

Crisis Connection

Marriage/Couples Counseling v. Men's BIP

"In the initial stages of case management where allegations of domestic violence are present, the following activities are **never recommended**:

- **Couples or family counseling;**
- **Court or divorce mediation;**
- **Visitation arrangements that endanger the victim and children or are in conflict with a protective or custody order;**
- **Anger management classes.**

Participation in these types of services can increase risks to victims and their children. **Couples counseling and divorce mediation is predicated on the assumption that partners who possess equal amounts of power can negotiate a resolution. In abusive relationships, however, there is an unequal balance of power between victims and perpetrators as well as a fear of physical violence or coercive attacks when the abuser feels challenged. Couples counseling or divorce mediation is acceptable only when the victim feels equally empowered and is not afraid that his or her participation will result in retaliation by the abuser.** Anger management classes are not appropriate because they do not focus on the overarching patterns of behavior common in abusive relationships. In addition, anger management classes are not effective in holding perpetrators accountable because it implies that they only have a problem with "managing" their anger."

Child Welfare Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov

Individual counseling and/or Men's Batterers' Intervention Program and Women's Support Group through Crisis Connection are much safer and effective options where coercive and/or violent behaviors are present.

Crisis Connection
24-Hour Hotline
1.800.245.4580
www.crisisconnectioninc.org