

OUT OF THE SHADOWS



A HANDBOOK ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PRESENTED BY
THE WOMEN'S FUND TASK FORCE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

National Hotline	1-800-799-SAFE (7233) 1-800-787-3224 (TDD)
Nebraska Hotline	1-800-876-6238
Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition	1-402-476-6256
Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Crisis Center (<i>Fremont</i>)	1-800-479-6221
Family Services Domestic Abuse Program (<i>Bellevue</i>)	1-800-523-3666
YWCA - Women Against Violence (<i>Omaha</i>)	1-402-345-7273
Catholic Charities - The Shelter (<i>Omaha</i>)	1-402-558-5700
There's No Excuse For Domestic Violence (<i>Public Education Campaign</i>)	1-800-777-1960

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - AN OVERVIEW

This overview is an attempt to explain some of the societal causes of domestic violence, dispel some of the myths, educate you on the cycle of violence, give you some local statistics, and point out some of the costs associated with this blight on our society. All information is documented and sources can be found in the appendix. It is our hope that this information will assist you in answering the question "What Can I Do?" and help us to "Pull domestic violence OUT OF THE SHADOWS, unite the community against it, and stop the violence."ⁱ

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Psychiatric Model links personality disorders, mental illness, alcohol and substance abuse to domestic violence.

Social-psychiatric Model examines the external environmental factors that affect the family - family structure, intergenerational abuse, family interaction patterns.

Sociocultural Model examines violence in light of the cultural norms and socially structured variables such as inequality and cultural attitudes about violence.

DEFINITIONS

Domestic Violence is defined as a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners. Other terms used may be partner abuse, spouse abuse, woman abuse and wife-beating.

Family Violence encompasses all violence that occurs inside a family unit. It can include partner, child, sibling, parent, and elder abuse.

Intimate means boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, ex-spouse, etc.

Other relative means parent, sibling, grandparent, in-law, cousin, etc.

Stranger means someone unknown to the victim.

Serious Injuries include gunshot or knife wounds, broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and undetermined injuries requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization.

Minor Injuries include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, and undetermined injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization.

Medical Care refers to any care or treatment given for injuries by a medical provider, a nonmedical person, or by the victim herself.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE

Physical abuse: pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking, choking, assault with a weapon, holding, tying down or restraining; leaving victim in a dangerous place, refusing to help when victim is sick or injured.

Emotional and psychological abuse: threats of harm, physical and social isolation, extreme jealousy and possessiveness, deprivation, intimidation, degradation and humiliation, calling names and constantly criticizing, insulting and belittling, false accusation - blaming victim for everything, ignoring, dismissing or ridiculing her needs, lying, breaking promises, destroying trust, driving fast and recklessly to frighten and intimidate victim.

Sexual abuse: trying to make her perform sexual acts against her will, pursuing sexual activity when she is not fully conscious or is not asked or is afraid to say no, hurting her physically during sex or assaulting her genitals, including use of objects or weapons intravaginally, orally or anally, coercing her to have sex without protection against pregnancy or transmittable diseases; criticizing her and calling her sexually degrading names.

Economic Coercion: Trapping the woman in the relationship through her fear of becoming poor or using money as a coercive weapon. Economic deprivation being used as a form of control, blaming the woman for the batterer's financial instability, requiring the woman to bail the batterer out of financial problems, man does not work and requires the woman to support him.

Escalation: Often when the physical abuse has stopped, the other forms of abuse will escalate. This is because all of the abuse is a matter of control - once one form of control has been discarded (for whatever reason - i.e., threat of jail, etc.), other forms of control will be reasserted with increasing frequency and gravity.

THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

The battering cycle appears to have three definite phases. These phases can vary in both intensity and time both for the same couple and between different couples. There does not seem to be any clinical way to predict how long a phase will last or how long the entire cycle will last. Some cycles lengthen and shorten depending on different stages in the couples' lives.