



National American Indian and Alaska Native

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: UNDERSTANDING ITS IMPACT

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SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

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WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

- Physical Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Threat of Control of Children
- Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Isolation

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Battery – a pattern of abusive behavior that keeps a person fearful for their safety.
- Withholding food and water and shelter.
- Physical control – restraining, tying up, handcuffing, blocking, locking in, taking car keys or even clothing or shoes.

PHYSICAL ABUSE CONTINUED

- Hitting, punching, slapping, tearing clothing, breaking eyewear, spitting on, biting, burning, hair-pulling, throwing objects, and cutting.
- Threatening with a knife, gun, or other weapon.
- Drugs and alcohol by force.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- Convincing the person they are worthless, hopeless, without help, powerless, and under the control of the abuser.
- Threats of harm to the victim, their children, or their loved ones.
- Stalking to the point of feeling very fearful
- Manipulation of facts and ways of perceiving the truth.

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Rape
- Sexual coercion
- Forced viewing of pornography or other sexual activity.

THREAT OF CONTROL OF CHILDREN

- Providing false knowledge of how they could take the children legally.
- Threats of leaving the area or the country with the children.
- Threats of harming the children.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Magnifying the victim's insecurities.
- Insults in public and private
- Degradation of character
- Giving messages that are not consistent.

FINANCIAL ABUSE

- Maintaining tight control of money.
- Withholding the truth about finances.
- Exploiting finances of an elderly or dependent adult.



ISOLATION

- Total lack of autonomy
- Tight control over who can be seen, where, and for how long.
- Convincing them they *belong* only to the abuser.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of [some form of] physical violence by an intimate partner.
- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men have been victims of **severe** physical violence by an intimate partner.

THE VICTIM

- Majority are women.
- Children
- Men
- They come from all ages, education levels, ethnicities, socio-economic levels, cultures and religions.

THE VICTIM CONTINUED

- Low self esteem
- Poor support systems
- Dependent
- Lack of coping skills
- Unaware of resources

THE VICTIM CONTINUED

- Often wants the abuse to end but not the relationship.
- Feels isolated.
- Is depressed.
- Acts helpless
- Feels embarrassed.

THE VICTIM CONTINUED

- Fears judgment or stigmatization.
- Denies or minimizes the abuse.
- Still loves their abuser.
- Is emotionally withdrawn.
- Distances themselves from family and friends.

THE VICTIM CONTINUED

- Feels guilt and shame.
- Highly anxious.
- Has suicidal thoughts or attempts.
- Abuse drugs and alcohol.
- Hope their abuser will change.

THE ABUSER

- Their main objective is domination and control. This often occurs in cycles that include good times and peace followed by periods of abuse.
- Their patterns of abuse intensify as time goes on and the abuse escalates.
- 90% of abusers have no criminal records and are law-abiding citizens.

THE ABUSER CONTINUED

- There is no one typical, detectable personality of an abuser. However, they do often display common characteristics.
- An abuser often denies the existence or minimizes the seriousness of the violence and its effect on the victim and other family members.
- An abuser objectifies the victim and often sees them as their property or sexual objects.

THE ABUSER CONTINUED

- An abuser externalizes the causes of their behavior. They blame their violence on circumstances such as stress, their partner's behavior, a "bad day," on alcohol, drugs, or other factors.
- An abuser has low self-esteem and feels powerless and ineffective in the world. He or she may appear successful, but internally, they feel inadequate.

THE ABUSER CONTINUED

- Manipulates to appear loving, caring, and attentive, especially in the beginning and also during the 'good times' in the abuse cycle.
- In public they are often charming, successful, and well-liked. They appear attentive and devoted to their victim's family and friends.
- NO ONE KNOWS!

THE ABUSER CONTINUED

- Extremely jealous and possessive
- Blame the victim for causing the abuse.
- Cruel to animals
- Extremely controlling
- Rigid in beliefs about women and children.



THE ABUSER CONTINUED

- Particularly interested in guns and weapons.
- Forceful, domineering, and aggressive.
- Highly vigilant.
- Never assume blame.

THE VICTIM'S REACTION TO ABUSE

- Coping – placating, enduring, etc.
- Managing – anticipating the abuser's mood and modifying their own behavior so as not arouse anger. Also, diverting attention.
- Resisting – creating consequences such a arrest, seeking outside help, or hitting back or striking preemptively.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECTS

- All aspects of a person's life.
- The entire family.
- The community

RESISTIVE/REACTIVE VIOLENCE

- The target is the abuser.
- Used as a means of stopping the abuse or escape.
- A form of revenge or retaliation.
- Seen as a way to reclaim or restore dignity.

RESISTIVE/REACTIVE VIOLENCE CONTINUED

- Perpetrator has the key to their own protection by stopping their violence against their victims.
- Violence is rarely the first or only tactic used by victims

PRIMARY OR OTHER TACTICS USED BY VICTIMS

- Negotiations
- Appeasement
- Threats to withdraw from relationship
- Soliciting help from others
- Threats to expose the offender to others
- Threats to hurt the offender in some way

VIOLENCE BY BOTH PARTNERS

- The victim's use of violence ends:
 - When the abuser's violence ends.
 - When the relationship ends.
- The abuser will continue to abuse indefinitely and often more intensely as they feel the loss of control over their victim, either within the relationship or when it ends. This is when the victim is most in danger.

STATISTICS

- On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the U.S.
- During one year, this equates to 10 million people.
- On a typical day, more than 20,000 calls are placed to domestic violence hotlines nationwide.

STATISTICS CONTINUED

- The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by 500%
- Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crimes.
- Women between the ages of 18 and 24 are most commonly the victim.

STATISTICS CONTINUED

- 19% of domestic violence involves a weapon.
- Domestic victimization is correlated with a higher rate of depression and suicidal behavior.
- Only 34% of people injured by intimate partners receive medical care for their injuries.

RAPE

- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men in the U. S. have been raped in their lifetime.
- About half, 46.7 % of female and 44.9% of male victims of rape in the U. S. were raped by an acquaintance
- Of these, 45.4% female and 29% male victims were raped by an intimate partner.

STALKING

- 19.3 million women and 5.1 million men in the U. S. have been stalked in their lifetime.
- 60.8% female and 43.5% male victims of stalking were stalked by a former or current partner.

HOMICIDE

- A study of intimate partner homicides found that 20% of victims were not the intimate partner but family members, friends, neighbors, persons who intervened, law enforcement responders or bystanders.

HOMICIDE CONTINUED

- 72% of all murder/suicides involve an intimate partner
- 94% of the victims of the murder/suicides are females.

CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- 1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year in the U. S.
- 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to the violence
- Children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk to become direct victims of child abuse



CHILDREN'S REACTIONS TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Generalized anxiety
- Sleeplessness
- Nightmares
- Difficulty concentrating
- High activity levels



CHILDREN'S REACTIONS CONTINUED

- Increased aggression
- Regression to separation anxiety
- Intense worry about their safety or the safety of a parent.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS ON CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY FROM CHRONIC EXPOSURE

- Physical health problem
- Behavior problems in adolescence (e.g., juvenile delinquency, alcohol, substance abuse.)
- Emotional difficulties in adulthood (e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, PTSD.)
National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

“Domestic violence poses a serious threat to children’s emotional, psychological, and physical well-being, particularly if the violence is chronic.”

“Children may learn that it is acceptable to exert control or relieve stress by using violence, or that violence is linked to expressions of intimacy and affection.”

NCTSN

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8.0 million days of paid work each year in the U. S.
- The cost of domestic violence exceeds \$8.3 billion per year.

ECONOMIC IMPACT CONTINUED

- Between 2003 and 2008, 142 women were murdered in their workplace by their abuser, 78% of women killed in the workplace during this time.
- Between 21-60% of victims lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse.



HOW TO HELP

- Encourage and support the client where they are.
- Do not pressure them to leave.
- Give them resources and education

RESOURCES

- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline:

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

<http://www.thehotline.org>