

**Batterer Intervention Program Advisory Board**  
**BIP Program Evaluation Study Report**  
**February 2016**

**Overview**

Nationally, research repeatedly indicates that domestic violence recidivism rates are reduced for those who complete a batterer intervention program (BIP), although the studies vary significantly in their findings from program to program, state to state<sup>1</sup>. These findings, along with the desire to understand the impact of the certification of Kansas BIPs which began in 2012, led to an interest by the Kansas Attorney General's BIP Advisory Board (BIP Advisory Board) in determining the effectiveness of our state certified BIPs. In 2014, the BIP Advisory Board set a goal to initiate a preliminary study on the effectiveness of Kansas BIPs. A BIP Advisory Board research subcommittee was formed to achieve this goal. This report describes the results of those efforts. This study was not funded, and is not an in-depth research study. It is the hope of this BIP Advisory Board that this preliminary study and its findings will encourage more in-depth research in the future.

**Description of the Study**

The research subcommittee selected six (6) certified batterer intervention programs across the state to participate in this study out of the 31 certified programs operating at the time of the study. The committee made the selections from a pool of programs that have been practicing and certified by the Office of the Attorney General for at least 2 years. These specific programs were also selected based on geographic diversity, so that both urban and rural programs were included.

The six certified BIPs agreed to provide the names and completion dates for the individuals who had completed their program in calendar year 2012. It was determined that the completers from 2012 would make the most suitable group to study at this time because it allowed data collection on behaviors of participants for a minimum of 2 years post-program completion. Six court services officers who work in the judicial districts served by the respective BIPs agreed to review the criminal history data available to them and report back to the Office of Judicial Administration staff with the data.

The court service officers were requested to review the records for the individuals and identify whether any "re-offenses" had occurred as documented in the individuals' criminal history records. The officers reviewed the criminal history documentation for each individual from the date of BIP completion until the time they began their research in April 2015. The court service officers reviewed criminal history information that was available to them via the National Crime Information Computer and Kansas Criminal Justice Information System. (Say more here about the limits of the data available?) For the purpose of this study, a "re-offense" was defined as a new arrest, new charge, or new protection order filing. Additionally, the court services officers also identified whether the offenses were felony, misdemeanor, or "person" crimes.

The following information details the specific data that was gathered for each individual:

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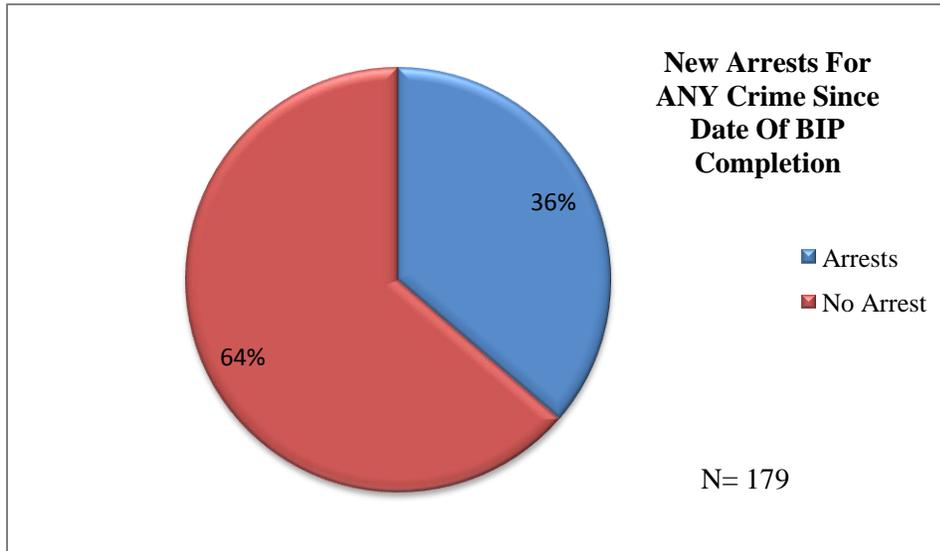
- No results returned
- Arrests
  - Felony
  - Misdemeanor
  - Violation of a protection order
- Charges
  - Felony
  - Misdemeanor
  - “Person” crime
  - Violation of a protection order
- Convictions
  - Felony
  - Misdemeanor
  - “Person” crime
  - Violation of a protection order
- New Protection Order filings
  - Temporary
  - Final
  - Out of State

The information that was gathered was then totaled and this aggregate data was provided to the Office of the Attorney General’s BIP staff for review and analysis. No identifying information with regard to any individual’s criminal history information was provided to the BIP staff or individuals who do not have the appropriate permissions to receive this information. The raw data will be maintained by the Office of Judicial Administration.

## Results

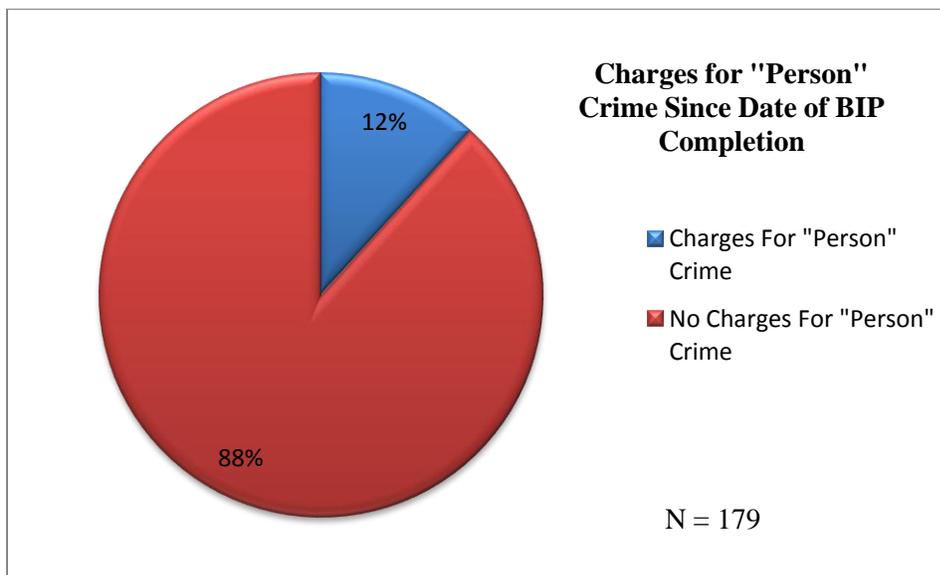
The measurable factors for the purpose of this study are: new arrests for any crime, new charges for a “person” crime, new convictions for a “person” crime, and filing of a new protection order against the program completer. The results are reported below:

### Arrests For Any Crime Since Completion Of BIP In 2012



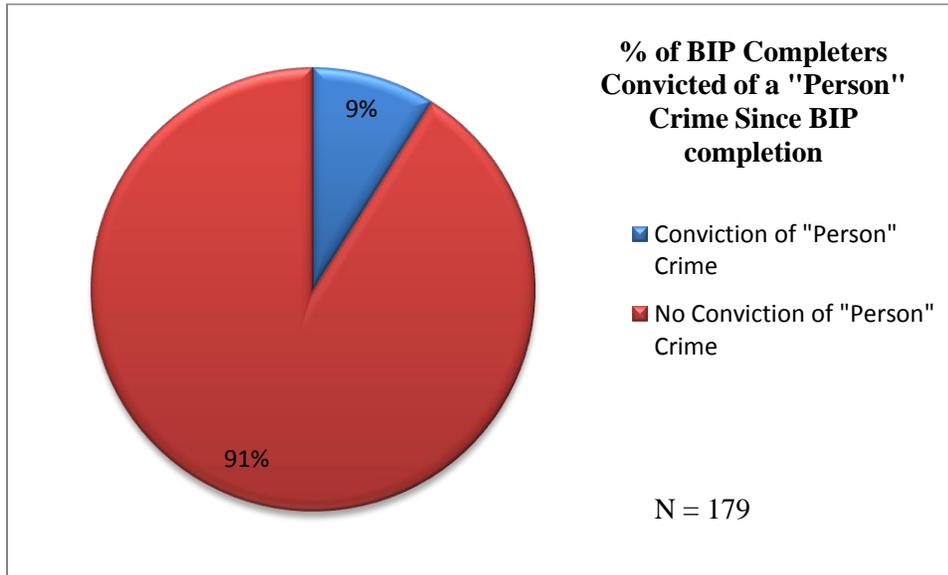
Out of the 179 participants, 114 individuals had not been arrested after the date of completion, and 65 individuals had been arrested. NOTE: **The arrest numbers include arrests for any crime, and are not reflective of domestic violence only.**

### Charges For A New Crime Identified As A “Person” Crime



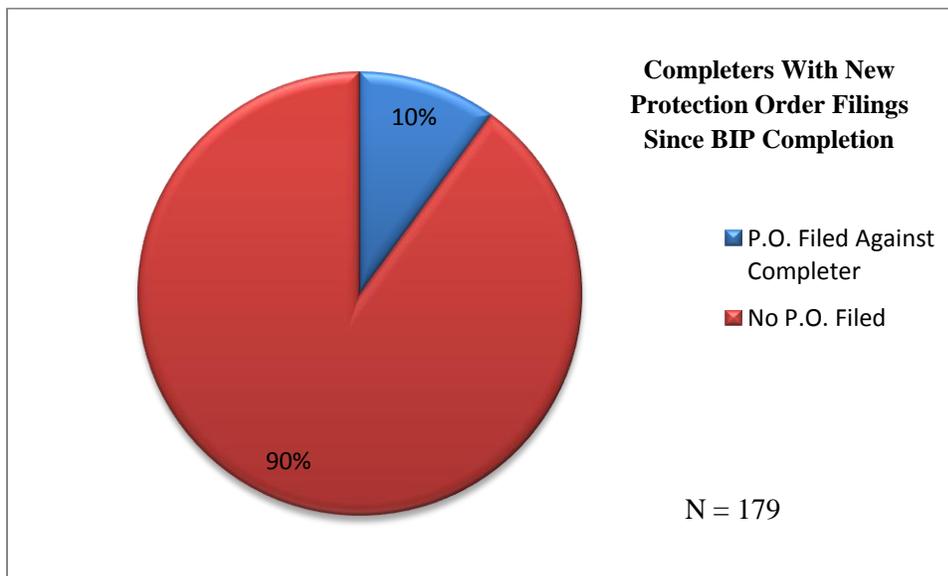
Of the 179 completers, 158 individuals had not been charged and 21 had been charged with a “person” crime since the date of their completion.

Convicted Of A "Person" Crime



Of the 179 completers, 163 individuals were not convicted of a person crime since their date of BIP completion, with 63 individuals having a conviction of a person crime.

Completers With New Protection Order Filings



Of the 179 completers, 161 individuals did not have a new protection order filed against them since their date of BIP completion, with 18 individuals having a new order filed against them.

**Limitations of the Study**

As mentioned, this study was not intended to be as comprehensive as future quantitative research could be. There are limitations that should be considered when reviewing this information. First, the study features a sample size of six participating programs and 179 individuals' data reviewed out of a total of 496 BIP completers reported in 2012 by all certified BIP programs.

Additionally, it could be beneficial to break down the category of "arrest" further so that a better understanding of the nature of the arrest and any connection to an incidence of violence in a relationship

could be ascertained. It would also be helpful to understand what non-person crimes unrelated to domestic violence are most likely to occur from this population.

It should be noted, that studying “re-offense” rates when evaluating BIP effectiveness has its own limitations, as has been discussed by Gondolf <sup>2</sup> and other BIP researchers. Other measures of effectiveness that can be helpful include qualitative data from the victims and partners about the occurrence of new incidents of violence in their relationships after their partner or ex-partner completed BIP. These studies are complex and getting high return rates has proven difficult <sup>3</sup>.

Additionally, using “re-offense” as defined in this study as the measure of effectiveness can lead to more questions that remain unanswered. Specifically, this quantitative data does not account for the different practices for response to domestic violence by other criminal justice agencies that occur in the different communities that were studied. Therefore another limitation of this study is that the collection of information did not include an analysis of the arrest rates, charging rates, or conviction rates in the different communities. It would be significant, for example, in the results for “arrest” if the BIP was located in a community where the law enforcement agency aggressively pursues arrests in domestic violence cases versus a community that does not have as strong of a law enforcement response.

Finally, gathering more extensive information in a formal research study would enable a more extensive review to determine some of the differences in characteristics among those that are most likely to struggle with recidivism, and those who are not.

## **Conclusions**

The results of this study are promising, and offer evidence to validate the efforts of the Office of the Attorney General and the BIP Advisory Board to support and strengthen batterer intervention programming in Kansas. This should also be a call to action to not only continue but also increase investment in the domestic violence intervention field. There is considerable room for innovation in practice and additional research on the effectiveness of Kansas batterer intervention programs. The BIP Advisory Board is dedicated to having quality batterer intervention programming statewide, and will continue to provide information and awareness to programs and communities to help ensure effective outcomes of these programs, and the reduction of domestic violence in this state.

<sup>1</sup> Klein, A. (2009). “Practical Implications of Current Domestic Violence Research: For Law Enforcement, Prosecutors and Judges.” Special Report for National Institute for Justice

<sup>2</sup> Gondolf, E. W. (2001a). Limitations of experimental evaluation of batterer intervention programs. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 2, 79-88.

<sup>3</sup>Taylor, B. G., Davis, R. C., & Maxwell, C. D. (2001). The effects of a group batterer treatment program: A randomized experiment in Brooklyn. *Justice Quarterly*, 18, 171-201.