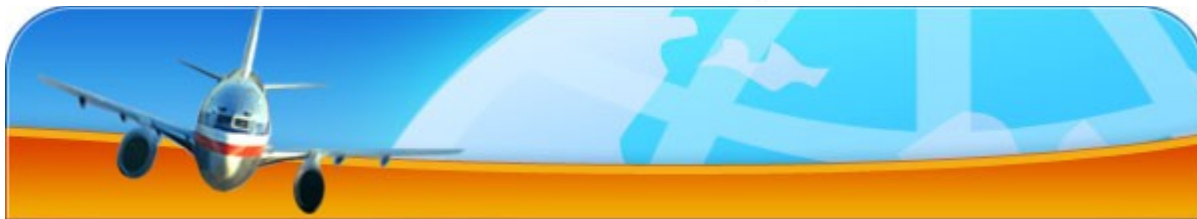




Emerge

Counseling and Education to Stop Domestic Violence



E-mail Newsletter

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At Emerge, we provide information on ending domestic violence to both a national and international audience. In this issue we present an article David Adams wrote for [NGO News](#) that speaks to the international community. NGO News is distributed to over 42,000 subscribers around the world.

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Promoting Men's Responsibility for Violence Against Women: Building an International Community

By David Adams, Emerge Co-Director

Introduction

A growing response to violence toward women in many nations has been the development of education programs for men who abuse their intimate partners. These programs provide opportunities for men to learn respectful ways of treating their partners. Recently, some programs have also provided education to help abusive men become more





responsible fathers.

A Unique Partnership

Violence against women is truly an international phenomenon. According to the first-ever study of intimate partner violence by the World Health Organization, domestic violence is the leading form of violence in women's lives. (WHO, 2006). The study also documents the devastating impact of domestic violence on women's lives, as well as the lack of resources and legal remedies for battered women. Finally, the study calls for "comprehensive violence prevention programmes to address domestic violence, alongside other types of violence". Part of that comprehensive response should be the establishment of abuser education programs so that the burden of change does not continue to rest on victims. While victim support services exist, in some form, in the most nations, abuser education programs are far more rare. While many such programs exist in North America, Europe and Australia, many nations in South America, Asia and Africa have none. Founded in 1977 as the world's first abuser education program, Emerge seeks to assist in the development of such programs worldwide. Emerge believes that emergency shelter and advocacy for battered women are essential, and often life saving services. But for 30 years now, Emerge has also argued that domestic violence should not continued to be cast as "a woman's issue" but rather as an issue of male violence. There should be expectations for abusive men to stop their abuse, and beyond that, opportunities for them to learn respect for their intimate partners. According to Emerge's founders, "domestic violence occurs within a context of male dominance over women; one that includes social, familial, institutional and economic spheres. In male-female interpersonal relations, male dominance is shaped by traditional sex roles in which men come to expect subservience and deference from women. Sexism often intermeshes with other forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and heterosexism, all of which serve to reinforce hierarchical divisions and to devalue categories of people" (Adams & Cayouette, 2002)



Margaret Wong, Executive Director of Harmony House, the first battered women's program in Hong Kong, founded in 1985, also supports the approach of expecting change from battering men. Putting this belief to practice, Harmony House created a hot line for abusive men in 2000, and with the help of Emerge, one of Hong Kong's first batterer intervention programs in 2001. Ms. Wong says, "Going into our eighth year of introducing a comprehensive batterer intervention program based on the Emerge Model, we are increasingly convinced that the approach which we have adopted - to protect victims AND at the same time to provide opportunities for batterers to change their abusive behavior - is important and rewarding. Women of our shelter tell us that they want us to help their partners to change." (personal communication, January 2008)

Due to the terms of a unique cross cultural partnership, Emerge and Harmony House have been working together to adapt the Emerge model to Chinese culture. The terms of the agreement call for Emerge to visit Hong Kong every two years to review their progress and to update them on the Emerge model in America. Harmony House's abuser education program, called The Third Path, has been successful in helping abusive men to overcome their violence and to accept more equalitarian values in their relationships. Most recently, Emerge also consulted with Harmony House on the development of a parenting education program that is specifically designed for men with histories of domestic violence.



Caring Dads Parenting Education Model: Collaboration for

Program Development on Three Continents

Since 2002, Emerge has been piloting the Caring Dads curriculum developed by the Changing Ways batterer intervention program in London Ontario, Canada. Emerge, Changing Ways and Harmony House are part of a growing international community that helps abusive men to become more responsible partners and parents, and in the process, become more positive role models for their children. This community has now expanded to Great Britain and Sweden. Caring Dads groups are now available in two places in the United Kingdom: London Probation, which is part of the National Probation Service of England, as well as at the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in Cardiff, Wales. In Sweden, Caring Dads groups are provided Social Services of Norrtälje City, northwest of Stockholm, according to Program Director Lars Naumburg.



Describing the origins of the Caring Dads model, Tim Kelly, who is Executive Director of Changing Ways, a batterer intervention program, says, "We found that in our current systems of intervention, fathers were not being held accountable for their abusive actions. Instead, women and children were being left to pick up the pieces. While holding the abuser responsible for what they have done is a primary activity of Caring Dads work, there is an equally important activity in part of the work is creating a systemic response that holds service providers and interveners accountable for their actions when dealing with the abuser. One of the biggest benefits to the work that we are experiencing is working with Child Protective Services and getting the people in that system to even see these men and begin to hold them responsible for being safe around their children and their children's mother instead of unnecessarily punishing her for his behaviour." (Scott, et al, 2006) The Caring Dads curriculum was inspired when Changing Ways began to see a second generation of abusers, comprised of the sons of abusive men. By providing parenting education, Changing Ways, Emerge, Harmony House, London Probation, NSPCC of Wales, and Social Services of Norrtälje City seek to help these men become better fathers who will set a more positive example for their own sons so that the intergenerational cycle of violence is broken. We look forward to hearing about similar efforts in other countries.



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WHO (2006)

Pictured Above: Staff of Emerge and Harmony House, including (left to right) Heidi Chiu, Heidi Ip, Joseph Wong, Margaret Wong (Harmony House Director), Kenneth Ou, Ted German (Emerge Training Director), David Adams (Emerge Co-Director), Wallace Tsand, , Wai-hung Suen, Joanna Lai, Tammy Chiu and Dorothy Wong

Feel free to contact us with any questions. We can be reached at 617-547-9879.

Sincerely,

**Emerge:
Counseling & Education to Stop Domestic Violence**

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