



NEWS RELEASE

CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

CONTACT:

Richard Strauss, Executive Director
Email: rstrauss@ctcase.org; 860-571-7135

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 21, 2015

CASE Releases Family Violence Study

Rocky Hill, CT – The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) conducted a study entitled *Addressing Family Violence in Connecticut: Strategies, Tactics and Policies* on behalf of the General Assembly’s Public Health Committee. The committee received a briefing on findings and recommendations September 21, 2015.

There is concern among the general public and the state’s leadership regarding family violence/ intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetrated by adults and adolescents in Connecticut, as well as across the United States. Efforts to reduce family violence are numerous, but many standard interventions to accomplish this goal achieve minimal benefits. Additionally, family violence, and in particular, the impact of such violence directed at women, children and elders, is of particular concern. The issues and challenges that need to be addressed to identify effective research-based solutions to successfully reduce violence are known to be complex. The objective of the study was to identify strategies, tactics and policies that can be employed in Connecticut to reduce the incidence of family violence perpetrated by adolescents and adults by targeting the common causes of violence.

The literature review conducted for this study indicated that children who witness abuse in their home are at risk of becoming a victim or an offender into their adult years with co-occurring behavioral health disorders and medical problems. Current research also indicates that the “one size fits all” treatment as usual approach (e.g., large group treatment settings that fail to treat co-occurring behavioral health problems such as mental illness or addiction for male offenders) has been costly and ineffective.

The study’s recommendations are in three key areas: clinical, prevention and a pilot demonstration project. Clinical recommendations include training, education and supervision of frontline clinicians; standardized family assessments; and evidence-based, science informed interventions. Prevention recommendations encompass public health announcements; programs; and offender evaluations.

This study’s research indicates that some offenders in Connecticut are inappropriately offered diversion to family violence interventions, or are referred to family violence interventions inadequate for their levels of risk. Moreover, it was evident that not all offenders receive adequate screening, especially with regard to psychiatric and substance use disorders, nor are they tracked or entered into a database systematically for determining treatment and program effectiveness.

Therefore, it is recommended that the state develop the capacity to conduct ongoing research and evaluation of family violence prevention policies, programs and strategies through use of a multi-agency framework. The overriding goal of this effort is to ensure that the most effective treatment approaches are employed to reduce family violence as well as the overall cost of family violence to the state. It is suggested that the Office of Policy and Management take a leadership role, with support of the governor’s office, in coordinating this effort across all branches of state government.

Additionally, it is recommended that a demonstration pilot project be undertaken to provide “proof of concept” based on this framework. The recommended demonstration pilot is focused on improving the screening of offenders charged with family violence to identify characteristics that are associated with recidivism in each of the Court Support Services Division’s three family violence interventions, and developing an algorithm for better screening to match offenders with the most appropriate treatment.

Visit the CASE website, www.ctcase.org, for further detail in the key points, executive summary or full report.