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A bird's-eye overview of Family Justice Centers and Multidisciplinary Models

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Vision on a Family Justice Center model

Dream big – Start small



Guiding principles to create a multidisciplinary approach

Build a culture of trust to work together, gap bridges and support.

“Take the best of what you already have and bring it all together.”

Casey Gwinn



Domestic Violence requires a specific approach

Common and under-reported problem

A lot of deadly and other victims

Complex and dangerous dynamics

Those involved often stay in each other's environment (parents, family)

Devastating impact on children -> intergenerational transfer

Great social costs

Gaps in interventions, approach and expertise

Many services involved -> transcends policy domains, policy levels and competencies

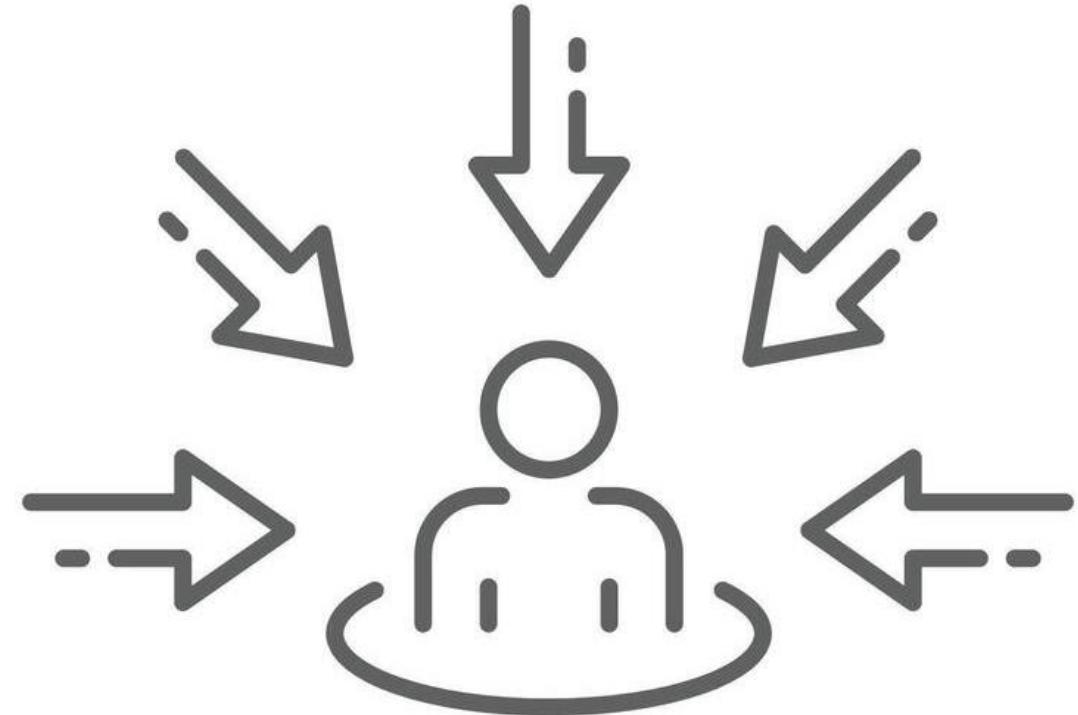
What is an integrated multidisciplinary approach?

- A coordinated community response in which social service agencies, health care providers and criminal justice providers join forces to work together to tackle domestic violence.
- **Ending domestic violence is everyone's responsibility**



"Survivors should not have to adapt to what is offered by the service providers or systems"

It's all about placing the survivors in the middle!



Conditions for a multidisciplinary setting

Working together on safety from a **shared vision**

Harmonize and coordinate different **work processes and methods**

Check whether in the primary process **obstacles** are present and need to be solved

Specialized multidisciplinary approach

Result focused work

Developing an **integral plan of action** for each different case

Intensive case-management in high risk situations

Sharing information



What is a Family Justice Center

An FJC is the co-location of a multidisciplinary team of professionals who are cooperating under one roof to offer help and support to victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence and their families

Guiding principles of an FJC

Safety comes first

Increase safety (direct and stable)

Victim-centered

Provide victim-centered services that promote victim autonomy and increases empowerment

Survivor-driven

Shape services to clients by asking them what they need

Empowered

Offer survivors a place to belong even after crisis intervention services are no longer necessary

Relationship-based

Maintain close working relationships among all collaborators/agencies

Offender-accountability

Increase offender accountability through evidence-based prosecution strategies and/or treatment programs

Outcomes of FJCs in- and outside Europe

- FJCs are a best practice model
- Survivors strongly support the FJC framework
- Professionals support the FJC framework



Family Justice Centers are a best practice model

- Family Justice Centers are capable of meeting survivor needs, satisfying clients, reducing homicides, increasing victim safety, making victims more autonomous and empowered, reducing fear and anxiety among victims and their children, helping victims avoid recanting or minimizing their experiences, making service providers more efficient and collaborative, making offenders more likely to be prosecuted, and connecting victims and their children with support services.
- Collaborative practices have the potential to be more comprehensive and coherent in addressing the distinct needs of family members struggling with IPV.



Survivors strongly support the FJC framework

Survivors in FJCs say that they would like to be able to go to one place for help instead of having to go from agency to agency, telling their story over and over.

FJCs are developed to improve the outcomes and lives of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other forms of trauma. The opinions of survivors are key to development and sustainability of FJCs

- “I think they saved my life. I don’t know where I would have gone if I didn’t have the Family Justice Center.”*

Survivors strongly support the FJC framework

- Family Justice Centers are organizations of change. They develop and host trainings, help bridge the gaps between institutions and communities and improve the lives of individuals who walk through their doors. They impact survivors, professionals, and the community at large.
- Family Justice Centers have a positive impact on the work of professionals working in Centers.
- Families experiencing an increase in safety, and reported an increase in empowerment related to their ability to advocate for themselves, make informed choices, and to navigate complex systems; and families experiencing an increase in protective factors and resilience in the prevention of secondary assault or re-assault.

Professionals support the FJC framework

Front line staff, professionals, partner agencies, and communities must buy-in to have a successful and dynamic Family Justice Center. Professionals agree that the Family Justice Center model is robust, and it works.

You can't work in silos in IPV, it's impossible. If we do, then we are doomed to fail.

Co-location in hospitals encouraged confidence among healthcare professionals about responding to domestic violence and abuse

And meant survivors -including those hidden to other services-- could get specialist support quickly.

FJCs reduce domestic homicides!!

“Family Justice Centers are leading the way forward in the domestic violence movement. They are challenging us to think outside the box--to keep growing, changing, and evolving as we work to prevent family violence.”



The international Family Justice Center movement

- **Is one of the most significant advances in the domestic and sexual violence prevention movement in more than 40 years.**
(FJC impact report 25 -Alliance for Hope International).
- Since its start in 2002 in San Diego, the Family Justice Center movement has expanded considerably, with over 150 Family Justice Centers operating in the United States and another 150 Centers operating in more than 25 countries around the world, of which 34 in Europe

EFJCA, as the European umbrella organization, supports European FJCs, related multidisciplinary centers, and emerging centers

Belgium

- DIVICO (Liège and Brabant-Wallon)
- Olista (Brussels)
- Veilig Huis (Antwerp, Halle, Geel, Hasselt, Ostend, Leuven, Ghent, Mechelen, Kortrijk and Aalst)

Croatia

- Društvo za psihološku pomoć (Zagreb)
- DUGA (Zagreb)

Estonia: Naiste Tugi- ja Teabekeskus (Tartu)

France

- Maison de Femmes (France, Paris)
- Network Re#Start (Maison des Femmes, France)

Greece: Union of Women Association of Heraklion Prefecture

Iceland

- Bjarkarhlíð (Reykjavik and Akureyri)
- Sigurhæðir (Victory Hills)

Ireland: Laois Domestic Abuse Service (Laois and Portlaois)

Italy: FJC Milan (Milan)

Latvia: Centre Dardedze (Riga, Latvia)

The Netherlands

- Fier (Leeuwarden)
- Filomena (Rotterdam)
- Sterk Huis (Goorle)
- *FJC Aruba*
- *FJC Bonaire*

Northern-Ireland: Derry Foyle's Women's Aid (Derry)

Poland

- Fundacja NON LICET (Wroclaw)
- Warsaw Women's Right Center (Warsaw)

Romania: Construim comunități mai sigure împreună (Iasi)

Sweden: Trygg Relation (Malmö)

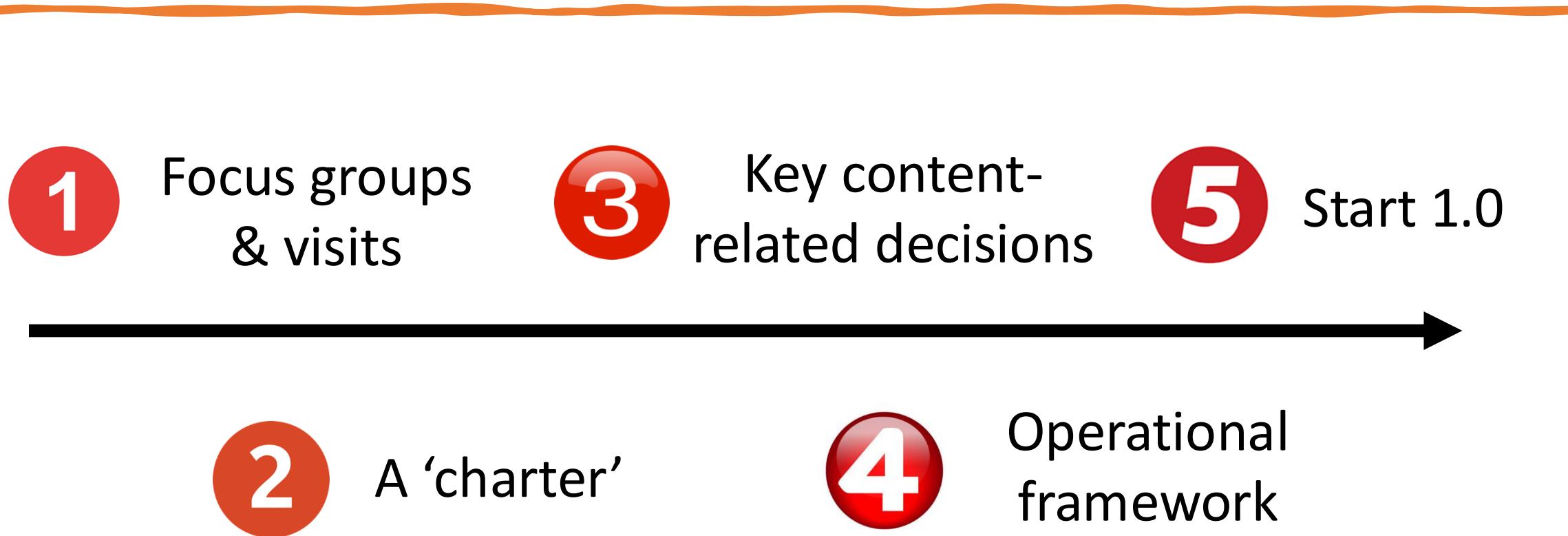


How to start an FJC

www.efjca.eu



What was our strategy? (*a two-year process*)



1

Focus groups + visit regions with good practices



- Focus groups with victims, children and perpetrators (also via advocacy groups)
- A parallel process involving all relevant sectors and organizations

1

Focus groups + visit regions with good practices

- What do victims, offenders, families experience? What is going well? How can we improve?
- What are the expectations of the organizations involved?



1

Focus groups + visit regions with good practices

Be inspired by good practices. Be critical, also ask about the stumbling blocks and the challenges.

Malmö (SE)



New Orleans (USA)

Tilburg (NL)



Antwerp (BE)

1

Focus groups + visit regions with good practices

What does the ideal FJC look & feel like?

“Safety”

“Good accessibility”



“Services on site”

“Anonymity”

“A coffee corner for a chat”

“A guide who takes you by the hand”

“Experienced staff”

“Support groups”

“A play corner for the children”

“Homely atmosphere”

“Collaboration
between services”

“A warm team”

2

A kind of 'charter'

FOR EXAMPLE

- Safety comes first
- Coordinated, high-quality and efficient approach
- Integrated approach
- Multidisciplinary team
- Under one roof
- Information sharing -> legal framework + respect deontological guidelines
- Risk assessment and triage of files
- Systemic -> one family, one plan
- Client-centered
- Child perspective
- Broad spectrum: prevention -> repression
- Expertise center



3

Key content-related decisions



- Model
- Processes
- Intake
- Sharing of information
- Route in and out
- ...

4

Operational framework

- Organizations involved
- Financial and other commitments
- Team
- Location
- ICT
- ...



4

Start with a 1.0-version

1.0





10 lessons I have learned during the start-up of FJC Limburg and the Flemish Safe Homes



10 lessons

1. Put together a **strong project team**. A team with expertise and good relationships with partners. That creates trust.
2. Make sure you are not working out an approach from within your Ivory tower. **Involve the people for whom you're doing it.**



10 lessons

3. Bear in mind that such an approach **cannot just be copied**. See other FJCs as a source of inspiration. **Translate everything to your local context and needs.**
4. Take **small steps** and **celebrate your successes**. That provides energy to take the following steps. Also dare to acknowledge that it is not obvious to anyone, that it is a **process that requires courage**.



10 lessons

5. "Dream big, start small, but most of all start." Ambition is very good, but **don't go too fast** for yourself and your partners. Rather start a little more modestly, instead of building a large but empty box. **Make sure you can meet expectations and go for real change.**



10 lessons

6. Make sure that the project team does not want to do everything itself. It is a process in which the **participating organizations** must be given a **mandate** and must take **responsibility**. In this way you increase support and share responsibility.

10 lessons

7. Take into account that certain mechanisms play a role in organizations. Despite the enthusiasm present, **it will not always be obvious to convince partners to invest**. Be aware of this when your patience is put to the test. But **do not give up!**

10 lessons

8. At a certain moment you have to go from "**talk about**" to "**do**". This requires courage. Don't forget to give recognition for that.

9. **Involve researchers** in the process to demonstrate the results and the added value. This is necessary to go beyond the pilot phase and to go to a structural implementation.



10 lessons

10. Do not separate the process towards the FJC from other social developments. Change does not happen under a glass dome. Stick out your feelers for **all kinds of relevant developments**. That way you can constantly monitor and adjust the process.

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK !