

The NGO Caribbean Development Foundation

Regional conference on Violence against women

Cascadia Hotel,

st. Anns Port of Spain , Trinidad

September 21 & 22nd , 2010

Recommendations

The Role of the Police

Sensitivity training for police

There should be ethical and sensitivity training for the Police in the ways in which they deal with victims of domestic violence

Creation/reinstallation of a training manual for police officers dealing with victims of domestic violence.

NGOs in the region working against domestic violence should be used by regional governments to provide such training to police units across the region. New police recruits, in particular should be targeted.

UWI as a tertiary level institute should also be used to provide training in some of the more sociological and psychological issues pertaining to domestic violence.

Creation of domestic Violence Unit

Each Police station should have a domestic violence unit attached to it. This in itself is not new as the domestic violence acts of a number of islands already include this provision.

However across the region there has been some level of experimentation but, in many cases those experiments have been discontinued.

The forum recommends that this provision of many of the DV acts across the region be implemented on a full scale.

Creation of sexual assault response team attached to domestic violence units

Each domestic violence unit should have attached to it a sexual assault response team that deal directly with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. This team should include ER nurses that are specially trained to deal with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence

Police officers should be trained in interviewing children from domestic violence homes with the objective of gathering evidence.

Victim support professionals should be attached to sexual assault units. These should include psychologists and other rape crisis experts and victim support groups

Security of Shelters

The forum identified a number of incidences at shelters, where abusive spouses tracked their partners to shelters, and became violent once locating their spouse. There should be armed police presence at shelters, or shelters should be no trespassing zones monitored regularly by the police.

Psychological counseling for Police officers

There should be mandatory psychological counseling for Police officers attached to Domestic violence units.

The Health Sector in the region and its ability to cope with domestic violence

The Forum recommends the establishment of a series of protocols for dealing with victims of domestic violence.

The Establishment of a relationship between Health Care workers, the police and social workers in the fight against domestic violence.

Where a suspected case of domestic violence enters the hospital the police and social worker should be alerted...

Mandatory reporting of cases of suspected domestic violence and sexual violence to the police by the health sector.

There should be the attachment of at least one forensic nurse to every emergency room, in every hospital. This should allow for collecting evidence as early as possible in the life of a case.

Emergency room attendants should be properly trained to accurately complete medical forms for injuries, sustained by suspected domestic violence and sexual violence victims.

The creation of a unified data collection process that will support analytical and sociological research on the issue of domestic violence in the region

Development of the field of forensic nursing in the region

The forum recommends that the field of forensic nursing should be developed as a specialized area of nursing in the region. Initiatives to develop this branch of nursing should take the form of government assisted tertiary level study for previously qualified nurses interested in specializing in this area of nursing

There should be the creation of an association of forensic nurses in the region, in an effort to regulate this specialized branch of nursing.

Mental Health sector and coping with domestic violence in the region.

The forum recommends mandatory counseling for perpetrators of domestic violence who have been served with restraining orders.

Training programs for health care workers should incorporate HIV/AIDS prevention awareness counseling for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence.

The Education sector – Coping with domestic violence in the region

The forum recommends domestic violence awareness programs that are age appropriate, targeting teenagers and young adults. These programs should attempt to make teenagers and young adults aware of what is considered appropriate and inappropriate behavior in relationships

There should be the initiation of mentoring programs for young teenage boys in schools. These programs should promote appropriate sexual conduct and responsibility.