

Case Study on the “Project Home Involved Intervention Strategies” Domestic Violence Model

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Final Report
Case Study on the “Project Home Involved Intervention Strategies” Domestic Violence Model

Report Prepared for:
New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality and Near-Fatality Review Board

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Background

Project Home Involved Violence Intervention Strategies (HIVIS), developed in 2015 by the Gloucester Township Police Department (GTPD) in Gloucester Township, New Jersey, is a comprehensive model developed to guide police responses to domestic violence (DV). As a police department, the primary mission of GTPD is to protect the Gloucester Township community. Their policing practices are guided by the values of honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, compassion, and courage. GTPD responds to nearly 60,000 calls for service each year and consists of 134 full-time law enforcement officers, 36 special law enforcement officers, 17 tele-communicators, and 16 civilian personnel. The department is split into three divisions – the Operations Division, Administrative Services Division, and the Community Services Division.

GTPD recognizes the importance of community policing; it serves as a platform whereby the department can prevent crime by investing in young people and vulnerable families. In order to effectively serve young people, the Gloucester Township 3RD GEAR Policing Model was established. 3RD GEAR Policing is a comprehensive approach involving suppression (1ST GEAR), prevention (2ND GEAR), and intervention (3RD GEAR) to address crime through an understanding that social disorder and substance abuse fuels crime, especially among young people. Several programs fall under the scope of 3RD GEAR Policing, including those aimed at reducing violence and decreasing youth delinquency recidivism; promoting engagement with youth through positive police contact; identifying at-risk youth, particularly those experiencing violence within the home; and fighting the epidemic of drug addiction. Project HIVIS is also implemented as part of 3RD GEAR Policing.

Project HIVIS is a comprehensive model in which GTPD investigates DV cases and connects victims and families impacted by DV to services. At its essence, Project HIVIS is

comprised of a specialized DV police unit enhanced by incorporating principles of coordinated community responses (CCR) to DV. Project HIVIS also incorporates many criminal justice response elements that have been highlighted by the New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality and Near-Fatality Review Board over the years, such as offender accountability, clear communication to victims, adherence to standard operating procedures, and the use of Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) volunteers to support victims.

Comprehensive police responses to DV are important for intervention, as they have the potential to increase victim safety and promote offender accountability. However, in order to achieve these goals, it is imperative that officers build positive relationships with community members and use evidence-based police practices. Victims' perceptions of police vary based on a range of factors. Research has found that victims generally have favorable opinions of encounters with police following a DV incident when officers show concern about victims' welfare, share information about DV and relevant resources, listen to victims, ensure that victims' children are safe, and lastly, secure victims' homes (Johnson, 2007). Conversely, victims perceive the experience as negative when officers are impersonal or not sympathetic, minimize the situation, disbelieve the victim, or do not seem to care (Johnson, 2007; Stephens & Sinden, 2000). Positive police encounters can be supported through the implementation of organizational policies and practices that equip officers with the knowledge and tools necessary to investigate DV cases in a trauma-informed manner.

Given the limitations of police responses that focus solely on criminal justice, some police departments have developed specialized DV units. According to Ford, Reichard, Goldsmith, and Regoli (1996), activities engaged in by specialized DV units should include: a) investigating DV reports, b) servicing warrants and orders of protection, c) collaborating with

other entities to detect future risk, and d) analyzing data and utilizing it for proactive DV intervention. Project HIVIS is innovative because it incorporates several promising practices including training, the assessment of risk, and a DV unit, in addition to connecting victims to services within the community.

Although research on specialized DV units has been positive, evaluations, particularly those with rigorous methodologies, are limited [see DuPree, 2003; Pennell and Burke, 2002; Willson, McFarlane, Malecha, & Lemmey, 2001; Wing, 2004]. Only five studies that evaluated specialized DV units included a comparison group in their analyses (Bledsoe, Sar, & Barbee, 2006; Exum, Hartman, Friday, & Lord, 2014; Farrell & Buckley, 1999; Regoeczi & Hubbard, 2018; Whetstone, 2001). While results from evaluations of specialized DV units have generally been favorable, there are some limitations. Notably, there appears to be limited advancement in this area. Further, study outcomes tend to vary widely in both conceptualization and operation, thus making it difficult to compare findings. As such, there is a need for additional research that examines and evaluates the effectiveness of DV models being implemented by police.

The purpose of this case study was to describe the nature of the Project HIVIS model. The study is descriptive in nature and serves as a first step toward understanding the key components of the Project HIVIS, which are necessary to understand in order to move forward with more rigorous program evaluations. This case study can also be reviewed by other police departments interested in replicating Project HIVIS or developing their own comprehensive DV model. This report provides a broad overview of the model and is not intended to serve as an implementation guide.

Methods

This mixed methods case study included: a) semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders involved with the implementation of the Project HIVIS model at GTPD, and b) a review of policies and programmatic documents on the Project HIVIS model.

Sample

Semi-structured interviews. Key stakeholders interviewed as part of this case study were individuals employed by GTPD who were involved with either the initial development and/or the current implementation of the Project HIVIS model. These key stakeholders were able to share historical information not documented in policies and programmatic documents, as well as offer clarification on elements of the model that were unclear. Participants were invited by email to participate in the study, which involved in-person one-on-one semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders involved with the implementation of the Project HIVIS model at GTPD. Key stakeholders were identified through snowball sampling. Six key stakeholders were emailed between October 2018 and January 2019 and four key stakeholders were interviewed. The average interview time was approximately 50 minutes. To protect the confidentiality of participants, no identifying information will be included in the report.

Review of policies and programmatic documents. Policies and programmatic documents provided by key stakeholders were reviewed as part of this study. These documents included: a) General Order dated June 18, 2018, b) Project HIVIS Media Package dated October 8, 2015, and c) 3RD Gear Policing: Building Trust and Promoting Positive Youth Development, no date. A General Order is a document that outlines the standard operating procedures of a police department. The General Order dated June 18, 2018 is 53 pages in length and outlines domestic violence procedures for GTPD. It is based on “State law, Court Rules, and the

Domestic Violence Procedures Manual which was jointly prepared by the New Jersey Supreme Court and the Attorney General through the Division of Criminal Justice,” (p 3). The Project HIVIS Media Package dated October 8, 2015 was developed for media sources following the announcement of the creation of the Project HIVIS model. The seven-page document includes a statement by Chief Harry Earle and an overview of some of the components of Project HIVIS, including a sample offender notification letter. Lastly, the 3RD Gear Policing: Building Trust and Promoting Positive Youth Development is an eight-page promotional packet that describes the nature of the Juvenile and Family Service Bureau (JFSB) Huddle and the types of incidents that make juveniles eligible for inclusion.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews. The research team created a semi-structured interview guide based on prior literature around police DV models and guided by the research questions. Interview questions centered around: a) elements that comprise the Project HIVIS model, b) factors that influenced the creation of the Project HIVIS model, and c) Perceptions of the Project HIVIS model by key stakeholders at GTPD. See Appendix A for a copy of the interview guide. The method of semi-structured interviews was chosen, as it allows research questions to be guided by theory, but also provides the flexibility to adjust the interview to best elicit details on the lived experiences of the participants (Galletta, 2013). All interviews were audio recorded. The audio recordings were not transcribed, but rather a member of the research team reviewed the audio recordings as part of the case study and took detailed notes. These notes included direct quotes that illuminated key themes well. Some of these direct quotes are presented in the results.

Review of policies and programmatic documents. The policies and programmatic documents were read carefully by a member of the research team. Notes were taken on key

pieces of information provided in these documents. This included policy and procedural information that confirmed data gathered from key stakeholder interviews, such as elements that comprise Project HIVIS and how the departmental leaders ensure the model is being implemented as intended.

Data Analysis

As part of the case study, data analysis involved an integration of the information collected as part of the semi-structured interviews and a review of the policies and programmatic documents. Data was interpreted holistically given the broad and descriptive nature of the research question. The goal of the data analysis was to develop a case description to explain the general characteristics of the Project HIVIS intervention. Findings from this study are presented through the construction of a logic model that outlines the key components of the Project HIVIS model, along with its short and long-term outcomes. A logic model is a visual representation of program that documents elements such as resources, staff activities, program processes, and outcomes. It is particularly useful in program evaluation because it maps out the sequence of events that are supposed to occur as part of a program in order for it to obtain an intended outcome (Cooksy, Gill, & Kelly, 2001).

Results

The logic model that emerged as a result of this case study can be found in Appendix B. The logic model includes the four key strategies that comprise Project HIVIS and the activities engaged in as part of each component. Short and long-term outcomes for the program are also identified. This results section will begin with a discussion of each of these four strategies, and then move to an overview of desired outcomes.

Strategies and Activities

Key stakeholder interviews and the review of policies and programmatic documents illuminated four primary response strategies within the Project HIVIS model: a) development of expertise around and implementation of trauma-informed police responses to DV, b) assessment of risk, c) enhanced protection action, and d) victim supports.

Development of expertise around and implementation of trauma-informed police responses to DV. The first strategy utilized by GTPD as part of the Project HIVIS model is the development of expertise around trauma-informed police responses to DV. This strategy includes the designation of two DV detectives, the creation of a General Order guiding departmental policies and procedures around responding to DV cases, and the implementation of department-wide DV trainings.

DV detectives. Two DV detective positions were established in 2015 to ensure that officers with a specialized knowledge of the crime investigated DV cases. Housed in the JFSB, these officers received training on the Danger Assessment by Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell and spent two weeks in the summer of 2015 training with the Camden County Prosecutor's Office. The two DV detectives work during the hours in which GTPD tends to receive the most DV calls and follow-up on any DV cases that come into GTPD, regardless of whether an arrest is made. If available, the DV detective will also respond to the scene and assist with the investigation. However, the two officers nearest to the scene will always respond first. If the DV detective is not available to respond to the scene, the DV detective receives information about the case after the initial investigation is completed by the responding officer. Post-DV incident activities engaged in by the DV detectives include: a) ensuring the completion of a DV safety review, b) attending afternoon and special court sessions when GTPD's DV cases are scheduled to appear, c) participating in the JFSB Huddle, and d) safety planning with victim and case follow-up.

Ensuring the completion of a DV safety review. A Family Safety and Service Assessment review must be conducted on all DV incidents. While the DV detective is not necessarily required to complete this assessment, they must ensure that it is completed by the appropriate personnel. The Family Safety and Service Assessment was developed by GTPD and components of the Family Safety and Service Assessment include an investigation into the number of past DV incidents both the victim and offender were involved in, past DV convictions and restraining orders, whether children are present in the home, including age and school attended, incident history at the residence including non-DV crimes, warrant inquiries of contacts known to adults within the home, a motor vehicle inquiry, and review of scores from the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) and Home Safety Worksheet to make determinations about increased risk indicators present within the household.

Attending afternoon and special court sessions. When possible, the DV detectives attend afternoon and special court sessions in the municipal court in which GTPD cases are scheduled to appear. The function of the DV detectives within the court are fourfold. First, in consultation with the DV advocate also in court, the DV detectives can inform victims of the services and protection measures available and/or being implemented by GTPD and other organizations within the community. Second, the DV detective can communicate with the offender and make it known that GTPD is aware of the offenses committed and will be monitoring the case. Third, the DV detectives are able to consult with the municipal court prosecutor regarding cases and discuss any concerns regarding the accused. As one key stakeholder describes:

Our domestic violence detectives go to the courtroom and are ready and they have [the victim advocate from the DV organization] so they are not only there by themselves, they have the victim advocate in the courtroom and they are a team and the prosecutor's on board. So if the prosecutor needs anything, you know, if they [the defendant] says "oh, I've never done this before" [the detectives] can be right there "oh, that's not true."

Lastly, by being present in the courtroom, the DV detectives have witnessed the court proceedings firsthand and are able to bring relevant information obtained from the court processes to departmental meetings regarding the case.

Participation in the JFSB Huddle. The JFSB Huddle is a weekly meeting in which all officers and support staff that work in JFSB meet to discuss family violence cases that have occurred within the past one week, as well as most DV incidences that occurred, with a specific focus on every juvenile that officers have had contact with. For DV cases, juveniles discussed include those who witnessed the incident, those who did not witness the event but were exposed to the incident (e.g. by hearing the incident taking place), and those juveniles who live in the home but were not present at the time. In addition to the DV detectives, the Huddle is attended by JFSB leadership, School Resource Officers, and the GTPD's in-house counselor.

During the Huddle, each case is discussed and findings from the Family Safety and Service Assessment are shared. If increased risk indicators are found to be present within the home, "Patrol Invest" will be assigned to the DV detective. As part of Patrol Invest, the DV detective is tasked with implementing enhanced protection actions to promote victim safety and offender accountability. This includes ensuring enhanced protection actions are executed by GTPD officers, discussing safety planning strategies with victims, checking on the detention status of offenders, and assigning 60, 90, and 180 day reviews of the defendant to determine whether there have been any additional warrants, victim contacts, or incidents within the household.

Case follow-up. Lastly, the DV detectives are responsible for case follow-up. As part of this follow-up, the DV detectives safety plan with victims, ensure that they are connected with

resources, and confirm that enhanced protection actions are being implemented. Overall, the DV detectives serve as a support for victims within GTPD. As one key stakeholder described,

...it's offering advice on how to be safe at home, trusted adults, friends and family, the whole list of advice that they give to those victims and I think because: 1) it may really help them, and 2) it just shows them that police care and they'll be more likely to call us if something happens again.

General Order. The implementation of a General Order, which is a formal policy memo, is another way in which GTPD ensures that officers utilize a trauma-informed police response to DV. The purpose of the General Order dated June 18, 2018 was to “establish general guidelines which consolidates the police procedures for domestic violence cases, including abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled, and response to domestic violence cases involving law enforcement officers...” (p. 3) in accordance with state laws, guidelines, memorandums, and directives, policies, and procedures guiding law enforcement responses to DV. Included in the General Order are general DV procedures for all officers to follow, as well as DV assessment procedures using ODARA, guidelines for implementing enhanced protection actions, practices for handling DV incidents involving law enforcement, an outline of the role of DV detective, and procedures for the activation of the DVRT. The DVRT is an intervention in which a DV advocate is called to respond to the police department following a DV incident, as to provide psychoeducation and safety planning to victims.

All officers are required to familiarize themselves with the General Order and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined throughout the document, although the procedures are for internal use only. To ensure Project HIVIS is being implemented in accordance to departmental policies, the Chief will conduct integrity checks by randomly selecting cases and reviewing the files to ensure proper procedures have been followed. A benefit to having the General Order is that it ensures that DV protocols are documented and that officers are aware of what is expected

of them. If the Chief determines that officers are not following the protocols as described, a training bulletin will go out in an effort to rectify any confusion. If there is continued confusion, the protocols will also be discussed during scheduled department-wide trainings, which occur four times a year in six-hour time blocks. Although not common, disciplinary action is taken in instances where officers fail to follow protocol even after corrective notification. There are also mechanisms in place to acknowledge officers who follow protocols and do exceptional investigative work during DV cases. For example, supervisors can complete a “Positive Performance Notice” to highlight outstanding work by an officer; this form is then added to officers’ personnel files. As one key stakeholder shared, “*Our chief sends a pretty strong message that officers need to be held accountable.*” In this way, the Chief has been able to foster departmental buy-in around the implementation of Project HIVIS by communicating that the issue is a priority.

Department-wide DV trainings. According to N.J.S.A. 2C: 25-20, all law enforcement officers are required to attend a training on DV and abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled within 90 days of appointment and transfer and at least four hours of in-service training on this topic per year. To ensure these requirements are being met, GTPD has a training department that includes a lieutenant and four officers. The training department conducts four six-hour blocks of training for its officers per year, of which at least one is focused on DV. The DV training includes a review of basic knowledge, a discussion of new policies and procedures being implemented, an overview of GTPD’s General Order, and the types of services that GTPD can offer to victims.

Assessment of risk. GTPD has two mechanisms for assessing risk during DV cases: a) the state-mandated ODARA, and b) and the GTPD Home Violence Grade Worksheet and Report.

ODARA. All law enforcement officers in New Jersey have been directed to utilize ODARA in conjunction with the Public Safety Assessment as part of a pretrial risk assessment process for DV cases. The purpose of this process is to assess for risk of new criminal activity and failure to appear in court and determine whether detention is appropriate for the offender. While the utilization of ODARA is not unique to GTPD, the department utilizes the score gathered from ODARA to inform the implementation of enhanced protection actions by the department. As will be discussed in the next section, enhanced protection actions are activities engaged in by GTPD to increase offender accountability and promote victim safety.

Home Violence Grade Worksheet and Report. The Home Violence Grade Worksheet and Report is a risk assessment tool developed by GTPD to be completed any time an officer is also required to complete the New Jersey Domestic Violence Supplementary Report. The Home Violence Grade Worksheet is considered a confidential intelligence report and is used to evaluate the risk of future violence within a household through the consideration of known risk indicators. Offender risk factors considered on the Home Violence Grade Worksheet include prior threatened or attempted suicide, animal cruelty, prior DV incidents, and prior non-DV related offenses, as well as the presence of children. Results from the Home Violence Grade Worksheet are then used to complete the Home Violence Grade Report that also guides which enhanced protection actions engaged in by GTPD.

The Home Violence Grade Report is completed using information collected as part of ODARA and the Home Violence Grade Worksheet. The Home Violence Grade Report includes

four categories of risk from Grade D, which is the lowest risk level, to Grade A, which is the highest risk level. Each risk level corresponds with specific enhanced protection actions that GTPD officers are recommended to complete in relation to the corresponding case. Generally, homes that score a risk grade of D have had minimal police involvement previously (e.g. no previous charges for DV or restraining order violations) and the most recent case did not result in indictable offense or the issuance of a restraining order, whereas homes that receive a risk score of an A exhibit multiple risk indicators, have an active warrant, and/or have an outstanding restraining order that needs to be served.

Enhanced protection actions. Enhanced protection actions are activities engaged in by GTPD following DV incidents that result in the completion of the New Jersey Domestic Violence Supplementary Report. The actions to be implemented are informed by results from ODARA and the Home Violence Safety Worksheet and collectively generate a risk grade level. The Home Violence Grade Report is used by officers to make determinations about what risk level to assign to a household and what enhanced protection actions should be enacted. Each risk grade level is associated with specific enhanced protection actions. These actions are intended to enhance offender accountability and increase victim safety. The number of enhanced protection actions implemented by GTPD corresponds with the risk level assigned to the home based on assessment of a range of risk factors. Table 1 provides examples of enhanced protection actions utilized by the department and risk grades they correspond with. The Home Violence Grade Report includes four categories of risk from Grade D, which is the lowest risk level, to Grade A, which is the highest risk level. While households assigned a risk level of Grade D receive three enhanced protection actions (i.e. entering the victim's email into the systems Family Crisis Sub-Group, sending a notification letter to the offender, and a weekly review of the case while it is

active), households assigned a risk level of Grade A may receive as many as 27 enhanced protection actions.

Overall, the enhanced protection actions center around offering support to victims and monitoring offenders’ criminal behaviors. Actions that focus on victim safety include discussing victim needs at the JFSB Huddle, contacting the victim via phone/email to check on welfare, offering services, assisting with safety planning, providing support to the victim during court proceedings, and connecting the victim with advocates from the county DV organization and the prosecutor’s office.

Table 1. Examples of enhanced protection actions implemented by GTPD

Enhanced Protection Action	Grade Level			
	A	B	C	D
Case discussed as JFSB Huddle as needed	x	x	x	x
Victim email entered into Family Crisis Sub-Group	x	x	x	x
Letter to offender advising that DV conduct will not be tolerated and services available	x	x	x	x
Contact with victim via phone/email to check welfare, offer services, and assist with safety planning		x	x	x
Monitor court appearances and meet with victim and DV advocate in court		x	x	x
Monitor offender recidivism and serve active warrants		x	x	x
Conduct a comprehensive review of offender criminal history		x	x	x
Monitor need for officer safety flag for residence		x	x	x
Evaluate need to contact prosecutor’s office regarding bail issues and requests for continued remand			x	x
Request victim advocates from outside GTPD connect with victim			x	x
Establish DV flag for low tolerance arrest			x	x
Issue patrol alert				x

Note. The Home Violence Grade Report includes four categories of risk from Grade D, which is the lowest risk level, to Grade A, which is the highest risk level. The enhanced protection actions correspond with risk grades.

Actions that focus on offender deterrence include monitoring the offenders' court appearances, warrants, and recidivism, and issuing patrol alerts. In addition, following the first offense, a letter is sent to the offender advising that DV conduct will not be tolerated. This letter also includes service referrals. A sample offender notification letter can be found in Appendix C. A letter is also mailed to the offender following each subsequent offense. Letters for subsequent offenses are similar in nature to the initial letter, except they also include specific mention of the offender's history of DV and associated concerns.

Patrol alerts initiate increased observation of the residence of concern and there are two patrol alert levels. Extra Patrol Advisories request that officers patrolling drive by the residence of concern when they are in the area and pay attention to anything "out of the ordinary." Officers implementing an extra patrol advisory are not expected to go out of their way to drive by the residence of concern. Conversely, the purpose of the Extra Patrol Alert is to demonstrate an increased police presence in the area in which the residence of concern is located. During an extra patrol alert, officers are expected to intentionally drive past the residence of concern a couple times during their shift and document it in the case records. Patrol alerts can also be initiated in response to concerning ODARA scores. For example, an extra patrol advisory is initiated when a DV offender scores at least a four but less than a seven on ODARA but is released on a summons. As one key stakeholder shared, a strength of Project HIVIS is that GTPD is committed to following through with protection actions to promote victim safety:

It may be subtle at times but I think that when the officers are interacting with the victim, that they're going through and they'll say, you know police officers will say, "Oh, we'll keep an extra eye out on patrol out of your house..." Do you? You know? Do you really or do you just tell them that? And we really do it. Like it's documented in the case...

In this way, the assessment of risk and implementation of enhanced protection actions are important components of the Project HIVIS model that can be incorporated into the policies and practices of other departments – even those with limited resources.

Victim supports. GTPD offers a range of supports to victims of DV. These supports come internally, through: a) the discussion of cases during the JFSB Huddle, b) DV detectives, and c) the clinician employed by GTPD, as well as externally, d) through the activation of DVRT and e) follow-up with other service providers and resources, as appropriate.

Internal victim supports. As noted previously, each week the JFSB Huddle meets to discuss family violence cases that came to the attention of the department in the prior seven days. Attendees at the JFSB Huddle include law enforcement assigned to JFSB, School Resource Officers, and the clinician employed by GTPD. During the Huddle, meeting participants discuss the Home Violence Grade and identify necessary follow-up tasks. Investigative follow-up tasks include those outlined as part of the enhanced protection actions implemented by GTPD. Support services to the victim may be provided by either a DV detective, GTPD’s clinician, or both, depending on the nature of the case and what is deemed most appropriate for the investigation and the safety of the victim. Support services may include safety planning, referrals to other services providers in the area, such as the county’s DV organization, or counseling provided by GTPD’s clinician. As one key stakeholder shared,

When there is a DV incident we talk about it. We meet once a week and it’s called our Huddle meetings every Tuesday, and we talk about it, and we talk about if there are any children involved or even if they aren’t I might reach out to the victim to offer any type of services I can and a lot of times they are really receptive and very happy to know they have this safe space...

While GTPD previously had a social worker on staff on a part-time basis to provide therapeutic services to victims of DV and other forms of interpersonal violence, along with at-

risk youth that come to attention of the officers, in 2018 GTPD was able to hire a full-time clinician for this role. The clinician is fully-funded by GTPD and works out of a community building separate from the police department. In addition to case management and service referrals, the clinician can offer both short and long-term individual, group, or family counseling to victims of DV and their children. GTPD also offers a range of prevention and therapeutic programs for at-risk youth that discuss issues such as substance abuse and the criminal justice system in an age appropriate manner. Key stakeholders noted that while they are fortunate to have the resources to be able to hire a clinician full-time, other departments interested in replicating the model can still support victims in their community by collaborating with their local DV organizations and having information about resources available in their community that they can provide to victims.

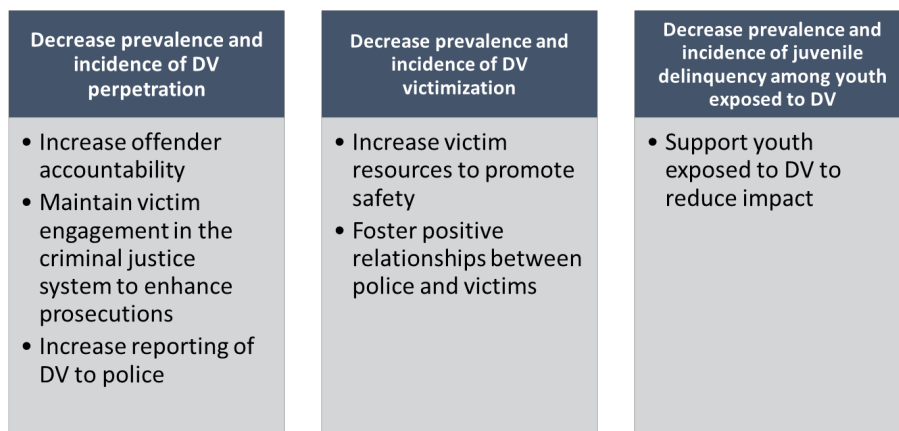
External victim supports. In addition to the internal mechanisms GTPD has to support victims of DV, GTPD also actively partners with the Camden County Women’s Center, their county DV organization, to connect victims to resources. One way in which GTPD partners with the Camden County Women’s Center is through the implementation of the DVRT. Following a DV incident, GTPD officers can activate a DVRT advocate to respond to the police department and meet with the victim. On rare occasions, the DVRT advocate can also respond to an alternate location such as a hospital emergency room. As part of the DVRT, the DV victim and advocate are provided with a private and secure environment where the advocate can provide the following information to the victim: a) an overview of criminal justice and civil court procedures, b) help understanding options available to them, c) assistance in obtaining a restraining order if appropriate, d) connection with shelter services if interested, and e) referrals for additional services provided by the Camden County Women’s Center and GTPD. In

instances where DVRT activation does not occur because it does not meet activation requirements (for example, in instances in which there is no arrest), officers are still encouraged to provide contact information for DVRT to the victim.

Short and Long-Term Goals

Figure 1 presents a visual representation of the three long-term goals of Project HIVIS and the short-term goals that serve as targets toward achieving these long-term goals. These short and long-term goals were identified based on interviews with key stakeholders and a review of programmatic documents. The Chief of GTPD was also consulted as part of the process for identifying the short and long-term goals of the model.

Figure 1. Short and Long Term Goals of Project HIVIS



Although the visual representation suggests that these short and long-term goals are separate, in reality they are interconnected, as decreases in prevalence and incidence of DV perpetration should result in decreases in prevalence and incidences of victimization and exposure to DV as well.

The first long-term goal of Project HIVIS is to decrease prevalence and incidence of DV perpetration. Short-term outcomes associated with this long-term goal include increasing offender accountability through the assessment of risk and enhanced protection actions,

maintaining victim engagement in the criminal justice system through the provision of victim supports, and increasing reporting of DV to police. It is the hope of GTPD that by demonstrating that the officers are committed to addressing this issue and are willing to follow through with protection actions that victims will be more likely to contact the police following DV incidents. As one key stakeholder shared, *“If [the victim] got the feeling that we didn’t care they may not call us, and that could be deadly.”*

The second long-term goal of Project HIVIS is to decrease prevalence and incidence of DV victimization. While ultimately the most successful way to achieve this goal is by decreasing perpetration, GTPD also engages in policing strategies intended to empower victims. The two short-term outcomes associated with this goal are increasing victim resources to promote safety and fostering positive relationships between police and victims.

Lastly, GTPD recognizes that many of the juvenile offenders that they come into contact are from *“broken homes”* and were previously known to the officers from prior incidents with the family, including DV. As such, as part of Project HIVIS, there is also a commitment to decreasing the prevalence and incidence of juvenile delinquency among youth exposed to DV by including them into JFSB Huddle meetings and making services available to them. The short-term outcome associated with this goal is therefore to support youth exposed to DV to reduce the overall impact.

Discussion and Implications

Project HIVIS is a unique DV police model that incorporates many criminal justice response elements that have been highlighted by the New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality and Near-Fatality Review Board over the years, such as offender accountability, clear communication to victims, adherence to standard operating procedures, and the use of DVRT volunteers to support victims. This case study was descriptive in nature and intended to explore

the key components of the Project HIVIS model through key stakeholder interviews and a review of programmatic documents. Findings from this study were used to generate a logic model that outlines the general function of the intervention.

The Project HIVIS model is comprised of four strategies: a) development of expertise around trauma informed police responses to DV, b) assessment of risk, c) enhanced protection actions, and d) victim supports. In addition to gaining a better understanding how these strategies are implemented, key stakeholders shared insights around how this model could be replicated by other departments.

Recommendations for implementation. Notably, key stakeholders acknowledged that while they are very fortunate to have the resources needed to implement Project HIVIS so comprehensively in their community, other departments could replicate these activities even where resources are limited. Key stakeholders identified the core elements of the model to be the grading of the home and connecting families with resources. While it would take time to train officers to utilize a risk assessment tool, such as the Home Violence Grade Worksheet and Report, it could be integrated into standard operating procedures without any additional staffing. Further, in the absence of a department clinician, officers can respond to DV incidents equipped with a list of resources within the community that they can easily share. This exchange of resources could be enhanced through positive working relationships with county DV organizations. Key stakeholders also emphasized that departments interested in responding effectively to DV cases should spend time familiarizing themselves with DV laws, recent cases, and how to take a trauma-informed approach to working with victims. In the absence of funding to send officers to such trainings, there are web-based resources (e.g. International Association of

Chiefs of Police; End Violence Against Women International; Battered Women's Justice Project) that make some of this information available for free.

Building departmental support. Key stakeholders also emphasized the importance of building departmental support for all DV work being implemented by the department and agreed that GTPD leadership sends a clear message to officers indicating that DV is departmental priority. This messaging has contributed to the department-wide support for the model. As a first step in promoting a DV victim supportive culture, departmental leadership should communicate that this area is a priority. Departmental leaders can also frame the issue of DV in the context of officer safety and offender accountability to foster officer buy-in around the issue.

Future research. While key stakeholders report that anecdotal feedback from victims of DV and community stakeholders around the Project HIVIS model have been positive, future research can evaluate the effectiveness of the model in achieving both its short and long-term goals. A comprehensive evaluation plan for Project HIVIS should include the analysis of administrative data to examine criminal justice outcomes, but also include feedback from victims of DV regarding their overall experience with Project HIVIS and how it has impacted their safety.

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Appendix A: Stakeholder Interview Guide

What is the interview start time: _____

We are conducting a case study to learn more about the Project Home Involved Violence Intervention Strategies (HIVIS) domestic violence model being implemented by the Gloucester Township Police Department (GTPD). We are conducting this interview to examine:

- (1) Elements that comprise the Project HIVIS model;
- (2) The factors that influenced the creation of the Project HIVIS model; and
- (3) Perceptions of the Project HIVIS model by GTPD leadership.

You will be one of approximately 5 to 10 participants interviewed as part of this study. It is our hope that the findings of this study will be useful to GTPD, as it will be a first step in documenting the components of the model for other municipalities interested in replicating it.

This study is confidential. This means that the research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. This information will be kept confidential by limiting access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the identifying information, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. However, it will be clear that key stakeholders were recruited from GTPD. Group results from this study will also be presented to GTPD leadership in report form. You may refuse to answer a question at any time and may also end this interview at any time.

Part I. Elements of the Project HIVIS Model

- 1) How long have you been on the police force at GTPD?
- 2) Can you please begin by describing to me what the Project HIVIS model means to you?
 - a. What elements are included in the model?
 - i. **Prompts:**
 1. Dedication of specialized officers?
 2. Community partnerships?
 3. Victim identification?
 4. Safety promoting follow-up activities?
 5. Services for at-risk youth?
 6. Anything else?
 - ii. **Follow up: For each element mentioned, ask the questions:**
 1. Why did you decide to include this element?
 2. Where did you get the idea to include this element in the Project HIVIS model?

- 3) Can you please tell me about your professional responsibilities as they relate to the implementation of the Project HIVIS model?
- 4) Who else is involved with the implementation of the Project HIVIS model?
 - a. What are the roles and responsibilities of those involved?
- 5) How does the Project HIVIS model fit in with GTPD's broader domestic violence operating procedures?
- 6) Can you walk me through what an average domestic violence investigation might look like?
 - a. **Prompts:**
 - i. What is the first thing officers do when a domestic violence call comes in?
 - ii. What do the officers do at the scene?
 - iii. What do the officers do if the victim comes back to the station?
 - iv. What do the officers do after the victim has left the station?
- 7) What has been the utility of Project HIVIS model in terms of policing?
 - a. **Prompts:**
 - i. Police response?
 - ii. Supporting victims?
 - iii. Increasing arrest rates/prosecution/sentencing?
 - iv. ODARA?
- 8) How have you been preparing officers to implement the Project HIVIS model and GTPD's broader domestic violence operating procedures?
 - a. **Prompts:**
 - i. Trainings?
 - ii. Memos?
 - iii. Anything else?
- 9) How do you ensure officer compliance with the Project HIVIS model and GTPD's broader domestic violence operating procedures?
- 10) A unique component of the Project HIVIS model, and GTPD more broadly, is the staffing of a social worker. How did a social worker come to be employed by GTPD?
 - a. Can you tell me what the role that the GTPD social worker plays in the Project HIVIS model?
 - b. How have officers responded to having a social worker within GTPD?

Part II. Factors that Influenced the Creation of the Project HIVIS Model

- 11) In 2015, your police department formally adopted the Project HIVIS model. Were you involved in the creation of the model?
 - a. If yes, what was your role in the creation of the model?
 - b. If no, do you recall anything about its implementation?

- 12) Can you describe the factors that contributed to the creation of the Project HIVIS model?
- a. What factors led to its creation?
 - i. **Prompts:**
 1. Departmental factors?
 2. Community factors?
 - a. Within Gloucester Township?
 - b. Within Camden County?
 3. Political factors?
 4. Societal factors?
 5. Other factors?
 - ii. Who was involved in this policy change?
 - i. What were the roles and responsibilities of those involved?
 - ii. How has the Project HIVIS model changed since it was first implemented in 2015?

Part III. Perceptions of the Project HIVIS Model

- 13) How has the Project HIVIS model changed the way officers from GTPD respond to domestic violence calls?
- 14) What do you view as some of the most critical elements of the Project HIVIS model?
- 15) Have these strategies influenced officer discretion?
- a. If so, how?
- 16) How did officers working within the department initially respond to the Project HIVIS model?
- a. Did anyone have reservations about the implementation of the Project HIVIS model?
 - b. What were the reasons for their reservations?
- 17) How would you describe officers' attitudes toward the Project HIVIS model now?
- 18) What have been challenges to implementing the Project HIVIS model department-wide since its inception?
- a. What works?
 - b. What has not worked?
 - c. How did you navigate these challenges?
- 19) Are there elements of the Project HIVIS model that you would like to improve?
- a. If yes, what are they?
- 20) If another department were interested in implementing the Project HIVIS model, what advice would you give them regarding how to get started?

21) If you were to evaluate the Project HVIIS model, what would you view as outcomes?

a. **Prompts:**

- i. Outcomes for victims?
- ii. Outcomes for offenders?
- iii. Outcomes for the family?
- iv. Outcomes for officers?

22) Do you have any other comments or questions about this project?

23) Do you have any recommendations for other individuals who should be interviewed based on their role in the implementation of the Project HIVIS model?

What is the interview end time: _____

Appendix B: Logic Model for Project Home Involved Intervention Strategies (HIVIS)

Strategy	Activities	Outcomes	
		Short Term	Long Term
Development of expertise around trauma informed police responses to DV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two DV Detectives • General Order • Department-wide DV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual training of all officers on DV, best practices, and departmental policies • Investigations facilitated by detectives with specialized DV training • Comprehensive departmental General Order provides guidance to all officers on the investigation of DV cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote safety by increasing victims' resources • Foster positive relationships between police and victims • Support youth exposed to DV to reduce impact • Increase offender accountability • Maintain victim engagement in the criminal justice process to enhance prosecutions • Increase reporting of DV to police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in prevalence and incidence of domestic violence offending by perpetrators • Decrease in prevalence and incidence of domestic violence victimization • Decrease in prevalence and incidence of juvenile delinquency among youth exposed to DV
Assessment of risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Safety Worksheet • ODARA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Safety Worksheet utilized to identify potential risk factors for future violence/lethality within a household • Supplemented by Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment which is a state-mandated pretrial risk assessment tool from which results inform enhanced protection actions 		
Enhanced protection actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up actions engaged in by officers to ensure victim safety and offender accountability (e.g. attempts to service outstanding warrants; patrol alerts) 		
Victim supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVRT • JFSB Huddle • Clinician employed by PD • DV Detectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation of DVRT when victim reports to police department • Inclusion of DV cases at JFSB Huddle¹ meetings to discuss service needs of the DV victim and children within the household in which the DV incident occurred • Contact by PD's clinician for referrals for counseling services and resource referrals • Follow up with DV Detective for safety planning and connection to resources, support in court 		

¹The Juvenile and Family Service Bureau (JFSB) Huddle is a weekly meeting in which all contacts with juveniles from the previous one week are discussed to identify service needs.

**Appendix C: Project HIVIS Sample Domestic Violence Initiative
Offender Notification Letter**



**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INITIATIVE
OFFENDER NOTIFICATION**

Dear Mr./Mrs. (Offender Name):

Officers recently responded to a domestic incident in which you were involved. The Gloucester Township Police Department aggressively focuses on preventing future acts of domestic violence. This letter is your official notice that members of the Gloucester Township Police Department are aware of your alleged involvement in a domestic violence incident and will be monitoring incidents to determine if you are involved in any future incidents.

Gloucester Township Police Chief Harry Earle has initiated a Home Involved Violence Intervention Program which may involve enhanced patrol of your residence. Gloucester Township Police Officers will thoroughly investigate all complaints of domestic violence from any source. Further incidents involving you as an offender will be investigated and acted upon by members of the Gloucester Township Police Department.

If you need assistance with family services, I encourage you to contact Detective Mark Grodzielanek of the Juvenile and Family Services Unit at 856-374-5718 so that he may provide you information about available counseling services. If you have a substance abuse issue, I encourage you to contact our SAVE (Substance Abuse Victimization Effort) Information Line at 856-302-7051 so that they can provide you information about services for addiction.

Sincerely,

Lt. Brian McKendry
Investigations Bureau Commander
Gloucester Township Police Department

**DISPATCH: 856-228-4500 • WEB: www.gtpolice.com • EMAIL: police@gtpolice.com
1261 Chews Landing Road, Blackwood, New Jersey 08012**