

Plan for Conducting Focus Groups with Domestic Violence Survivors

- I. Purpose of Focus Groups:** LCADV staff will be conducting focus groups with domestic violence survivors in Louisiana in order to ensure that their voices and needs are incorporated into statewide assessment and planning. As we are all aware incorporating victim experiences and voices in our planning and policies ensures more effective outcomes, while empowering survivors. These focus group sessions will allow survivors of domestic violence to define resources have been helpful in promoting their safety and empowerment; any concerns they have about experiences with our systems, organizations and agencies; needs that have not been met; and their own suggestions for promoting safety and empowerment of survivors of domestic violence.
- II. Target Population:** Our target population for this study is survivors of domestic violence who have or have not utilized residential or non-residential domestic violence program services provided by LCADV member programs.

III. How will programs be chosen to take part in focus groups?

In order to increase the number of participants and ensure provision of child care during the focus group, we will request that member programs who have non-confidential locations and a private space to have the meeting agree to allow us to hold the focus group sessions at their physical location. Additionally, we will attempt to ensure that we choose programs that allow us to hear from the following types of survivors:

- i. Those reside in rural area
- ii. Those who reside in urban areas
- iii. Those who reside in different regions of Louisiana

IV. How will we invite survivors to the focus group?

- i. Advocates who facilitate support groups make an announcement at all meetings the week prior to the scheduled focus group.
- ii. E.D.s or Program Directors place an announcement/flyer in a central location or in various locations within the shelter.
- iii. Have E.D.s or Program Directors place an announcement in mail boxes for residents, if these exist.
- iv. Have E.D.s or Program Director request that their local victim assistance coordinators invite 5 to 10 domestic violence victims.

V. Where will these focus groups take place?

- i. We are asking that programs provide a private space that is large enough to accommodate the number of survivors you estimate might attend (i.e., conference room, area where support groups are held, etc...).

VI. When will these focus groups take place?

- i. We would like to conduct all focus groups in the **month of March**.
- ii. We can hold these groups at the usual time and location of support groups, if this is easiest and will ensure greater turnout.
- iii. If programs think we can achieve a desirable turnout in the daytime, we would prefer to host focus groups during the day, on a day and time that works for most programs and survivors.

VII. How long will the focus group last?

- i. Ninety minutes

VIII. What will be the primary topics for the focus groups?

- i. Those resources (member program, criminal and/or civil justice system, healthcare, etc...) that have been the most beneficial to the safety and empowerment of survivors.
- ii. Concerns with policies or practices within member program, criminal or civil justice systems, healthcare, welfare, etc... that could undermine their safety and empowerment.
- iii. Needs that have not been met.
- iv. Their suggestions for how we could improve efforts to support them in achieving safety and empowerment.
- v.

IX. Who will conduct the focus groups?

- i. LCADV staff members.
- ii. In order to promote openness without fear that responses could impact services, program staff should not be present.
- iii. Informed consent will be obtained from all survivors choosing to participate.