

## WHAT IS NOT A BIPP?

**Couples counseling** is not a BIP Program and is not recommended for relationships affected by abuse. Before you work together to create a healthy relationship, your partner must take responsibility for his abusive behaviors and demonstrate positive changes that make you feel safe to share your opinions or perspective. Couples counseling may also imply you hold responsibility for his abusive behavior when really your partner chooses to behave in an abusive manner on his own.

**Anger management** is not a BIP Program and is not recommended for men who use abuse to control their partners. Anger management focuses on stress reduction and helps chronically angry individuals overcome rage arising in specific situations, as well as in their general anger against themselves and the world around them. Your partner needs to examine his need for power and his need to control your relationship and identify his underlying attitudes and beliefs that promote violence in his relationship with you.

**Individual therapy** is not a BIP Program and is not the recommended referral for offenders of family violence. Individual therapy does not create a space for your partner to learn from other men's experiences. Men participating in BIPPs interact in a group format facilitated by experienced staff. Group members work on holding each other accountable and developing critical thinking skills that challenge beliefs and attitudes that lead to their abusive behaviors.

**Substance abuse treatment** is not a BIP Program and should not solely address your partner's abusive behavior. Alcohol and drugs may intensify violence, but they are not the cause of your partner's abusive behaviors. If your partner abuses substances, a BIPP should recommend he complete substance abuse treatment, as well as the BIP Program.

It may be possible you are not located near an accredited BIPP. This may require your partner to work with an individual therapist. While this is not a recommended alternative, it may be the only option in your community.



You can locate a list of accredited BIPPs at:  
[www.tdcj.state.tx.us/cjad/cjad-bipp.html](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/cjad/cjad-bipp.html)  
or by calling 800.525.1978

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## Is he really going to change this time?

A guide for women whose partners need abuse intervention services or are enrolled in a Battering Intervention and Prevention Program



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Your partner may be mandated to attend, or is considering attending, a Battering Intervention and Prevention Program to change his abusive behavior. Below you'll find information about the program serving your partner and what that means for you.

## WHAT IS A BIPP?

A Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) is a course for men who abuse their intimate partners. Throughout the sessions, your partner will examine his abusive behavior and be held accountable for his actions that maintain his power and control over you.

A trained BIPP facilitator guides each man in the group through:

- » Exploring his acts of violence, whether physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, psychological, or financial.
- » Understanding his individual beliefs and attitudes that led to his choice to use force.
- » Using non-violence strategies to communicate and develop a healthy relationship based on equality and respect.
- » Holding one another accountable for their controlling beliefs and acts of violence.

BIPPs should be accredited by the State of Texas and should abide by state accreditation guidelines. The guidelines outline requirements relating to program length, curriculum, and standards for communicating with survivors.

If your partner is using violence toward children, the Department of Family and Protective Services (CPS) can support him in getting a referral to a BIP Program and accessing other fatherhood services.

**You can find your local program by contacting the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1.800.799.7233 or 1.800.787.3224 (TTY). They also have a chat feature on their website, [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org).**

## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Your partner is the only one who can commit to this work, change his behaviors, and choose actions that lead to healthy and equal relationships. **It is not your responsibility to change his behavior.**

You may need to continue to assess your safety and seek assistance from a local family violence agency. These organizations often provide advocacy around housing and legal issues, counseling, safety planning, and a crisis hotline at no cost to you.

If your partner enters a BIPP and provides a mailing address for you, the program is required to send you notification of his enrollment. The program also must notify you in writing if your partner is exited from the program or when he completes the program.

It is helpful to know that your safety is a priority for BIP Programs, so if you speak to a BIPP about your partner's progress, that information will be kept confidential and separate from your partner's file.

Please note that a BIPP cannot share any information with you that your partner provided to them during his assessment, during the group sessions, or his exit interview.

## WILL A BIPP REALLY CREATE CHANGE?

If your partner entered a BIPP, you're probably relieved and hopeful he is finally getting help. It's important to know that there are no quick fixes for his violence, and he is the only one who can decide to change.

A BIPP is a small but important part of a community response system (including police, district attorney's office, the courts, and adult probation) holding your partner accountable for his abusive behavior and reinforcing the belief that family violence is unacceptable.

If your partner acknowledges his abusive behaviors, commits to change his behavior to support a relationship based on equality and mutual respect, and completes the program, change may be possible.

However, even men who complete programs can regress to abusive behaviors. Completing the program is not a guarantee that abuse will not occur in the future. For many men who struggle with these behaviors, staying nonviolent is a lifelong process. You should continue to assess your safety.

## WARNING SIGNS YOUR PARTNER ISN'T GETTING IT

Your partner's abusive behavior is rooted in a need to control your relationship. That need isn't going to change overnight. He may no longer be physically violent, but he may still try to exert control by manipulating you into doing what he wants, guiltting you into sympathizing with him, or using the BIP Program against you.

If you hear your partner making statements like these while he is in a program, you should be concerned that he isn't making meaningful progress:

*"I'm not the only one who needs counseling."*

*"I'm not as bad as a lot of the other guys in there."*

*"As soon as I'm done with this program, I'll be cured."*

*"We need to stay together to work this out."*

*"Now that I'm in this program, you have to be more understanding."*

*"You're the reason I'm being forced to go to this program."*

## IS HE CHANGING?

Your partner must decide to work toward change on his own. Despite what he may claim, there is nothing you can do to create this change.

While you are the best person to determine if your partner is responding to the program, you may want to ask yourself the following questions about his behavior:

*Can your partner listen to your opinion and respect it even when he disagrees?*

*Does your partner respect your wishes about sex and physical contact?*

*Is your partner supportive about your work, school, or other goals?*

*Are you comfortable with the way your partner interacts with your children?*

*Does your partner continue to blame or minimize his behaviors?*

*Can you negotiate compromises with him without being humiliated or belittled?*

*Do you feel afraid when you are with him?*