



Bill Kaye, Project Coordinator

Lethbridge Domestic Violence Action Team (DVAT)

Theme: Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

DVAT is a result of a number of individuals working in the area of domestic violence coming together to develop a collaborative approach in responding to domestic violence. Based on the principle that our community would not tolerate family violence, this partnership of more than ten agencies and organizations meets to reflect on and strengthen the services, support and information each delivers in order to provide an effectively coordinated response to family violence in our community.

Critical Elements

- Based on the Duluth model of community collaboration.
- It is a free-standing committee that is not connected to the local domestic violence court, although partners in court identify issues for DVAT to work on.
- The group generally works on resolving process issues, areas of tension between systems, and systemic barriers.
- In resolving these issues, DVAT members seek victims' feedback and suggestions.
- It is critical that decision makers are present at the table to ensure that issues are dealt with right away.
- It is important not to let the committee get too large (committee currently includes 14 members); and to limit it to essential people only (e.g., those directly delivering services)
- Partners around the table include police, probation, crown, domestic violence treatment providers, victims service, health services, child family services and shelters. Domestic violence court team is a subset of this group and can support implementation of decisions that are made at DVAT table.
- Documentation and processes are in place to guide the work, clarify partner responsibilities and ensure accountability to each other.
- Offender accountability is the key in the process, as is offender treatment.