

“I wanted to do everything right to get my children back. This program is so beneficial and enlightening and it helps families. I want other mothers to benefit from this program the way I have,”

Former participant of a Mothers Program

“The program gives hope and friendship. A feeling that there are others like them who are trying to do the right thing,”

Womanhood Program Facilitator

For more information on Probation’s Mothers’ and Women’s Programs, please contact:

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Brochure created by
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Barnstable County

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Bristol County

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Franklin County

Greenfield District Court Womanhood Program
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Mothers’ Enrichment Program

Cambridge District Court and Middlesex Probate & Family
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Motherhood Program

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Norfolk County

Norfolk Juvenile Court-Dedham’s MPower & Triple P Programs

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Quincy District’s Mothers’ Program

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Suffolk County

Chelsea District Court’s Womanhood Program or El Programa De La Mujer
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The Massachusetts Probation Service

Mothers’ & Women’s Programs



Photo credit: The Boston Herald

What are the Mothers' and Women's Programs?

The Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) offers 11 Mothers', Women's, and Womanhood Programs for court-involved women as well as one program for both mothers and fathers in seven counties across the Commonwealth.

The four Mothers' programs and one Mothers' Enrichment program each typically run for 10-12 weeks and are offered twice a year—fall and spring. Sessions feature interactive lectures by guest speakers who help women navigate the court system, learn about community resources, and offer guidance on working with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Although the 10-week Women's and Womanhood Programs are open to women who are not mothers, several of these initiatives do address parenting-related issues. There are four Womanhood programs and one Women's program in the state. Issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, breast and cervical cancer are topics featured in the programs' curriculums. Other offerings include therapy through art, self-defense, and self-care. Job skills trainings such as resume writing, job search, and interviewing skills are offered.

All programs, which culminate with a graduation ceremony, are voluntary and are usually recommended by a Probation Officer.

The Five Principles of Motherhood

The Mothers' and Motherhood Programs, which are separate from the Women's and Womanhood programs, are based on five principles which are incorporated in the weekly meetings. Women's and Womanhood program participants do not use the five Principles of Motherhood.

Mothers, enrolled in the Mothers' and Motherhood programs, are required to learn the five principles which they recite at the start of each session. They are often called upon to provide examples of these principles which serve as the foundation of the program.

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Principles of Motherhood

As a mother, it is my responsibility to:

- 1. Give affection to my children.***
- 2. Give gentle guidance to my children.***
- 3. Provide a safe home for my children.***
- 4. Set a proud example for my children by having self-respect.***
- 5. Live within the law and without the taint of alcohol or drug use.***

Programs' Origins



Photo credit: Boston Herald

Cover and panel photos: MPower participant Jaime Rea, and son, Brandon.

The first Mothers' Program was introduced at Boston Municipal Court (BMC)-West Roxbury 20 years ago. Cambridge District Court's Mothers' Enrichment Program followed.

The Womanhood Program of BMC-Dorchester, was the first of its kind to address the needs of women who are not mothers.

Chelsea District Court's Womanhood Program, also referred to as El Programa De La Mujer, was the first in the state to specifically target Latino women although the group is open to all ethnicities.

Norfolk Juvenile's MPower (MomPower) Program was the first to address the needs of mothers with Care and Protection cases, which involve allegations of abuse and neglect. Since MPower was established in 2012, more than half of all participants have been unified with their children. The court also offers the Triple P Program, a parenting program for both mothers and fathers.