

# the Missouri Model

## THE “SHOW-ME STATE” APPROACH

### *Action Statement:*

The work of domestic violence practitioners continues to progress as we strive to ensure that services are responsive to the evolving needs of domestic violence survivors.

### *Abstract:*

This aspect of the workshop will include a look at one model of how leadership from a state coalition—or a national organizing group—can provide a hands-on opportunity for domestic violence programs to address ongoing, new and/or emerging issues to better meet the needs of survivors. Located in the center of the United States, the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence has developed a practical, low-cost model to address identified issues relative to providing woman-defined advocacy for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This “Missouri Model” has been successful in bringing together advocates from programs in regions and communities of the state that differ significantly to address issues that all have in common. The outcome is a model for replication by other programs.

These materials were developed by  
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## Organizing Advocates to Address Significant Service Issues

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1. Coalition identifies issue or problem to be addressed based on conversations and feedback from domestic and sexual violence programs.
  - ▶ This information is gained through regular regional meetings of programs, e-mail/listserv communications, trainings with member programs, requests of Coalition for technical assistance and training, and through similar communications with other states and national organizations.
  - ▶ Materials are created by Coalition staff to identify, define and detail the premise of the issue and project. Resource materials are created for project participants from research, articles, reports on similar work of other groups or organizations, and summary reports of current challenges within the state and nation.
2. Programs are informed by e-mail, mail and at in-person regional meetings of opportunity to participate in project. Volunteers are sought to participate in the “pilot” project for at least a one-year commitment of involvement.
  - ▶ Representatives from governing Board of Directors are included in pilot project; staff members are assigned as liaisons to work with advocates from programs on pilot project.
3. Coalition staff selects pilot project participants to ensure diversity of representation, based on geographical location, type and size of service program, and particular communities served.
4. Coalition financial support responsibilities include providing mileage reimbursements to participants, food for meetings, copying and distribution of resource materials, hosting listservs and paying for conference calls, dedicating staff time to project, and writing, printing and distributing of resource materials that result from project. Coalition staff record minutes of meetings, conference calls, and summaries of work accomplished on project.

5. As project begins, face-to-face meetings are scheduled. Calendar for ongoing and future meetings are established, typically meeting at least once a quarter; meetings may be held monthly or bi-monthly as project begins.

- ▮ Resource materials mailed/e-mailed to project participants prior to first face-to-face meetings, initial schedules circulated.

6. Communication system is established at Coalition for project participants: separate e-mail listserv established, conference call information provided, and point-of-contact staff liaisons identified.

- ▮ Listserv communications provide an opportunity for information sharing among participating program advocates and serve as a “support group” for participants as they work with the challenges of implementing the project. Rapid responses to requests for assistance are addressed at a low cost, communication is immediate, resources can be provided, problem-solving discussions occur, and a shared community of advocates is built through project.

7. Based upon topic/issue to be addressed through pilot project, participants agree upon the project goal and identify models for approaching the issue. Some projects involve all working from same format for action, others allow tailored approaches chosen by each participating program.

8. If standardized responses are sought, materials are created and refined through the project. Coalition staff writes the drafts that contain project participants’ consensus, and revisions follow from ongoing project participants’ input.

- ▮ Example: “Thoughtful Documentation Project” outcome—standardized forms for documentation of services by programs.

9. If individualized responses to project issue are created and implemented by participants, those models are detailed by Coalition staff to serve as a “menu” of options that can be used by other programs as they replicate the project.

- ▮ Example: “Shelter Rules Project” outcome—different approaches for how residential programs can implement varied approaches to enhance communal living and reduce “rules” within shelter programs.
- ▮ Example: “Language Access Project” outcome—different approaches for how programs can ensure non-English speaking survivors can gain access to culturally competent services.

10. Some pilot projects end with a comprehensive model—manuals and implementation guides—for use in project replication by other programs. Coalition staff provide trainings and technical assistance to all programs that seek to adopt the project model of addressing service issues (i.e. Thoughtful Documentation). Other pilot projects involve ongoing work with additional selections of new programs to participate in the same project, allowing for more programs to tailor their topic-specific responses to the needs of their communities and programs (i.e. Shelter Rules and Language Access).