

HISTORY OF THE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIVISION
METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE
POLICE DEPARTMENT:

A Decade of Service to Victims of Family Violence

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ABSTRACT

The intent of this qualitative research study was to document the history of the formation and operation of the Domestic Violence Division of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department on the ten-year anniversary of its opening. One of the first investigative divisions of its kind, the division has been cited often as a model for law enforcement agencies nationwide. Through a snowball sampling methodology, thirty-three individuals agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews. The content of those interviews was combined with information from local newspaper articles and departmental media releases over the past ten years to produce a narrative history of the division. Prospects for the future of the division are included along with recommendations for future research.

INTRODUCTION

In August of 2004, the Domestic Violence Division of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPD) commemorates a decade of service to families in middle Tennessee. One of the first of its type to be organized, it has been cited often as a model among law enforcement agencies nationwide. A study, received by the National Institute of Justice in 2000, identified eleven police departments that were noteworthy in the way that they handled domestic violence cases. With close to 40 employees Nashville was, reportedly, the largest police domestic violence division in the country at that time. This was significant in that nine of the eleven cities surveyed were much larger population-wise. The division was also given credit for having one of the most innovative data management systems of those studied (Roehl, 1997).

Comment [CG1]:

Typically anniversaries such as this are a catalyst for retrospection. However, as preparations geared up to mark the event, no comprehensive history of the division was evident. There is no clear answer as to why no such record exists. Early on there were those who were skeptical about the success of the project, even within the department, and assumed that it would be short-lived. It may be that even the enthusiasts did not recognize that a history was unfolding. In any case, it was apparent that knowledge of events leading up to the division's formation existed only in the memories of those individuals who were involved ten years ago. Given the national stature accredited to the division, it seemed fitting that the story of its formation be formally documented for posterity. However, an exhaustive review of literature - newspapers, periodicals and professional journals - produced little. Apart from what might be pieced together with newspaper clippings and media releases, printed material left significant gaps in the sequence of events. Therefore, what seemed more productive would

be interviews conducted with those individuals instrumental in the formation and/or operation of the division over the past ten years.

This article represents an attempt to research and document a thorough history of the division. The sequence of events reported herein represents a compilation of what could be found in print, plus information gathered through interviews. The goal was to produce a written chronicle of the events leading up to the formation of the division along with a history of its operation to date.

¹ Nashville was ranked the twenty-seventh largest city in the U.S. in 2002 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned in the Introduction, an exhaustive review of the literature available produced limited information on the sequence of events or the individuals involved in the formation of the Domestic Violence Division. The office of Mr. Don Aaron, Public Affairs Manager for the MNPD, supplied a file of media releases and newspaper clippings about the division. In all, approximately 50 clippings were located in the archives of five local newspapers. A total of only three articles from national periodicals made reference to the Nashville division, although a number of Internet web sites, transcripts of public speeches, and videos have cited the division as the first and/or the largest of its kind in the country. This lack of documentation dictated a qualitative methodology. The largest source of information for this article came from the interviews that were conducted.

METHOD

In an attempt to expound on the limited information available in published materials, personal interviews were conducted with as many individuals as possible that were present at the time of the division's formation. As is indicated in exploratory research of this type, these individuals were identified using a snowball sampling method. This is a purposeful, non-random procedure, also known as chain sampling or network sampling, wherein one subject suggests the name of another, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on. The format of the interviews was semi-structured, consisting of six open-ended questions with follow-up inquiries for clarification. The interview questions are provided in Appendix A. Participants were contacted and responded either in person, by telephone, or through email. Notes from the interviews were collected and combined into a narrative history of the division. Recurrent themes in the responses were also considered noteworthy.

RESULTS

The interviews took place over a period of approximately six months, between May 29, 2003 and December 5, 2003. Initially, the original detectives, with the division since its inception, agreed to participate. These detectives suggested names of others who had transferred from the division during the ten-year period. As the interviews progressed it became apparent that the vision for the project did not originate solely within the police department. The formation of the division involved the collective efforts of others within the domestic violence community at large. There were many more individuals whose process of recall might be tapped. Subsequently, other service providers who were suggested were contacted for interviews as well.

In all, a total of 43 individuals were contacted. Of these, 33 (77%) agreed to participate. Three (7%) declined, and seven (16%) did not respond. The sample of individuals interviewed consisted of 8 (24%) men and 25 (76%) women. Sixteen (48.5%) participants were police department employees and 17 (51.5%) were individuals working in the domestic violence community. The police department employees consisted of 12 (75%) sworn officers and 4 (25%) civilians.

NARATIVE HISTORY

Brief History of the Domestic Violence Movement

The battered women's movement began as a grassroots effort to raise social awareness on the injustices of domestic violence and to protect women from abusive partners. It was an outgrowth of the women's rights movement as a whole, which followed closely on the heels of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. During the 1970s, domestic violence shelters and related services began to appear across the country. In the 1980s, a number of research studies were published on the prevalence of domestic violence that provided alarming high statistics to validate the cause. By the early 1990s, any assault on women by their partners became officially recognized as a crime. In 1994 President Clinton signed the landmark Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).² It was enacted as Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act and created national standards for stronger legal measures with which to restrain abusers. VAWA outlines law enforcement tactics and safeguards for female victims of domestic violence and sexual assault (Jasper, 1996). This legal reform became the catalyst for institutional changes nationwide. In addition to a growing array of community services, one trend was that police and the courts began to form special units for the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence cases (Roberts & Kurst-Swanger, 2002).

The Beginning of Efforts in Nashville

As early as 1979, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Nashville began a local domestic violence hotline. In 1981 they opened the first domestic violence shelter in Nashville. Three other shelters would follow in the years to come. In 1986 the Madison Church of Christ opened a small shelter as a part of their outreach ministry. In 1996 Sumayya McCutcheon Coleman, an

advocate, organized Ujima House, a shelter for women of color. The newest shelter, Freedom House, opened in 2003 sponsored by Cornerstone Church. With less than 100 beds, across all four locations, finding shelter for domestic violence victims in Nashville continues to be a challenge.

During the late 1980s a few agencies began to send representatives into the courts in order to assist victims of domestic violence. The YWCA domestic violence shelter had one of the first advocates, as did the Victim Witness program in the Office of the District Attorney. However, at that time a different attorney and different judge handled domestic cases every week, allowing for limited consistency. Often referred to in slang as the “love docket,” some advocates believed that the court system did not take domestic violence cases seriously.

In 1986 the Project to End Abuse through Counseling and Education, Inc. (PEACE), which was to become the largest batterer’s intervention program (BIP) in Davidson County, began taking referrals from the courts for specialized therapeutic probation. The PEACE program also sent a representative to court. Over the years other BIPs were started in the area. A panel of BIPs, organized by the local domestic violence coalition in 2002, consisted of representatives from eight different service providers within the local jurisdiction. There was evidence of significant variability in the type of services provided, from eight -week anger management classes to a full year of mandatory weekly groups meetings.

Scattered in and around Nashville, during those early years, were other domestic violence advocates with various agencies and programs. However, until the early 1990s, there was still no cohesive voice in the community for victims of family violence. Local advocates, however, were aware that new domestic violence laws were in the making nationwide. They were watching the initiatives of

² P.L. 103-322; 108 Stat. 1902; 42 U.S.C. 13701.

police departments and courts in other parts of the country. The District Court in Quincy, Massachusetts began a Domestic Violence Prevention Program in 1987 (Garrigan, 1998a). And, in August of 1992 the San Diego Police Department formed a specialized Domestic Violence Unit (Police Department Domestic Violence Unit, 2004). Informal conversations began to take place between a number of individuals in Nashville about the possibility of starting a similar coordinated response between the police department and judicial system. One person interviewed remarked that it seemed a pipe dream for those who had been helping victims navigate a system that was complicated, and, at times less than helpful to their particular problems and needs. Nevertheless, efforts began among advocates to form a domestic violence task force. At first, many members felt they were not being heard. But, in one instance, a Channel 4 reporter, Don Aaron, gave the issue of family violence exposure for which advocates say they were appreciative.

The District Attorney's office, various courts, and the Chief of Police were also talking to one another. During the summer of 1992, Jody Folk, Director of Victim Witness Services, with the support of General Torry Johnson, acquired funding for two additional staff positions. One attorney, Mary Hausman, and one victim advocate, Sharon Reddick, began to handle all domestic cases that came to the attention of the office. Attorney Carrie Daughtrey came to the unit as an intern soon after its formation. This was the beginning of what would later grow to into the Family Protection Unit. A healthier sense of teamwork soon began to develop between prosecutors and advocates. Those relationships helped to advance cases through the system more efficiently, as well as providing more substantial support for victims. The unit would later include child abuse and elder abuse. Most recently Assistant District Attorney Katrin Miller has headed the unit.

In Nashville, judges heard cases involving domestic disputes across a number of dockets in civil, circuit, and criminal court. Several local judges began to develop an awareness of the unique issues that domestic violence presented. Some were interested in putting together a coordinated system to address domestic assault cases. One of these was Judge Penny Harrington, who voiced her support for a special domestic violence docket in General Sessions Court. The challenge was to develop a method of identifying those cases so that they might be funneled to one specialized docket. Judge Harrington attended national conferences on domestic violence, in order to learn more, and became acquainted with other advocates at the national level. Judge William Faimon, moved by a particularly lethal case in his courtroom, also voiced his support to the mayor. Ultimately, nine local judges met. Their decision was that two judges would be designated to hear all domestic cases. The purpose of having victims return to the same courtroom was for continuity and familiarity with the cases. The judges who agreed to hear domestic violence dockets at that time were Penny Harrington and Gale Robinson, Jr. Judge Gloria Dumas succeeded Judge Harrington in 1998. In Circuit Court Judge Muriel Robinson had issued restraining orders and dealt with similar issues for some time. Judge Marietta Shipley later joined her.

Around that time, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPd) assigned one officer in the Homicide, Detective David Miller, to track all reports designated as domestic disturbances. Prior to that, personal crimes among family members had been routed to various divisions of the Investigative Services Bureau, such as Homicide, Sexual Abuse, Youth Services, and Robbery. Now there were a number of individuals within the local system officially designated to handle family violence. They were a small team given the volume of domestic incidents in the city, but it was a beginning.

Advocates within the community at large got wind of these changes and were excited at the prospect of a coordinated effort. They began to research successful programs in other communities for

models. Police Officer Mark Wynn began to help with training at the academy by telling his own story. He related that, as a child, he had grown up in a violent home. He described the many abuses suffered by his mother at the hands of an alcoholic stepfather. His charismatic presentation skills soon earned him speaking engagements around the country. Like Judge Harrington, he began to make the acquaintance of national advocates, including attorneys Casey Gwinn and Gail Strack of San Diego, attorney Barbara Hart of Pennsylvania, and domestic violence activist Sara Buel.

Jody Folk and Sharon Reddick tell of an evening in 1993 when they worked into the wee hours on a grant proposal to fund domestic violence training for advocates from programs across the city. The MNP, YWCA, and PEACE shared in the effort. The grant funded a seminal conference bringing together a diverse group of people from the community who were involved in the issue. It began with a gala dinner held at Sugartree Estates, in affluent Belle Meade, for approximately 50 people. A daylong training at Montgomery Bell Academy followed. Attorneys Barbara Hart and Casey Gwinn, both knowledgeable and motivating, were key speakers. Representatives from across the metropolitan area had been invited from law enforcement, the judiciary, legal assistance, the District Attorney's office, women's shelters, counselors, churches, and elected officials. Reportedly much enthusiasm was generated among those who attended the conference. That weekend was a catalyst for the sequence of events to follow. Attendees and others who joined them later became, officially, the Nashville Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV). However, what is apparent is that the changes they initiated may not have come about without the support of several influential people who were brought to the table at this event.

Among those attending the conference was Andrea Conte, wife of Mayor Phil Bredesen. She had become a victims' advocate after being attacked by a stranger and seriously injured in a public

parking area during the late 1980s. Before he was apprehended, her assailant went on to murder another local woman, a social worker. Ms. Conte had the spirit of a survivor and began the Nashville-based program, You Have The Power...Know How To Use It, Inc. She was invited to participate in the strategic planning meetings that were organized following the conference. Her influence and involvement were important. Former Governor Lamar Alexander remarked that, having been a victim of violence herself, Andrea could truly relate to the needs of victims (Gold and Pittman, 2003).

Formation of the Domestic Violence Division

During the State of Metro address in April of 1994, Mayor Phil Bredesen announced his support of efforts to provide better services for victims of violence. He called for a full-scale assault on domestic violence through the creation of a special investigative division and the mandate for police officers to arrest offenders, with probable cause, even if victims were afraid to press charges (Gerlock, 1994). That same week Police Chief Robert Kirchner announced the formation of the new family violence division designed to reduce homicides, assaults, officer injuries, spousal rape, hostage situations, stalking, and other related crimes. Organized as a division of the Investigative Services Bureau, and commanded by Captain Shirley Davis, the division would be staffed with a lieutenant, three sergeants, and approximately twenty specially trained domestic violence detectives.

During the first quarter of 1994, Judy Alexander, a civilian in the Personal Crimes Division compiled statistics over a three-month period with records provided by the Communications Center. She tallied the number of domestic calls, including information on day of the week and time of day. This information helped to determine staffing needs for the new division, such as shift configurations and number of personnel assigned per shift. Interestingly, few trends were noted at that time, contrary to

what is commonly believed about the rise in domestic violence incidents during a particular season or major sporting event.

Within the police department an announcement was posted for applications to the division. Those interested were encouraged to apply. Officers, whose work was known to be of high caliber, were recruited to apply for the assignment. A written test was given consisting of 50 questions that covered domestic violence law, police policy, and procedures. Oral interviews were then conducted, which included role-play situations. The original group of officers selected to staff the division were recruited from all areas of the department. Those interviewed gave various reasons for wanting to transfer. Many tell the story of a serious domestic case they had worked that left a memorable impression on them. Some, who had worked with Captain Davis or another supervisor, transferred out of loyalty. Others caught the spreading enthusiasm for the cause. The first lieutenant assigned to the division was Arlene Burris. Day shift sergeant was Mark Wynn, relieved by Sergeant Kim Dillingham on evenings, and Sergeant Robert Williams on midnights. Dillingham soon returned to patrol and was replaced by Sergeant Gayle Bass. Bass had been with the Youth Services Division, which investigates child abuse cases. Among the detectives selected, Officer Suzanne McClure had been working in patrol on the east side of town. Michael McCarty and Clarence Thompson came from the west patrol division. Joseph Towers had worked for many years in patrol, then for the Vice Section, in addition to being a hostage negotiator. Bradford Worthington transferred from the Burglary Section.

Twenty-five officers in all were selected to staff the division. One supervisor described them as a group of fresh, young investigators, who seemed eager and thirsty for knowledge. The detectives received 80 hours of specialized training in family violence investigations during June of 1994 at the department's training academy on Tucker Road. The lengthy list of topics covered included – the

dynamics of domestic violence, impact of arrest, on-scene investigation, victim assistance, data collection and analysis, interviewing victims, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, liability, criminal and civil law, departmental police on domestic violence, assessing lethality, stalking, dual arrest, orders of protection, scientific content analysis of statements, audio-video techniques, courtroom presentation, mobile surveillance techniques, and victim resources. Media representatives were invited to attend the graduation ceremony on Friday, June 17, 1994. Andrea Conte presented detectives with their certificates of completion. It was also announced that equipment, such as camcorders, 35-millimeter cameras, and lap top computers, had been funded by \$112,000 in federal grant money through the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, June 16, 1994).

A press release the following day announced that the division would be housed in the old Metropolitan Transit Authority land port at the end of Peabody Street. The push was for the division to be operational before the start of the 1994-1995 school year. Chief Kirchner cited links established between children victimized by domestic violence and juvenile crime (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, June 17, 1994). Immediately following their training, two detectives, Leonard Keeler and Robert Swisher, were assigned to clean up the building. The abandoned offices, near downtown, were full of trash and occasionally sheltered homeless squatters. Wires hung from the ceiling and there was very little furniture. To begin, one office was remodeled into usable space with a small table, a phone, and cardboard filing boxes. With relatively little fanfare the division opened its doors on August 1, 1994 (Gerlock, 1994). A brief statement released that day stated that the Domestic Violence Division was now in full operation and provided the new phone number for victims to call (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, August 1, 1994).

Ironically, one of the first cases to be investigated by the division involved a retired Metro police sergeant. In fact, the investigation actually began before the division was officially open. The officer's wife reported that he had recently been acting erratically and had assaulted her on at least one occasion. It was reported that, in a rage, he was prone to shooting off guns into the air, at kitchen appliances, and in the basement with the family at home. One witness had seen him hold a gun to his wife's head. In fear for her life, she had left home to stay in a motel. Detectives Worthington, Swisher, and Keeler investigated and arrested the former police officer. A search of his home later produced a cache of firearms including automatic weapons. The former officer made bond and immediately checked himself into a mental health facility. The prosecutor in the case was Assistant District Attorney Mary Hausman. Ultimately, he was sentenced to three years of supervised probation and mandatory counseling. Investigators heard through the grapevine that many of their names appeared on his hit list. This case made it clear to the public that law enforcement officers were not exempt and would be held accountable by the new division.

Early on the decision was made that Nashville's Domestic Violence Division would handle all types of family violence, not limited to intimate partner assaults. Police Procedural Order 95-15 was written to mirror the definition of domestic assault found in Chapter Three, Tennessee Code Annotated 39-13-111 (Anderson, et al, 1997). In Tennessee, a person commits a domestic assault that commits an assault against anyone who is a member of that person's family or a household member. This includes any blood relative or roommates. The use of this broader definition has been a point of debate. Similar divisions handle only intimate partner violence. From the very beginning the volume of reports was challenging. Detectives realized they must be skilled at balancing paperwork with investigative duties. Nevertheless, they appeared eager to do a good job. Advocates report they soon began to see

the importance of having a domestic violence division. Detectives, due to their extensive training, now understood the psychology of abusive relationships. This understanding informed the way that they investigated incidents, treated victims, dealt with suspects, worked with advocates, and built cases for prosecution. Having photographs taken right at the scene was essential in court. Local judges remarked that these pictures do not lie.

Day shift detective duties included taking victim statements, filing criminal charges, tracking and arresting suspects, counter-stalking, contacting victims, photographing injuries and evidence, following up on repeat call families, conducting lethality assessments, and maintaining case logs. In the beginning, 16 of the detectives, four per metropolitan sector, were designated as the Family Abuse Suppression Team (F.A.S.T.). These officers worked the evening/midnight shifts. Their duties included assisting patrol in responding to domestic calls, conducting investigations, assisting with warrants, filing charges, helping with orders of protection, maintaining a repeat offender log, and serving outstanding warrants. Unlike the other investigators, they wore uniforms and drove marked police cars. Reportedly, this aspect of the division's organizational structure had been modeled somewhat after the San Diego Police Department. It was a new concept for the MNPD and some considered it odd. Domestic Violence was the only division where some detectives wore uniforms and some did not. Ultimately, it created confusion and was unpopular with investigators. The evening shift saw uniforms as a hindrance to their investigations. One former F.A.S.T. detective related that a commissioner refused him a warrant because he was in uniform, saying that he would need to obtain the assistance of a detective. At that time the division was still considered experimental and Captain Davis was open to suggestions for improvement. After meeting with the detectives she decided that, in the interest of fairness and consistency, the better option would be to operate two shifts of plain-clothes detectives. Also, the

number of calls received during midnight hours did not justify a third shift. Within the first year F.A.S.T., along with the midnight shift, were eliminated. A rotating schedule for on-call duty over night and during the weekends was developed. In addition to investigative duties, detectives were also responsible for conducting ongoing training with officers, judges, prosecutors, social service workers, teachers, and others in the community at large (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, April 4, 1994).

The First Five Years

Soon after the division opened the Counseling Section was added. Social Worker Rhonda Harris transferred from the department's Victim Intervention Program to become the first domestic violence counselor. Soon, two more crisis counselors were added. Heidi Bennett transferred from the Victim Intervention Program where she had counseled victims of crime for approximately three years. Linda Nagim was hired as a new employee. Rhonda Harris was promoted to supervisor of the section. MNPDP crisis counselors are all Masters-level, licensed therapists. The Counseling Section provides on-call crisis counseling 24 hours a day. They conduct follow-ups, by phone or mail, to victims listed on incident reports. They offer both individual and group counseling to any non-offending family member free of charge. Walk-in clients can receive one-time crisis intervention. Follow-up therapy may be scheduled on a regular basis. Clients are routinely provided with tips on safety planning, assistance in filing Orders of Protection, information on the Tennessee Criminal Injury Compensation Fund, assistance finding shelter, limited court support, and referrals to other services in the community. Counselors, like investigators, have carried a consistent caseload from the beginning. Domestic violence counselors also assist with training and public speaking. They network with other agencies in the community and collaborate on a number of projects.

Often, it is the case that those in law enforcement and advocates do not approach crime from the same perspective. Police officers may fear interference in their investigations from those in the field of social services. Advocates may not understand the officers' roles or police procedures that guide their decisions. Those interviewed said that having counselors within the division has helped detectives to understand better how an advocate can assist in a case. Over the years a partnership has developed between sworn officers and civilian counselors, both within the division and in the community as a whole. Domestic violence crimes are unique in that they are frequently ones in which prosecutors must deal with an uncooperative victim. Detectives, specially trained in domestic violence, have a better understanding of the dynamics of power and control in relationships. One shared that he believed he had become a student of human behavior. Nevertheless, the cycle can be frustrating and often leads to burnout. One investigator remarked that a good counselor is worth their weight in gold. They are able to intervene with the emotional aspects of a crime and to follow up with counseling in ways that an officer would not be able to do. One supervisor remarked that, if the intergenerational cycle of violence in families is to be broken, counseling is the answer for the future. Domestic violence detectives in Nashville seem to have developed an appreciation for the opportunity to work in concert with counselors.

As early as 1995, less than one year into operation, Nashville's Domestic Violence Division was recognized nationally. A January article in the local Tennessean boasted that, at the same time a Los Angeles judge was considering whether to allow evidence that O.J. Simpson had a history of abusing his wife, Nichole Brown Simpson, Nashville was also making the national news. The report went on to say that journalist Bill Moyers had spotlighted Nashville's effort in a recent PBS television

special entitled, "What Can We Do About Violence?" The article quoted Sergeant Wynn who referred to the division as a model police program ("Family violence focus," 1995).

On Valentines Day 1995, the Domestic Violence Division held an open house showcasing their newly remodeled offices at 60 Peabody Street (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, February 13, 1995). A few days later, on February 18, 1995, the division carried out its first full scale warrant sweep – Domestic Roundup I. Detectives Michael McCarty and Edward Crouch had researched a backlog of unserved warrants. They pulled 183 of the most serious charges of domestic crimes against 113 individuals. These included one first-degree murder, one homicide, three vehicular homicides, three sexual offenses, and five stalkings. Twenty-five teams of officers and detectives hit the streets at 7:00 am that morning, serving 27 people with 36 warrants within a four and a half hour period. Sergeant Wynn told reporters that this would be just the first of many such efforts. He reported that, since opening, the division had responded to 17,050 calls in the first six months. The largest percentages of them were made on Saturdays (18.5%) and Sundays (17.6%) (Carter, 1995). Warrant sweeps of this type are still conducted regularly by the division in coordination with patrol.

On July 1, 1995 four new state laws went into effect. The front page of The Tennessean that day described the new legislation and praised local domestic violence services. First, a stalking law no longer required proving the victims' emotional distress, thus making it easier to prosecute. The penalty for subsequent arrests was also increased. Next, patrol officers were encouraged to adopt the preferred response of determining primary aggressor and arresting the suspect in domestic violence calls. Officers were advised to offer assistance to victims and to seize weapons used in committing the crime. The third law created a Domestic Violence State Coordinating Council to train law enforcement and judicial agencies throughout the state. Lastly, magistrates were allowed to impose conditions of release or bail

on defendants in order to protect the victim. And, all fees for Orders of Protection were waived. Officers were allowed to press charges without the victims' signature if probable cause existed, with a no-drop policy. With 31 full time sworn officers, the Domestic Violence Division was then declared the largest of its kind in the region and was recognized as a model effort by the U.S. Department of Justice (Tran, 1995).

In October 1995, the Division, in collaboration with a number of other agencies participated in Nashville's first annual Walk to End Domestic Violence. PEACE, the Nashville Academy of Medicine Alliance, and the YWCA Domestic Violence Program sponsored the 2.5-mile walk. Participants were welcomed at the Legislative Plaza by Andrea Conte. Denise Brown, sister of slain Nicole Brown Simpson, was the invited guest speaker (Canon, 1995).

Nashville now had a presence at the national level and was becoming known as a leader in the field. Officers and counselors, acknowledged experts, were speaking around the country to groups as prestigious as the American Bar Association, the U.S. Congress, and at the White House (Asseo, 1995; Atzlinger, 1996; Carlson, 2000a; Yates, 2000). Many domestic violence situations involve more difficult to prosecute offenses, such as stalking and spousal rape. The division earned notoriety for special efforts at tackling these types of cases (Roberts & Kurst-Swanger, 2002; Spaid, 1995). Representatives of the division were also busy training others in law enforcement, locally and with agencies in Chicago, New York, and abroad, as far away as Ireland, Germany, and Russia (Garrigan, 1998b; Paine & Warren, 2000).

Mayor Phil Bredesen, an avid supporter of the division, frequently mentioned its impressive track record in his successful reelection campaign of 1995 (Gerbman, 1997). By the end of the year, domestic homicides in Davidson County had dropped 65%, from 23 in 1993, and 15 in 1994, to 12 in

1995. This reduction was even more significant considering that homicides overall had reached a record high that year at 104. Many attributed this success to the coordinated efforts of government with other agencies in the community advocating for victims' services (Asseo, 1995; Commins, 1995; "Mayor's top priorities," 1995; Spaid, 1995). In 1996, just two years into operation, the division was praised by United States Attorney General Janet Reno for its contribution to the reduction of domestic homicides (Yates, 2000).

In the spring of 1996, a local mental health agency, Family and Children's Services, and the MNPd – Counseling Sections and Community Policing Division – competed nationally as a team against several other cities to become a replication site for the highly successful Trauma Debriefing Program for children begun by Yale University and the New Haven, Connecticut Police Department. At that time clinicians from the Nashville collaborative received extensive training at Yale. The Yale/Nashville alliance has provided the team with on-going support, training, on-site consultation, assessment, and computer software. The trauma team, police command staff, and the DVD Counseling Section continue to meet monthly to debrief, plan, and problem solve. Senior domestic violence counselor, Heidi Bennett, is an original member of the team. The collaboration has gained momentum with the recent award of a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant in 2003 for expansion of services. The division's recognition continued into 1997. An article in the national Law Enforcement News again recognized the DVD as the largest of its kind in the nation. It quoted Captain Davis, who said that Nashville's success had prompted other departments around the country to set up similar units ("Nashville's domestic violence unit," 1997).

The vision from the beginning was that of a "paperless office." However, this took time to implement. The original detectives refer to a somewhat cumbersome index card filing system that was

kept on cases in the beginning. By 1998, Sergeant Mihaela Sloan and civilian John Neely had developed a database of all incident reports received by the division. The breadth of information included has grown over the years. It allows division staff to access information on prior reports and to compile statistics on a number of variables (Roehl, 1997). These statistics are tallied on a monthly and annual basis. They are distributed within the department, reported in the division's quarterly newsletter, News Bits, and made available to the public. They are also sent monthly to The Tennessean for publication in a regular feature entitled "Domestic Violence: The Facts."

With the high volume of cases being handled at the division, the crunch was on at local shelters, where space was limited. Soon, the YWCA initiated a capital campaign to raise funds for a larger, more modern 52-bed shelter and transitional housing. The city donated land with the public support of Metro Council member Chris Ferrell (Garrigan, 1998a; Gerbman, 1997). The shelter began operation at its new location in 2000. This expansion has allowed the YWCA to offer additional support groups within the community and to branch out into other areas of services.

The Last Five Years

Grant funding has allowed for additional counselors to be added over the years. With Nashville's growing Hispanic population, the need for culturally competent services soon became apparent. For Latino victims of crime, the legal system can be especially daunting given the language barrier and fears around immigration status. The reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 ensured the receipt of funding to improve responses to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases under the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Grants Program. A three-year STOP grant funded the position for a bilingual Hispanic social worker, Janisca Rodriguez. Ms. Rodriguez, a native of Puerto Rico, had previously worked with Catholic Charities in Nashville. During her first year, the number of Hispanic victims receiving counseling services at the division increased over 200%, from approximately 90 to more than 200. Equally important, the department's Hispanic social worker was able to network with Spanish speaking advocates in many other agencies, such as, the local shelters, the Nashville Child Advocacy Center, and the Legal Aid Society, in order to link victims with other culturally sensitive services.

From the beginning, transportation to and from the police department and courts was recognized as an ongoing problem for victims with few financial resources. In March of 2001 the division reported that, through the coordinating efforts of Sergeant Mike Norton, it had teamed up with the local Yellow Cab company and Metro Transit Authority to provide domestic violence victims with a ride in order to obtain warrants and orders of protection. The police department paid for cab fare, using funds from the STOP grant, while the transit authority donated bus tickets (Burke, 2001b; "Help for domestic violence," 2001).

In 2000 a new civilian attorney, Kennetha Sawyers, was assigned to MNPD's Office of Professional Accountability. She reopened cases dating back to 1997 in which law enforcement officers had been accused of domestic violence. A 1996 federal law had barred anyone convicted of domestic abuse from owning or carrying a firearm. This signaled the end of a career in law enforcement for officers who were convicted. Implementing a no-drop policy, similar to that of Baltimore's police department, she began requiring a complete probe even if the victim recanted (Garrigan, 2000a; Warren, 2000, Yates, 2000).

The Domestic Violence Division now has new and improved equipment, which saves time, streamlines paperwork, and allows them to conduct more expert investigations. Old lap top computers have been replaced with newer models. They are maintained by the department's Information and Technology Division, updated and/or replaced on a regular basis. In addition, each detective and counselor now has a personal computer at his or her desk. Polaroid cameras have been replaced with more state-of-the-art digital models, so that photographs can be downloaded, saved to files, and printed. The quality of evidence is thus improved. All supplements and reports have been computerized. Few forms remain that must be filed out by hand.

Aside from its many successes, the division has not been without its share of the problems that characteristically beset most work environments, such as, employee grievances, personality conflicts, errors in judgment, media criticism, and budget crunches. Challenges of this type complicate the smooth operation of many organizations. Police department employees are often accustomed to public scrutiny in all areas of their life (Thomas, 1997). There were kinks to be worked out in procedure with other agencies in order to interface services. For example, failure of detectives to be subpoenaed, and therefore appear in court, on some cases resulted in meetings between the judges, district attorneys, and

police department to discuss procedure on all domestic violence cases set for trial (Carlson, 2000a; Loggins, 2000a; Loggins, 2000b; Loggins, 2000c; Garrigan, 2000b). The number of detectives and/or counselors assigned, and the amount of overtime allowed, has fluctuated with budget changes and loss of grant funding (Burke, 2003; "Nashville's next move," 2000; Paine & Warren, 2000; "Police unit due for change," 2000; Yates, 2000). To its credit, when faced with these difficulties the department has made efforts to review protocol and policies, to reassign personnel, and to implement improvements in an effort to restore confidence in the division's credibility (Yates, 2000).

Recognition and praise from local media has been accompanied by negative critiques as well. Over the years, supervisors, detectives, and counselors have come and gone, some better known than others. In 2000 the media and community reacted to the transfer, resignation, and retirement of two high profile supervisors in dispute – Captain Shirley Davis and Lieutenant Mark Wynn (Garrigan, 2000c). The lieutenant had been named "Nashvillian of the Year" in 1998 by a local weekly (Garrigan, 1998a). Highly regarded as an effective speaker, Wynn had received much of the division limelight. Some interpreted the transfers as a sign that the department had less of a commitment to the issue of domestic violence than in the beginning. The department held that although Wynn had helped earn acclaim for the division, he was not exempt from other assignments within the department. Wynn was followed by John Smith. Upon his resignation, the division added Lieutenant Danny Driskell for a short period. Wynn supporters offered this turnover as additional proof that the division was unraveling.

One reporter, Liz Murray Garrigan of *The Nashville Scene*, took special notice of division affairs (Garrigan, 2000a; Garrigan, 2000b; Garrigan 2000c; Garrigan, 2000d; Garrigan, 2000e). She authored a series of articles critical of the division, including one on the dismantling of a children's playroom in the counseling section. Captain Davis and Counseling Supervisor Harris justified the closing

for safety concerns. Poisonous spiders had been found in the play area (Garrigan, 2000e). It was later cleaned, decorated, and reopened by Davis' successor. A January 2000 editorial in *The Scene* even called for Chief Emmett Turner's resignation ("Turner should resign," 2000). Some of those interviewed noted Garrigan's fervor. They questioned her motivation and wondered about access that she seemed to have to inside information and records.

Recent Events

Turnover has resulted in many new faces within the division over the years. Many have brought new enthusiasm and ideas to the operation. The consensus of those interviewed was that the current staff is top notch. In July of 2000, Captain Valerie Meece, a 27-year department veteran, replaced Davis. Meece transferred from the Youth Services Division, which investigates child abuse. She holds a Masters degree and a black belt in karate. Her reputation was that of "a fair, no-nonsense, straight forward administrator" (Yates, 2000, p. A1). The new captain commenced immediately to clean up the division, both literally and figuratively speaking. In March of 2001, Lieutenant Rita Brockmann Baker was promoted and assigned to replace Danny Driskell. Baker, previously with the adult Sexual Abuse Section, had experience investigating crimes against women. In the fall of 2001, Rhonda Harris resigned from the counseling section. Her position was filled by Carol Hughes Gipson, Ph.D., a psychologist with eight years prior experience in counseling victims of domestic violence. She had begun as a women's advocate at Woodshaven, the first YWCA domestic violence shelter. With the blessing of Captain Meece, Dr. Gipson organized an internship program within the division for students from area colleges and universities. Three to six interns, both undergraduate and graduate students, have assisted the counseling staff each semester since 2002. Also in 2002, the position vacated by Linda Nagim was

filled by Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Kimberly Page. Ms. Page's prior experience included case management and working with children at Vanderbilt University.

The ebb and flow of grant funding is notorious in the world of social services (Bottorff, 2001). As immigrant services continued to be a special focus of the division, the federal grant that funded the position for a Hispanic social worker, ended in 2003. Having more than justified a need for these services, the department approved the permanent hiring of Social Worker, Janisca Rodriguez, within the division's counseling section. By this time a cohesive network of individuals existed, representing several agencies, providing assistance to the ever-growing Spanish-speaking population of Nashville. It is not unusual for advocates with local shelters, Legal Aid, Victim Witness Coordinators, batterers intervention programs, child advocacy centers, Catholic charities, and immigrant services to coordinate efforts with the division on behalf of Hispanic victims of crime (Burke, 2001a; Burke, 2001b; Edwards, 2003a; Edwards, 2003b). One recent collaborative organized the weekly Hispanic Family Night Out conducted at St. Luke's Community Center. Following a family social hour with refreshments, counselors from four agencies – the Domestic Violence Intervention Center, YWCA, the Domestic Violence Division, and Conexión Américas – facilitate separate groups for men, women, teens, and children in Spanish. The collaboration is modeled after a similar program in Atlanta, Georgia called Tapestri, Inc. According to their web site Tapestri is a coalition of ethnically diverse advocates working on issues of violence against women (Tapestri, Inc., 2004). A number of advocates from the Nashville community were trained by visiting Tapestri personnel on January 29, 2004.

Domestic violence detectives have come and gone over the years. The application process has not changed significantly. There is both a written and oral exam. Those accepted receive 40 hours of specialized training in domestic violence investigations. In addition, they are afforded a significant amount

of ongoing training. Each detective receives the mandatory 40 hours of in-service per year. In 2004 the Domestic Violence Division plans to offer detectives an optional fourth day of in-service covering selected topics relevant to domestic violence investigations, such as, stalking, strangulation, and the psychological aspects of family violence. In addition to in-service training, division staff members attend seminars and annual conferences on domestic violence. A recent internal survey showed that, since 1994, domestic violence detectives have received a total of 3140 hours of additional training. This averages 349 hours per year for the entire division.³ Per detective, the range of training hours received for the ten-year period was 40 to 616 hours.⁴ From 2000 to 2003 there was a phenomenal spike in training time accrued. This directly coincides with the time period that Meece was Captain of the division. It may reflect the value that this particular commander placed on training. Prior to her assignment with the Youth Services Division Meece had been an instructor for many years at the police training academy.

For counselors, who are licensed, the division budget allows for attending one national conference annually. Typically, this would be the convention affiliated with their professional license. In addition, counselors attend training seminars locally in order to obtain continuing education credits.

Given their current level of expertise, most personnel also participate in the provision of training, public speaking, and community education as a part of their regular job duties (Boerner, 2002a; Gerbman, 1997). The domestic violence division provides a full day of training for recruits at the academy, in addition to regular in-service and roll call training with police personnel.

³ For the division: Range = 32 to 844 hours, Median = 188 hours, Mode = 120 hours.

⁴ Per detective: Median = 132 hours, Mode = 72 hours.

Detective/counselor teams regularly conduct public speaking engagements and health fairs community wide.

For over ten years Vanderbilt University Medical School has required all second year medical students to attend a six-week course on domestic violence, including how to recognize suspicious injuries and work with victims. In Spring 2001, through the efforts of Professor Carol Etherington and Captain Meece, the domestic violence division became a partner in that training sharing what they see on the streets and giving tips on how to spot abuse. Counselor Heidi Bennett has been a regular panelist (Burke, 2001c).

In 2002, a state law authorizing review teams ended legal barriers prohibiting agencies from sharing information due to strict victim confidentiality. Mayor Bill Purcell, continuing the city's commitment to prevent domestic homicides, announced a new multiagency team developed to review homicides and explore ways that the system might be more effective. The team includes representatives from the MNPD, Office of the District Attorney, Metro Health Department, Davidson County Sheriff's Department, Metro Council, Legal Aid Society, the medical community, the Medical Examiner's office, and domestic violence advocates. The team attempts to retrace each step in the case from police calls to court hearings. The mayor, who lauded local authorities for their great job in responding to domestic violence, said the new team was put together as a preemptive effort to detect, punish, and prevent violence. Prevention was the ultimate goal. These team meetings are regularly held at the Domestic Violence Division ("A new team on abuse," 2002; Burke, 2002).

In 2003 the Division announced the installation of new state-of-the-art technology to make the arrest process even more user-friendly for victims of domestic violence. Previously, several agencies had made arrangements to fax applications for orders of protection back and forth with Night Court

commissioners. This alone alleviated transportation issues for many victims. Acting Police Chief Deborah Faulkner announced at a June press conference that recently installed closed-circuit television equipment, linking the division with Night Court, would allow for audio-video conferencing between the two locations. Through efforts initiated by Chief Valerie Meece, a collaboration was established between the MNP, General Sessions Court, and the District Attorney General's Office. Victims coming to the Domestic Violence Division for assistance are now able to obtain orders of protection and/or arrest warrants by testifying, showing their injuries, and signing affidavits before a commissioner from a private room within the division. Detectives and counselors are available on site to assist, and there is a play area for victims who must bring their children with them. The overall intent is to make the process as comfortable as possible for the already traumatized victims. Research conducted by the division revealed that the Nashville police department was the first to initiate a system of this kind in the region, perhaps in the country ("Another way to fight abuse," 2003; Edwards, 2003a; Edwards, 2003c; Metropolitan Police Department, June 4, 2003; "Closed circuit connection," 2003).

Recently, art broker and domestic violence advocate, Brenda Brown, initiated the creation of what has been named the Family Peace Gallery at the Domestic Violence Division. Conversations with the counseling supervisor around their mutual backgrounds in art prompted Brenda to solicit donations of original artwork for the division's walls. Brenda felt the building that housed the division was stark and governmental. She wanted to create a more comfortable atmosphere for victims. The generous response from artists was overwhelming. Over 60 pieces of original art were donated to be hung within the division for the enjoyment of staff and visitors. Following the Metro Council's approval of the \$70,000.00 donation, a media release event and artists' reception was held in the fall of 2003 to

recognize the generosity and talent of those who contributed (Bostick, 2003; Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, October 29, 2003; Russell, 2003a; Whitsitt, 2003).

Given its high profile, the division has been successful in obtaining much cooperation from the media in raising awareness about domestic violence. Periodically, especially during Domestic Violence Awareness Month each October, local newspapers and periodicals publish informative articles on domestic violence, spotlighting a local advocate or survivor and often quoting division personnel (Ferguson, 2001; Ferguson, 2002). A national study on teen dating violence, released in mid 2001, reported that one in five teen-aged girls has been a victim of dating violence. A spread in *The Tennessean's* Sunday "Life" section, on October 28, chronicled the stories of three middle Tennessee teen-agers who were victims of abuse. One lost her life at the hands of an angry boyfriend. The Domestic Violence Division, with 15,012 total reports for the first half of 2001, commented that most teens will not report abuse to the police and, therefore, the number of those reports was actually quite low (Ferguson, 2001; Stein, 2002). Detectives and counselors have made a concerted effort to raise awareness through training with schoolteachers and in university dormitories. Counselor Kim Page regularly conducts training for college students in the dormitories at Tennessee State University with the assistance of detectives. For a 2003 article on animal cruelty, Carol Gipson, was interviewed about the connection between animal cruelty and intimate partner violence. She stated that division counselors have had to contend with the issue of women reluctant to enter shelters out of fear for their pets that must be left behind (Edwards, 2003d). The division has participated in collaborative efforts with the General Federation of Women's Clubs to organize area veterinarians willing to board pets for women in shelters. Through substantial media attention and good publicity, many more Nashvillians now have a

better understanding of domestic violence issues and a commitment to the city's ongoing coordinated effort ("Nashville's next move," 2000).

Staff at the Domestic Violence Division is actively involved in many community collaborations. Aside from routine interaction with other agencies, many in the division have taken on special assignments in which they liaison with other programs (Boerner, 2002a; Gerbman, 1997). Counseling Supervisor, Gipson, who has served as recording secretary to the NCADV since 2002, writes the monthly newsletter. The NCADV has grown into a network of dozens of agencies across Davidson County that provide services in the domestic violence arena. Through that involvement, Lieutenant Baker, Detectives Keeler and Bennett, and the entire Counseling Section participated in a Domestic Violence Roundtable discussion in July 2003. Representatives of several agencies came together with the police department and courts to discuss issues and iron out solutions around service provision. During October 2003, the coalition put on a daylong clergy training for faith leaders across the city at Vanderbilt's Scarritt Bennett conference center. Nashville has been credited with having one of the largest networks of providers coordinating services for victims and public awareness (Russell, 2003b).

Sergeant Michelle Donegan came to the division in 2002 from the Vice Section. She is the police liaison for the "Cops and Readers" program. The effort is a collaborative between the department and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Children's books, donated by the community to the program, are distributed to patrol officers to be handed out to children in their sectors (Boerner, 2002a). Sergeant Anna Maria Williams, who came to the division in 2002, is a camp counselor for the Fraternal Order of Police summer camp and actively involved in the Special Olympics program.

The results of a department-wide performance audit conducted by MGT of America, Inc. prompted major restructuring within the police department in 2002. Four veteran police supervisors were promoted to top management positions. Captain Valerie Meece was promoted to Assistant Chief of Police over the Administrative Services Bureau. As Assistant Chief, Meece oversees the department's Training, Personnel, Information and Technology, Records, Inspections, and Case Preparation Divisions (Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, December 16, 2002). Her promotion left a vacancy at the division that was filled temporarily by Lieutenant Rita Baker (Boerner, 2002b). On January 1, 2004, Captain Baker was promoted to head the division. Her replacement, Lieutenant Christopher Taylor, transferred to the division from patrol. The same MGT audit apparently found no problems within the division. The only recommendation was the need for a better facility.

On March 11, 2003 Chief Emmett Turner announced that he would retire from the Metropolitan Police Department effective the end of that month. Turner, a 34-year-veteran of the police department and Chief of Police for seven years, accepted an offer from the State of Tennessee to become Assistant Commissioner for Fire Prevention in the Department of Commerce and Insurance. Deputy Chief Deborah Faulkner filled the nine-month vacancy temporarily. The swearing-in ceremony for newly appointed Police Chief Ronal W. Serpas was held Monday, January 12, at 10 a.m., at police headquarters, 200 James Robertson Parkway. Serpas, who holds a doctorate, came to Nashville from the New Orleans Police Department via Washington State. He is the sixth chief to be appointed to the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department.

Where Are They Now?

Former Mayor Phil Bredesen was elected governor of Tennessee in 2003. His wife, Andrea Conte, continues to advocate for victims of crime at the state level. Jody Folk left the District Attorney's

office to become Deputy to the First Lady. Victim Witness Coordinator Sharon Reddick recently finished law school and shifted her role within the unit to that of attorney. Carrie Daughtrey is an Assistant United States Attorney with the Middle Tennessee District of Tennessee. Former Channel 4 reporter Don Aaron is now Public Affairs Manager for the MNPD.

In 2003, the NCADV hosted a banquet in appreciation of three Nashville judges - Gale Robinson, Jr., Muriel Robinson, and Marietta Shipley - for a decade of presiding over domestic cases. Former Judge, Penny Harrington, has left to open her own family law practice. She continues to help victims of domestic disputes. Former Metro Councilman Chris Ferrell is the president of a local Internet marketing firm. He continues to take an active interest in local government.

Susan Canon has been Executive Director of the Domestic Violence Intervention Center program since 1988. Formerly known as PEACE, Inc., their name was later changed. The program has expanded to include a variety of services, including a Teen Peace program. The state of Tennessee now recommends that batterer intervention programs seek state certification. The center is currently one of two programs in Davidson County to obtain this state certification.

Captain Shirley Davis has retired. Former Lieutenant Mark Wynn now runs his own firm, Wynn Consulting. He is a national trainer, international speaker, and advisor on domestic and sexual violence (Wynn Consulting, 2003). Former Detective Mike McCarty has relocated to Indiana where he is Director of the Public Training Institute and Breaking the Cycle, a consulting firm specializing in training on the issue of violence against women and children. He has facilitated training, in the United States and abroad, and is currently producing a video series. He is also on the Advisory Board for Communities Against Violence Network (CAVNET) headquartered in Washington D.C. (East Central Illinois Police Training Project, 2004).

Six of the original domestic violence detectives are still with the division. They are Leonard Keeler, Suzanne McClure, Tim Sneed, Clarence Thompson, Joe Towers, and Brad Worthington. Detective Keeler serves on the board of Freedom House. Tim Sneed is a former board member of Survivors Against Violent Environments (SAVE), a faith-based program. Along with others, Leonard Keeler, Tim Sneed, Joe Towers, and Brad Worthington are active as expert trainers and educators within the community. Civilian Judy Alexander has also been with the division for the duration of its operation. Social worker Rhonda Harris continues in the field of domestic violence working with a domestic violence intervention program for the U.S. Army at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Her focus has shifted to working with men in the military who are batterers.

Looking To The Future

Within the next year or two the Domestic Violence Division will again be looking for a home. The division has outgrown its current location along the Cumberland River, land that the city has recently sold. As in 1994, key concerns still include accessibility for victims, location, transportation, parking, and security. Nearness to downtown and the courts is essential.

A number of proposed activities are being considered to observe the ten-year anniversary of the division, from an awards ceremony and reception to new brochures and bumper stickers. What is apparent is that, even as the DVD commemorates its successes, there are ambitious plans for the future projects.

CONCLUSION

If in fact Nashville's Domestic Violence Division is to be regarded as a model, then perhaps the value of recounting its history is in discovering a recipe for success. There were several ingredients that contributed to making the vision a reality. Nashville is a city that has been rich in advocates and social services for over a decade. Early on a handful of community leaders energetically pursued the idea of a collaborative effort at the local level. Subsequently, there was much hard work on the part of many different individuals. And, although faces have changed over the years, enthusiasm still seems to run high for this common cause.

With the proliferation of programs that existed, it was only a matter of time before working collaborations would begin to develop. However, as many cities have discovered, a coalition of diverse personalities and organizations may not be prone to smooth operation. It would seem that Nashville service providers are to be commended for their ability to rise above individual differences, navigate the system effectively, and bring law enforcement on board. The sustainability of services over a period of ten years, throughout different administrations, is commendable. It speaks of the synergy that is created through collaboration.

Also remarkable is the relative swiftness with which the project came together. This seems attributable to the support of those in positions of power, who could make it happen. Advocates realized that they must bring the issue of domestic violence to the agenda of elected officials, such as the Mayor, and other community leaders, like the District Attorney General and the Chief of Police. Without the cooperation of individuals in high places, advocacy alone could not have made it happen.

The level of effectiveness of Nashville's system for handling domestic violence calls might be demonstrated with statistics from the data management system that Roehl (1997) recognized as

innovative. It would be interesting to compare local statistics to those being reported at the national level. Two primary sources of measurement are used by the Department of Justice. The Federal Bureau of Investigation publishes the Uniform Crime Report yearly. It reports information from the nation's law enforcement agencies. It is estimated that 40% of all crime is actually reported. The National Crime Victimization Survey from the Bureau of Justice Statistics details incidents of crime, victims, and trends regardless of whether incidents were reported to law enforcement (Underwood & Edmunds, 2003). Recommendations for further research would include comparative studies of crime statistics using recognized methods of measurement such as these.

In conclusion, many factors appear to have contributed to the formation and success of the Domestic Violence Division as one part of a community effort against the crime of domestic violence. The collaborations that continue to exist make Nashville a prime site for furthering the effort with the of a family violence center. This is a vision that elected officials have indicated they would support. All that remains is to bring these many advocates and services under one roof to facilitate access for victims of domestic violence. In anticipation of what may lie ahead for the city, a 1995 quote by San Diego City Attorney Casey Gwinn about Nashville's Domestic Violence Division is just as apropos today as it was then, "The challenge is what's going to happen over the next five or ten years" (Spaid, 1995).

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Can you talk briefly about how the domestic violence division came into being in 1994?

At what point did you become involved with the division and in what capacity?

What were some aspects of the operation that worked well/did not work in the beginning?

What are some of the ways that the division has progressed over the last 10 years?

Are there still areas for improvement?

How has working in the field of domestic violence influenced your overall career?