



Why Relationships Matter for In-Risk Men: Identifying and Responding to the Intersections between Intimate Partner Conflict and Community Violence

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Introduction

Since 1998, ALSO has coordinated services for youth and families in the Logan Square and Humboldt Park neighborhoods in Chicago, Illinois. Much of ALSO's local work focuses on and provides support to in-risk¹ men, disconnected² youth, and individuals who are reentering the community after incarceration. ALSO seeks to strengthen and support its clients' safety and security, economic and educational opportunities, and positive social networks. Many of the individual clients³ that ALSO serves are fathers and therefore ALSO is particularly concerned with promoting fathers' healthy connections and involvement with their children.

ALSO has operated CeaseFire⁴ programs in several Chicago neighborhoods including Logan Square, Humboldt Park, and Hermosa Park. Through CeaseFire, ALSO has employed innovative mediation and intervention to prevent community violence. A core component of ALSO's approach to CeaseFire programming is the modeling and promotion of pro-social relationships to motivate and encourage clients to make thoughtful and responsible decisions that consider the needs of their children, intimate partners, and other family members. This helps to build the kinds of social supports that increase protective factors and reduce risk factors. Because research has shown that higher levels of social supports bolster fathers' well-being, involvement with their children, co-parenting relationships, and outcomes for children,⁵ this holistic approach has critical implications for fatherhood. Higher father involvement with their children has larger implications for the safety, growth, and stability of children, families, and communities as a whole.

At the heart of ALSO's work with clients is building trust and positive relationships. This is done on a staff-client basis and by encouraging relationship-building and camaraderie among clients – including those who have different gang affiliations. This process occurs three main ways: through structured opportunities for social interaction; facilitated group discussions that cover violence prevention topics; and impromptu client-staff contact on the street. In more recent

¹ The term "in-risk," developed by Ceasefire staff member Darrell Johnson, is used throughout this document because – as opposed to "at-risk," which implies that factors are present that may negatively impact an individual at some point – "in-risk" acknowledges that risk factors have already resulted in impacts and consequences.

² In this paper, "disconnected youth" is defined as young men and women who are not employed, not enrolled in school, and who are otherwise not engaged in mainstream educational or economic systems.

³ ALSO's clients are generally between the ages of 14 and 24, do not attend school, are affiliated with a gang, and are at high risk to commit or become victims of violence. Many have reentered the community after a period of incarceration.

⁴ CeaseFire is the Illinois branch of the Cure Violence Organization. <http://bit.ly/1maMPGH>

⁵ See National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance (Feb. 2010). Father involvement and social support, retrieved from <https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Father%20Involvement.pdf>.

years, ALSO has expanded to incorporate programs and activities that address a broader range of prevention, education, and supports for in-risk men and women.⁶

Several years ago, the results of an ALSO CeaseFire program analysis revealed a direct connection between an intimate partner violence (IPV) incident and a string of gang-related shootings that resulted in three homicides and numerous injuries. Figure 1 depicts the sequence of community violence events that occurred after an initial incident of intimate partner violence. After further inquiry into other community violence incidents, ALSO learned that a certain percentage of gang shootings are related to “red flag” relationships: high-risk relationships with the potential for a linkage to community violence. Since then, ALSO has begun screening for red flag relationships and IPV, conducting risk assessments for both community violence and IPV, and has incorporated prevention and intervention practices into its work with at-risk and in-risk men.

This paper discusses how ALSO uncovered the connection between familial and intimate partner relationships (IPR) and community violence; provides descriptions of this complex set of interrelationships and attached risks; outlines the development integration of this information into its work with in-risk and at-risk men; and details the screening/assessment, prevention, and intervention components that ALSO has woven into its work. The paper concludes with recommendations and considerations for agencies and organizations who work with in- and at-risk men and women.

Uncovering the Intersections between Community Violence and Familial and Intimate Partner Relationships

Both community violence and intimate partner violence are now recognized as major public health problems⁷ with deep and far-reaching effects on individuals who are exposed to it. The consequences of exposure for children and youth are particularly severe, and include emotional, behavioral, mental health, substance use, cognitive, and academic impacts. There is a body of literature that demonstrates the importance of social capital, social networks, family ties, and other social supports as protective factors for children and youth, for the prevention of community violence and IPV, to prevent recidivism and delinquency, to help reentering prisoners achieve post-release success,⁸ and to support positive father involvement⁹. Given the

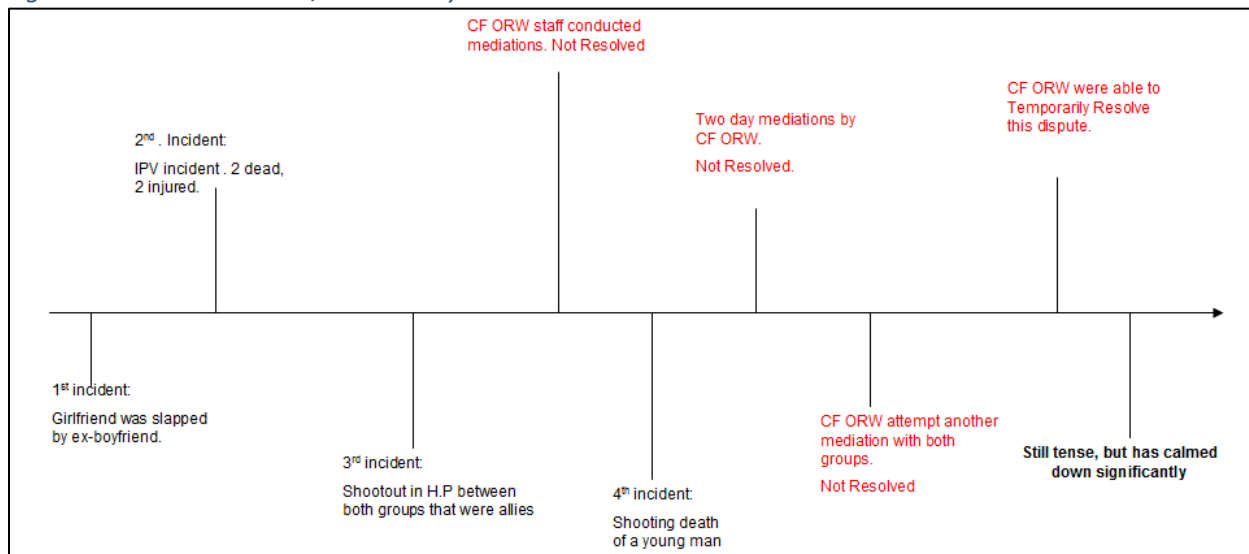
⁶ For example, ALSO’s job skills-building program, known as 10/10/10, employs in-risk youth, teaches skills in the sound industry, and incorporates violence prevention messages and education. The teen dating violence pilot⁶ project and the Youth Advocacy Program engaged local youth in convening youth-led focus groups, creating and disseminating a survey to 100 youth, and conducting interviews to hear from local youth and learn about what they face in terms of dating violence and the kinds of resources would be helpful for youth. Additionally, ALSO operates Community Violence Prevention Programs in 23 Illinois neighborhoods.

⁷ See World Health Organization (2002). World report on violence and health. World Health Organization: Geneva.

⁸ See Hairston, C.F. (Dec. 2001). Prisoners and Families: Parenting Issues During Incarceration. Paper presented at: From Prison to Home: The Effect of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities, Jan. 30-31, 2002, Bethesda, MD; Urban Institute (2012). *Families and Reentry*, Prisoner Reentry Portfolio, retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/projects/reentry-portfolio/families.cfm>; Hairston, C.F. & Rollins, J. (2003). Social capital and family connections, *Women, Girls & Criminal Justice*, (Aug.-Sept. 2003)67.

escalating nature of IPV and its inherent risks to intimate partners and children, it is also critical that partners, children, and other household members who have been exposed to IPV are connected to social networks, and that they have access to advocacy and other security and safety supports.

Figure 1: Intimate Partner/Community Violence Timeline¹⁰



Within the Hermosa Park, Humboldt Park, and Logan Square neighborhoods in Chicago that are served by ALSO, multiple risk factors for youth and community violence¹¹ combine to create an environment with high potential for youth, community, and intimate partner violence. These risk factors include limited economic resources, low social capital, the long-standing and deeply rooted presence of gangs, higher than average school drop-out rates, substance use, and high rates of prisoner reentry.¹² Viewed together with the risk factors for intimate partner violence,¹³ there is enormous potential for youth, community, and intimate partner violence.

⁹ See National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, supra at note 5.

¹⁰ The events included in the timeline occurred within an eight-month period; they are based on actual incidents but have been changed to protect those involved.

¹¹ See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Violence: Risk and Protective Factors*, retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html> and Lambert, S., Ialongo, N.S., Boyd, R.C., & Cooley, M.R. (Sept. 2005). Risk factors for community violence exposure in adolescence. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 36(1/2), 29-48.

¹² Fifty-one percent (51%) of released prisoners returning to Illinois went to Chicago. One-third (1/3) of them went to six (6) of Chicago's 77 communities. One of the 6 is Humboldt Park. La Vigne N.G. & Marmalian, C. (2003). *A Portrait of Prisoner Reentry in Illinois* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute). Humboldt park is within ALSO's service area.

¹³ See Centers for Disease Control, *Intimate Partner Violence: Risk and Protective Factors*, retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>; National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice (Sept. 2004). *When violence hits home: How economics and neighborhoods play a role*. Washington, DC: author, retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/205004.pdf>; Benson, M.L. & Fox, L.F. (2004). Concentrated disadvantage, economic distress, and violence against women in intimate relationships. Division of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati & Department of Child and Family Studies, University of Tennessee, retrieved from

This presents a complex and intermingled array of risks to ALSO clients, their children and intimate partners, caregivers, and other community members.

An additional layer of risks is attributable to the intersection between community violence and familial and intimate partner relationships (IPRs). ALSO learned that a certain percentage of shootings and homicides committed by gang members are rooted in intimate partner¹⁴ relationships (IPRs). This is especially true when certain factors elevate the risks connected with an IPR, whether or not IPV¹⁵ is a factor. CeaseFire outreach workers and violence interrupters have labeled these high-risk IPRs as “red flag” relationships. While there may be no violence within these relationships, they are still considered to be high-risk based on the presence of certain factors (see below).

Red Flag Relationship Factors

- ❖ A person is involved who is in a position of influence (e.g., high-ranking gang member; gun or drug supplier);
- ❖ There is a dating or relationship scenario in which a family member of an intimate partner (i.e., boyfriend) is threatening or fighting a new intimate partner from an opposing or the same gang; and/or
- ❖ Intimate partner violence is present or threatened.

ALSO hypothesized that red flag relationships can and do lead to community violence, and that through identification and appropriate intervention, more shootings and homicides can be prevented.

Seeing the Links between Red Flag Relationships and Community Violence

In 2012, ALSO conducted an analysis of activity that occurred in 2011 and 2012¹⁶ to refine its hypothesis. ALSO hoped to establish a better sense of how often red flag relationships are a factor in shootings and learn about the specific prevention and intervention techniques that CeaseFire workers were using in the field.

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/199709.pdf>; Sheidow, A.J., Gorman-Smith, D., Tolan, P.H., & Henry, D.B. (2001). Family and community characteristics: Risk factors for violence exposure in inner-city youth, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 29, 345-260, retrieved from <http://www.centerforyouth.org/files/RiskFactorsforViolenceInnercityyouth.pdf>.

¹⁴ For purposes of this paper and the work it describes, “intimate partner” is defined as a person that is a current or former dating partner, spouse, or person with whom one otherwise has or had an intimate relationship. In ALSO trainings of Ceasefire workers from other sites, participants learn that an intimate partner relationship is a non-violent intimate relationship, but gang violence can erupt because of the relationship itself (e.g. jealousy from a love triangle, territorial issues arising from simultaneous multiple partners from rival gangs, etc.).

¹⁵ IPV, or intimate partner violence, is defined in ALSO Ceasefire trainings as physical, emotional, or sexual harm by an individual towards an individual including a current or former dating partner or spouse. The intent of the abuse is to control or harm.

¹⁶ The analysis examined activity that took place during the time periods of December 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012, and September 1 – November 30, 2012. These two periods, totaling ten months, are the periods during which ALSO’s Ceasefire staff were active. The period of inactivity between July 1 and August 31, 2012, occurred because of layoffs due to funding constraints.

The analysis was accomplished through a two-part process:

- (1) Case reviews and dialogue with CeaseFire workers who had received ALSO training¹⁷ on how to detect and understand IPV, and who had applied that information into their work in Chicago neighborhoods.
- (2) Examination of shooting data collected by ALSO's CeaseFire programs in Logan Square and Humboldt Park.

Case Reviews and Dialogue with ALSO CeaseFire Workers

During the case reviews, ALSO CeaseFire workers, who had already begun assessing for IPV and its link to community violence, talked through the cases that they had handled in which familial and intimate partner relationships (including those with IPV) were a factor.

The following is an example of a case that illustrates the complex nature of red flag relationships and how the IPRs and presence of gang influence can set up a situation to be one that is at high risk for reactive violence and lethality.

Case Scenario

At age sixteen, a young woman has a son with a young man who is affiliated with Group A. The son is named after the father, looks like the father, and is their first child as a couple and as individuals. The couple was raised on the same block where they still reside in separate households – she lives with her grandmother and he lives with his mother. When the baby is eighteen months old, the couple breaks up, but they see each other regularly because they all still live on the same block.

The young woman meets a new man at a party. He is affiliated with Group B, which is Group A's rival. The young woman and the new man immediately connect and start seeing each other regularly. He lives in rival territory, though, so in order for them to visit each other, they must cross gang boundaries. The new man knows and hates the child's father. Every time he looks at the baby, he thinks about the child's father and the history of conflict between the two of them, and between Groups A and B.

When his friends and associates realize who he is dating, the man from Group B is accused of "sleeping with the enemy." By virtue of her address, her affiliation with her child's father, and her ongoing affiliation with those from her block, she is perceived by members of Group B as a threat. Members of Group B tell the new boyfriend that he is "messing with that girl from the other side." They accuse her of taking information back to her block and sharing secrets with

¹⁷ In 2011, ALSO provided introductory training and education to Chicago Ceasefire site staff about intimate partner violence. Subsequent to these trainings, ALSO engaged in ongoing conversations with outreach workers and violence interrupters about cases in which IPV was linked to community violence. It was through this process that ALSO learned that this was much more common than originally estimated.

her child's father and his associates. At the same time, members of Group A tell the young man with the child, "She better not bring him (the boyfriend from Group B) around here," and "You know your kid is calling him Daddy." They make threats against the young woman and the boyfriend.

The young woman understands that she is never to speak positively of or defend her child's father to her new boyfriend if she is to demonstrate loyalty to her new boyfriend. In an effort to support the relationship between her father and son, however, she decides to get their pictures taken together. At the father's request, they are both dressed in Group A's colors. When the new man sees the picture, he perceives this as an act of aggression and disrespect by the child's father. A violent confrontation occurs between the child's father and the young woman over this picture. Violence also erupts on the street, which is organized by Group B against Group A.

This scenario provides an example of the ways that IPRs and gang dynamics intersect in a complex and convoluted way, and the way that multiple "micro-conflicts" take place, add to the tension, and later lead to larger-scale community violence. As in the scenario, it can be difficult to determine one underlying cause for the eventual community violence.

Data Collection

ALSO's Logan Square and Humboldt Park CeaseFire sites compiled data on shootings, killings, and mediations of conflicts that had a high probability of resulting in a shooting. The primary cause was attributed to each event.¹⁸ The data revealed that there were:

- ❖ 15 shootings;
- ❖ 6 homicides; and
- ❖ 50 mediations in conflicts that had a high probability of leading to a shooting or homicide.

At least 8 (12.3%) of these conflicts were identified as having a red flag relationship as a cause (i.e., rooted in a familial or intimate partner relationship). This is almost identical to the number of red flag relationship conflicts that were identified through December 31, 2011 (12.5%). The primary difference between the conflicts that were reported in 2011 and those reported in 2012 is that three cases involving red flag relationships in 2011 resulted in shootings. However, the cases involving red flag relationships in 2012 were all successfully mediated by ALSO CeaseFire workers following the training and post-training partnerships that were developed (see below for details about this process).

¹⁸ The categories are assigned pursuant to the reporting requirements of Cure Violence (formerly known as the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention) and are: gang, altercation, narcotics, domestic violence, child abuse, robbery, unknown, and other.

Understanding the Context of Intimate Partner Relationships and Community Violence

In an interview on National Public Radio on January 7, 2013, Steve James, the author and producer of the Academy Award-winning film *The Interrupters*,¹⁹ spoke about the fact that, while much of community violence is traditional gang violence, it is also about micro-conflicts that stem from interpersonal and relational issues.²⁰ This is underscored and reflected in ALSO's findings that at least some shootings and homicides are a response to micro-conflicts grounded in familial and intimate partner relationships. The case scenario illustrates one way that these micro-conflicts can arise, build, and bind together. The result is an indivisible web of conflicts involving multiple individuals and grievances that, absent intervention, will continue to expand over time.

What is also clear is that the IPRs and many of the circumstances in which individuals and families find themselves are shared with individuals and their families in communities everywhere. All of the typical circumstances involving intimate partner relationships are present. Relationships form; individuals cohabit, marry, and have children. Relationships dissolve and micro-conflicts occur for a variety of reasons including infidelity, financial difficulties, and domestic violence. Jealousies, injured feelings, and anger often accompany breakups. Child custody arrangements are made – often through informal agreement and sometimes by order of a court. Individuals begin relationships with new partners. These are common occurrences within the lives of individuals in communities throughout the United States. Red Flag Relationship Factors are what distinguish the relationships from others. The elevated risks inherent in red flag relationships (which assume ready access to or possession of a firearm) have the potential to catapult these micro-conflicts into larger-scale community violence that threatens the safety of many within the community. Once multiple members of gangs are involved and shootings occur, it will appear to many outside observers that the conflict is simply about guns, drugs, and trafficking boundaries. In reality, though, the larger conflict is about the IPR-related micro-conflicts that preceded and laid the groundwork for it.

Returning to the case scenario, by the time the photo is taken and the news of its existence becomes known, the situation is ripe for violence. All four parties – the young woman, her son, the boy's father, and the new boyfriend – are then at a high risk for homicide due to the rising tensions and the ready availability of firearms to the members of Group A and Group B.

It is clear that the context of gang life and community violence puts immense pressure on IPRs of gang-affiliated men and women. Violence may occur within the relationship and/or within gangs in an interlocking, self-perpetuating pattern. This makes discernment of the origination of a conflict nearly impossible. Without identification of IPRs as red flag relationships, and ensuing prevention or intervention work, the potential for violence can quickly move from eventuality to imminence.

¹⁹ *The Interrupters* is a 2011 film by Katemquin Films that follows three Ceasefire violence interrupters as they mediate and intervene in conflict in high-risk situations involving gang members in Chicago neighborhoods.

²⁰ "U.S. Murder Rates Decline, But Chicago's Goes Up," *Morning Edition*, WNPR Chicago Public Radio, Chicago, IL, WBEZ, January 7, 2013.

Addressing the Needs of At-Risk Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence

In an effort to address the needs of at-risk women who have partners that are members of a gang, ALSO consulted with a number of community-based domestic violence organizations. In 2011, ALSO convened a multi-organizational violence prevention working group (VPWG) that included representatives from Between Friends (domestic violence advocacy organization), Casa Central's violence prevention program, ENLACE Chicago (Little Village community development), Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc., (substance abuse and behavioral health services), and Mujeres Latinas en Acción (a community-based domestic violence program with culturally specific advocacy and services for Latinas).

The group agreed to explore:

- ❖ Ways to address multiple needs including multidisciplinary protocols covering referrals for an individual who is affiliated with a gang, whose partner may be affiliated, and/or who is a survivor of intimate partner violence.
- ❖ Strategies for talking with men about their use of violence and de-escalation when violence is imminent.
- ❖ Cross-training needs and opportunities for partnerships among organizations addressing community violence and those focused on domestic violence.
- ❖ How outreach can be provided to survivors of IPV who are at-risk.
- ❖ Ways to increase access to services and advocacy for those experiencing the greatest levels of risk.
- ❖ The creation of entry points for clients.

The working group discussed how to conduct appropriate and effective advocacy with survivors of intimate partner violence who are identified during CeaseFire mediation processes or in other contexts. Important elements include:

- ❖ Partnering with domestic violence advocates to either talk with her in the community alongside an outreach worker or for an advocate to follow up separately.
- ❖ Planning to protect safety, particularly because of the availability and access to weapons that a gang-involved partner will have.
- ❖ Engaging in lethality assessment to gauge the level of risk that a survivor may be facing.
- ❖ Making services and advocacy available and accessible to youth in the moment (e.g., walk-in services).
- ❖ Focusing on the effects of exposure to violence for children in the home.

At the conclusion of the VPWG, the group agreed that it would be important for ALSO to move forward with addressing the needs of survivors whose life risks include an abusive partner who is affiliated with a gang. The group recommended that this could include:

- ❖ Incorporating screening for IPV perpetration and victimization into assessment processes.
- ❖ Developing strategies to intervene in and prevent both IPV and community violence.
- ❖ Discussing what other organizations can do through their provision of services.

- ❖ Exploring opportunities for collaborative efforts that bring to bear a wide array of practice specialties and expertise.

Identifying and Responding to Red Flag Relationships

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the 2012 analysis underscored the links between red flag relationships, intersecting micro-conflicts, and community violence. The VPWG recommendations supported the conclusions reached and raised important issues related to services for at-risk women experiencing IPV. It had become clear that an important opportunity for violence prevention had presented itself and that there was a need to incorporate this information into ALSO's work with in-risk men. Identification of red flag relationships and targeted strategies to reduce the risks to family, intimate partners, and other members of the community were needed.

ALSO embarked on a process of developing and implementing approaches that would allow staff to detect risks for community violence and IPV, and to employ finely-tuned strategies that could be used to prevent and intervene in violence. This section describes ALSO's efforts in this area.

Learning about Client Relationships

When beginning work with a client, ALSO staff engage in a screening and assessment in order to learn more about the central relationships in his or her life. This helps staff to understand where there are positive influences that are protective and where there may be red flag relationships. There are two main components of this process. The first is a dialogue-style screening interview using funnel questions²¹ and the second is the construction of a genogram.

Screening Interview

During the screening interview, the interviewer embeds screening questions in a conversation rather than reading them from a checklist. This allows the client to recall events more easily and to see connections among behaviors. The answers given can open up the conversation to more direct questions about past and current experiences with violence, as well as a client's relationships and affiliations. The process typically takes place over several sessions. It reveals much about a client's most significant relationships and also helps to build trust between the client and staff.

²¹ The funnel interviewing technique is designed to lead the discussion to a particular topic or set of topics without directing the interviewee there immediately. It can be especially useful when a topic is difficult to recall or there is another reason why the interviewee may not be able to answer direct questions about it initially. A funnel interview first introduces a broad topic, using open-ended questions. Depending on the answer, more narrowly tailored, specific, and close-ended questions can then be posed, which are designed to allow the interviewee to provide answers to the questions about which the interviewer wants to learn more.

Before uncovering the intersection between community violence and IPRs/IPV, staff engaged in this process to learn whether one or more Community Violence Risk Factors are present.

Community Violence Risk Factors

- ❖ Has access to weapons
- ❖ Has associations with gangs
- ❖ Has a leadership role in a gang (e.g., shooter)
- ❖ May have a history of perpetrating IPV
- ❖ May be depressed
- ❖ Has a history of using violence
- ❖ Is on parole or probation (i.e., has been recently released from incarceration)
- ❖ Is between the ages of 16 and 25
- ❖ Is quick to anger
- ❖ Was the victim of a recent shooting

After identifying the intersection between community violence and IPRs/IPV, ALSO incorporated a number of IPV risk factors into the client intake/assessment process. The assessment now includes Criminal History and Psychosocial Factors²² and Intimate Partner Violence History Factors.²³

Criminal History & Psychosocial Factors

- ❖ Past assaults of family members or friends
- ❖ Victim or witness to IPV in childhood
- ❖ Anger, impulsivity, and instability disorders
- ❖ Recent suicidal or homicidal comments
- ❖ Increased drug or alcohol use/abuse
- ❖ Past violations of conditional release
- ❖ Recent psychotic/manic symptoms
- ❖ Past assault of acquaintances/strangers
- ❖ Problems with obtaining or maintaining employment

Intimate Partner Violence History Factors

- ❖ Past physical assault of intimate partner
- ❖ Past sexual assault/jealousy
- ❖ Past use of weapons and/or credible threats of death
- ❖ Recent escalation in frequency or severity of assault;
- ❖ Past violation of “no contact” orders
- ❖ Extreme minimization or denial of spousal assault history
- ❖ Attitudes that support or condone spousal assault

²² These factors are adapted from the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment tool contained in Kropp, P.R., Hart, S.D., Webster, C.D., and Eaves, D. (1995). Manual for the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (2nd edition). British Columbia: The British Columbia Institute on Family Violence (available at http://www.biscmi.org/documents/Spousal_Assault_Risk_Assessment.pdf).

²³ The risk factors are based on the Danger Assessment, developed by Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD, RN, and available at <http://www.dangerassessment.com>.

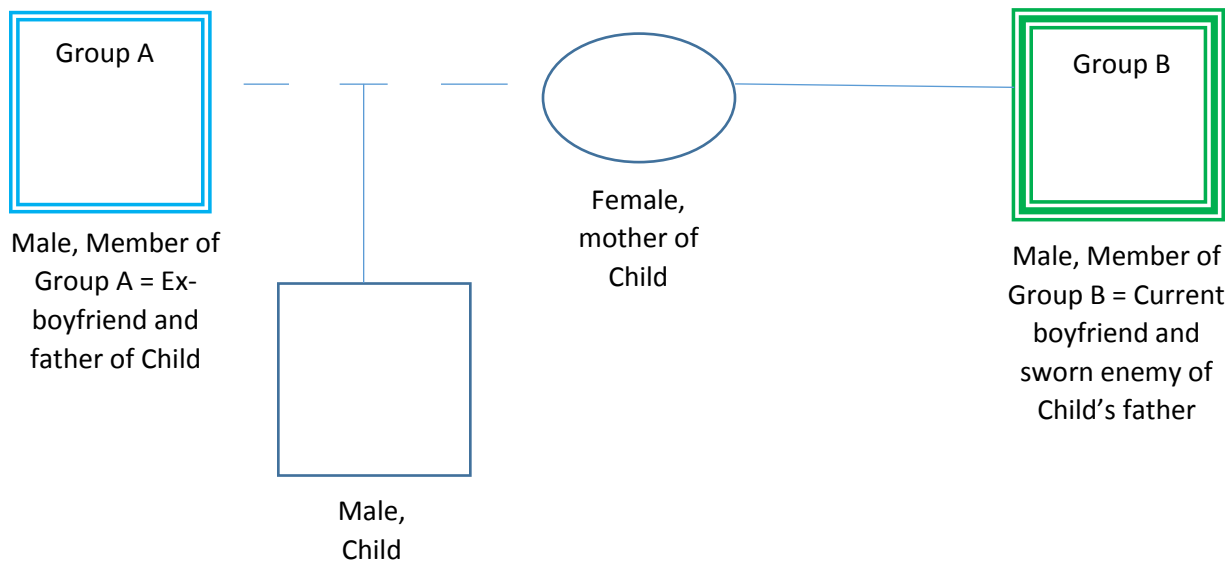
❖ Severe violence or sexual assault

The identification of two or more Criminal History/Psychosocial and (or) Community Violence Risk Factors, in combination with the presence of at least one of the Intimate Partner Violence History Factors indicates the presence of a red flag relationship, a high risk for a future violence, and a very dangerous situation.

Genogram Construction

Later, after the screening assessment interview process has neared completion, staff construct a genogram with the client to learn more about the key relationships in a client’s life.²⁴ A genogram is a visual display resembling a family tree that identifies family relationships, individual family members’ histories, how family members relate to and interact with one another on multiple levels, and patterns of behavior across generations (e.g., alcoholism, depression, mental illness). The lines connecting individuals demonstrate the strength of the connection and illustrate where relationships are strained or broken. ALSO builds genograms that not only indicate family relationships and patterns, but also intimate partners, gang leaders, allies, and foes. Building a genogram with a client is important because it allows for further conversation with clients about the nature of their relationships. This helps to reveal where red flag relationships may exist, where micro-conflicts have already occurred or are imminent, and where there is potential for future conflict. The genogram pictured in Figure 2 is based on the Case Scenario described earlier.

Figure 2: Simple Genogram Illustrating Case Scenario: IPV Leads to Gang Violence



²⁴ Used in family therapy, genograms are a way to view problems across at least three generations of a family by looking at multiple contextual levels. Butler, John (May 2008). The Family Diagram and Genogram: Comparisons and Contrasts. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 36(3), 169–180.

Making Every Conversation Count

After the initial assessment process, ALSO staff engage in the kinds of relationship-building activities that are highlighted earlier in the paper. Prevention programming is integrated throughout ALSO's work with clients. Staff strive to make every moment and conversation count: there are always opportunities to integrate violence prevention work into the conversation or context. Staff use opportunities for meaningful, high quality, one-on-one discussions with clients – both scheduled and impromptu – to reinforce the importance of nonviolence in all aspects of life. These may occur in the context of scheduled meetings between clients and staff, on the phone, or in the community when staff stop by the client's home or the block where he often hangs out. Comments about violence that are made by clients – either during group dialogues or casual conversation – are addressed. Nonviolent behavior is modeled and reinforced in clients. The consequences of using violence are also addressed in one-on-one conversations and group discussions. Staff encourage clients to think about what can happen when an individual commits IPV in the presence of a child, including the imposition of increased charges and sentences. Conversely, staff also point out how remaining nonviolent can contribute to the well-being of clients' children.

Tailored Intervention Strategies

The options for mediating to prevent retaliation are appreciably limited once tensions and risks have risen to a high level. However, staff have identified that it is easier and more effective to argue against retaliation, and to isolate and contain the violence, when they know that the shooting or homicide is based on a red flag relationship and a related micro-conflict (or series of them) and not on gang warfare. Using this knowledge, staff can engage in mediation conversations that incorporate this information, allowing for more a more nuanced and tailored approach that is focused on the red flag relationship and the consequences of retaliation.

Training of Outreach Workers and Partnership with Additional CeaseFire Sites

In an effort to ensure that all CeaseFire outreach workers are trained on intimate partner violence, how to screen for it, and prevention and intervention techniques, ALSO developed a three-hour training on the intersection of community violence, IPRs, and IPV. The training is intended to teach the identification and labeling of violent acts, inspire workers to address all forms of violence, and introduce techniques for appropriate responses.²⁵

In May 2012, ALSO trained CeaseFire outreach workers and violence interrupters from across Chicago on the intersections between IPV and community violence. During each training,

²⁵ Alliance of Local Service Organizations (2012). *The Connections Between Familial and Intimate Partner Relationships & Street/Gang Violence: Three-Hour Training for Ceasefire Outreach Workers and Violence Interrupters* (training curriculum).

participants received an introduction to IPV risk factors, and learned why it is important to recognize and understand the role of IPV in community violence and to identify when it is a factor. Participants practiced implementing this new knowledge through scenarios and role play exercises. For example, training participants learned how to screen for possible IPV using funnel questions. Participants in the training also viewed a role play by ALSO staff. The role play demonstrated preventive, non-violent interventions; participants then practiced having these conversations.

Of the sites that were trained, several committed to partnering with ALSO to address community violence in a broader way to include consideration of IPV in their community violence work. These partner sites sent outreach workers to attend the forty-hour domestic violence advocacy certification training conducted by Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network in July 2012²⁶. ALSO provides follow-up and ongoing technical assistance to CeaseFire sites to help staff incorporate the training material information into their work.

In September 21, 2012, ALSO hosted a one-day training, in collaboration with Alianza – National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence. The training, entitled *Engaging Latino Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women in the Context of Community Violence*, was led by trainers Jerry Tello and Ricardo Carillo, who are experts on the effects of violence and trauma on Latino families and on developing strategies to heal and restore Latino men and youth who have been exposed to community violence (as victims and perpetrators). On the day prior to the training, the trainers worked with ALSO CeaseFire staff to teach them techniques for facilitating culturally-based healing circles with their clients.

Incorporation of IPV into Forms and Procedures

When CeaseFire outreach workers mediate conflicts or respond to a shooting, they attempt to learn the root causes of the conflict and then complete a CeaseFire Conflict Mediation form. This form describes the location of the conflict, the primary and secondary reasons for the conflict, risk factors, the likelihood that the conflict could have led to a shooting, the type of mediation, and the outcome of the mediation. The form now includes domestic violence as one of the possible reasons for the conflict. The risk factors also include the option to check the box next to the statement, "Conflict is thought to be related to high risk domestic violence activity." If the mediation was domestic violence-related, staff must indicate the actions that were taken. A separate section on domestic violence information is included that relates to the prevention of retaliatory violence, connections to a domestic violence advocate, and whether it is considered to be a high risk situation. Similarly, the CeaseFire Shooting Review form, which is completed after every shooting to which CeaseFire workers respond, now includes questions that allow staff to indicate that the incident was related to IPV.

²⁶ This was a particularly significant sign of commitment because it occurred during a gap in funding during which most CeaseFire staff at these sites had been laid off.

Moving Forward: Identifying Opportunities for Growth and Collaboration

The identification of a close connection between community violence and IPV in the violence that occurs in the Logan Square and Humboldt Park neighborhoods in Chicago has led to a shift in the way that ALSO views violence and does its work in these communities. The presence of IPRs and gang life can cause interrelated micro-conflicts that generate large-scale conflict. These can ultimately result in shootings and homicide. Screening and assessment with a client now includes red flag relationships and IPV. Constructing genograms helps staff to further understand the context of relationships and aid in the identification of the use of violence against an intimate partner. Intervention work, including mediations and response to shootings and other violent incidents includes investigations into whether components the conflict are rooted in IPV. Contact with intimate partners includes the identification of risks and connection with appropriate resources. Prevention work that is built into an array of activities with clients includes structured and informal discussions about IPV and uses impromptu opportunities to reward and encourage nonviolence. Staff emphasize the impact of both community violence and IPV on children – particularly for those clients who are fathers. Support and reinforcement are given for positive and responsible choices related to intimate partner relationships, fathering children, and co-parenting.

Optimally, all agencies and organizations working with at- and in-risk men and women will one day have the capacity to competently identify red flag relationships and IPV, and take appropriate action. This would ensure multiple entry points to opportunities for prevention and intervention. Given the complexity of these issues, however, there is a need to first understand more about these intersections and lay a solid foundation. Below are some recommendations for initial next steps that would help to ensure solid footing for more work in this area.

Training and Education on IPV

As a first step, all organizations and agencies that offer services to in-risk and at-risk men and women should consider participating in training and education on IPV. ALSO began discussions about the intersection of IPRs, IPV, and community violence because of the in-house collective knowledge of ALSO staff who work on local and national domestic violence technical assistance and policy projects. ALSO staff who have expertise and experience on IPV issues engaged in focused discussions and cross-training with ALSO's CeaseFire staff, which led to much of the work that is outlined in this paper.

At a minimum, leadership, management, and front-line staff at any organization or agency working with in-risk and at-risk clients should receive training. Entities that may want to participate in this training include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Re-entry programs;
- ❖ Substance abuse treatment providers;
- ❖ Health care providers;
- ❖ Corrections;
- ❖ Courts, including probation and parole;

- ❖ Batterer intervention programs;
- ❖ Responsible fatherhood programs;
- ❖ Community leaders;
- ❖ Faith-based organizations; and
- ❖ Community-based domestic violence, trafficking, and sexual assault advocacy programs.

This is essential for an understanding of the roots of IPV, risks, survivor needs, effects, and community resources for survivors, their children, individuals who use violence, and those who advocate and work with them. Training and education should be provided by individuals or organizations that have a long-standing commitment to, and expertise on, issues related to IPV.

Development of Organizational/Agency Policies on IPV

Once training is obtained, organizations may wish to consider developing policies and procedures that provide staff with guidance on IPV. These should be created in partnership with an organization that has an established history of, and expertise on, working with domestic violence survivors. The topics that policies and procedures could address include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ When or if IPV will be screened for, by whom, and under what circumstances;
- ❖ Actions to be taken if there is a positive screen;
- ❖ Where clients can be referred for victim services or for using violence;
- ❖ Confidentiality, documentation, and record-keeping; and
- ❖ Staff training and supervision.

Engaging in Community-Wide Collaborative Work

One important step may be the formation of collaborative community entities for the purpose of working on a discrete issue or addressing larger topics. Examples of issues and work areas that could be addressed by a collaborative group include:

- ❖ Defining the elements of appropriate advocacy and services for in-risk and at-risk men and women, including those experiencing IPV;
- ❖ Developing interagency agreements to define roles, modes of referral, and information-sharing;
- ❖ Making recommendations about documentation and record-keeping;
- ❖ Developing an understanding of unintended and collateral consequences of positive screening on a client, the intimate partner, children, and other family members; and
- ❖ Identifying measures of success and determining how to evaluate processes and outcomes.

Research and Identification of Promising Practices

Development and dissemination of a research agenda could be another opportunity for work by a collaborative group. There is currently a dearth of research that addresses the intersections of community and intimate partner violence, and effective methods of prevention

and intervention. Research that is informed by or based on community-based work in this area is needed to support policies and practices that can be incorporated into program work. Additionally, more focus may be needed to determine the unique risks, circumstances, and advocacy needs of at-risk women who are experiencing IPV at the hands of a partner who is involved with a gang.

Conclusion

Community violence and intimate partner violence are generally viewed as discrete problems that operate separately. ALSO's identification of a close connection between these types of violence has led to a shift in perspective about the ways in which it is possible to assess and support clients, and engage in prevention and intervention work. ALSO has incorporated screening for and ongoing assessment of red flag relationships and intimate partner violence in the lives of its clients and their partners, and stays attuned to central relationships. At the same time, staff work to build trusting relationships with clients, model responsible and nonviolent responses to micro-conflicts that can lead to larger-scale community violence, and encourage men's positive connections with social supports. These are strategies that have been shown to be effective in reducing risks and increasing men's involvement with their children.

It is recommended that all agencies and organizations working with in-risk and at-risk men and women receive training on IPV. More information may be needed in order to learn more about the specific circumstances and advocacy needs of at-risk women who are abused by a gang-affiliated partner. Programs should not begin screening for IPV, however, until after receiving appropriate training, instituting agency/organization policies, and collaborating closely with programs that have established expertise on IPV. Research is needed to help identify, learn more about, and disseminate information about effective prevention and intervention work for the intersections of IPV, IPRs, and community violence. It is hoped that this future work can ultimately lead to and further support nonviolent decision-making by fathers that places the needs of their children, and others closest to them, at the forefront.