

An Introduction to Domestic Violence

Fact Sheets Compiled By The
Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence
Promoting economic, racial and social justice



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The Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence is a human rights organization committed to ending violence against women, youth and children through support, advocacy, education and community organizing.

Envisioning a just and equitable world for women and their families.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

24-hour Crisis Line: 303-444-2424

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**To make a donation,
please send checks to SPAN, 835 North Street, Boulder, CO 8034.**

Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

Statistics: January – December 2007

Shelter and Crisis Line:

Women in Shelter: 192

Children in Shelter: 61

Total days of service: 5,063

Number of women referred to other shelters due to lack of space: 218

Number of children who witnessed abuse: 23%

Crisis Line Calls: 8,715

Advocacy:

Number of victims who received advocacy immediately following an abusive incident: 435

Number of individuals who received Legal Advocacy: 319

Number of individuals who received Immigrant Legal Advocacy: 64

Counseling:

Number of women who received group counseling: 281

Number of women who received individual counseling: 226

Number of children who received group counseling: 333

Number of children who received individual counseling: 61

Transitional Services:

Number of women served: 89

Number of children served: 103

Education:

Number of community presentations: 150

Number of school-based presentations: 434

Total number of people reached through presentations: 9,669

Volunteers:

Number of volunteers: 377

Number of volunteer hours: 42,399

General Domestic Violence Statistics

- ❑ A common crime: 50% of all couples experience at least one violent incident.
- ❑ One in 5 female high school students reports being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.
- ❑ For 1 in 4 couples, violence is a common occurrence.
- ❑ Battering is the most common cause of injury to women – more frequent than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.
- ❑ It is more likely that a woman will be killed by her spouse than a police officer killed in the line of duty.
- ❑ 20% of all murders in this country are committed in the family. 13% are committed by intimate partners.
- ❑ 21% of all women who use hospital emergency surgical services are battered.
- ❑ 6 million American women are beaten each year by their partners.
- ❑ There are 1200 battered women's shelters in the U.S. ... and 3600 animal shelters.

Sources: FBI; Journal of the American Medical Association, US Bureau of Justice Statistics.

BARRIERS TO LEAVING

The question “Why do victims stay in abusive relationships?” shifts the responsibility of safety from the violence from the abuser to the victim. A better question is “Why doesn’t the perpetrator stop using violence?” It is also useful to understand some of the barriers women experience when leaving is a possible option:

1. INCREASE RISK OF DANGER: Fears that the partner will follow her and kill her if she leaves; often based on real threats by the abuser
2. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE: Having to face the difficulties of trying to financially support herself and her children.
3. PARENTING: Needing (or being told that she needs) a partner to help parent. Fear she can’t cope with home and children by herself.
4. RELIGION AND EXTENDED FAMILY: Pressure to keep the family together.
5. FEAR OF BEING ALONE
6. PITY: Partner convinces her to feel sorry for him/her.
7. FEAR PARTNER WILL COMMIT SUICIDE.
8. DENIAL AND MINIMIZATION: Believing that it’s not really that bad, or that other people have it worse.
9. LOVE: Often the partner is quite loving and lovable when not being abusive.
10. DUTY: Feeling bound by marriage/relationship commitment.
11. GUILT: She believes -- and her partner and other significant others are quick to agree-- that their problems are her fault.
12. RESPONSIBILITY: It is up to her to work things out and save the relationship. Women have been socialized to believe that the emotional side of the relationship is the woman’s responsibility.
13. SHAME AND HUMILIATION: “I don’t want anyone to know.” The stigma of being “battered” keeps many women silent about abuse experienced in a relationship.
14. ISOLATION: The abuser isolates the victim from friends or family who may offer her support.
15. SECURITY: Fear of being alone in the world; belief in the ‘happily ever after’ fairy tale.
16. IDENTITY: Women have been socialized to feel they need a partner -- even an abusive one -- in order to be complete.

17. UNFOUNDED OPTIMISM: Belief that things will get better, despite all evidence to the contrary. This is a way to “stay sane” in a terrorizing, traumatic environment.
18. INTERNALIZATION OF ABUSER’S BELIEFS/EXCUSES: “I deserve this treatment.” “If only I were a better wife/partner/mother this wouldn’t happen.”
19. BEGINS TO EXPECT FAILURE AND THE LACK OF SUPPORT OF OTHERS: Trying every possible method to change something, but with no success, the woman begins to expect failure. Her experience tells her that no one (her community, the police) takes her fear/concern seriously. She becomes more and more alone, unsupported and isolated.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP

The following questions are directed primarily at evaluating the potential for abuse in an intimate relationship. They can, however, help you to identify abusive behavior in other relationships (i.e., with friends, employers, parents, children, professional helpers). We use “s/he” as we wanted these questions to be relevant to examine any type of relationship.

ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP

1. Can you describe particular characteristics that you love?
2. Can you give examples of these?
3. How many qualities of being a “good friend” does this person possess?
4. What are his/her interests besides being with you?
5. Does s/he have any of the qualities that previous people who have been with you have had?
6. Can you discuss concerns/problems about the relationship with the person?
7. How do you feel about your “self” when or after you have been with him/her?

ABOUT POWER AND CONTROL

1. Does he/she accept your right to decide about birth control? Is s/he willing to wear a condom or discuss issues related to sexually transmitted disease.
2. Is s/he willing to have you spend time alone, even if s/he'd like to be with you?
3. Is s/he pleased with your accomplishments and ambitions?
4. Does s/he believe that only they should make the important decisions?
5. Does s/he think you have enough education even though you want to go to school?
6. Does s/he take over when you're doing something whether you want them to or not?
7. Does s/he sometimes put you on a pedestal, saying that they don't deserve you?
8. Are there some qualities you especially like about yourself that s/he disapproves of or ridicules?
9. When you have acted on your own, does s/he sometimes call you a “dyke”, “ball buster”, “whore”, etc.?
10. Has your partner spent time in jail or been arrested for acts of violence?

ABOUT FRIENDS AND FAMILY

1. Is s/he glad that you have your own friends?
2. Does s/he have good friends? What are your feelings about them?
3. Is s/he sometime jealous of your friendships or family?
4. Does s/he talk negatively about your family when you're alone, but impress them when in their company?
5. Does s/he put your friends down as either “too good” for you or “not good enough”?

ABOUT TRUST

1. Does s/he keep asking you about the other relationships in your life?
2. Do you feel interrogated when you return after having been out?
3. Are you accused of “cheating” on him/her if you dance with an old friend or talk to others when in public?
4. Does s/he seem to sulk or be irritable when you are having a good time, but playful and happy when you are bored or lonely?
5. Do you feel that it is safe/okay to share your thoughts/feelings?

ABOUT GENDER AND SEX ROLES

1. Does s/he think women can and should be as wise, worldly, confident, strong, decisive and independent as men?
2. Does s/he think it is a wife's/woman's right to decide whether to work out of the home or not?
3. Are there special traits about women that s/he admires? What are they?
4. What was his/her relationship like with his/her mother, sister, other women?

5. Does s/he think that under any or some circumstances it is okay to hit a woman?
6. What was his/her relationship like with his/her father? What traits does he/she admire in significant male role models or heroes?
7. Does s/he believe that men should earn more than women? Does s/he express wanting baby boys more than baby girls?
8. How does s/he see masculinity or a "real man"?
9. Does s/he put down or ridicule characteristics associated with women or femininity? Does s/he use slang or profanity that reflects words about women?
10. Does s/he always decide when and how you have sex? If you say "no", does s/he stop?
11. Has s/he been in fist fights or physical altercations with others?
12. Has s/he been in other abusive relationships? If so, has s/he taken responsibility and dealt with it in ways that make you feel safe?

ABOUT COMMUNICATION AND FEELINGS

1. Does s/he ask and show interest in hearing your opinion?
2. Does s/he both talk and listen?
3. Does s/he tell you when his/her feelings are hurt? Does s/he punish you by withdrawing?
4. Is s/he able to show they're "weak" or vulnerable and to cry? Does s/he only show this type of emotion after abusing you?
5. Is s/he affectionate aside from after abusing you or wanting sex?
6. How does s/he express anger? Does s/he break or throw things?
7. Does s/he have a temper? How does s/he control it?
8. Does s/he get abusive when you don't have dinner ready on time or some other task that you are responsible for?
9. Can s/he talk openly and honestly about his/her feelings, problems, worries, insecurities, etc.?
10. Can s/he talk openly and honestly about sex?
11. When hurt, does s/he act angry instead?
12. Does s/he have a drug or alcohol problem? Can s/he admit it? Is s/he actively seeking help or in recovery?
13. Can s/he admit when s/he is wrong?

THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

A person who abuses someone else uses the abuse to feel power and control.

In a violent relationship, the perpetrator operates in a system of *power and control* by manipulating others with abuse and threats. They try to compensate for the loss of control in their personal lives by controlling another person.

In a system of *freedom*, individuals operate in a system of honesty, responsibility for personal needs and actions, mutual support and respect, and acceptance and affirmation.

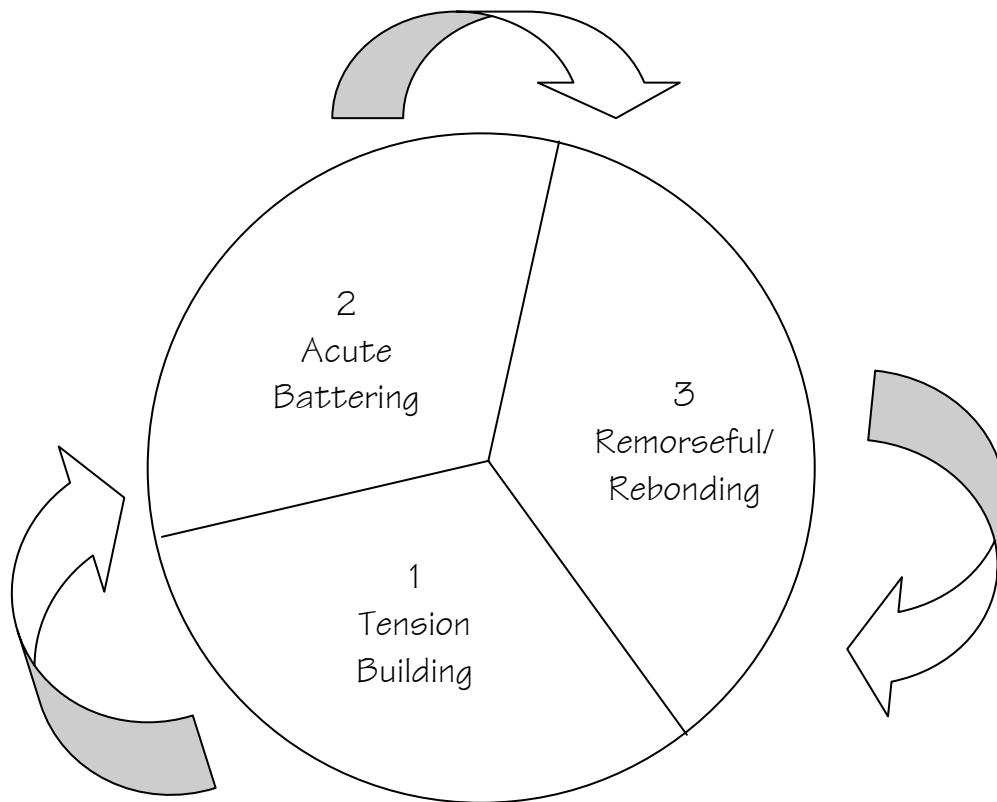
Refer to the “Power and Control” and “Freedom” Wheels for an illustration of this point.

There are various ways of obtaining and maintaining this power and control, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, economic abuse and emotional abuse. Often times a minor offense is ignored or minimized. However, over time, these minor offenses can slowly erode the empowerment of the victim. All techniques used to control someone can be found on the Continuum of Violence.

The Cycle of Violence has three primary phases where the

- 1) *tension mounts*, then
- 2) *the acute incident occurs*, and
- 3) *a period of re-engagement, “the hook,”* follows.

The cycle continues to develop throughout the relationship and gradually speeds up while becoming more and more violent.



Phase 1: Tension Builds

Victim may be nurturing and compliant. May cover up for batterer's behavior, accept full blame for many problems, compromise and manipulate to keep batterer non-violent. Batterer becomes increasingly jealous, and verbally or physically abusive.

Phase 2: Acute Battering

Tension increases rapidly. Batterer's rage escalates. Abuse can happen to mind, body, and/or spirit. If the victim can no longer tolerate own terror, anxiety or anger, may trigger the event to get it over with. Batterer may abuse victim even after victim is severely injured. The victim may simply endure the abuse or disassociate from body.

Phase 3: Re-Engagement, Hook (the "Loving, Remorseful, Hearts and Flowers Stage")

The batterer will try a variety of behaviors to encourage the victim to re-engage in the relationship, or get "hooked in." Examples of these hooks include: telling the victim "You're my only friend. Only you understand me;" giving gifts; saying "Don't give up on me;" behaving as if what occurred is only a minor incident; promising to go into counseling but never following through with it; promising the victim everything they ever asked for. Both welcome this stage. The batterer may be loving and kind, may beg for forgiveness and promise to change. The batterer convinces the victim and everyone else of these intentions. The victim wants to and may believe this. At the same time, the batterer believes the victim has been taught a lesson.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL ABUSE

Many of the behaviors that society socializes women to interpret as caring, attentive, passionate and romantic can actually be warning signs of abuse. **Note that one sign alone does not always mean that abuse will follow. Nor will these signs always appear in the very beginning of a relationship.**

TOO MUCH TOO SOON: Partner pushes for instant closeness and does not allow relationship to grow at a pace that is comfortable to you.

Examples: Partner praises you constantly and puts you on a pedestal. They want to live together immediately. Partner wants to care for your children and disciplines them early in relationship (instead of honoring your role as their parent). Initially, you may feel swept off your feet. Yet, this shows your partner's lack of respect for boundaries.

CONFUSION: They change expectations or guidelines, thus keeping you guessing how to please them.

Examples: Saying they want you to work, but criticizing every job opening you apply for. Wanting to go out to dinner when you spent all day preparing their favorite meal.

INTRUSIVE AND CONTROLLING: Partner consistently wants to know your whereabouts, who you were with, where you were going, when you were coming home.

Examples: Constant phone calls, showing up at friend's homes unexpectedly. Initially, this may make you feel missed and cared for, but actually, these are signs of suspicion and distrust.

ISOLATION: Partner insists on spending all or the majority of your time together, cutting you off from friends and family, making fun of your interests in other activities.

Examples: Calling your friends derogatory names ("sluts", "stupid"); discouraging you from keeping in touch with family or friends; discouraging you from doing activities apart. Not providing child care.

Initially, this may make you feel wanted and needed because of all the time and attention devoted to you. Actually, this cuts down your resources (family, friends), so when you need them, they may not be there for you. Do they respect your need to have space or have time alone?

POSSESSIVENESS AND JEALOUSY: Partner constantly accuses you of sexual interactions with anyone in your life (friends, teachers, bosses, counselors, etc.). Accuses you of flirting; monitors how you look and what you wear.

Examples: Makes statements like, "I want you to be all mine," "I don't want any one else looking at you," "You look like a whore with that make up on." Initially, jealousy may seem like a demonstration of partner's love, but it actually demonstrates partner's willingness to treat you like an object, or a piece of property. Uses jealousy as an excuse to isolate.

PRONE TO ANGER: Partner is easily angered, has rapid mood swings, unpredictable behavior; anger is out of proportion to the incident.

Example: Partner's anger is directed toward a pet, possessions, objects. Partner may kick the dog, destroy something of yours, rage at you if you're five minutes late. It is important not to ignore what may seem like even small overreactions. It is not acceptable for someone to use aggression to get their point across, regardless of how angry they are, or how they've dealt with their anger in the past.

UNKNOWN PAST & RESPECT FOR WOMEN: How has your partner treated previous girlfriends? Does your partner use derogatory or disrespectful language about women in general (bitches, whores, sluts, etc.)? Does your partner have stereotypical beliefs about gender roles?

Examples: Partner makes statements like, “she’s got nice tits”, or “women are good for just one thing”; or does things like pinch your body parts in a humiliating or uncomfortable way. Partner is physically and/or emotionally abusive to other women (their mother, ex-girlfriend). Blames past partners for all problems.

It is important to take the “mystery” out of your partner’s past, like talking to partner’s former girlfriends. Be in touch with your feelings -- how do you feel when your partner degrades women? By degrading women, your partner is also degrading you.

SELF-CENTERED: Partner always focuses on their own wants and needs. They ignore your wishes.

Examples: Orders for both of you at restaurants. Interrupts you when you are speaking. Decides that you will go to a movie that you clearly do not want to see. Tells you what you want (without asking you what you want).

DOUBLE STANDARDS: Partner expects others (and you) to live by their standards, yet he/she doesn’t live by them.

Examples: Buys an expensive stereo, but criticizes you for buying new shoes. Calls you a slut for having slept with your partner, yet they have slept with many partners.

ALCOHOL & DRUG USE: While alcohol and drug abuse doesn’t cause a person to be abusive, these problems often coexist. If they are engaging in drug abuse (an unhealthy behavior), there is a strong tendency for them to also be involved in other unhealthy behaviors, such as abuse. Additionally, drugs and alcohol can decrease a person’s inhibitions about using violent behavior.

Examples: Hides alcohol/drug use. Makes excuses why they need to drink or why it is okay. They had a bad day so they deserve to celebrate.

BLAMES OTHERS: Partner doesn’t accept responsibility for their actions.

Examples: Blames police for their DUI or domestic violence arrest. Says you provoked them into yelling, pushing.

INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR OR DEMANDS: Partner pushes you to engage in behavior that is uncomfortable or painful.

Examples: Not allowed to use birth control. You only have sex when they want it.



Above all, trust your gut feelings and intuition. If you feel uncomfortable, be cautious. Take your time and check out your thoughts and feelings with supportive people.

Be aware if you are making excuses for your partner’s behavior or if you are minimizing his/her past. Discuss with a supportive person what warning signs may be difficult for you to acknowledge.

Know that abusive people choose to use manipulation, intimidation, and abuse to gain power and control over their partner. Pointing out these warning signs to an abusive person will not change them. In fact, they will probably deny them or accuse you of being abusive. Use caution, as they may become violent when confronted with information that challenges their control.

A PHILOSOPHY OF EMPOWERMENT



The empowerment approach to advocacy, counseling and communication views all “personal” problems in the context of a sexist society, and helps women understand the socially defined roles that reinforce their victimization and feelings of powerlessness. In such intervention, a large part of the listener’s role is to communicate to women this vision and understanding through facts about sexual abuse and intimate partner violence. The issues the abused woman must struggle with - such as balance of power in the relationship, being viewed as property, and finding her own worth as a woman in a sexist society - are the same issues that all women face daily.

Empowerment advocacy, counseling and communication believes that intimate partner violence is not something that happens to a woman because of her characteristics, her family background, her psychological “profile,” family of origin, dysfunction, or her unconscious search for a certain type of man. It can happen to anyone who has the misfortune of becoming involved with a person who wants power and control enough to be violent to get it.

In an empowerment model, the woman coming for help is assumed to be a basically healthy person who needs understanding, information, support, and concrete information and resources in order to make changes in her life. She is responsible for her own life decisions, and our role is to help her tap into her own strengths and abilities, and to recognize and experience her potential. We are not there to probe for weaknesses, diagnose her or label her. Our role is to put forward the conscious expectation that she can take charge of her own life.

The counselor and the counseled are assumed to be equals. We may use different terms to define our different roles. It is basic to the empowerment philosophy that the word “advocate” or “counselor” does not connote more value or worth. We have the responsibility to share this perspective with the person seeking our support. It is also important to understand that although we are equals, our role in the relationship gives us institutional power over the woman. It is our responsibility not to misuse that institutional power, and to carefully look at how it affects our relationship with the woman.

It is of great importance that we fully explain the extent and nature of confidentiality, including the exceptions to confidentiality, such as threats to life or child abuse. It is our ultimate goal, using the philosophy of empowerment, to provide a supportive atmosphere in which all concerns and possibilities can be discussed.

Adapted from SEEKING JUSTICE: Legal Advocacy Principles and Practice
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SAFETY PLANNING

Safety plans are responses that address the risks that you have identified and prioritized. These may include strategies for staying or strategies for leaving, with personal protection as an aspect of each. Some of the suggestions below may be appropriate for you and others may not be at this time, due to economic restraints, the degree to which you are “out,” or obstacles that are unforeseen and beyond your control. An Advocate can offer support and assist you in assessing your options, your safety, and the lethality of the abuser. To speak to an Advocate, call the confidential 24-hour SPAN Crisis and Information Line, at 303-444-2424.

A Sample Safety Plan:

1. Tell someone about the abusive situation, if you can. Build a support network with family, friends, and associates, including bosses, neighbors, teachers, and colleagues. If you identify as LGBTQ and are not “out” and would like to speak to a SPAN Advocate about additional options, you can call 303-444-2424.
2. Keep a dated record of physical abuse, threats, stalking, and destruction of property. This includes anonymous and/or excessive phone calls, text messages, and e-mails. Document abusive phone calls and keep harassing messages on your answering machine. Photograph property damage. Keep any written material that is threatening or harassing.
3. Write down the names of people who witness abusive incidents. If you’ve gone to the doctor or emergency room because of battering injuries, keep all records and take photographs of injuries. All this evidence, including police reports, can help you obtain protection through the legal system. Even if you choose not to report right away, your documentation can help you get protection from your abuser in the future. If you feel ready to report, you do not have to do this alone – an Advocate from SPAN can support you through the process.
4. If possible, do not spend time alone with your partner. If you do plan to be alone with them, let someone else know of your whereabouts and when to expect to hear from or see you. If people are aware of your plans, they can check on your safety or call for help if you don’t call or return on time. This option can be difficult if you live with your partner, and may require more creative safety planning.
5. Vary your routine. If you are concerned about being followed or stalked, choose different routes, or leave at different times each day. If you are going out, tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back.
6. Go to the nearest public place if you believe you are being followed. Learn where the police

stations are located. A good second choice is a fire station, if it is staffed 24 hours a day.

7. Keep an emergency bag hidden in a central location (garage, under the bed) with the following items included:

- MONEY. Take all check books and bank statements
- Extra keys for the car, house, safety deposit box, P.O. box
- A change of clothes for you and your children
- Mass transit transportation schedules in the event that a car is not available
- Motel numbers and locations at the end of a bus or train ride
- Driver's license, car registration, proof of insurance
- Your and your children's birth certificates, insurance policies
- Your children's school ID card, or other identification if they have it
- Pictures, jewelry, or anything that has sentimental value for you
- Address book: phone numbers and addresses of friends and relatives
- Appointment book
- Medical records and cards, school records
- Social security cards (yours and your children's), work permits,
- Green card, passport
- Medicaid card or other Social Services cards, if applicable
- Medication, baby items (diapers, formula), some extra clothing
- Medication for pets, pet food, and veterinarian information

8. Have a plan of escape:

- Where can you go that is safe?
- How much will it cost, if anything?
- Can you get the children out of the house safely or do you need help
- Remember to take your bag with all the items you need.

9. If you have a car, drive it to a friend's house. Park away from the actual location. Ask someone to walk with you to your vehicle until you are safely away.

10. Call SPAN if you would like emergency, confidential shelter or other options: 303-444-2424. Emergency shelter is available to all women, youth, children, and transgender people.

11. Can pets stay with a friend or family member? If not, SPAN has a "Safe Pets" program, in collaboration with the Human Society of Boulder Valley. Call the 24-hour Crisis and Information Line for details.

12. Call 911 if you are in immediate danger. Due to mandatory arrest and reporting laws in Colorado, the Police and the Hospital may be safe places but may not guarantee that they will keep the information about the abuse confidential.

13. Get a Civil Protection Order if you are afraid of your partner. SPAN offers a Protection Order Clinic Monday through Friday at the both the Boulder County Justice Center and the Broomfield Courthouse. Advocates cannot provide legal advice, but can explain the paperwork and the general process of filing for a civil protection order as well as offer support in the courtroom. For a list of clinic hours and to check the availability of the Court Advocates, call the SPAN Crisis and Information Line at 303-444-2424. You can also call this number for information on the free Legal Drop-In Clinic and a Immigrant Legal Clinic, both located at the SPAN Outreach Center in Boulder.

Information from a variety of sources, including Safety Planning With Battered Women: Complex Lives/Difficult Choices by Jill Davies, 1998, Sage Publications, Inc.

TYPES OF VERBAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE

1. **WITHHOLDING:** By withholding, the verbal abuser is saying, "I've got something you want and I can withhold it from you, therefore, I am in control."
2. **COUNTERING:** The abuser will state the opposite opinion from the victim, just to stay in control. The abuser cannot tolerate the victim having a different opinion or her own thoughts. This common type of abuse destroys a relationship because it prevents discussions, denies the victim's reality, and is a put-down of the partner's experience.
3. **DISCOUNTING OR MINIMIZING:** Denies the reality and experience of the abuse. Example: After abusing you, abuser says things like "you're too sensitive", "you're making a big deal out of nothing", or "I didn't really hurt you, you're crazy".
4. **VERBAL ABUSE DISGUISED AS JOKES:** Cuts to the quick. The abuser usually has a look of triumph. Mocks partner's intellectual abilities, competency, personality or character.
5. **BLOCKING AND DIVERTING:** Prevents conflict resolution. Can be accusatory, switching topics, or diverting partner from issues with accusations and irrelevant comments.
6. **ACCUSING AND BLAMING:** Accuser blames partner for abuser's own anger, irritation, or insecurity.
7. **JUDGING AND CRITICIZING:** Expressing judgments in a critical way shows the abuser's lack of acceptance. Uses negative "you" statements, like "you're always...." or "I wouldn't be angry if only you would do..."
8. **TRIVIALIZING:** Making partner's feelings, actions, perceptions, thoughts, concerns, and opinions less than they are.
9. **UNDERMINING:** Withholds emotional support of partner; erodes partner's confidence. "You wouldn't understand." "What's the big deal?" "Who asked you?"
10. **THREATENING:** Threats which bring up partner's deepest fears are used. "Do what I want or I'll leave/reject you." "If you leave, I'll make sure you never see the children again."
11. **NAME CALLING:** Most obvious and covert form of verbal/emotional abuse.
12. **FORGETTING:** Constantly forgetting interactions which have had a great impact on partner. Denial and manipulation, like forgetting promises or agreements.
13. **ORDERING:** Denies equality and autonomy of the partner. Treats partner as a servant. Abuser feels entitled to services.
14. **DENIAL OR CRAZY-MAKING:** Insidious because it denies the reality of the partner. "I never said that!"

15. **INVASIVE BEHAVIORS:** Abuser invades partner's privacy or personal boundaries. Examples: Abuser reads partner's private diary/journal; won't allow partner any private time or space.
16. **ANGER:** The underlying, motivating force behind all verbal abuse is ANGER. Both partners are responsible for their own emotions and behaviors. Abuser attempts to make victim feel responsible for abuser's anger, insecurities, fears. Victim is not responsible for being yelled at, snapped at, raged at, glared at -- despite the abuser's demands, accusations, and blaming. Within the context of a verbally abusive relationship, the perpetrator's anger can stem from a general sense of *personal powerlessness* ("I feel powerless, so I'm going to assert control over you in order to feel better about myself") or from a sense of *privilege or righteousness* ("I have the right to have my needs met regardless of how it impacts you"). The victim/partner is the scapegoat, used to justify the perpetrator's abuse. The abuser releases tension and reasserts dominance over partner by the use of verbal/emotional abuse.

THE IMPACT OF WITNESSING VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

At SPAN, we recognize that the needs of children here are as great as those of the mother. In fact, there are often more children who are victims or witnesses of domestic violence. Children who are victims of domestic violence are found in all age groups.

Child as Witness to Violence

Many problems may arise with children who have been involved in domestic violence:

- They may begin **Modeling** the roles and responses to conflict. Examples would include hitting siblings, parent, friends or dolls when angry.
- They often lack appropriate **Socialization** in the home due to unpredictability and anxiety regarding the possibility of further violence.
- The Trauma of **Violence** is horrifying and overwhelming, over-stimulating and cannot be emotionally or cognitively integrated.
- The consequences or ensuing symptoms are related to **disassociation**, a strategy the child employs to manage the trauma.
- The child does not actually experience the event; rather, he/she experiences fragments of the event through fragmentary sensory impressions.
- The child cannot make cognitive connections as to why he/she feels so bad.
- The child is confused because the impressions are not integrated.
- The child tries to make integration by re-experiencing the story so that it makes sense, e.g. post-traumatic play, preoccupation, nightmares, etc.
- The child has a preoccupation with particular disconnected sensory details of the event that do not join together into a “story” that makes sense.

The disassociation becomes the crux of the trauma.

1. Keeps the child connected to the trauma.
2. Will avoid anything that might allow the external or internal possibility of re-encountering the trauma.
3. As long as the event remains disassociated, the isolated sensory impressions are usually increasingly symbolized and therefore disguised. Apparent fears/preoccupation become more removed from the actual event and harder to understand.
4. Continues to influence the child as she/he struggles with the pieces.

Other common symptoms include:

- Fear, terror, helplessness
- Re-experiencing the traumatic event due to sounds or stimulus that remind the child of the event.
- Avoidance of stimuli associated with the event
- Numbing of feelings, particularly those of intimacy or tenderness.
- Detachment or estrangement from other people.
- No longer interested in previously enjoyed activities.

These symptoms often express themselves in certain behaviors.

- A combination of limited tolerance, lengthy depression and stress
- Hyper vigilance: jittery behavior, restlessness, startles easily
- Agitated, hyperactive, excitable
- Extreme mood swings from very happy to very angry without clear reason why
- Poor or inconsistent self-image, low self-esteem
- Negatively values the mother; engages in constant bargaining; tries to prove self against mother
- Poor impulse control
- Continual hope it will improve
- Social/peer isolation, high risk for alcohol/drug/sex abuse or running away; keeps family matters a secret.
- Emotional numbness; unable to recognize, label or express feelings appropriately or at all.
- Poor definition of personal boundaries; violates others' boundaries
- Little or no understanding of the dynamics of violence; may understand it to be the norm.
- Self-blaming for family conflict, divorce, or separation. May re-enact violence with younger siblings, pets or parents in later years.
- Poor problem-solving skills; may use violence as a technique at school, with peers or family.

Although confidentiality is a primary policy of the SPAN, we are obligated to report cases of child abuse.

HINTS THAT CHILD ABUSE MAY BE OCCURRING

The Parent:

- Shows evidence of loss of control or fear of losing control.
- Presents unrelated, irrelevant or contradictory history of injury.
- Projects cause of injury onto a sibling or third party.
- Has delayed care for the child or refuses further diagnostic study.
- Shows detachment.
- Reveals inappropriate awareness of the seriousness of situation(either over- or under-reacts).
- Continues to complain about problems irrelevant to situation.
- Personally is misusing drugs/alcohol.
- Cannot be located.

- Changes hospitals frequently (i.e. “hospital shops” – doesn’t re-visit the same hospital twice for fear of someone noticing repeated abuse.)
- Is psychotic or psychopathic.
- Has been reared in a “motherless” or abusive atmosphere.
- Has unrealistic expectations of the child.

The Child:

- Has unexplained or repeated injury.
- Shows evidence of dehydration/malnutrition.
- Has been given inappropriate food/drink.
- Is unusually fearful.
- “Takes over” and cares for the parents' needs.
- Is dressed inappropriately to hide possible injuries.
- Has injuries not mentioned in the history.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many children witness violence toward their mothers?

It is estimated that family violence is prevalent in 3 to 4 million American homes. If 2.5 children are living in each of these homes, then approximately 7.5 million children witness abuse of a parent, typically their mother, each year (Jaffe, Wolfe and Wilson, 1990).

Despite clinical reports of mothers attempting to hide the battering from their children, one study found that children were present during almost half of all the battering incidents (Steinman, 1991).

Interviews with children from violent homes indicate that as many as 87% not only knew about the violence against their mother, but could also accurately describe violent incidents (Jaffe, et al, 1990).

Of the 1,014 witnesses who testified in 928 wife-assault cases, 50% were children (Bowker, Arbitell and McFerron, 1988).

Are children in homes where a woman is being abused at risk of being abused themselves?

Children in homes where domestic violence occurs are physically abused or neglected at a rate of 1,500% higher than the national average (Ford, 1991).

The number one predictor of child abuse is woman abuse (Stark and Flitcraft, 1988).

Fathers who battered the mother are TWICE as likely to seek sole custody of their children as are non-violent fathers. (American Psychological Association's Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family, 2001).

In one study of more than 900 children at battered women's shelters, nearly 70% of the children were themselves victims of physical abuse or neglect. Nearly one-half of the children had been physically or sexually abused. Five percent had been hospitalized due to the abuse (Hotaling and Sugarman, 1986).

Boston City Hospital found a 60% correlation between abused children and battered women (McKibben, Devos and Newberger, 1989).

In a 36-month study of 146 American children ages 11-17, who came from homes where domestic violence was occurring, *all sons over the age of 14 attempted to protect their mothers from the attacks. Sixty-two percent were injured in the process.* (Roy, 1988).

The more severe the abuse of the mother, the worse the child abuse (Bowker, et al, 1988).

Abuse of children by a batterer is more likely when the marriage is dissolving, the couple has separated, and the husband/father is highly committed to continued dominance and control of the mother and children (Bowker, et al, 1988).

In families where the mother is assaulted by the father, daughters are exposed to a risk of sexual assault 6.51 times greater than girls in non-abusive families (Bowker, et al, 1988).

What are the psychological and social traumas caused by witnessing abuse?

Children who have chronically witnessed domestic violence exhibit behaviors and reactions similar to those of children who have been physically abused (Jaffe, et al, 1990).

Disruptions of normal developmental patterns that result in disturbed patterns of cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral adjustment, including low self-esteem, sadness/depression, poor impulse control, feelings of powerlessness/hopelessness, and a high degree of anxiety.

Among pre-schoolers, researchers found signs of *terror*, as evidenced by the children's yelling, irritable behavior, hiding, shaking, and shuddering. These children also often experienced insomnia, sleepwalking, nightmares, and bedwetting (Davidson, Alessi, and Hearn).

Children exposed to domestic violence often have difficulties with school:

- Poor academic performance
- School phobia
- Difficulty concentrating
- Constant conflict/aggression with peers
- Rebellious against instruction and authority
- Frequent absences

Many children from violent homes exhibit symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress.

Re-experiencing the traumatic event in the form of flashbacks, traumatic dreams, repetitive play, and/or intrusive thoughts.

Psychological numbing through avoidance of thoughts or feelings associated with the trauma, reduced interest in usual activities, and/or change in orientation toward the future.

Increased state of arousal demonstrated by irritability, sleep disturbances, hypervigilance, and/or physiological reactivity upon exposure to events that symbolize the traumatic event.

Fragmentation and dissociation of the events presently occurring for the child.

Sources include Silvern, et al, 1994; Excerpts from *Statistics Packet: 3rd Edition (February, 1994)*, National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women.

AGE-SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Children Who Are Victims/Witnesses of Domestic Violence

Infants

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic need for attachment disrupted | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty sleeping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Routines about feeding/sleeping are disturbed | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Injuries while “caught in the crossfire” | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental delays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability or inconsolable crying | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of responsiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent illness | |

Pre-School

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somatic or psychosomatic complaints | <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme separation anxiety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regression | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental delays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability | <input type="checkbox"/> Sympathetic toward mother |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fearful of being alone | |

Elementary Age

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacillate between being eager to please adults and wanting to make new friends, to being hostile/aggressive | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalized behavior problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to be verbal about home life | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate social skill development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental delays | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender role modeling creates conflict/confusion |

Pre-Adolescence

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior problems become more serious | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental delays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased internalized behavior difficulties: depression, isolation, withdrawal. | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective of mother, though may also view mother as “weak;” may undermine mother’s authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional difficulties: shame, fear, confusion, rage | <input type="checkbox"/> Tends to be guarded/secretive about family situation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor social skills: lack opportunities for developing healthy social bonds, boundaries | |

Adolescence

- Internalized and externalized behavior problems can become extreme and dangerous: drug/alcohol involvement, truancy, gang involvement, sexual acting-out, pregnancy, runaway, suicide attempts.

- Dating relationships may reflect violence learned and/or witnessed at home.

SPAN SERVICES

BRIEF OVERVIEW

SHELTER PROGRAM

SPAN operates an Emergency Shelter and Resource Center for women and their children and transgender people leaving abusive situations. SPAN can shelter up to 27 people at one time, and residents may stay for up to six weeks. While at the shelter, residents receive individual and group counseling as well as food, emergency supplies and referrals to community resources.

24-Hour Crisis and Information Line. Counselors and trained volunteers provide crisis counseling, information and referrals for other services, and access to the SPAN shelter or outreach services.

Counseling. Counselors are available, for both women and children staying at the shelter, around the clock for one-on-one and group support.

ADVOCACY

The Advocacy Program oversees SPAN's emergency response and victim/legal advocacy services.

Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART). SPAN DART Advocates provide immediate, in-person response to the scene of a battering incident, 24 hours a day. At the request of a police officer or health care provider, DART Advocates contact and meet with victims, discuss available resources, and provide assistance and support.

Legal Advocacy. Court advocates staff a Restraining Order Clinic at the Justice Center Monday through Friday to assist clients with the process of obtaining temporary and permanent orders. They accompany clients to court hearings and advocate on their behalf during interactions with judicial officials in both Boulder and Broomfield.

Court Watch. Court Watch is a community-based program designed to evaluate and respond to the performance of the Boulder County Justice System in the area of domestic violence.

OUTREACH COUNSELING

Short-term individual and group counseling is available for child, teen and adult victims and survivors of violence in various stages of recovery. All services are available on a sliding scale in Boulder, Lafayette, Broomfield and Nederland.

Tri-City Outreach Program. Based in Lafayette, our outreach office serves Louisville, Lafayette, Superior and Broomfield. The Tri-City Program offers group and individual counseling to women and children, public education, and crisis line services. Additionally, group-specific services are provided to Spanish-speaking women, older/senior battered women, and to migrant working families in eastern Boulder County and Longmont.

Latino Outreach. Bi-lingual staff provides individual, group, and community assistance to the Latino population in Boulder County, and work collaboratively with other agencies to provide culturally appropriate services.

Transitional Services Program. The Transitional Services Program provides access to low-income housing and transitional support services to women and children. Counseling, skill building classes and community resources are available to women as they move from crisis to self-sufficiency.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Safe Relationship Outreach Project. This project provides information, outreach and support to the GLBT community regarding same-sex relationship violence, and works to ensure appropriate justice system response.

Support Group for Women in Jail. Counselors provide weekly support to female inmates at the Boulder County Jail. We have found that the majority of women in jail have been or are current victims of domestic violence.

Children's Program. Counselors and trained volunteers provide individual and group activities for children. They also provide parenting techniques, emphasizing non-violent disciplinary techniques, and facilitate parent-child communication.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The SPAN Education Program focuses on social change through community, volunteer, and school-based education, and early intervention and prevention efforts.

School-Based Programs. School programs on family issues and dating violence are available to elementary, middle and senior high schools. A complete Elementary School curriculum educates young people about violence and safety. The Peer Education Program is a collaborative effort between SPAN and MESA in which students educate their peers about dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. "Choices and Change: Challenging Interpersonal Violence" K-12 curriculum.

Educational Materials and Training. SPAN has developed resources on preventing abuse and dealing with consequences which address the special needs of specific audiences: children, teens, parents, teachers, the faith community, workplace, and medical personnel. We have also created training on Ethical Communication and Anti-Racism for organizational development.

Volunteer Opportunities. Volunteers from the Boulder County community receive a comprehensive 50-Hour Paraprofessional Training in preparation for their work as Victim Advocates, Court Advocates, Shelter Volunteers or Children's Volunteers.

Speaker's Bureau. Staff and volunteers are available through the Speaker's Bureau to speak to community groups, businesses and classrooms on subjects related to domestic violence.

The monthly **Seminar Series** is an educational forum for the community on a variety of topics related to intimate partner violence.

SPAN sponsors an **Annual Conference** each October in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The conference provides in-depth information on critical domestic violence issues.

The **Spiritual Support Team** is a group of volunteer spiritual leaders representing a variety of religions. The SST assists survivors of violence as they work through the spiritual concerns they are facing as a result of their abuse. The SST also works to increase awareness of domestic violence within their congregations, denominations, and the religious community. Team members receive training and provide a weekly support group to residents at the Shelter.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The Resource Development Program raises funds through grants, special events and private donations to keep Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence a financially solvent agency.

The **SPAN Guild** is a group of volunteers who coordinate the annual Chocolate Lover's Fling, a highly popular community event that raises 10% of the agency's annual budget.

Spring for SPAN and **Jam for Justice** are annual community events aimed at raising public awareness about violence against women and children, and inspiring local activism to end intimate partner violence.

‘NO-CONTACT’

as a Condition of Bond or Sentence in a Criminal Case

1. A condition of "no-contact" as part of a defendant's bond may, and most likely will be ordered by the Judge on a violent crime arrest.
 - The "no-contact" order is in effect for the **entire length** of the criminal case or until the victim requests that it be removed and then it is only removed on the approval of the District Attorney and the Judge handling the case. It is a common fallacy that the "no-contact" will be automatically removed at the first appearance or after 30 days - THIS IS NOT THE CASE.
 - "No-contact" means that a defendant is not to call, write, have a third party contact, or themselves physically contact the victim or any other person the Judge orders the defendant have "no-contact" with.
 - A condition of "no-contact" may be part of the disposition or sentence in a case.
 - "No-contact" may include the children of the defendant and the victim if the children are assessed to be victims of the crime.

2. The "no-contact" can be removed only by the victim coming into the District Attorney's office and filling out a request to remove the condition of "no-contact."
 - After a request by the victim the process takes APPROXIMATELY 10 days (it may take even longer if the crime is a felony). There is still no guarantee that the request will be approved by either the District Attorney or the Judge.
 - The request to remove the "no-contact" must be filled out at the District Attorney's office. It cannot be done over the phone or through the mail. Interpreters are available for any language at the District Attorney's office through AT&T's language line.
 - Victims are encouraged to call the Victim/Witness program at the District Attorney's office for more information. The number is 303-441-3700

10 THINGS TO KNOW WHEN CONSIDERING A PROTECTION ORDER

1. Protection Orders are for people who believe they are in danger.
If the person you wish to restrain has ever hurt or threatened to hurt you and/or your children in any way, if the person is harassing you in a threatening manner, or if the person has demonstrated violent behavior around you (damaged the furniture or hurt a pet), you may be eligible for a Protection Order.
2. You do not have to disclose your address.
If your perpetrator does not know where you are currently residing and you want to keep it that way you do not need to include your address on the Protection Order.
3. You can protect your children.
A judge can rule that the perpetrator be restrained from any contact with your children. If the perpetrator does not have legal rights to your children, the Protection Order works for your children exactly as it works for you. If the perpetrator does have legal rights to your children, the judge can make a temporary order regarding care, control, and visitation of the children. This order is good for 120 days from the date the Permanent Protection Order is granted. It then becomes a custody issue and a matter for District Court.
4. A Protection Order is more readily enforceable than a no-contact bond.
Often a police officer will have to make at least one phone call to get verification that the no-contact order is in place. You will get a paper copy of your Protection Order from the court and should have it with you at all times to show the responding police officers if you call 911.
5. There is no cost for filing or for service of a Protection Order if you are requesting protection from a current or former intimate partner which constitutes Domestic Violence.
*If you **are not** seeking protection due to domestic violence then fees will be assessed for both filing and for service of the Protection Order. If you are not able to pay, you can ask to have both of these fees waived or postponed. Be sure to request a Motion to Waive Costs form from the Clerk of Courts office.*
6. Protection Orders do not create a criminal record.
When you get a Protection Order against someone, the order by itself does not give that person a permanent criminal record. Only when your perpetrator violates the order is it a criminal offense.
7. PERMANENT MEANS PERMANENT.
When a judge grants a Permanent Protection Order (PPO) it is valid permanently. You do not need to reapply after a certain amount of time. If you ever want the PPO dropped or want the conditions changed, you must return to the justice center to file the appropriate motion and explain why you no longer feel in danger.
8. A Protection Order is only part of a safety plan.
Statistics show that Protection Orders do work. Once you get a Protection Order, you should call 911 if you or your children are contacted by the perpetrator in a way that is prohibited by the order. Violating a Protection Order is a criminal act. You can contact Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, at 303-444-2424, or the Safe Shelter for St. Vrain Valley, at 303-772-4422, for information on a complete personalized safety plan.

9. You do not need a lawyer.

It is not necessary to retain the services of a lawyer to get a Protection Order. It can be helpful to have a lawyer if you have children or a particularly complicated case. You can contact Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, at 303-444-2424, or Safe Shelter for St. Vrain Valley, at 303-772-4422, for lawyer referrals.

10. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Court Advocates from Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence are available at the Boulder County Justice Center and the Broomfield County Courthouse to assist with filing for a Protection Order. Advocates from Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley are available at the Longmont annex. Please call the hotlines listed in #9 for advocate availability.