

# **Safety Evaluation for Battered Women**

**A Resource Packet for  
Advocates, Practitioners and Policymakers**

Developed by Praxis in partnership with the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice, for recipients of grants under the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program. Points of view expressed in this resource packet are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

# Safety Evaluation for Battered Women

## A Resource Packet for Advocates, Practitioners and Policymakers

Creating safety for a woman who has been the victim of battering is a complex undertaking. Most advocates, and many other interveners in cases where domestic violence has occurred, are trained in and deeply familiar with conducting face-to-face risk assessments with individual battered women. However, if we limit our analysis to the safety of one woman at a time, we miss valuable opportunities for examining how women's safety can be taken up by and woven into every level of our work—from community organizing to program evaluation.

This resource packet is divided into sections: defining safety, conducting individual safety assessments with women, building safety into policy development, and using program evaluation to assess how effectively our organizations keep women safe. You will find:

### THINKING ABOUT THE MEANING OF SAFETY

- A discussion of the **definition of safety**, useful for sparking philosophical discussions—among advocates, within intervening agencies charged with public safety, and within coordinated community response teams

### CREATING SAFETY WITH INDIVIDUAL WOMEN

- A review of the latest research on conducting **risk and lethality** assessments with individual battered women
- An assessment manual that offers in-depth guidance to practitioners attempting to assess the **extent and severity** of domestic abuse occurring in a relationship

### BUILDING SAFETY INTO POLICIES

- A guide to **developing policies** that best account for battered women's safety
- A brief examination of how, and in what context, **tribal beliefs and life-ways** can enhance safety for Native women

## BUILDING SAFETY INTO YOUR PROGRAM

- A preliminary discussion about building safety analysis into your **program evaluation**: how do we determine if our programs are really enhancing the safety of battered women?

This packet of resources was compiled in order to guide us—as advocates, systems practitioners, or policymakers—in our thinking about what the safety of women means in our community. Our intention is to broaden our collective perspective on safety evaluation for battered women and their children. It is our hope that it has wide practical application.

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