

**CALIFORNIA DELTA  
PREVENTION PLAN**

**Mariposa County 2007-2013**

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## PREFACE

In December 2006, eleven members of the Mariposa County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) responded to this Individual Prevention Capacity Questionnaire (IPCQ) question: If your state had unlimited funding to support programs and activities related to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), how would you allocate that funding? 21.8% indicated programs to increase public awareness of IPV and 23% indicated programs to prevent the first-time perpetration of IPV. Later, under the leadership of the DVCC, the Prevention Subcommittee approved the steps in the assessment process and has been informed of the trends emerging from the data collection. This document is the result of eighteen months of process planning, data collection and interviews, analysis, goal setting and plan development.

The California DELTA Project has reduced expectations for final and complete Domestic Violence Primary Prevention Plans from participating grantees. Nevertheless, the Mariposa County DVCC has decided to proceed with a modified version of the original “Getting to Outcomes” Plan.

There were lengthy discussions concerning the use of the terms Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) or Domestic Violence (DV) in this community. At the present time, it is the decision of the Mariposa County DVCC to use the term **Relational Violence** to include child abuse, domestic violence, dating violence and elder abuse. Although bullying is not included in this definition, research indicates that bullying can be both a symptom of violence occurring at home and a precursor of violent behavior in relationships later in life (See “The Link Between Bullying and Domestic Violence” in Appendix A). As a small community, we feel it behooves us to work collaboratively on all of these issues, so as to maximize resources and avoid duplication of prevention efforts. Additionally, a review of local and national research indicates that both risk and protective factors for all of these issues often are the same.

## **Vision Statement**

The Mariposa County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (MCDVCC) is a community-based team that shares a vision of Mariposa County as the safest place to live in California, where residents embrace alternatives to violence. We respond to the unique needs of Mariposa County through education, support, and accountability.

## **Step 1: Needs and Resources Assessment**

### **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

#### Mariposa County

Mariposa County is a small rural county located in the foothills and Sierra of Central California. Nearly half of the 1,451 square miles of the County is owned by Yosemite National Park, two national forests, and the U.S. Department of Land Management. Much of the county is mountainous with winding, narrow roads. There is great scenic beauty. Open range land dominates the lower elevations, giving way to forested areas and mountain peaks as one travels into the high Sierra.

#### **Demographics**

##### Population

The U.S. Census 2006 estimates the population of Mariposa County to be 18,401. This population is evenly divided between males (50.9%) and females (49.1%). There are approximately twelve people per square mile, as compared to the state average of 217 per square mile. The town of Mariposa, county seat, has the largest population density with about 1,700 people. Four other areas of the county have more wide spread populations, and each has its own distinct cultural norms. Those communities are El Portal-Yosemite (pop. 1556), Lake Don Pedro (pop. 2043), Catheys Valley (pop. 1370) and Coulterville-Greeley Hill (pop. 2355).

The U.S. Census 2006 for Mariposa County reports the following: 81.9% White persons non-Hispanic, 10.0% Hispanic, 3.6% American Indian and the remaining percentages shared by Asian, Black, and people who report more than one race. English is the primary language with only 5.2% reporting a language other than English spoken at home. According to the 2000 census, 21.9% of the population over age five is disabled.

The median age in 2005 was 43.1 years, compared to California's 34.4 years. The percentage of the population under the age of eighteen is 18.1; the percentage over the age of sixty-five is 17.4. This compares with state percentages of 26.1% under 18 and 10.8% over 65. There are 6,613 households in the county. Of the households, 37% include children ages 0-18 years compared to 51% statewide.

##### Income, Unemployment and Poverty

In 2004 Mariposa's median household income was \$37,355, compared to California's household median income of \$49,894. Service jobs, including tourism and retail, provide 42.4% of the jobs in Mariposa County. Much of the employment is seasonal in nature. Unemployment rates vary from 4.1% to 14% depending on the reporting agency and the time of year. U.S. Census 2004 reports 11.0% of the population of Mariposa County is below the federal poverty level. The state average was 13.8%. *Children Now 2007* reported 17% of the children in Mariposa County living in poverty, compared with the state percentage of 19%.

## Education

In 2006-2007, the Mariposa County Unified School District served 2,271 students at seven elementary, one middle school, one comprehensive high school, one continuation high school, and two alternative high schools.

According to the 2000 US Census of the population 25 years and over, 3.7% have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education. 11.2% did not earn a high school diploma. Therefore, approximately 15% of adults in Mariposa County have either dropped out of high school or never attended, 26% have obtained their high school diploma or GED, 38% indicate having attended some college and 20% have a bachelor, graduate or professional degree. There are no universities or colleges located in the county. However, Merced Community College offers adult education classes at the comprehensive high school located in the town of Mariposa.

## **Conditions**

There are four small, distinct population centers (Coulterville-Greeley Hill, Catheys Valley, La Grange/Lake Don Pedro, and El Portal/Yosemite National Park) in the 1,461 square miles of the county. There is no formal communication uniting them. There is no radio, no TV station, a lack of cell phone connectivity, and only one weekly newspaper. The local markets and post offices are the “hubs of communication” for each community. There is limited public transportation. Since private transportation is difficult, some say that “they need to get money together to come to appointments” outside their local area. Because homes are isolated, there is a lack of supportive neighborhoods.

Health and human services are limited in areas outside the town of Mariposa. For years there has been an effort to coordinate the delivery of services such as health, counseling, employment, etc. However, there has been limited success with this effort, resulting in a continuing need for better coordination. One barrier has been the mountainous geography that has made it difficult for service providers, most often from the town of Mariposa, to travel to the outlying areas. Additionally, until recently with a change in leadership, there were leaders who were unwilling to share resources and collaborate.

The influx of newcomers arriving to serve the new UC Merced and retirees from the Bay Area/Southland has impacted the county. The values and expectations of newer residents about services and norms of behavior are clashing with the more traditional, independent, anti-interventionist values of the core population.

Mariposa has a history as “The Gateway to Yosemite.” As such, the community has an investment in projecting a positive image to tourists. As a result, there is an underreporting of incidences of crime, abuse, drug/alcohol problems, gangs, etc. As a new resident who volunteers on the Mt. Crisis "Hot Line" said, "I read the Sheriff's Report in the local paper for years before we retired up here. We thought it was the safest county in the state. Wow, were we surprised!"

Mariposa depends on the tourist industry. Seasonal, low paying employment with irregular work schedules, as well as periodic closures of the road into Yosemite National Park have added to stress and poverty.

Gun and knife ownership are the norm, as hunting is both a recreational choice and survival tactic. "The increased availability of weapons, such as firearms and knives, common in rural households, also increases both the risks and lethality of domestic attacks..." (Safe Start Grant Proposal, 2005)

Drug and alcohol use is prevalent. There are community and local norms favorable to their use, and parental attitudes are permissive. (Friday Night Live Partnership 2004) In 2002, Mariposa County was higher than all other California counties in percentage of drug and alcohol arrests, with 118.9 arrests per 1000, which is 28.4% vs. 12.2% statewide. (CASA grant) In fact, there is such an issue with this that the County Board of Supervisors recently passed an ordinance (Social Host Accountability) that would fine parents who allowed, knowingly or unknowingly, parties to occur for teens at their homes.

In Mariposa's small communities it is often difficult to keep things private. Crimes often go unreported because of the fear of retribution. The unfortunate result is that, in their own minds, children assume that everyone knows of abuse they are suffering, but no one cares to do anything about it. To illustrate: A child has cigarette burns on his arm when he visits his neighbor, who notices the burns and asks about them. The neighbor, fearing the temper of the child's parent, does not report the suspicion of abuse.

### **Assets and Resources**

Several of the conditions above are also our assets and resources. For example, the close community ties noted above can result in a lack of anonymity as well as tremendous outpouring of support for families when needed. Generosity comes from churches, service organizations, merchants, and private individuals for a variety of causes.

Many talented people are attracted to Mariposa County for its rural beauty and lack of modern day conveniences. This is creating a group of people, willing to volunteer their new ideas and services. The recently organized Foothills Mediation Center is a good example. Another is the emerging Community Connections, a seniors group that provides resources such as after school and summer activities for school aged children in Greeley Hill and food distribution for needy families.

The school district has a reputation for responsiveness to student and family needs. County agencies have often used the schools as venues for reaching and serving the population. Schools in town have easy access to agencies which can quickly give help. The SARB (School Attendance Review Board) is an excellent example of Sheriff's Office, Probation, District Attorney, Child Welfare, Mental Health, schools, Indian Council all working together to get students to school and to improve student behavior.

"Everyone serves on everyone else's boards, councils, and committees." This cross-agency responsiveness and knowledge has the potential to create powerful, working partnerships across our county. For instance, the DVCC meets monthly and shares reports on activities related to the mission of reducing violence. The chairs of the Child Abuse Interagency Coordinating Council and the DVCC lead agencies directly involved in the provision of resources for prevention and intervention in cases of Relational

Violence. One of these agencies is Mountain Crisis Services, a local non-profit whose primary goal is to reduce the impact of relational violence in Mariposa County. To that end they provide peer counseling, legal assistance, case management services and emergency shelter. This agency is presently implementing “Project Respect” with funds from the CA Delta grant to reduce bullying in the community.(See Mariposa County Project Respect History in Appendix B). The other agency is Mariposa Safe Families, whose responsibility is to operate the Local Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council.

Unique prevention opportunities exist in Mariposa County due to the rural setting and the proximity of Yosemite National Park. Students are involved in Camp Green Meadows, and the Wawona Pioneer Living Project. Yosemite Institute scholarships are available for weeklong experiences. UC Merced has begun working with local high school students on environmental projects. Many students are involved in Merced River water quality monitoring, watershed research and environmentally focused project-based learning. All of these activities engage students in positive, challenging, healthy learning experiences.

These are some examples of existing prevention programs that exist in the Mariposa Community:

- Project Respect (anti-bully environmental messages and curriculum in schools and community)
- ADAPT (Juvenile Delinquency Prevention program to prevent teen use of alcohol and drugs)
- Safe at Home yearly event (providing families with resources and information)
- First Five funds projects (serving families of children, ages 0-5)
- California Endowment Grant to support Mariposa Safe Families
- Various school-based programs (Prop. 49 After School Programs, Parenting Programs, Friday Night Live)
- School and community counseling programs
- Parks and Recreation after school sports and summer camp programs
- Service organizations provide Sober Grad Night, Disabilities Awareness programs, and family activities.
- California Endowment Peer Advantage anti-bullying project in high schools
- Health Department’s Visiting Nurses Program, SMART START
- Women-Infant-Child (WIC) Program
- Friendly Visitors’ Program, serving seniors
- Mariposa Safe Families Community Link resource and referral
- MMASH (Mariposa Mothers Against School Hazing and Bullying)
- Lushmeadows Playground Program, Acorn Preschool, Kiwanis Preschool, Almost Like Home, Catheys Valley Preschool, Greeley Hill Preschool, Lake Don Pedro Preschool

Appendix D is a comprehensive list of resources and assets as identified by the DVCC in January 2008.

## **Understanding Relational Violence in Our Community**

Information about relational violence comes from two general sources. One is quantitative data or statistical reports and the other is qualitative data or community knowledge. A sophisticated data management system to track the incidence of relational violence does not exist in Mariposa County. While various agencies collect data, it is not coordinated so that trends can be analyzed. The following are pieces of the information available. To get the full scope of the relational violence problem in this community, data other than DV data should be collected and examined.

### Quantitative Data: Health, Alcohol, Child Abuse and Relational Violence

Children Now 2007 reports the following Mariposa statistics:

- 20% (as compared to 16% statewide) of children are diagnosed with asthma
- 78% (as compared to 89% statewide) of children have regular access to a doctor
- 61% (as compared to 80% statewide) of children visited a dentist last year
- 83% (as compared to 71% statewide) of children never exercise
- The number of children in foster care has increased from 30 children in 2002 to 53 children in 2004, to a rate of 14/1000.

According to the Mariposa County Sheriff's Dept 2006, 157 domestic violence reports were taken. It is estimated that in about half of these children were present during the incident. Safe Start 2005 reports 144 DV-related calls to the Mariposa County Sheriff's Department, of which 19 involved weapons and 15 involved fists/feet, resulting in 29 arrests.

Annually, for the past several years, according to the Center for Social Services Research, Mountain Crisis Services (MCS) has provided resources to approximately 250 victims of domestic violence and their children which include: shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, case management and assistance in meeting basic needs.

From 1998 through 2005 Mariposa Child Welfare Services received an average of 373 reports per year of child abuse or neglect, according to The Center for Social Services Research. Mariposa County ranks 8<sup>th</sup> among the 58 California counties for most reports of child abuse or neglect per 1000 children; it has twice the number of reports per 1000 children than the state average. Of the 2005 reports, actual abuse or neglect was confirmed over 52% of the time compared to 11.3% of the time statewide. The rate of substantiated cases of abuse and neglect for Mariposa County has steadily increased from 15.7% in 1998 to the current 52%.

In 2004, the California Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (CDADP) reported that Mariposa County ranked a high 35<sup>th</sup> out of the 58 counties in adult arrests for alcohol violations, an even higher 45<sup>th</sup> in motor vehicle accidents where alcohol was involved, 47<sup>th</sup> in alcohol/drug treatment admissions, and 52<sup>nd</sup> in deaths due to alcohol and drug use. Note: a low rank (e.g., 4<sup>th</sup> of 58) indicates that the county rate is low relative to other

counties in the state and thus, that the population has a low relative level of substance abuse risk for that indicator. According to the Mariposa County Sheriff's Department, during 2005, there were 326 reports filed in which juveniles were identified as the suspects and/or responsible parties. Of those, 153, or 47%, involved alcohol and/or drug related offenses. Note: those 326 reports out of the 4802 youth in our county may indicate that roughly 1/20 youth have interactions with the juvenile justice system.

In 2006 the Mariposa County Sheriffs' Department took 8,277 incident reports; and out of these 2,029 ended in crime reports. Domestic violence cases averaged 13 per month compared to 12 per month in the preceding year. There were 8 burglaries reported per month compared to 12 per month in 2005. Theft reports averaged of 19 per month, down from 22 per month in 2005. Crimes against children remained at the average of 2 cases per month. Assault and battery reports decreased to 13 per month compared to 20 per month in 2005. The Sheriff's Report for Mariposa County, 2006, lists 25 substantiated sex crimes. This includes both adults and teenagers. Nationally, it is estimated that although 1 in 4 women report experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault in their lifetime, roughly 5-10% of these crimes are ever reported to the police and even fewer (roughly 1 in 10) are ever substantiated for a variety of reasons.

The Spring 2007 California Healthy Kids Survey for students in Grade 5 finds that:

- 21 % have ever used alcohol and on 50% feel that alcohol use is very bad for a person's health.
- 38% report being bullied (that is a drop from 43% in 2005) and 59% report feeling safe at school all of the time. (This is up from 52% in 2005, after the first year of "Project Respect" implementation).

The Spring 2007 California Healthy Kids Survey for students in Grades 7-12 finds that:

- 31% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 46% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 69% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders have used alcohol and other drugs at least once in their life. Of those, 12% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 22% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 44% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders have used in the last 30 days. 51% of the 11<sup>th</sup> graders have been drunk, and 29% admit to binge drinking in the last 30 days. These percentages are higher than the California averages at each grade level.
- Only 18% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 37% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 38% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders feel very safe at school. These percentages are higher than the California averages at each grade level.
- 34 % of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 28% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and 25% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders claim to have been harassed at school. 33% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 12% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 8% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders are afraid of being beaten up. 12% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 12% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 20% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders admit to having carried a gun, knife or club to school. These percentages are all higher than the California averages.

The 2005 Mariposa County Anti-Bullying Project Needs Assessment reported that 41% of students in Grades 4-8 had been bullied within the past year. Sixty-five percent report having witnessed someone being bullied during that time frame.

Another telling indicator of relational violence in our county is that, according to the California Attorney General's Office Crime and Violence Prevention Center, elder abuse crime reports in Mariposa County have almost doubled between the years of 2000 to

2006 (from 52 reports to 92). This follows a trend statewide of increasing numbers of reported cases of elder abuse.

This next section on community knowledge is based on focus group discussions and interviews, as well as DVCC planning group meetings.

### Qualitative Data: Community Knowledge of Risk Factors

In 2004, Mountain Crisis Services conducted a strategic planning process in which they identified risk and protective factors for domestic violence in the community. This process involved agency staff, board members and clients. The top risk factors identified included: substance abuse and mental illness, history and experiences of clients (past domestic violence, past child abuse, or in other words the intergenerational cycle of abuse), the culture of Mariposa County (including social norms and the “good old boys network” phenomena), lack of transportation and social isolation (due to geography and choice).

During February and March 2007, six focus group discussions were held with the following: Elder Abuse Planning Conference Committee, Mariposa Safe Families Board, Behavioral Health staff, Shared Leadership Committee, Mariposa County High School students, Mariposa County Unified School District counselors. Participants answered four questions dealing with risk factors. These are reported in their own words in Appendix E.

To summarize:

The answers to the first question, **“Do you think that relational violence is a problem in Mariposa County?”** were overwhelmingly, “Yes.”

To the question **“Who do you think is most affected by relational violence?”** People felt that children are most affected.

In their answers to the question **“Which risk factors are especially prevalent in Mariposa County?”** Respondents listed alcoholism and methamphetamine/drug use, unemployment, elderly population, isolation, fear of reporting crimes, community norms concerning relational violence

When asked, **“Do you think certain areas of the county are more at risk of relational violence, and if so, why,”** the general response was that the underserved areas, namely Coulterville-Greeley Hill and Lake Don Pedro were more at risk. Reasons given for this answer include: isolation, lack of the county services which are located in the town of Mariposa, no cars, and “the rural areas are where you can get away with anything.”

It is significant to note that the answers to this last question have been validated by comments and experiences of law enforcement, county agencies, schools and the general population for years. This part of the county lacks services and has the population most in need of prevention and intervention services. For example, the schools have high levels of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch Program and Special Education Services. There is a high rate of unemployment and underemployment. An informal

report from the Sheriff's Department on their 2006 domestic violence statistics reveals that approximately 38 incidents occurred in North County, which is about 24% of all DV cases for the year. This northern part of the county has approximately 2300 people. To put this in perspective, one quarter of all domestic violence cases in 2006 came from approximately 13% of the county's population.

In 2007, a group composed of North County community leaders identified distrust of county agencies and a sense of cynicism about agency interest in providing consistent services to this area. There is a history of services initiated for a short time and abandoned because of lack of community participation.

### Qualitative Data: Community Knowledge of Protective Factors

The protective factors identified by the DVCC in January 2008 all included the relationships that occur as a result of being in a small rural community. For instance, people within the community watched over each other (although they sometimes turn an eye to domestic violence or child abuse, in general people felt this was a helpful community norm). Furthermore, they felt like the fact that law enforcement or teachers know the community and families, and can respond to needs as such, was a protective factor. Additionally, the discussion of all the community's existing agencies, projects and prevention programs was discussed with the context of protective factors.

It is interesting to note that the Project Respect anti-bullying program was not recognized as a protective factor by any focus group. While the program is at this point primarily implemented in schools, it is becoming clear that additional prevention strategies in multigenerational settings would encourage a wider change in community norms.

Since all focus group identified the greatest area of need for prevention was the north sections of the county, an examination of protective factors that exist in these areas is important. The North County supervisor, Greeley Hill Elementary principal, and several North County informants identified existing protective factors available to families in the North County. However, getting the information about these services to the families most in need has been a problem. These protective factors include:

Availability of neighborhood resources; Having positive relationships/connections: Community Connections, a seniors group, distributes food to the needy and serves Wednesday Hot Meals on Wheels.

Involvement of children with positive peer group activities; Positive youth development: The Northside Communities Coalition provides summer fun activities.

Opportunities and rewards for pro-social community involvement: The Women's Club operates a Thrift Store.

High-quality schools/clear standards and rules: The Mariposa County Unified School District provides high quality schools, clear standards and rules, SARB, Project Respect, and counseling programs.

School motivation/positive attitude toward school: First Five preschools operate in the Greeley Hill and Lake Don Pedro areas.

Presence and involvement of caring, supportive adults: The Proposition 49 After School Program operates during the school year at Greeley Hill Elementary School.

Safe and health-promoting environment: The Public Health Department provides immunization clinics once a month in Coulterville and Greeley Hill. Jessie B. Fremont Hospital recently opened a full time, satellite clinic in Greeley Hill.

Religiosity/valuing involvement in organized religious activities: There are active faith-based organizations in the area.

The Mountain Crisis Services strategic planning process of 2004 identified the same risk and protective factors for the North County.

## **How to Strengthen the Capacity of the Relational Violence Primary Prevention System**

The preponderance of community knowledge on strengthening capacity relayed through the six Spring 2007 focus groups points to the need for education on relational violence. Decreasing social norms that promote general tolerance of relational violence by modeling of respectful behaviors, parenting classes, counseling, communication of information about available services, peer support groups, and safe, open places for intergenerational activities to occur were strategies mentioned. (See Appendix E for specific comments)

Throughout this needs assessment, the paucity and inconsistency of reliable information about the contributing factors and incidence of relational violence was obvious. The evaluation of effectiveness of any future preventive strategies depends on accurate, timely collection and sharing of data by all agencies working in these areas.

### **Conclusions**

In summary, the assessment documents these findings:

- There is a long-standing and generally understood need for primary prevention strategies to reduce the risk factors for relational violence and take advantage of existing protective factors and resources located in Mariposa County. The Project Respect program recently implemented in the schools is a good start to changing social norms that tolerate relational violence, but this program needs to be imbedded in the wider community to a greater extent (community level; universal population).
- The initial focus of prevention efforts should be in the North County, due to increased risk factors including the physical and social isolation, lack of transportation to services, and high incidence of substance abuse and relational violence (individual level; selected population).
- There is a need to assemble demographic data and statistics that are the reporting responsibility of individual Mariposa agencies. Compiling this data and making it available online would help to verify needs for services and form a basis for evaluation of prevention efforts. In addition, building a repository of grant proposals written by the different agencies would increase the knowledge of effective strategies that address common problems and reduce duplication of effort. Having this information readily available would help others prepare grant proposals and reports and, in effect, build the community's capacity to implement prevention efforts (systems capacity; universal population).

## Step 2: Goals and Desired Outcomes

### Preface

The goals and desired outcomes are directly related to the problems (risk factors) and protective factors that exist in Mariposa County. These are the findings, restated from Step 1, which resulted from the analysis of the data reported there.

- There is a long-standing and generally understood need for primary prevention strategies to reduce the risk factors for relational violence and take advantage of existing protective factors and resources located in Mariposa County. The Project Respect program recently implemented in the schools is a good start to changing the social norms that tolerate relational violence, but this program needs to be imbedded in the wider community to a greater extent (community level; universal population).
- The initial focus of prevention efforts should be in the North County, due to increased risk factors including physical and social isolation, lack of transportation to services, and high incidence of substance abuse and relational violence. (individual level; selected population).
- There is a need to assemble demographic data and statistics that are the reporting responsibility of individual Mariposa agencies. Compiling this data and making it available online would help to verify needs for services and form a basis for evaluation of prevention efforts. In addition, building a repository of grant proposals written by the different agencies would increase the knowledge of effective strategies that address common problems and reduce duplication of effort. Having this information readily available would help others prepare grant proposals and reports and in effect build the community's capacity to implement prevention efforts. (systems capacity; universal population)

Steps 2-5 are described below and then again outlined in the Logic Models located in the Appendix of this document.

### Identified Goals

The first goal addresses the universal population, all of Mariposa County:

**To decrease the risk factor and social norms which promote the general tolerance of relational violence.**

The second goal addresses the selected population, the residents of North County:

**Create primary prevention strategies and vehicles that engage north county residents in order to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and change behaviors surrounding issues of relational violence.**

The third, a community level goal, addresses prevention system capacity:

**To increase resources and assets available to help prevent relational violence through broader partnerships.**

The fourth is a prevention system capacity goal:

**To increase the community's capacity to implement prevention efforts through improved data collection, data sharing and resource sharing.**

### **Steps 3: Evidence-Based Strategies**

#### **Goal 1: To decrease the risk factor and social norms which promote the general tolerance of relational violence. (universal population)**

In assessing how to address this goal, we decided that we would continue to refine and expand the strategies and activities that were begun in 2005 through Project Respect. As demonstrated in the Project Respect planning process, we explored strategies that were “evidence-based” in their ability to address the issue of bullying based on the findings of our 2005 Needs Assessment. Because the research links bullying to later incidence of IPV (See Appendix for Bullying Research), we deduced that the strategies we chose for bullying would be “evidence-informed” for IPV.

As illustrated in the CDC Step 3 Manual, “IPV/SV health promotion primary prevention content emphasizes the promotion of strong, stable, and positive relationships between children and adults, among adolescents, and among adults. In regard to positive relationships between adults and children, these relationships are characterized by mutuality, trust and empathy, have been shown to be a protective factor for numerous potential risky behaviors among youth (Rhodes, 2005).” When choosing our strategies for Project Respect, particularly our Individual (“Steps to Respect” curriculum) and Relationship (Professional Development for school staff) level strategies, we attempted to address the above-stated concepts of “health promotion”.

As for our Community Level (Public Awareness Campaign – “Bullying...It’s Just Not Cool”) strategy, although we created this campaign ourselves, therefore classifying it as an “unproven strategy”, we utilized the prevention principles and recognized health promotion social marketing strategies, as well as the assistance of a professional marketing firm, in order to create and implement the best campaign possible. The Campaign prevention principles utilized included: saturation (dosage), appropriate timing (to be launched in unison with other strategies), and skill-based teaching (attempting to tell students what to do vs. what not to do when it comes to bullying). Additionally the campaign focused on changing knowledge, skills and behaviors associated with bullying.

Finally, as for our Societal Level (Administrative Support) strategy, we created this with an attempt to get administrative buy-in for our project, as well as to “institutionalize” or create systems-level changes. We knew we would need this in terms of our Capacity (Step 5) to implement Project Respect, but also in terms of addressing all levels of the Social Ecology, we felt that this was a strategy we could get support for at that time. Since the inception of Project Respect we have been actively trying to effect other systems-level strategies (policies, procedures, etc.), which have been marginally successful to date. These systems-level strategies are evidence-informed- informed by successful prevention system-level changes that have occurred in other health related fields such as tobacco prevention, alcohol and other drug prevention, HIV prevention, etc.

#### **Goal 2: Create primary prevention strategies and vehicles that engage north county residents in order to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and change behaviors surrounding issues of relational violence. (selected population)**

In our CA Delta planning process over the past several years, there were several things that we found lacking in terms of prevention systems capacity. First, as described above, the “silo” effect was keeping us from maximizing our resources and our reach. Second, although there were some prevention programs and strategies in existence, we lacked strategies for community engagement. In other words, we could present the strategies (ie; curriculum for Project Respect), but we were not reaching the numbers of people we needed to in a meaningful way because there were no vehicles to do so and no community buy-in that we required. A good example of this was the Project Respect Parent component. When developing our strategies, we felt that in order to fully reach young people in a comprehensive way, we would have to engage all of the adults in their lives. Although we developed clear strategies for reach school staff, we had difficulty reaching parents. We made presentations available to them, but only achieved a smattering of participation. At the same time this was being assessed, there was a movement afoot to create Family Enrichment Centers (FEC), also known in other communities as Family Resource Centers, in Mariposa County as a way not only to engage community members into services, but as a vehicle for delivering prevention strategies and programs, as well as information and programs to “Enrich” the entire community, not just those individuals who were in need of direct services. One example of the early FEC concept in our community included the addition of a “discovery center” for kids to learn about science, arts, music, and more in an interactive learning environment. Our county lacks a children’s museum or activities that enrich children in this way other than through the school system.

There is a wealth of evidence being generated currently about how family resource centers engage communities and act as vehicles for not only delivering direct services, but also for facilitating programs that help to address the risk and protective factors associated with IPV, as well as a host of other issues. Some of these include: a reduction of isolation and increase in connections, as well as an increase in information and knowledge associated with certain social issues (such as IPV) and related assistance. More importantly, as family resources centers become a known, trusted and welcoming place for all community members to convene, prevention strategies and programs are able to be more effectively delivered on a widespread basis.

Some of the prevention strategies that we hope to administer utilizing the Family Enrichment Centers as a vehicle include, but are not limited to:

- The Second Step Family Curriculum: This strategy will reinforce the knowledge, skills, attitude, behaviors, and beliefs (KABB’s) addressed through the Project Respect program, including the promotion of respectful and healthy relationships. The evidence-based Second-Step curriculum will give young families an understanding of why tolerating bullying has such drastic effects on children’s lives. It will also give them and their children the skills to deal with bullying behavior. In addition, other outreach activities of the FEC will carry the anti-bullying messages and help change the social norms that promote acceptance of relational violence. For IPV, this strategy becomes evidence-informed vs. evidence-based, as there is no current research linking the Second Step curriculum to the prevention of IPV specifically.

- **Parenting Classes:** As outlined in this document, we have defined our scope of IPV to include all forms of relational violence, including child abuse. Parenting classes, although not linked specifically to the prevention of IPV, has been linked to the prevention of child abuse. Furthermore, child abuse and domestic violence are found to co-occur in the literature so one may conclude that giving parents additional skills may reduce stress, which in turn may reduce other risk factors associated with the perpetration of IPV.
- **Community Baby Shower:** By reaching out to pregnant women and new families we hope to reduce some of the risk factors, which are also associated with IPV, by giving these families information, resources, and mostly connections to community agencies and to other families- a connection that reduces stressors and increases assets for the family.
- **Strategies to Engage Fathers:** By implementing strategies that engage fathers, such as Fathers-Sons and Fathers-Daughters Day in the Park, we are hoping to improve relationships fathers have with their kids and helping to role model healthy relationships for youth. This has been preliminarily seen as a prevention strategy for child abuse, although further research is warranted.

**Goal 3: To increase resources and assets available to help prevent relational violence through broader partnerships. (prevention system capacity)**

In developing strategies to address Goal 3, we assessed our internal prevention systems capacity and what was needed to further the creation and implementation of prevention programs in Mariposa County. Some things were evident towards the beginning of our CA Delta planning process. For instance, everyone was operating in a vacuum from one another. There were several prevention programs being implemented, however, there was little knowledge or communication between agencies. Not only did this lead to a redundancy, but the “silo” effect (or compartmentalizing of resources), was not allowing us to maximize resources. In reviewing the risk factors and protective factors for our various issues (IPV/SV, child abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, etc.) it became clear that there was much overlap. In fact, this was one of the first exercises the MCDVCC undertook- was to identify the overlap and to make a decision that given our small community and lack of resources (we determined this based on our Community Knowledge), that our strategies should be “generic” enough to address the most pertinent risk/protective factors instead of just focusing on one issue.

We determined that by increasing our partnerships, we could in turn increase our resources and assets available for prevention programming. Because there is no “evidence” to support that this strategy is a “best practice” in terms of increasing systems capacity, this is an “unproven strategy” by CDC’s definition, but one that we hope to create evidence for over time.

**Goal 4: To increase the community’s capacity to implement prevention efforts through improved data collection, data sharing and resource sharing. (prevention system capacity)**

This system capacity building strategy will hopefully give the community baseline data needed to not only make us more competitive to access funds, but will allow us to better

evaluate prevention efforts. Specific strategies surrounding data collection and dissemination will be explored through the implementation of the Plan.

#### **Step 4: Fit**

As organized in Step 3, Step 4 will be discussed goal by goal, as the contextual issues and compatibility issues, as well as the adaptation required must be looked at separately for each of the goals.

Defined the context in which your strategy will be implemented

#### **Goal 1: To decrease the risk factor and social norms which promote the general tolerance of relational violence. (universal population)**

In general, Project Respect was developed to address IPV with the community context and social norms of Mariposa County in mind. At the time it was originally developed (2005), we explored strategies for addressing domestic violence/IPV more directly. We decided at that time that we would not have the community support needed to address IPV directly due to the social norms in our community which supported IPV. These include mores and norms that are discussed more in detail in Step 1. Therefore, bullying was chosen as a focus area as it is a precursor to IPV. Furthermore, although our Team felt it would be best to focus on youth in terms of primary prevention, we also explored focusing on adults and decided that we may have some resistance to changing norms amongst adults in our community, whereas we would not face this as readily with youth. We knew that we needed to change social norms across the board, but decided that focusing on youth and bullying would be most palatable given the sociopolitical environment. Finally, although we explored focusing on a subset of our population, we have a small community and decided it would be important to take a more universal approach to addressing this issue. As described in Step 1, we have a high degree of homogeneity amongst our population, therefore, we did not feel multiple variations/adaptations to our designed strategies were required.

In terms of organizational contextual issues, we learned early on that the schools have competing priorities, as well as political issues that shape the environment in which we had hoped to birth Project Respect. Some of these include: educational standards that need to be met, as well as competing interests by teachers and staff. Additionally, there has historically been a tension between the District Administration and school site staff, which we had to navigate to ensure that our messages to implement this program were inviting vs. demanding. There is a reluctance on the part of District Administration to “mandate” this Project due to the contextual issues described here, therefore we knew that we needed to create avenues for buy-in. This has made it difficult to ensure the comprehensive delivery of this strategy that we once thought possible.

Over the course of the past few years of Project Respect’s implementation, we have learned many lessons and adapted our strategies to accommodate the lessons learned through a continuous quality improvement process. Some of these adaptations are described below.

### **Adaptations Required**

“Steps to Respect” Curriculum (individual-level): Our original goal was to have the “Steps to Respect” Curriculum delivered in Grades 3-6 throughout the School District (including 6 elementary school). In exploring the curriculum and evidence supporting its effectiveness, we felt that it was compatible enough with our community context that it did not need to be adapted to achieve our desired outcomes. Although we have not made any adaptations to the curriculum, we have had to adapt our method of delivery several times. What we learned is that each school site had a different scope and sequence they wanted for delivery. Some wanted to start in Kindergarten for instance, as well as some middle school teachers felt it would be important to take the curriculum through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. “Steps to Respect” was designed for 3-6 grades and therefore, we had to purchase the complimentary “Second Step” Curriculum for the other grades who demonstrated a willingness to implement. “Second Step” is also an evidence-based curriculum as linked to bullying prevention and delivers the same prevention messages as Project Respect so it was a natural fit. Through ongoing CQI we are still adapting the scope and sequence of curriculum delivery for each school, but are sticking to the Curriculum as written.

Professional Development (relationship-level): The “Steps to Respect” Teacher and Staff Training was meant to be delivered in an 8-hour session. We were given 3 hours during back-to-school training to educate teachers about bullying and motivate them to get involved and an additional 3-hours several months later to unroll the curriculum. Therefore, we had to adapt the training to fall within this timeline, and then find other avenues for providing ongoing information to staff, such as through written formats and periodic discussions in the teacher/staff meetings. Given our restrictions above, the intended strategy required some adaptations to the way it was delivered to make it compatible with the contextual issues we faced.

As described in the CDC manual for Step 4, “the key element found across the literature regarding organizational influences on strategies producing the desired outcomes is that the staff who are to implement the strategy must be well-trained.” For this reason, this was an important strategy in which we tried to cover all the topics addressed through the “Steps to Respect” staff training in as comprehensive a way as possible.

Public Awareness Campaign (community-level): During the development phase of this strategy, we examined several media campaigns that existed for bullying prevention. After a review, we decided that not only did the kids in the campaign not represent the demographics of our populations (therefore, kids may not identify with the kids in the photos), but the messages of the campaigns we explored did not tie in with the messages we wanted to get across in the “Steps to Respect” curriculum and throughout our comprehensive prevention program, Project Respect. Therefore, as described in Step 3, we developed our own campaign to best fit our community. As also described in Step 3, although principles of prevention and best practices for social marketing were adhered to, we adapted this strategy to meet our needs.

Administrative Support (societal-level): As this strategy was being developed, we felt strongly that new policies be enacted to mandate Project Respect as a strategy. The lesson learned however, was that this type of administrative support within the School District would need to be developed over time due to the contextual issues described above. Therefore, we settled on Board resolutions by the School Board and the County

Board of Supervisors (to show this was a community-wide strategy, not just a school-based strategy). Although this strategy was “unproven”, we felt that it was the first step needed to achieving institutional support for our efforts. Since that time the School District has made Project Respect a goal for its 2009-10 Strategic Plan. We hope this showing of administrative support will lead to increased systems-level/societal strategies being implemented.

**Goal 2: Create primary prevention strategies and vehicles that engage north county residents in order to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and change behaviors surrounding issues of relational violence. (selected population)**

In exploring the “Fit” for the development of an FEC to deliver IPV primary prevention strategies, we first explored our community context, assets and needs, as described in Step 1. As described in Step 3, we felt that given our community context, we needed to develop a vehicle for community prevention delivery and engagement. Given our research into family resources centers in other communities (we looked at those being implemented in multiple settings similar to our community), we felt this was the best strategy and fit for Mariposa County. In small rural communities, isolation is a major risk factor. We feel the FEC will create a sense of community and that belonging to any sort of a community group can be a prevention strategy in and of itself. Families that feel connected with others in the community and have a place to go to participate in prevention strategies, for resources and for fun will certainly benefit in many ways.

In addition, as described in Step 3, multiple prevention strategies and programs will be delivered through the FEC. These strategies were also chosen based on our community context, therefore at this time we don’t anticipate the need for adaptations, however, as we begin implementation this may change due to CQI processes.

As described in this document, we intend to begin delivering this strategy in the North part of Mariposa County for several reasons. First, it is our area of greatest need. Second, it is a “microcosm” or insulated enough community that we feel that we will be able to truly measure the effects of the FEC because of residents’ often limited ability to access other resources and programs. Third, there is a community readiness on the North side of the County...a real desire to build a sense of community and have a center for involvement. Finally, given our limited resources, we can start small, create a model for implementation and adapt that model as we move towards implementing this goal in other areas of the County.

**Goal 3: To increase resources and assets available to help prevent relational violence through broader partnerships. (prevention system capacity)**

This goal was developed in order to increase both the community’s and individual organizations’ readiness and capacity to address IPV/SV prevention. Because this strategy is not evidence-based, no adaptations were required. When developing this potential strategy we took into account our community context and organizational contexts. What we decided was that we are a small community, who has a relatively good chance at collaborating successfully because of our limited number of organizations. We also explored community readiness to collaborate and found that the timing was excellent for this. There are several new individuals in leadership positions

over the past year in Mariposa County and these individuals are all focused on building partnerships for collaboration and leveraging purposes. We also explored our community context and state context in terms of funding. We came to the conclusion that resources on a state and federal level are diminishing, and Mariposa County cannot justify having multiple prevention programs in terms of our numbers or degree of need (based on local vs. statewide and national data). Therefore, it behooves the community to collaborate and build partnerships in order to increase our resources and assets available for prevention. Finally, in exploring our social norms in Mariposa County, we decided that it also behooves us to address multiple issues in unison in order to make them more “palatable” for our community. For example, it is difficult for the community to ignore the issue of child abuse or elder abuse. If we can develop strategies to prevent these issues, which also address the risk and protective factors associated with IPV, we will be able to not only maximize resources, but reach those individuals who we may not otherwise reach.

**Goal 4: To increase the community’s capacity to implement prevention efforts through improved data collection, data sharing and resource sharing. (prevention system capacity)**

As with Goal 3, this goal was developed in order to increase both the community’s and individual organizations’ readiness and capacity to address IPV/SV prevention. Because this strategy is not evidence-based, no adaptations are required currently. However, when we begin to explore mechanisms and strategies for improved data collection and sharing, we may find strategies already in existence, which may require adaptations to meet our community need. When developing this potential strategy we took into account our community context and organizational contexts. We learned that many of our organizations that collect data regarding IPV have several common characteristics:

- They are operating with databases that have limited capacity;
- They have staff operating these databases who could use increased training to maximize their ability to use the data;
- They have data collection and data storing processes which may be incompatible; and
- Organizations do not define IPV in the same way, therefore comparing data across organizations is impossible at this point.

Although this does not seem to be unique to our community or our state, it is something we feel we need to address in order to build our capacity to implement successful prevention efforts. Additionally, one of the intended strategies of this goal is to share resources (both data and language for funding proposals). We felt if we could build individual organization’s capacity (or better build the ability for organizations who are partnering on efforts) to access funds and resources, we would be benefitting the community as a whole. In many communities, this may not be possible due to the “competition” for limited resources, however, in exploring community context and the political environment, we felt the timing for this strategy has never been better.

## **Step 5: Capacity**

As of the writing of this document, CDC had not yet released the manual outlining requirements for Step 5, therefore, this is written based on what we have gleaned in initial guiding documents. Step 1 outlines the assets and resources that we determined our community to have based on our assessment. During the planning phase for Step 5, our Team considered not only community capacity, but also organizational capacity, which is described below.

### **Goal 1: To decrease the risk factor and social norms which promote the general tolerance of relational violence. (universal population)**

The tangible resources necessary to implement Project Respect fully have all been purchased through a combination of funding sources over the past three years. Therefore, we have the curriculum and public awareness materials necessary to implement this Goal. Additionally, we have some additional funding resources through CA Delta allocated to staffing to support the coordination of these efforts. The one area that we still need to build capacity in is organizational readiness of the School District staff to implement Project Respect efforts. Although this is administrative support, as described throughout this document, there is still a resistance on the part of some teachers to dedicate time to curriculum delivery in their classrooms. Several strategies are being implemented to build this capacity/buy-in:

- A Lead Teacher model has recently been implemented at each school site. It is our hope that this model (which was identified and suggested by schools themselves through the Project Respect evaluation) will help to motivate, engage, and provide additional support to teachers who are willing to implement the curriculum but may have some reservations.
- Demonstration Project: We have recently secured funding through a partnership with the Behavioral Health Department to implement a comprehensive demonstration project at 2-3 schools sites. Sites will go through an application process to be chosen for this opportunity. Those chosen will be required to participate in 24 hours of staff development training, curriculum delivery at all grade levels, and an evaluation process. These schools will also have a mentoring program implemented on site (being developed, but not yet associated with Project Respect) as an early intervention strategy for those youth who are just getting involved in bullying behavior, as well as a part-time “coach” on staff in order to address issues of bullying seen on the playgrounds, buses or referred to them instead of to the principals/counselors. We hope this demonstration project not only gives us good data on Project Respect, but also motivates other school sites to implement the Project more comprehensively.
- Strategic Planning Goal: As described above, MCUSD recently added Project Respect as a strategic planning goal for 2009-10. School sites will now be required to report to the District what they are achieving with respect to its implementation.

**Goal 2: Create primary prevention strategies and vehicles that engage north county residents in order to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and change behaviors surrounding issues of relational violence. (select population)**

Goal 2 clearly will require the most resources in terms of capacity to implement. Not only does it require the human resources necessary to plan to the FEC and the prevention strategies to be delivered through the FEC, but requires the funds to both hire staff to implement prevention strategies as well as the commitment and partnerships necessary to make this successful. Furthermore, it requires a planning body to do evaluation and CQI to ensure that the goal is achieving its intended outcomes. We feel we have the current capacity to initially launch this Goal. Through the commitment of multiple agencies, under the lead of Mariposa Safe Families, the local child abuse prevention coordinating council, many agencies have contributed resources for this goal. A blend of child abuse prevention funds, alcohol and drug prevention funds, First 5 funds, and others will be utilized to develop the FEC vehicle/structure. CA Delta dollars will be utilized for planning purposes as well as IPV prevention strategy delivery (as described in Step 3). In terms of community readiness, the FEC concept has been discussed in our community for several years and there has always been much buy-in for it. This planning process has helped give the synergy and momentum to make this goal a reality in our community.

**Goal 3: To increase resources and assets available to help prevent relational violence through broader partnerships. (prevention system capacity)**

In terms of community readiness and capacity, we feel there is no better time than now to implement this strategy. What we feel is needed to successfully achieve this goal is primarily commitment and an initial outlay of time to explore these possibilities. As this goal moves forward, we may find that there are barriers, which inhibit our capacity to fully implement it (such as personalities, territorialism, etc.), but we will continue through our CQI process to examine these and address them as they arise. As described in this Step under Goal 1, a new partnership between Project Respect and the Behavioral Health Department has already been formed for the 2009-2010 school year, in which Project Respect will be comprehensively implemented at 2-3 demonstration sites. This will be an excellent case study as we evaluate the effectiveness of this partnership.

**Goal 4: To increase the community's capacity to implement prevention efforts through improved data collection, data sharing and resource sharing. (prevention system capacity)**

This goal may be the most difficult to achieve in terms of capacity. It will not only require the buy-in of each organization that collects relational violence data to look internally at their system capacity, but may require a broad shift in the way organizations do business. Furthermore, it may end up being a very costly endeavor if we learn that new data systems are necessary in the future. We have set long-term timelines for this strategy as we know this will require "baby steps" to fully assess how to be successful in this goal. One strategy we are exploring is finding funding as a collaborative (MCDVCC) to have a consultant assess our current system capacity and make recommendations surrounding this issue. At this point we do not have the capacity to fully achieve this goal, but are working towards developing it.



## Step 6: Prevention Plan - Narrative

The primary prevention plan envisioned for Mariposa County has two interrelated key goals and two supporting goals, represented in the four logic models attached. They are the result of the planning process and activities undertaken by the Mariposa County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, the Mariposa County School District, the Project Respect Committee, Mariposa County Safe Families, Mt. Crisis Services and members of the North County Task Force. Under Project Respect, the school district launched a major effort to reduce the incidences of bullying behavior. The effort was based on research indicating that this behavior is a precursor to intimate partner violence as well as a reflection of community tolerance of relational violence. Another effort has been to develop a Family Resource Center in the North County. All of these efforts have a common vision: a community which no longer tolerates relational violence. It is time to change the social norms of Mariposa County.

The following is a narrative which includes the more significant details of the logic models for the universal and selected populations, and the prevention system capacity goals. The four major goals with activities, expected outcomes, anticipated impacts and evaluations give direction to the community for the next several years.

The universal population, the citizens of Mariposa County, is addressed in the **first goal**. It is *to decrease the risk factor and social norms which promote the general tolerance of relational violence*.

To date, the activities to accomplish this goal have focused on the school district. For the past two years Project Respect has been implemented in the schools, using banners, school newsletter announcements, Second Step and Steps to Respect curriculum, and staff training. Although the results to date have been fairly successful in terms of increased awareness and knowledge, as well as slight increases in intentionality around bullying prevention/intervention, more needs to be done. The activities will be to continue to deliver the Steps to Respect and Second Step curriculum, protocol development and ongoing training for administrators, teachers and classified employees at all school sites. In addition, 2-3 demonstration school sites will participate in a more comprehensive Project Respect effort (all students will receive curriculum, all staff will receive extensive training, etc.) to measure effectiveness when the Project is implemented as it was originally intended. There will be a continuing effort to involve parents and the community via public awareness campaigns and presentations. The curriculum will be delivered in the Family Enrichment Center as part of the activities for families with young children or for parents referred by school personnel. (See Mariposa County Project Respect Program Evaluation 2008.)

Expected outcomes are increased student knowledge of skills to deal with bullying and increased student motivation to utilize Steps to Respect skills. It is anticipated that school staff will have increased intervention skills and implement prevention strategies and activities in their classrooms. The community will have increased recognition of bullying behaviors, have access to resources for intervention and most importantly, there will be an increase in positive outcomes for bullies and victims. These outcomes will show a 50% improvement from the 2008 data using pre-post tests, surveys, and other data.

The expected impacts are decreased incidence of bullying and improved outcomes for victims of bullying, decreased community acceptance of bullying behaviors and increased awareness of cause and effect.

Success in achieving the goal and the expected impacts will be evaluated using a variety of tools such as pre-posts tests, surveys, Healthy Kids data, Aeries data, Family Enrichment Center activity logs, and interviews with school staff whose job it is to deal with bullying and its results -- counselors, principals, vice principals.

The **second goal** addresses the selected population: the residents of North County. It is *to create primary prevention strategies and vehicles that engage north county residents in order to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and change behaviors surrounding issues of relational violence.*

The activities to accomplish this goal are being undertaken by the DVCC, Mariposa Safe Families, Mountain Crisis Services, the Shared Leadership parent group and the North County Family Enrichment Center Task Force. Many of these activities are the same as the ones listed in goal two. Building the collaborative effort to support the creation of the Family Enrichment Center is key to realizing the vision of a community that no longer tolerates relational violence.

The activities specific to the creation of the FEC are selecting and training of staff, determining target population(s) and identifying appropriate messages, determining strategies and timelines, and planning, promoting and implementing prevention activities.

Once the vehicle is established for prevention activity delivery, a number of programs will be implemented with the goals of increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors surrounding relational violence. Some of these programs will include: a) delivery of the Second Step Family Curriculum; b) parenting classes which assist parents to develop the skills and resources necessary to teach their children respect and non-violent behaviors; c) a community baby shower, for pregnant and parenting mothers in order to give them information and access to resources, thereby increasing their knowledge of healthy parenting and healthy relationships, decreasing social isolation, increasing connectivity, etc; d) Father Engagement Strategies: the development of ongoing activities to encourage fathers to take a more active role in their children's lives; e) Celebrating Families: a comprehensive curriculum for families in recovery to aid the entire family in maintaining healthy relationships, while in recovery. Other strategies are currently being researched and will be adapted and implemented as funds and community needs/desires allow.

Some of the outputs expected are a calendar of prevention programs delivered that reflect community needs, hired and trained staff and a marketing and outreach plan.

These outcomes are expected to be in place by 2010: (1) Prevention strategies will be implemented through efforts of schools, Family Enrichment Center, and Mariposa agencies. (2) Responsive and core services that honor stakeholders and insure accessibility through appropriate delivery strategies will be available in at least one location the North County. (3) A resource development and funding plan will be created

and (4) a marketing and outreach plan will be developed and implemented. It is anticipated that by 2010, 25% more North County residents will access prevention activities, information and resources.

The expected impact is that, by January 2010, a viable and replicable Family Enrichment Center will be established which provides activities and programs to reduce isolation and other risk factors that contribute to the high level of relational violence in North County.

Evaluation will be the same as listed above for goal two.

Prevention system capacity at the community level is addressed in the **third goal**. It is *to increase resources and assets available to help prevent relational violence through broader partnerships*.

Goal Three activities rely on the input provided and resources represented by the DVCC. This and other councils/advisory groups will be used to brainstorm initial collaboration possibilities. Relationships with current and potential resources will be established and nurtured. New partnerships for the provision of prevention strategies will be forged. Successful efforts will be promoted to encourage new partnerships and funding for implementing collaborative efforts will be developed. A collaborative effort in providing coordinated programs in the Family Enrichment Center settings is anticipated.

Expected outcomes: By January 2009 responsive and core prevention strategies that honor stakeholders and insure accessibility through appropriate delivery strategies will be in place. There will be documents listing the partners and agencies providing programs in the North County Family Enrichment Center with at least two successful grants funding the prevention efforts.

Expected impacts: By 2010 (1) multi-agency collaboration for the funding and implementation of prevention programs will be in place backed up by a network that detects and responds to relational violence quickly and (2) a viable and replicable Family Enrichment Center, which provides activities and programs to reduce the isolation and address other risk factors, will be established in the North County.

The evaluation process will measure the number of prevention activities and core services in place in the Center, the number of collaborating agencies, the number of MOUs created, and the number of funded grants. The tools to be used are activity logs, meeting minutes, agency reports and grant award letters.

The **fourth goal** also addresses prevention system capacity. It is *to increase the community's capacity to implement prevention efforts through improved data collection, data sharing and resource sharing*.

This goal grew out of the frustrations in finding pertinent, reliable data about the incidences of crime, abuse, and demographics while completing Section I of this document. Strategies to solve this problem will greatly help all of the county agencies and will facilitate collaboration between them. Additionally, reliable and consistent data will be able to be utilized as a baseline for measuring program strategies and efforts.

The activities include identifying data to be collected and sources; selecting data gathering tools that meet needs of agencies dealing with relational violence; training agency personnel to use the data reporting tool(s); encouraging sharing of data and developing a process for submitting data and using the Community Link to store, catalogue and disseminate data collected. Additionally, agencies will be given a vehicle and encouragement for sharing proposal narratives in order to reduce duplication of efforts and advance the capacity of all agencies to bring funds into the community for IPV prevention efforts.

The output will be useful tools for collecting and disseminating data and the expected outcome will be at least 75% of agencies collecting data relevant to relational violence will enter that data on Community Link or another such easily accessible site.

The expected impact that, is by 2013, an easily accessible system of collection data will verify the need for services and form a basis for evaluation of prevention efforts. In addition, the knowledge of effective strategies that address common problems and reduce duplication of effort will be increased. With this improved and readily available information, the preparation of grant proposals and reports will be simplified.

Evaluation tools will be the web site use log and surveys on the quality and usefulness of the information available.

### **Rationale for Supporting the Establishment of Family Enrichment Centers**

There is a strong relationship between the goals numbers one and two. As the activities outlined under the first goal have been implemented, it has become evident that a stronger effort is needed to inform and educate in the community. The socio-ecological model of prevention that has been the basis for the development of Project Respect activities supports addressing bullying at all levels and in multiple venues. To date Project Respect has had a difficult time reaching parents and community members. In part, this may be because of our limited time and resources. In another part, however, the schools have traditionally had a difficult time engaging parents in activities and the schools have been our primary vehicles for Project Respect delivery thus far. Using the Family Enrichment Centers to deliver the Project Respect curriculum and other prevention programs targeting relational violence will augment the existing effort in the schools. We feel the FEC's will have better success with engaging families because they not only will offer an opportunity for community connections and reduce isolation, which is a prevention strategy in and of itself for IPV, but will serve as a vehicle for community engagement, as evidenced through research.

“Evolving research and evaluation indicate that family resource centers (the Family Enrichment Center) are promising strategies for addressing such issues as: child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, family violence, family instability, juvenile violence and crime, welfare to work/employment, community unity, family isolation, family and community health and educational outcomes.” *The Family Resource Centers: Vehicles for Change, 2000* . A two-year study of the Family Resource Centers in Santa Cruz County found marked increases in community connectedness and number of children in

homes free of violence as well as a decrease in the malfunction of family systems. *First 5 California State Conference, May 30, 2007*

The effort to develop an FEC in the remote, isolated part of Mariposa, the North County area, was based on the information gained in the needs assessment described in Section 1. The creation of a North County FEC will be the model for other Centers envisioned for Mariposa County. The guiding principle for this work is the belief that the community members know what is needed and what will work. The “we know best” attitude by well-meaning agency personnel has not worked, particularly in this part of the County.

Therefore, the Task Force, a group of committed residents of the North County, was developed to clearly identify the community needs. This group consists of community leaders who participate in leaderless meetings using an agenda developed together. They have been trained on the *Strategies* process and concepts, and have taken responsibility to insure that the planning for an FEC reflect their communal knowledge. To create interest in and enthusiasm for the new FEC, they have planned and conducted family-oriented events (Safe at Home fair, Friday night family movie, Community Baby Shower) which have met with a high level of success. These engagement events will become a regular part of the outreach activities, which will reduce isolation and give families a place to learn and practice treating each other with respect.

### **Steps 7-10**

Steps 7-10 of this Plan will be completed during the next contract period.