

Understanding Domestic Violence

Crime Victims Assistance and Prevention Program of
the Ohio Attorney General's Office

What we know...

- Nearly one-third of American women (31%) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. (*“Health Concerns Across a Woman’s Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women’s Health,” The Commonwealth Fund, May 1999*).
- Women between the ages of 16 and 24 are nearly three times more vulnerable to intimate partner violence (excluding intimate partner homicide) than women in other age groups. (*Intimate Partner Violence 1993-99. U.S. Dept. of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics*).
- In 2005, approximately 1,181 women were murdered by their intimate partners. The same year 329 men were killed by an intimate partner. (*“Homicide Trends in the United States: Intimate Homicide.” Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007.*)
- Domestic violence, whether sexual, physical or psychological, can lead to various psychological consequences for victims, including depression, antisocial behavior, suicidal behavior for females, anxiety, low self-esteem, inability to trust men, fear of intimacy, and/or symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. (*Intimate Partner Violence Prevention: Scientific Information and Consequences, CDC, 2007*).

- Equal prevalence in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) relationships: Large-scale studies that have measured interpersonal violence (IPV) in LGBTQ relationships have reported rates that range from 17% to 52%.
- Like heterosexual domestic violence, violence in LGBTQ relationships involves the conscious manipulation and control of one person by another through the use of threats, coercion, humiliation, and/or force.
- According to a Liz Claiborne study on teen dating abuse in 2005, 80% of girls who reported having been physically abused in their relationship continue to date the abuser. (*Liz Claiborne, Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.*)
- 1 in 3 teenagers report knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped, choked or physically hurt by their partner. (*Liz Claiborne, Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.*)

What we Know About Domestic Violence?

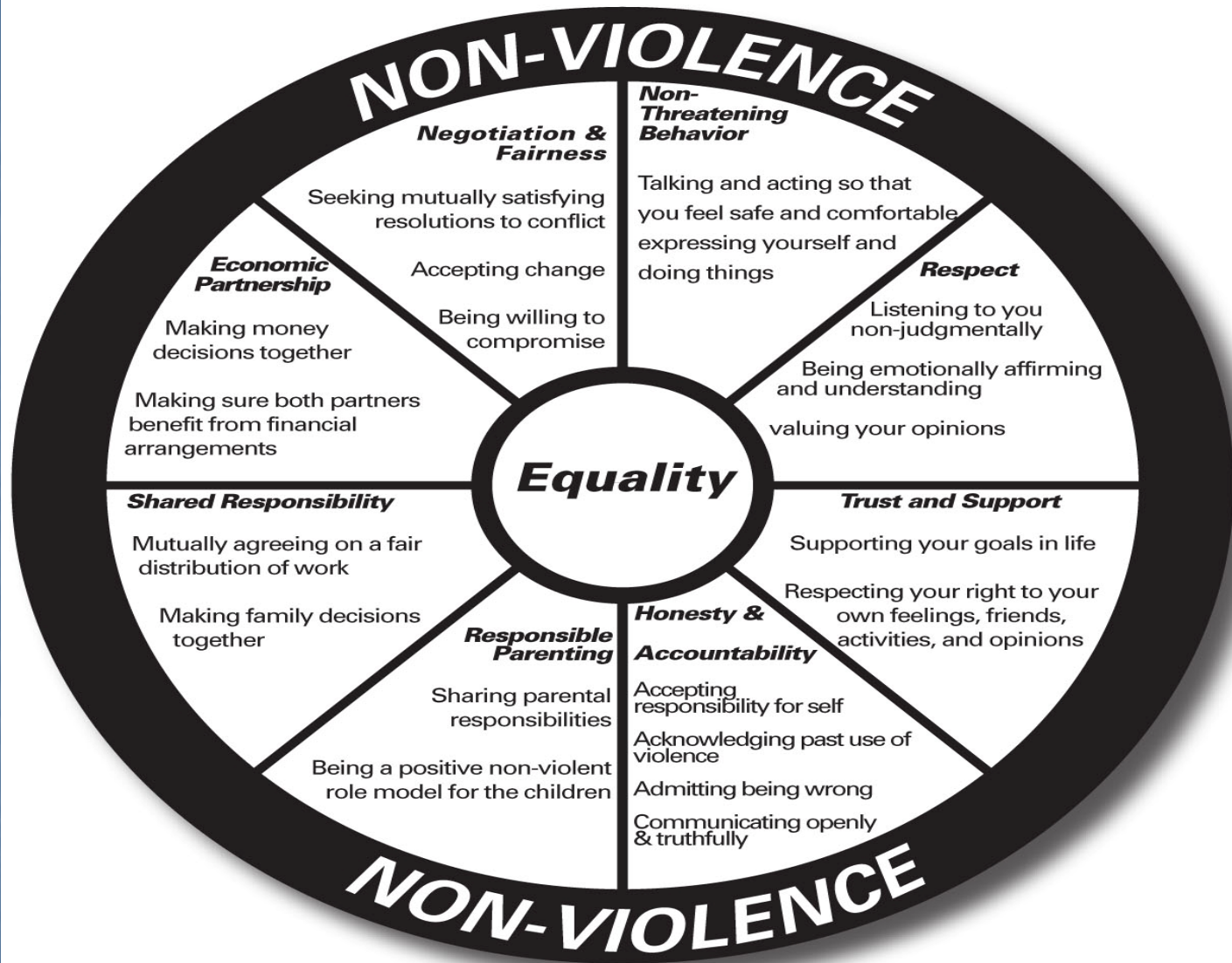
Domestic Violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners.

POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

After interviewing hundreds of women who attended their educational sessions for survivors, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in Duluth, Minnesota, concluded that abusive tactics are a constant force in the relationships of women and that batterers had full intention to control the lives of their partners. Thus, DAIP developed the Power and Control Wheel in 1984 to depict these women's experience more accurately.



Equality Wheel



This wheel was developed to demonstrate the characteristics of a relationship based on mutuality, respect, and equality. The rim of the wheel--which gives it strength and holds it together--is non-violence (emotional and physical).

**Adapted from "The Equality Wheel." Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 206 West Fourth Street, Duluth, MN 55806; 218-722-4134.*

Types of Abuse

VERBAL ABUSE

- Yelling
- Name calling
- Threatening to hurt or kill
- Degrading women in general
- Criticizing appearance
- Belittling accomplishments
- Constant blaming

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Apologizing and making false promises to end abuse;
- Offering false hope
- Isolating from others
- Ridiculing, criticizing, blaming
- Neglecting physical or emotional needs
- Ignoring, withholding affection
- Abusing pets
- Accusing of affairs
- Monitoring conversations
- Making partner account for time
- Criticizing friends and family
- Embarrassing in front of others
- Undermining authority with children
- Constant phone calls

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE ABUSE

- Taking or breaking phone
- Controlling money/bank accounts
- Withholding financial information
- Making account for shopping purchases
- Withholding child support
- Destroying property
- Taking or disabling car
- Taking keys/purse
- Quitting or losing jobs
- Running up debts
- Sabotaging work or school

Types of Abuse cont...

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Constant sexual demands
- Forcing unwanted sexual acts
- Insisting on unwanted and uncomfortable touching
- Committing rape or incest
- Forcing sadistic sexual acts
- Treating others as sex objects
- Making demeaning sexual remarks
- Forcing family members to see pornographic materials
- Calling fat, ugly, no good in bed
- Wanting sex after abuse
- Forcing to have sex with others
- Forcing pregnancy or abortion

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Holding down (restraining)
- Hair pulling
- Poking, grabbing, pinching
- Pushing, shoving
- Locking in or out of house
- Subjecting to reckless driving
- Refusing to help when sick or injured
- Kicking, biting, spitting
- Hitting, slapping
- Choking, strangling
- Burning
- Throwing or hitting with objects
- Using a knife or gun

Abusive behaviors used in domestic violence situations:

- 1) create fear in the victim.
- 2) force the victim to do what (s)he does not wish to do.
- 3) prevent the victim from doing what (s)he wishes to do.

*Above from *Emergent Batterers Intervention Group Program Manual* (2000).*

Myths and Realities of Domestic Violence

Myth 1: Domestic violence is usually a one-time event.

Reality: Domestic violence involves a pattern of coercive, assaultive control and can include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or financial abuse. The frequency and severity of violence tends to increase over time.

Myth 2: Battering occurs when a man is stressed out.

Reality: Many people are stressed out and do not become violent with another person. There are many positive ways to handle stress, and a high stress level is not a legitimate excuse for violence.

Myth 3: Alcohol and drugs cause domestic violence.

Reality: Alcohol and drugs use are correlated with domestic violence, but alcohol and drugs do not cause domestic violence. Often batterer's use alcohol or drugs as an excuse or justification for violent behavior. However, many batterers abuse others while sober and many alcoholics and drug addicts do not become violent when using.

Myths cont...

Myth 4: Battered women always stay in abusive relationships.

Reality: Many women leave abusive relationships and lead lives free from violence. We do not know how many women leave after the first incident of abuse. There are also many dangers to a woman if she chooses to leave an abusive relationship. Abusive partners often escalate abuse during separations from their partners, putting women and their children at increased risk. Also, women may not receive appropriate responses from institutions that are expected to assist them (police, courts, medical, or social services personnel) further increasing their danger.

Myth 5: Domestic violence is a family problem, so all family members must change to stop the violence.

Reality: The batterer is the only person responsible for stopping the violence. The battered woman and her children have most likely made numerous attempts to stop the violence without success. Batterers are the only family member with the power to end the violence.

Adapted from the Ohio Domestic Violence Network's *Domestic Violence Advocacy Fundamentals* training manual (2008.)

Why Do Partners Batter?

Domestic violence is caused by the batterer's decision to batter based on:

- What he learned through observation
- What he learned through experience and reinforcement
- What he learned in the culture
- What he learned in the family
- What he learned in the communities

Batterer Belief System

Batterers tend to:

- Deny responsibility
- Emphasize externals
- Switch subjects
- Rationalize/justify/intellectualize their actions
- Minimize severity or importance of matters
- Deceive
- Generalize to absurdity
- Have all-or-nothing thinking
- Jump to conclusions
- Dwell on the negatives
- Have high expectations for others
- Have rigid ideas and values
- Have an attitude of ownership
- Have an attitude of retaliation
- Have little trust
- Have no ability to feel for others
- Show boosted sense of self and pride
- Have "mood swings"
- Have poor tolerance for frustration and are easily discouraged
- Be overly cruel or overly kind

None of which may be visible to individuals they do not have an intimate relationship with.

How Can You Help?

- Listen and believe victims of abuse when they disclose what they are experiencing.
- Do not give them advice about what they should do. They know their partner best and will make the safest decisions based on their relationship.
- NEVER say “Why don’t you leave?”, “Why did you go back?”
- Respect their right to refuse your help. Your frustration with them only causes further isolation.

Know the Best Resources

- **National Domestic Violence 24-hour Hotline:** 800-799-7233 (access to interpreters of most languages). www.ndvh.org
- **Ohio Domestic Violence Network:** 800-934-9840 (after hours automated county shelter referral system). www.odvn.org
- **Buckeye Regional Anti-Violence Organization:** 866-86-BRAVO or www.BRAVOOHIO.ORG (provides advocacy services to LGBT community)
- **Ohio Hispanic Coalition:** (614) 840-9934, or www.ohiohispaniccoalition.org (provides services and advocacy to the Hispanic community)
- **Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network:** 800-656-HOPE or www.rainn.org (24 hour phone and online hotline)
- **National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline:** 1-866-331-9474
1-866-331-8453 TTY or loveisrespect.org