What is Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence?

Domestic Abuse and Violence is a deliberate pattern of assaultive, controlling, and intimidating behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, that one intimate partner does to another to gain power and maintain control.

Domestic Violence and Abuse in California

- Almost 6% of California’s women suffer physical injuries from domestic violence every year. (CA Department of Health Services, Women’s Health Survey, 1998-99)
- 153 murders were the result of intimate partner violence in California in 2002 (CA DOJ Criminal Justice Statistics Center)
- 128 women were killed by their husbands, ex-husbands, boyfriends, or ex-boyfriends and 25 men were killed by their wives, ex-wives, girlfriends, or ex-girlfriends in 2003 (DOJ Criminal Justice Statistics Center)
- In 2002, California law enforcement responded to 196,569 domestic violence calls. 119,850 involved weapons, including firearms and knives. (DOJ Criminal Justice Statistics Center)
- Approximately 916,000 children were exposed to intimate partner violence at home in 1998. (CA Department of Health Services, Women’s Health Survey, 1998-99)
- Estimated that 1 in 5 women who went hungry because they did not have enough money to buy food was also a victim of intimate partner violence. (CA Department of Health Services, Women’s Health Survey, 1998-99)

Domestic Violence Facts

- Approximately 1.5 million women and 834,000 men are raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner each year (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).
- Nearly 2/3 of women who reported being raped, physically assaulted, or stalked since age 18 were victimized by a current or former husband, cohabitating partner, boyfriend, or date (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).
- Among women who are physically assaulted or raped by an intimate partner, one in three is injured. Each year, more than 500,000 women are injured as a result of
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), require medical treatment (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).

- As many as 324,000 women each year experience IPV during their pregnancy (Gazmararian, et al. 2000).
- Firearms were the major weapon type used in intimate partner homicides from 1981 to 1998 (Gazmararian, et al. 2000).

National Statistics

- On average, more than 3 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the U.S. every day. In 2000, 1,247 women and 440 men were killed by an intimate partner (U.S. Dept of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001).
- Estimates from the National Crime Victimization Survey reveal there were nearly 700,000 nonfatal violence victimizations committed by current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends during 2001. 85% of this number was crimes against women. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Violence by Intimates, March 1998).
- 37% of women who sought treatment in emergency room for violence related injuries were injured by a current or former intimate partner. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Violence by Intimates, March 1998).
- Women between the ages of 16 and 24 are nearly three (3) times more vulnerable to intimate partner violence (IPV). (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Violence by Intimates, 1999).
- In a national survey of college students, 27.5% of the women surveyed said that they had suffered rape or attempted rape at least once since age 14. Only 5% of those experiences were reported to the police. The term “hidden rape” has emerged because this survey and many other studies found that sexual assaults are seldom reported to the police. (Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control, 2003).

Types of Abuse

- Physical Abuse – includes slapping, hitting, kicking, choking, grabbing, punching, shoving, etc., or the use of a weapon; also included being forced to use alcohol or drugs (Includes “rough play”, forcibly being held or pinned down, etc.)
- Sexual Abuse – includes any coerced or forced sexual contact, undermining a person’s sexuality, unprotected sex and rape in marriage
• Verbal/Emotional Abuse – includes name calling, insults, put-downs, threats, belittling, silent treatment, criticism, etc.
• Psychological Abuse – includes intimidation, isolation from family and friends, harassing and/or attempts to control one’s behavior, destroying possessions or treasured objects, hitting walls, breaking doors, abusing/killing one’s pets
• Economic Abuse – includes attempts to make someone financially dependent, i.e., withholding money, keeping someone from work or school, harassing someone at work, controlling all incomes, and requiring justification for any monies spent
• Legal Abuse – includes dragging out legal/custody proceedings, refusing to pay support or alimony, withholding assets, and fighting for custody solely to maintain control over victim’s whereabouts
• Financial Abuse – includes withholding money, having to account for every penny, refusing to pay bills/creditors, no money of your own, not allowed to work

Domestic violence is not a marital conflict, a lover’s quarrel, or a private family matter. It is a serious social and personal problem. The batterer may be a husband or wife, ex-husband or wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, partner (including same sex) or ex-partner. Abuse and violence are usually learned behaviors. Everyone must learn and understand that Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence are unacceptable.

Domestic Violence is a CRIME!

The next bulletin will cover ways to recognize domestic violence, how to provide assistance, and the Cycle of Domestic Violence. What you need to know.

For additional information, the following websites can provide assistance and information:

Ohlone Community College Student Health Center
(ohlone.edu/org/healthcenter/sexualassaultinfo.html)

Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV.com)

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV.com)

Bay Area Women Against Rape (bawar.org)

Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments (save-dv.org)