**INFORMATION SHEET**

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN**

**MEN’S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAMS**

**AND**

**ANGER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS?**

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| **Anger Management Programs** | **Men’s Behaviour Change Programs** |
| Geared towards perpetrators of non-intimate violence. | Specially designed for men’s use of violence towards family members. |
| Focus of program is to teach participants to control and express anger appropriately. | Men are taught about the different types of abuse as well as about the dynamics of abuse. |
| Participant’s violence is viewed as a “momentary outburst of anger”. | Violence is viewed within a broader power and control context. |
| Focus is on what makes the participant “angry” – i.e., it could be his partner’s “nagging” – therefore they can unwittingly support victim blaming.  | Focus is on the man’s belief system (which is reinforced by broader society) and how that influences his behaviour. |
| Anger management doesn’t take into account the premeditated and controlling behaviour associated with abuse. | Focus is on man making a choice to use power and control tactics in order to gain or maintain control.  |
| Anger management programs “psychologise” violence by reinforcing that violence is the result of individual deficiency – or perhaps implies that the man is helpless to control his actions. | Men’s Behaviour Change programs see the use of violence as part of a wider cultural context that condones violence. Men are not seen as “sick” – using violence is a choice. |
| Programs are offered independent of concerns for the partner’s safety. | Safety of women and children is the primary objective of Men’s Behaviour Change programs. |
| No partner contact. | Partner contact key component of the program. |
| Anger management programs often teach the man to be even more controlling because they focus on the “control of emotions”. | Men’s Behaviour Change programs focus on man taking responsibility for his behaviour by acknowledging his behaviour and by examining impacts on women and children. |
| Can feed into the man’s tendency toward self-pity and self-deception and his need to dwell on his own discomfort. | Focus is on choice of behaviour and impact on family. Accountability and taking responsibility is paramount. |
| Anger management programs take the focus off protecting the victim and into “treating” the man. | Men’s Behaviour Change programs main focus is on safety and wellbeing of the family. |
| Programs are often very brief – studies have shown short term interventions can actually be less effective than no treatment at all. | Programs run from between 12 to 52 sessions – comprehensive programs. |

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| Studies have shown anger management programs less effective in re-offending rates. | Studies have shown Men’s Behaviour Change programs are more effective in re-offending rates. |
| Program not necessarily part of integrated court and justice response. | MBC programs are an integral part of justice response and integrated into the broader family violence service system. |
| Anger management is a therapeutic program – can send messages that domestic violence is not a crime. | Strong links to criminal justice system sends a strong message that domestic violence is unacceptable and in some cases a crime. |
| Anger management programs are not suitable for men who are violent and controlling with their partners, family members or kin and studies have shown that men can become more dangerous. | Men’s Behaviour Change programs with their focus on a power and control analysis, accountability and partner contact have been proven to be safer for women and children. |
| Anger management programs are not funded by the Victorian Government nor accredited by the peak body No To Violence. | Men’s Behaviour Change programs in Victoria are funded by the Victorian Government and accredited by the peak body No To Violence. |

This material has been sourced from a number of resources including:

“Improving the sentencing of domestic violence offenders in Maine: A proposal to prohibit anger management therapy”. Molly Butler-Bailer. Maine Bar Journal – Summer 2006

- Various publications from Dr. Ed Gondolf

- Various publications from “No To Violence”

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