Protecting Lives, Careers, and Public Confidence: Florida's Efforts to Prevent Officer-Involved Domestic Violence

Karen Oehme, Darcy Clay Siebert, Carl Siebert, Nat Stern, Colby Lynne Valentine, and Elizabeth A. (Elizabeth Anne) Donnelly
PROTECTING LIVES, CAREERS, AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE:
FLORIDA’S EFFORTS TO PREVENT OFFICER-INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Karen Oehme, Darcy Clay Siebert, Carl F. Siebert, Nat Stern, Colby Valentine, and Elizabeth Donnelly

In October of 2009, a police lieutenant in Florida murdered the mother of one of his children and then fatally turned the gun on himself.\(^1\) The tragedy brought into dramatic focus a phenomenon that had gained prominent attention a decade earlier: officer-involved domestic violence. In 1999, the International Association of Chiefs of Police acknowledged that “the profession of law enforcement is not immune from members committing domestic violence,” and that it occurs at least as frequently in officers’ families as it does in the general population.\(^2\) Since that pronouncement, many states across the United States have made efforts to address officer-involved domestic violence. Their progress, however, has been uneven. In Florida, where over 45,000 law enforcement and 35,000 correctional and probation officers are employed,\(^3\) agencies recently redoubled their efforts to prevent such crimes in a broad-based project called the Law Enforcement Families Partnership (LEFP).\(^4\) The LEFP not only pursues intervention strategies, but has taken what victim advocacy groups describe as the “bold move,” of systemically attempting to prevent domestic violence in officers’ families.\(^5\) This Article first offers an overview of the scourge of domestic violence which forms the backdrop of the LEFP. The Article then tracks the inception of the LEFP and focuses on one of its core components: a new web-based prevention curriculum.\(^6\) In addition, the Article reports the result of the first-quarter research data from the pre- and post-tests of the online curriculum study. Besides providing preliminary information on officers’ knowledge and attitudes, these data include

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\(^1\) TaMaryn Waters, Domestic Violence, Police Deadly Mix, TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT, Oct. 27, 2009, at 1.
\(^3\) The Florida State University, FSU And Florida’s Criminal Justice Community Join Forces To Prevent Officer-Involved Domestic Violence (March 31, 2009), http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF/Resources_LEF/PressRelease33109.pdf.
\(^5\) Id.
feedback on the training itself. The LEFP hopes that even these early results will significantly
advance efforts to curb officer-involved domestic violence.

I. COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PROBLEM OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTED BY OFFICERS

As researchers have noted, some 60,000 to 180,000 officers’ families would be involved
every year in domestic violence even if officers commit the crime simply at the same rate as
batterers in the general population. The problem first gained substantial attention in the early
1990’s. Two small studies suggested that domestic violence may actually be more common in
law-enforcement families, occurring in 20% to 40% of those families. Since then, however, no
large population-based studies have been conducted. A National Institute of Justice report later
bemoaned the lack of data on the topic:

Police domestic violence is an almost entirely unstudied
phenomenon, and support for studies of this nature has been
limited, partly because of the data collection barriers; and also
partly due to the lack of valid information. This has led to barriers
to our serious understanding [of] both [the] full extent and the
nature of the problem.

The lack of information may result in part from the distinctive culture of law
enforcement. A conspicuous feature of that culture is the tendency of officers to think of
themselves as separate and apart from the citizens whom they serve. In addition, the dangerous
nature of the job, the authority to use force, and the close bonds between officers who rely on
each other for safety and support may help to strengthen a “code of silence” among within the
ranks. Some researchers believe that common police skills and techniques such as use of
weapons, exercise of authority, and imposition of control can become ingrained in officers’

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7 Judith A. Waters & William Ussery, Police Stress: History, Contributing Factors, Symptoms, and Interventions, 30
POLICING: INT’L J. POLICE STRATEGIES & MGMT. 169, 170 (2007). The authors opine that the rate of
domestic violence is probably higher in law enforcement families.
(statement of Leanor Boulin-Johnson, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Family Studies, Department of Family
Resources and Human Development, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ)).
9 Still, the high rates are routinely reported on sites such as the National Center for Women and Policing. See, e.g.,
National Center for Women and Policing, http://www.womenandpolicing.org/violenceFS.asp (last visited Nov. 20,
2009).
12 Lonald D. Lott, Deadly Secrets; Violence in the Police Family, FBI L. ENFORCEMENT BULL, Nov. 1995,
available at http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Deadly+secrets%3a+violence+in+the+police+family.-a017788995. The
author is himself an officer who states that the unfavorable conditions of police work can make officers very poor
spouses, parents, and friends. He describes the tension between the code of silence among officers, and the fact that
administrators can only address problems when they become aware of those problems. Id.
behavior, and thus spill over into their home lives. These practices can combine to create a formidable abuser.

The law enforcement profession was forced to consider the problem of domestic violence committed by officers in the wake of the 1996 federal Lautenberg Amendment to the Gun Control Act. The amendment prohibited any person with a misdemeanor conviction—including police and military officers—from possessing firearms. Shortly after the provision’s enactment, law enforcement agencies’ response to domestic violence by officers underwent intense scrutiny in California. A highly publicized scandal involving the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) revealed 227 cases of violence by officers toward intimate partners and family members from 1990 to 1997; the United States Office of the Inspector General found that the LAPD consistently failed to address domestic violence complaints against its officers. In 1999, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), supported by the Office on Violence Against Women, published an issue paper on a Model Policy on Police Domestic Violence by its National Law Enforcement Policy Center. The Model Policy recommended that law enforcement administrators adopt some version of the policy, which emphasizes five main areas: prevention, education, and training; early warning and intervention; incident response protocols; victim safety and protection; and post-incident administrative and criminal case actions. The IACP published an updated Model Policy that year, but lamented that there was

In 2003, a tragic event highlighted the potentially devastating consequences of officer-involved domestic violence. David Brame, the police chief of the Tacoma Police Department in Washington gunned down his wife Crystal in a shopping center parking lot and then shot himself in the presence of their two children. Brame’s commission of murder and suicide made national news, and the spate of publicity included revelations of Brame’s prior threats and violence. The IACP published an updated Model Policy that year, but lamented that there was

13 Sandra S. Stone, Barriers to Safety for Victims of Police Domestic Violence, in DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY POLICE OFFICERS, 331 (Donald C. Sheehan ed., 2000).
14 See id.
16 Id. Researchers have expressed regret over the ability of officers’ agencies to circumvent the law. Kimberly A. Lonsway, Policies on Police Officer Domestic Violence: Prevalence and Specific Provisions within Large Police Agencies, 9 POLICE Q. 397, 398 (2006).
17 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE, OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT: HOW WELL DOES THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICE ITS OWN? (1997). The OIG found that the investigations lacked objectivity, that many times arrests were not made when they should have been, and that the disciplinary action was remarkably lenient (sixty percent of the complaints were dismissed). This evidence, which revealed a deep lack of internal accountability, resulted in the OIG making several recommendations on new policies to increase proper investigation of LAPD personnel involved in domestic violence cases.
19 POLICE OFFICER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, supra note 15.
20 See, e.g., Sandy Prabhu & N. Turner, Rising to the Challenge: Preventing Police Officer Domestic Violence, 67 THE POLICE CHIEF, 43, 45 (2000). The authors strongly advocate development of comprehensive policy and practice to best address police officer domestic violence. Id.
no consistency in administrative reaction to it. Some departments had an unequivocal zero-tolerance position, other departments had a less definite stance, and still others had not articulated a position at all. In late 2006, three years after the updated Model Policy was disseminated, and seven years after the original Model Policy was published, only 29 percent of the law enforcement agencies surveyed had specific policies in place to address the issue of officer-committed domestic violence.

II. FLORIDA’S RESPONSE AND THE FORMATION OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT FAMILIES PARTNERSHIP

Florida has shared other states’ experience with the problem of domestic violence. According to Florida’s 2008 Domestic Violence Fatality Report, domestic violence accounted for 189 (16%) of the entire state’s 1202 murders in 2007. That same year, 115,150 domestic violence incidents were reported, accounting for 34 percent of all violent offenses and simple assaults. As in other jurisdictions, it is difficult to determine precisely the extent of officer-involved domestic violence. In 2006 there were 44 domestic violence battery cases investigated by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. FDLE itself, however, acknowledges that it does not know whether these numbers reflect the actual incidence of officer-involved domestic violence.


23 MODEL POLICY, supra note 1 at 2.
24 Lonsway, supra note 13 at 400. The author, a researcher at California Polytechnic State University, conducted a study to determine the specific policies that pertain to officer-involved domestic violence. Using a national sample of 78 large police agencies, it was found that merely 23 agencies indicated such a policy existed. The only two provisions found in a majority of policies were those requiring the immediate notification of a supervisor in any case of officer-involved domestic violence as well as officers reporting themselves or other employees in incidents of domestic violence. Id.
27 The exact amount of domestic violence among officers has never been gauged. As Police Psychologist Dr. Lawrence Miller states, “potentially higher rates of abuse might be offset by lower rates of reporting by fellow officers” in Domestic violence in police families: Causes, effects & intervention strategies in Police One.com at http://www.policelife.com/health-fitness/articles/1350610-Domestic-violence-in-police-families-Causes-effects-intervention-strategies/ (last viewed June 3, 2009).
violence,”29 and studies have consistently maintained that domestic violence cases are chronically underreported.30

In 1999, Florida adopted Responding to Domestic Violence, Model Policy Number Two for Florida Law Enforcement.31 This policy, which was written to improve officer compliance with Florida’s pro-arrest laws codified in Florida Statutes 741.29,32 includes a one-page provision regarding officer-involved domestic violence. The Florida Police Chiefs Association, along with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, have agreed that although Florida does have a general domestic violence response, a thorough Model Policy specific to officer-involved domestic violence is necessary.33 Such a policy would allow departments across the state to highlight the problem and demonstrate their determination to tackle it. A specific Model Policy following the IACP template would also encourage departments to create and utilize innovative programs for prevention, early intervention, training, and targeted assistance to officers and their families on this critical issue.34

With this end in mind, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) in 2008 joined with the Institute for Family Violence Studies at Florida State University35 to focus more attention on officer-involved domestic violence.36 FDLE supported the idea of a long-term partnership involving the university, criminal justice community, and victim advocacy groups aimed at reducing and preventing the problem.37 The planned components of the LEFP included research on officer-involved domestic violence, a web-based prevention curriculum, and data

29 E-mail from Glen Hopkins, Training and Research Manager, Florida Dept. of Law Enforcement, (July 4, 2009) (on file with author) (confirming that FDLE does not know the actual amount of domestic violence, only those that result in disciplinary proceedings).

30 See, e.g., Enrique Gracia, Unreported Cases of Domestic Violence against Women: Towards an Epidemiology of Social Silence, Tolerance, and Inhibition, 58 J. EPIDEMIOLOGY & COMMUNITY HEALTH 536 (2004) (“[M]ost of the cases of domestic violence are unreported. That is, reported cases of domestic violence against women represent only a very small part of the problem when compared with prevalence data. This part of the problem is also known as the ‘iceberg’ of domestic violence…most of the cases are submerged, allegedly invisible to society.”)


33 The resulting Committee on Florida’s Model Policy on Officer-Involved Domestic Violence publishes its minutes on the Law Enforcement Families Partnership Website: http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF (last viewed December 1, 2009).

34 Lonsway at 419 (Id. at note 16).

35 The Institute for Family Violence Studies at Florida State University is an endowed Institute with a mission of “serv[ing] as a catalyst for the elimination of all forms of domestic violence.” Florida State University, Institute for Family Violence Studies, http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/IFVSG.php (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).

36 E-mail from Patricia Melton, Bureau Chief of Training, Florida Dept. of Law Enforcement, (on file with authors). Patricia Melton and Glen Hopkins represented FDLE while the program was developed. Id. FDLE is the lead law enforcement agency in Florida. FDLE’s duties, responsibilities and procedures are mandated through Chapter 943, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 11, Florida Administrative Code. Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Quick Facts, http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/3749abfa-3acc-4d9e-af97-3016b86cad/Quick-Facts.aspx (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).

37 See Press Release, Gerald M. Bailey, Commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (March 31, 2009) (“Florida’s officers are charged with protecting citizens, and they are held to the highest standards. This program makes critical training readily available. I know agencies of all sizes will be eager to take advantage of the program.”) available at http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF/Resources_LEF/PressRelease33109.pdf.
collection and analysis of a pre and post testing study tied to each module. It also included the creation of a task force to write a Florida Model Policy on Responses to Officer-Involved Domestic Violence; multi-media tie-ins for all agencies, such as posters and brochures for roll call rooms and agency displays, and outreach to educate officers’ families about domestic violence. Finally, the LEFP planned new written material on prevention geared toward agency administrators. FDLF provided the Institute with redacted records of officer-involved DV cases for research and training case scenarios.

The 2008 annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Florida Chiefs Association intensified the heightened attention to officer-involved domestic violence in the state. At the meeting, directors reviewed a list of newspaper articles from around Florida involving dozens of officers accused of domestic violence. The reported incidents included behavior such as choking, punching, hitting, beating, and killing their intimate partners and family members, as well as pushing them down stairs, shooting them, shocking them with stun guns, raping them, and threatening to kill them. The chiefs noted that the problem is not peculiar to Florida;

38 See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
39 The Institute for Family Violence Studies provides listing of members, minutes, and meetings. Florida State University, Institute for Family Violence Studies, supra note 32.
40 See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
42 See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
43 For a description of newspaper articles outlining alleged violent behaviors among law enforcement officers in the state of Florida, please see the list of news reports at http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF/Resources_LEF/Police_Officer_Domestic_Violence_Rep.pdf. Resources available to the general public, law enforcement officers, and the significant others of law enforcement officers is available at http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF/.
44 According to Florida Statutes, the criminal definition for domestic violence is “any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household member by another family or household member”. FLA. STAT. § 741.28(2) (2009).
45 See, e.g., Thomas W. Krause, Police Officer Charged with Stalking Gets One Year Probation, TAMPA TRIB., June 28, 2006, at Metro3 (James Cabble agreed to a plea deal in which he accepted a misdemeanor stalking charge after being accused of threatening the family members of an ex-girlfriend, and obsessively calling her – in excess of 200 times per day); Joe Brogan, Riviera Officer Charged with Stalking, PALM BEACH POST, Dec. 5, 2003, at 8C (After being placed on leave for stalking a second time during his eight year career, Claude Cosby was dismissed and charged with stalking); Adam L. Neal, Fellsmere Police Officer Accused of Domestic Violence Suspended with Pay, VERO BEACH PRESS J., May 23, 2006, at B1 (For the second time in a week, William Scott Wheeler was arrested on a domestic violence related crime. His live in girlfriend called police after Wheeler put blankets over her head punching her head and choking her until she passed out); Sofia Santana & Sallie James, Springs Officer Faces Domestic Battery Charge, S. FLA. SUN SENTINEL, Oct. 20, 2007, at 1B (Charles Mersch was arrested after his ex-wife accused him of throwing her to the ground, punching her in the right eye, and choking her); Opalocka Cop Charged with Assaulting His Wife, MIAMI HERALD, Sept. 29, 2005, at 3B (Vinnie Robinson was arrested outside of the hospital emergency room he took his wife to after the couple had a fight where he repeatedly punched her in the head causing injuries that required medical attention); Rochelle E.B. Gilken, Cop Charged with Hitting, Kicking Longtime Girlfriend, PALM BEACH POST, Nov. 18, 2006, at 9C (With an internal investigation already taking place, Lamar Ghent was arrested when his girlfriend called the Sheriff’s office after he slapped her, hit her in the arm,
accounts of officers committing domestic violence have been reported throughout the United States. Nevertheless, the chiefs, representing over 12,000 police officers at over 300 agencies,
immediately embraced the LEFP. Moreover, they committed their agencies to using a prevention curriculum at the earliest opportunity, displaying their eagerness by asking: “When can we have it?”

In the aftermath of the chiefs’ meeting, Institute staff approached individual agency heads about interest in the project. The response was surprisingly swift; within a few months, every major criminal justice agency in the state had agreed to be a partner in the LEFP, including the Florida Sheriff’s Association, representing the 67 Sheriff’s departments, the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), and the Florida Department of Corrections (DC). The Department of Juvenile Justice, whose officers are not certified, also asked to join the partnership. The Florida Council Against Sexual Violence and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence joined the partnership, and several university groups also signed on, including Florida State University’s College of Social Work, College of Law, and Family Institute. The rapid development of the LEFP team signified not only Florida agencies’ willingness to expand the requirements of the existing skeletal model policy, but also their broader interest in actively addressing domestic violence, which was already considered a violation of “good moral character” for officers under Florida’s Administrative Code.

III. ADOPTING AN INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM TO CHANGE AGENCY CULTURE

As criminal justice experts have noted, every police department has a culture—the unwritten rules, mores, customs, codes, values, and outlooks—that forms the overall departmental environment. The high-ranking supervisors in each agency are largely responsible for establishing that tone and culture. Accounts of the most egregious police misconduct, such as the Rodney King case in Los Angeles, the shooting of Amadou Diallo in New York, and other accounts of corruption and abuses, all emphasize the “blue wall” or “code of silence” that deters officers from reporting the misconduct of their colleagues. This code of silence, an

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47 See, e.g., Letter from Amy Mercer, Executive Director of the Florida Police Chief’s Association, to Karen Oehme, Director of the Institute for Family Violence Studies (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
48 Id.
49 Id.
50 Email from Maureen Honan, Operations Management Consultant with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, to Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies (April 1, 2009) (on file with authors).
52 FLA. ADMIN. CODE ANN. r. 11B-27.0011 (2009) (Domestic Violence is a violation of “good moral character”).
57 See, e.g., Myriam E. Gilles, breaking the Code of Silence: Rediscovering “Custom” in Section 1983 Municipal Liability, 80 B.U.L. REV. 17, 82 (2000) (recounting scandals involving police misconduct and stating that the pervasiveness of the police code of silence is evident in the reports by various ‘blue-ribbon’ commissions and task forces convened in recent years to study intractable police department problems, such as the use of excessive force and police corruption.)
unwritten rule and custom, has been called the “greatest single barrier to the effective investigation and adjudication of complaints” against officers. The code exerts a major impact on how average citizens perceive the police culture, further encouraging an “us-versus-them” dichotomy for both officers and citizens. It is this culture that some believe largely accounts for the frequent failure to report officer-involved domestic violence. It is this culture that the Law Enforcement Families Partnership and its pioneering curriculum were created to change.

In striving to alter the culture of tolerance of domestic violence, LEFP’s approach emphasizes prevention of such destructive conduct. This philosophy is consistent with national efforts, such as those of the Centers for Disease Control, to move toward “exploring ways to prevent violence against women before it occurs.” These efforts seek to transform the context that makes violence possible in the first place. Thus, the LEFP did not first attempt to sort out overlapping theories of causation: e.g., individual psychopathologies, biological theory,

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61 Id. at 213.
62 See, e.g., Behind the Blue Wall, a website describing officer-involved violence, at www.behindthebluewall.blogspot.com (last viewed on November 22, 2009).
63 See http://training.familyviolence.csw.fsu.edu/ (last viewed November 29, 2009).
65 Corinne M. Graffunder, et al, Through a Public Health Lens. Preventing Violence Against Women: An Update from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 13 J. WOMEN’S HEALTH 5, 6 (2004) (stating that it is necessary to change the paradigm and end, not just respond to, such violence).
66 Individual pathologies and dysfunctions can result from damaging early life experiences and are likely to be learned behaviors. See, e.g., Donald G. Dutton, Male Abusiveness in Intimate Relationships, 15 CLINICAL PSYCHOL. REV. 367, 369 (1995). Dutton states that “Broader aspects of early experience such as recollections of paternal rejection and shaming are strong contributors to an Abusive Personality. Shaming experiences and insecure attachment both appear to contribute to this link between parental treatment and subsequent personality. The Abusive Personality itself is highly correlated with both the Fearful attachment style and with BPO [Borderline Personality Organization]... The cognitive aspects of the Abusive Personality, especially its tendency to project/attribute blame to the intimate partner for felt dysphoria and to ruminate on these blaming attributions, serves as a strong maintenance mechanism for anger.” Id. Amy Holtzworth-Munroe, et al. Violent Versus Nonviolent Husbands: Differences in Attachment Patterns, Dependency, and Jealousy, 11 J. FAM. PSYCHOL. 314, 316 (1997) (Authors state that “Results were generally consistent with hypotheses that, relative to nonviolent husbands, violent men would evidence more insecure, preoccupied, and disorganized attachment (e.g., anxiety about abandonment, discomfort with closeness, and difficulty in classifying attachment); more dependency on and preoccupation with their wives; and more jealousy and less trust in their marriage.”); Lynn Magdol, et al. Gender Differences in Partner Violence in a Birth Cohort of 21-Year-Olds: Bridging the Gap Between Clinical and Epidemiological Approache, 65 J. CONSULTING & CLINICAL PSYCHOL. 68, 72 (1997). (Authors state that “Among perpetrators of severe physical violence, men had more extreme levels than did women of clinically relevant characteristics such as polydrug abuse, antisocial personality disorder, and depression.”).
67 The biological theory is based on factors such as genetics, brain chemistry altered by trauma, and other organic causes. See, e.g., Alan Rosenbaum & Stephen K. Hoge, Head Injury and Marital Aggression, 146 AMER. J. PSYCHOL. 1948, 1949 (1989). (Authors comment “Thus the rate of head injury found in our sample (61.3%) far exceeds that found in the population at large” (5.9%).); Bruce D. Perry, Incubated in Terror: Neurodevelopmental Factors in the "Cycle of Violence", in CHILDREN IN A VIOLENT SOCIETY 123 (Joy D. Osofsky ed., Guilford Press 1997) (Author states that “Neurodevelopmental experiences of trauma or neglect alter a variety of brain areas and functions important in predisposing to violence.”).
couple and family interaction theory, social learning and development theory, societal structure theory, and feminist theory. While all of these theories may have some role in

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68 Some researchers believe that couple and family interaction may provide the context for understanding an individual’s violent behavior. See FAMILY VIOLENCE FROM A COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE 7 (Dudley Dean Cahn & Sally A. Lloyd, eds. Sage Publications, Inc. 1996) (“According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis, when goal attainment is blocked frustration increases and, as a result, persons become more aggressive, increasingly more threatening, and eventually violent.”); Richard E. Heyman & Peter H. Neidig, Physical Aggression Couples Treatment, in CLINICAL HANDBOOK OF MARRIAGE AND COUPLES INTERVENTION 589 (W.K. Halford & H.J. Markman eds., John Wiley and Sons 1997); Julia C. Babcock, et al., Power and Violence: The Relation between Communication Patterns, Power Discrepancies, and Domestic Violence, 61 J. CONSULTING & CLINICAL PSYCHOL. 40, 40 (1993) (Babcock argues “… violence may be compensatory behavior to make up for husbands’ lack of power in other arenas of marriage.”).

69 Social learning and development theory posits that families, along with the larger society, support violence as acceptable behavior and allow it to continue. See, e.g., Robert E. Emery & Lisa Laumann-Billings, An Overview of the Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Abusive Family Relationships: Toward Differentiating Maltreatment and Violence, 53 AMER. PSYCHOL. 121 (1998). Gerald T. Hotaling & David B. Sugarman, An Analysis of Risk Markers in Husband to Wife Violence: The Current State of Knowledge, 1 VIOLENCE & VICTIMS 101, 101 (1986). (Authors state that “Only witnessing violence in the wife’s family of origin was consistently associated with being victimized by violence.”); DAVID A. WOLFE, CHILD ABUSE: IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY 62 (2d ed. 1999) (“Drawn largely from clinical and developmental research on parent-child interactions, psychological viewpoints explained the causes of child abuse in terms of a dynamic interplay between individual, family, and social factors, in relation to both past events, such as exposure to abuse as a child, and present events, such as a demanding child.”); David S. Riggs & K. Daniel O’Leary, A Theoretical Model of Courtship Aggression, in VIOLENCE IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS 53 (M.A. Pirog-Good & J.E. Stets eds., Praeger Publishers 1989); Debra Kalmus, The Intergenerational Transmission of Marital Aggression, 47 J. MARRIAGE & FAM. 11, 11 (1984) (Kalmus argues that “Observing hitting between one’s parents is more strongly related to involvement in severe marital aggression than is being hit as a teenager by one’s parent.”); Joan I. Vondra, The Community Context of Child Abuse, 15 MARRIAGE & FAM. REV. 19, 26-27 (1990) (Vondra states that “In the context of high-volume expression of violence in the media, the probability that child care will drift into child maltreatment no doubt increases proportionately.” “Maltreating adults appear to share a common history characterized by insecure, unstable, and/or pathological relations with their parent(s).”).

69 Others believe that the power inequalities of the entire social structure must be examined to adequately explain the presence of domestic violence. See, e.g., THE CANADIAN PANEL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE: ENDING VIOLENCE-ACHIEVING EQUALITY (The Panel 1993); Eve S. Buzawa & Carl G. Buzawa, Domestic Violence: The Criminal Justice Response (3d ed., Sage Publications 2003) (Authors argue that “In a real sense, structured gender inequality existed both in the home and in the institutions designed to mainstream Western cultural and family values.”); Michael D. A. Freeman, Violence Against Women: Does the Legal System Provide Solutions or Itself Constitute the Problem? 7 BRIT. J. L. SOC’Y. 216, 216 (1980); (Freeman states that “The legal system plays a significant part in producing this for it operates in such a way as to impose particular structural forms on social relationships both within and without the family. It reproduces an ideology about the family which not only makes violence against women understandable but almost makes it necessary.”); David Levinson, FAMILY VIOLENCE IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE (Sage Publications 1989) (Found that in 90 societies studied worldwide, 16 of them had rare or nonexistent occurrences of family violence. Characteristics of these societies included natural support systems and emphasis on peaceful conflict. In addition, sexual equality was a common factor (in decision making and lack of double standards).

70 Others believe that the power inequalities of the entire social structure must be examined to adequately explain the presence of domestic violence. See, e.g., THE CANADIAN PANEL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, supra note 49; Buzawa supra note 49, at 67 (Authors argue that “In a real sense, structured gender inequality existed both in the home and in the institutions designed to mainstream Western cultural and family values.”); Freeman, supra note 49, at 216 (Freeman states that “The legal system plays a significant part in producing this for it operates in such a way as to impose particular structural forms on social relationships both within and without the family. It reproduces an ideology about the family which not only makes violence against women understandable but almost makes it necessary.”); Levinson, supra note 49 (Found that in 90 societies studied worldwide, 16 of them had rare or nonexistent occurrences of family violence. Characteristics of these societies included natural support systems and
explaining why a batterer is violent toward an intimate partner, the LEFP instead began by focusing on ensuring that officers understand what behavior is unacceptable and what consequences will result from such behavior. The goals of the partnership are to educate officers about the crime of officer-involved domestic violence, to create a law enforcement culture that condemns officer-involved domestic violence and holds offenders accountable, and to prevent violence by encouraging officers to seek help so that they do not become offenders. Thus, the primary means of prevention is to discourage the impulse to violence before it erupts, and to adopt strategies to avert both first-time perpetration and first-time victimization.

The Institute worked with FDLE to develop a standardized web-based curriculum that would be utilized by officers. The three types of officers referred to by the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC) are law enforcement, corrections, and corrections probation officers. Officers are required to have forty hours of retraining credit every four years. FDLE agreed that if agency heads approved the content, officers could receive mandatory retraining credit for taking the training. Six modules are expected by the end of 2010. The first two modules (similar to chapters) of the curriculum were released in April, 2009. The Dynamics of Officer-Involved Domestic Violence, and the Consequences of Officer-

emphasized on peaceful conflict. In addition, sexual equality was a common factor (in decision making and lack of double standards).

71 Feminist theory is focused on deeply-rooted gender inequality and misogyny. See, e.g., Kristin L. Anderson, Gender, Status, and Domestic Violence: An integration of Feminist and Family Violence Approaches, 59 J. MARRIAGE & FAM. 654, 655 (1997) (Arguing that domestic violence is rooted in gender and power and represents men’s active attempts to maintain dominance and control over women.); Kersti Yllo, Through a Feminist Lens: Gender, Power, and Violence, in CURRENT CONTROVERSIES ON FAMILY VIOLENCE 47, (R.J. Gelles & D.R. Loseke eds., Sage Publications 1993) (Author states that “Despite this complexity, the most fundamental feminist insight into all of this is quite simple: Domestic violence cannot be adequately understood unless gender and power are taken into account.”) See, Michael P. Johnson, Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: Two Forms of Violence Against Women, 57 J. MARRIAGE & FAM. 283, 284 (1995) (Johnson argues that “The first form of couple violence, which I will call patriarchal terrorism, has been the focus of the women’s movement and of researchers working in the feminist perspective. Patriarchal terrorism, a product of patriarchal traditions of men’s right to control ‘their’ women, is a form of terroristic control of wives by their husbands that involves the systematic use of not only violence, but economic subordination, threats, isolation, and other control tactics.”); Kristin L. Anderson & Debra Umberson, Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men’s Accounts of Domestic Violence, 15 GENDER & SOC’Y. 358, 358 (2001) (States that “This study suggests that violence against female partners is a means by which batterers reproduce a binary framework of gender.”).

72 For a discussion of the different theories of causation of domestic violence generally, see, e.g., David A. Wolfe & Peter G. Jaffe, Emerging Strategies in the Prevention of Domestic Violence, 9 FUTURE OF CHILD. 133 (1999).

73 Officer-Involved Domestic Violence: A Prevention Curriculum, supra note 5.

74 See, e.g., Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DElTA), http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/DElTA/default.htm (last visited Nov. 20, 2009). In keeping with these goals, the Partnership also seeks to educate family members of officers about domestic violence. Id.


76 For a complete description of the CJSTC, see Id.


78 See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
*Involved Domestic Violence* have streaming video, audio clips, case scenarios with questions to consider, and research-based content.\(^79\)

Module One (*The Dynamics of Officer Involved Domestic Violence*), is an introductory module. It is designed to have officers reflect on the behavior that constitutes the crime of domestic violence, and repeatedly reminds trainees that Florida officers have been perpetrators of the same crimes that they are charged with preventing.\(^80\) The result is that officers are not only reminded of domestic violence dynamics, but are also encouraged to “look in the mirror,” as one officer put it.\(^81\) The module emphasizes personal, professional, agency, and community costs of officer-perpetrated domestic violence, and appeals to officers to examine their own behavior.\(^82\) A pointed dichotomy outlined in a chart is the cornerstone of the module. It demonstrates how skills that are part of the officer’s job on the street become humiliating, intimidating, and abusive when applied to intimate partners and family members.\(^83\) For example, using law enforcement surveillance tools and techniques, though essential for tracking suspects on the job, will constitute stalking when used against intimate partners.\(^84\) Likewise, it may be necessary for an officer to exhibit “command presence” to keep order on the streets; when applied at home, however, this forceful authoritarianism can be menacing and frightening to intimate partners. A chart separating “An officer on the job” and “An officer at home” encourages officers to recognize how exercise of job skills must be consciously differentiated from demeanor at home.\(^85\) The module repeatedly reminds officers that domestic violence is a choice\(^86\) --whether committed by officer or civilian--and that all perpetrators must be held accountable for their actions.\(^87\)

Case scenarios drawn from real-life incidents demonstrate what the crimes of domestic violence, stalking, battery, and sexual assault can look like when they are perpetrated by law enforcement and corrections officers. The module also describes how a colleague might become aware of evidence of a partner’s stalking tactics and violence. Questions encourage the participant in the curriculum to consider how one would react to a colleague’s behavior if that officer were a *civilian* instead. Then participants are asked to reflect on the abusive behavior described, and on the possibility that the officer committing the behavior was still considered a

\(^79\) See [http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF](http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/LEF) (last viewed November 29, 2009).

\(^80\) Officer-Involved Domestic Violence: A Prevention Curriculum, (hereinafter “Prevention Curriculum”) Module One, page 9. The Curriculum is pass-word protected; access will be provided to publishing journal.

\(^81\) E-mail from Officer Tom Clark, Training Coordinator, Palm Beach Shores Police Department to Karen Oehme (June 20, 2009) (on file with authors) (“Our training [under the LEFP curriculum] is about ‘them’ and is never presented in a fashion that has us looking in a mirror. This training is geared to do just that….”).

\(^82\) Prevention Curriculum, *supra* note 78; Module One, page 16.

\(^83\) The chart can be previewed at [http://training.familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/preview/mod-1/cop-home-job](http://training.familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/preview/mod-1/cop-home-job) (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).

\(^84\) Stalking includes following, harassing, or cyberstalking another person knowingly, willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly. FLA. STAT. § 784.048 (2009).

\(^85\) Id.


\(^87\) See, e.g., Rekha Mirchandani, *Battered Women's Movement Ideals and Judge-led Social Change in Domestic Violence Courts*, 13 GOOD SOC’Y 32, 34 (2004) (reviewing the history of domestic violence courts and contending that these specialized courts understand the importance of batterers themselves acknowledging the criminal act of battery and being accountable for the crime by accepting the court-imposed consequences).
supportive, highly acclaimed, or decorated colleague.\textsuperscript{88} The intent of these questions is to encourage officers to recognize that numerous highly ranked and decorated officers have been batterers (i.e., criminals) at home.

The curriculum acknowledges that jobs in law enforcement are stressful and demanding.\textsuperscript{89} Officers are reminded in multimedia presentations to seek help if they need it, and a video of a human resources officer advises officers of ways to obtain assistance before they “get into trouble.”\textsuperscript{90} The tone of the module is patient but firm. The training is not a batterer intervention program; it is designed to encourage officers to seek help and to avoid becoming perpetrators.\textsuperscript{91} Since it will likely take time to overcome officers’ belief that seeking help creates impressions of dependence, incompetence, and inferiority,\textsuperscript{92} the attempt to increase and normalize officers’ willingness to seek assistance is considered a long-term goal.\textsuperscript{93}

Module One also attempts to build empathy for all victims of domestic violence by identifying numerous reasons why victims often do not report domestic violence.\textsuperscript{94} In addition, this section connects the officer’s experiences on the street to general domestic violence dynamics, encouraging officers to link their knowledge to the commission of the crime by officers rather than by “other people.” For example, when discussing a common batterer’s tactic of destroying a victim’s property to inflict emotional harm, the module reminds officers:

\begin{quote}
Officers understand that the respect of property is an important part of a peaceful society. On the job, they witness firsthand the consequences of loss or intentional
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{88} See, email from Carol Hendrix, Human Resources Officer, Tallahassee Police Department, to Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
\textsuperscript{89} See, e.g., James D. Sewell, \textit{Dealing with Employee Stress: How Managers can Help – or Hinder – Their Personnel}, FBI L. ENFORCEMENT BULL., July 2006, at 1 (“Stress is a critical issue within contemporary organizations and society. For law enforcement agencies, it can arise from a variety of sources. For example, stress may stem from circumstances or incidents that occurred as a result of the unique nature of an officer’s job or personal life issues.”); Donald C. Sheehan & Vincent B. van Hasselt, \textit{Identifying Law Enforcement Stress Reactions Early}, FBI L. ENFORCEMENT BULL., Sept. 2003, at 12 (listing the numerous job-related issues that increase stress and exhaustion in law enforcement officers).
\textsuperscript{90} See, email from Carol Hendrix, Human Resources Officer, Tallahassee Police Department, to Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
\textsuperscript{91} Id.
\textsuperscript{93} The United States military has experienced similar problems with military personnel who are resistant to reaching out for help. According to researchers, only two out of five troops who have mental health problems have sought assistance. There is still stigma against mental health treatment within members of the military, and troops do not want to appear weak. Army personnel now have access to programs such as Combat Stress Control. Navy and Marines have a program called Operational Stress Control and Readiness. These programs are meant to provide mental health services overseas. Mark Greer, \textit{A New Kind of War}, 36 American Psychological Association Monitor on Psychology 40 (2005), available at http://www.apa.org/monitor/apr05/405war.html (last viewed December 2, 2009). Likewise, the military’s web-based suicide prevention campaign tries to remove stigma from seeking help. “Military personnel are highly reluctant to ask for help when they are depressed because they do not want to be seen as weak.” Kevin Caruso: Suicide Prevention in the Military, http://www.suicide.org/suicide-prevention-in-the-military.html (last visited Dec. 4, 2009). There are a number of resources for officers, such as Military One Source, which helps veterans and their families. http://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/suicide/ (last viewed December 2, 2009).
\textsuperscript{94} Brian K. Payne, \textit{Domestic Violence and Criminal Justice Training Needs of Social Services Workers}, 36 J. CRIM. JUST. 190 (2008) (discussing literature which suggests that police and other criminal justice professionals need more training about how to be understanding toward the specific needs of domestic violence victims).
damage to a victim’s property. An officer must respect these same sentiments and avoid making a family member a victim.  

In this way, the curriculum seeks to connect general domestic violence information to the officer’s own personal circumstances.

In addition to encouraging officers to seek help, the module attempts to foster a culture that condemns domestic violence by urging officers to take action when they know or suspect that a colleague is a perpetrator. Research has found no state other than Washington that explicitly trains and reminds all officers to recognize and report domestic violence among colleagues. The ethical and professional dilemmas associated with sharing suspicions with a supervising officer or with internal affairs are discussed in a chart designed to anticipate and address objections to reporting. For example, under “Common Reactions of Officers Reluctant to Report” is the fear that “If I tell what I know, no one will back me up on the street.” The response to that fear includes the information that “[t]here are ways to report anonymously” and an appeal to concern for the agency and the profession: “No officer wants to see the profession tainted by an officer committing violence against his/her family.” Officers are reminded that they have several options for reporting, including reports to supervisors or internal affairs at his/her agency, either openly or anonymously. In a sense, the curriculum illuminates the rationale for the 1999 policy’s directive that “any officer who witnesses or otherwise has first-hand or well-founded knowledge of a domestic violence incident involving another officer in the department must report that incident to a supervisor who will cause an investigation to be initiated.” The curriculum explains that domestic violence affects an officer’s ability to perform his or her duty as well as the officer’s actions toward domestic violence on the street.

In addition, this section lists behavior that may indicate problems of colleagues.

The section in Module One explaining what behavior may indicate that a colleague is violent toward an intimate partner recites many of the behaviors listed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, but Module Four contains a more in-depth discussion of these behaviors specifically for supervisory personnel. The messages of Module One are reinforced by wallet-sized laminated affirmation cards that were sent to all agencies for officers who take the training. The cards include a short checklist, reminding officers in writing that “As an Officer of the State of Florida, I will be a good example by keeping my own family free of domestic violence; get help when I need it; and report suspicion of anyone committing domestic violence,

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95 Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module One, page 12.
96 Washington State, Office of the Attorney General, Officer-Involved Domestic Violence Training (June 11, 2004), http://www.atg.wa.gov/page.aspx?id=2348 (providing online materials which can be used as training on officer-involved domestic violence).
98 Id. Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module One, page 28.
99 Id. Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module Two, page 5.
100 Id. Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module Two, page 5.
101 THE FLORIDA LAW ENFORCEMENT RESEARCH COALITION, supra note 29 at 20.
102 Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module One, page 24.
103 Id. Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module One, page 28.
104 See, email from Carol Hendrix, Human Resources Officer, Tallahassee Police Department, to Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
including fellow officers.”

Admittedly, the cards and poster possess no independent ability to solve the tragedy of domestic violence. Rather, they represent one small part of an ongoing campaign to raise awareness and to shift traditional police culture. After all, researchers suggest that the “blue wall of silence” is common among police departments. In one study, 79% of police officers stated that they were aware of the code of silence discouraging officers from reporting the behavior of their colleagues, and 46% of officers acknowledged having witnessed misconduct but not reported it. When affirmation cards are circulated to officers by the agency head, these cards also serve as a reminder of the top administrator’s commitment to preventing officer violence. As one author put it:

It is the Chief who sets the tone for the department. This tone directly influences what officers perceive as acceptable or unacceptable behavior. The Chief can provide the leadership critical to eliminating domestic violence in the ranks by adopting a clear position of zero tolerance.

The multimedia approach to Module One includes a video in which police officers from across the state speak directly to their colleagues. Individual officers first describe a “good cop” who is trustworthy, brave, and true, and then list behavior in which a good cop does not engage; these include beating, hitting, and stalking loved ones. The video crescendos with the declaration that “a good cop doesn’t commit domestic violence.” Copies of a large glossy poster have been circulated throughout the state for roll-call room display; in the poster, an officer’s family reminds everyone that “there is no code of silence and no excuse for domestic violence.” The posters were designed to reinforce the messages of the training.

Domestic violence is often described as a method of control. If officers--trained to use control techniques as part of their day-to-day employment--are uncertain about the consequences of abusing those techniques at home, Module Two organizes the ramifications into clear agency, criminal, and professional consequences. A video of a circuit court judge reminds officers that if they commit domestic violence, “your badge will not protect you.” Several case scenarios demonstrate how an officer’s certification can be suspended or revoked, regardless of the agency

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105 FSU and Florida’s Criminal Justice Community Join Forces To Prevent Officer-Involved Domestic Violence, supra note 2 at 2.
109 Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module One, page 9.
110 See, e.g., email between Roy Hudson, Florida Sheriffs Association and Karen Oehme (April 27, 2009)(on file with authors) describing the mailings of multimedia materials and financial responsibility of the Florida Sheriffs Association.
111 Angela M. Moe, Silenced Voices and Structured Survival: Battered Women’s Help Seeking, 13 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN 676 (2007) (“According to Ptacek, the combination of coercive control tactics by abusers, and social and institutional failures to adequately address battering, are largely responsible for the entrapment of battered women.”).
112 Prevention Curriculum, supra note 78, Module Two, page 11.
response to the violence or the severity of the criminal court penalties. The makeup and role of the Standards and Training Commission are described at length, emphasizing the complex nature of investigations of accused officers. The Chair of the Standards and Training Commission, Chief Jay Romine, is featured in a video discussing the costs of domestic violence to officer perpetrators and their families. Elsewhere, Romine has offered his assessment of the importance of the curriculum:

This training is relevant and contains very useful material that will assist our criminal justice officers... It dispels many of the myths surrounding domestic violence in the criminal justice community and makes a very pointed effort to address this very difficult issue.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP CURRICULUM: THE NEXT PHASE

While Chief Romine’s comments illustrate agencies’ positive response to the Partnership, several challenges remain to completing and disseminating the curriculum. First, in 2008-2009 Florida, like many other states, experienced a severe fiscal crisis that reduced the budgets of all the agencies in the Partnership. Thus, the project survived only because of the endowment of the Institute, and the effort of many university and other state employees who offered their services without compensation.

113 Id. at Module Two, pages 7-9.
114 Each agency is statutorily required to have a system to receive complaints against officers. This system must be responsible to "receive, investigate, and make a determination in regards to complaints." FLA. STAT. § 112.533(1)(a) (2009). Every law enforcement agency and correctional agency shall establish and put into operation a system for the receipt, investigation, and determination of complaints received by such agency from any person, which shall be the procedure for investigating a complaint against a law enforcement and correctional officer and for determining whether to proceed with disciplinary action or to file disciplinary charges, notwithstanding any other law or ordinance to the contrary. In addition to administering its own punishment, the agency must report sustained complaints to the criminal courts, if so warranted, and to the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC). The CJSTC certifies all law enforcement officers in the state. The discipline from the Commission is separate and distinct from an agency or criminal consequence. If the officer’s certification is revoked, he/she cannot work as a certified law enforcement officer in the state of Florida. FLA. STAT. § 943.12 (2009). Powers, duties, and functions of the commission are also described in Florida Statutes § 112.533. They include certifying and revoking the certification of officers.
115 E-mail from Glen Hopkins, Florida Department of Law Enforcement to Karen Oehme (June 25, 2009) (on file with the authors).
116 See, e.g., Death Penalty and Taxes: In Cutting Public Safety Budgets, Consider the Cost of the ‘Ultimate Punishment’, SARASOTA HERALD-TRIB., Feb. 17, 2009, at A08 (Editorial bemoaning the fact that dozens of probation officers and about 100 positions at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement were cut; counties are trimming sheriff’s personnel, and many jails are overcrowded.); Crist Budget Addresses Florida ‘Crisis’ News-Press, Feb. 21, 2009 (discussing the state’s fiscal crisis); Dara Kam & Michael C. Bender, Crist’s Budget Taps Into Reserves, PALM BEACH POST, Feb. 1, 2008, at 1A (discussing cuts to higher education, health administration, and a variety of social services and state agencies).
117 For a list of the people who contributed valuable time and effort into coordination of the project, see Officer-Involved Domestic Violence: A Prevention Curriculum, About this Curriculum and the Law Enforcement Families Partnership, http://training.familvio.csw.fsu.edu/about-curriculum (last visited Nov. 20, 2009); Judge George S. Reynolds, a circuit court judge involved in the project, nominated the Partnership for a “Florida Tax Watch/ Davis Productivity Award” for the work by university and agency employees. E mail from Judge George Reynolds to Karen Oehme (September 29, 2009, on file with the authors).
Second, the sheer number of law enforcement agencies and officers in Florida presents difficulties in ensuring that the curriculum reaches substantially all of the state’s officers. Because Florida has hundreds of agencies, it has been necessary to coordinate constantly through state leaders to reach the individual agencies. Chief Romine and Amy Mercer, the Executive Director of the Florida Police Chiefs Association, agreed to serve as active liaisons with the chiefs of over 300 individual police departments, sending out directions, passwords, and reminders to police agencies. The President of the Florida Sheriff’s Association has performed the same role for the 67 Sheriff’s Departments in the state. In addition, the size and geographic scope of the intended audience effectively dictated the medium of the curriculum. The Partnership chose a web-based format, as opposed to a bound training manual, to reduce the cost and enhance the accessibility of the curriculum. Research also suggests that online curricula may be helpful in expanding users’ ability to learn new ideas and facts, and to set up virtual academic institutions, especially for continuing education.

Third, the necessity of keeping costs as low as possible, coupled with the desire to tie meaningful research to the curriculum in the form of anonymous voluntary pre- and post-testing, confine the curriculum exclusively to an electronic version. This constraint generates a number of practical challenges. With no hard copy available for general dissemination, officers must have computers to view the curriculum. Nor does simple access to a computer suffice. Internet access, as well as basic software such as Adobe Acrobat and Windows Media Player, are needed to view videos, listen to sound clips, and print certificates of completion. The Institute has been working with individual agencies to resolve simple agency access issues. For example, many agencies do not allow officers to watch videos on training computers, so the necessary software has not been downloaded onto agency equipment. To surmount this obstacle, agencies have arranged designated computers onto which appropriate software is loaded so that officers can view the videos. Moreover, many officers simply do not have access to computers on the job. This problem is especially acute at the Florida Department of Corrections, where

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118 For a listing of all the police agencies, see the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s website: http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/a8e620e3-f084-44ca-ab7f-a44a1263d8a3/Police-Department-Directory-(1).aspx (police departments) and College & University Police: http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/b248b2e5-aec9-4fb2-b11a-45320604d9e0/State-Agencies-Directory-(1).aspx. There are also 67 Sheriff’s offices. Sheriff Directory, http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/11e74857-8920-4f66-8734-b447076e566d/Sheriffs-Directory-(1).aspx (last visited Nov. 20, 2009)
119 See, e.g., E-mail from Amy Mercer, Priority High, to Chiefs of Police in Florida (June 23, 2009) (on file with author).
120 See E-mail from Sheriff Bill Farmer, President of the Florida Sheriff’s Association, to all Sheriff Departments in the state (November 1, 2009)(on file with authors).
121 See, e.g., E-mail from Amy Mercer, Priority High, to Chiefs of Police in Florida (June 23, 2009) (on file with author).
122 Ananda Mitra, Suchi Joshi, et al., Demographic Differences and Attitudes Toward Computers Among Health Care Professionals Earning Continuing Education Credits Online, 35 J. EDUC. COMPUTING RES. 31, 36 (2006). See, also Nick Fox, Alan O’Rourke, et al., Change Management in Primary Care: Design and Evaluation of an Internet-delivered Course, 35 MED. EDUC. 803, 804 (2001) (Interviews with subjects indicated that the main advantages of taking an internet-based course were the convenience and flexibility provided by distance learning.).
123 See, e.g., E-mail from Amy Mercer, Priority High, to Chiefs of Police in Florida (June 23, 2009) (on file with authors).
124 Id.
officers typically work in secure facilities and are restricted from using the Internet.\textsuperscript{125} To overcome this limitation, the Institute has worked with the Department to develop an alternate way to use the curriculum. In this modified approach, officers are gathered with a department trainer in a traditional classroom setting, where the trainer accesses the curriculum and projects it onto a screen. The voluntary pre- and post-tests are collected by the trainer and mailed to the Institute to be hand-counted by graduate students.\textsuperscript{126} This alternate method may eventually enable the Institute to compare the online cumulative tests to the paper-and-pencil results; researchers may then be able to determine whether there are any meaningful differences in the officers’ responses.\textsuperscript{127}

Finally, the honor system employed by the curriculum and by the anonymous online system raises concerns that it may be too easy for officers to “cheat.” Because it is essential to have pre- and post-testing tied to the modules, strict anonymity is required for those who take the training. LEFP researchers did not have confidence that officers would answer the questions honestly if they had to enter their names or even their agencies into the online database. In addition, the Internal Review Board at Florida State University was assured that no identities would be tracked in the system that collects answers.\textsuperscript{128} As a consequence, an officer so inclined can simply click through the training and print a certificate. To address this problem, many agencies have added a second layer of verification to the training. Once an officer provides the training certificate to his or her supervisor (to be kept in the personnel file as evidence for retraining credit), the officer must sign a department log verifying that he or she indeed took the training.

With these challenges in mind, the Partnership plans to bring four new modules to the online curriculum in 2010. One of these is entitled “The Officer as Victim,” and discusses primary and secondary victimization.\textsuperscript{129} This module seeks to debunk the myth that officers themselves are immune from domestic violence, while building understanding and empathy for all victims of domestic violence. The frequent inquiry “Why does she stay?”\textsuperscript{130} is turned into a frank and empathetic discussion of the numerous reasons that victims—even officers who are victims—choose not to leave or even reveal a violent intimate relationship. Issues such as gay and lesbian partnerships, private concerns, and community prejudices are discussed. The cornerstone of the module is a video of an officer whose friend—also an officer—was murdered.

\textsuperscript{125} See, Email from Deborah Dolan, Human Resource Manager, Florida Department of Corrections, to Karen Oehme (November 30, 2009) (on file with the authors).
\textsuperscript{126} Id.
\textsuperscript{127} Id. In addition to computers, printers are necessary to obtain the certificates of completion for each module. If an officer’s computer is not hooked up to a printer or if the officer lacks a printer, the Institute must verify with supervisory staff that the officer has completed the curriculum and then issue an individual certificate to that individual by email. The Institute has many emails from officers across Florida asking for assistance with certificates of training. See email from agencies (on file with authors) (asking for assistance with certificates).
\textsuperscript{128} See, e.g., E-mail from Amy Mercer, Priority High, to Chiefs of Police in Florida (June 23, 2009) (on file with author).
\textsuperscript{129} See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).
by her husband. During the officer’s testimonial, the 911 tape of the incident is played in the background.

Other modules are for supervisory staff only, with new tools for prevention and intervention to be incorporated into routine administration instead of sporadic use.\textsuperscript{131} Tied to these modules are self-tests on substance abuse and violence, designed for an officer to print out and take privately.\textsuperscript{132} Scoring helps an officer to identify when assistance should be sought. An advertising campaign, with information cards mailed to the home addresses of officers, will provide the statewide domestic violence hotline number, as well as facts about domestic violence, to the adults living with officers. In addition, the partners of the LEFP are working to improve Florida’s Model Policy on Officer-Involved Domestic Violence. Several other states already have model policies; those most closely tracking the IACP’s model are in North Dakota, New Jersey, and Washington State.\textsuperscript{133} A future module will introduce Florida’s new statewide policy.

\textsuperscript{131} See email from Karen Oehme, Director, Institute for Family Violence Studies, to Glen Hopkins, Professional Compliance and Trust Fund Manager, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (November 30, 2009) (on file with authors).

\textsuperscript{132} Id.

V. THE INITIAL DATA: EXTRACTING PROVISIONAL LESSONS

A study, based on a series of voluntary pre- and post-tests designed by the research team, accompanies each online module. Study questions track the objectives for each module, examining the officers’ knowledge in the wide range of topics presented. The attitudes and beliefs questions use standard instruments gathered from a variety of published sources. The number of respondents (N=X) varies according to the number of officers who chose to answer each individual question. The questions seek to elicit information about the effectiveness of the training intervention; about participants’ knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about officer-committed domestic violence; and about participant’s self-reported experiences of mental and physical health issues, such as stress. Over the long term, these data will assist the team with investigating self-reported variables such as depression and related products of stress such as alcohol use.

A. Summary of Results

Admittedly, the first set of data is not drawn from a fully representative sample of officers. In the first three months of use, participants in the online training and testing comprised predominantly white, heterosexual male, married police officers. A large majority of respondents (N=933) who took Module One Pre-Test were police officers (786, 84.2%). Of the remaining respondents, 10% responded as “other”; only 38 identified themselves as deputies (4%). This disproportion may be attributable to the manner in which the program was introduced. The project was announced in waves, with the Florida Police Chiefs Association ensure that the response is properly documented and that agency policy has been followed. Whenever possible the supervisor shall respond to and take charge of the scene.” Also, pp. 95 – 106 discusses procedures for officers who are enjoined by a personal protection order. Model Domestic Violence Policy for the Maryland Law Enforcement Community (April 2004) available at http://www.mdle.net/dvpolicy04.pdf. Page 36 of this policy states that when determining if an arrest should be made, the responding officer should disregard the fact that the suspect is a fellow law enforcement officer or supervisor, public official, or person of stature in the community. Page 71 discusses respondents who are law enforcement officers and the weapons and protective orders. Page 93 – 94 discusses cases where either party in a domestic violence situation is a member of a criminal justice agency. Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Responding to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Alabama Law Enforcement Agencies (2004) available at http://www.acadv.org/LawenforcementGuidelines.pdf. Page 9 section 7A. states that law enforcement agencies are encouraged to develop policies regarding responses to law enforcement officers who are perpetrators or victims of domestic violence, however, only provides the ICAP’s model policy and does not outline any specifics. State of Tennessee, Domestic Violence Law Enforcement Model Policy (March 1997) available at http://www.tcadsv.org/benchbook/2007%20benchbook/8LawEnfPolicy.pdf. This Policy is a guide for law enforcement agencies to develop policies that address domestic violence in general. Part C on page 4 details the suggested response to officer involved domestic violence in one sentence: “When officers respond to a domestic violence call and the victim or offender is a law enforcement officer, the officers will call the line supervisor to the scene.” Section XIV discusses trainings that should be implemented to inform officers, yet no training addressing officer involved domestic violence is included.

Study data were collected using SNAP survey software (v.9) SNAP Survey Software (version 9) [computer software]. (2007). Portsmouth, NH: Snap Surveys Ltd. http://www.snapsurveys.com/software/ (last visited Nov. 20, 2009). Participant responses are kept confidential in several ways. Participants are routed away from the LEPF website for separate data collection. Officers use anonymous IDs that can assist researchers with tracking answers across modules, with a focus on the changes that may occur as a result of exposure to the prevention curriculum. Responses are recorded using the anonymous IDs which are encoded in the URL.
becoming the first agency to disseminate a statewide call for its officers to take the training in the
spring.\footnote{The Florida Police Chiefs Association issued its announcement in April, 2009. See email from Amy Mercer, Executive Director of the Florida Chiefs of Police to Karen Oehme (April 10, 2009)(on file with authors).} Moreover, the Chair of the Standards and Training Commission is himself a police chief who was actively involved in the creation of the project.\footnote{See, e.g., About this Curriculum: \url{http://training.familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/about-curriculum} (last viewed December 3, 2009).} Still, the full first year of data will likely show a less lopsided participation, as the Florida Sheriff’s Association began encouraging deputies to take the training in the fall.\footnote{See email from Sheriff Bill Farmer, Sheriff of Sumter County, to Karen Oehme (Nov. 2, 2009) (on file with authors).}

Among police officers in the current study (N=694\footnote{The N size decreased when Module One and Module Two data sets were merged in order to have the variables for race and officer type (police, correctional, etc.) in the same dataset. After the first dataset was analyzed, demographic questions were added to every module so N sizes should remain consistent.}), white officers were overrepresented in relation to their proportion of the statewide force. 83.0\% of participating police officers were white, while 69\% of all police officers in Florida are white.\footnote{Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Police Department—Gender by Race, \url{http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/587c0077-7488-4400-9150-7e401902387a/2008-CJAP-Police-Department-Index-Page.aspx} (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).} Conversely, 7.6\% of the police officers in the study are Black or African American, while 11.47\% of police officers in Florida are Black.\footnote{Id.} Thus, Black officers are underrepresented in the study. Hispanic or Latino police officers are also somewhat underrepresented in the initial study, though less markedly so that Black officers. 11.7\% (92) of police officers (N=696) reported being Hispanic or Latino, while 17.01\% of police officers in Florida are Hispanic.\footnote{Id.} Among other police officers in the study, 5.8\% of officers reported more than one race, 1.7\% are Asian; 1.4\% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 4\% are Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. In Florida, 1.07\% of police officers are Asian.\footnote{Id.}

With respect to other demographic information, a majority of the respondents (N=822) reported their primary sexual identification as heterosexual male (80.4\%); 15\% of the respondents in the study reported identifying as heterosexual female.\footnote{Of police officers in Florida, 85.82\% are male and 14.18\% are female. \textit{Id.}} Almost half of the respondents (N=825) reported that they were in their first marriage (43\%); 24.4\% reported that they were married with previous marriages.\footnote{Questions relating to marital status were asked in order to determine whether there are linkages between violence, stress, depression, and marital status over the long term of this study. There is currently a difference of opinion in the literature: some research suggests that if police families can survive for the first three years, they have no greater risk of breaking up than other families. See, e.g., Laurence Miller, \textit{Police Families: Stresses, Syndromes, and Solutions}, 35 AM. J. FAM. THERAPY 21, 24 (2007). However, other studies report that divorce rates are extraordinarily high among police officers. Stephen Alkus & Christine Padesky, \textit{Special Problems of Police Officers: Stress-related Issues and Interventions}, 11 COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGIST 55 (1983). One article even described divorce as a “catching disease” in police families. Waters, supra note 7. Thus, statistics appear to present a “mixed picture” of marital discord. E.K White & A.L. Honig., \textit{Law Enforcement Families, in POLICE PSYCHOLOGY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY} (M.I. Kurke & E.M. Scrivner eds., 1995).} Of the remaining respondents, 16.8\% had never been married, while 14.2\% were currently divorced or separated. A majority of the respondents (78.6\%) reported that they are currently living with a spouse or partner in a committed relationship.\footnote{\textit{Id.}}
relationship, 4.4% are living with non-partner others, 12.8% reported living alone, and 4.3% reported other living situations.

As the researchers hypothesized before the testing, Modules One and Two tests reveal that officers who took the training knew much of the substantive information about domestic violence dynamics and the consequences of officer-involved domestic violence. While correct answers increased slightly in the post-testing, officers already seemed to have considerable general knowledge of the information presented. This result is not surprising in light of Florida’s existing requirement that officers to have training in the dynamics of domestic violence. Florida Statutes §943.1701 lists fourteen items related to domestic violence in which officers must have training. The items pertain to such duties as responding to domestic violence calls, understanding domestic violence dynamics, offering victims assistance, documenting and reporting incidents, and ministering to the special needs of children. However, the goals of the modules extend beyond acquainting officers with the basic dynamics of domestic violence. In addition, officers are continually reminded that they themselves must avoid the behavior about which they are learning.

The Partnership does not assume that the current form of the modules will remain static. Rather, acquisition of new data will provide direction on ways in which the curriculum should be refined. For example, the tests are currently being revised to obtain information that is more specific by asking officers to check off each correct response rather than grouping answers together (e.g., “all of the above are correct”). This method may assist in distinguishing the specific information that officers know well from that which they do not. Nevertheless, even the early data summarized in the tables below provide valuable insights into officers’ comprehension of the dynamics and consequences of officer-involved domestic violence.

145 FLA. STAT. § 943.1701 (2009); Florida Officer Mandatory Retraining Requirements mandate that all 14 points must be covered in officer training. Florida Officer Mandatory Retraining Requirements, http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/08b74938-6e0c-4ce4-9bb0-13e8a57aa5fb/08RetrainingMatrix081308.aspx (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).
Table One

In Table One, officers are asked “Which may be a warning sign of domestic violence requiring intervention?” (correct answer is A,B,D\(^{146}\)). Thirty-five percent (332; 35.2%) of the officers answered this question correctly in the pre-test (N=942, 7 missing cases), with 518 respondents (55%) answering that all of the options were warning signs. On the post-test (N=909, 6 missing cases), the correct answer was indicated by over half of the respondents (467; 51.4%), showing an increase of 16.2%.

In future testing, respondents will be asked to individually “check all that apply” to help researchers ascertain precisely which particular items respondents know well and which they do not.

\(^{146}\) IACP MODEL POLICY, *supra* note 1.
In Table Two, officers are asked to fill in the blank for the statement, “Child witnesses of domestic violence are ______.” (The correct answer is C: they are more likely to continue modeled behaviors\textsuperscript{147}). This table illustrates the increase in officer recognition that children who witness domestic violence are more likely to engage in these behaviors later in life. Pre-test responses (N=941, 8 missing cases) identified that officers believe that children who witness domestic violence are equally or more likely to engage in these behaviors in the future. Post-test comparisons (N=907, 8 missing cases) show that those who identified the correct response (more likely to continue modeled behaviors) increased to 80%, whereas the percentage of children equally likely to offend and less likely to offend decreased by 2.7% and 1.4% respectively.

Revisions for this question will change the wording from “continue modeled behaviors” to “engage in modeled behaviors.”

In Table Three, law enforcement officers were asked to evaluate the validity of three statements pertaining to victims of domestic violence. (The correct answer is D: all statements are true. [148]) Table Three shows the increase in officers who understand that abused women are at a higher risk for miscarriages and still births, and that victims are more likely to ignore their own health needs and in many cases turn to drug and alcohol use (pre-test N=939, 10 missing cases; post-test N=906, 9 missing cases). Correct responses again increased after the training information was presented, as evidenced by the elevation in post-test percentages increasing in the “all statements are true” category (pre-test 94.1%, post-test 96.4%).

Revisions to the question include changing the format to a check an option to indicate all that apply, thus eliminating the “all statements are true” and “no statements are true” categories. This change is designed to ascertain which information participants know and which they do not.

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In Table Four, officers are asked “What percentage of men who assault their wives also assault their children?” (The correct answer is C, 50%.) Table Four shows the mixed responses on both the pre-test (N=936, 13 missing cases) and the post-test (N=906, 9 missing cases). Pre-test responses indicated that nearly half (N=420; 44.9%) of the participants believed that 67% of men who assault their wives also assault their children, with one-quarter (N=234) responding that the number was 50% and more than one-fifth (N=210; 22.4%) reporting that 40% of abusers also abuse their children. Post-test responses doubled the correct answer response (from 25% to 50.1%).

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Table Five specifically addresses the different dynamics of domestic violence with the following question, “Which of the following is NOT considered a dynamic of domestic violence?” (The correct answer is E: all may be dynamics of domestic violence.\textsuperscript{150}) During the pre-test (N=938, 11 missing cases), 872 (93%) answered correctly. The post-test (N=907, 8 missing cases) saw all incorrect responses drop to 1.1% or lower (i.e. selecting only emotional abuse, financial control, isolation or using the child to control the victim) with the correct answer of all increase to 97.2%.

In order to test participants’ knowledge of each dynamic, revisions for this question may include changing to a format that includes the option of individually checking all that apply.

\textsuperscript{150} Fla. Stat. §§ 741.30, 784.011, 784.021, 784.048 (2000); Intimate Partner Violence During Pregnancy, supra note 102. (last visited Nov. 20, 2009).
Table Six asks participants to fill in the blank for the statement, “Criminal justice officers who are perpetrators of domestic violence often ____.” (The correct answer are both A and B.) Table Seven pre-test (N=936, 13 missing cases) results show almost 92% answering correctly. Similar to Table Six, the post-test (N=908, 7 missing cases) responses saw a decrease in all answers except the “both A and B,” which increased to 94.6%. Of note is that the one answer choice that is entirely incorrect (take full responsibility for their action) received 0 responses in the post-test.

In future testing, respondents will be asked to individually “check all that apply” to help researchers determine precisely which responses participants understand fully and which answer choices they do not.

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\textsuperscript{151} Diane Wetendorf, Representing Victims of Police-Perpetrated Domestic Violence, 16 Family Law Forum 14, 16-17 (2007).
Table Seven

Pre- and Post-test Comparison of Respondents' Views about Who Can Report Complaints regarding Officer Involved Domestic Violence

Module Two of the Law Enforcement Families Partnership curriculum specifically addresses consequences of domestic violence among officers. Table Seven asks officers to complete the statement “Complaints to an agency regarding officer-involved domestic violence can be reported by______.” (The correct answer is D: any person.\(^\text{152}\)) Pre-test (N=834, 11 missing cases) responses show that officers recognize that anyone can report domestic violence incidents (97.6%). Post-test (N=825, 5 missing cases) results again showed an increase in officers who selected the correct answer (99.2%), with only 7 respondents selecting another answer choice (2 picking only a witness or victim, and 5 choosing only a witness, victim, doctor, or arresting agency).

Table Eight asks officers to complete the statement “If an officer fails to maintain ‘good moral character’ the agency _______.” (The correct answer is D: “must submit the investigation findings and documentation to the Commission.”) Results from the pre-test (N=835, 10 missing cases) showed 84.8% answering correctly, with the remaining 15.2% of answers divided falling primarily between choosing “is at liberty to only handle discipline actions within the department” (7.1%) and saying that the agency has the right to choose how it wishes to continue based on the officer’s track record (6.5%). Post-test (N=827, 3 missing cases) responses again point to improvement in officer responses for the correct answer (90.7%) and decreases in all incorrect answer choices.

Table Nine asks participants to fill in the blank for the statement, “The Commission can find out about complaints of domestic violence by ________.” (The correct answer is E: all of the above.) While responses were strong in both the pre-test (N=836, 9 missing cases; correct answer 95.7%) and the post-test (N=826, 4 missing cases; correct answer 97.9%), the most conspicuous feature is that the response of none-of-the-above dropped by two-thirds of its respondents between the pre- and post-test responses (11, 1.3% to 4, 0.5%).

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Table Ten states: “All of the following are possible agency administered punishments except _____.” (The correct answer is D: loss of certification.)

Nearly all officers completing the pre-test (N=833, 12 missing cases) understood that demotion, dismissal, or suspension were possible (7.8%, 2.5%, and 1.1% correspondingly). Post-test (N=827, 3 missing cases) results saw decreases of more than 50% in each incorrect answer, and the responses to loss of certification as an action the agency cannot take rise from 88.6% to 95.5%.

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155 Id.; IACP MODEL POLICY, supra note 1, at 7.
Table Eleven asks: “If an officer chooses not to attend a hearing where an injunction is granted, can a decision be made regarding the officer’s actions without his presence?” (The correct answer is C: Yes, a decision can be made regardless of the officer’s attendance.156) 788 out of 833 (94.6%) respondents answered correctly saying that a decision can be made regardless of the officer’s attendance in the pre-test data (N=833, 12 missing cases). Post-test (N=826, 4 missing cases) results saw the correct answer increase to 98.1%, with each incorrect answer falling to 1%.

156 Professional Compliance Process, supra note 140, at 261.
In Table Twelve, participants were asked to complete the statement “The discipline handed down by the Commission is _____.” (The correct answer is D: separate and distinct from the agency or criminal consequence.) Pre-test (N=830, 15 missing cases) responses showed Commission responses were as follows: recommending actions for the agency to take (95; 11.4%), dependent on agency response (15; 1.8%), contingent upon judicial action (30; 3.6%), and separate and distinct from agency and/or criminal consequence (690; 83.1%). The final responses from the post-test (N=826, 4 missing cases) saw all incorrect answers fall by more than half (5.4%, 0.7%, and 1.3% respectively), where the correct answer increase by almost 10 percentage points from 83.1% to 92.5%.

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Table Thirteen tests the participants’ knowledge by asking “The Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997 prohibits which of the following for people convicted of misdemeanor crime of domestic violence?” (The correct answer is E: all of the above.\textsuperscript{158}) Pre-test (N=830) data show 88.7% answering correctly that after a conviction an individual is prohibited from possessing, receiving, shipping, or transporting firearms. Despite having fewer respondents complete the post-test (N=827), more participants answered correctly (784; 94.8%), displaying knowledge of this information.

Revisions to consider again include changing the format of the question to provide the option of individually checking all that apply. The question will focus on the comprehensive understanding of the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997.

**B. Evaluating the Curriculum’s Utility**

After completing each module participants are asked for their opinions on the effectiveness and utility of the modules as a whole and of five subcomponents (video presentations, examples within the curriculum, case scenarios used, the training materials, and the question and answer sections pertaining to specific information). The responses were overwhelmingly positive with respect to the value of the material presented in Module One: the Dynamics of Officer-Involved Domestic Violence. With 98.9% of respondents (905 out of 915) answering the question about the how useful they found the overall training, 231 (25.5%) stated that it was somewhat useful, 405 (44.8%) responded with very useful, and 155 (17.1%) deemed the training extremely useful. More than 75% of those surveyed felt that the videos were somewhat useful (30.3%), very useful (32.9%), or extremely useful (12.1%); these results again

\textsuperscript{158}The Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act , H.R. 3610, 104th Cong. (1997) (enacted).
suggest the apparent value of this curriculum to the officers who complete the training and their appreciation for having a training customized for them.

Specific components of the training were also well received. For example, 28.1% of respondents found the question- and-answer portion somewhat useful, 41.8% rated it as very useful, and 16% described this component as extremely useful. The availability and presentation of examples to these officers received support in the categories of somewhat useful (26.1%), very useful (44.3%), and extremely useful (15.8%). These responses identified this subsection as one of the most beneficial parts, after only the case scenarios and training information provided. The case scenarios received high utility ratings—24.8% (somewhat useful), 43.9% (very useful), and 17.8% (extremely useful)—thus apparently justifying the importance and value of the practical application to situations the officer may encounter in the field. Based on the perception of the training material that was found in the module, officers who characterized the training provided as useful broke down among 17% who found it extremely useful, 46.3% as very useful, and 23.5% as somewhat useful.

Module Two, focusing on the more punitive topic of the consequences of officer-involved domestic violence, was also received positively but not quite as well as Module One. This module experienced a slight dip in overall survey completion, and the satisfaction reported declined slightly from 87.3% to 83.8% (26.8%—somewhat useful, 43.2%—very useful, and 13.8%—extremely useful). Videos for Module Two witnessed a decrease in interest, with 31.7% identifying the module as somewhat useful, 33.1% as very useful, and 11.4% as extremely useful; still, these figures amounted to favorable ratings of 76.2%. The examples provided were somewhat better received, bringing in more than 80% approval: 29% selecting the somewhat useful ranking, 41.1% identifying the examples as very useful, and 12.6% choosing to describe the examples as extremely useful (82.7% total). Case scenarios were very favorably received by the survey participants, again ranking in the top three of their favorite parts of the module (28.4%—somewhat useful, 41.4%—very useful, and 13.7%—extremely useful: 83.5% total). The structure of the question-and-answer format was slightly different for Module Two, and produced a jump in appeal; 29.3% viewed the new version as somewhat useful, 41.2% found it very useful, and 13.4% agreed that this section was extremely useful. Again, participants found the information presented in this module in a very positive light, with only 5.2% responding that it was not useful at all.

C. Illuminating the Role of Stress

Some of the most striking data obtained from the first phase of the project pertain to the potential link between stress in officers’ lives and their propensity to commit domestic violence. Much has been written about the link between stress and health. Researchers have long linked stress with such illnesses as cardiovascular disease, stroke, somatic disorders, asthma, immune-deficiency diseases, diabetes, stomach problems, and high blood pressure. Because the field of police psychology has often emphasized the high rates of stress of law enforcement

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officers, the present study included questions about officer stress to determine whether officers’ reports of stress were related in any way to their attitudes about domestic violence. Some researchers believe that policing is one of the most highly stressful jobs in North America. LEFP researchers hypothesized that as the study progresses, identification and evaluation of stress might be critical for prevention and intervention in officer-involved domestic violence. Thus, using McCreary and Thompson’s measures of operational stressors in policing, the post-tests for Modules One and Two each included a list of twenty items that “describe different aspects of being a criminal justice officer.” Respondents were asked to describe how much stress each item has caused over the past six months, using a seven point scale from one (no stress at all) to seven (a great deal of stress). Respondents were also given the option of N/A.

McCreary and Thompson’s twenty “operational stress” items were included in Module Two’s Post-test in order to measure and characterize stress associated with serving as a criminal justice officer. Officers were asked to describe, using a seven point scale from one (no stress at all) to seven (a great deal of stress), how much stress each of the following items had caused over the past six months.

- Shift work
- Working alone at night
- Over-time demands
- Risk of being injured on the job
- Work-related activities on days off (e.g. court, community events)
- Traumatic events (e.g. MVA, domestics, death, injury)
- Managing your social life outside of work
- Not enough time available to spend with friends and family
- Paperwork
- Eating healthy at work
- Finding time to stay in good physical condition
- Fatigue (e.g. shift work, over-time)
- Occupation-related health issues (e.g. back pain)
- Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work
- Making friends outside the job
- Upholding a "higher image" in public
- Negative comments from the public
- Limitations to your social life (e.g. who your friends are, where you socialize)
- Feeling like you are always on the job
- Friends / Family feel the effects of the stigma associated with your job

In the analysis of the data on operational stress (N=520), respondents overall report a modest

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level of stress associated with being a criminal justice officer. The mean operational stress score was 2.72 and the median score was 2.4. Missing cases \((N=59)\) and N/A answers \((N=251)\) were dropped. The scale demonstrated acceptable reliability in this sample \((\alpha = .969)\).

The moderate levels of stress reported by respondents contradicted the researchers’ hypothesis about this measure, which had anticipated higher levels of self-reported stress. The intent is to investigate, over time, the links among self-reported stress, physical and mental well-being, and attitudes about violence. At this early date, the measure does not shed much light on officer stress.

There are several hypotheses for the current study’s low reporting of stress. First, the majority of the respondents are white, married, male police officers, so the data does not yet include adequate comparisons to analyze the sample. Until there is a broader spectrum of officers, the ability to compare stress responses as they correlate to race, gender, ethnicity, or other categories in a multivariate analysis are limited.

Second, the moderate level of reported stress may reflect a form of social desirability bias. Participants in a questionnaire of this nature exhibit a tendency to answer in a manner that the respondent believes would be socially appropriate. It is possible that the police officers in the preliminary phases of the study want to make themselves appear “better than they actually are.” “Better” in this context, could conceivably mean experiencing less stress. Social desirability comes in at least two forms: (1) self-deception, or the unconscious tendency to give inaccurate but honestly held descriptions of oneself and ones behavior, and (2) other-deception, or the active tendency to give more favorable self-descriptions to a researcher. Many researchers believe that social desirability bias is pervasive and the cause of false or misleading research results; if so, it can affect measurement scores and variable means. On the other hand,

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163 For example, variables such as demographics, social support, and level of education, will only be available later as future modules are published. Gender, for example, may be important: among corrections officers, it has shown to be an important predictor of stress. See, e.g., Richard Tewksbury & George E. Higgins, *Prison Staff and Work Stress: The Role of Organizational and Emotional Differences*, 30 AM. J. CRIM. JUST. 247 (2006). In addition, there is “fairly consistent” evidence that a person’s perceived social support moderates the effects of stress on subsequent physical and psychological distress. See, e.g., DeLongis, supra note 113.


165 P. Miotto & A. Preti, *Suicide Ideation and Social Desirability Among School-aged Young People*, 31 J. ADOLESCENCE 519, 527 (2008) (the authors believe that there is an “inverse relationship between social desirability and measures of psychological distress.”)


167 Id.

some researchers posit that social desirability is higher when an action is judged to be more unethical,¹⁶⁹ and experiencing stress is not generally seen as unethical conduct.

Third, the moderate stress responses may result from the context of the curriculum itself. The curriculum and pre- and post-testing study are not identified as a study about stress, but about domestic violence committed by criminal justice officers. Accordingly, it is possible that officers themselves believe that there may exist a link between stress and violence. Since the self-testing occurred in the context of a curriculum about domestic violence, officers may therefore have reported their own stress to be modest.¹⁷⁰

The study results relating to stress present intriguing information that calls for more scrutiny. Because of the challenging questions that result from the preliminary analysis, the team decided to add the Impression Management subscale of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding.¹⁷¹ This scale may clarify future data and reveal participants’ favorable self-presentation with respect to the level of stress that they experience.

VI. THE FUTURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The goals for the Law Enforcement Families Partnership include the development and dissemination of Florida’s Model Policy on Officer-Involved Domestic Violence in 2010, and a training module focusing on developing leadership skills among supervisors and administrators. The latter will focus on preventing and intervening on officer-involved domestic violence. Under this plan, sample material for agencies will be developed. Chief among these is a prototype brochure about domestic violence that agencies can make available to the families of their new recruits as well as experienced officers. Other efforts are much smaller, but may still be significant. Providing scholarships to patrol officers to attend regional trainings such as “A Call to Men”¹⁷² is a minor gesture, but as Sheriff Farmer said of the entire project: “If it saves even one life, it’s worth the effort.”¹⁷³

After the first set of preliminary data was analyzed, the team decided to add several new scales and questions for the next modules. A “crime seriousness” scale¹⁷⁴ is included to determine how serious officers consider the crime of domestic violence in relation to other crimes. Standardized scales to determine job dissatisfaction, depression, and strain have been added.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, scales are used to assess levels of anger,¹⁷⁶ social support,¹⁷⁷ alcohol

¹⁷⁰ This would be similar to social desirability, but influenced more by the context than “faking bad” or “faking good.” Crowne, supra note 118 at 394.
¹⁷² See, www.acalltomen.com, which conducts large regional trainings to enlist the help of men to end violence against women (last viewed on December 3, 2009).
¹⁷³ See, email from Sheriff Bill Farmer, Sumter County Sheriff, to Karen Oehme (Dec. 3, 2009) (on file with authors).
¹⁷⁵ An instrument measuring “strain” seeks to help identify and explain some of the linkages between officer stress, coping strategies, and negative consequences of that stress. See, Marc L. Swatt, Chris L. Gibson & Nicole Leeper Piquero, Exploring the Utility of General Strain Theory in Explaining Problematic Alcohol Consumption by Police Officers, 35 J. CRIME & JUST. 596, 599 (2007). The authors describe the roots of strain theory, and note that current research has not fully demystified the complicated causal mechanisms that underlie the linkages between stress and its negative consequences.
Organizational and operational facets of police stress continue to be assessed. In addition to the standardized measures, officers are asked about personal attitudes towards their work-related exposures to domestic violence, the degree to which they perceive others in the criminal justice system (e.g., supervisors, prosecutors) take domestic violence seriously. Further questions ask how and when they might intervene in officer-involved domestic violence, and what punishment they feel is appropriate for officers who have committed domestic violence. In addition, the curriculum asks questions about violence in officers’ childhood and home life in order to determine the level of violence that officers have experienced and continue to experience at home. These modules went online in November, 2009, for analysis in late 2010. After the first year of data is returned, the researchers will consider the addition of other scales, depending on the multivariate analysis of other respondents from a broader sample (e.g., sheriff’s deputies and correctional staff, non-white officers, and women who take the tests).

The future of the project will doubtless be influenced by one of the most surprising outcomes of the LEFP: the phenomenon of officers calling Florida State University’s Institute for Family Violence Studies to anonymously seek assistance after taking the online curriculum. These contacts have a general theme: Officers notice that their supervisors take this training seriously, and that therefore the partnership should address other, perhaps related issues. For example, some officers have requested training on post-traumatic stress disorder, especially for their colleagues who have recently returned from military tours of duty. Some officers want their supervisors to have some training in PTSD symptoms and treatment because they are concerned about their colleagues who they suspect may be suffering from it. Therefore, researchers decided to provide a brief training on PTSD and other links to PTSD training as part of Module Four, the administrative and supervisory module. PTSD training will also be included on a web page that lists ways to access other resources.

CONCLUSION


181 Paulhus, *supra* note 168 at 17.

182 McCreary *supra* note 160 at 494.
The grievous harm inflicted by domestic violence is compounded when committed by those charged with preventing this crime. An already vulnerable victim is rendered even more helpless when a physically powerful perpetrator comes additionally armed with the aura of official authority. Moreover, criminal behavior by law enforcement officers threatens to undermine the legitimacy of the law itself. In its effort to combat the scourge of domestic violence, the Law Enforcement Families Partnership has gained attention statewide and has begun to draw interest nationally as well.\textsuperscript{184} Still, with the project only in its infancy, much work remains to be accomplished. The magnitude of the problem is daunting, if only because of the sheer numbers of officers in the state. Yet Florida’s new approach to preventing domestic violence has made a strong start with vital agency cooperation which, if sustained, will lead to innovation and the statewide dissemination of a clear, consistent anti-violence message to Florida’s over 80,000 certified officers. Indeed, the progress of the LEFP over the next few years may well demonstrate whether such a partnership can curb domestic violence among officers, protect victims, and enhance the standing of officers in their communities. Ultimately, then, this project could potentially become a national template for prevention and innovation.

\textsuperscript{184} \textit{See, e.g.}, E-mail from Officer Angela Douglas, Planning Department, Houston Police Department, to Karen Oehme, (April 22, 2009)(on file with authors); E-mail from A. Gaszak, Milwaukee Police Department, Office of the Chief, Planning and Research to Karen Oehme (April 9, 2009) (on file with authors); other agencies in various jurisdictions have also contacted the Institute about the Law Enforcement Families Partnership (letters on file with authors).