



European  
Network

## NATIONAL REPORT / FINLAND

### 1) Organisation / programme

Three organisations are representing Finland at this network collaboration. The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters's Jussi-työ (Jussi-work) in Helsinki from the Helsinki Shelter registered association, Lyömätön Linja in Espoo and Jyväskylä's Model, crises center Mobile, Jyväskylä.

Men who get in contact with Jussi-työ have either used violence or want to preempt its use. Organisations who refer men to Jussi-työ are, amongst others, the shelter, police, child welfare and family counselling services. The violence used by the man is discussed at Jussi-työ. By assessing ones personal circumstances questions and models of action are seeked and with its help the client can stop using violence in his family.

Jussi-työ was founded in 1994. Now the work has spread to ten other regions in and it is the most extensive form of work offered to perpetrators of violence in Finland. Jussi-työ, together with the shelter and open care work, seeks to help families with the aid of an integrated model of work. This means that each family member is offered help individually, but simultaneously. Professionals working with the man, woman and children exchange information amongst each other and, if necessary, combine forces, if there are no risks to safety involved. Integrated work models have proved to work, especially if the family decides to continue living together despite the violence that has taken place. On the other hand the model does work successfully with families who end up separating. The violent behaviour of the man hinders work regarding separation. If both adult parties have their own workers here too, the man and woman can be helped to see the issues to be agreed regarding separation in a more neutral light. Separation can be processed more safely. The results of work are assessed after six months.

The registered non-profit association **Lyömätön Linja Espoossa** was founded in 1979. The canonical purpose of the association is to give support to those who are victims of mental and physical domestic violence and to those who have seen domestic violence in their home.

Lyömätön Linja -service for the perpetrators launched at 1993 in Espoo and was the first service for the perpetrators in Finland. Our domestic violence intervention programme includes both individual counseling and peer group sessions. One attends the peer group 15 times once a week. The peer group can only be joined via individual meetings. Evaluation of the violent behavior and follow-up are ongoing during the counseling. Our intervention programme lasts approximately one - one and half years. A follow-up is also carried out after completing the intervention programme, usually in 6 months.

Miehen Linja for immigrant men started at 2005. Miehen Linja -service provides both preventive work and intervention programme for domestic violence perpetrators. Miehen Linja also organizes social integration groups. (Lyömätön Linja translates roughly as "The Unbeatable Way" and Miehen Linja as "The Men's Way".)

A part of our intervention programme is service guidance to the clients' family members. We guide our clients' spouses or other family members to find suitable services for them. Safety of the victim and the children is the most important goal in our service.

**Jyväskylä model.** In 1995, in the city of Jyväskylä, Finland, local collaboration began between two bodies, namely the crisis center Mobile, and the Psychotherapy Training and Research Center of the University of Jyväskylä. This co-operation involves social and welfare agencies and also the police.

It aims at preventing and treating domestic and partner violence by offering a range of services to violent clients, victims, and witnesses of violence. The Jyväskylä model has been influenced by a model developed within a Norwegian research and treatment center; "Alternative to Violence" (Alternativ til Vold, ATV)

The clients usually reach the crisis center by contacting the center themselves, following a contact made by their partner, or guidance from a local network agency. In the individual intervention phase for perpetrators usually comprises five meetings with a crisis center worker, the main activities involve clients describing the violence they have used, considering ways of avoiding further abusive behavior, and evaluating their willingness to commit to a minimum of fifteen group meetings at the Psychotherapy Training and Research Center.

The Jyväskylä model of intervention among partner-violent men (see Holma et al., 2006) does not draw on any one mode of intervention; rather, it employs ideas from both structured psycho-educational methods and supportive, individual needs-focused therapy approaches.

The Jyväskylä model uses no manual, no pre-structured contents, and no fixed intervention techniques. Instead, the principles are flexibly deployed, with adaptation to group conversations in which client activity is encouraged.

## **2) Country**

In Finland corrective and preemptive work with those using violence in an intimate relationship is under several different organisations. The work is carried out mostly by NGO's. Examples are The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters Jussi-työ, the registered association Lyömätön Linja Espoossa, crises center Mobile in Jyväskylä, the registered association Miessakit's Lyömätön Linja in Helsinki, Settlement Society Naapuri's domestic violence clinic amongst others. Those workers working solely with men total an estimate of 30. In addition, domestic violence is dealt with child welfare, couple- and family counselling centres, church's domestic affairs counselling centres, youth work, substance abuse work and prisons for example.

The majority of the NGO's services are financed Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) and services provided are mainly free of charge to clients.

In the past four years, there have been few amendments to Finnish laws linked to intimate partner violence. The most notable ones are linked to changes in child welfare laws. For example, social and healthcare workers and other professionals are now obliged to make a preemptive notification to child welfare about an unborn child when they are aware that the child will not be able to be sent home from the maternity hospital without the aid of child welfare's supportive work. Another significant change is regarding the previously mentioned professionals obligation to notify the police as well as child welfare, if they have reason to suspect sexual crime towards a minor. With these and other changes to child welfare laws the aim is to expand the obligation to notify child welfare regarding crimes against children and their neglect. The aim is that the children would receive help quicker. In part this aim has already been met, but at the same time the increased obligation to notify child welfare has in places backlogged child welfare centres.

### 3) Best practices

**Jussi-työ®** won the national crime prevention competition in 2013. Jussi-työ's aim is to support men in finding non-violent resolutions to problems, as well as to help men live securely with themselves and those close to them. In addition, family orientated work in shelters is being developed. From 1994 the venture has spread to ten cities which show its ability to be reproduced. Clients have found it to be helpful. They get experiences of taking steps towards non-violent behavior, improvement in self control, subsiding of family crises and being part of a helping organisation. Violence was found to have reduced significantly according to the 2010 research carried out by Jussi-työ (crime prevention council's bulletin 2.10.2013).

For Jussi-työ to expand to a new region, a trained worker is needed who will be familiarised by a more experienced Jussi-työ worker. In addition, they have to have the opportunity of consulting and guidance as well as working alongside other professionals working in the field of domestic violence. A client at Helsinki's Jussi-työ is obliged to give permission to professionals working with the family to collaborate and exchange information.

**Lyömätön Linja Espoossa's** Intervention programme for the perpetrators is one of the best practices recommended by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs as is the collaboration model with the Police.

Since 2001 Lyömätön Linja has been collaborating with the Espoo Police Department. Police gives the suspect information about the domestic violence intervention programme and then asks his permission to forward his contact info to Lyömätön Linja. They then contact the potential client and agree on starting the counseling with him. The aim of the collaboration is to prevent the perpetrators repeating the crimes of domestic violence and to give psychosocial support to the perpetrator. One's participation to the Intervention programme is voluntary.

There has been long term research activities concerning perpetratorprogramme in Jyväskylä. The results have been published in several international and domestic scientific journals.

#### 4) Needs and recommendations

- Professionals working with perpetrators of violence do not have identical training or educational backgrounds. This can also be seen in the slightly differing approaches and ways of working. For this reason arranging collaborations, training days and work meetings are important from the view point of sharing information and experiences.
- Financing is difficult to organise. Numerous worker's funding is dependent solely on the Slot Machine Association (RAY). Politically there is a will to support preemptive and corrective intimate partner violence work, but is not reflected financially.
- More research is necessary regarding results and quality of work.
- A nationwide information bank is necessary from where clients can easily access information on the help available in different regions.
- Despite the popularity of integrated approaches to working with the man, woman and children, training and sharing of information more openly amongst workers (those working with the man, woman, children) is still needed.
- Although therapeutic group work has had positive experiences, its representation in violence work is limited. Developing group work would require a clearer structure as well as time and financial investment. It would also be good to compare the affects of group work based on various thought processes.
- In intimate partner violence the child's point of view and support may still be left in the background of helping adults. For this reason, various work places should have their own professional child worker, who would work along side those working with adults.
- Violence used by women towards her children or her partner is underestimated. Help offered to female perpetrators of violence should be developed hand in hand with the help offered to male perpetrators.
- Preemptive, information on intimate partner violence, preventing it and its consequences should systematically be made more available through public institutions. For example in playschool and school teacher training, social and healthcare training, the church's youth work e.g. confirmation classes, the army and prenatal courses. Intimate partner violence often starts or escalates when the child is born or soon after that.
- Multiculturalism brings added challenges to intimate partner violence work. For this reason there should be more education about cultural sensitivity approaches and workers in this field from various different cultural backgrounds.

This report has been collected by Jussi-worker **Matti Kupila** with a help of **Salla Hyvärinen** and **Juha Holma**.

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