



HILLAR C. MOORE, III

East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney

**2019 Annual
Domestic & Dating
Violence Report**

EAST BATON ROUGE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

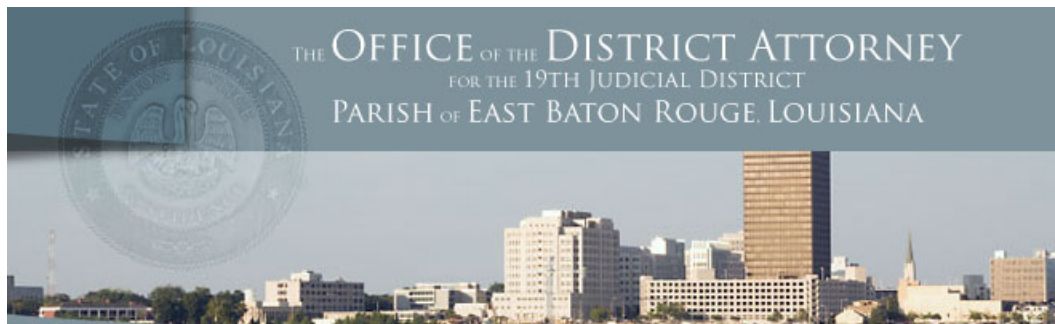
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Focused Deterrence Policing

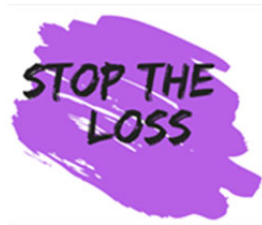
The emergence of the offender focused domestic violence initiative

For decades American policing has gone through significant change and innovation. Police have begun to consider their fundamental mission, the nature of the core strategies of policing, and the character of the relationships of the communities they serve. One thing however, is constant—that policing hopes to stop the loss of life, to stop the loss of intimate partners in the hospital, stop the loss of children’s innocence as they witness family violence, and stop the loss of family as more fathers and mothers are incarcerated for abuse. To this core mission police have now added a commitment to use as little law enforcement—arrest, prosecution, and incarceration—as possible, and to police in ways seen as legitimate by communities.

One well-developed and evidenced-based approach to achieve all these goals is “focused deterrence.” Developed by David Kennedy in the mid 1990’s, focused deterrence was developed as an approach that revolutionized crime prevention and intervention, receiving extensive national attention. His project began in Boston in 1995, initially known as the Boston Gun Project, and combined problem oriented policing with collaboration between law enforcement organizations and community stakeholders, focusing on the reduction of homicide and gun violence in the city. This strategy involved research that revealed serious violence was concentrated amongst very small numbers of identifiable people at extremely high risk of both committing and experiencing violence, and the implementation of an approach in which a partnership of law enforcement, service providers, community members met directly with those at high risk to articulate community norms against violence and the desire to keep them safe and support them, and gave them explicit prior notice of the legal risks they face for continued violence. The strategy led to a rapid drop in homicide—nearly

two-thirds amongst young people, and half citywide—and has been replicated nationally and internationally.

This approach allowed the police and prosecutors to change and develop policies unique to that community in an effort to address current conditions of crime and possibly prevent future criminal activity through the “pulling levers” strategy of focused deterrence. The “pulling levers” strategy of focused deterrence is being incorporated into East Baton Rouge Parish’s Stop the Loss Initiative as it moves forward with its community partners to identify and intervene in those who continue to commit intimate partner violence.



What is the Initiative?

The Stop-the-Loss Initiative is a strategy to identify and intervene in patterns of abuse as early as possible, countering the “ineffective” criminal justice system responses which lead abusers to believe they will not be held accountable. To do this, law enforcement and prosecutors will identify the most serious abusers and “pull levers” available to them, by actionable offenses, such as revoking probation, prosecuting other offenses, etc.

Simultaneously, the initiative will refer both the offender and the victim to available community resources. Offenders will be put on notice that intimate partner violence is not tolerated by this community, counseling and assistance for change is available, and criminal justice action will be taken at the next level.

Parallel affirmative action will support victims, address safety, and suggest all available community services.



Mission Statement

The District Attorney supports prosecutors, law enforcement professionals, and community providers in their efforts to create safer communities, manage large volumes of DV cases while promoting dignity and respect for victims, fostering community involvement, creating office cultures that support and sustain prosecutors and staff doing difficult work, innovating and reforming DV response—all while maintaining the prosecutor’s mission “to ensure justice and safety.”



The Level Approach

Lowest Level (D): Should an officer be called to a domestic disturbance, but find no evidence of a crime, the officer will provide a “Solutions Brochure” along with a verbal warning. The first contact, which does not warrant an arrest, will be documented to provide insight to officers and community responders should further action be required. However, this contact will provide intimate partners with access to community resources to avoid escalation.

Next Level (C): Level “C” offender requires arrest or summons due to the evidence of a crime and considerations of victim safety. This arrest, combined with other evidence-based criteria, establishes a Level “C” offender. A deterrent message is delivered, and Level “C” offenders may be considered for intervention in the form of pre-trial requirement for a reduced or dismissed charge.

Next Level (B): Level “B” offender requires arrest due to the evidence of a crime and considerations of victim safety. This arrest, combined with other evidence-based criteria, establishes a Level “B” offender. A strong deterrent message is delivered, usually through an intervention meeting or “call-in,” informing that further violent behavior will not be tolerated. Level “B” offenders are not eligible for pre-trial intervention but may be recommended for a post-conviction re-education program in conjunction with probation. These offenders may plea to a lesser offense but will still be subject to a domestic violence re-education.

Highest Level (A): Level “A” offender is identified as the most violent offender. An evidence-based criterion establishes a Level “A” offender. These suspects are more likely to have multiple arrests for domestic violence and/or to have used a firearm in the commission of the crime in the instant case. These offenders are prosecuted and are not eligible for pre-trial intervention. Due to the severity of the offense, prosecutors pursue more severe sentences for Level “A” offenders.

EBRDA Victim Assistant Coordinators will conduct affirmative outreach to the victims of all offenders identified as part of a parallel response, providing information on service available (including but not limited to safety planning, counseling, and emergency shelter) in collaboration with participating community-based organizations and advocacy groups.

Law Enforcement Working Group

For effective focused deterrence implementation, law enforcement must spend the necessary time and resources to identify the offenders that will respond to

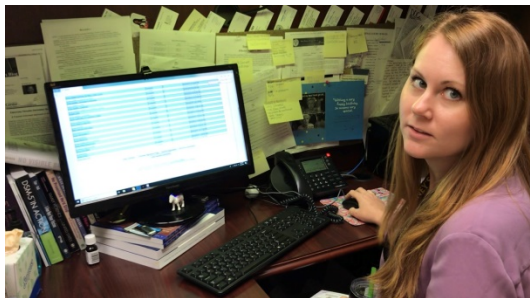
deterrence efforts. This initiative is intended to intervene and pull levers of individual abusers to deter them from further criminal/abusive activity and help them transition into behavioral changes that allow them to enter into healthy intimate partner relationships.

**EBRSO Capt.
Chiquita
Broussard**

The Law Enforcement Working Group was led by EBRSO Capt. Chiquita Broussard. It included EBRSO Det. Patti Freeman, and Denise Boudreaux, BRPD Capt. Shona Stokes, Sgt. Derrick Williams, Jamie Nolan and Holly Distefano, EBRDA Investigator Keva Sims, and Probation & Parole Supervisor Stephanie Webb.

The Law Enforcement Working Group was tasked with creating objective criteria in which each and every intimate partner violence offender will be evaluated, ultimately *identified*, and assigned a level. Mindful of the different means by which the sheriff's office and the police department respond and follow up to calls for service, and the different numbers the agencies receive in terms of calls for service, the group worked together to create criteria that were not only objective, but could realistically be applied by the uniform officer and his/her supervisor.

Criteria were agreed upon and beta-tested by both agencies.



**Suzanne Hamilton,
LMSW**

Victim Services Working Group

Social service providers must follow up with each victim for successful intervention. Social service providers should be matched to the specific needs of the victim and children for successful safety planning and long term intervention.

EBRDA Victim Assistant Coordinator, Suzanne Hamilton, led this group. The group included Sarah Margaret Smith, the Legal Director of Iris Domestic Violence Center and Talya Bergeron, the Directing Attorney for Southeast Legal Services.

This group met and discussed the messaging, method, and tone of messaging for the victims and families of intimate partner violence. They provided the Operational Team suggested written messages for the various level victims, and suggestions for the methods and tone of delivery based upon their experience of working with these victims.

Further, this group intends to provide feedback about certain offenders without breaking confidentiality of the work they are doing with victims. They may also know about a serious offender who is up for consideration for an A level offense since they may be working with victims who are not necessarily engaging or connecting with law enforcement.



District Attorney's Victim Assistance Bureau 225.389.8888

Community Partnership

Currently the District Attorney employs 14 victim assistant coordinators. Each of these victim assistants rotate weekly “duty” and are available to IPV victims to assist with immediate transition needs as they navigate the criminal justice system. One of the District Attorney Victim Assistant Coordinators has an office at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital, where she is immediately available to IPV victims of physical violence that find themselves in trauma.

Our VACs work closely with victim advocates and liaisons employed by both EBRSO and BRPD, as both our Sheriff and Chief of Police recognize the need for immediately addressing the needs of special victims.

All of these agencies collaborate with the Legal Director and Victim Services Director of the Iris Domestic Violence Center to provide wrap around services and safe spaces for victims in immediate danger.

Iris Hotline: (225) 389-3001 or 1 (800) 541-9706



Currently serving on the Iris Board is **Veronica J. Mark**, an Assistant District Attorney with the East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney's office. She was elected to serve as Treasurer of the Iris Board.



Offender Outreach Working Group

For successful intervention, a unique and specific plan should be tailored for each individual depending upon the offender's specific social service resource needs. The

Offender Outreach Working Group was led by **Amber Kepper** and included John Campbell, Reneè Taylor, Christopher Velardo, Stephanie Webb, and Robin Doxey.

This group worked to develop the messaging to IPV offenders who want to access services. The group developed a list of community services to include behavioral change counseling consistent with legal requirements of Criminal Code Art. 14:35.3, probation, resume writing, job skills training, mentorship, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. Engaging the community and having the community support will assist in successful intervention.

It is planned that “primary aggressor” determination will be made for Level D’s and messaging will be sent to only those identified. Messages will be sent to all Level C and B offenders. Police, prosecution, and probation officials will use every legal sanction and enforcement action available to prosecute Level A offenders.



United States Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Louisiana

The District Attorney’s Office has worked with the United States Attorney’s Office to identify specific criteria for referrals for federal prosecution pursuant to possession by DV subjects under 18 USC 922(g)(8) (DV court orders) and (9) (DV misdemeanor convictions) as another means of “pulling a lever.”

Operational Team

In 2018 the District Attorney’s Office partnered with the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College to develop the tier system that is integral to our Stop the Loss Initiative.

Led by Assistant District Attorney, **Melanie S. Fields**, the Operational Team consists of Assistant District Attorney Steve Danielson, EBRDA VAC Suzanne Hamilton, Parish Attorney Andy Dotson, City Prosecutor Brandi Lawrence, Assistant City Prosecutors Lisa Smith and Shelley Harrison, EBRSO Capt. Chiquita Broussard, BRPD Deputy Chief Jonny Dunnam, Capt. Shona Stokes and Sgt. Derrick Williams, EBRSO Analyst Denise Boudreaux, BRPD Analysts Jamie Nolan and Holly Distefano.

Joining the operational team from NNSC were Rachael Teicher, Chelsea Ocon, Fatma Zahra, Celeste Bleiberg, and Kyle Ott.



The operational team conducted bi-monthly meetings via phone and was primarily responsible for moving the operations of the strategy forward. The local participants worked closely with the NNSC partners to tailor the materials and messaging of the Stop the Loss Initiative for our East Baton Rouge jurisdiction, while maintaining fidelity to the deterrence model.

Governance Team

Leading our Governance Team is our **District Attorney, Hillar C. Moore, III**. Included on this important team is our Sheriff, Sid J Gautreaux III, and Chief Murphy Paul.



Full implementation of our Stop the Loss Initiative has not yet begun; however, we have begun beta testing Level A offenders. When the Law Enforcement Working Group reviewed a two month beta test by both EBRSO and BRPD, they concluded that both agencies objectively scored offenders at the same levels.

In the future, levels will be recorded by officers in the “records management system,” allowing officers to see that offenders have previously been “identified” as having been accused of committing intimate partner violence. This recordation should serve several purposes. Often DV calls are the more dangerous calls for officers, and it will immediately alert officers to an offender’s previous DV history. These levels will also serve to inform judges as they make immediate bond and bond condition decisions.

Also, it is the hope of the team that the Stop the Loss Initiative will identify the intimate partner abuser early and offer interventions that will deter further criminal behavior, further abuse, and further loss of life.

Implementation

East Baton Rouge is currently beta-testing the Stop the Loss Initiative. The Law Enforcement Working Group and technology experts have worked to integrate the criteria and offender levels into a new “Records Management System” (RMS) that will soon be used by law enforcement. Currently both the sheriff's

department and city police use ADSi (Application Data Systems). The new Records Management System is expected to be fully operational by the summer of 2020.

The uniform responder will determine if the intimate partner relationship exists. If so, the uniform responder will indicate so in the new Records Management System. That indication will prompt an entire extra page of questions specific to IPV that are required for the officer or deputy to complete before he or she may continue with the remainder of the report. These simple yes and no questions were designed to assist with the “level” evaluation, as well as to prompt the uniform responder to consider the evidence needed in IPV cases.

All IPV reports will be sent immediately for “level” evaluation. As agencies differ in operations, the sheriff’s office and police department will have different procedures for handling this process; however, both agencies are using the same criteria.

Once leveled, the offender’s status will be entered into the new Records Management System on the “person’s page.” This level identification will be visible to anyone who looks up the offender in the Records Management System and will print with the report.

Each agency will then mail a deterrent message to the offender with suggested community resources available for aid in positive change. Only “D” and “C” level offenders will receive a mailed deterrent message. The Records Management System will allow law enforcement to scan and upload a copy of the letter sent to the offender and attach to his or her report. It will also allow the returned receipt or returned letter, if “unable to locate,” to be scanned and uploaded to the offender’s report. This will enable both law enforcement and the prosecutor’s office to confirm messaging in the event there is another offense.

“B” level offenders will receive an invitation to a “call-in” for a more stringent deterrent message. Law enforcement, the District Attorney, the United States Attorney, Probation & Parole, and community providers will be available for group and individual messaging.

2019 Homicides

2019 reported two identified domestic violence homicides; however, those two incidents involved four deaths. On March 30, 2019 Willie Joseph III beat his girlfriend with a blunt object and then covered her face with a plastic shopping bag. On June 11, 2019 Michael Lee Wade arrived at the home of his ex-girlfriend and shot and killed her, her 72-year old grandmother, and her current boyfriend. Her two children, ages 14 and 12 were able to escape, call for help, and identify the shooter as their mom’s ex-boyfriend.

Decline of DV Homicides



While it is possible that the 2016 natural disaster and vulnerability accounts for some of the increased numbers for 2017, we believe that our community efforts of Stop the Loss implementation and the work towards developing awareness of domestic and dating violence have contributed to the decline in loss of life due to intimate partner violence.

Capital Area Family Justice Center

To further community awareness and meet the needs of family violence victims, East Baton Rouge is looking forward to the opening of the Capital Area Family Justice Center. It is expected that employees from both EBRSO and BRPD will be located at CAFJC to assist with the Stop the Loss Initiative. It is also our hope that Probation and Parole will facilitate morning meetings with detectives from these agencies as they look at Level A offenders and the “levers” that may be used by law enforcement to enhance prosecution and deterrence.

It is expected that many of the community providers available to victims will have offices in CAFJC. Hopefully as victims come in for follow up interviews, they will be directed toward individual service providers for safety and empowerment.



2019 DV Office Totals

Our office handled approximately 2400 domestic and dating violence cases in 2019. Of those, 492 plead guilty, 493 were dismissed, and 402 were no billed. Eight DV cases were tried with two resulting in acquittals and six resulting in guilty verdicts. The year ended with 53 DV offenders having outstanding bench warrants, and the remaining cases are pending prosecution.

Conclusion

It is our hope that addressing domestic violence through the strategy of Stop the Loss Initiative will not only provide a safe space for victims, with services and protection, but will also provide intervention and outreach for abusers. Our office is committed to seek aggressive prosecution for repeat and violent offenders; however, we will acknowledge those who take advantage of services offered and truly take steps to avoid re-offending. Stop the Loss is designed for the East Baton Rouge community to assist both the victim and offender by alleviating systemic barriers in the judicial process and allow positive and healthy change.

Resources

Emergency Shelter	
Iris Domestic Violence Center	
Local	(225) 389-3001
State Hotline	1-888-411-1333
National Hotline	1-800-799-7233
Individual Counseling Services	
• Free individual counseling services through Catholic Charities	(225) 389-4736
• Family Service of Greater Baton Rouge	(225) 924-0123
• Children’s Advocacy Center	(225) 343-1984
Support Groups	
• Domestic Violence Community Group Counseling	(225) 389-4736
• Hope & Healing Homicide Survivors Support Group	(225) 389-4736
Food	
• Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank	(225) 359-9940
• Southeast Ministries Association Inc.	(225) 924-5122
Clothing	
• St. Vincent de Paul (any location)	
• Salvation Army of Greater Baton Rouge	(225) 355-4483
Financial Services	
• Crime Victims Reparations	(225) 239-7850
• Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge	(225) 336-8700
• Salvation Army of Greater Baton Rouge	(225) 355-4483
Legal Aid	
• Southeast Louisiana Legal Services	(225) 448-0080
Employment Services	
• Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge	(225) 336-8700
Childcare Assistance	
• Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	(877) 453-2721