

Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



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The women, children or men pictured in this publication are models and are used for illustrative purposes only.

Understanding the dynamics of domestic violence

People often think of domestic violence only in terms of the black eyes and bruises that can be seen. In reality, domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that abusive men use to control their intimate partners. As adaptive and resilient as they are, women who have been battered nevertheless face a daunting number of barriers to escaping the violence. In addition to the very real threat of harm or death to themselves or their children, victims must contend with the accompanying financial and emotional hardship. They also often weigh cultural and religious values that emphasize keeping families intact, and respond to the violence in spite of justice and social service systems that don't always provide adequate safety and support.

People who have never experienced abuse often find it difficult to imagine why women don't leave and how the abuse can continue for years. Relationships almost never start out abusive. It is important to remember that love and intimacy precede the abuse, which can make it difficult to break away. Abusive relationships are not violent all the time. There are periods when a woman is reminded why she fell in love with her partner. Abusers effectively weave together intimacy and abuse to control their partners.

Women who have been battered sometimes express confusion about the recurring nature of the violence they experience in their relationship. It seems to them to be unpredictable and impulsive. Domestic violence, however, is neither random nor haphazard. It is a complex pattern of increasingly frequent and harmful physical, sexual, psychological and other abusive behaviors used to control the victim. The abuser's tactics are devised and carried out precisely to control her.



Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that adults or adolescents use against their current or former intimate partners.
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Domestic violence occurs in intimate relationships where the perpetrator and the victim are currently or previously have been dating, living together, married or divorced. They might have children in common or not.

About the use of pronouns in this publication

The greatest single common denominator about victims of domestic violence is the fact that the overwhelming majority are women.

According to the most comprehensive national study by the U.S. Department of Justice on family violence, the majority of domestic violence victims are women. Females are 84 percent of spouse abuse victims and 86 percent of victims at the hands of a boyfriend or girlfriend. The study also found that men are responsible for the vast majority of these attacks—about 75 percent.¹

And, women experience more chronic and injurious physical assaults by intimate partners than do men.²

That's why feminine pronouns are used in this publication when referring to adult victims and masculine pronouns are used when referring to perpetrators of domestic violence.

This should not detract from the understanding that, in some instances, the perpetrator might be female while the victim is male or of the same gender.

¹ Durose, M., et al. (2005). Family violence statistics: Including statistics on strangers and acquaintances. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

² Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). Full report of the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS UNLIKE OTHER CRIME

While domestic violence has certain similarities to other forms of family violence—such as child abuse, child-to-parent violence, sibling violence or elder abuse—it has certain unique characteristics that make it distinct. Domestic violence distorts what is supposed to be a partnership based on mutual respect. Neither partner has a legitimate role in disciplining or controlling the other. When domestic violence permeates a relationship, the abuser and victim no longer share equal rights and responsibilities within the partnership.

SAFETY SHOULD BE PARAMOUNT

Safety must be the fundamental guiding principle in any and all efforts to assist those escaping the violence and control of their intimate partners. All contact and interventions with a survivor must account for the risks she faces when she seeks help. The reality for women victimized by domestic violence is that the risk of danger is greater when they leave their abusive relationships.

A woman who has been battered further risks the safety of herself and her children through the process of disclosing the abuse she received, separating from a batterer, seeking child support or reporting her batterer's abuse of her children. There will be unintended consequences for a woman if interventions are not based on safety and her assessment of her situation.

EMPOWERING SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL

The woman experiencing domestic violence is the expert on the violence in her life. She has the best sense of whether her batterer will carry through on his threats if she tells her story, goes to work or pursues child support. Anyone seeking to help a victim of domestic violence must encourage and respect the choices she makes. This reinforces her autonomy and can empower her with the knowledge that she can survive outside of her abusive relationship.

In a non-emergency situation, some of the primary reasons a survivor tells you her story is to seek your services, gather information and resources, investigate her options and be encouraged by a non-judgmental, helpful person. **The responsibilities of anyone who works with women victimized by domestic violence can be summarized as follows:**

- ▶ Help her plan for future safety.
- ▶ Listen to her and acknowledge her experiences.
- ▶ Affirm the injustice of the violence against her.
- ▶ Respect her autonomy.
- ▶ Promote her access to community services.
- ▶ Respect and safeguard her confidentiality.

THE ROLE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

There are more than 100 domestic violence shelters and support programs throughout Missouri. However, fewer than half of the state's 114 counties have emergency shelters. Consequently, domestic violence program staff are accustomed to using creative and inventive approaches to providing services in a variety of settings. Most women don't need emergency shelter, but they do need someone to talk to beyond office hours. Almost all can benefit from the common ground found in a support group.

The majority of domestic violence shelters and service providers have toll-free numbers that allow them to serve multiple counties so they can help create safety plans, offer support, and provide court advocacy and other resource information—even from a distance. Some programs have outreach staff who can work with victims to make plans for obtaining services in their communities. When working to meet the needs of women and their children, there is more to be gained by working together than anyone can do by working alone.

YOUR ROLE IS EQUALLY VITAL

The challenge for all of us is to do what we can. We can meet the challenge with hope. For the truth is that people commit domestic violence, and people can stop it. Your efforts have the potential to save lives, to stop the violence and to create new opportunities for families living in fear and danger. By its very nature, your work to address domestic violence is an ethical endeavor to further social justice.

Four types of abuse

Abuse can take on many forms. Some types are more subtle than others and might never be seen or felt by anyone other than the woman experiencing the abuse. The abuser uses a combination of tactics that work to control the victim. The abuse also usually increases in frequency and severity over time.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is easier to recognize and understand than other types of abuse. **It can be indicated when the batterer:**

- ▮ Scratches, bites, grabs or spits at a current or former intimate partner.
- ▮ Shakes, shoves, pushes, restrains or throws her.
- ▮ Twists, slaps, punches, strangles or burns the victim.
- ▮ Throws objects at her.
- ▮ Subjects her to reckless driving.
- ▮ Locks her in or out of the house.

*You cannot emerge a
whole human being
when you escape
someone who
constantly beats you
and berates you
physically, emotionally
and spiritually . . .
until that searing
of the soul has been
attended to . . .*

*There is something that
happens to the psyche.
The wholeness of the
individual must be
looked at. . . They must
begin to understand
what has happened to
them, and why.*

— SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The people harmed by domestic violence

► About one in four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.

—Tjaden, P., & Thonennes, N. (2000). *Extent, nature and consequences of intimate partner violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

► Having a verbally abusive partner was the variable most likely to predict that a woman would be victimized by an intimate partner.

—*Ibid.*

► The National Violence Against Women Survey estimated that 1.5 million women are raped or physically assaulted by intimate partners each year.

—*Ibid.*

► In 2007, 45 percent of female homicide victims were murdered by intimate partners; 5 percent of male homicide victims were murdered by intimate partners.

—Catalano, S.I., Smith, E., Snyder, H. & Rand, M. (2009) *Female Victims of Violence*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

► 26 percent of female crime victims are victimized by intimate partners; 5 percent of male crime victims are victimized by intimate partners.

—Truman, J. & Rand, M. (2010). *Criminal Victimization, 2009*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

- Refuses to help when she's sick, injured or pregnant, or withholds medication or treatment.
- Withholds food as punishment.
- Abuses her at mealtime, which disrupts eating patterns and can result in malnutrition.
- Abuses her at night, which disrupts sleeping patterns and can result in sleep deprivation.
- Attacks her with weapons or kills her.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

Sexual violence and abuse can be extraordinarily difficult for victims to talk about because of the ways in which this type of violence often is perpetrated. **Sexual violence or abuse can be indicated when the batterer:**

- Is jealous or angry and assumes she will have sex with anyone.
- Withholds sex and affection as punishment.
- Calls her sexual names.
- Pressures her to have sex when she doesn't want to.
- Insists that his partner dress in a more sexual way than she wants.
- Coerces sex by manipulation or threats.
- Physically forces sex or is sexually violent.
- Coerces her into sexual acts that she is uncomfortable with, such as sex with a third party, physically painful sex, sexual activity she finds offensive or verbal degradation during sex.
- Inflicts injuries that are sex-specific.
- Denies the victim contraception or protection against sexually transmitted diseases.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

It is the abuser's use of physical and sexual force or threats that gives power to his psychologically abusive acts. Psychological abuse becomes an effective weapon in controlling a victim, because she knows through experience that her abuser will at times back up the threats or taunts with physical assaults. **Psychological abuse can be indicated when the batterer:**

- Breaks promises, doesn't follow through on agreements or doesn't take a fair share of responsibility.
- Verbally attacks and humiliates his partner in private or public.
- Attacks her vulnerabilities, such as her language abilities, educational level, skills as a parent, religious and cultural beliefs or physical appearance.
- Plays mind games, such as when he denies requests he has made previously or when he undercuts her sense of reality.
- Forces her to do degrading things.

- ▶ Ignores her feelings.
- ▶ Withholds approval or affection as punishment.
- ▶ Regularly threatens to leave or tells her to leave.
- ▶ Harasses her about affairs he imagines her to be having.
- ▶ Stalks her.
- ▶ Always claims to be right.
- ▶ Is unfaithful after committing to monogamy.

ECONOMIC ABUSE

Economic abuse can be indicated when the batterer:

- ▶ Controls all the money.
- ▶ Doesn't let her work outside the home or sabotages her attempts to work or go to school.
- ▶ Refuses to work and makes her support the family.
- ▶ Ruins her credit rating.

The relationship between violence and other tactics of control

Domestic violence is not an isolated, individual event but rather a pattern of repeated behaviors. Assaults are repeated against the same victim by the same perpetrator. These assaults occur in different forms, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic. While physical assaults might occur infrequently, other parts of the pattern can occur daily. The use of these other tactics is effective because one battering episode builds on past episodes and sets the stage for future episodes. All tactics of the pattern interact and have profound effects on the victims. **Examples of commonly used control tactics include:**

ISOLATING THE VICTIM

- ▶ Initially, a batterer might cut off the victim from supportive relationships with the claims of “loving you so much” and “wanting to be with you all the time.”
- ▶ The intent is to control her time and isolate her from her support system of family and friends who might question his actions. For example, he might refuse to have telephone service or reliable transportation, monitor her email or make the family change residences frequently.
- ▶ He might constantly criticize her family and friends or harass her so much that it is easier for her to cut off contact with them. He might make it impossible for her to have contact with others by using coercion, threats or force.

What really got to me was the way that he abused me. You know, he would not leave me alone until we had sex. He was like that. I would be there, tears rolling out of my eyes from our fighting, and him hitting me, and he would want to have sex. But I had no choice, because if I didn't have sex with him, well, what would happen to me next? Right after the fights is when he wanted it, and I couldn't stand it.

— SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

There were signs all along: he was very jealous and very possessive, but he was also very, very, charming. He brought me roses and diamond rings, and all kinds of stuff. He treated me like a queen for years until we bought this house and moved in together.

— SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ▶ A victim might believe what her abuser says because she is so isolated she has no access to information that might contradict him.

USING THE CHILDREN

- ▶ The batterer might punish the children as a way to hurt the victim.
- ▶ He might sexually abuse the children or force them to watch the abuse of the victim.
- ▶ He might use the children to spy or report on her activities.
- ▶ He might threaten to kidnap or kill the children if she leaves him.
- ▶ He could gain legal custody, just take the children, or use custody and visitation arrangements to harass or harm her.

DAMAGING RELATIONSHIPS

- ▶ The abuser might discredit the victim's relationships with others in the community, such as employers, clergy, friends and neighbors, by spreading rumors or distorted information. For example, he might tell others she is crazy or a liar or send messages from her email address to alienate her from friends and family.

ATTACKING PROPERTY AND PETS

- ▶ The abuser might hit the wall next to where the victim is standing or throw objects at her. He might pound the table next to her or break her favorite possessions. He might say: "Look what you made me do" or "You'll be next."
- ▶ The abuser might harm pets to hurt and intimidate her.

STALKING PARTNER OR EX-PARTNER

- ▶ The abuser might follow, threaten, harass and terrify his partner or ex-partner, especially after she has left or separated.
- ▶ The abuser might monitor the victim's whereabouts, daily activities, phone conversations or email to prove to her that she cannot conceal anything from him.

Domestic violence victims employ a variety of survival strategies

Women who have been battered are survivors. Asking them why they don't leave an abusive relationship ignores the complex set of factors they must weigh to decide how best to protect themselves and their children. Implying that it is the responsibility of the victim to end the violence blames her for the abuse and does not hold the batterer accountable for his crimes.

FOR SOME VICTIMS, STAYING MAY BE SAFER

Not all women want to leave the relationship. They want the violence to stop. There are times when it may be safer for a woman and her children to stay. Quite simply, a woman who has been battered might be told she will be killed, or her children will be killed, if she leaves or refuses to return. Past violence has taught her that his threats often translate into action. Leaving also might harm her children if he gets custody or visitation. If she is still in the relationship, she can monitor his interactions with the children. Indeed, the decision to leave an abusive relationship is not as straightforward as it might seem. The table on page 8 outlines some of the crucial factors a victim must consider, especially if she has children.

WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN BATTERED LEAVE ALL THE TIME

It is important to remember that women do escape the violence in their lives. Friends, family and a network of service providers within a supportive community can be instrumental for a survivor who chooses to make the difficult decision to uproot her life.

What at first might appear to an outsider to be self-defeating behaviors on the part of the victim, such as being afraid to seek the services of a program for victims of domestic violence or wanting to return to the abuser in spite of severe violence, in fact might be normal reactions to significantly frightening situations. A victim uses different strategies to cope with and resist abuse. These strategies might appear to be the result of passivity or submission, when in reality she has learned that these are sometimes-successful, temporary means of stopping the violence.

I was threatened by one of Dale's friends. He threatened to burn my house down and kill me and kill my father-in-law and burn down his trailer. I reported this to the police. In two weeks, my home was burned down. When I returned to the police station, they could find nothing about my previous report. Absolutely nothing. And I know I was there. I suppose somehow they got to the police.

— SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DILEMMAS IN LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

Leaving a violent relationship is not a simple matter. There are many factors that must be weighed carefully, because only the abuser truly can stop the violence.

PHYSICAL

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE STAYS

- ▶ **Physical injury.** He can continue to hit and injure her.
- ▶ **Death.** He might kill her or the children.
- ▶ **STDs/HIV.** She might have no choice regarding safe-sex practices. He might sexually assault her.

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE LEAVES

- ▶ **Physical injury.** He might continue to injure her. He also might be inclined to escalate the violence after she leaves.
- ▶ **Death.** Leaving doesn't ensure that he won't find her, and it might increase the chance she or the children will be killed.
- ▶ **STDs/HIV.** Unsafe behavior might continue. He might sexually assault her.

CHILDREN

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE STAYS

- ▶ **Physical injury or psychological harm.** Children can witness violence, be targets themselves or be hurt trying to protect others.
- ▶ **Loss of children.** He could make false allegations of child neglect or abuse about her. Failure-to-protect arguments could be used to remove children or terminate parental rights.

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE LEAVES

- ▶ **Physical injury or psychological harm.** Children can witness violence, be targets themselves or be hurt trying to protect others. They might be at greater risk during visitation.
- ▶ **Loss of children.** He could legally gain custody or just take the children. He could make false allegations of child neglect or abuse.

FINANCIAL

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE STAYS

- ▶ **Standard of living.** He might control the money and give her little to live on. He could lose or quit his job. He might make her lose or quit her job.
- ▶ **Loss of income/job.** He could keep her from working or limit how much she works. He might sabotage her efforts to find a job or her success in a job or training program.
- ▶ **Loss of housing.** She could be evicted because of property damage he has done.
- ▶ **Loss of or damage to possessions.** He might destroy things of importance or value to her.

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE LEAVES

- ▶ **Standard of living.** She might have to live on less money, relying solely on her own income. She might have to move out of her home and community.
- ▶ **Loss of income/job.** She might have to quit her job and raise her children as a single parent. He might sabotage her efforts to find a job or succeed in a training program.
- ▶ **Loss of housing.** She might have to move out, leave town or go into hiding. She might lose her home in a divorce.
- ▶ **Loss of or damage to possessions.** He might destroy things of importance or value to her. She might have to leave things behind if she flees.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE STAYS

- ▶ **Physical injury.** He might threaten or injure family or friends, particularly if they try to offer assistance.
- ▶ **Loss of support.** They might want her to leave and might stop supporting her if she stays. They might be afraid of him or not like him. He might keep her isolated from them.

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE LEAVES

- ▶ **Physical injury.** He might threaten or injure family or friends, particularly if they try to offer assistance.
- ▶ **Loss of support.** They might not want her to leave and might stop supporting her.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE STAYS

- ▶ **Psychological harm.** Verbal, emotional and physical attacks will continue to affect her.
- ▶ **Substance abuse.** She might use drugs or alcohol to help her cope with the emotional and physical pain.
- ▶ **Suicide.** He might threaten or commit suicide.

POSSIBLE RISKS IF SHE LEAVES

- ▶ **Psychological harm.** He might have continued access to her, particularly if they have children in common.
- ▶ **Substance abuse.** She might use drugs or alcohol to help her cope with her new situation and past abuse.
- ▶ **Suicide.** He might threaten or commit suicide.

The relationship between poverty and domestic violence

Domestic violence permeates all social groups defined by race, ethnicity and economic circumstances, yet it is clear that the combined experience of poverty and violence raises particularly difficult issues for women and their children. Women living in poverty experience violence by their partners at higher rates partially because they have fewer options. Access to independent economic resources, including public assistance, is vital to an abused woman's decision making and safety planning.

The high rates of domestic violence in the lives of impoverished women, along with higher rates of physical and mental health problems, mean that economically disadvantaged women, including homeless women, are likely to have more, and more complex, needs than those who have more resources. It is important to note that women who experience violence and poverty can be astoundingly resilient and strategic in using the resources they do have at hand. Each woman has her own experience and is affected by the violence in her life in different ways and to different degrees.

Economic independence and employment are central considerations in women's safety. For a woman with limited resources, obtaining safe and affordable housing is often difficult and can lead to homelessness, which increases her risk of future victimization. Each victim faces unique risks and thus has unique needs for safety and self-sufficiency. In many instances, determining what a particular woman needs is as simple as asking her.

BARRIERS TO LEAVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Not all women who have experienced domestic violence have problems that interfere with their taking steps toward self-sufficiency. Other women, however, do have lingering safety concerns or trauma that interferes with job training or employment. For a significant number, domestic violence is a major "welfare-to-work" barrier. Abusers often feel threatened by a partner's efforts to become more financially independent, and they actively interfere with or sabotage job training, education or employment activities.

Considerations for working with diverse populations

Domestic violence affects all segments of society including those defined by gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, geographic location, socioeconomic status, and physical or mental ability. Because our society is very diverse, it is important to understand that domestic violence and cultural issues can intersect in complex ways for each individual. To effectively provide survivor-focused advocacy, advocates must recognize that each survivor understands domestic

Poverty and intimate partner violence

• Women living in disadvantaged neighborhoods are more than twice as likely to be the victims of intimate violence compared with women in more advantaged neighborhoods.

—Benson, M. L., & Fox, G. L. (2004). *When violence hits home: How economics and neighborhood play a role*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

• Women in disadvantaged neighborhoods are more likely to be victimized repeatedly or to be injured by their domestic partners than were women who lived in more advantaged neighborhoods.

—Ibid.

• Half of all homeless women and children become homeless while trying to escape abuse situations.

—Browne, A., & Bassuk, S. (1997). Intimate violence in the lives of homeless and poor housed women: Prevalence and patterns in an ethnically diverse sample. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 67, 261-278.

• Homeless women experience high levels of abuse before, during and after episodes of homelessness and often are victimized by multiple perpetrators in their lifetimes.

—Goodman, L.A., Fels, K., Glenn C. & Benitez, J. (2006). *No Safe Place: Sexual Assault in the Lives of Homeless Women*. Retrieved from http://www.vawnet.org/applied-research-papers/print-document.php?doc_id=558.

The extent of intimate partner violence

.....
 ► Women living with female partners experience less intimate partner violence than women living with male intimate partners. Men living with male intimate partners experience more violence than do men who live with female intimate partners.

—Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Extent, nature and consequences of intimate partner violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

► Rates of intimate partner violence vary significantly among women of diverse racial backgrounds. Asian American and Pacific Islander women and men tend to report lower rates of intimate partner violence than do people from other minority backgrounds. African American and American Indian/Alaska Native women and men report higher rates.

—Ibid.

violence in a different way and might experience unique barriers to seeking services. For example, if a person who is Deaf chooses to seek services, they might find that a service provider does not have access to an interpreter or assistive devices. Service providers should become familiar with the diverse populations in their communities and develop outreach strategies to ensure that all victims of domestic violence are aware of services and are able to gain access to them. Having a staff that is culturally representative of the community should be a goal for all programs and services.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The term “people with disabilities” is often used to describe a diverse group of individuals, including people with cognitive, physical or sensory disabilities, or people with mental illness. Many individuals with disabilities are at an increased risk for domestic violence. Perpetrators often choose to target people with disabilities because they perceive them to be vulnerable, unable to defend themselves and/or unlikely to report an assault.

People with disabilities can be more vulnerable to domestic violence for a variety of reasons. Some people might depend on others to meet their basic needs. These care providers might be involved in the more intimate parts of a person’s life, which can increase the opportunity for abusive acts. Some people with disabilities are taught to be obedient or passive; this socialization to comply may inadvertently make them more vulnerable to abuse. People with physical disabilities might face greater difficulties than those without physical limitations if they try to defend themselves or seek to escape a violent situation. Those with cognitive disabilities might be overly trusting of others. They might not understand the difference between abusive and non-abusive behavior, and might think abuse is normal.

People with disabilities are often less likely to seek services because they fear they will not be believed, do not realize that what happened to them was abuse or assume service providers will not be accessible to them. Barriers to communication also can cause problems in gaining access to services.

When working with people with disabilities, it is important to remember that each individual is very different in terms of skills and needs. Advocates should never make assumptions about a person’s abilities based on appearance and, when in doubt, should not be afraid to ask the individual what support she needs. Advocates should be open, respectful and flexible—as they are when working with all victims.

Any program working with domestic violence victims should collaborate with local programs that provide services for people with disabilities in order to share resources and receive education and support.

IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

Immigrant or refugee women might face extreme difficulty in obtaining services due to cultural isolation and language barriers. She might be

unfamiliar with the community and unaware of resources available to her. Because of experiences in her country of origin or discrimination in this country, she might have little trust in the justice system or might not be aware that programs even exist to meet the needs of survivors. If she is undocumented, she might fear deportation if she chooses to report to law enforcement. Immigration relief in the form of VAWA, T and U visas are available for immigrant survivors of domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking and other violent crimes, and their children. Cooperation with law enforcement is not always a requirement, depending on the type of visa and the individual's situation. It is critical that immigrant and refugee women have access to legal services to help them address their particular concerns and legally complex situations.

Creating a plan to ensure language accessibility for all victims, conducting outreach in immigrant and refugee communities, and becoming aware of community resources can help programs provide quality services to immigrant and refugee women.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER SURVIVORS (LGBT)

Heterosexist and homophobic bias in society provides unique opportunities for LGBT abusers to manipulate and control their partners. The small size of the gay and lesbian communities and lack of visible resources, especially in smaller towns and rural areas, can make it difficult for the abused partner to seek help. LGBT survivors are more likely to be embarrassed and to minimize the abuse because of internalized homophobia. An abuser might have tried to turn others in the community against the survivor.

An abusive partner might isolate the victim from contact with the community by preventing the partner from attending social events and seeing friends within the LGBT community. Isolation is a powerful tool used by abusive partners to create distance between friends, family, neighbors, service providers and law enforcement. The survivor is much easier to control and maintain power over when isolated from support systems. This is especially true for people in their first gay or lesbian relationship who might not have had much contact with the LGBT community before the relationship began.

The stigma attached to identifying as LGBT can cause those within the LGBT community to hide, ignore or minimize relationship violence for fear of further condemnation. Because of the lack of validation that abuse does exist in the community, LGBT survivors might not even recognize what they are experiencing as intimate partner violence.

Service providers can support LGBT victims by reassuring them that they are believed and that the violence is not their fault. If a LGBT victim chooses to disclose, advocates can provide support by being sensitive to the additional barriers that might arise. Using inclusive language while providing services can help LGBT survivors feel more comfortable seeking services.

Intimate partner violence in the gay and lesbian communities

Intimate partner violence in same-gender or gender-diverse relationships is as prevalent and lethal as in heterosexual relationships¹.

Heterosexist and homophobic bias in society provides unique opportunities for LGBT abusers to manipulate and control their partners. The small size of the gay and lesbian communities and lack of visible resources, especially in smaller towns and rural areas, can make it difficult for the abused partner to seek help. The stigma attached to identifying as LGBT can cause a survivor to hide, ignore or minimize relationship violence for fear of further condemnation by the majority population.

Isolation is a powerful tool used by abusive partners to create distance between friends, family, neighbors, service providers and law enforcement. The survivor is much easier to control and maintain power over when isolated from support systems. This is especially true for people in their first gay or lesbian relationship who might not have had much contact with the LGBT community before the relationship began.

¹LGBT Domestic Violence Coalition and Jane Doe Inc., 2005.

Intimate partner violence and women with disabilities

► In a study on women with disabilities, 56 percent reported abuse. Of this group, 74 percent reported abuse that was chronic in nature and 55 percent reported multiple abuse situations in their adult lives. The abuser was their male intimate partner 80 percent of the time.

—Wayne State University (2004). *Michigan study on women with physical disabilities*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

In considering accessibility of services, educating key people, such as law enforcement, hospital staff and social service agencies about the reality of domestic violence in LGBT relationships could increase service provision for LGBT communities.

The need for a victim/survivor to freely tell his or her story without concern for the listener's comfort level with the language is crucial. Be well versed with the terminology used by the survivor. Use gender neutral language such as "partner" or "significant other" until you know for certain the gender of the abuser. LGBT survivors will be looking for such language and will interpret your use of gender language as sensitivity to their needs or as a lack of sensitivity and understanding from program staff.

OLDER WOMEN

Due to their age and life experiences, domestic violence might present older women with issues different from those experienced by younger survivors. Older women can be more vulnerable to domestic violence for a variety of reasons, including isolation, physical condition, health and/or dependency on caregivers. Many have been raised in a culture and during a time when domestic violence was not openly discussed, making it difficult or even humiliating to disclose. This, in turn, makes them less likely to report. Older women also might choose not to report because they fear younger professionals would not believe them or they might not define the violence as a crime.

Domestic violence is not included under the mandated elder abuse reporting law in Missouri. An "eligible adult" under Missouri elder abuse reporting law is defined as someone 60 and older who is unable to protect his or her own interests or adequately perform or obtain services which are necessary to meet his or her essential human needs (660.250 RSMo).

ADVOCATES WHO ARE SURVIVORS

Many are called to advocacy work after a personal experience with domestic violence, either in their own lives or in the life of a loved one. Including survivors' voices in the development and implementation of services continues to be a priority of the movement to end violence against women. Some survivors choose to become a part of the movement as a means of empowerment. Some survivors might choose to be on a domestic violence program's board of directors, some might choose to work as advocates, or others might volunteer to be a part of a program's speakers' bureau to tell their stories to others. Survivors providing direct services should be aware that advocacy with others might bring back memories of their own victimization and should identify their own coping strategies.

It is important to remember that each survivor has a different experience that is not necessarily reflective of all victims. Although there might be similarities among survivors' stories, each individual uniquely experiences domestic violence.

Men who batter, their selective behaviors and societal influences

Domestic violence is not impulsive but purposeful and instrumental. Batterers can be perfectly agreeable with or conciliatory to police officers, employers, neighbors, co-workers and friends. But batterers don't use those skills with their intimate partners because they choose not to. Individual men beat individual women to make those women do what they want.

The violent man is not "out of control." He is at work on his own agenda, which is to condition his victim to be what he wants her to be all the time. This is impossible because he constantly changes his demands. The batterer chooses tactics that work to achieve compliance or control. His behavior is directed at controlling most aspects of his partner's life.

Men batter because battering works. Domestic violence is a socially supported behavior, learned through observation, experience and reinforcement. It is learned through our culture, families, schools and peer groups. Domestic violence is not caused by illness, genetics, substance abuse, stress, the behavior of the victim or problems in the relationship.

Domestic violence is a crime, and it should be accorded the same prosecution efforts as any other violent offense. Communities and the justice system have an obligation to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence and hold the perpetrators responsible. Prosecution of offenders can protect the victim from additional acts of violence, reduce children's exposure and possible injury, deter the abuser from committing further acts of violence, and reinforce a community's refusal to tolerate domestic abuse. Unless men who batter are truly held accountable, they have little incentive to stop their abusive behaviors.



Domestic violence is purposeful behavior. The batterer's pattern of abusive acts is directed at achieving compliance from or control over the victim.
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Tactics that work to control the victim are selectively chosen by the batterer. This power affects many aspects of a victim's life.

Attitudes and behaviors of men who batter

There is no way to spot a batterer in a crowd. Domestic violence is not a matter of class, race or socioeconomic status. It is a gender issue. Most batterers are male; however, most men are not batterers.

How batterers choose to carry out their abuse

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► In 2002, 63 percent of spousal murders involved a firearm.

—Durose, M., et al. (2005).
*Family violence statistics:
Including statistics on strangers and acquaintances.*
Washington, D.C.: U.S.
Department of Justice.

► The majority of spouse violence (78 percent) and boyfriend/girlfriend violence (64 percent) occurred in the victim's home.

—Ibid.

Batterers often share the following characteristics:

INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

- Resolves conflict with intimidation, bullying and violence.
- Holds her down, restrains her from leaving a room, pushes or shoves.
- Uses threats and intimidation as instruments of control or abuse.
This includes threats to harm physically, to defame, to embarrass, to restrict freedom, to disclose secrets, to cut off support, to abandon, to kidnap children and to commit suicide.

VERBALLY ABUSIVE

- Says things that are meant to be cruel and hurtful.
- Degrades her, curses her and/or minimizes her accomplishments.
- May wake her up to yell at her or not let her go to sleep by yelling at her.

MINIMIZES ABUSE

- Redefines a violent incident, for example, by saying, "It wasn't that bad," or, "I didn't hit her that hard; she bruises easily."
- Accuses her of exaggerating the abuse or of being crazy.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Cites alcohol or drug use as an excuse or explanation for hostile or violent conduct (e.g., "That was the booze talking, not me; I got so drunk I was crazy.").
- Forces her to use drugs or alcohol.

BREAKS OR STRIKES THINGS IN ANGER

- Beats on tables with a fist, throws objects around or near her.
- Uses symbolic violence (e.g., tearing a wedding photo, marring a face in a photo).

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

- Has battered in prior relationships.
- Has previous police encounters for behavioral offenses (e.g., threats, stalking, assault, battery).

PROJECTS BLAME

- Refuses to take responsibility for his actions.
- Blames his partner for his problems to justify the violence.
- Often blames other ethnic groups, coworkers or women in general for his problems.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS OR CHILDREN

- Treats children cruelly or is insensitive to their suffering.
- Treats animals cruelly or is insensitive to their suffering.
- Expects children to be capable of doing things far beyond their ability or teases children until they cry.

- ▮ Forces children to watch the abuse of the victim or engages them in the abuse of the victim.

EXTREME JEALOUSY

- ▮ Becomes jealous of anyone or anything that takes her time away from their relationship.
- ▮ “If I can’t have you, nobody will.”
- ▮ Requires her to account for all of her time.
- ▮ Accuses her of flirting or of having affairs.
- ▮ Calls her frequently at work or refuses to let her go to work.

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR

- ▮ Makes all the decisions about the house, joint finances, her clothing, or where they go and who they can or cannot visit.
- ▮ Is extremely impatient and might exhibit poor impulse control. Believes his needs and wants should be fulfilled immediately.
- ▮ Uses money to control her activities, purchases and behavior.

ISOLATION

- ▮ Cuts her off from resources.
- ▮ Accuses people who support her of causing trouble.
- ▮ May not let her use the car, work or go to school.

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

- ▮ Has sudden and extreme changes in mood.
- ▮ Is alternately loving and abusive.
- ▮ Can behave explosively.

RAPE OR USE OF FORCE IN SEX

- ▮ Has no concern about whether she wants to have sex.
- ▮ Uses sulking, anger, harassment or coercion to manipulate her into compliance with sexual demands.
- ▮ Forces her to have sex while she is sleeping or demands sex when she is ill, injured after a beating or soon after childbirth.

SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS ABUSE

- ▮ Misuses religious passages or beliefs to reinforce abuse (e.g., emphasizing her forgiveness and not his repentance and responsibility).
- ▮ Manipulates her religious beliefs or spiritual values (e.g., refusing to allow her to attend church or spiritual gatherings or claiming that she is condemned and unwanted by her God or her congregation).

USE OF PRIVILEGE

- ▮ Treats her like a servant; makes all of the “big” decisions.
- ▮ Threatens to “out” the victim if it is a same-sex relationship.

We found our client work, but when her abuser got out of jail, he applied to the court for visitation rights for his daughter. It turned out that this visitation was just one way for him to get in closer with her. Even when he had the child, he would come over and throw rocks at the window if she didn’t come out, wanting to make sure what she was doing while he had the child. It wasn’t just about visiting with his daughter. He wanted to keep tabs on her. Unfortunately, she took him back. The violence is now interfering with her work. We have actually gotten calls from the employer. She is emotional, it is hard to get her to focus on her work, she calls in sick. She tells me that she cannot come to work with her black eyes and bruises.

— JOB PLACEMENT
COUNSELOR

Abusive men can learn respect and equality—if we insist that they do so. But they won’t make those changes unless they are subjected to tremendous pressure, because their cultural values as well as their privileges are pushing them so hard to stay the same.

There has never been a better time than the present to apply the pressure, to demand that abusers accept responsibility for the destruction they cause.

We live in a period of mounting international pressure for the respect of human rights for everyone, of insistence on the recognition of the worth and dignity of each person, male or female, young or old, wealthy or poor, and of whatever color.

—Bancroft, L. (2002).
*Why does he do that?:
 Inside the minds of angry
 and controlling men*
 (p. 333). New York, NY:
 Putnam’s Sons.

- ▶ Mistranslates information if the woman has limited English proficiency.
- ▶ Withholds medical attention or necessary intervention if the woman has a mental illness or physical or communicative disability.
- ▶ Uses social status or job/status in the community to question her credibility.
- ▶ Uses racial or ethnic slurs within an interracial couple.
- ▶ Threatens her immigration status.

Factors for changing batterers’ behaviors

Criminal justice and mental health systems are increasingly becoming more involved in domestic violence interventions. Frequently, the focus of batterer interventions is to hold batterers accountable, educate them about the effects their actions have on the victim, and underscore that they must learn and decide to act differently. These batterer intervention programs are only one part of a coordinated community response that delivers consistent support to survivors and consequences to batterers.

Because batterers usually don’t voluntarily attend batterer intervention programs, intervention strategies must emphasize zero tolerance for new incidents of abuse. The message must be constantly reinforced that his abuse will be exposed and that he won’t get away with it. Well-established and respected batterer intervention programs recognize and clearly stress that the goals of any program should parallel those of probation: victim safety must be the first priority, followed by offender accountability and behavior change. Effective batterer intervention programs consult with advocates who work directly with victims of domestic violence to help keep victims safe and to evaluate program practices.

While important, the content of batterer intervention programs seems secondary to the degree to which these programs are integrated into coordinated community responses to domestic violence. A successful batterer intervention program is part of a process that begins with an arrest or the issuance of a protection order. It also includes prosecution, sentencing and oversight of the batterer’s subsequent behaviors by the justice system. The effectiveness of batterer intervention programs as a whole is inconclusive, and the limitations of all batterer interventions should be explained to victims to reduce the chance they will have a false sense of security that their partners will be “helped” simply by attending an intervention program.

It’s important to note that anger management and impulse-control classes, and sometimes marital counseling and mediation, are frequently used as misguided intervention strategies with batterers. These approaches don’t generally take into account the power imbalances in abusive relationships and don’t adequately emphasize to the batterer that he will be held accountable for his actions.

Sociocultural factors that contribute to domestic violence

There are multiple reasons why people perpetrate domestic violence. Some factors are related to the experiences of the individual offender, but many are related to the conditions within our society and communities that in some ways support, excuse and encourage domestic violence. Through observing popular culture, families, schools and peer groups, both men and women internalize views on femininity, masculinity and violence. These attitudes and beliefs lead to a culture in which some people perpetrate domestic violence and in which other men and women often fail to hold them accountable.

There are risk and protective factors for the perpetration of domestic violence. We use risk and protective factors to help better understand the problem and to inform response and planning for prevention. A risk factor is a condition or experience that increases the likelihood of perpetration. These factors identify who is at risk for perpetration of domestic violence. A protective factor decreases the likelihood of perpetration. These factors identify what protects against perpetration.

Identifying risk and protective factors for domestic violence is necessary as they highlight modifiable conditions or experiences that can lead to causes of violence. Limited evidence exists on the risk and protective factors for domestic violence perpetration and victimization. However, evidence suggests that because domestic violence is a complex problem there is no one risk or protective factor that predicts occurrence with certainty. For example, if someone is abused as a child, it cannot be predicted with certainty that he or she will grow up to abuse or be abused. Many factors are associated with domestic violence perpetration and victimization, but none are causal. Additionally, all risk and protective factors are not equal; a one-to-one relationship does not exist. Addressing or prioritizing a single risk factor to prevent domestic violence is not sufficient as multiple risk factors need to be taken into consideration.

Risk factors for domestic violence perpetration include:

SOCIETY

- ▶ Traditional gender norms
- ▶ Societal norms supportive of violence
- ▶ Institutional structures that promote unequal power between men and women
- ▶ Historical and societal patterns that glorify violence against women
- ▶ Men's gender-role socialization process
- ▶ Women's gender-role socialization process

COMMUNITY

- ▶ Weak community sanctions against violence
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Unemployment

Prevention as Social Change

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Domestic and sexual violence prevention can take many forms, but at the heart of prevention is social change. Prevention is about changing the social norms that allow and condone violence against women. Preventing violence means changing our society—addressing attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, environments and policies. Prevention means eliminating factors that contribute to violence and promoting those that prevent the violence.

The early violence against women movement focused on social change through education about the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence, legislative changes to make women safer, finding and building resources to assist women, making alliances with law enforcement and increasing perpetrator accountability. Prevention has grown out of this social change movement.

Community and Coalition Building

Community and coalition building is an important component of domestic and sexual violence prevention through social change. In order for change to occur, communities must be engaged, educated on the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence, and be willing to change. Community and coalition building fosters collaboration between agencies, systems and individuals who are stakeholders in the community. It encourages ownership of the prevention efforts that work in their community, whether it is urban or rural, large or small. Through this collaboration, participation and leadership, communities can be mobilized toward taking action against domestic and sexual violence.

- ▶ Low social capital (lack of shared awareness and trust)
- ▶ Negative portrayal of women in the media

RELATIONSHIP

- ▶ Fear of losing power and control
- ▶ Patterns of interpersonal communication
- ▶ Economic stress
- ▶ Male dominance in the family
- ▶ Poor family functioning
- ▶ Unresolved family of origin conflicts

INDIVIDUAL

- ▶ Observing or experiencing violence in family of origin
- ▶ Power and control problems
- ▶ Low self-esteem
- ▶ Lack of empathy
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Intimacy problems
- ▶ Gender role conflict
- ▶ Heterosexism and homophobia
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Heavy drinking
- ▶ Young age

Preventing domestic violence

Early work in the movement to end violence against women focused on social change through education about the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence, through legislative changes to hold violent men accountable, by finding and building resources to assist women, by making alliances with law enforcement and courts and through increasing perpetrator accountability. Prevention is the natural evolution of a movement intent on creating social change.

Prevention can sometimes seem overwhelming because the oppression of women is deeply rooted in society. Prevention also can seem like a luxury when there aren't sufficient resources to help victims. Certainly, the movement to end violence against women can always provide quality services to and advocate for victims of domestic violence, but the question remains: how can advocates better address the larger issue of the oppression of women to reduce the number of victims who need services?

Domestic violence can have long-lasting and harmful consequences on individuals, families and communities. The goal of preventing domestic violence is to stop it before it starts.

Domestic violence prevention can take many forms, but at the heart of prevention is social change. No small feat. Preventing domestic violence means changing our society—addressing attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, environments and policies to eliminate those that contribute to domestic violence and to promote those that prevent domestic violence.

Much of today's domestic violence prevention language, models and research comes from the public health community. Public health is an appropriate perspective with which to approach violence prevention as it focuses on the health and well-being of the community rather than an individual. It is grounded in social justice and looks at how to prevent disease or injury rather than treat disease or injury.

The core principles of public health include emphasizing primary prevention, advancing prevention efforts, creating effective programs and building on the efforts of others.

The public health perspective approaches health as a public matter. Therefore, a community's health, disease, death rates and well-being reflect the decisions and actions a society makes, for good or for ill.

PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY PREVENTION

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention use the following definitions for the three levels of violence prevention:

Primary Prevention: Activities that take place before violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration or victimization.

Secondary Prevention: The immediate responses after violence has occurred to address the short-term consequences of violence.

Tertiary Prevention: The long-term responses after violence has occurred to deal with the lasting consequences of violence. Tertiary prevention also includes the work of batterer intervention programs and sex offender treatment interventions.

Prevention efforts should reduce the occurrence of domestic violence through promoting healthy, respectful and non-violent relationships. Addressing domestic violence in multiple settings (individual, relationship, community and society) and in multiple ways is key to prevention.

Prevention efforts are varied and community-specific. Some communities implement school-based educational sessions to address attitudes, skills, beliefs and behaviors. Other communities focus on teaching skills to individuals to increase active and visible bystanders. Social marketing campaigns are another strategy for addressing domestic violence prevention by changing the media messages consumed in communities. While evidence is still limited about what works in prevention, communities have already been effectively tailoring strategies to fit their communities and neighborhoods.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

Bystander intervention is one promising strategy in domestic violence prevention. Typically the term “bystander” refers to a person who passively

Prevention is the natural evolution of a movement intent on creating social change.

Bystander Intervention Programs

The **Green Dot Kentucky** program is becoming a model for violence prevention in Missouri. It was developed by Dorothy J. Edwards, Ph.D., the director of the Violence Intervention and Prevention Center at the University of Kentucky. Every act of violence against women—every incidence of rape, stalking, assault, or sexist joke, advertisement and music video—is represented by a symbolic red dot. The green dots stand in opposition to the red dots—everyone doing “his/her own little green dot” to make the state safer. A green dot represents “any behavior, choice, word, or attitude that promotes safety for women and communicates utter intolerance for violence.”

This bystander model of primary prevention identifies not only student leaders, but also influential people in a community, educating and encouraging them to be responsible for promoting healthy behavior, affecting social change and recognizing and responding to situations at high risk for violence. Individuals involved in the program act as peer educators to influence others in their community.

stands by watching an event take place without getting involved. For primary prevention—stopping violence before it starts—a bystander is redefined as someone who actively intervenes when witnessing situations that promote or condone violence. This shift is important for a few reasons. First, empowering active, visible bystanders to stand up and speak out against violence shifts the cultural norm to make it more acceptable to speak up against violence, and makes violence less acceptable and, therefore, less likely to occur. Second, bystander intervention shifts away from the notion of men as perpetrators and women as victims and instead holds both men and women responsible for being active bystanders and preventing violence.

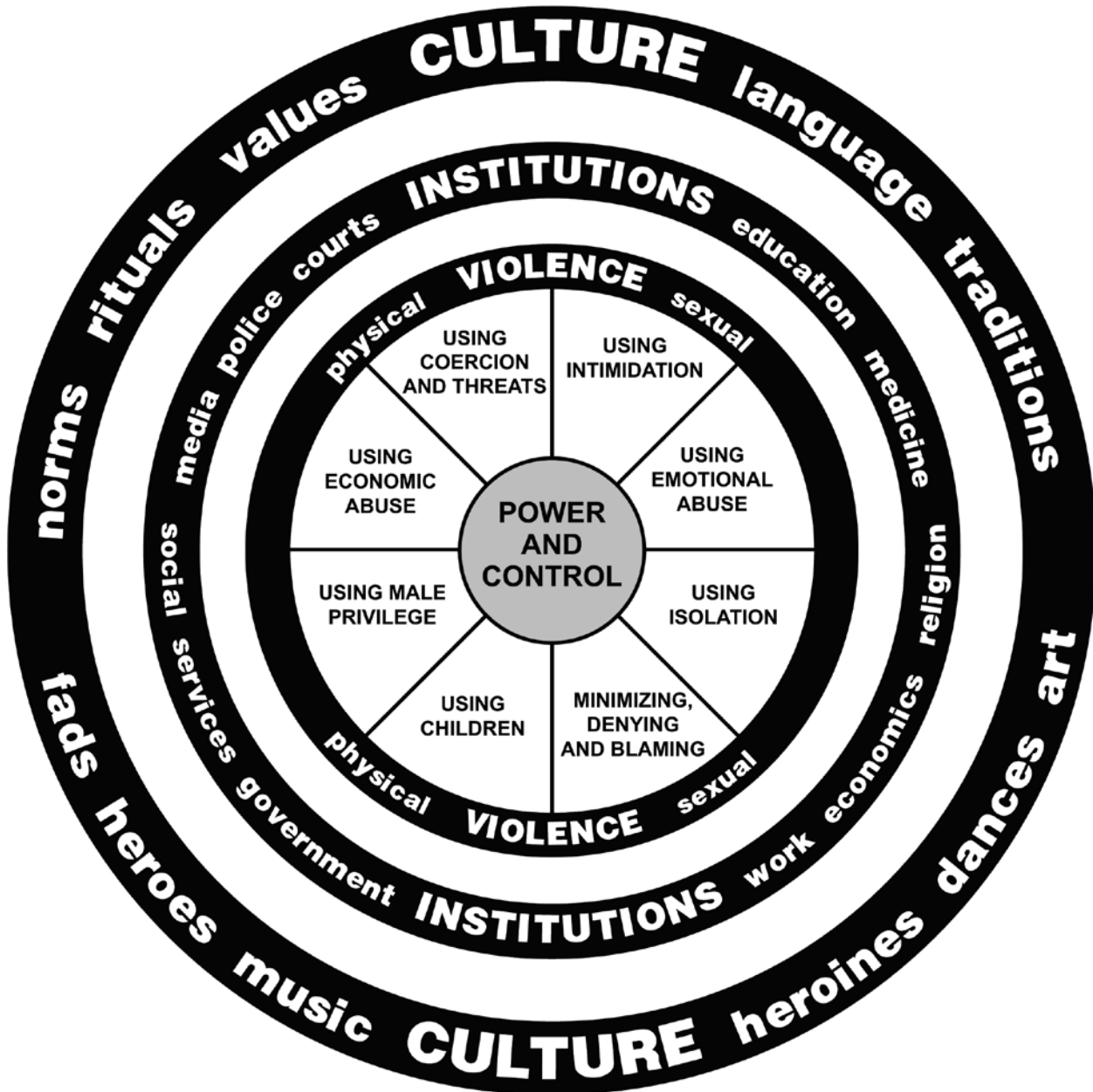
There are different programs and approaches to bystander intervention, but they typically follow a similar philosophy. That philosophy includes: teaching bystanders the skills necessary to: recognize a potential event that falls along the continuum—from inappropriate comments to sexual abuse and rape—that leads to violence, decide whether it is an event or situation that needs action, decide if the situation needs their own action, choose what to do, decide how to do it, and feel their action is manageable.

For bystander intervention to be successful, programs must be part of comprehensive prevention work that seeks to change social norms, policies, organizational practices, laws and community awareness. Through teaching the knowledge and skills necessary to intervene, bystanders can have a powerful and immediate impact on preventing domestic violence.

It is also important to understand the difference between awareness and prevention. Awareness activities, such as one-time events or education sessions, will not change beliefs, attitudes or behaviors to prevent domestic violence. However, without a basic understanding of the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, a community does not have the context or sense of urgency to mobilize to do true prevention work. Institutional and community awareness of the issue is needed, as is an understanding of the concept of prevention. Thus, awareness is necessary but not sufficient to achieve social change. Awareness must be moved into action to bring about social change. Comprehensive primary prevention programming can foster that change.

POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Domestic violence is a socially supported behavior, learned through observation, experience and reinforcement. It is learned through our culture, institutions, families, schools and peer groups.

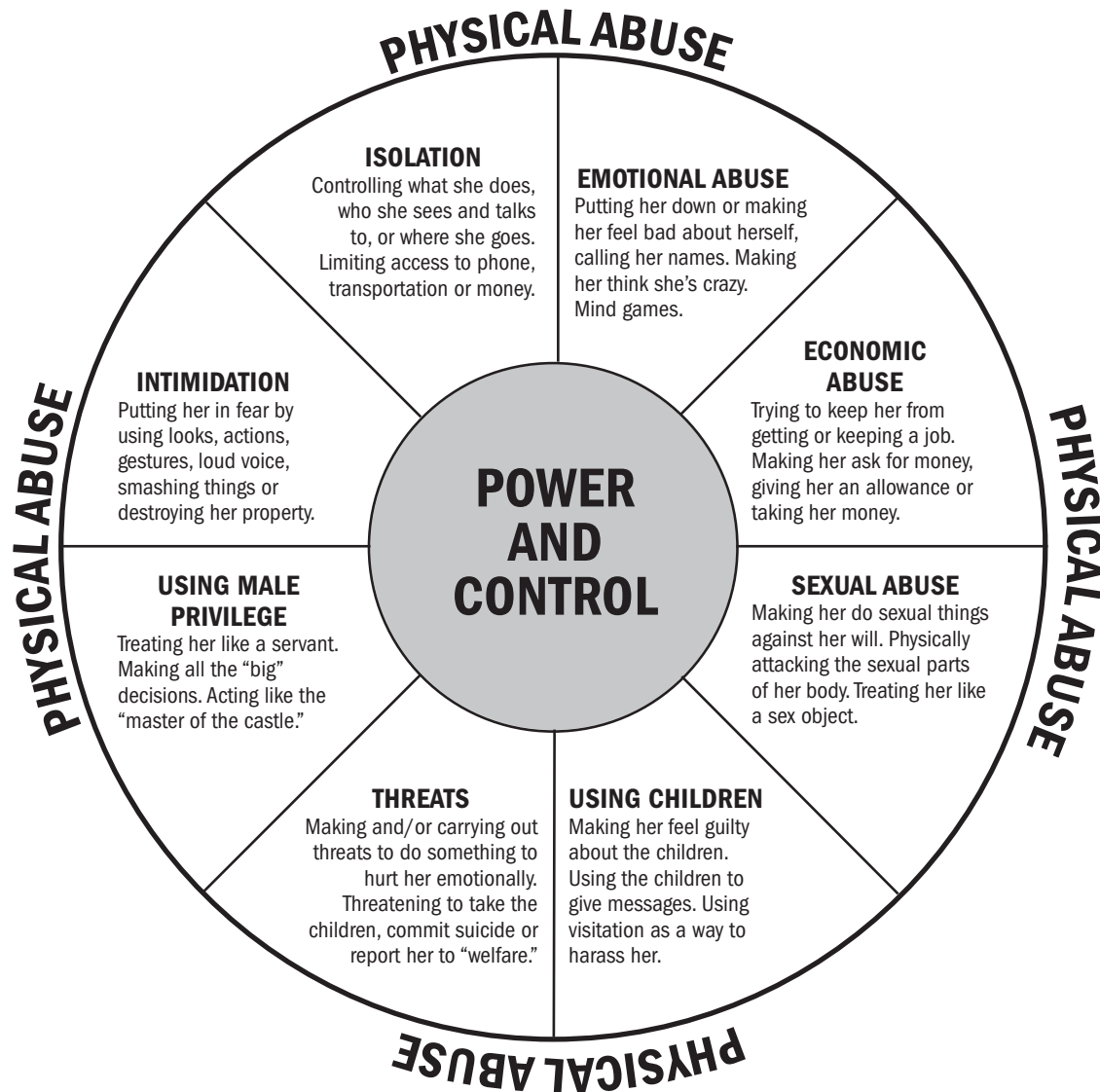


The "Power and Control Wheel" was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, MN.

HOW ABUSERS USE POWER AND CONTROL

Domestic violence is not impulsive, but purposeful behavior. The batterer chooses a range of abusive tactics that are reinforced by violence or the constant threat of violence.

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The "Power and Control Wheel" was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, MN.

Domestic violence and its complex effects on children and mothers

Like their mothers, children of women who have been battered frequently live in an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Quite simply, domestic violence can deprive children of the joys of childhood. It can disrupt their sense of safety and security and can threaten their well-being, development and social adjustment. In spite of these negative effects, it is important to note that each child's response to domestic violence is unique and is affected by the frequency and severity of the abuse, her or his relationships with adult caregivers, and a host of other complex factors.

The safety and security of survivors and their children are closely linked. In the vast majority of families where domestic violence is prevalent, the mother is the primary caregiver, and the father is the perpetrator. Women victimized by domestic violence who have children often make decisions about their relationships with intimate partners based on their beliefs of what will be in the best interests of their children. These decisions are not simple. A mother must determine how to protect herself and her children from physical danger. She also must contemplate how much she wants to uproot her children's lives by fleeing to a shelter, changing schools, losing financial security or having them see their father arrested.

Some policymakers, child protection workers and judges mistakenly assume that if a child is exposed to domestic violence, then the child is in immediate danger and must be removed from the home. Mothers victimized by domestic violence are sometimes also criminally prosecuted for "failure to protect" their children, even if those mothers believe that leaving the relationship will put themselves and their children at greater risk of harm. These types of punitive responses to victims do not hold the batterer accountable for his actions and can cause even greater unintended harm to the children and mother. Such actions ignore the reality that a woman is at greater risk for assaults after she leaves her abuser.

There also is evidence that in a significant number of homes where either child maltreatment or woman battering is occurring the other form of violence also exists.



Children's safety and well-being is in fact often dependent upon their mother's safety.

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Holding the batterer, not the mother, accountable for the violence and protecting the abused parent from further harm is critical in providing a safe environment for both the mother and her children. A child's mother might be her child's one constant in a long period of turmoil.

My 3-month-old woke up in the middle of the night with an ear infection and temperature. My husband screamed, 'Shut the baby up, I'm trying to sleep.' I was trying to comfort her, but nothing worked. He got up, took her from my arms and whacked her. She had a black-and-blue rear end. Now what should I do? I thought. If I take her to the doctor, they'll take her away from me because I'm the mother and I allowed this. My husband told me, too, 'No matter what you say, I'm going to tell them that you did it.'

— SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The effects associated with witnessing domestic violence

Millions of children are exposed to domestic violence each year in the United States. They can be harmed by:

- ▶ Intentional injuries inflicted by the perpetrator.
- ▶ Unintentional injuries from violence directed at the mother.
- ▶ An atmosphere in which they directly witness violence or the aftermath of an attack.
- ▶ Emotional abuse when they are used as pawns to coercively control the abused parent.

A batterer's use of violence against a child's mother can affect that child in varied and complex ways that can be exhibited in emotional, behavioral, social and physical development. Some children may exhibit aggression, depression, anxiety, lower levels of self-esteem and below-average academic performance, while others may show no response.

Some children might also lose respect for their mother—and women in general—if their mother's abuser constantly tells her she is worthless and unable to care for her children. These children also must contend with conflicting emotions about a father they both fear and love.

The effects of domestic violence on children also illustrate how their reactions can mimic so-called diagnosable disorders, including attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. These reactions can be exaggerated in crisis situations, such as when a child is temporarily residing in a domestic violence shelter, and should be considered normal responses to abnormal situations.

MODERATING FACTORS IN A CHILD'S RESPONSE

The impact of witnessing violence can be magnified or reduced by a number of factors, with some children showing great resilience in the face of adversity:

- ▶ Age and gender of child. Younger children in particular have fewer resources to draw upon to make sense of their experience. Gender is an important factor because of the way children are socialized. Girls tend to internalize their responses more than boys. Girls are likely to exhibit more depressive and anxious behaviors, while boys might exhibit more aggressive behaviors.
- ▶ Other violent experiences. Whether a child also has been battered or abused will have a significant influence. Consideration also must be given to the level of violence in the child's larger environment.
- ▶ Severity and frequency of violence. Varying degrees of violence and the recency of violence will have different effects.
- ▶ Social supports available and the extent to which the child can accept support. A child's relationships with adult caregivers, both within the family and community, strongly influence the child's adjustment.

WHAT CHILDREN NEED

Children whose mothers are battered are not hidden, but the reality of their lives is all too often overlooked or misunderstood. They attend school, child care or church. Many already have contact with healthcare providers and mental-health professionals, government social workers, police, and the justice system. At the very least, every child needs and deserves these basic services:

- ▶ Education and support. Children need to learn what domestic violence is and hear that it is not their fault.
- ▶ Communication with others about what happened to them. Children need to talk about their experiences and learn that their situation is not unique. Talking with a group of peers can be helpful.
- ▶ Safety planning. Children need to develop a safety plan so they can feel and be safe. A safety plan can give them control of situations in which they often have little power, and it will increase their chances of escaping harm.

Anyone who has contact with children should be aware of the possibility that domestic violence can occur in any home. Clearly, greater screening is required, both routinely and when children demonstrate behavioral or emotional problems.

Not all advocates are mandated reporters

By Missouri law, not all advocates are considered mandated reporters. “Mandated reporter” is a legal term. Legally mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, as identified in 210.115 RSMo, are:

Any physician, medical examiner, coroner, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, podiatrist, resident, intern, nurse, hospital or clinic personnel that are engaged in the examination, care, treatment or research of persons, and any other health practitioner, psychologist, mental health professional, social worker, day care center worker, juvenile officer, probation or parole officer, jail or detention center personnel, teacher, principal or other school official, minister as provided by section 352.400 RSMo, peace officer or law enforcement official, or other person with responsibility for the care of children.

Domestic violence programs have policies that address the specific procedures by which staff who are legally mandated to report child abuse and neglect must comply with the mandated reporting provision of Missouri law 210.112 RSMo. These policies take into account the provisions for such reporting in compliance with the strict confidentiality requirements for the shelter service information and records in Missouri law 455.220 RSMo. This Missouri law, as upheld by the Supreme Court

Children and domestic violence

▶ It is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of children, or 3.3 million to 15.5 million children, are exposed to domestic violence each year in the United States.

— Carlson, B. (2000) Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence: Research Findings and Implications for Intervention. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 321-342. McDonald, R., Jouriles, E., Ramisetty-Mikler, S., Caetano, R., & Green, C. (2006) Estimating the Number of American Children Living in Partner-Violent Families. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 137-142.

▶ Researchers estimate that child maltreatment occurs in 30 to 60 percent of families who experience domestic violence.

— Appel, A. & Holden, G. The Co-Occurrence of Spouse and Physical Child Abuse: A Review and Appraisal. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 578-599. Edleson, J. (1999) The Overlap Between Child Maltreatment and Woman Battering. *Violence Against Women*, 134-154.

▶ Between 23 and 70 percent of men who batter their partners also abuse their children.

—Edleson, Ibid.

▶ One study estimates that 50 percent of battered women have been abused while stopping their partner from abusing the children.

—Mbilingi, L., Edleson, J., Hagemaster, A., & Beeman, S. (2007) What Happens to Children When Their Mothers Are Battered? Results from a Four City Anonymous Telephone Survey. *Journal of Family Violence*, 309-317.

Advocates emphasize confidentiality

Confidentiality is a fundamental necessity when assisting victims of domestic violence.

Program advocates are bound by strict state and federal guidelines regarding the release of information. These restrictions sometimes might appear to be a barrier to collaboration.

You should understand that domestic violence advocates will not acknowledge a person's presence or participation in their program without a written release of information from the victim. Keep in mind that domestic violence advocates are bound by state law (Section 455.220 RSMo) and their programs' confidentiality requirements. A domestic violence advocate's insistence on written releases is a function of safety and self-direction for women and their children.

In addition, state law gives domestic violence shelter staff members and volunteers certain legal protections from being forced to testify about a program participant unless that individual waives her confidentiality protections (Section 455.220 RSMo). This law was upheld in *State ex rel. Hope House* (2004).

of *Missouri in State ex rel. Hope House* (2004), forbids domestic violence shelter staff and volunteers from disclosing records or testifying about those to whom they provide services unless that information is subpoenaed for a court case and the women whose records are sought consent to the release in writing.

For anyone who works with victims of domestic violence and their children, it is important to know the Missouri Department of Social Services Children's Division's definition of child abuse and the procedures the Children's Division will follow after a report of abuse. If a report is necessary, it is vital to keep the mother informed throughout the entire process. In most instances, a more positive outcome for the family can be achieved by providing support and services to a mother before, during and after she makes a child abuse report herself.

Empowerment and advocacy for survivors

Throughout this publication, the word “empowerment” has been used countless times. There is good reason for this. A woman’s abuser takes power and control from her through the use of physical force, threats and coercion. Empowerment restores a woman’s power and control over her own life and affords her the opportunity to see herself as a strong survivor who can participate actively in securing safety for herself and her children.

A woman victimized by domestic violence deserves to tell her story to a non-judgmental, empathetic person. It is critically important to let her know that she is believed and that the violence is not her fault. This might be her first—and perhaps last—opportunity to be fully heard. By listening to a survivor talk about what has happened to her, you will have a greater understanding of her situation and can discuss options that are grounded in her experience, hopes and fears.

When people working with a woman who has been battered inform her of available resources and let her empower herself through education—instead of taking control and making decisions for her—it is more likely that she will be equipped to advocate for herself both immediately and throughout her life. That is not to say that advocates cannot provide additional assistance securing resources when asked

by the women with whom they are working. It also is important to remember that victims of domestic violence are, first and foremost, people. All too often women who are beaten by their intimate partners are saddled with labels and diagnoses by well-intentioned, yet misguided, people who simply want to help. Unfortunately, the labels that are applied to women who have been battered in particular moments in their lives do not reflect the total context and complexity of their experiences. People who work with survivors should keep in mind that these individuals can and do harness the enormous power of their own experiences to move beyond the violence that subdues the spirit within.



Empowerment affords a woman who has been battered the opportunity to see herself as a strong survivor who can participate actively in securing a life free from violence.

.....
What makes it possible for men to entrap women is not their greater physical strength but the social strength they derive when unequal power relationships are reinforced, rather than countered.

*They tell me I wouldn't
make decisions on
the job without
somebody's OK.
I could not make
decisions on my own.*

*That's the biggest
drawback that I've had,
learning how to make
decisions and feeling
comfortable with what
I can do. That I, that
I'm allowed to make
a decision and I don't
have to check with
someone to make sure
that this is the way
it should be. The
people in the office
say I was afraid to
do anything without
making sure that
somebody said it was
OK for me to do so.*

— SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The LIFE process of assisting women victimized by domestic violence

Listening, informing and educating can lead to empowerment for a victim when the LIFE process of assistance is used. Through this process, victims gain knowledge, and knowledge is power. This process happens in degrees, but it does happen.

LISTEN

- ▶ Provide a safe place for a woman to talk and tell her story.
- ▶ Afford sufficient time for her to become comfortable and able to discuss the details of her abuse.
- ▶ Begin with her story, history, concerns and questions. Affirm her experience and what she is saying. Clarify anything you do not or she does not understand.
- ▶ Identify her hopes and fears and the resources she is currently using or might need.
- ▶ Help her create a personalized safety plan.

INFORM

- ▶ Tell her about available resources.
- ▶ Explore her circumstances and discuss the worst- and best-case scenarios as they relate to each of the remedies available to her.

FACILITATE

- ▶ Help her to critically assess her chosen course of action (including her safety plan) and to understand the likely consequences of each action.
- ▶ Schedule specific times and dates for ongoing contacts or follow-up.
- ▶ Explore all contingency plans.

EMPOWER AND ASSIST HER

- ▶ Support her so she can advocate for herself, thereby taking control of her life and making it safer for herself and her children.

EMPOWERMENT IS THE CORE OF ADVOCACY

In the empowerment model, a woman seeking help is assumed to be a basically healthy person who needs understanding, concrete information, support and resources to make changes.

.....

You should consciously reinforce the expectation that a woman who has been battered can—and will—take charge of her own life.



This is an adaptation of the "Empowerment Wheel" developed by the Domestic Violence Project, Inc., in Kenosha, WI, and is based on the "Power and Control and Equality Wheel" developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, MN.

A GUIDE TO WORKING WITH WOMEN IN CRISIS

The written Japanese *kanji* expression for “crisis” is composed of two characters. Taken separately, one means “opportunity,” the other means “danger.” Crisis can thus be a time of danger or vulnerability that offers an opportunity for change and growth.

.....

► REMAIN CALM

Fear is contagious, and many women in crisis have enough fear bottled up to last a lifetime. By emotionally reacting to a woman’s fear you might limit your own ability to think clearly. The best ways to combat your fear are to be well-informed on procedures and resources, know yourself and learn to gauge your own emotional reactions, and get to know the woman you are working with so you can help her separate objective reality from her immediate sense of fear.

► LET WOMEN DECIDE THEIR OWN PACE FOR CHANGE

Allow women you are helping to decide on their own plan of action. Some women in crisis have never recognized their own resources. Others have lost touch with their resources. Respect and believe in a woman’s capacity to change and grow.

► EXPLAIN ALL KINDS OF INFORMATION THOROUGHLY

Don’t assume that women know about their rights or available services. Don’t talk down to women, but do be thorough in explaining information about your services and other community resources. If a woman looks or sounds confused, ask if she has any questions. Listen to her. Remember that she is the expert on her situation.

► DO NOT IMPOSE YOUR OWN VALUES

This does not mean you cannot express concern about a woman’s choices if you believe she is in danger, but it does mean you must be careful not to reject her even if you disagree with her behavior. Understanding the dynamics of domestic violence can help you avoid anger and despair when women struggle with decisions about ending a violent relationship or “giving it one more try.”

► ENCOURAGE EACH WOMAN TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR HER FUTURE

There might be a tendency for you to want to do things for her that she can do for herself. Even though you can and should help her, she will become stronger and more self-sufficient as she assumes responsibility for her own life.

► DON’T CONVEY DISAPPOINTMENT IF A WOMAN RETURNS TO AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

She will have enough conflicts about her decision. She might feel like she is failing you. You can point out your concerns about her safety while still accepting her. Respect her decision and remind her that you are available if she needs you in the future. Always work with her to create a safety plan.

► BE ABLE TO TOLERATE YOUR OWN ANGER AND THE WOMAN’S ANGER

Have some personal outlets for your anger, anxiety and frustrations. You will be better equipped to help women in crisis if you can avoid “burn out” and overwhelming stress. Talk to other staff members or domestic violence program advocates if you need help dealing with your anger or a woman’s anger about the violence she has survived.

► MINIMIZE EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

Avoid focusing on your own personal history. If you are distant, however, the woman you are trying to help might feel hurt. Strive for a comfortable balance. Answer her questions about you with minimal detail and turn the conversation back to her life. Convey warmth, respect and concern.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

Safety plans might help you anticipate the dangers you may face. Just as abusers continually shift their tactics of power and control, your safety plan is an adaptable tool to help increase your safety in your ever-changing situation.

■ WHEN TO USE A SAFETY PLAN

Safety plans can be made for a variety of situations: for dealing with an emergency, such as when you are threatened with a physical assault or an assault has occurred; for continuing to live with or date a partner who has been abusive; or for protecting yourself after you have ended a relationship with an abusive partner.

■ USE WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW

If you are a woman who has been abused, you probably know more about safety planning and risk assessment than you might realize. Being in a relationship with an abusive partner—and surviving—requires considerable skill and resourcefulness. Any time you do or say something as a way to protect yourself or your children, you are assessing risk and enacting a safety plan. You do it all the time; it's just not always a conscious process.

■ THINK IT THROUGH

It can be a helpful strategy to evaluate risks and make safety plans in a more intentional way. Whether you are currently with your partner or have ended the relationship, and whether you choose to use available services or to involve the police, there are certain things that are helpful to consider in planning for your future safety.

■ BE AWARE OF DANGERS

If you are planning to leave your partner or already have left, be aware that batterers often escalate their violence during times of separation, increasing your risk for harm, including serious and life-threatening injury. Making a separation safety plan can help reduce the risks to you and your children.

■ EVALUATE YOUR OPTIONS

Only you can judge who it's safe to tell about your situation and who to ask for help. Sometimes, people who don't have good information about domestic violence respond to women who have been abused in ways that aren't helpful, even when they mean well. On

the other hand, you might feel comfortable asking for help from someone you know. It's your decision. The important thing is for you to identify all the people who might be willing and able to help you. Make a list of their phone numbers and attach it to your safety plan for easy reference.

■ PLAN AHEAD

You don't have to wait for an emergency to ask for help. In fact, it's a good idea to talk to people who can help before there's a crisis. Find out what they are willing and able to do for you. That way, you'll know in advance if you have a place to stay, a source of financial assistance or a person to keep copies of important papers.

■ REDUCE YOUR RISK

No woman has control over her partner's violence, but women can and do find ways to reduce their risk of harm. The following safety plan is a tool to help you identify and evaluate your options and assist you in creating a personalized plan to reduce your risk when confronted with the threat of harm or with actual harm. Use what applies or change it to reflect your particular situation. **Your safety plan does not need to be written down (especially if you fear your abuser will find it), though you may choose to.** There's no right or wrong way to develop a safety plan. Make it your own, and review it regularly to make changes as needed.

■ SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

- ☐ I will use my judgment and intuition. If I think my partner is going to hurt me, I will try to move to a space that has lower risk, such as _____. (Often bathrooms, garages, kitchens, areas near weapons or rooms without an outside exit are most dangerous.)
- ☐ If the situation is serious, I can give my partner what he wants to try to calm him down. I have the right to protect myself until I/my children are out of danger.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN (CONTINUED)

► SAFETY IF STAYING

- ☐ I can tell _____ about the violence and request they call the police if they hear noises coming from my home.
- ☐ I can teach my children how to use the telephone or dial 911 to contact the police or fire department and/or how to contact a safe neighbor for help. I will make sure my children know our address.
- ☐ If I have a programmable phone, I can program emergency numbers.
- ☐ I will use _____ as the code word with my children or my friends so they will call for help if needed.
- ☐ If I have to leave my home, I will go to _____. If I cannot go there, I can go to _____.
- ☐ The domestic violence program hotline number is _____. I can call it or the national hotline at (800) 799-SAFE for help.

► SAFETY IF LEAVING

Preparing to leave

- ☐ I will call a domestic violence program to get help making my plans. The hotline number for the nearest program is _____.
- ☐ I will leave money and an extra set of keys with _____ so I can leave quickly.
- ☐ I will leave extra clothes with _____.
- ☐ I can open a post office box and have personal mail and bills (credit cards, cell phone, etc.) sent there.
- ☐ I will ask _____ and _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
- ☐ I can increase my independence by opening a bank account and getting credit cards in my own name; by taking classes or getting job skills; and/or by getting copies of all the important papers and documents I might need and keeping them with _____.
- ☐ I can rehearse my escape plan and, if appropriate, practice it with my children.
- ☐ If it's not safe to talk openly, I will use _____ as the code word or signal to my children that we are leaving, or to my family or friends that we are coming.
- ☐ I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____ so I can leave quickly.

► ITEMS TO CONSIDER TAKING IF LEAVING

The following items may be helpful to have if you decide to leave, but remember that almost all of these items are replaceable.

- ☐ Identification for myself
- ☐ My and my children's birth certificates
- ☐ My and my children's Social Security cards
- ☐ School and vaccination records
- ☐ Money, checkbook, bankbooks, ATM cards
- ☐ Credit cards
- ☐ Medication and medical supplies
- ☐ Keys—house, car, work
- ☐ Driver's license, car registration
- ☐ Insurance papers
- ☐ Public assistance ID/Medicaid cards
- ☐ Passports, Alien Registration Receipt Cards, work permits
- ☐ Divorce or separation papers
- ☐ Lease, rental agreement or house deed
- ☐ Car/mortgage payment book
- ☐ Children's toys, security blankets, stuffed animals
- ☐ Sentimental items, photos
- ☐ My personalized safety plan (if written down)

► SAFETY AT HOME

If my partner and I are no longer living together

- ☐ I can, or ask my landlord to, change the locks on my doors and windows.
- ☐ I can, or ask my landlord to, replace wooden doors with metal ones.
- ☐ I can, or ask my landlord to, install security systems, including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, etc.
- ☐ I can buy rope ladders to be used for escape from second-floor windows.
- ☐ I can install smoke detectors and put fire extinguishers on each floor in my home.
- ☐ I can provide my onsite property manager and/or trusted neighbors with a picture of my partner and ask them to notify the police if they see him near my home.

► SAFETY AT WORK

- ☐ I can inform my boss, the security supervisor and the employee assistance program (EAP), if available, about my situation. The number of the EAP office is _____.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN (CONTINUED)

- ☐ I can ask to screen my calls and visitors at work.
- ☐ When leaving work, I can _____.
- ☐ If there's trouble when traveling to and from work, I can _____.

► SAFETY IN PUBLIC OR IF BEING STALKED

- ☐ If I suspect I am in imminent danger, I will locate a safe place for myself (police stations, residences of family or friends, domestic violence shelters, local churches, public areas, etc.).
- ☐ I can document my partner's actions and keep it in a safe place. This may include taking photos of destroyed property/vandalism, saving answering machine messages, keeping letters/notes, etc.
- ☐ I can change my patterns—avoid stores, restaurants, banks, doctor's appointments, self-service laundries and other places where my partner might find me based on my regular schedule.
- ☐ I can tell _____ and _____ about the situation and provide them with a photo or description of my partner and any possible vehicles he may drive. I can ask them to call the police if they believe I or my children are in danger.
- ☐ When I am out of the house, I will try not to travel alone and will try to stay in public areas.

► WITH AN ORDER OF PROTECTION

- ☐ I will keep my protection order _____.
(Always keep it on or near you.)
- ☐ I will give copies of my protection order to the local police or sheriff and to departments in towns where I visit friends and family.
- ☐ I will give copies to my employer, my religious advisor, my closest friend, my children's school and child-care center and _____.
- ☐ If my partner destroys my order or if I lose it, I can get another copy from the court that issued it.
- ☐ If my partner violates the order, I can call the police and report a violation, contact my attorney, call my domestic violence program advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation.
- ☐ I can call a domestic violence program if I have questions about how to enforce an order or if I have problems getting it enforced.

► PROTECTING MY CHILDREN

- ☐ I can teach developmentally appropriate safety strategies to my children.
- ☐ I can teach my children how to make a collect call to me if they are concerned about their safety.
- ☐ I can teach my children how to use the telephone or dial 911 to contact the police and fire departments and how to contact a safe neighbor for help. I will make sure they know our address.
- ☐ I can tell my children's caretakers who has permission to pick them up and make sure caretakers know how to recognize those people.
- ☐ I will give the people who take care of my children copies of custody and protection orders, as well as emergency numbers.

► SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY

- ☐ Each day there are advances in technology. I can ask someone familiar with technology or domestic violence about the ways that my partner may monitor me.
- ☐ I will use a computer that my partner doesn't have access to when I look for help, a new place to live, etc. It may be safest to use a computer at a public library, Internet café, community center or _____.
- ☐ I can ask my friends and family to be careful about who they give my email address to, and to use the Bcc: option when copying me in on email.
- ☐ When making or receiving private calls, I will not use a cell phone that I share with my partner because my partner may have access to cell phone billing records and phone logs and may have put settings on my phone that allow him to track my whereabouts. My local domestic violence shelter may have a donated cell phone I can use.
- ☐ I will ask the court systems, post office and other government agencies how they protect or publish my records and request that they seal or restrict access to my files to help protect my safety.

► MY EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- ☐ If I am feeling down, lonely or confused, I can call _____ or the domestic violence hotline.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN (CONTINUED)

- ☐ If I have left my partner and am considering returning, I will call _____ or spend time with _____ before I make a decision.
- ☐ I can attend support groups, workshops or classes at the local domestic violence program or _____ so I can build a support system, learn skills or get information.
- ☐ I will look at how and when I drink alcohol or use other drugs. If I am going to drink or use other drugs, I will do it in a place where people are committed to my safety.

D KEEP YOUR PLAN IN A SAFE PLACE

Only you can decide if it is safe to have a written safety plan. If you decide to keep a written safety plan, make sure to find a place to keep it where your partner won't find it; maybe you can ask a friend to keep a copy for you. Whether it's safe to write down your plan or not, it's still important to make one.

D WHAT CAN A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM DO FOR ME?

Local domestic violence programs are a vital resource, providing free and confidential assistance to women victimized by domestic violence and their children. They provide emergency safety services, such as shelter and 24-hour crisis hotlines. **But you don't have to stay in a shelter to get help from a program.** Most also provide a full range of non-residential services to women who have been battered. Domestic violence program advocates have accurate information about domestic violence and are experienced in providing assistance to women who have been battered and their children. They understand the criminal justice, family court and social service systems; and they are familiar with other community resources that might be useful to you.

In addition to giving you good information, advocates often can accompany you to court, to the police station or to social services offices. They can provide you with practical and emotional support. Getting help from someone who has experience working with survivors of domestic violence and who knows how to work with the different systems can make things a lot easier for you.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

800-799-SAFE (7233)

**Toll-free, 24-hour crisis intervention
and referrals to domestic violence
programs in your area.**

This personalized safety plan was adapted from ones developed by AWARE in St. Louis, the Office of the City Attorney, San Diego, the National Center for Victims of Crime Stalking Resource Center and the National Network to End Domestic Violence Safety Net Project.

Fundamental issues related to justice system remedies

For most women, becoming a victim of a violent crime is their first introduction to the legal system. It can be complicated, confusing, frustrating, intimidating and, often, insulting. The stress of dealing with the bewildering proceedings and the frequently encountered gender bias of the justice system adds to a victim's trauma. And, while the court system is able to respond to some of the needs of women who have been battered, it is equally important that both survivors and those who work with them understand its limitations in ending violence against women.

Because a woman's danger generally increases as she tries to escape her abuser, it is vitally important that she have a well-thought-out safety plan. She is the expert on her situation and has been using all of her skills to survive so far. The likelihood is great that her abuser will retaliate or that the violence will escalate as she tries to engage the justice system. Keep in mind that testifying in court against an abuser can be a frightening and dangerous thing for a survivor to do. It might be the first time she faces her partner since the last attack or when she was able to leave. She has every reason to believe that his anger and violence will escalate as a result of the steps she is taking to free herself.

Because victims recognize the danger associated with testifying against their abusers, or because of threats from their abuser, they may recant accusations of abuse or refuse to cooperate with law enforcement and/or prosecutors. While recanting or refusing to cooperate may appear to be counter-intuitive—if he goes to jail, he cannot hurt her—abusers often threaten harm and have ways of controlling their victims even while incarcerated (e.g., using friends, family or children). Also, most batterers do not go to jail. And, those who do may seek revenge once they are released. Recanting or refusing to cooperate with the prosecution of their batterers is an often-misunderstood survival strategy sometimes employed by women victimized by domestic violence.



Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that adults or adolescents use against their current or former intimate partners.

.....
Domestic violence occurs in intimate relationships where the perpetrator and the victim are currently or previously have been dating, living together, married or divorced. They might have children in common or not.

Concealing a survivor's address

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If a survivor does not want her abuser to know where she is living, she has the right to request her address not be disclosed in the court documents. She can also conceal her address by applying for the Safe at Home program through the Secretary of State's office. This program allows a survivor to establish a post office box in Jefferson City if she has relocated or is about to relocate to an address unknown to the assailant and that is not part of any public record. The Secretary of State will receive all mail sent to her, then forward the mail to her actual address.

More information can be found by calling the toll-free number for the Secretary of State's office (866) 509-1409, or on the website, www.sos.mo.gov.

BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF PROTECTION ORDERS

It is important that survivors are informed about the benefits and drawbacks of getting an Order of Protection. It must be made clear to her that it is not an ironclad shield against the abuser's renewed assaults. Even law enforcement agencies that have strong resolve to respond to victims' needs cannot provide officers to be with her 24 hours a day. Furthermore, a woman's ability to rely on assistance from police and sheriff's deputies often depends upon the particular officer who answers a call. Even at best, the violence might happen so suddenly that she can call for help only after an assault has occurred.

Experience suggests that Orders of Protection might be most effective with men who ordinarily obey the law and have something to protect, such as their standing in the community or their employment. For the batterer who has contempt for all authority, has a history of other criminal behavior or is determined to control his partner at all costs, an Order of Protection might offer little increased safety to a woman.

On the other hand, having an Order of Protection can enhance local law enforcement's efforts to assist the victim, and repeated violations of a protection order eventually are likely to result in legal consequences for a perpetrator.

ENFORCEMENT OF PROTECTION ORDERS

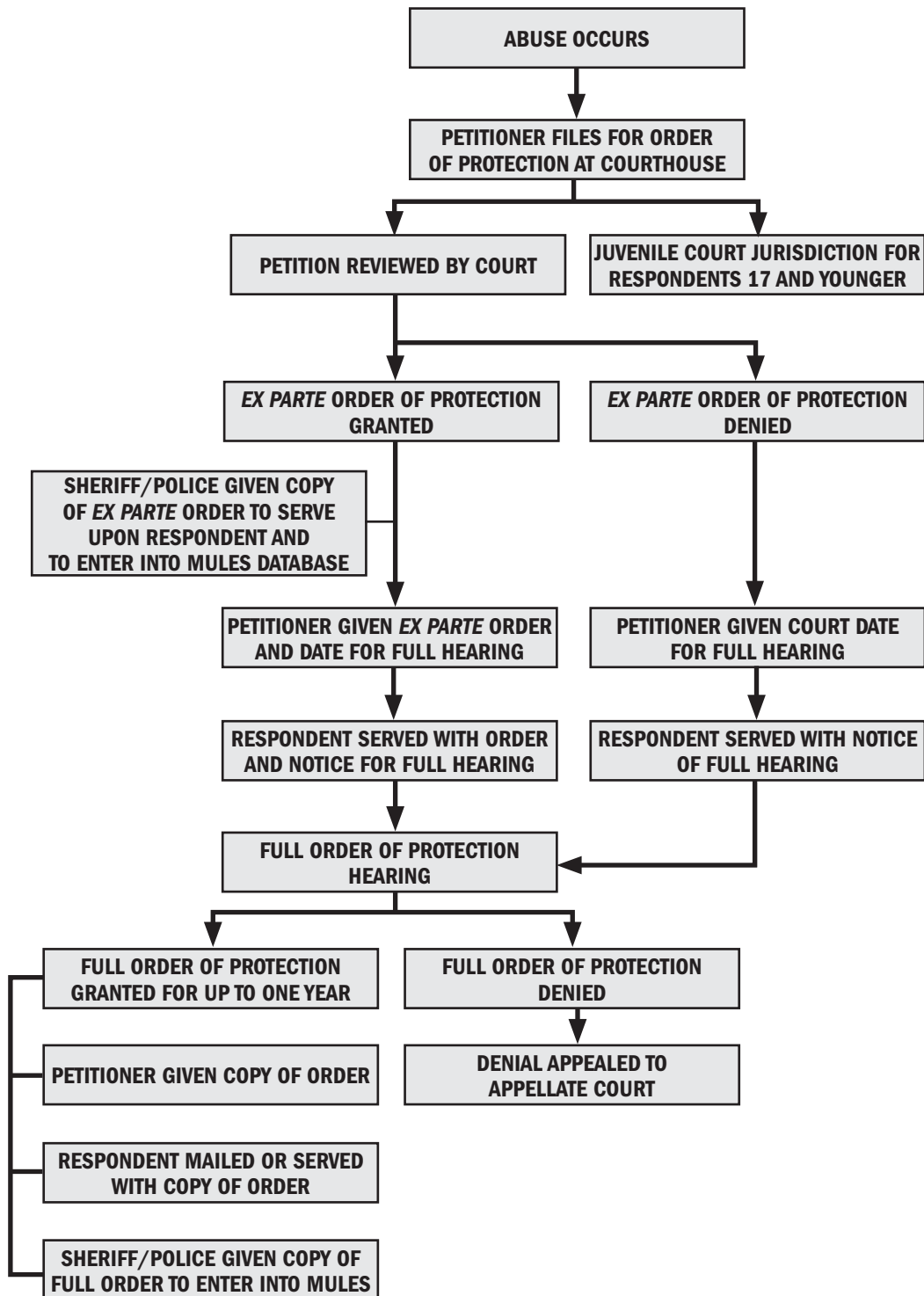
A violation of an Order of Protection is a criminal offense, and you should contact law enforcement immediately if the order has been violated. Law enforcement should arrest the abuser if you show them you have an order and they reasonably believe that the abuser has abusively violated it. If an order has been abusively violated, your abuser can be arrested and prosecuted for certain crimes. The abuser can be arrested if he continues to contact you, frighten or stalk you, disregards any provision of the child custody order or enters your dwelling or place of employment or school, or goes within a certain distance of you or your child. If the violation involves the abuser's failure to surrender custody of the children to you as ordered, he can be arrested and the children turned over to you.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CRIMINAL OFFENDERS

Domestic violence is a crime, and it ought to be accorded the same prosecution efforts as any other violent offense. Communities and the justice system have a critical interest in reducing the prevalence of domestic violence, particularly because such violence tends to escalate in frequency and severity if unchecked. According to the U.S. Department of Justice National Crime Victimization Survey, more than 1,640 women were murdered by a current or former intimate partner in 2007.

In addition to holding criminals accountable for their conduct, there are other significant reasons that underscore the importance of a diligent response to domestic violence from members of the criminal justice system. Offender prosecution in domestic violence cases can protect the victim from additional acts of violence, reduce children's exposure and possible injury, deter the abuser from committing further acts of violence and reinforce a community's refusal to tolerate domestic abuse.

PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING AN ADULT ORDER OF PROTECTION



RELIEF AVAILABLE WITH PROTECTION ORDERS

Missouri domestic violence law allows a victim of abuse to ask the court for the following types of help, as well as other types of help the court reasonably deems necessary to ensure the petitioner's safety, through an Order of Protection, such as prohibiting a Respondent from entering a Petitioner's place of employment or school or ordering that a Respondent stays a certain distance away from the Petitioner or the Petitioner's child. However, these orders are not always granted by the court.

EX PARTE ORDER OF PROTECTION (SECTION 455.045, RSMO)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p> D Temporarily restrains the Respondent from abusing, threatening to abuse, molesting, stalking or disturbing the peace of the Petitioner. </p> <p> D Temporarily restrains the respondent from entering the premises of the dwelling unit of the petitioner when the dwelling unit is: a) jointly owned, leased or rented or jointly occupied by both parties; or b) owned, leased, rented or occupied by the Petitioner individually; or c) jointly owned, leased or rented by the Petitioner and a person other than the Respondent; provided, however, no spouse shall be denied relief </p> | <p>under this section by reason of the absence of a property interest in the dwelling unit; or d) jointly occupied by the Petitioner and a person other than the Respondent; provided that the Respondent has no property interest in the dwelling unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p> D Temporarily restrains the Respondent from communicating with the Petitioner in any manner or through any medium. </p> <p> D Awards temporary custody of minor children where appropriate. </p> |
|--|--|

FULL ORDER OF PROTECTION (SECTIONS 455.050 AND 455.075, RSMO)

- Prohibits the Respondent from abusing, threatening, attempting to abuse, molesting, stalking or disturbing the peace of the Petitioner.
- Prohibits the Respondent from entering the premises of the dwelling unit of the Petitioner when the dwelling unit is: a) jointly owned, leased or rented or jointly occupied by both parties; or b) owned, leased, rented or occupied by the Petitioner individually; or c) jointly owned, leased, rented or occupied by the Petitioner and a person other than the Respondent; provided, however, no spouse shall be denied relief under this section by reason of the absence of a property interest in the dwelling unit; or d) jointly occupied by the Petitioner and a person other than the Respondent; provided that the Respondent has no property interest in the dwelling unit.
- Prohibits the Respondent from communicating with the Petitioner in any manner or through any medium.
- Awards custody of minor children born to or adopted by the parties when the court has jurisdiction over such child and no prior order regarding custody is pending or has been made, and the best interest of the child requires such order be issued. There is a presumption that the best interest of the child is served by placing him or her in the custody of the non-abusive parent.
- Establishes a visitation schedule for the non-custodial parent that is in the best interest of the child. The court can deny visitation if it finds that visitation would endanger the child's physical health, impair his or her emotional development or would otherwise conflict with the best interests of the child, or that no visitation can be arranged that would sufficiently protect the custodial parent from future abuse.
- Awards child support, when no prior order of support exists.
- Awards income maintenance, for no more than 180 days, to the Petitioner when the Petitioner and the Respondent are lawfully married.
- Orders the Respondent to make or to continue to make rent or mortgage payments on a residence occupied by the Petitioner if the Respondent is found to have a duty to support the Petitioner or other dependent household members.
- Orders the Respondent to pay the Petitioner's rent at a residence other than the one previously shared by the parties if the Respondent is found to have a duty to support the Petitioner and the Petitioner requests alternative housing.
- Orders the Petitioner be given temporary possession of specified personal property, such as automobiles, checkbooks, keys and other personal effects.
- Prohibits the Respondent from transferring, encumbering, or otherwise disposing of specified property mutually owned or leased by the parties.
- Orders the Respondent to participate in a court-approved counseling program designed to help batterers stop violent behavior or to participate in a substance abuse treatment program.
- Orders the Respondent to pay a reasonable fee for housing and other services that have been provided or that are being provided to the Petitioner by a domestic violence shelter.
- Orders the Respondent to pay court costs.
- Orders the Respondent to pay the cost of medical treatment and services that have been provided or that are being provided to the Petitioner as a result of injuries sustained to the Petitioner by an act of domestic violence committed by the Respondent.
- Orders one of the parties to pay the other's attorney's fees.

MISSOURI ADULT ABUSE ACT AT A GLANCE

WHO CAN OBTAIN RELIEF?

Adult Order of Protection: (§455.010) Any **adult**, defined as a person 17 years of age or older or otherwise emancipated. This person is called the Petitioner.

Child Order of Protection: (§455.010 & §455.503) Any **parent, guardian, guardian ad litem, court-appointed special advocate, or juvenile officer** on behalf of a child (any person younger than 17 years of age). This person is called the Petitioner.

WHOM CAN THEY OBTAIN RELIEF AGAINST?

Adult and Child Orders of Protection: (§455.010) A **family or household member** (a spouse, a former spouse, any person related by blood or marriage, any person residing together or who resided together in the past, any person who is or has been in a continuing social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, or anyone who has a child in common, regardless of whether they have been married or have resided together) or **any person stalking** the victim. This person is called the Respondent.

New in 2011: *An Adult Order of Protection and a Child Order of Protection can be filed against a person younger than 17.*

WHAT ACTS BY THE ABUSER FORM THE BASIS FOR RELIEF?

Adult and Child Orders of Protection: (§455.010) **Abuse**, which includes, but is not limited to, the occurrence of any of the following acts, attempts, or threats against a person who may be protected under Missouri law: **assault, battery, coercion, harassment, sexual assault or unlawful imprisonment, except abuse shall not include abuse inflicted on a child by accidental means by an adult or household member or discipline of a child, including spanking, in a reasonable manner. Stalking also is covered by this section of law.**

WHAT RELIEF IS AVAILABLE?

Adult Order of Protection:

(§455.045) *Ex Parte* Order of Protection.

(§455.050) Full Order of Protection.

Child Order of Protection:

(§455.520) *Ex Parte* Child Order of Protection.

(§455.523) Full Child Order of Protection.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING RELIEF?

Adult Order of Protection: (§§455.015–455.032) **Petitioning** court for Order of Protection. (§455.035) **Obtaining** *ex parte* Order of Protection if there is an immediate and present danger. An *ex parte* Order of Protection is not always granted, but the Court always should set a hearing date. (§455.040) **Hearing** on full Order of Protection held within 15 days after petition is filed, unless there is good cause for a continuance.

Child Order of Protection: (§§455.503–455.510) **Petitioning** court for Child Order of Protection. (§455.513) **Obtaining** *ex parte* Child Order of Protection if there is an immediate and present danger. An *ex parte* Order of Protection is not always granted, but the Court always should set a hearing date. (§455.516) **Hearing** on full Child Order of Protection within 15 days after petition is filed, unless there is good cause for a continuance.

New in 2011: *If an Order of Protection is filed against a person younger than 17, the case will be moved to juvenile court.*

HOW LONG CAN AN ORDER LAST, AND IS IT RENEWABLE?

Adult Order of Protection: (§455.040) An Order of Protection lasts for a **minimum of 180 days** and a **maximum of one year**. It can be renewed twice; each renewal can last up to one year. No new incident of abuse is required if the order is renewed before the old one expires.

Child Order of Protection: (§455.516) A Child Order of Protection can last for a **minimum of 180 days** and a **maximum of one year**. The order can be renewed twice; each renewal can last up to one year. No new incident of abuse is required if the order is renewed before the old one expires.

New in 2011: (§455.040 & 455.516) **Automatic One-Year Renewal.** *The Court may, upon a finding that it is in the best interest of the parties, include a provision that any full Order of Protection for one year shall automatically renew unless the Respondent requests a hearing by 30 days prior to its expiration.*

MISSOURI ADULT ABUSE ACT AT A GLANCE (CONTINUED)

▶ WHAT HAPPENS IF ANOTHER COURT MAKES A CUSTODY ORDER?

Adult Order of Protection: (§455.060) The portion of the Order of Protection relating to **custody, visitation, support and maintenance** is no longer valid, but the prohibitions regarding abuse remain in effect.

Child Order of Protection: (§455.528) The portion of the Order of Protection relating to **custody, visitation, support and maintenance** is no longer valid, but the prohibitions regarding abuse remain in effect.

▶ CAN AN ORDER BE MODIFIED?

Adult Order of Protection: (§455.060 & §455.065) **Yes.** Upon the filing of a motion and a showing of changed circumstances.

Child Order of Protection: (§455.528 & §455.530) **Yes.** Upon the filing of a motion and a showing of changed circumstances.

▶ ARE PROTECTION ORDERS FROM OTHER STATES ENFORCEABLE IN MISSOURI?

Adult Order of Protection: (§455.067) **Yes.** The Adult Abuse Act provides that orders from other states must be given “full faith and credit” in Missouri. A procedure for registering these “foreign orders” is contained in the statute. However, registration does not have to occur for such orders to be enforced.

Child Order of Protection: **Uncertain.** No statutory or legal precedent at this time. Child orders might be covered by the federal Violence Against Women Act. Consult an attorney.

▶ WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ORDER IS VIOLATED?

Adult and Child Orders of Protection: (§455.085 & §455.090) The violator can be **arrested** and **prosecuted** for a crime. Arrestable violations of the terms and conditions of a protection order include abuse, stalking, disregard of child custody provisions, communication initiated by the Respondent, or entrance upon the premises of the Petitioner’s dwelling unit, place of employment or school, or being within a certain distance of the Petitioner or child of the Petitioner. If the violation involves the failure to surrender custody of a minor child to the person to whom custody is awarded, the violator must be arrested and the **child turned over to the custodial parent**. A **contempt of court** action can be brought in the issuing court and the violator can be held in contempt of court. (This sometimes results in a fine and can include jail time.) The Court may schedule compliance review hearings to monitor the Respondent’s compliance with the order, whether or not there has been a violation.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ASSAULT CRIMES

The Missouri General Assembly in 2000 established separate crimes for domestic assault. These categories of assaults acknowledge elements of power and control, and include enhanced penalties for prior or persistent offenders.

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FIRST DEGREE DOMESTIC ASSAULT (SECTIONS 565.063, 565.072 RSMo)

DEFINITION - A person commits the crime of domestic assault in the first degree if he or she attempts to kill or knowingly causes or attempts to cause serious physical injury to a family or household member or an adult who is or has been in a continuing social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the actor, as defined in Section 455.010, RSMo.

PUNISHMENT - Domestic assault in the first degree is a Class B Felony, unless the offender inflicts serious physical injury on the victim, in which case it is a Class A Felony.

Prior offender (1 prior offense within 5 years): Class A Felony; no probation or parole if serious injury inflicted.

Persistent offender (2+ previous offenses within 10 years): Class A Felony; no probation or parole.

SECOND DEGREE DOMESTIC ASSAULT (SECTIONS 565.063, 565.073 RSMo)

DEFINITION - A person commits the crime of domestic assault in the second degree if the act involves a family or household member or an adult who is or has been in a continuing social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the actor, as defined in Section 455.010, RSMo, and he or she attempts to cause or knowingly causes physical injury by any means, including use of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument, or by choking or strangulation; or recklessly causes serious physical injury; or recklessly causes physical injury with a deadly weapon.

PUNISHMENT - Domestic assault in the second degree is a Class C Felony.

Prior offender (1 prior offense within 5 years): Class B Felony.

Persistent offender (2+ previous offenses within 10 years): Class A Felony.

THIRD DEGREE DOMESTIC ASSAULT (SECTION 565.074, RSMo)

DEFINITION - A person commits the crime of domestic assault in the third degree if the act involves a family or household member or an adult who is or has been in a continuing social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the actor, as defined in Section 455.010, RSMo, and he or she attempts to cause or recklessly causes physical injury; or with criminal negligence causes physical injury by means of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument; or places the victim in apprehension of immediate physical injury by any means; or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a grave risk of death or serious physical injury to the victim; or knowingly causes physical contact knowing the other person will regard the contact as offensive; or knowingly attempts to cause or causes the isolation of such family or household member by unreasonably and substantially restricting or limiting such family or household member's access to other persons, telecommunication devices or transportation for the purpose of isolation.

PUNISHMENT - Domestic assault in the third degree is a Class A Misdemeanor.

Persistent offender (2+ previous offenses): Class D Felony. The offenses may be against the same family or household member or against a different family or household member.

CRIME OF HARASSMENT - Harassment Law (565.090 RSMo)

In 2008 Missouri law was refined to expand the definition of harassment. Under this law, a person can commit the crime of harassment by any means of communication instead of only by written or telephone communication.

DEFINITION - A person commits the crime of harassment if he or she:

- Knowingly communicates a threat to commit any felony to another person which, in doing so, frightens, intimidates or causes emotional distress to that person; or
- Knowingly uses coarse language offensive to a person of average sensibility which causes that person to be in apprehension of offensive physical contact or harm; or
- Knowingly frightens, intimidates or causes emotional distress to another person by anonymously making telephone calls or by using any electronic communication; or
- Knowingly makes repeated, unwanted communication to another person; or
- Knowingly communicates with another person who is, or who purports to be, 17 or younger and recklessly frightens, intimidates or causes that person emotional distress; or
- Without good cause, engages in any other act with the purpose to frighten, intimidate or cause emotional distress to another person that causes that person to be frightened, intimidated or emotionally distressed.

PUNISHMENT - Harassment is a Class A misdemeanor, unless a person older than 21 commits harassment against a child 17 or younger or is a repeat offender, in which cases harassment would be a Class D felony.

CRIME OF STALKING - Stalking Law (565.225 RSMo)

In 2008 Missouri law expanded the definition of aggravated stalking, amended definitions related to stalking crimes and changed the requirements for penalties for both.

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DEFINITIONS:

Stalking - A person commits the crime of stalking if he or she purposely, through his or her course of conduct, harasses or follows with the intent of harassing another person.

Aggravated Stalking - A person commits the crime of aggravated stalking if he or she purposely, through his or her course of conduct, harasses or follows with the intent of harassing another person, and:

- Makes a credible threat to that person; or
- Violates a valid Order of Protection; or
- Violates probation or parole, pretrial release, or release on bond pending appeal; or
- The victim is 17 or younger and the perpetrator is 21 or older; or
- The person has previously pled guilty to or been found guilty of domestic assault, violation of an Order of Protection or any other crime where the other person was the victim.

In the above definitions, the following terms mean:

1. "Course of conduct" a pattern of conduct composed of two or more acts of communication by any means, over any period of time, evidencing a continuity of purpose.
2. "Credible threat" a threat communicated with the intent to cause the person who is the target of the threat to reasonably fear for his or her safety, or the safety of his or her family, or household members or domestic animals or livestock. The threat must be against the life of, or a threat to cause physical injury to, or the kidnapping of, the person, the person's family, or the person's household members or domestic animals or livestock.
3. "Harasses" to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that serves no legitimate purpose that would cause a reasonable person under the circumstances to be frightened, intimidated, or emotionally distressed.

PUNISHMENT -

Stalking is a Class A misdemeanor, unless an offender has committed or pled guilty to a subsequent offense, which would make it a Class D felony.

Aggravated stalking is a Class D felony unless an offender has committed or pled guilty to a subsequent offense, which would make it a Class C felony.

To see the complete version of any Missouri law, go to www.moga.mo.gov. Click on "Missouri Revised Statutes," and enter the statute number in the search field.

Collaboration: Expanding services with community partners

Working collectively provides opportunities to secure results we are more likely to achieve together than alone. These joint efforts, which are commonly known as collaborations, demand relating to and working with one another in innovative ways. In the context of addressing domestic violence, it is essential to bring together diverse service providers and community members, meld their resources, and stretch their minds to embrace new ideas and strategies.

For the sake of justice and human rights, communities have an interest and obligation to end domestic violence. The health, economic and social costs of domestic violence warrant attention as well. Living in an atmosphere dominated by domestic violence harms children and adults. Every community owes these individuals respect and competent services that provide safety and restore their well-being and sense of security.



**A key element to the success
of addressing domestic
violence is the existence
of available resources.**
.....

Domestic violence initiatives in any community require collaboration with other service providers and thereby offer opportunities to create and sustain new ways of working together.

Dozens of communities throughout Missouri are already effectively responding to domestic violence. Known as coordinated community responses, these efforts are often formed and maintained by individuals and organizations that most frequently serve women who have been battered. Groups of concerned civic leaders, law enforcement and justice system officials, social service and health care providers, educators, and clergy can have a significant effect upon their communities when

they unite for a common purpose. Some groups meet formally on a regular basis; others have an informal structure that relies upon regular and honest communication among the participants.

Collaboration is a process that gets people to work together in new ways. To most effectively collaborate, each community partner needs to know what resources partner agencies have to offer, how the referral and networking connections should be structured, and what services they can expect to be offered to the population of women and children all partners are striving to serve. To facilitate a cooperative alliance with domestic violence advocates, it is important to know something about the work they do and how they can assist survivors and their children by providing support and safety.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM SERVICES

Domestic violence programs provide a range of services:

- ▮ **Hotline.** Crisis intervention, information and referrals provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week on a telephone line answered by qualified, trained staff or volunteers.
- ▮ **Crisis intervention.** Interactions and activities performed by telephone or in person by qualified, trained staff or volunteers with an individual in crisis to stabilize emotions, clarify issues and provide support and assistance to help explore options for resolution of the individual's self-defined crisis and needs.
- ▮ **Shelter.** Emergency housing and related support services provided in a safe, protective environment for adult individuals and their children who have been victimized by domestic violence.
- ▮ **Transitional housing.** Non-emergency housing for a length of stay of more than six months that is free or low-cost subsidized and directly available through the program.
- ▮ **Support groups.** Interactive group sessions that may be non-directed, topic-oriented or informational and educational that are facilitated by a qualified, trained staff member or volunteer.
- ▮ **Services for children.** Structured programs that include information, activities, support and assistance provided to children.
- ▮ **Professional therapy.** Individual or group therapy delivered by an individual who is in compliance with state licensure rules and regulations pertaining to a psychologist, counselor or social worker and who has specific training in addressing domestic violence.
- ▮ **Ongoing advocacy.** Tangible, goal-directed interactions, advocacy and assistance provided to aid a survivor in obtaining needed services and developing short- and long-term resource and safety plans.
- ▮ **Court advocacy.** Provision of information, support, assistance, accompaniment and intervention with any aspect of the civil or criminal legal system on behalf of a service recipient.

It is important to understand that shelters and other domestic violence programs will not always be able to accommodate a woman and her children. Shelters are sometimes filled to capacity. Sometimes, after an in-depth interview and an assessment of alternatives, a domestic violence program advocate might not admit someone to the shelter, might not encourage getting an Order of Protection, or might not support your sense of urgency that she leave. Ultimately, all decisions regarding courses of action are up to the woman to make. She is the expert on her own life.

Ultimately, all decisions regarding courses of action are up to the woman to make. She is the expert on her own life.

Internet and Computer Safety

If you are in danger, please try to use a safer computer that someone abusive does not have direct or remote (hacking) access to.

Computers can store a lot of private information about what you look at via the Internet, the emails and instant messages you send, Internet-based phone and IP-TTY calls you make, web-based purchases and banking, and many other activities. It is not possible to delete or clear all the “foot-prints” of your computer or online activities.

It might be safer to use a computer in a public library, at a trusted friend’s house, or an Internet café to research an escape plan, new jobs, apartments or bus tickets, or to ask for help.

If you think your activities are being monitored, they probably are. Abusive people are often controlling and want to know your every move. You don’t need to be a computer programmer or have special skills to monitor someone’s computer and Internet activities—anyone can do it. There are many ways to monitor computer usage with programs including spyware, keystroke loggers and hacking tools.

Recommended websites

STATE

- ▶ Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, www.mocadsv.org

NATIONAL/OTHER

- ▶ The Battered Women’s Justice Project, www.bwjp.org
- ▶ The Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, www.duluth-model.org
- ▶ Faith Trust Institute, www.faithtrustinstitute.org
- ▶ Futures without Violence (formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund), www.endabuse.org
- ▶ Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse, www.mincava.umn.edu
- ▶ National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, www.ncdsv.org
- ▶ National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, www.ncadv.org
- ▶ National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, www.avp.org/ncavp.htm
- ▶ National Domestic Violence Hotline, www.ndvh.org
- ▶ National Electronic Network on Violence Against Women (VAWnet), www.vawnet.org
- ▶ National Network to End Domestic Violence, www.nnedv.org
- ▶ National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, www.nrcdv.org
- ▶ National Stalking Resource Center, www.ncvc.org/src
- ▶ PreventConnect, www.preventconnect.org
- ▶ U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention Family and Intimate Violence Prevention Team, www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/dvp.htm
- ▶ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs

The mission and purpose of MCADSV

The Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV) is the membership coalition of those working in the Missouri movement to end violence against women. Founded in 1980, MCADSV has more than 100 member programs that provide services to victims of violence against women. Since its beginning, MCADSV has worked to ensure there is someone to talk to, someplace to go and someone to help women victimized by violence when they need it most. MCADSV's members—individuals and organizations from throughout the state—count on the Coalition to provide them with the resources, training and expertise to further social justice in their own communities as well as a unified voice at the state level to improve public policy, systems and responses to violence against women. To further these aims, MCADSV provides the following services to its members and the communities they serve:

EDUCATION

- MCADSV educates the general public about domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking; trains professionals; and advocates public policy to prevent and alleviate violence against women.

ASSISTANCE

- MCADSV provides technical assistance, training and support to members and related communities of service providers.

ALLIANCE

- MCADSV provides opportunities for communication among those working in the movement to end violence against women.

RESEARCH

- MCADSV researches the extent of domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking to more effectively reduce its impact and occurrence in the lives of Missouri's women.

History of MCADSV

Formed in 1980 to affect public policy relating to domestic violence in the state of Missouri, the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV) formally expanded its mission in 2006 to also address the needs of women victimized by sexual violence, dating violence and stalking. MCADSV is the state's oldest and sole grassroots organization of community-based programs and advocates working to end violence in the lives of Missouri's women.



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