

NonviolenceWorks

The board of Men Engaged in Nonviolence recently resolved to change the organization's name to "NonviolenceWorks (NVW)."

The reason is simple. Following the successful launch of Women in Nonviolence (WIN), it makes little sense to operate a program for women and girls under the auspices of a men's organization. We need a name which reflects gender equality, and which will flexibly encompass the full spectrum of nonviolence work going forward.

Operationally, nothing has changed. Our men's programs (men-to-boys mentorship, boys' support groups and Fatherhood) will continue as the TaosMEN programs. TaosWIN will continue to conduct mentorship and support groups for girls. When the time is right, a Motherhood program may be added as well.

Many people don't realize that NVW also conducts gender-inclusive programs for both children and adults. Nonviolence Education in the schools typically takes place in a coeducational classroom setting. GRIP (Gang Reduction is Powerful) is a prime example, serving hundreds of boys and girls in 2nd and 5th grade.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and The Art of Nonviolence are other examples of educational services for both boys and girls.

There are several services which are available for both men and women. Supervised visitation allows an estranged parent to visit his or her child in a safe, supervised setting. Parenting classes and couples and family counseling clearly involve both sexes, as will the Workforce Development program we hope to implement in 2012.

NonviolenceWorks is intent on addressing the very great need for gender reconciliation and cooperation. Men and women must be able to trust each other and work for the good of the family and the community. The most obvious beneficiaries will be our children, who suffer the most when parents are estranged or in conflict.



Placing the MEN and WIN programs on an equal footing is an important step. This is not merely symbolic: only when men and women function as equals can they become true partners. Only through mutual respect can they build healthy relationships. Only by putting their children's wellbeing first can estranged mothers and fathers successfully co-parent.

NonviolenceWorks is serious about modeling gender equality and cooperation within its own organization. Women currently occupy positions at all levels of NVW – mentors, staff, interns, administration and board of directors. It will take time for an organization which started out as a men's project to fully rebalance itself – but we look forward to it.

We are happy with the name NonviolenceWorks, because it says it all. Nonviolence does indeed work – further, it calls us all to get to work in order to make our community the safe and functional place we want it to be. We invite you to step up and help – as a mentor, a volunteer, a donor, or a prospective board member.

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