



Community Response to Domestic Violence

Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence
(SPAN)

www.safehousealliance.org

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safehouse
progressive alliance
for nonviolence

SPAN is a human rights organization committed to ending violence against women, youth and children through support, advocacy, education and community organizing.

- Serving Boulder/Broomfield Counties since 1979
- Goals for today

What is Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence?

“Domestic Violence,” as defined by the Colorado Revised Statute 18-6-800.3., means an act or threatened act of violence upon a person with whom the actor is or has been involved in an intimate relationship.

A definition of domestic violence

- *Domestic Violence or Intimate Partner Violence is a pattern of coercive control in an intimate relationship which may be characterized by physical, verbal, sexual, or financial abuse or isolating and controlling behaviors on the part of the perpetrator.*
- This definition covers abuse that can occur in relationships that have ended, e.g. divorced couples, and teenagers.

Prevalence and Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence

Lifetime - Women

- ❖ 25% physical assault
- ❖ 8% raped
- ❖ 5% stalked

Lifetime - Men

- ❖ 7% physical assault
- ❖ 0.6% stalked
- ❖ 0.3% raped

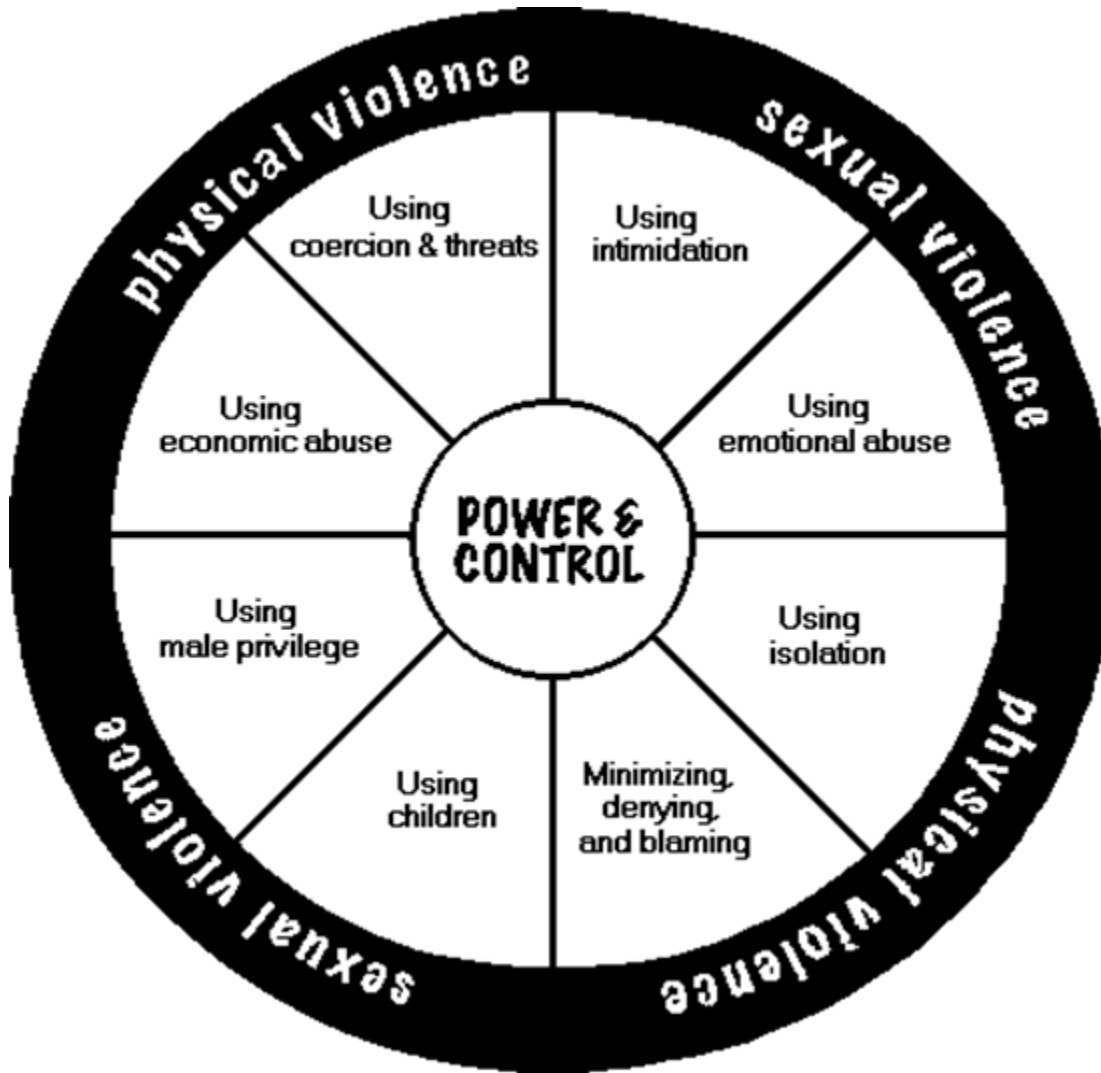
85% victims of IPV are women battered by a male partner

Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes; U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Facts About Domestic Violence/IPV

- 37% of women seeking emergency room care are victims of IPV.
U.S. Dept. of Justice
- Estimated annual cost of medical care for treating victims is \$857 million a year. - *American Medical*
- 74 percent of employed battered women were harassed by their partner while they were at work. - *Family Violence Prevention Fund*
- Cost of IPV exceeds \$5.8 billion/year, \$4.1 billion for direct medical & mental health services, much of which is paid for by employer. - *FVPF*
- Abuse by husbands and partners was ranked as leading cause of injuries to women aged 15-44. - *U.S. Surgeon General*
- Estimated 40% of victims seeking medical help for injuries had previously sought help due to their victimization - *CDC*

Power and Control



At the center of the Wheel is the purpose of all the abusive tactics: to establish power and control.

Each spoke of the Wheel represents a particular tactic (i.e. economic abuse, threats, and intimidation).

The rim of the Wheel that holds it together is physical abuse and the threat of violence (Pence, 1987).

Beliefs About Power and Violence

Batterer

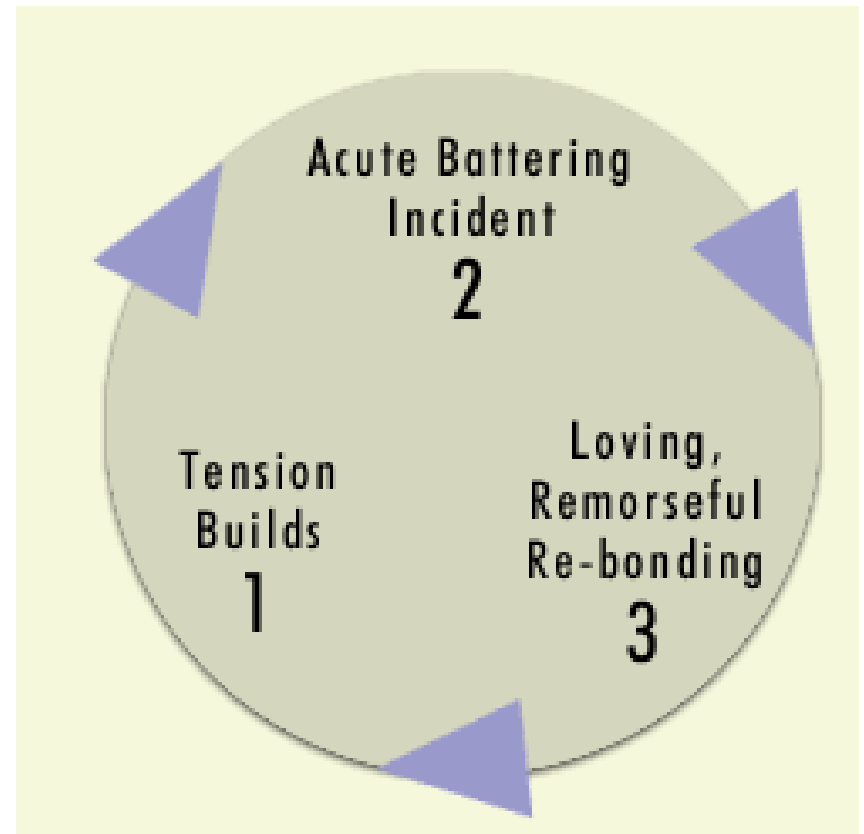
- Justification:
 - I have the right to do this
- Minimization:
 - It's not such a big deal
 - I won't get caught, and if I do the consequences will be light
- Blaming
 - She pushes my buttons
 - I'm really the victim here

Victim (& Children)

- Responsible/culpable
 - I know I set him off
- Minimization:
 - It's not really that bad
 - He only does it when he drinks
 - It's just an anger-control problem
- Survival/Safety
 - If he knew I told anyone, he'd kill me
 - If I left he'd hunt us down
 - I can't do this alone

The Cycle of Violence

Understanding
the cycle of
violence
is helpful for
establishing a
pattern of
violence



Signs – “Red Flags”

- Signs of injury, explanations that don't match injury; cover/hiding injuries
- Isolation, restricted contact with family/friends
- Monitored by partner – phone calls, texting
- “Covering” for partner's behavior
- Loss of sense of self



Barriers to Leaving/Reporting: Abuser's Threats & Retaliation

- ❖ Escalated physical violence - against victim, children, pets, other family or friends
- ❖ Escalated psychological violence and intimidation – stalking, harassment
- ❖ Potential loss of children – custody/visitation, threats to report to Child Protective Services
- ❖ Financial –loss of housing, job, life-style



Additional Barriers

- ❖ Economic – job loss, education, transportation
- ❖ Housing - temporary and stable long-term
- ❖ Social/cultural – racism, homophobia, anti-immigrant, language, deportation
- ❖ Victim-blaming – faith community, family, friends, justice system
- ❖ Multiple Issues –mental/physical health, substance abuse

Separation Assault

- ❖ In spite of widespread misconceptions that ending the relationship will end the violence, it is quite common for batterers to continue or even escalate their violence after the relationship ends.
- ❖ Separation assault is the abuser's attempt to gain, retain, or regain power in a relationship, or to punish the woman for ending the relationship

(Fleury, Sullivan, Bybee, 2000)



Possible Risk Factors for Separation Abuse:

- Frequency and severity of prior abuse
- Frequency of threats
- Violent jealousy
- Drug and alcohol use
- Violence toward children and others

Most extreme case of separation assault is homicide:

- 55-75% domestic violence related murders happen after the victim has left the relationship

Safety Planning

“Safety plans are strategies and responses that address the batterer-generated risks identified and prioritized by each battered woman. They may include strategies for staying and strategies for leaving, with protection strategies as aspects of each.”

- Women’s strategies often focus on the well-being of their children.
- Children’s safety is often linked to their mother’s safety.
- Enhancing mother’s safety and stability is a major avenue for children’s well-being.



Impact on Children/Youth

An estimated 3 million children are exposed to IPV annually

- Abuse/neglect as a child increases likelihood of juvenile arrest by 5.3%; adult arrest by 38% (1/3 for violent crime).
- 60% of the cases where the woman is being abused, so are the children.
- 80% of runaways are fleeing violent homes.
- Children from violent homes are 6x more likely to attempt suicide.
- Abuse of children by the 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, 1988).



Effects of DV on Children

- Externalizing behaviors
 - Aggression/conduct problems
- Internalizing behaviors
 - Depression, anxiety, low self esteem
- Intellectual and academic functioning
 - Learning disabilities, grades
- Social development
 - Friendships, relationships with adults, dating
- Physical health and development
 - Developmental delays, stress-related illness

Moderating Factors

- Severity and frequency of violence
- Relationship with abuse and victim
 - Biological father v. mom's boyfriend
 - Perceived protective efforts by mother
- Developmental considerations
- Exposure to multiple traumas
 - child maltreatment
 - community violence & substance abuse
 - poverty
 - racism
- Support network-resiliency



What Do Children Need?

- Safety for self, siblings and non-offending parent
- Stability and continuity
- Help for adult victim is help for the children
- The message: "It's not your fault."
- Responsibility for the violence and abuse placed with the perpetrator
- Support for ambivalent feelings towards victim and perpetrator
- Safe (when possible) contact with the batterer

Teen Dating Violence

- 1 in 3 adolescent girls in the U.S. is a victim of *physical, emotional or verbal abuse* from a dating partner
- Nationwide, 1 in 10 high-school students (8.9 percent) has been *hit, slapped or physically hurt* on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- 1 in 3 teens reports *knowing a friend or peer* who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped or physically hurt by a partner, and 45 percent of girls know a friend or peer who has been pressured into having either intercourse or oral sex.
- Teen victims of physical dating violence are more likely than their non-abused peers to smoke, use drugs, engage in unhealthy diet behaviors (taking diet pills or laxatives and vomiting to lose weight), engage in risky sexual behaviors, and attempt or consider suicide.

[Family Violence Prevention Fund www.endabuse.org]



Supporting Teens

- Open communication about “healthy relationships”
- Trusted adults
- Ask questions – be involved
 - Respect privacy, but not secrecy
 - Notice changes in behaviors
 - Know resources – Teen Dating Violence Programs, Bully-Prevention Programs, school counselors



Abuse in Later Life: Ongoing, Trusted Relationships

- Occurs in all types of relationships
- Adult children, grandchildren, family members
- Caregivers
- “Domestic violence grown old”
- New relationship
- Late onset
- “Reverse domestic violence”



Forms of Elder Abuse

- Physical
- Neglect
 - Self-Neglect (unable to do daily activities; hoarding)
 - Caregiver Neglect
 - Abandonment
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual assault or abuse
- Financial Exploitation

Intervention/Prevention of IPV

- Education – of professions & the community
 - 48% of women killed by abuser had visited a health care provider, primarily Emergency Room
 - 75% community members know someone in an abusive relationship & want to help but don't know how

- Legal
 - Probable Cause Arrest
 - No-Contact Orders
 - Protection Orders
 - Protocol for Domestic Violence, Elder Abuse, Teen Dating Violence
 - However, legal system is limited and many survivors are reluctant to disclose abuse



All of Us Can Help

- Take survivors seriously
- Know the warning signs
- Address/confront abusive or controlling behavior
- Know community resources
- Early intervention is key to safety
- Changing social norms regarding violence



Friends and Family

Questions NOT to Ask:

- Why don't you just leave?
- What did you do to make him/her so angry?
- Why do you go back?

Supportive Responses:

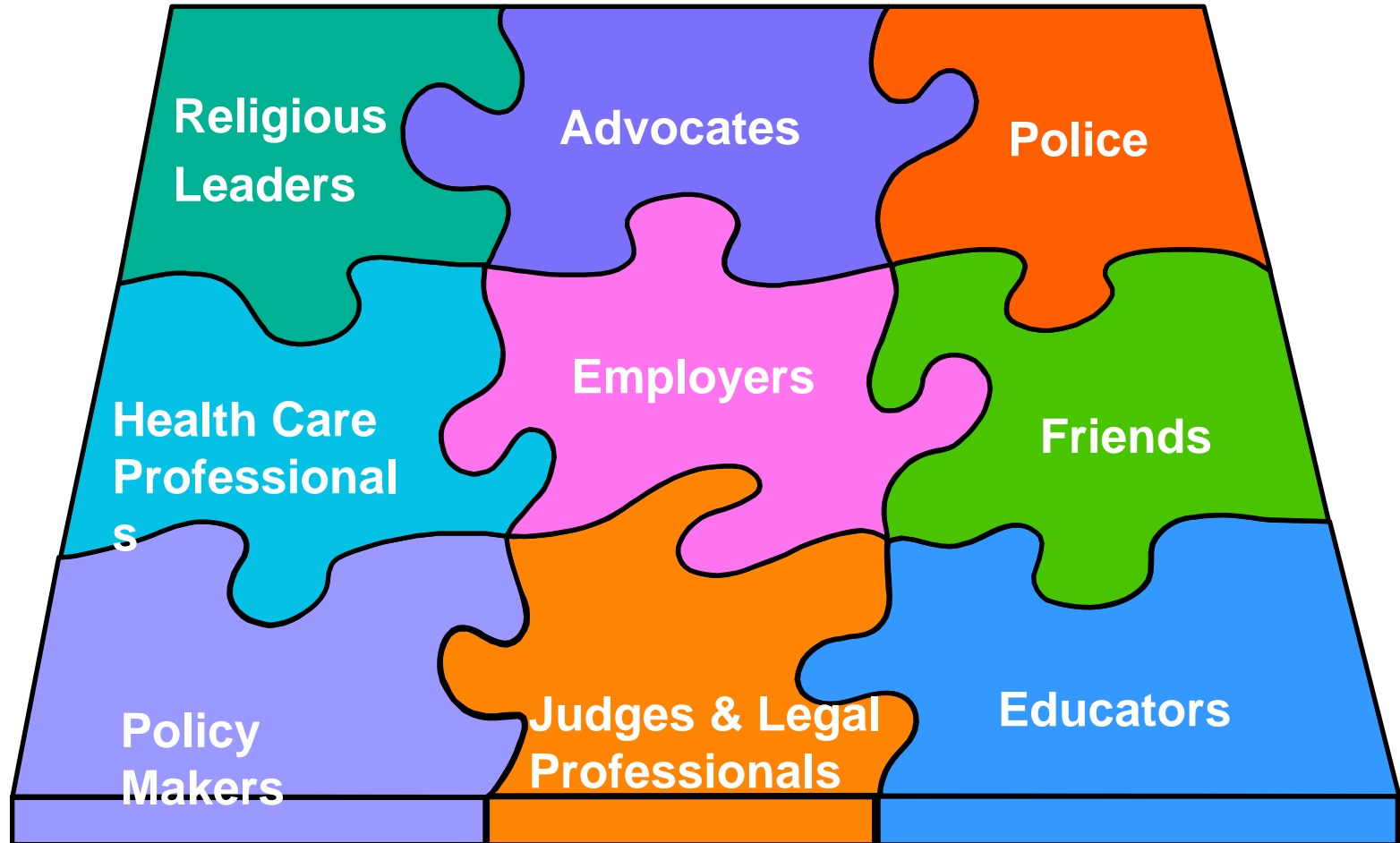
- This is not your fault.
- No one deserves to be treated this way.
- I'm sorry you've been hurt.
- Do you want to talk about it?
- I am concerned about your safety (and that of your children).
- Help is available to you.



Resources Available through SPAN

- 24-hr Crisis/Info Line
- Shelter & Resource Center
- Emergency Response – DART
- Counseling - for adults/children; JDC; jail groups
- Legal Advocacy - Protection Orders, criminal cases, divorce/custody, other legal issues
- Immigration Clinics – bimonthly (Boulder & Lafayette)
- Transitional Services/Housing
- Referrals to Community Resources: legal, housing, public benefits, other emergency/non-emerg needs
- Community/School-based Education & Prevention

Collaborative Response



Thank You!

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