   |   | Implementation team                                       |
|   |   | Agency liaisons<br>Agency supervisors                     |
| <b>7. Ensure that the Blueprint is “institutionalized” (i.e., integrated into agency policy, protocol, &amp; practice; personnel trained and supervised).</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies’ adapted policies   | Coordinator   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. <i>Agency Implementation Plan Template</i>   | Advocate  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i>                                    | Implementation team                                       |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 28. <i>Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities</i> | Agency liaisons<br>Agency supervisors<br>Agency directors |

- |  |   |                     |
|--|---|---------------------|
| 8. Keep the experiences of victims of battering visible and central throughout the implementation processes. | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint for Safety</i> | Coordinator         |
|  |   | Advocate            |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of Effective Intervention</i>             | Implementation team |

- |   |  |                     |
|---|--|---------------------|
| 9. Use community consultations to help guide the implementation, with specific attention to communities that are overrepresented and/or underserved communities in seeking help from the criminal legal system. | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i> | Coordinator         |
|   |  | Advocate            |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of Effective Intervention</i>  | Implementation team |



## PHASE 5: MONITOR AND REVISE

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### WHAT

The Blueprint for Safety is meant to be a dynamic, active response to battering, not a document that sits on a shelf. Once the initial adaptation is complete and the new policies and practice are set in motion, monitoring and revising the Blueprint positions a community to sustain this new way of working together and solving problems. **Phase 5** links directly back to the early steps in building an identity as a



Blueprint and forming the adaptation team. The Blueprint coordinator, advocate, and champions—agency, practitioner, and community champions—all have a role in keeping the Blueprint true to its principles, goals, and practice. **Phase 5** solidifies the data gathering and assessment that helps maintain the Blueprint over time. The ongoing

work of the Blueprint involves regular reviews of agency practice and attentiveness to potential disparities of impact and unintended consequences. **Phase 5** is anchored in the key role that community-based advocacy and community consultation have in keeping victims of battering visible and central to the criminal legal system's intervention.

Internal monitoring activities address practitioner compliance with policies and administrative practice. Interagency monitoring activities reinforce the Blueprint as a collective policy. The goals of ongoing monitoring are to:

- Ensure that practitioners are carrying out Blueprint policy and practice as designed and intended.
- Ensure that the planned interagency information sharing, cooperation, and accountability measures have been implemented.

- Identify problems unforeseen in the Blueprint design or implementation and correct them.
- Identify and correct any unintended negative outcomes and disparate impact of Blueprint policy and practice.

In essence, **Phase 5** poses this question: “We said we were going to do X, Y, and Z with the Blueprint for Safety. Are we doing this? If not, why not? What needs to change?”

## WHO

The full range of people and partnerships that have developed over the course of adapting the Blueprint continue to be involved, from the champions to the individuals who serve on the implementation team and ad hoc work groups. The Blueprint coordinator continues to have a pivotal role in the day-to-day oversight of the Blueprint. Agency liaisons help the implementation team secure the necessary data and implement the monitoring plan. Agency supervisors monitor internal policy and practice and contribute to ongoing interagency reviews. Ad hoc groups are convened as needed to participate in monitoring and assessment activities. The Blueprint advocate provides a bridge between community-based advocates and criminal legal system agencies as they implement the advocacy-initiated response. The coordinator, advocate, and the organizations and individuals participating in community consultation help keep the experiences of victims of battering visible and central to the Blueprint. The coordinator, advocate, and implementation team prepare an annual “state of the Blueprint” report to update the community on the impact of the Blueprint as a unified, collective policy.

## TASKS & TOOLS

The Blueprint coordinator and implementation team continue to use tools introduced throughout the entire adaptation process to track progress and assess and identify problems. While a Blueprint community with an active monitoring plan in place would rarely, if ever, conduct a full 911-through-sentencing policy and practice assessment, it will use the assessment tools as needed—and case review, in particular—to determine how the Blueprint is working and to identify any implementation problems. Internal monitoring by agency supervisors provides ongoing quality control and identifies needed corrections or problems that warrant further attention in the interagency review. Ad hoc groups are convened as needed to study a specific problem, revise policy language, or change an administrative practice, with information going back to the coordinator to keep track of issues and changes as they emerge. Ongoing agency training returns to and expands upon core Blueprint practices, such as documenting and communicating information about risk and danger, strengthening witness interviews and officers’ direct observations, making more use of undercharged crimes such as witness tampering, improving the investigation of charging of suspects who have left the scene, and using more thorough self-defense and predominant aggressor determinations to minimize arrest and charging of victims of battering. Community consultation continues as a key tool for keeping the experiences of battered women visible and addressing disparity for victims of battering from communities that are

overrepresented and/or underserved in the criminal legal system. The essential elements provide a steady point of reference for examining policy and practice. The coordinator continues to use such tools as the agency tracking system and strategies to stay focused to help manage the day-to-day monitoring and interagency response. The coordinator and implementation team prepare an annual “state of the Blueprint” report to update the community on the impact of the Blueprint for Safety as a unified policy and practice.

The new tool in **Phase 5** is the Interagency Accountability Check (**Appendix 29**), which defines five dimensions of accountability and provides a template for tracking agency successes and gaps in meeting them.

## PHASE 5: MONITOR & REVISE

| Key Tasks   | Key Tools [Appendix]   | Key People  |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Establish a calendar and tracking system for agency data collection, monitoring activities, and anticipated reports.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. <i>Adaptation Process and Timeline</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i>  | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons  |
| 2. Evaluate whether and how essential elements and features of the Blueprint are working.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements Annotated</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 22. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 28. <i>Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities</i> | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Agency liaisons<br>Agency supervisors<br>Implementation team |
| a. Implement ongoing monitoring activities: (1) internal and (2) interagency.<br>b. Form small interagency work groups to review cases or conduct other practice assessment as needed to determine how agency practitioners are following new policies and practices. |  |   |
| 3. Evaluate the extent to which agencies are working together on shared tasks, such as an interagency case review and other monitoring.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i>   | Coordinator<br>Implementation team  |

| Key Tasks  | Key Tools [Appendix]  | Key People  |
|--|---|---|
| 4. Collect statistical data for domestic violence-related crimes, including 911 calls, arrests, crimes charged, disposition, sentencing, and demographics.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-3. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide: Data-Gathering Template</i>   | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons  |
| 5. Conduct annual focus groups and other consultation with victims/survivors to learn about their experiences with the implemented policies and practice.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i>  | Coordinator<br>Advocate<br>Implementation team                              |
| 6. Include agency directors, liaisons, and supervisors in addressing low or incorrect compliance with Blueprint policies and practice.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 28. <i>Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i> | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons<br>Agency supervisors<br>Agency directors    |
| 7. Present an annual report on Blueprint implementation internally to administrators (internal monitoring) <u>and</u> to the Blueprint implementation team (interagency monitoring). | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 28. <i>Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i> | Coordinator<br>Agency liaisons<br>Agency supervisors<br>Implementation team |



|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>8. Assess for unintended harmful consequences and disparity of impact and adapt Blueprint policies and practice to address.</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 22. <i>Policy and Practice Assessment Guide</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i> | Coordinator<br><br>Advocate<br><br>Implementation team        |
| <b>9. Adapt Blueprint policies and practice as needed to address unforeseen and new problems.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. <i>Essential Elements Annotated</i>     | Coordinator<br><br>Agency liaisons<br><br>Implementation team |
| <b>10. Update the community on the impact of the Blueprint collective policy, with specific attention to community-based organizations that regularly work with battered women and those representing marginalized communities.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. <i>Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. <i>Interagency Accountability Check</i>   | Coordinator<br><br>Advocate<br><br>Implementation team        |
| <b>11. Keep the experiences of battered women visible and central throughout the monitoring process via ongoing community consultation.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of effective intervention</i>  | Coordinator<br><br>Advocate<br><br>Implementation team        |
| <b>12. Utilize community consultations to help guide the monitoring, with specific attention to communities that are overrepresented and/or underserved communities in seeking help from the criminal legal system.</b>             | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <i>Community Consultation in the Blueprint</i><br><input type="checkbox"/> 11. <i>Foundations of Effective Intervention</i>  | Coordinator<br><br>Advocate<br><br>Implementation team        |

## PRINCIPLES AND COMPLEX REALITIES

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**Principle 2: Recognize that most domestic violence is patterned crime requiring continuing engagement with victims and offenders.**

**Principle 6: Act in ways that reduce unintended consequences and the disparity of impact on victims and offenders.**

Reliance on the criminal legal system to address violence against women has been subject to much debate over the past thirty years, a vigorous debate that continues today.<sup>9</sup> The Blueprint for Safety enters this debate by acknowledging and trying to address three complex realities: (1) the deep and pervasive harm of violence against women, (2) the deep and pervasive harm of mass incarceration and



its impact on marginalized communities, and (3) the ways in which victims of battering are routinely caught up in the criminal legal system. The criminal legal system becomes involved in battered women's lives when they reach to it for help; when a family member, friend, or neighbor intervenes; or when women are entrapped or criminalized by their circumstances and survival strategies.

The Blueprint is not a way to force everyone to use the criminal legal system. It endeavors to make that system work in as protective and least harmful and oppressive way as possible for victims of battering

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<sup>9</sup> For example, see *Safety and Justice for All: Examining the Relationship between the Women's Antiviolence Movement and the Criminal Legal System*, MS. Foundation for Women, 2003, based on meeting report by Shamita Das Dasgupta and summary by Patricia Eng; access at [http://files.praxisinternational.org/safety\\_justice.pdf](http://files.praxisinternational.org/safety_justice.pdf). Also, the positions and publications of INCITE! Access at <http://www.incite-national.org/home>.

who seek it out and for those who are drawn into it. To make that system work in as protective and least oppressive way as possible requires direct attention to issues of disparity.

## PROBLEMS OF IMMENSE SCOPE AND IMPACT

“... A woman called [Police Department] to report a domestic disturbance. By the time the police arrived, the woman’s boyfriend had left. The police looked through the house and saw indications that the boyfriend lived there. When the woman told police that only she and her brother were listed on the home’s occupancy permit, the officer placed the woman under arrest for the permit violation and she was jailed. In another instance, after a woman called police to report a domestic disturbance and was given a summons for an occupancy permit violation, she said, according to the officer’s report, that she “hated the [Police Department] and will never call again, even if she is being killed.”<sup>10</sup>

Susan and her boyfriend, Robert, are a young African American couple. Both are twenty years old; they live together with their six-month-old daughter, June. Susan has an early morning shift at a coffee shop and Robert recently started night classes to become a medical technician. Two months ago, neighbors called police when they heard Susan screaming. Robert was arrested for misdemeanor assault, even though Susan asked that they not arrest him. She told police that she had screamed at Robert after he had slapped her and broken several plates and that she also slapped him back. He had hit her a couple of times after they first got together, she told police, but this was the first time in over a year. Robert was booked into the jail for two days until his brother could pay the bail. He was released and ordered to have no contact with Susan. Susan missed two days of work when Robert was in jail because there was no one to

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### DISPARITY OF IMPACT

Exists when the proportion of a specific group within the control of the criminal legal system is greater than its proportion in the general population or when criminal legal system intervention has a more negative impact on a specific group. The group may reflect a particular characteristic or, more likely, reflect the intersectionality of different aspects of identity, such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, poverty, ability, health status. Harmful disparity may result from overt bias or it may reflect unintended consequences, such as policy or practice that appears identity-neutral but that has a different impact on specific groups and communities.

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<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, *Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department*, p. 81. Released March 4, 2015. Access at: [http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson\\_police\\_department\\_report.pdf](http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf)

care for June. When Robert called to apologize, she asked him to return home. Ten days later, while giving her a ride to work, Robert is stopped for having expired plates. Because there is a no-contact order, Robert is arrested, his car impounded, and Susan and their daughter are left at a bus stop. Robert is charged with a gross misdemeanor for violating the no-contact order, in addition to the original assault charge. He's released and again ordered to have no contact with Susan. Now he has no car or money to pay the impound fee and get his car back; the fee grows by forty dollars a day. Susan has no one to care for June. Her boss asks her to get back on her usual shift or quit. Robert has missed several days of classes and a major test. Neither of them can get to work or school without traveling by bus for over an hour each way, but Susan could take the first bus at 4:30 am if Robert was there for June. If Robert returns home, however, he risks being charged with a felony for violating the no-contact order a second time.

Such stories raise our opening questions: *How are we intervening... Does our response make people safer? Are we reaching those who are most dangerous and cause the most harm? What messages are we sending and reinforcing? Are we paying attention to how our intervention impacts victims of battering and the community?*

The Blueprint for Safety has emerged during a time of widespread national discussion about racial and class disparities in the criminal legal system. Many activists, communities, and public officials are examining how to address the broad and costly impact of a process that incarcerates the highest number of people in the world, feeds a prison system of unprecedented size, and brings millions of people under an often lifetime sentence of restricted access to housing, employment, education, and voting rights.<sup>11</sup> Incarceration rates for Black, Latino, and Native American peoples are hugely disproportionate to their populations.<sup>12</sup> This “mass incarceration” comes at a high cost: 70 billion dollars each year to incarcerate 2.2 million people, plus 65 million adults (approximately one in four) with a criminal record and its collateral consequences.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The United States has less than 5% of the world's population but over 23% of the world's incarcerated people. It imprisons the most women in the world. Crime rates do not account for the high incarceration rates. See *US Rates of Incarceration: A Global Perspective*, Christopher Harvey, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, November 2006. Access at [http://www.nccdglobal.org/sites/default/files/publication\\_pdf/factsheet-us-incarceration.pdf](http://www.nccdglobal.org/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/factsheet-us-incarceration.pdf). See also: *Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie*, Prison Policy Initiative Briefing, March 12, 2014. Access at <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie.html>.

<sup>12</sup> See *Breaking Down Mass Incarceration in the 2010 Census: State-by-State Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity*, Leah Sakala, Prison Policy Initiative, May 28, 2014. Access at <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/rates.html>.

<sup>13</sup> *Criminal Justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Criminal Justice System*, Conference Report by Tanya E. Coke, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 2013. For a discussion of

*Never before have so many been arrested for so little... Despite the minor nature of most offenses processed through the system, a large number of defendants will be too poor to post bail, will plead guilty to time served to get out of jail, and then will suffer one or more of the collateral consequences of criminal conviction: deportation from the United States, the inability to get or keep a job, the loss of housing, student loan disqualification, and/or the denial of the right to vote.<sup>14</sup>*

Women who are being or have been battered experience this complex, troubled system in many different ways. Their experiences are shaped by different social realities and intersections of race, ethnicity, class, age, immigration status, gender, sexual orientation, ability, community, history, oppression, privilege, and many other aspects of culture and identity.

Women are disproportionately impacted by intimate partner violence, rape, and stalking. Many experience high lifetime rates of severe violence and the violence contributes to or causes unemployment, homelessness, and loss of their children. Violence against women and girls also

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## UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Reforms to institutional policy and practice that are meant to increase safety and well-being for victims of battering, that instead jeopardize safety and well-being and contribute to disparity of impact.

Unintended consequences may affect a broad range of victims of battering or fall more heavily on a specific group or community.

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increases the risk of arrest and incarceration, particularly for women of color and poor women. Criminalization of women's survival strategies and entrapment into crime by their abusive partners and by gender, race, and class oppression are paths to incarceration. Once criminalized and under correctional control, women face state "enforcement violence" through coercive laws and policies.<sup>15</sup> The consequences of enforcement violence, in turn, often lead to unemployment, homelessness, and

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mass incarceration, see *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander, The New Press, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> New York State Supreme Court Justice Marcy Friedman, *Criminal Justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> See *Women's Experiences of Abuse as a Risk Factor for Incarceration*, Mary E. Gilfus, VAWNet Applied Research Forum, December 2002. Access at [http://www.vawnet.org/applied-research-papers/print-document.php?doc\\_id=412](http://www.vawnet.org/applied-research-papers/print-document.php?doc_id=412). Gilfus references the following researchers: Meda Chesney-Lind and Noelle Rodriguez (criminalization of survival strategies), Beth E. Richie (gender entrapment), and Anannya Bhattacharjee (enforcement violence).

loss of their children.

The United States imprisons more women than any country in the world and most of those women are survivors of violence. Over a million women are in the correctional population.<sup>16</sup> Between 1980 and 2010, the rate of growth of women in prison exceeded the rate of increase for men (646% to 419%). While incarceration rates overall have declined somewhat since 2008, the rate of women's incarceration continues to outpace the rate for men.<sup>17</sup>

Most women in the correctional system have histories of being abused, either as a child and/or as an adult. Estimates of prior abuse range from 55% to as high as 95%. Lower estimates reflect general screening questions while more in-depth studies with expanded measures of abuse report that nearly all girls and women in prison have experienced physical and sexual abuse throughout their lives.<sup>18</sup> Severe physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner is an overwhelmingly common experience of incarcerated women: 75% to 93% of women who report prior abuse have been abused by an intimate partner.<sup>19</sup>

Women in the correctional system are disproportionately women of color. While the rate at which African American women are incarcerated in comparison to white women and Latinas has dropped in the past ten years, African American women still represent over 30% of incarcerated women and Latinas represent roughly 17%.<sup>20</sup> While the downward trend for African American women is encouraging, as one

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<sup>16</sup> Lauren E. Glaze and Danielle Kaeble, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2013*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2014. The correctional population includes those on probation or parole, in state or federal prison, or in local jail.

<sup>17</sup> Marc Mauer, *The Changing Racial Dynamics of Women's Incarceration*, The Sentencing Project, February 2013. Access at [http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/rd\\_Changing%20Racial%20Dynamics%202013.pdf](http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/rd_Changing%20Racial%20Dynamics%202013.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> For a review of research studies, see Gilfus, *Women's Experiences of Abuse as a Risk Factor for Incarceration* (at note 15).

<sup>19</sup> Studies cited in *About Survivors in Prison*, fact sheet published by Domestic Violence Survivors' Justice Act, <http://dvsja.org/about-survivors-in-prison/>.

<sup>20</sup> Mauer, *Changing Racial Dynamics*. "Changes during the decade were most pronounced among women, with black women experiencing a decline of 30.7% in their rate of incarceration, white women a 47.1% rise, and Hispanic women a 23.3% rise" (p. 7-8).



commentator put it, “I don’t want to just exchange women of color for poor white women.”<sup>21</sup> Data on rates of incarceration for Native women is less accessible but rates for Native women have been rising—often greater than rates for Native men—and vastly outpace those for whites. For example, in South Dakota Native peoples are 10% of the population but Native women make up 35% of prison inmates; in Montana, Native peoples are 6.8% of the population but 29.6% of women prisoners.<sup>22</sup>

To repeat, the Blueprint for Safety faces three complex realities as it seeks to change the criminal legal system response to battering: (1) the deep and pervasive harm of violence against women, (2) the deep and pervasive harm of mass incarceration and its impact on marginalized communities, and (3) the ways in which victims of battering are routinely caught up in the criminal legal system. The realities are interconnected.

- Mass incarceration and the hyper-surveillance of the criminal legal system in marginalized communities is a barrier to engagement. Victims of battering who feel “over-policed and under-protected” in their communities and daily lives are unlikely to see the police and other representatives of the criminal system as a trusted source of help.<sup>23</sup>
- Battered women can become even more isolated in an environment of mass incarceration and over-policing as they are pushed to choose between their individual well-being and safety and the increasing devastation to their families and communities by the immediate and collateral consequences of incarceration.
- Violence against women—and battering, specifically—is a pathway to incarceration and state control for millions of women, a pathway that has opened even wider with the well-intended reforms of mandatory arrest and prosecution for domestic violence-related crimes.

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<sup>21</sup> Glenn Martin, Fortune Society, cited in “Race, Women and Prison,” Graham Kates, *The Crime Report*, February 28, 2013. Access at <http://www.thecrimereport.org/news/inside-criminal-justice/2013-02-race-women-and-prison>

<sup>22</sup> Frank Smith, *Incarceration of Native Americans and Private Prisons*, access at <http://lenapeprograms.info/socio-political-issues-2/prisoners/>.

<sup>23</sup> For example, see the papers published in conjunction with the 2012 UCLA Law Review Symposium, “Overpoliced and Underprotected: Women, Race, and Criminalization.” Access at <https://maximinlaw.wordpress.com/2012/09/02/symposium-articles-published-ucla-law-review-overpoliced-and-underprotected-women-race-and-criminalization/>. See also, Donna Coker, et al., *Why Opposing Hyper-Incarceration Should be Central to the Work of the Anti-Domestic Violence Movement*, University of Miami Race & Social Justice Law Review, 2015. Access at <http://repository.law.miami.edu/umrsjlr/vol5/iss2/30/>.

How does a Blueprint community address these complex realities? How does the focused, interagency collective policy prescribed by the Blueprint for Safety make meaningful change in the face of these realities? How does a community make two of the Blueprint's most distinctive principles real?

## QUESTIONS AND LESSONS

The Blueprint for Safety begins to embody its principles and address these complex realities in part by asking many questions. Some of these questions focus narrowly on a specific practice or aspect of intervention; others are broader and more philosophical in nature.

To address and ultimately reduce harmful interventions and disparity of impact is challenging, arduous, and essential work. Few CCRs have been positioned to initiate and sustain an examination and response to disparity in their communities. The CCR idea and practice has been largely dominated by a criminal legal system orientation that has more or less accepted business as usual, even sometimes framing its role as “getting the bad guys.” For many victims of battering in marginalized, underserved and over-scrutinized communities, interventions based on accepting the system as-is have not contributed to safety, well-being, or accountability.

The Blueprint is distinctive in defining action to reduce harmful intervention and disparity as an essential function of a coordinated response to battering. That work begins by posing the questions to be answered, both as suggested below and as specific to each community. Lessons from the early Blueprint adapters—the demonstration communities and St. Paul—point the way to strategies that move this critical work forward.

In its structure and organization, the Blueprint requires a commitment by community-based advocates and allies in the criminal legal system to “stay at the table” as they identify problems and explore solutions. It is difficult to take varied viewpoints about complex issues—particularly when related to race, gender, class, and other disparities—and secure agreement on a direction to take, let alone agree on specific policy and practice changes. It is difficult to challenge long-standing practice.

Among the more specific questions that a Blueprint community must ask:

- How do practitioners sort out battering from other kinds of domestic violence? How can they use the Blueprint risk questions a path to identify battering and find out more clearly who is most dangerous to whom?
- Are there ways in which 911 is used as a resource by the community that inadvertently contributes to disparity?
- What is the impact of poor guidance on how to make sound self-defense determinations and how to assess for predominant aggressor when warranted?



- What domestic violence-related crimes should be enhanced? What is the impact of expanding the category of felony crimes related to domestic violence?
- Should prosecution diversion be reconsidered as an option in domestic violence-related crimes? Under what conditions and with what safeguards?
- What is the impact of the following kinds of laws and practices in relation to engagement and to a fair and just response: mandatory minimum sentencing, penalty/sentencing enhancements, mandatory arrest, and mandatory no-contact orders?
- How might options and costs related to electronic monitoring—or lack of options—contribute to disparity of impact?
- How can sanctions account for people’s economic circumstances (i.e., fees, fines, forfeitures and conditions under which they are leveled and multiplied)?
- At each step in the system, do people receive clear information about what is expected of them? Is there confirmation that people in fact understand what is expected? Are supports and resources in place to support their success in meeting what’s expected?
- In what ways might probation sanctions for technical violations (i.e., unrelated to a new assault or crime) contribute to disparity of impact?
- Should there be any kind of way to expunge criminal records in domestic violence-related convictions? If so, under what circumstances?

Among the broader questions:

- How do we keep women and children safe and yet hold batterers accountable without necessarily seeking longer, more punitive sentences as the response?
- How do we meet the needs of victims without eroding judicial fairness and the due process protections of accused persons?
- Who belongs in jail and when? Who does not belong in jail?
- What is the multiplier effect of intensive policing and poverty? Which communities reflect the greatest disparity in rates of incarceration and state control?
- What are effective alternatives for women and children’s safety within the criminal legal system?

- What discretion should exist for practitioners at each phase in the criminal legal system process?
- Would reducing the role of law enforcement provide a convenient excuse for some law enforcement officials to return to a response where victims of battering were largely ignored or discounted?
- How might we build a framework of community safety outside of criminal legal system? Should the criminal legal system become the diversionary program, the secondary option? If so, how?
- What are the right interventions to maximize safety and accountability while minimizing unintended harm and disparity?
- How can we put the intersection of poverty and race at the forefront of discussions and policy-making rather than treat it as an afterthought?

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## ENGAGEMENT

To be engaged is to be active in seeking a meaningful relationship that is characterized by respect and thoughtfulness. Engagement requires openness to and awareness of peoples' unique identities and histories. In the context of the Blueprint for Safety, to be engaged means using practitioners' extended contacts with those experiencing the harm caused by battering and those responsible for the harm to build meaningful relationships over time. Such relationships reinforces messages of help and accountability and opportunities to change.

**BUT . . .** We can hear you wonder: how can it be helpful in an adaptation guide to pose so many questions? A guide should have the answers, right?

Not every question can be asked and answered at once. Initial answers might prove misguided when actually implemented or upon closer attention to unintended consequences. Nonetheless, the experiences of the early Blueprint adapters suggest effective strategies to accomplish both the mechanics of working together and the kinds of change that contribute to reducing harmful consequences and disparity. For example, the following discussion of strategies illustrates how two Blueprint communities have investigated disparities related to the arrests of victims of battering and the impact of mandatory universal no-contact orders.

The Blueprint for Safety is a dynamic approach and process to shaping the criminal legal system's response to battering. It is not a one-time event or document to place on a shelf. The Blueprint is very much a work in progress. As it is adapted and practiced by more communities, broader implementation will produce new insights and answers on how the criminal legal system can best engage with those impacted by battering and intervene in ways that are protective and effective while reducing unintended consequences and disparity of impact. Domestic violence-related crimes are a significant

part of the business of the criminal legal system. As the Blueprint principles shape actions in that system they have the potential to reduce broader institutional harm and disparity.

## STRATEGIES

On their own, Blueprint organizers and leaders are poorly positioned to tackle the deep-seated, structural factors that contribute to overall disparity—such as poverty and a highly racialized society. The overwhelming scope of the problem can make any effort appear impossible. Within the sphere of domestic violence-related crimes, however, a Blueprint community can investigate and make concrete changes in the response that help avoid harmful consequences and help reduce aspects of disparity.

Strategies will evolve as more communities implement the Blueprint and contribute their experiences. Again, the Blueprint is meant to be a “living” application of principles and practice. Its various tools and templates, such as those presented in this guide, will be revised to reflect new knowledge about how to best discover, talk about, and address the complex issues of disparity. In the meantime, the available tools help a Blueprint community conduct focused and effective inquiries into aspects of disparity and produce concrete recommendations for change.

## TOOL BOX

This adaptation guide itself is a primary tool via its organization of planning, implementation, and monitoring activities, all of which keep the Blueprint principles in focus. In addition, the following specific approaches and strategies help keep the Blueprint attentive to disparity.

- Use the practice assessment tools and process to identify possible areas of disparity and harmful intervention. Key assessment tools include:
  - Basic data collection about the number and disposition of cases, broken down by gender, race, ethnicity, and other characteristics
  - Mapping each step of criminal case processing and examining how disparity might be introduced or magnified
  - Consultation with victims/survivors and community members—via interviews and discussion groups, among other strategies—including advocates working with specific populations, to identify problems related to unintended consequences and disparity
  - Analysis of forms that direct practitioners to take certain actions (e.g., domestic violence supplement form or bail screening checklist) and the case records that convey the official accounts of cases (e.g., police reports or prosecution files).

- In all Blueprint phases, include meaningful representation (i.e., more than one or two individuals expected to represent an entire community) from communities most affected by likely problem(s) of disparity.
- Build a knowledge base about the nature of disparity within the larger community and the criminal legal system, with attention to the histories and distinctive experiences of people most impacted.
- Use the following questions to shape the exploration of a possible disparity:
  - What is the nature of the disparity and how did it come about?
  - Who does the disparity impact and in what ways?
  - What information is needed in order to define and explore this issue?
  - Are there laws that affect the disparity?
  - Are there policies or procedures that affect the disparity?
  - Are there linkages between intervening agencies—or lack thereof—that affect the disparity?
  - Are there Blueprint principles that are not being fully incorporated into a community's practice that affect the disparity (e.g., incorporation of risk and danger or recognition that risk change can change over time and the response may need to be modified)?

### Case Study: New Orleans

The New Orleans Blueprint demonstration site analyzed police arrest data and discovered that African American women had the highest rate of arrest among women charged with domestic violence, while also being the most likely to experience intimate partner violence. It began to examine how criminal justice policies and procedures might have a disparate impact on African American women arrested on domestic violence charges.

New Orleans conducted a literature review, analyzed police reports, held advocate and survivor focus groups, and established a community-based Disparate Impact Strategic Planning Committee—known as the disparity impact committee—to guide the Blueprint. The disparate impact committee is grounded in the critical expertise of community members with years of experience working with African American women in New Orleans. The committee also includes Blueprint coordinators, system practitioners, and a university-based researcher who has initiated an expanded analysis of police patrol reports.

Among the themes and discoveries:

- Persistent stereotypes build what Melissa Harris-Perry calls the “Black women’s crooked room” and influence how they are seen in the world.<sup>24</sup> This includes the “Sapphire” or “angry black woman” who is aggressive, strong, and loud: i.e., therefore cannot be a victim. In the police response, such assumptions can prevail in the absence of thorough self-defense and predominant aggressor determinations.
- African American women turn to the police as a last resort when they are fearful for their own or their children’s safety. This contrasts with the “mad day” belief expressed by police officers in mapping activities, interviews, and analysis of reports: i.e., women are out of sorts with their partners and decide to get mad and call the police.
- Trust is a significant element in whether and how women approach or avoid the police and other agencies. When women report helpful interactions with police and others in the system, it is often because there is an individual “gate-keeper” whom they trust and who acts on their behalf. While such a personal response is useful to an individual woman, it is not institutionalized in a way that benefits all victims of battering.

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<sup>24</sup> Melissa Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*, Yale University Press, 2011. The New Orleans Blueprint sought out the Anna Julia Cooper Project on Gender, Race, and Politics in the South as a community partner. It utilized Harris-Perry’s analysis and conceptual framework for understanding the dominant myths about African American women.

While the disparity work in New Orleans is ongoing, it has already led to policy changes in the New Orleans Police Department’s approach to self-defense and predominant aggressor determinations, stronger attention to and documentation of the context and history of violence, and plans to revise report formats to eliminate the use of standard modus operandi categories (e.g., “broad nose,” “flabby,” “angry”) that can reinforce stereotypes of African American women.

The New Orleans experience has also produced insights into strategies for organizing community focus groups and adapting risk questions to meet diverse literacy and comprehension levels. For example, building relationships with diverse community-based advocacy organizations—beyond those typically identified as working with victims of domestic violence—was critical to reaching a broader range of participants, particularly those who were reluctant to turn to the police for help. In New Orleans, those relationships included organizations whose primary advocacy focused on issues of poverty, health and wellness, and the lives of marginalized women. The New Orleans analysis also noticed how seemingly neutral elements in Blueprint templates (e.g., document emotional demeanor, physical appearance, and indications of drug or alcohol abuse) can inadvertently reinforce stereotypes of African American women.

### **Case Study: St. Paul**

In St. Paul, the defense bar and probation officers raised concerns that young men of color were disproportionately affected by St. Paul’s application of Minnesota state law permitting courts to issue a pretrial or post-conviction Domestic Abuse No-Contact Order (DANCO). The DANCO is enforceable by warrantless arrest and punishable as a misdemeanor. Subsequent arrests for violating the no-contact order, however, can be enhanced as felony-level crimes. There is the possibility that a defendant can commit a low-level misdemeanor assault, be subject to the terms of a DANCO that the victim of the assault may not want, and subsequently be prosecuted as a felon, even if the victim wants contact and no further violence occurs. The defense and probation raise the concern that DANCO enforcement has a disproportionate impact on young men of color, resulting in felony convictions and potential incarceration for violations of no-contact orders that do not involve new acts of violence.

The St. Paul Blueprint partners—including the community-based advocacy program, practitioners, and technical assistance partner, Praxis International—together with the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, identified the following key questions to answer in order to establish whether and to what extent the perceived disparity exists and how to address the disparity if it is established:

- How many offenders are ending up with felony convictions when they did not commit more violence? What is their race and age? How many did or did not commit additional violence or pose a serious threat to the victim?
- Are convictions for DANCO violations driven by a goal of increased conviction rates or a goal of increased safety?

- Prosecutors have charging discretion; under what circumstances would the Blueprint recommend that prosecutors not issue an enhanced charge for a DANCO violation?
- Under what circumstances should a prosecutor request a DANCO over the objection of a victim during the pretrial period? Post-conviction? What tool should be used to make this determination?
- Should a victim be able to request cancellation or modification of a DANCO? What process could be created to allow cancellation or modification? What tool would the court use to weigh its decision?
- If a cancellation or modification process is established, are advocates prepared to stand with the judicial decision-maker if a woman gets killed after a DANCO is cancelled or modified as she requested?

Initial steps have included (1) information-gathering focus groups with women who have had DANCOs ordered against their wishes, (2) formation of a work group that will draft a process for victim-directed modification or cancellation of no-contact orders, and (3) revisions to prosecutors' practice so mandatory universal DANCOs are no longer routine. Future steps include (4) case reviews to determine how many offenders are being charged with DANCO violations unrelated to new acts of violence and to examine more closely the risk to victims in such cases, and (5) additional statistical research on felony charges and convictions related to no-contact order violations.





## INSIGHTS FROM THE EARLY ADAPTERS

*Complex problems are not just more complicated than other problems; they are different in kind... The hallmark of complex problems is that they involve a wide range of factors that interact with one another to generate a constantly shifting set of issues and challenges. As a result, they can be addressed effectively only when an equally wide range of partners, each engaged with different aspects of the issue, work together to adjust and re-adjust how they affect one another through the decisions and actions they take.<sup>25</sup>*

The Blueprint for Safety reflects this essential approach to solving complex problems. It involves a wide range of partners within the criminal legal system, other government agencies, and community-based advocacy organizations. Each partner attends to its own practice and role while working together to “adjust and re-adjust” the Blueprint as a collective policy and practice.

The Blueprint is a design for change within a complex incident-focused system that was never organized to fit the distinct nature of battering, with its pattern of ongoing intimidation, coercion, and violence. The Blueprint is a fully articulated criminal legal system response framed by features that distinguish it from other approaches to intervening in domestic violence-related crimes. In a Blueprint community:

- A framework of foundational principles and essential elements guides intervention.



<sup>25</sup> Eric Leviten-Reid, *Comprehensive Strategies for Deep and Durable Outcomes*, Caledon Institute of Social Policy, April 2009.

- Practitioners are organized to identify, document, disseminate, and act upon cases based on risk and danger.
- Reform efforts are grounded in the experiences of victims of violence and organized around principles of victim engagement.
- Attention to recognizing and preventing harmful disparity of impact and unintended consequences is central to a unified response.
- Intra- and interagency monitoring and accountability are built into policy and practice throughout the system.

The Blueprint's early adapters have demonstrated that under certain conditions communities can position themselves to develop the shared philosophy, commitment, and response that characterize the Blueprint's distinct approach to curtailing and eventually eliminating domestic violence. Communities seeking to develop and apply the Blueprint benefit from the experience of St. Paul and the demonstration initiative sites: Duluth, New Orleans, and Memphis/Shelby County. Thanks to their groundbreaking efforts, a community starting now has the foundation of tools and options presented in this guide.

The early adapters have many insights and lessons to share about how to organize and sustain the Blueprint's sweeping approach to changing a complex system. Among the core insights:

- Structure, organization, and skilled coordination are essential from the beginning.
- The Blueprint requires champions at many levels—agency decision-makers and leaders, a coordinator, practitioner partners, advocates, community leaders—working in an environment of respect and trust for one another's role and contributions and a mutual willingness to seek out and respond to problems in the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence crimes.
- Everyone involved needs to see and understand the “essential elements”—the big picture and purpose—how the Blueprint will work at each step and within each agency, and everyone's role in implementing and maintaining it.
- A consistent and repeated message of the Blueprint as a collective policy is critical. It requires a focus on how the various roles, parts, and pieces in the criminal legal system response to battering fit together. Under a collective policy, everyone is always looking at how they are linked and what information is collected and where it goes.
- It is critical to learn the process, approvals, and timelines for each agency's policy writing and training delivery early on in the Blueprint adaptation process.

- Communities vary greatly and local conditions, skills, and circumstances require flexibility in approach and technical assistance related to adaptation and implementation.
- Blueprint coordinators, leaders, and team members need clear guidance on the logistics and mechanics of managing the Blueprint, including what to do, where to start, roles, timelines, strategies for addressing problems, and implementation and monitoring tools.
- Attention to unintended consequences and disparity of impact needs to happen early on. Community consultation must be a key part of Blueprint planning, adaptation, and monitoring.
- Community-based advocacy has a central role in adapting the Blueprint and helping to ensure that it is centered in the voices and experiences of victims/survivors.
- The practice assessment is an important element in adapting the Blueprint and maintaining it over time.

In short, the foundation for implementing and maintaining the Blueprint has to be set early on in how the community prepares, who is involved, and the ways in which the Blueprint is defined and communicated.



## APPENDICES

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In addition to the appendices to this guide listed below, see the policy templates and supplemental material published in *The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes*.

Access at [http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp\\_materials.aspx](http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx).

1. *Essential Commitments of a Blueprint Community*
2. *Frequently Asked Questions*
3. *Blueprint for Safety Informational Brochure*
4. *Adapting the Blueprint: Phases & Key Activities*
5. *What Is Distinctive About the Blueprint as an Approach to Domestic Violence Crimes?*
6. *Community Readiness Checklist*
7. *Community Consultation in the Blueprint*
8. *Research that Supports the Blueprint for Safety*
9. *The Blueprint Approach to Risk*
10. *Blueprint for Safety Essential Elements – Annotated*
11. *Foundations of Effective Intervention*
12. *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
13. *Blueprint Coordinator Role, Responsibilities and Skills*
14. *Blueprint Advocate Role, Responsibilities and Skills*
15. *Blueprint Adaptation Team Role and Activities*
16. *Planning a Blueprint for Safety Proposal*
17. *Policy Adaptation Phases*
18. *Adaptation Process and Timeline*
19. *Coordinating the Blueprint: Strategies to Stay Focused and Move Forward*
20. *Blueprint Adaptation Tasks and Timeline*
21. *Presentation Template: Becoming a Blueprint Community*
22. *Policy and Practice Assessment Guide*

- 23. *Blueprint Implementation Team: Role and Activities*
- 24. *Launch and Interagency Training Planning Checklist*
- 25. *Presentation Template Launch & Interagency Training Slide*
- 26. *Agency Implementation Plan Template*
- 27. *Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities Grid*
- 28. *Implementing the Blueprint for Safety: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities*
- 29. *Interagency Accountability Check*
- 30. *Agency Training Slide Presentation Template: 911*
- 31. *Agency Training Slide Presentation Template: Patrol*