

SANTA CLARA COUNTY GREENBOOK PROJECT



RESPECT CULTURE & COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Community Leaders
Speak to the Co-Occurrence of
Child Abuse and Domestic Violence –
A History of Community Involvement & Action

Report compiled by:

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY GREENBOOK PROJECT
RESPECT CULTURE AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

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I. Introduction & Overview

Research has suggested that in about half of all child maltreatment cases, the mother is also being battered. The intersection of domestic violence and child maltreatment has been traditionally overlooked. In most communities, the primary systems for helping mothers and children become safe consist of dependency courts, child protective services, and domestic violence service providers. The Santa Clara County Greenbook Project recognizes the need to strengthen these systems' understanding of the issues of child abuse and domestic violence and build their capacity to address these issues. In an effort to improve the overall effectiveness of systems, the Santa Clara County Greenbook incorporated several strategies that recognize the significance of cultural competency in systems. These strategies provide the foundation for the Respect Culture and Community Initiative (RCCI) to gather and incorporate community input into system responses regarding the co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic violence while building the community capacity to respond to these issues. This paper includes a history of this initiative in Santa Clara County and highlights some of the activities that the RCCI committee has engaged in since the inception of the initiative through December 2004, as well as feedback from community stakeholders on various topics related to the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse.

The "Greenbook" is a publication that originated in the late 1990's, when the Family Violence Department of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges convened leading family court judges and experts on child maltreatment and domestic violence. The Greenbook was released in 1999 and is formally titled, "Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice". It offers a comprehensive set of recommendations designed to eliminate or decrease the enormous risks that battered mothers, caseworkers, and judges must take on in order to keep children safe.

"Too often, non-offending battered mothers are blamed for the abuse of their children. Too rarely, perpetrators are held accountable. Children suffer because they may be injured in the course of violence against their mother, or they suffer harmful effects simply by being in a violent home." -Greenbook Website

In January 2001 a federal initiative was created to fund six demonstration sites from among 100 candidates to create and implement local Greenbook Projects. Santa Clara County is one of six communities across the country taking part in a new federal initiative that is designed to change the way courts and social service agencies handle the complex yet common challenge of helping families facing both domestic violence and child maltreatment. The goal of the Santa Clara

County Greenbook Project is to increase collaboration among the courts, child protective services, domestic violence agencies, law enforcement and others in the community in order to devise better service delivery systems for families experiencing both domestic violence and child maltreatment. An essential part of the Greenbook Project has been working with a local research partner (LRP). The LRP helps the Greenbook Project design outcome measurements and other tools to assist all seven Greenbook Project committees in reaching their goals.

II. History & Purpose of the Initiative

The Respect Culture and Community Initiative (RCCI) of the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project was originally referred to as the Cultural Competency Committee when it was initially implemented in April 2001. The Implementation Team created this committee as one of six committees that would constitute the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project. The decision to implement the Cultural Competency Committee in Santa Clara County was based on the fact that several recommendations in the Greenbook Project publication, published in 1999, recognized the importance of cultural considerations in systems. The recommendations include the following:

Recommendation 9

Cultural competency requires agency leaders to make an ongoing commitment to fact-finding in order to determine whether children and families of diverse backgrounds are served fairly and capably by their agencies in the reporting and substantiating of child maltreatment; in the filing of dependency petitions and foster care placements; and in the response of shelter providers, police, and the courts to domestic assaults and child maltreatment.

Recommendation 10

Child welfare agencies, domestic violence programs, and juvenile courts should develop meaningful collaboration relationships with diverse communities in an effort to develop effective interventions in those communities.

Recommendation 12

Agencies and courts should build staff capacity to attend more competently to clients from diverse communities and income levels.

Recommendation 30

Domestic violence programs should collaborate with other community groups and service providers, child protection services, and juvenile courts to improve access to services.

The goal of RCCI is to encourage community involvement in influencing system changes to help ensure that issues related to cultural competency and relevance are considered and to increase community accountability by providing community leaders and residents with information and resources that can offer assistance to families who may be experiencing child abuse and domestic violence.

When the project was initially implemented, the goal of RCCI was to improve the cultural competency of the systems that deal with domestic violence and child maltreatment including the juvenile dependency court. In November 2002, the committee decided to incorporate community input into systems change and also help to empower community members by informing them of resources related to child maltreatment and domestic violence. Today, the mission of RCCI is to focus on bringing the talents, resources, and skills of people in the community together to increase their collective power and work for social change.

III. Initiative Activities

In 2001 when this initiative was referred to as the Cultural Competency Committee, the committee researched cultural competency assessment tools that might be able to capture cultural proficiency efforts. In addition, the committee reviewed Census 2000 data on the populations of Santa Clara County and researched definitions of cultural competency.

In 2002, members of the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project attended a presentation held in San Francisco, California by the national Greenbook Technical Assistance. During this presentation, the advisors emphasized the importance of including community input into systems change. As a result, the Cultural Competency Committee decided to evolve its existing efforts in Santa Clara County and incorporate community engagement and accountability efforts. By late 2002, in an effort to denote its evolution, the committee changed its name to the Respect Culture and Community Initiative.

One of the first steps that RCCI undertook was to understand how to encourage community leaders to engage in efforts to end the cycle of domestic violence in their own communities. In order to do so, RCCI committee members enlisted the help of Catlin Fulwood, a consultant through the Greenbook Technical Assistance. She suggested that community leaders would be

able to provide great insight to various communities. She explained that community organizing is a social change strategy for preventing and responding to violence in their home. By bringing the skills, talents, and resources of people in the community together, an increase in collective power could transform their own community and create social change. In an attempt to answer the question of community members “*what can I do to help?*” Catlin suggested and helped to create an action plan so that the community had a way to become engaged in making change in their own neighborhood. Domestic violence and its impact on the community was the common ground that the individual identified as a concern and was the catalyst that brought the neighbors together.

Through this community outreach and education, the RCCI committee made it a priority to build relationships and trust with community members and to create connections and contacts in an effort to begin the dialogue around domestic violence and child abuse. Community leaders were recruited from a diverse group of human service and community-based organizations, child welfare, domestic violence advocacy organizations, legal service providers, law enforcement, faith communities, and local government entities.

A. COMMUNITY LEADER STRATEGY MEETINGS

This endeavor began by the RCCI committee calling upon community leaders to create time in their busy lives to collectively discuss this important subject matter in hopes of understanding domestic violence in Santa Clara County communities. RCCI defined a community leader as an individual or gatekeeper that works with the families and children in diverse communities on a day-to-day basis. Gatekeepers have access to large numbers of people who trust them and hold the influence and capabilities of educating fellow community members on important initiatives such as the Greenbook Project. The goal was for community leaders to play a role in improving systems response to families experiencing violence through their participation and partnership in RCCI.

RCCI members identified the following groups as community leaders, while making a point to reach out to individuals that represented many different communities in Santa Clara County (i.e., multi-lingual, faith based, age, and cultural): the faith community, battered women and their children, former batterers, child advocates, youth mentors, substance abuse rehabilitation providers, strong neighborhood programs, legislators and policy makers, institutional leaders, grassroots communities, youth mentors, small business owners, parks and recreational personnel,

cultural media, individuals from the gay/lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender community, sports leaders, coaches, hospital liaisons, nurses, and public health representatives.

Once community leaders were identified and engaged, they made a commitment to participating in six formal gatherings where they had the opportunity to have an in depth dialogue related to domestic violence and child maltreatment and the systems implications and outcomes.

1st Community Leader Strategy Meeting Responses

Attendees of the first RCCI Community Leader Stakeholder meeting were asked to respond to the following questions regarding their perceptions and interest in domestic violence and child abuse. The responses below represent some of their feedback:

What is your experience with domestic violence and/or child abuse?

- ◆Children with the most problems come out of shelters
- ◆Child abuse in another country
- ◆Church, family, and friends can be the first line of defense as opposed to government agencies
- ◆Clinical treatment of adult victims, perpetrators, and children
- ◆Cultural differences (i.e., when the wife is viewed as property)
- ◆Daughter experienced harassment and law enforcement couldn't help
- ◆Definition of child abuse is different across cultures and customs
- ◆Effects on children leads to fear and assumptions
- ◆Everyone is responsible to get people the help they need
- ◆Experience with psychological and elder abuse
- ◆Victim of Financial abuse
- ◆First hand experience in family
- ◆Have called Adult Protective Services
- ◆HIV/AIDS has largely increased in youth and women of color
- ◆Husband was a child witness to domestic violence
- ◆Know young single mothers who have experienced domestic violence
- ◆Oversee victim's groups, domestic violence advocates, children and parent group programs
- ◆Prevention
- ◆Survivor of child abuse and domestic violence and now provide outreach to survivors
- ◆Violence partner/spouse/children not addressed in faith/religious community

- ♦ Denial is an issue in faith communities and makes it difficult to provide resources

How prevalent do you think domestic violence is in the community?

- ♦ African American community had no deaths last year, but it is an issue
- ♦ Big city origins influence choices
- ♦ Cultural norms and expectations are different
- ♦ Difficulty in developing relationships later on
- ♦ Domestic violence common in culture
- ♦ Domestic violence does not discriminate and happens among all socioeconomic groups
- ♦ Domestic violence affects the entire family through economics
- ♦ Domestic violence is a family issue, and makes it difficult to talk about it with law enforcement and other outside resources
- ♦ Domestic violence is not taken seriously and is a national epidemic
- ♦ Easy for society to blame victim
- ♦ Hard to the break cycle
- ♦ In White communities it's hard to imagine reasons/methods/barriers to seeking help
- ♦ Individuals need to get involved
- ♦ Major culture barriers prevent victims from accessing resources
- ♦ People in African American community don't talk about domestic violence because of survival (emotional and/or monetary dependence) and it is easier to deny or minimize
- ♦ Perspectives are different and limits of violence vary
- ♦ Religious influence and authority factor into why people don't talk and/or feel like their choices are limited
- ♦ Shame is a big issue to the family (to perpetrator in African American community)
- ♦ Silence and not knowing how to articulate problem adds to resistance
- ♦ Violence is multigenerational

What do you know about the effects of domestic violence on children?

- ♦ Children accept it as a way of life that can happen across generations
- ♦ Children may be confused by what they witness (i.e., seeing their mother as a victim, complexities in relationships, a mother's mixed feelings, an identification with the aggressor and victim, and their role based
- ♦ Children are afraid to sleep which effects their performance in school goes down
- ♦ Children become the adult by trying to protect their mom
- ♦ Children withdraw, act out, and are aware that something is different or wrong

- ◆ Co-occurrence of domestic violence and substance abuse is traditionally dealt with separately, yet they tend to both be present in a large number of incidents
- ◆ Grow up too fast
- ◆ Lifetime impact
- ◆ Lose their faith and mistrust parents
- ◆ Many have no idea of the impact on their children
- ◆ More people are talking about this now than in the past
- ◆ More prevalent than we think it is
- ◆ People don't talk about it because it's considered taboo
- ◆ Perpetuates how they live their lives and their future adult relationships
- ◆ Prevents quality relationships
- ◆ Search for place to escape
- ◆ Self esteem and guilt

What do families experiencing domestic violence need?

- ◆ Additional education, outreach, and support services
- ◆ Age appropriate services
- ◆ Build relationships before you can talk about it
- ◆ Fear and racism lead people to believe they can't trust the justice system
- ◆ Increase cultural and language capabilities
- ◆ More resources before and after being in the systems
- ◆ Need education
- ◆ Resources for older victims
- ◆ Safe houses
- ◆ Support services and safety (violence to stop)
- ◆ They need to be empowered and know there is a way out
- ◆ Victims feel shame and a loss of self-respect
- ◆ Who will pick up support services? The community has to come forward
- ◆ Women do not want men to be taken away and abused by system.

Based upon this first meeting with the help of Catlin Fulwood, the RCCI committee identified five themes for community leaders to address. The community leaders valued and imbedded the following goals in the future collective work of RCCI:

- 1) raise awareness in the community on the overlap of domestic violence and child maltreatment;
- 2) identify ways to increase accountability in the community;
- 3) develop recommended family resources before and after families enter the system;
- 4) develop resources and curriculum for multiple age groups in schools; and
- 5) increase services, education, and outreach while emphasizing bilingual/bicultural services.

During the second Community Leader Strategy Meeting, community leaders developed “Community Leader Action Plans”. The process of creating an action plan consisted of the community leaders breaking into four groups, and having each group identify a strategy to pursue. The following is a brief synopsis of the hard work accomplished by each of the Small Groups in collectively addressing, educating, and reaching out to diverse communities where domestic violence had historically been considered taboo and not been made a priority of community outreach.

The issue of overrepresentation of children of color was brought up early on by community leaders and so related statistics and reports were distributed at meetings in regards to this topic. But RCCI committee members recognized this subject as needing further discussion in addition to broaching the issue of an individual’s experience within the different systems.

B. SMALL GROUP WORK

Small Group 1

This group accomplished their objective of administering surveys to community members where they were asked for their input on questions related to their ability to define, intervene, and identify domestic violence resources. The surveys asked participants to convey what tools were needed in their neighborhood to assist families affected by violence. These surveys have given Small Group 1 an understanding of how the neighborhood perceives (i.e., knowledge and attitudes) domestic violence and child abuse.

<u>Small Group 1: Community Survey Results</u>			
Total Number of Surveys: 88			
Average age of respondents: 28.3 years			
Gender		Community	
Female	63%	Gilroy	52%

Male	35%	San Jose	18%
No Response	2%	No Response	20%
		Other	10%

Do you know where people who are experiencing family violence or who want to learn more about family violence can go for help or assistance?

Other Community Based Organizations	51%
Domestic Violence Shelters/ Agencies	16%
Don't Know	14%
Counseling	5%
Other	5%

What services are you aware of that are available in your neighborhood for victims?

Domestic Violence Shelters/ Agencies	22%
Other	20%
Don't Know	20%
None	17%
Other Community Based Organizations	15%

What do you think causes family violence?

Drugs/ Alcohol	40%
Poor Communication	22%
Cycles of Abuse/Learned Behavior	18%
Other	20%

How do you think family violence could be prevented?

Increased Awareness/ Education	33%
Improved Communication (Between Partners)	30%
Counseling	9%
Improved Parenting Skills	9%
Additional Resources	6%
Other	12%

Do you think that children are affected by family violence? If so, how?

Yes- 97%	No/No Response- 3%
They learn to be violent	29%
They become scared/depressed/ traumatized	26%
Emotionally/ Psychologically Impacted	25%
Other	20%

Would you want to be involved in a neighborhood effort to stop violence?

Yes	71%
No/ No Response	39%

NB: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Small Group 2

The goal this group adopted was the need to increase services, education, and outreach with an emphasis on bilingual/bicultural services. The group decided to accomplish this goal by conducting a community outreach forum within a particular cultural community. Small Group 2 has been successful in holding two community forums targeting specific cultural/ethnic groups as an audience. The forums were hosted at Nuestra Casa Family Resource Center (a family resource center that focuses on the needs of the Latino population) and at the Ujirani Family Resource Center (a family resource center that focuses on the needs of the African American population). The forum presented an opportunity for each community of color to obtain information on the warning signs of domestic violence, how to get help, and what to do to stop domestic violence in the community. Each forum had a panel presentation from various agencies and individuals from the community who are working collaboratively to address the issue and impact of domestic violence. The panel participants were Child Protective Services, Law Enforcement, the District Attorney’s Office, and an advocacy agency titled Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence. These forums have been well attended and have created a catalyst of discussion on this important subject matter.

Small Group 3

Small Group 3’s goal was to cultivate community small businesses as distribution sites for educational materials regarding domestic violence and child abuse. The action plan consisted of identifying ways to increase accountability in the community and to develop resources for teens, adults, and seniors. Members of this group accomplished this plan by distributing resources and information to many different arenas where people often congregated. Group 3 provided education, awareness, and resource information to interfaith communities, resource agencies, public and private athletic/recreational facilities, coffee houses, high schools, malls, and senior centers. Groups 3 also collaborated its efforts with the City of San José’s Hairdresser Project. In this project

Group 3 provided educational materials to specific salons to be distributed if and when a client disclosed any information related to domestic violence. The hairdresser would then be equipped to provide resources safely.

Small Group 4

The goal of this group was to raise awareness in the community on the overlap of domestic violence and child abuse in a targeted community. Small Group 4's hard work was noticed and captured in an article describing the work of the Greenbook Project and of the community leaders and was ran in El Observador. The members of this strategy group wrote editorial articles for ethnic newspapers and stories related to the work of the community leaders. This information was also reported to the public via radio stations.

C. COMMUNITY LEADER STRATEGY MEETING TOPICS

While Small Group goals and objectives actively continued in the community by specific community leaders, subsequent Community Leader Strategy Meetings continued, each focusing on domestic violence. The format and agendas for each Community Leader Strategy Meeting was based upon the requests and needs of the community leaders who had attended previous meetings. Many Community Leader Strategy Meetings provided a viewing of public service announcements on domestic violence. By beginning meetings in this fashion, the subject matter returned to being about people and provided an opportunity for reflections as to how the public service announcements did or did not apply to their own community.

In an effort to provide community leaders with what was requested (to hear from systems representatives so they could lean more about the challenge families face within those systems), RCCI committee members organized presentations. Rolanda Pierre-Dixon, from the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office and the Chair of the Domestic Violence Council Death Review, provided statistical data, explanations, and clarifications between facts and myths of domestic violence within the community. In addition, systems representatives presented their policies, procedures and protocols, answered community leaders' questions and networked with the group. One panel presentation consisted of a Domestic Violence Specialist, a detective from the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office, a Juvenile Dependency Court Judge, and a District Attorney from the Domestic Violence Unit of Santa Clara County all joined forces to present the systems response to domestic violence and child abuse. The second panel presentation consisted of members of child welfare workers and law enforcement who are involved with the Family to

Family Initiative to speak of pilot programs that focused on diverting families from entering the child welfare system. This second panel presentation was exceptionally effective because it provided an opportunity for the community to learn how to become involved in helping children stay within their own communities, be accountable, and be a resource. Both of these panel presentations provided an opportunity for community leaders to not only become educated, but also to ask questions they normally would not have had the opportunity to ask.

The RCCI committee prioritized providing tools for community leaders to walk away with useful information to apply in their own communities. Community leaders requested that Community Leader Strategy Meetings provide an opportunity to network with other community leaders. In response to this request, the RCCI committee created the opportunity for community leaders to network at Community Leader Strategy Meetings. Networking with each other provided the opportunity for community leaders to utilize one another as resources and build a larger community front in tackling the issue of domestic violence and child maltreatment.

D. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD MALTREATMENT TOOLKITS

In September 2003, the RCCI committee members presented community leaders with Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Toolkits that included facts, statistics, information on local domestic violence, child welfare, and human service resources and family violence related penal codes, and media contacts. The intent of the toolkits was to empower community leaders by providing them with information and resources that they could use to take action by linking with resources, accessing additional information, and becoming involved with related effort. Multi-lingual public education information and awareness materials from the Family Violence Prevention Fund were also included in the toolkit.

The toolkits were met with overwhelmingly positive response and several of the community leaders have since commented how valuable they were in helping them to assist others. To date, over 65 of the Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Toolkits have been distributed.

E. FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY

The RCCI Committee created an open forum where community leaders had a chance to provide their thoughtful feedback on specific questions asked. The following questions provided to community leaders were also asked in an attempt to understand what would help people receive better services and understand the opinions people held about the four sectors (law enforcement,

child welfare, the courts, and domestic violence agencies). Here's a synopsis of community leader responses to questions asked.

7th Community Leader Strategy Meeting Responses

1) Do you believe that victims of domestic violence are willing to call the police or are they hesitant? Why or Why not?

- ◆ It's hard for law enforcement to determine the dominant aggressor because batterers are sophisticated and know how to get their victims arrested
- ◆ Some communities of color don't trust the police
- ◆ Victims don't call the police because there is a fear of deportation
- ◆ It is hard to create outreach to victims because they are so isolated.
- ◆ Suggestion to create outreach to isolated victims (i.e., laundry mats, stores)
- ◆ Police don't always follow up on reports and do not respond in a timely manner
- ◆ There is a need for community policing
- ◆ Reporting (by batterers or law enforcement blaming victims) has punished victims
- ◆ Victims contact the police department as a very last resort. Even when a victim contacts a domestic violence agency for help it is a common request for the domestic violence agency to not inform the police
- ◆ Neighbors who are willing to contact the police if they are witnessing or hearing domestic violence do not do so because their neighbor often times does not have the information required to make a report.

2) Do you know victims who have gone through Child Protective Services (CPS)? If so, what was their experience with the system? What was their relationship with the social worker like? What was their experience going to the court? What was their accessibility to their caseworker?

- ◆ There is not an opportunity to identify and provide the entire family's needs and needed resources to heal as a family in an effort to preserve the family bond.
- ◆ There is a lack of resources for families to stay together (or to not be broken apart).
- ◆ A need to tailor the services to the individual family
- ◆ A lack of credibility exists for the systems

- ◆ There is a lack of non-traditional approaches
- ◆ How can a community member intervene when their neighbor (victim) speaks a different language?

3) Are victims you come into contact with satisfied with how the community holds batterers accountable? Are batterers arrested? Do they go to jail? Are they prosecuted? Do victims file restraining orders against them? Do batterers attend classes?

- ◆ The 52-week program effectiveness is based on the batterer and not on the length of the California State Mandate of a 52-week program. Not sure if the program is working for everyone.
- ◆ The 52-week Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) focuses on belief systems. It takes at least 6 months for batterers to identify their beliefs and understand who (the batterers) are.
- ◆ Maintenance after the BIP 52-week program ends is needed to help accountability
- ◆ Victims have more classes than batterers per week
- ◆ How can the family (preservation) be integrated into BIPs without making the victim and children safe?
- ◆ Batterers are sophisticated and know how to use the systems against victims, i.e., getting the victims arrested.
- ◆ If batterers don't go to required programs, they go to jail. When they get out of jail they go back into the same systems
- ◆ Current interventions are not very effective. There needs to be a look at new intervention programs while not losing the criminal justice system response.

4) Are you aware of how victims think children are affected by violence in the home? Do you know if victims are able to get services for their children?

- ◆ Victims become aware of the impact once they see their child acting out or the child's behavior starting to change
- ◆ Victims might not be aware of the emotional harm to their child
- ◆ When children approach victims crying and saying, 'Why did Daddy hit you?' women realize they need to leave. They are not leaving because of the violence, they are leaving

for their children.

- ◆ We are not giving women enough credit and instead we are re-victimizing women.
- ◆ We need to give more resources to women so they understand the resources for kids.
- ◆ We need more resources for kids to heal, i.e., a program for kids zero to five years in age that have experienced trauma.
- ◆ Develop programs to heal the parent with the child and to continue the bond instead of creating separate programs for each member of the family.

IV. RCCI Summary: Hopes for the future

The RCCI committee is honored to have begun this path to collective social change with

Working with [the RCCI] committee has helped me stay in the fight for victims of domestic violence and their children. Communities taking on the responsibility of making our homes safe is the best way to eradicate domestic violence.

Rolanda Pierre-Dixon, Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, RCCI participant

community members from a diverse cultural, social, and socio-economic, age, and faith range.

The collective work done by communities so far is only the beginning. It is the RCCI goal that other communities benefit from the lessons, challenges, and accomplishments learned. It was proven that the RCCI community leaders had accomplished many things, but most importantly

we have all learned how to come together as a community to make these important changes.

It takes an entire community to come together to help victims and children and that is why it is the hope of the Respect Culture Community Initiative Committee that this report be used as a tool for other communities to join forces in helping families impacted by domestic violence and stop the co-occurrence of child maltreatment.

The next step for RCCI is to tie the feedback from community leaders to the systems that represent the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project (i.e., law enforcement, child welfare, domestic violence agencies, and courts). It is RCCI's goal to bring this insightful feedback to the other six Greenbook project groups and to discuss how this information can influence their work in the future. RCCI plans to share this information with the Greenbook Project Implementation Team (a group of approximately 80 stakeholders that come to receive regular updates on Greenbook and offer their feedback), other collaborative groups including policy makers and community leaders.

Santa Clara County Greenbook Project
Respect Culture and Community Initiative
Highlights & Accomplishments

- ❖ Implemented Cultural Competency Committee as a part of the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project in April 2001; evolved into the Respect Cultural and Community Initiative in 2002.
- ❖ Diverse representation from faith communities, human service workers, social workers, legal service providers, and community educators.
- ❖ Eight Community Leader Strategy Meetings held between January 2003 and December 2004, which included over 80 community leaders.
- ❖ Sponsored a Domestic Violence Community Forum (in Spanish) at Nuestra Casa Family Resource Center.
- ❖ Presentations to community members by representatives of the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, Department of Family and Children's Services (linking with the Family to Family Initiative), Office of the Sheriff, Superior Court, the City of San José, and San José Police Department Family Violence Center.
- ❖ Twenty community leaders from RCCI received scholarships, which allowed them to participate in the 2004 Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Conference: Moving Beyond Traditional Models of Domestic Violence Intervention. (The conference included a workshop on Strengthening Community Partnerships.)
- ❖ One of the small groups sponsored by RCCI successfully administered over 80 community surveys inquiring what the community perceptions were regarding domestic violence and child abuse.
- ❖ RCCI related activities and events have received media coverage by Telemundo (Channel 48), and a local radio station and periodical (El Observador).
- ❖ RCCI community leaders have been linked with resources and access to other key community leaders through the Community Leader Strategy Meetings.
- ❖ The Community Leader Strategy Meetings have become a forum where community leaders can connect with each other and network in addition to learning the most recent progress made on issues, such as overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system.
- ❖ Participants of RCCI have been provided with Toolkits that included facts, statistics, information on local domestic violence, child welfare, and human service resources and family violence related penal codes, and media contacts.

Santa Clara County Greenbook Project
Respect Culture and Community Initiative
Timeline

- April 2001 Creation of Cultural Competency Committee (Project 3) of the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project based on four recommendations cited in the Greenbook.
- 2001 Implementation of the committee; Co-Chaired by Leroy Martin (Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children’s Services) and Roger Chow (Asian Americans for Community Involvement)
- 2002 National Greenbook Project Technical Assistance suggests that demonstration sites consider ways to incorporate community input into systems change.
- Nov. 2002 Cultural Competency Committee decided to adopt National Technical Assistance suggestion and evolved the committee into the Respect Cultural and Community Initiative (RCCI) under the leadership of Co-Chairs Honorable Katherine Lucero (Santa Clara County Superior Court) and Zonia Sandoval Waldon (Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children’s Services).
- March 2003 1st Community Leader Strategy Meeting was held. Forty five community leaders were in attendance. The goals of the first meeting were to begin building trusting relationships with the community leaders; begin dialog around domestic violence and child abuse; and to provide resources/referrals and time for networking.
- May 2003 2nd Community Leader Strategy Meeting was held. Attendees were asked to commit to meeting six times over a one year period in an effort to work on issues related to child abuse and domestic violence collaboratively. Five smaller working groups were created to make progress on each of the goals identified by the larger group.
- July 2003 3rd Community Leader Strategy Meeting. A panel presentation on Systems Response to Domestic Violence and Child Abuse, which included representatives from law enforcement, the courts, prosecutors, domestic violence advocates, and child welfare. Small working groups began drafting work plans.
- Sept. 2003 4th Community Leader Strategy Meeting. The work groups finalized their work plans.
- Nov. 2003 5th Community Leader Strategy Meeting. Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Toolkits were distributed to each of the community leaders. Small groups reported out on their efforts and achievements.
- Dec. 2003 Co-Chair Zonia Sandoval Waldon retires from the Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children’s Services; Eve Castellanos, from the City of San José joins the Honorable Katherine Lucero as Co-Chair of RCCI.

- Jan. 2004 6th Community Leader Strategy Meeting. Presentation on Family to Family efforts by Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services and by the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council Death Review Committee representative.
- March 2004 Sponsored a Domestic Violence Community Forum (in Spanish) held at Nuestra Casa Family Resource Center, approximately 15 community members in attendance. (Received Spanish television media coverage.)
- June 2004 7th Community Leader Strategy Meeting. Dialogue Session Topic: ***How are our systems working for your clients?***
- Sept. 2004 8th Community Leader Strategy Meeting. Presentations on the San José Family Violence Center Presentation and *Family to Family* Panel Presentation on Community Action Teams by representatives from the Department of Family and Children's Services.
- Dec. 2004 Compilation of ***Community Leaders Speak to the Co-Occurrence of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence – A Historical Account.***

Santa Clara County Greenbook Project ***Respect Culture and Community Initiative*** ***Lessons Learned***

RCCI has faced the challenge of representing Santa Clara County's large and diverse population effectively, incorporating the feedback into the systems, and realizing the connection and correlation between systems and the community. Through these challenges, RCCI is proud of the community leaders in Santa Clara County that have gone above and beyond in not only addressing this problem, but have provided their creative and thoughtful insight of how Santa Clara County systems and community members can help families whose lives are impacted by domestic violence and child maltreatment. A notable sign of success in this project has been the high attendance of community leaders that have continued to take time out of their day to share information, resources, and ideas over an 18-month period. We owe much of our success in this process to the Greenbook Project Technical Assistance we have received, the leadership of our Chairs, the input of RCCI committee members, the coordination of Greenbook Project staff, and the commitment of our community leaders.

Challenges and Successes

- The key to our success in working with the community has been the RCCI committee's ability to recognize, respond, and provide the community's need for more information on domestic violence and child maltreatment, (i.e., hand out materials, statistics, systems' leader presentations). This was accomplished by drawing on all of the community resources related to domestic violence and child maltreatment.
- Through this process, a relationship and trust was built between the Greenbook Project and the community. RCCI was able to gain the community's feedback relating to the competency of the systems to deal with domestic violence and child maltreatment. Without a mutually beneficial relationship based upon trust and respect the community may not have provided this important feedback.
- Listening and helping to provide what the community requested not only created a mutually beneficial relationship, but has also created the foundation of community accountability in making change.
- Keeping the entire Greenbook Project abreast of the community's feedback and integrating the feedback into implementation of the Greenbook Project goals has been a challenge. One of the reasons for this report was to help other Greenbook Project committees incorporate the feedback from the community.

Important Themes & Topics

- ❖ The systems that work to make change often forget to ask the experts as to what systems can do to make things better for communities affected by domestic violence and child maltreatment. The experts are within each community and their wealth of knowledge is essential in understanding how systems can better serve communities. Asking and calling the community to action allows the collection of important and innovative ideas to help systems learn how to do so.

- ❖ Overrepresentation of children of color is a serious issue that community members would like to proactively address; opportunities such as the community action teams sponsored by the Santa Clara Department of Family and Children's Services have provided community leaders with opportunities for such involvement.
- ❖ Community leaders involved with RCCI are strongly in agreement that culture and language be considered when crisis intervention services are being provided to women and children who have experienced domestic violence and/or child abuse. Further, the leaders have stated that additional opportunities for community intervention and involvement in identifying and addressing violence could be equally effective in stopping family violence.
- ❖ The surveys administered by one of the small groups, show that the majority of community members recognize the term domestic violence, but still primarily identify it as involving physical violence. A common point of discussion in the Community Leader Strategy Meetings is the need for additional community education, awareness, and alternatives to systems that families can access before a crisis occurs.
- ❖ While community members, in general, seem to recognize the co-occurrence between family violence and child abuse, there are few resources (outside of the child welfare and court systems) that recognize and offer services to families who may be experiencing both types of violence.