

Domestic Violence: Keep it Safe

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- Bluegrass Healthy Marriage Initiative (BHMI) is a collaboration between:

University of Kentucky Family Studies
and

Bluegrass Healthy Marriages Partnership

- BHMP is a community coalition who seeks to support healthy marriages and co-parenting relationships through marriage & relationship education

Description of Workshop

- Participants will learn the importance of and how to develop a protocol for handling issues of violence
- The workshop will include suggested components of a protocol and offer ideas on how to collaborate with marriage educators and domestic violence professionals

Part I

Understanding Domestic Violence

Abuse: More than just physical

- *"Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure or wound someone."*

-National Domestic Violence Hotline

Types of Abuse

- Psychological abuse
- Control (psychological or physical)
- Sexual assault (rape) or coercion
- Deceptive behaviors
- Restricting acts
- Verbal abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Overt violence

Source: Borjesson et al., 2003

Terms: DV, IPV

- The term “domestic violence” (DV) describes a pattern of abuse and coercive behaviors used to gain power and control over an intimate partner
- The term “Intimate partner violence” (IPV) captures abuse in all intimate relationships (married, cohabiting, dating)

Four Types of Violence:

Intimate terrorism (battering): usually male. The individual is violent and controlling, the (woman) is not.

Situational couple violence: the individual is violent, but neither the individual nor the partner is violent and controlling. Can be mutual.

Violent resistance: the (woman) is reactively violent (but not controlling); the (male) is the violent and controlling one.

Mutual violent control: Both partners are violent and controlling.

Source: Michael Johnson, Penn State

How Common is Violence? National Incidence

- 1 in 4 women will experience DV in their lifetime
- Just over 1/2 of all partner violence is reported
- Young women 16-24 experience highest rates of partner violence
- 1/3 of murders of women are committed by intimate partners
- 1/3 of women seeking injury-related services in a hospital emergency room were injured by current or former intimate partner

Source: National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

How Common is Violence? International Incidence

World Health Organization:

- Women around the world suffer physical and sexual violence by intimate partners at rates from 15% to as high as 71%
- In most geographic areas, the prevalence of IPV is between 29% and 62%. The violence is often characteristically severe and continuous (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2006)

Sources: World Health Organization (WHO); Garcia-Moreno et al., 2006

Understanding Abuse: Why Does it Happen?

- Partner abuse is a *multicausal, multifaceted phenomenon*, occurring in:
 - Heterosexual/Homosexual couples
 - Cohabiting/Dating/Married/Separated couples
 - Low/High social-economic status
 - All races and nationalities

Sources: Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin, 2005; Michalski, 2004

Understanding Abuse: Risk Factors

- **Risk factors** include
 - Substance & Alcohol abuse
 - Male partner isolation
 - Seeing/Experiencing violence in family of origin
 - Stress
 - Gender inequality
- **REGARDLESS OF RISK, PEOPLE CHOOSE WHETHER OR NOT TO ABUSE.**

Understanding Abuse: Costs

- Individual Trauma –physical, emotional and mental problems
- Child Trauma
- Social Costs
- Neighborhood Costs
- Work Costs

Part II

Domestic Violence and Marriage Education



Marriage Education: Harmful-?!

- Some professionals fear that couple educators and therapists may *ignore* violence – or that their work may make violence *worse*
- In the face of abuse, traditional couples work can be detrimental:
 - Responsibility may be deflected from the abuser (“see, it’s our problem”)
 - Bringing up problems or issues may increase abuser’s control and violence tendencies
 - A marriage course may increase the woman’s fear to speak, even in the group

Assessment Challenges



- Many individuals in violent relationships don’t want to talk about it
- Many professionals – therapists and educators alike – often don’t identify and deal with violence
- **Couples may hide or downplay abuse**, and so the focus may remain on communication or other issues

“We have communication problems”

How Do We Assess?: The Intimate Justice Scale

- The Intimate Justice Scale (IJS) is a measure of patterns of psychological abuse and potential for violence.
- This scale can discriminate between types of abuse. It measures attitudes and motivations, not just what people do.

Source: Jory, B. (2004). The intimate justice scale: An instrument to screen for psychological abuse and physical violence in clinical practice. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 30(1), 29-44.

Scoring the IJS

Action Items: 14 (my partner isolates me)
15 (my partner physically hurts me)

Range:

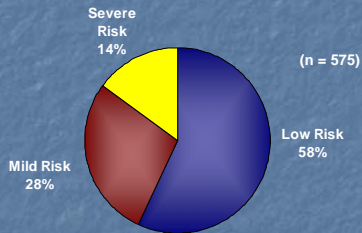
Low: 15 (safe)

High: 75 (high likelihood of abuse)

Cutoffs:

- 15-29: Little risk of violence
- 30-45: Likelihood of minor violence
- **>45: Likelihood of moderate to severe violence**

What did we find in our Community Sample?



Levels of Psychological and Physical Abuse (and abuse potential) according to the Intimate Justice Scale

Assessing the Feasibility of Couples Work

Couple Education may be possible if:

- The violence has been minor and infrequent
- There is not a climate of intimidation or emotional abuse
- No risk factors of lethality are present and there is not a fear of retaliation
- The man takes responsibility for any abusive behavior (or if there has been bi-directional violence, they both take responsibility for the behavior, recognizing the greater danger of the man's violence).

Assessing the Feasibility of Couples Work

Issues of lethality (life-threatening violence) should be assessed, and if any are found, couples education is contraindicated.

- Current substance abuse
- History of violence (2 or more acts in last year)
- History of violent crimes or violations of restraining orders.
- Use of weapons
- Threats of retaliation, hurt, or death
- Sexual coercion (frequent and unwanted)

If lethality is indicated, the duty to warn exists.

General Issues

You may...

- refer the couple to a DV treatment facility, or
- do couples education if there has been 6 months of nonviolence, and you have the woman's full consent.

You should...

- be cautious not to be charmed by the abuser.
- watch for your own denial, minimization, anger, or fear.
- Create a safety plan (if needed) to fit the client's situation.

Know that...

- most couples do not disclose violence until asked specifically.

Part III

Creating a Protocol

Early Issues

- Plan ahead for a protocol
- Make connections in your community
- Gather resources
- Work collaboratively to create the protocol

Plan Ahead

- Familiarize yourself with existing resources on Marriage Education & DV
 - The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center
 - <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/>
- Focus on Two Questions:
 - How will your project ensure safe & confidential opportunities to disclose?
 - How will your project ensure the decision to participate is voluntary and informed?

Helpful Documents

- Developing & Implementing Effective DV Protocols: (Menard, 2007)
- Developing & Implementing DV Protocols: Where to Start? (Menard, 2007)
- Blueprint to Guide Development of DV Protocols (Menard, 2006)
- Marriage Education & Domestic Violence: Issues & Challenges (Menard, 2006)

Source: www.healthymarriageinfo.org. See "Resources" slide in this presentation for more information.

Collaboration & Connections

- Identify and work with local or state DV advocates or intervention
 - Takes relational time
 - Takes an appreciation for various values
 - E.g., recognize that many in the DV community focus on individual well being and may be skeptical of marriage initiatives at all
 - Takes openness and a willingness to learn

Get Situated in your Community

- Learn what resources exist
- Learn state reporting laws
- Get training and experience
- Ask for willingness to participate in protocol creation process – who can give feedback?

Protocol Components

1. Name of the project
2. List of key partners and contacts
3. Program description
4. Program/project mission
 - May include commitments to safety, free choice, and other values of the project

Components, continued

5. Scope and purpose of protocol
 - Defines who will be using the protocol, and how it will be used
6. Underlying principles and commitments
 - May include statements on regional and cultural applicability and sensitivity

Components, cont.

7. Definition of DV
 1. may include local/state stats
8. Providing safe opportunities to disclose
 - What information is provided to participants? How might it assist DV victims?
 - What information is provided to partners?
 - Approach to screening and assessment
 - How to explore issues with potential participants

Components, cont.

9. Responding to disclosure
 - Crisis response (immediate danger)
 - Past or current, but no immediate danger
 - When participation should not occur
10. Sensitivity
11. Confidentiality
12. Protocol review & update

Components, cont.

- Other components (appendices):
 - Detailed list of resources
 - Regarding disclosure
 - State/local laws
 - Addressing diversity and cultural sensitivity
- Cross-Training: Domestic Violence & Marriage Education

Applying the Protocol

Component #8 – Providing Safe Opportunities to Disclose

Applying the Protocol

- Safe & Skilled: Understanding ME & DV
- Developed in concert with DV experts
- Assures accurate information delivery
- Assures informed decision making



Facilitating Disclosure

See Essential Components #8-11

Safe Opportunities to Disclose: Self-Screening for DV

- Truth in advertising: Not-so-fine print
- Brochures / info cards passed out to all
- Brochures / info cards in women's restroom
- Resource list available at back of class
- Video: Safe & skilled

See Component #8

Safe Opportunities to Disclose: Keys to Interaction & Response

- Scripts in protocol help assure proper handling of domestic violence issues
- Training on the protocol facilitates accurate and proper use of the scripts and other elements

See Component #9

Safe Opportunities to Disclose: Keys to Interaction & Response

- Be aware of verbal/non-verbal cues
- A caring, non-judgmental stance
- Not in front of partner
- Ask direct questions
- Ask for detailed description
 - Frequency, duration, and intensity
- Inquire about present safety
- Provide handouts/materials

See Component #9

Questions to Ask

- Do you think you might be in an abusive relationship?
 - If you'd like to talk about something now or in the future, I'm available.
- If abuse disclosed:
 - Are you in danger right now?
 - Are you afraid your partner will hurt you today?
 - Are you afraid to go home?
 - Does the abuse seem to be getting worse?

See Component #9

Questions You May Be Asked

- Is this activity right for us? Will it help us?
- My partner does this...Does that count as abuse?
- Is there someone I can talk to about DV?
- Where can I get more information?
- What resources are available?
- I need to get out. What do I do?

See Component #9

Confidentiality

- To protect the victim's safety, confidentiality is of the utmost concern
- Handle private information with the greatest care
 - Work with individuals when reporting is necessary – better to involve them at this stage than to go behind their back

See Component #11

Questions?

Resources

- National DV Hotline: 800.799.SAFE (7233)
- National Resource Center on DV
 - <http://www.nrcdv.org/>
- NHMRC TA Call (3.13.2007)
 - Transcript & associated documents available
 - <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/>
 - Look for "Multimedia" link on left and go to "Selected Presentations"
 - Examples protocols available, including ours!

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Myths about Abuse and Violence

- ***Men and women are equally abusive.***
 - While women and men can both be victims of IPV, women are at greater risk for physical and emotional trauma (Clements & Sawney, 2000; Sleutel, 1998). Men cause more injury, and female victims express more fear and terror than do male victims (Cares & Felson, 2005).
- ***Victims of IPV like to be beaten.***
 - No one likes to be beaten. Survivors of IPV stay in abusive relationships for many different possible reasons including belief that things will change, financial instability, or lack of alternatives.
- ***Victims of IPV have psychological disorders.***
 - Studies show that some survivors of IPV have symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and/or health problems (Carson, 1997). However, these often develop in response to the abuse.
- ***Low self-esteem causes victims to get involved in abusive relationships.***
 - Studies have shown that some victims of IPV have low self-esteem (Carson, 1997). Again, this may be partially a consequence of the abuse.
- ***Victims of IPV never leave their abusers, or if they do, they just get involved in other abusive relationships.***
 - Some survivors do in fact leave their abusers and do not become involved in other abusive relationships. This is less likely to happen when services and interventions are available.
- ***Batterers abuse their partners because of alcohol or drugs.***
 - Alcohol and substance abuse have been shown to be risk factors for the development of IPV and increasing its possible intensity (Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000). However, many batterers do not abuse alcohol or drugs; and many alcohol or drug abusers do not become violent.
- ***Perpetrators of IPV abuse their partners because they are under a lot of stress or are unemployed.***
 - Again, stress and unemployment are risk factors, but do not cause IPV. Many batterers are not unemployed or under a lot of stress, and many people who are unemployed or under a lot of stress are not violent towards their partners.
- ***Law enforcement and judicial responses, such as arresting batterers or issuing civil protection orders, are useless.***
 - Unfortunately such legal and judicial responses are not enough to protect all victims from further harm. However, this does not mean that they are useless. Many victims and victim advocates report that such responses are helpful and necessary protections.
- ***Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other.***
 - Children are significantly affected when one parent is abusing the other. Children in homes characterized by IPV are at greater risk for physical and emotional harm. They have much higher incidences of emotional and behavioral problems.

Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Abusive Behaviors

Using Intimidation: Does he make you afraid by using looks, actions, or gestures; smashing things; destroying property; abusing pets; or displaying weapons?

Using Emotional Abuse: Does he put you down, make you feel bad about yourself, call you names, make you think you're crazy, play mind games, humiliate you, or make you feel guilty?

Using Isolation: Does he control what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read, where you go; limit your outside involvement; or use jealousy to justify actions?

Minimizing, Denying, and Blaming: Does he make light of the abuse and not take your concerns about it seriously, say the abuse didn't happen, shift responsibility for abusive behavior, or say you caused it?

Using Children: Does he make you feel guilty about the children, use the children to relay messages, use visitation to harass you, or threaten to take the children away?

Using Male Privilege: Does he treat you like a servant, make all the big decisions, act like "master of the castle," or define men's and women's roles for you?

Using Economic Abuse: Does he prevent you from getting or keeping a job, make you ask for money, give you an allowance, take your money, or not let you know about or have access to family income?

Using Coercion and Threats: Does he make and/or carry out threats to do something to hurt you; threaten to leave you, commit suicide, or report you to welfare; make you drop charges; or make you do illegal things?

About Abusive Relationships

Abusive relationships are characterized by extreme jealousy, emotional withholding, lack of intimacy, raging, sexual coercion, infidelity, verbal abuse, threats, lies, broken promises, physical violence, power plays and control games. Abusers are generally very needy and controlling; the abuse escalates when they feel they may lose their partner, or when the relationship ends.

Abuse does not have to be physical

Emotional abuse is as damaging as physical abuse, though it is often harder to recognize, and therefore to recover from. Emotional abuse causes long term self esteem issues and profound emotional repercussions for the partners of abusers. Abuse typically alternates with declarations of love and statements that they will change, providing a "hook" to keep the partner in the relationship.

Risk Factors for Dangerous Violence

When any of the following are present in a relationship, the risks for more severe violence and injury are increased.

- **Substance Abuse.** Alcohol or other drug abuse can make violent behaviors increase quickly and become more unpredictable.
- **History of Violence.** Two or more acts of violence in the last 12 months.

- **History of Violent Crimes and Previous Violations of Restraining Orders.** Convictions and/or accusations of spousal abuse, violations of restraining orders, or assaults of non-family members.
- **Use of Weapons.** History of the threat or use of weapons, including martial arts or military/police training.
- **Threats.** Threats to retaliate, hurt, or even kill you or himself should be taken seriously.
- **Obsession with Partner.** Intense jealousy, repeated accusations of cheating, monitoring, calling often to check on your whereabouts, isolating you, stalking, harassing you at work, and limiting your contact with people.
- **Bizarre Forms of Violence.** The use of severe abuse that has elements of torture, rape, burning, starvation, or sleep deprivation.

If you are in an abusive relationship

Abusive relationships do not generally change without specific help. This may be scary or challenging, but seeking help is almost always a necessary step in stopping cycles of abuse. If the abuser is unwilling to take responsibility for their behavior and seek help it is best to remove yourself totally from the situation. Get help with this, as it is common for threats or abuse to increase after you leave - stepping out of the cycle enrages the abuser, as it shatters their illusion of control.

Help is readily available for both parties in abusive relationships. Please contact your local police or emergency service, or learn more from the following resources:

For Questions or Help Please Contact Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program at

1-800-544-2022

Provides 24-hour crisis intervention, emergency shelter, counseling, help with safety planning, legal aid, and more.

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

1-800-799-SAFE

1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

WARNING: THIS HANDOUT MAY PUT YOU AT RISK FROM AN ABUSIVE PARTNER. PLEASE BE AWARE OF WHERE YOU KEEP IT. CONSIDER MEMORIZING THE TELEPHONE NUMBER AND THROWING IT AWAY.

Prepared by University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

(adapted from materials from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project; Bograd & Mederos, 1999; and Recovery-Man Website)

Domestic Violence - Safety Planning

*IF YOU ARE IN DANGER, CALL 911
or your local police emergency number*

*To find out about help in your area, call:
National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-SAFE
1-800-787-3224 (TTY)*

*Whether or not you feel able to leave an abuser,
there are things you can do to make yourself and your family safer.*

SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

- Have a packed bag ready at a relative or friend's home.
- Ask a neighbor you trust to call the police if they hear a disturbance.
- Devise a codeword to use with children, family, or friends to call the police.
- Decide and plan where you will go if you need to leave.
- Use your instincts and best judgment.

SAFETY WITH A PROTECTIVE ORDER

- If you or your children have been threatened or assaulted, you can request a protective order (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) from your local district court.
- Keep your order on you at all times. Give a copy to family members, friends, and your child's school.

SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

- Open a savings account and/or credit card in your name to start to establish independence.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, extra medicines and clothes with someone you trust or in a safe place.
- Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- Keep the shelter or hotline phone number close at hand or memorize it.

SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

- Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them and teach them how to call for help.
- Inform your children's school, day care, etc..., about who has permission to pick up your children.
- Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him near your home.
- Teach children to not get in the middle of a fight, even if they want to help.

SAFETY ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC

- Decide which people at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security. Provide a picture of the batterer if possible.
- Arrange to have an answering machine, caller ID, or a trusted friend or relative screen your calls, if possible.

- Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your vehicle and wait with you until you are safely on your way. Use a variety of routes to go home, if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home (i.e. in your car, on the bus, etc.).

A Note of Caution:

For women in abusive relationships, statistics suggest that the two most dangerous times in their lives is while attempting to leave the relationship or during pregnancy.

A CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE WHEN YOU LEAVE

Identification

1. Driver's license
2. Children's birth certificate
3. Your birth certificate
4. Social Security cards
5. Welfare identification

Financial

1. Money and/or credit cards
2. Bank books
3. Checkbooks

Legal Papers

1. Your protective order (keep with you at all times)
2. Lease, rental agreement, house deed
3. Car registration & insurance papers
4. Medical records for you and children
5. School records

6. Work permits / Green card / VISA
7. Passport
8. Divorce & custody papers / marriage license
9. Pre-trial bond release papers

Other

1. House and car keys
2. Medications
3. Jewelry
4. Address book
5. Pictures of you, children, and abuser
6. Children's small toys
7. Toiletries / diapers
8. Change of clothes for you and your kids
9. Social Security numbers for all family members

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