

## **FACILITATING DISCUSSION WITH THIS FILM**

*Defending Our Lives* is an Academy Award-winning documentary that exposes the magnitude and severity of domestic violence in this country. The devastating accounts of the women featured in this film reveal the failure of the criminal justice system—and of our society as a whole—to protect the victims of domestic violence.

*Defending Our Lives* usually evokes powerful emotions from its viewers. We strongly recommend that you allow time for people to express their responses to the documentary. One method we have tried is to ask people *directly* how they are feeling and allow enough silent time to be sure people have the opportunity to speak. Sometimes it takes a significant amount of time before people are ready to talk. We also strongly recommend that you present the documentary as part of a discussion or presentation. The national listings of hotline numbers in this pamphlet are for organizations that will be able to provide local assistance in finding people who can be discussion leaders and resources for your presentations. We also include a section listing people who can lecture and lead discussions with the documentary.

Occasionally individuals become very emotional after a screening. You should be prepared to handle such a response and be able to provide resources and referrals to those who need them. We encourage you to have the number of the local battered women's shelter and counseling center hotline available at your screening.

*Defending Our Lives* has proven to be an effective tool in starting discussions about domestic violence, human rights, criminal justice, violence against women, the need for social legislation, professional responsibility, law enforcement, women's status in society, battered women and self-defense and many other related ideas. This study guide is designed to assist you in leading a discussion after the film and to help you address domestic violence in your community.

***Defending Our Lives* is now available in video formats of 30 and 42 minutes. It is also available in Spanish in a 30 minute video format.**

We would appreciate hearing from you about additional materials we might include in this support packet to enhance discussion of the issues raised in the film. Please write us at **Cambridge Documentary Films, Inc., P.O. Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139** or **call** us at **(617) 354-3677** or **fax** us at **(617) 492-7653** with any suggestions you have for improving these resources.

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## STATISTICS

- Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the United States—more than rapes, muggings, and automobile accidents combined. (Surgeon General, United States, 1992.)
- A woman is beaten every 9 seconds in the United States. (Family Violence Prevention Fund Report 1994.)
- There are at least 4 million reported incidents of domestic violence against women every year. (Dr. Angela Browne, Senate Judiciary Hearing, 1992.)
- According to the Center For Disease Control, a woman is in nine times more danger of violent attack in her home than on the streets.
- Over 50% of the women killed in the United States are killed by male intimate partners or ex-partners. (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1992)
- 11.6% of all married or cohabiting relationships experience some physical violence within a given year. (National Institute of Mental Health, 1985.)
- In a 1985 National Crime Survey, one out of six American couples experience at least one incident involving physical assault. (Gelles & Straus, *Physical Violence in American Families*)
- Women are more likely to be victims of homicide when they decide to separate from their husbands. The risk of homicide is highest in the first two months of separation (Wilson & Daly, *Violence and Victims*. 1993)
- Battered women are often severely injured—22 to 35% of women who visit medical emergency rooms are there for injuries related to ongoing abuse. (*Journal of American Medical Association*, 1990.)
- Domestic violence is a significant cause of miscarriage and birth defects. (March of Dimes, 1992.)
- Approximately 50% of the homeless women and children in this country are on the streets because of violence in the home. (Senator Joseph Biden, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Violence Against Women: Victims of the System*, 1991.)
- In 1993, nearly 50,000 restraining orders pertaining to violence against intimates were issued in Massachusetts alone. (Commission on Probation, State of Massachusetts.)
- In self-reported data, 35% of adolescents mention at least knowing someone who experienced physical violence in a dating relationship. (Roscoe and Callahan)
- There are an estimated 600 women in California prisons convicted of killing an abusive partner. (California Coalition for Battered Women in Prison, 1994.)

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR OFFERING HELP**

Here are some basic steps you can take to assist someone who you believe may be in a battering relationship. (This page is geared towards women because the majority of domestic violence is perpetrated against women, however, it is important to note that men can be victims of domestic violence, too.)

- **Approach** her in an understanding, non-blaming way. Assure her that she is not alone, that there are many women like her in the same kind of situation.
- **Acknowledge** that it is scary and difficult to talk about domestic violence. Tell her she doesn't deserve to be threatened, hit or beaten. Nothing justifies the abuser's violence.
- **Support** her as a friend. Be a good listener and encourage her to express her hurt and anger. Allow her to make her own decisions.
- **Ask** if she has suffered physical harm. Go with her to the hospital to check for injuries. Help her report the assault to the police, if she chooses to do so.
- **Share** information. Discuss the dynamics of violence and how abuse is based on power and control. Let her know that resources are available to help her, including programs that can provide emergency shelter, counseling services and legal advice.
- **Inform** her of her legal rights under local and state abuse prevention laws. Go with her to district, probate or superior court to obtain protective orders, or find someone who can.
- **Plan** safe strategies for leaving an abusive relationship. Never encourage a "safety plan" that she believes will put her at further risk. Remember, she may not feel comfortable taking these materials.

Adapted from *Domestic Violence: The Facts*, Peace at Home, Inc.

## CONTROLLING BEHAVIORS WARNING LIST

This list identifies a series of behaviors typically demonstrated by batterers and abusive people. All of these forms of abuse—psychological, economic, and physical—come from the batterer's desire for power and control. The list can help you recognize if you or someone you know is in a violent relationship.

### **Psychological and Economic Abuse**

- \_\_\_ **Verbal Abuse:** name-calling, mocking, destructive criticism, accusing, blaming, yelling, swearing, making humiliating remarks or gestures.
- \_\_\_ **Pressure Tactics:** rushing you to make decisions through "guilt-tripping" and other forms of intimidation, sulking, threatening to withhold money, manipulating the children, telling you what to do.
- \_\_\_ **Abusing Authority:** always claiming to be right, insisting statements are "the truth," telling you what to do, making big decisions unilaterally.
- \_\_\_ **Disrespect:** interrupting, changing topics, not listening or responding, twisting your words, putting you down in front of other people, saying bad things about your friends and family.
- \_\_\_ **Abusing Trust:** lying, withholding information, infidelity, unreasonable jealousy.
- \_\_\_ **Breaking Promises:** not following through on agreements, not taking a fair share of responsibility, refusing to help with childcare or housework.
- \_\_\_ **Emotional Withholding:** not expressing feelings; not giving support, attention or compliments; not respecting feelings, rights or opinions.
- \_\_\_ **Minimizing, Denying & Blaming:** making light of abusive behavior and not taking your concerns about it seriously, denying that the abuse happened, blaming you for the abuse
- \_\_\_ **Economic Control:** interfering with your work or not letting you work, withholding or taking money, denying you access to the car and other resources, threatening to report you to welfare or other social service agencies.
- \_\_\_ **Self-Destructive Behavior:** abusing drugs or alcohol, threatening suicide or other forms of self-harm, deliberately doing or saying things that will have negative consequences.

\_\_\_ **Isolation:** preventing or making it difficult for you to see friends or relatives, monitoring phone calls, telling you where you can and cannot go.

\_\_\_ **Harrasment:** making uninvited visits or calls, following you, checking up on you, embarrassing you in public, refusing to leave when asked.

### **Acts of Violence**

\_\_\_ **Intimidation:** making angry or threatening gestures, use of physical size to intimidate, standing in doorway during arguments, out shouting you, driving recklessly.

\_\_\_ **Destruction:** destroying your possessions, punching walls, throwing and/or breaking things.

\_\_\_ **Threats:** making and/or carrying out threats to hurt you or others.

\_\_\_ **Sexual Violence:** degrading treatment based on your sex or sexual orientation; using force, threats or coercion to obtain sex or perform sexual acts.

\_\_\_ **Physical Violence:** being violent to you, your children, household pets, or others; slapping, punching, grabbing, kicking, choking, pushing, biting, burning, stabbing, shooting, etc.

\_\_\_ **Weapons:** use or threatened use of weapons, keeping weapons around that frighten you.

Adapted from *Domestic Violence: The Facts*, Peace At Home, Inc.

## **PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN    Increasing safety in the relationship**

- I will have important phone numbers accessible to my children and myself (see next page)
- I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
- If I leave my home, I can go (list four places) : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I can leave extra money, car keys, clothes, and copies of documents with \_\_\_\_\_.
- If I leave, I will bring \_\_\_\_\_ (see checklist next page).
- To ensure safety and independence, I can: keep change for phone calls with me at all times; open my own savings account; rehearse my escape route with my children and support person; and review safety plan on (date) \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Increasing safety when the relationship is over**

- I can: change the locks; install steel/metal doors; a security system; smoke detectors; and an outside lighting system.
- I will inform \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ that my partner no longer resides with me and to call the police if s/he is observed near my residence or my children.
- I will tell people who take care of my children who else has permission to pick them up. The people who have permission are: \_\_\_\_\_.
- I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ at work about my situation and ask \_\_\_\_\_ to screen my calls.
- I can avoid stores, banks, and \_\_\_\_\_ that I used when residing with my battering partner.
- I can obtain a protective order from \_\_\_\_\_ court, keep it on or near me at all times as well as leave a copy with \_\_\_\_\_.
- If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can call \_\_\_\_\_ for support or attend workshops and support groups to gain support and strengthen my relationships with other people.

**Items to Take Checklist**

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Identification                    | Welfare identification                   |
| Birth certificates                | Passport(s), Green Card(s), work permits |
| Social Security cards             | Divorce papers                           |
| School and medical records        | Lease/rental agreement                   |
| Money, bank books, credit cards   | House deed, mortgage payment book        |
| Keys – house/car/office           | Current unpaid bills                     |
| Driver's license and registration | Insurance papers                         |
| Medications                       | Address book                             |
| Pictures, jewelry                 | Children's favorite toys , blankets      |
| Other items of sentimental value  | Change of clothes                        |

**Important phone numbers:**

Police _____	Hotline _____
Friends _____	Shelter _____

**Being Aware + Informing Others + Finding Support = Increased Safety**



## **Violence Against Women:**

**How to Improve the Legal Services' Response** Excerpts from a speech by Sarah Buel, Assistant District Attorney, Quincy, MA and Head of the Suffolk County Domestic Violence Unit, delivered Nov. 18, 1991

They have their teeth knocked out with hammers; they are run over by cars and trucks; they are raped with hot curling irons and large objects. They are beaten, stabbed, choked [and] strangled. They are beaten in public, in the streets; they are beaten in the privacy of their own homes; they are tortured and beaten in front of their children; and they are tied up and forced to watch the torture and sexual molestation of their own children.

Am I talking about atrocities committed in some foreign country by enemy soldiers against captive prisoners? Am I talking about atrocities that human rights organizations around the world are outraged by, that [they] are screaming and yelling and telling us how funds need to be raised to stop this abuse? No, I'm talking about the domestic violence that is occurring not just across this country, but specifically in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all around us.

The F.B.I. now tells us that one out of every two women in this country will be in a violent relationship in their lifetime. Not because 50 percent of all men are abusers, but because we as a society completely fail to hold them accountable and provide sanctions for that abuse. That means that this is no longer an "us-and-them" proposition. It is all of us. The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta has a Violence Epidemiology Unit that tells us more women in this country now seek treatment in our nation's emergency rooms as a result of domestic violence injuries than from the combination of muggings, rapes and car accidents. That makes domestic violence the *number one* cause of injury to women in this country.

They also tell us that women are in nine times more danger in their homes than they are in the street...I did not come to this work by accident. I grew up in a violent home and, not surprisingly, ended up in a violent marriage—at a time 15 years ago when there were no abuse prevention laws, no battered women shelters [and no] courts that I could find [which] were at all interested in my safety, the safety of my then infant son and the two foster children I had.

We have come a little way in that time. There are now about 1,200 battered women's shelters across this country. But, just to keep that in perspective, there are about 3,800 animal protection shelters. And it seems to me, no matter how much you love animals, our priorities are a little skewed when we have three times the number of shelters for homeless animals than we have for battered women and their children.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Metropolitan District Commission spends more on its zoo than the entire Commonwealth spends for battered women. Just two years ago, when the Legislature approved \$100 million for a new tropical rain forest pavilion at the zoo, it was the same year that battered women's shelter programs had their funding reduced to \$4.3 million. You are each tax-paying, voting citizens, and you have a voice. I would argue that you have a responsibility to make that voice heard, and to let your elected officials, your legislators [and] the policy makers around us know that [this] kind of funding disparity is simply not acceptable to us.

I come to you with two assumptions, two premises today. The first is that domestic violence is serious violent crime, and until and unless we treat it as such, we will continue to see the spiraling numbers of victims. The second proposition is the good news; there is a tremendous amount that you as an individual, as well as a professional, can do.

The number-one question people ask me is, "If you were smart enough to go to law school (as if there is any correlation between going to law school and being smart), how could you stay in a violent marriage for so long (as though there is any correlation between being stupid and staying in a violent relationship)?" It has nothing to do with being stupid, it has everything to do with what your options are and what information you have. I need to point out that there were more safety nets when I left [my ex-husband] in 1977. I was able to get on welfare. There was then the CETA program which got me a job in legal services as a paralegal. And that's what really changed my life, in terms of learning about what legal rights and options I had, and figuring out how we could protect battered women...

So many legal services people call me and say, "I'm being supportive with her, I'm telling her that I'm here for her and I'm going to help her get a restraining order, and she still went back to him. Tell me what I'm doing wrong, tell me when this woman is going to understand that she's got to leave." She's going to understand that she's got to leave, I believe, when we make it safe for her to do so, and when there are enough support mechanisms in the community.

There are several very good reasons why battered women are forced to go back...One of the first that I want to address is the issue of fear. You are not going to be with her 24 hours a day, so no matter what assurances you give her, you simply can't be there...I can't believe how often I have heard supervisors when I worked in legal services tell me and assure [other] battered women that he really is not going to kill her.

Well, I have buried too many battered women. We are not going to start talking about second-guessing when battered women are the people who know this abuse the best, and they know when he's giving the clues and the signals that he is serious this time. That this is the time that he could kill her. We can't be giving assurances about things that we simply don't know.

I want to share with you something that keeps [this] in mind for me the most clearly, and that's when I left [my ex-husband] and went to a small rural town in New Hampshire. I was in a Laundromat on a Saturday morning, and my son was running around with the kids over there, and I saw people by the counter, so I felt reasonably safe. I tried to always be around people. And then I saw my ex-husband come in the door.

I could not believe that he had figured out how to find me. It is just amazing the tenacity that batterers use in tracking down victims. Do not ever underestimate them. So I see him come in, and I look over to the counter, and I ask the people to call the police.

But he said, "No, this is my wife, and we've just had a little fight and I've come to pick her up." So nobody moved. I still had bruises on the side of my face, and I said, "This is the person who did this to me, you need to call the police!"

And he said, "No, this is my wife, we've just had a little fight and I've come to take her home." So nobody moved.

As long as I live, I want to remember what it feels like to be terrified for my life and nobody can even pick up the phone. And we hear this over and over and over again. Women screaming in the street, women screaming in their homes, and nobody can be bothered to pick up the phone.

...When we talk about how battered women should leave because they are in great danger, we need to think about what we are telling them to do. More battered women are murdered in the process of leaving than at any other time, so it is irresponsible to simply tell them, "You need to leave." You have to hook them up with a shelter, or somebody who can help them put together a safety plan.

...I first went to legal services as a client because I had been denied welfare because I wouldn't tell them where he was, because I knew that they would contact him for child support, and then he would track me down, again. But nobody asked me, "Are you safe? Are you OK? Has anyone hit or assaulted you in the last year?"

*We need to routinize inquiries about abuse.* If you do nothing else, [make sure that] every single intake form [asks these questions] of every single female client who walks in your door. I would suggest that it is malpractice not to ask every single female—whether they come in for a landlord/tenant problem, [or] consumer protection...

So many women come to us and still have no idea that the abuse is illegal. They still have no idea how to get a restraining order; there is a vague notion, as in many states, that you have to have a lawyer to do that. We have that information, and I would argue that we have a responsibility to give it out, to share it. That means *we need to make community legal education an integral part of our work.*

You need to be out in your community. You need to forge a network with your legal services programs and other areas, as well as the battered women's shelters in your communities, the batterer's treatment program. We have to be able to assist battered women in complete ways...

A second obstacle for many battered women leaving [their abusers] is economic factors. This is particularly true for the people with whom we work.

What I usually like to do when we talk about economic factors, because people seem to remember it, is to take everybody's wallet. When you take people's money, their credit cards and their identification, they get pretty nervous. I want them to have a sense about what it is like to be a battered woman and leave in the middle of the night and not have a chance to grab your purse. So I say OK, take out your wallet, put your cash, checks, credit cards on the desk in front of you. I'll let you keep \$20, and I'll give you a bus ticket to anywhere in the state that you want.

And you have three children under the age of six, so when you get to this new city or town, you need to find the battered women's shelter. The problem is: we turn away eight children for every two that we shelter, and that was two years ago before all of the budget cuts.

So, there's probably no room for you. You try going to the homeless shelter, [but] 95 percent of them don't accept women. Of those that do, many do not accept women with children, and many, such as Rosie's Place [of Boston], do not accept battered women because they feel that you endanger the rest of the residents.

So you think that you're going to go to Welfare to get some Emergency Assistance? But they don't even have to give you an answer, if they let you fill out an application, for 30 days, let alone give you money. So, you think that you are going to find a sympathetic landlord? Somebody that will just let you stay overnight? Or a couple of weeks, or a couple of months? But you don't have the first and last month's rent, never mind the security deposit, and you don't have a source of income in that city.

By this time the batterer has tracked you down, and he has a box of chocolates and a bouquet of flowers. He's real sorry, and [says] it's never going to happen again. Either that or he's going to kill you if you don't come home, and he has a gun to your head. And the children are crying and they just want to go home. You've spent the \$20 on Pampers and Burger King and getting back and forth to all of these agencies.

I ask you, how long would you stay away?

You think you're going to sleep in the park? The Department of Social Services will take your children away; it's called neglect.

So, if you're lucky enough to stay with a friend, and you get a minimum wage job, that means you take home \$120 a week. The Office for Children tells us the cheapest day care is \$90 a week for one child, that leaves you \$30 to pay the rent, to buy clothing, medicine, food; you can't do it.

What is it we want battered women to do? The next time somebody tells you how stupid we are for staying, you ask them to figure out a safety plan...

We need to talk about a whole new way of community organizing. We are just starting an organization of formerly battered women, because we have to make our voices heard. We have to not only make them heard on Beacon Hill,\* but within our local legal services programs. And many of you here know exactly what I'm talking about. There are some that do an extraordinary job at providing legal services to battered women, and some that do a horrendous job, not only in the allocation of how many housing attorneys you have as opposed to how many battered women's attorneys you have, but also the attitudes, and the ways that you think about battered women, and the priority that they receive within your program.

When we talk about economic issues, we have to talk about the particularly cruel irony of battered women who are doing time in our nation's prisons as a result of the abuse. We learned from a Brandeis study at the Framingham women's prison that 95 percent of the women at that prison are battered women. When we started a project at Harvard pairing up law students with women in prison, we learned that [while] less than 10 percent are there for committing violent crime, that 99 percent of the women who are there for committing violent crime committed it against their batterer.

We learned that over 60 percent are there for writing bad checks. These are not checks that were written to fur stores on Newbury Street or Filene's diamond department. They were written to Stop & Shop, Sears and KMart's children's department. We can trace that these are battered women who went into court and couldn't get a restraining order, or had no idea how to get to court.

So they would leave in the middle of the night, and they don't have any money...Now it's you. And then you have to write a bad check, and you don't have any food. And you write another bad one, because you left in the middle of the night, because you have no clothing for yourself or your children. So you get to work it off at \$30 a day at the Framingham prison.

\*State government

I don't know about you, but they told me in ninth-grade civics class that the Pilgrims came over here to escape debtors' prison. I would submit to you that we have a debtors' prison for battered women in Massachusetts and across this country...

I was asked to talk about some of the ways that domestic violence affects other kinds of work we do in legal services. One of those ways is to talk about the correlation between domestic violence, child abuse and juvenile delinquency...The first way that we look at this is through pregnant battered women. We know that about 30 percent of all pregnant women are battered at some point during their pregnancy, and as we train more medical people, we are learning that the number is probably a lot higher. We also know that abusers target the stomach on a pregnant battered woman.

So, it is not surprising that a March of Dimes 1989 study reports that more babies are now born with birth defects as a result of the mother being battered during pregnancy than from the combination of all the diseases and illnesses for which we immunize pregnant women.

In 1985, the Mass. Department of Youth Services did an outstanding study correlating family violence and juvenile delinquency. They found, not surprisingly, that children growing up in violent homes do not need to be physically abused themselves in order to take on violent and delinquent behavior. It is enough for them to witness their mother's abuse.

If you remember nothing else from what I say today, I would like you to remember the number 63. Sixty-three percent of the young men between the ages of 11 and 20 who are doing time for homicide have killed their mother's batterer. You need to hear me; *63 percent of the young men between the ages of 11 and 20 who are doing time for homicide have killed their mother's batterer.*

I suggest to you that they have taken on the role that we as their family, their friends, their community, and their legal system have completely failed to do: to protect them and to protect their mothers. We need to understand that young men are socialized to be

protectors. I see this with my own son who's now 16, and he's about a foot taller than I am. When he has visitation with his father, we always meet in a public place and he sees his father coming towards me, and remember, this is a child who really, really loves his father. But he always comes and stands next to me, and it makes me so angry, and it hurts me so much.

At what point did he get the message that it was his job to protect me? Maybe it was having to move about 10 times in 12 years. Maybe it was seeing that it took the police over an hour to come when we called... What does this do to children who constantly have to feel like they have to be on alert? With female children...we tend to see the rage and pain turned inward. In working with teen-aged prostitutes, people are amazed at how often they come from upper-income homes. As though, somehow, there is not abuse and neglect and sexual assault going on in those homes. But, in virtually everyone we could trace, those children had accurately assessed that they were safer on the street than they were at home.

Probably the person that taught me the most about the connection between domestic violence and child abuse was a foster child named Christopher, who came to me when he was three years old. When he first came to me he had two broken ribs and he had cigarette burns on the bottoms of his feet. And he stayed for about three months and then his father, who was the acknowledged perpetrator, said he was real sorry, and it would never happen again.

And so the court allowed Christopher to go home, and within a few weeks I got a call, Christopher was in the hospital again. He had new cigarette burns on the bottoms of his feet and on the palms of his hands, and all of his ribs were broken. Those of you who know about early childhood development know how resilient a child's ribs are. It's very hard to break them so it must have been a tremendous amount of force. So Christopher came home with me, and his mother was allowed to have visitation, as again his father acknowledged he was the one who had abused him.

But I was so righteous with her, because she was staying with the man who had done this to her child. What was wrong with this woman? She would come in, I would sort of notice that there were bruises on her, I didn't really let it register. My focus, my obsession, was with Christopher and keeping him safe...And after a few months Christopher's father went back into court, and [said] he was real, real sorry, and it was never, never going to happen again. And the court allowed Christopher to go home with him.

The following August we buried Christopher, and we buried his mother right next to him. And as hard as it is for me to think and talk about Christopher even now, it is ten times harder, a hundred times harder for me to think about his mother. Because I did everything humanly possible to save Christopher. I went to every hearing, I went to every meeting possible, I called and wrote to the mayor, the governor, the president, but I did nothing for his mother. Because I was so busy judging her, and so busy being righteous, and she could not have presented herself more clearly as a battered woman if she had a megaphone and a neon sign.

We learned at the murder trial that DSS, in writing, had told Christopher's mother that she needed to stay with his father if she ever wanted her child back. Because we have as a priority the reunification of the family. We hang on to the illusion of Mom, Pop, Bud, Sis, and dog Spot. My God, what are we willing to do to keep that myth alive? To make women toe that line because, no matter what, we hold women responsible for the safety of the children.

In all the years I have been working in the legal system, I have never seen a father charged with failure to protect when the mother is accused of the abuse. And yet in virtually every single case where the father is the acknowledged abuser, the mother is charged with failure to protect.

Is there something about our anatomy which makes us magically able to protect children from that which we can't protect ourselves? We need to think about the roles and the expectations that we inflict on women, and particularly on mothers...

If you think that it's only about the physical abuse, you're missing the whole other realm of what makes it so difficult for us to leave. The physical abuse is certainly part of it, but it is also the emotional abuse, it's also using intimidation, coercion and threats and economic abuse. Many times even upper-income women that come to us have no access to the money, the batterer controls that. It's a part of being in control of everything. Using male privilege and using the children are extremely common. When my ex-husband said to me, "You can leave, but you will never see your kids again," that's extremely powerful. Because you feel like this person has some extraordinary amount of power, you listen.

Why did I think he would get custody? What did I think he knew about the system? But just look at the SJC Gender Bias Study in Massachusetts, which says that in 70 percent of the cases when men attempt to get custody of their children here, they do so successfully. We need to acknowledge that this is a very real threat, and custody in abuse cases needs to be a priority within legal services...

Minimizing, denying and blaming is [another] very powerful tool that batterers use. It's easy to buy into that and believe that somehow, it's our fault or somebody else's fault besides his. That is why I do the criminal prosecution piece, because I think abusers need to be held accountable within the same system that says it's not OK to be violent in the street.

**Recommendations.** The first is developing an *awareness* about the problems of domestic violence. Each of you within your own communities can set up meetings with your police departments. We need to know how many battered women are there in each community; we need to know the assaults, the homicides, the number of cases of assault-and-battery with intent to murder...Our police departments are able to collect this data on virtually every other kind of crime. I can't make them do it in every city or state, but where you live, you have that power as a voter. There is an amazing amount of federal money available, state money, foundation money, but you have to give them numbers.

This is one of the first steps. We can then set priorities within legal services about allocation of attorneys, so that we do not have 10 housing attorneys and one family law attorney. You need to figure out the connections between what you're doing and not doing, and its impact on battered women in your community.

Understanding the larger social context, we need to put this in the framework of the feminization of poverty. Put this in the framework of forced homelessness. Put this in the framework of misogyny; [that is] why this is tolerated. We need to use this language. We need to talk about what violence against women and children really is. It has to be about misogyny, when you talk about that this is 95-to-97 percent male-inflicted on females. There is no other area of law in which we would tolerate the degree of breakdown in implementation of laws than in the area of violence against women.

Third is creating an empathetic bridge. Make sure you have a safe waiting area that is not visible from the street. Some place where she can wait which has a toy box, something for her kids to do while she is there, and community legal education materials.

**Cultural Diversity.** Make sure that you have a diverse staff, racially as well as formerly battered women, and not simply at the lowest levels. It's not enough to have a token secretary; we need to have diversity among managers, directors, supervisors. [We need] ongoing training about cultural awareness. Four years ago the William Monroe Trotter Institute at U. Mass.-Boston conducted a study which found that 85 percent of the information that we receive about communities of color from our major media outlets is negative. That means that it is our responsibility to educate ourselves about what is going on around us... every single office should be subscribing to *The Bay State Banner*. You need to subscribe to magazines [such as] *Essence*, *Ebony*, *Jet*, Hispanic-magazines and publications that come out of communities of color.

Also we need to have brochures that don't just have white people on the front. This also goes back to [the issue of] who your staff are. You need to make this your issue, this has to be the work of white people within these organizations. It is not up to people of color to keep saying there should be more people that look like me here. This has to be the issue, and you [need to] raise it all the time, at every staff meeting. Don't let them placate you with one person, we are not about tokens; we need to really talk about diversity within our programs.

[We need] ongoing training on background dynamics of family violence. To really bring in people, particularly from your shelters and your local battered women's programs. They have a tremendous, tremendous amount to teach you about things you need to learn. Don't just think because you've been to law school, that you have a handle on family violence. It needs to be an ongoing dialogue.

**Interviewing Skills.** *Find out from former victims what worked and what didn't work; what was helpful for them to hear; what was not helpful; what was insulting and patronizing... Try asking victims, "What makes you feel safe? What do you need?"*

If you see injuries on a woman, but she's there for a welfare or landlord/tenant issue, and she doesn't want to talk about it, you can at least say, "I understand you may not want to talk to me about this, but very often when I see injuries like yours, it's because someone is being beaten by their husband or boyfriend, and I would at least like to give you this number." If you don't know the number of your local shelter, you can give them the national number, 1-800-333-SAFE.\* This toll-free, 24 hour number also has multi-lingual capabilities. It means that if she is going across state lines, they can hook her up with a program nearest wherever she is. If she doesn't want to take a piece of paper, you can say you'll write it on the bottom of her shoe. If you write it right in the back of the heel, it doesn't get worn off. A lot of batterers go through a woman's purse, so don't think, well, I'll sneak it in her purse and do her a favor. Talk with her about where this information will be.

Don't think the first time you say to her, "You need to leave or get out" or that "I'm afraid for your safety," she's going to be able to leave. *Psychology Today* says we need to hear things 11 times before they sink in... Tell us a lot of times you are afraid for us, and you are concerned, and there are options and there are places we can go. We may need to hear it 15 times or we may need to hear it once, but let us be the decision-maker about that.

The number-one thing that I want you to remember, in addition to 63 percent, is to routinize inquiries about abuse. Every single person that comes into your program needs to be asked.

Pennsylvania triage nurses found by asking the one question, "Have you been injured or hit in the last year?" they increased identification of battered women by 60 percent... Again I would argue, it is malpractice not to ask these questions [of every single person]...

*Know your community resources...* There's a lot more out there, and some of you are wonderful about being able to refer people to a whole area of places. We need to share what those are. One of the ways of doing that, every single community we hope will set up some kind of Roundtable or Family Violence Coordinating Council, preferably through your court. Just try to have the major players—police officers, judges, probation [officers], prosecutors, victim-witness persons, shelter people, whomever in your community has any contact with battered women. Get them all together and meet monthly.

Finally, I want to ask you to *envision* the kind of system, the kind of course, the kind of shelters, the kind of legal services program that can really be supportive and nurturing to battered women.

If anybody had told me 15 years ago, "You will not only be able to get off welfare, you will be able to go to Harvard Law School, you will be able to try cases, you will be able to talk to more than three people who aren't your relatives for more than two minutes," I would have told them that they were out of their mind. When I first wanted to go to law school, I didn't even know how you become a lawyer.

I thought you had to be a legal secretary first. So I kept trying to get jobs, but nobody would hire me because my typing was so bad. Then, from welfare I went to the CETA program and was hired as a paralegal at legal services. They told me you have to go to college first. I spent seven years going at night as an undergraduate, and then nearing the end, I asked, "OK, how do I apply to law school?" They said, "Where do you want to go?" I said, "Well, you know, I drive by Harvard, it looks like a decent place, I guess I'll apply there." One of the attorneys in my office told me, "No, you don't understand. You're not Harvard material. You're a single mother, you've been on welfare, you didn't go to the right schools. Don't set your sights too high."

That really made me mad. I would drive by there, and I would yell at Harvard Law School, "You're going to let me in." I would stop the car and get out and would walk around the buildings. I would sit down just to see what it felt like to sit in a classroom. I went a little further, and they had all these different lockers, and I decided I wanted an orange one. Then I would drive

\*This number no longer exists. See hotline list in this booklet.

by, and I would yell at them, "You're going to let me in, and I'm going to change the way you do business."

And the most amazing thing happened. They not only let me in, they gave me a full scholarship *and* an orange locker. You have to be careful what you wish for, because we can make this stuff happen. We started a battered women's advocacy project in law school... We put a notice in the student newspaper, but we had 80 people at the first meeting. We now have 215 law students (30 percent are men); there are now programs at Boston University Law School and Northeastern University Law School. We modeled our program after the project at Suffolk Law School.

We can take every single institution, whether it's a high school, a college, a law school, whatever you have near you, and train those people, not only because we need them now as advocates, but they are our juries. I do want to tell you that you can make a huge difference. Just the power of what you envision.

I want to close with a quote from somebody who knew a lot about vision and a lot about nonviolence. It was Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his 1963 letter from Birmingham jail, who said, "We in this generation must not only repent for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people."

I implore you not to be silent about the family violence in your community.



## Identifying the Assaultive Husband in Court: You Be the Judge

by David Adams, Ed.D., Co-founder and President of Emerge: A Men's Counseling Service on Domestic Violence. He is a nationally known expert on counseling assaultive husbands. This article was published in the *Boston Bar Journal*, July-August 1989.

Individual and institutional suppression of the truth frequently run parallel courses in history. Even when the truth is not actively suppressed, it is sometimes resisted because of the low status of its tellers. Such is the case with wife abuse.\* The ability of the individual perpetrators to conceal or justify their violence has been facilitated by a criminal justice system that has historically ignored or blamed the battered woman (Taub & Schneider, 1982; New York Task Force on Women in the Courts, 1986). But the criminal justice system is not alone in letting the abusive man off the hook. The downplaying of domestic violence and the tendency to blame the victim have been well documented among social service providers, medical personnel, clergy, and the media (Schechter, 1982). Too often, those who are in a position to intervene have failed to educate themselves about wife abuse. Biased perceptions about men and women have impaired nearly everyone's ability to identify wife abuse and consequently, our ability to hold abusers responsible for their violence. Even our questions betray a preoccupation with the victim's choices and responsibilities rather than those of the perpetrator. We ask, "Why does she put up with it?" rather than "Why does he beat her?" Finding the truth means moving beyond popular stereotypes and learning to ask the right questions. Court officers must be especially careful to ask plaintiffs whether they fear potential reprisals from the defendant in reporting domestic assaults.

As frightening as domestic abuse is, the experience of publicly disclosing it has been compared to stepping off a cliff. Disclosure not only puts the battered woman at greater risk for retribution from her abuser but it also severely jeopardizes her social and economic security. Research shows that, far from being irrational, these fears are well-founded. Women are most likely to be murdered while attempting to report abuse or to leave an abusive relationship (Sonkin, 1985; Browne, 1987). Many battered women report that their husbands have repeatedly threatened to kill them if they call the police or attempt to leave. Those who treat the abusive man confirm that the violence often escalates once the woman attempts to end the relationship. The abuser's threats of continued physical abuse are often accompanied by economic threats.

These commonly include threats to withhold child support and to sabotage her job plans. Some men make threats that are specific to the children, exploiting their wives' fears of losing the children once they report domestic abuse.

Most battered women's fears about calling the police or seeking court protection are logical reflections of her past experience with her abusive spouse. What appears from the outside as an irrational pattern of "crying wolf," becomes much more understandable when one identifies the specific scare tactics of the abuser. These, combined with inconsistent and sometimes hostile responses from the criminal justice system, reinforce the battered woman's fear that there is no real escape from the abuse.

\* the more general term "partner abuse" can be substituted for "wife abuse"

### **Characteristics of the Abusive Husband**

The following descriptive profile of the abusive husband is provided to help criminal justice workers become more sensitive to the concerns of battered women and more knowledgeable of (and hence less vulnerable to) the manipulation patterns of the abusive man. The profile is drawn not only from victim accounts and research findings but also my twelve year experience as a counselor of abusive

men at Emerge: A Men's Counseling Service on Domestic Violence, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Founded in 1977, Emerge was the first program of its kind in the nation. Each characteristic listed has implications for all those who are in a position to identify abusive behavior and prescribe solutions.

### **1. Discrepancy in public versus private behavior**

Men who batter their wives often do not come across to those outside the family as abusive individuals. Often, the abusive man maintains the public image as a friendly, caring person who is a devoted "family man." This good reputation often leads neighbors and friends to conclude that his wife is exaggerating when she reports physical abuse. Police responding to these reports may be swayed by the calm demeanor of the perpetrator. By contrast, his wife may seem more agitated and hysterical, leading police officers to conclude falsely that she is the more aggressive party. This false picture is often repeated in court. Dressed in a suit and accompanied by counsel, the male defendant frequently comes across more credibly than the female plaintiff. This is especially true when the perpetrator is a professional man. In such a case, the picture the plaintiff paints of her husband's behavior may seem inconsistent with his stature in the community. Approximately one-third of the men counseled at Emerge are professional men who are well respected in their jobs and their communities. These have included doctors, psychologists, lawyers, ministers, and business executives. Police and court officers must look beyond the popular image of the abusive man as an easy-to-spot brute. While some abusers bear some resemblance to this stereotype, most do not.

### **2. Minimization and denial**

Living in a society that undervalues domestic life, abusive men do not expect their abusive behaviors toward women to be taken seriously. One man said it had never occurred to him that he could be arrested for such a "minor thing." This man's attitude that men's ill-treatment of women doesn't belong in the public sphere does not exist in a social vacuum. It is mirrored by recent public debates about the relevance of how public men treat their wives, particularly when allegations of wife abuse or infidelity are made. It is reflected by the historical reluctance of police and courts to intervene in "domestic disturbances" (Roy, 1977).

Few, if any, abusive husbands characterize themselves as men who beat their wives. A recent informal poll of clients at Emerge revealed that few men, even the most severe abusers, had thought of themselves in those terms. The abuser's tendency to minimize problems is comparable to the denial patterns of alcohol and drug abusers. Problem drinkers minimize their drinking by favorably comparing their own consumption pattern to "worst case" alcoholics—those who drink bottles of hard liquor on the street. Many battering husbands similarly minimize their violence by comparing it to "brutes who beat their wives every day." Besides spurning the "wife beater" label, most abusive men under report their violence. Research studies of violence-reporting patterns among husbands and wives have found that husbands are more likely than wives to under report their own violence (Szinevacz, 1983; Browning & Dutton, 1986). For instance, husbands are more likely to count even severe acts of violence (e.g. choking, punching, beating someone up) as self-defense rather than violence (Brygger & Edleson, 1984). Frequently, what abusers report as self-defense is in reality violent retaliation. While some men rationalize their violence, others merely lie about it. The previously mentioned poll of Emerge clients found that many had lied about their violence when asked by neighbors, relatives, and police.

### **3. Blaming others**

Perhaps the most common manipulation pattern of the abusive man is to project blame for his violence onto his wife. In treatment programs for abusers, statements like "she drove me to it," "she provoked me," "she really knows how to push my buttons" are common. Statements like these reveal the abuser's attempts to divert attention away from his own behavior and choices. Abusers in the early stages of treatment resist self-criticism by projecting responsibility for their violence onto others (Adams, 1988). This is similar to the alcoholic's tendency to blame other people, things, and circumstances for his drinking. The abusive husband, like the alcoholic, presents himself as a victim.

Too often, interveners get caught up in talking about the victim's behavior. This is a disservice to the abuser because it reinforces his denial of responsibility. When the topic of discussion shifts to his partner's behavior, the abuser is prevented from recognizing that he has choices in how he responds to her, and that some choices are more constructive than others. Often, the abuser manipulatively seeks allies in his attempts to monitor and police his wife's behavior. Abusers in later stages of treatment are able to critically identify this as a lack of respect for their partners. One man said, "I could never accept her the way she was; I always felt I had to 'correct' her. And it was easy to find other people to agree with me" (Emerge, 1989).

#### **4. Controlling behaviors**

Advocates for battered women have pointed out that wife abuse is more than isolated acts of physical violence. It is a cohesive pattern of coercive controls that include verbal abuse, threats, psychological manipulation, sexual coercion and control over economic resources (Dobash & Dobash, 2979; Schechter, 1982). The co-existence of these other controlling behaviors serve to remind the victim subliminally of the potential for physical abuse (e.g. yelling, threats, angry sulking) and to undermine her independence. The abuser's frequent criticisms of his wife erode her confidence and her own abilities. One abusive husband said he constantly tore down his wife's self-confidence because "I felt threatened whenever she felt good about herself." This man's wife said that it was only when she got support and validation from others that she began to trust that she could make it on her own. Social isolation is another tactic used by abusers to undermine their wives' autonomy (Walker, 1984). Accusations of infidelity or of "neglecting the family" serve to manipulate the woman into curtailing her contacts with friends, co-workers, and relatives.

#### **5. Jealousy and possessiveness**

Many battered women report that their husbands make frequent jealous accusations. For some abusers, this jealousy has an obsessive quality. These men constantly monitor their wives' whereabouts. Their surveillance activities often continue (and escalate) when their wives leave or attempt to end the relationship. These may include following her around, interrogating the children, eavesdropping on telephone conversations and making frequent telephone calls to monitor her activities.

It bears repeating that pathological jealousy of this kind is not evident in all men who abuse their wives. Its presence should be seen as a significant indicator of potential homicidality (Sonkin, 1985). Closely related to this is extreme possessiveness, which is often manifested by the abuser's unwillingness to accept the end of the relationship. Women who leave this type of man are subjected to ongoing harassment and pressure tactics, including multiple phone calls, homicide or suicide threats, uninvited visits at home or work and manipulation of the children.

#### **6. Manipulation of children**

There is considerable variation among abusive husbands as to whether their violence extends to the children. While child abuse is as frequent or more frequent than wife abuse for some abusive husbands, others have strong prohibitions against hitting their children. Regardless of whether children are directly abused, children are adversely affected by being exposed to wife abuse (Kalmuss, 1984). Children exposed to abuse are more insecure, more aggressive, and more prone to depression. Children in this situation commonly feel divided loyalties between their mothers and fathers. Research shows that childhood exposure to wife abuse is a significant predictor of future wife abuse (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986).

Courts are often asked to decide custody and child visitation issues when battered women file for protective orders. Judges must be wary of the manipulation patterns of the abuser in making these decisions. For instance, abusive husbands commonly misuse child visitations as a way of gaining access to their wives. Abuse of child visitations not only compromises the battered women's safety but also has an adverse emotional impact on the children. Some abusers use their children as emissaries who are responsible for spying on Mom's activities or for convincing Mom to "let Daddy come home." Some abusers contest custody or child support agreements as a bargaining tactic designed to coerce their partners to reconcile or to drop criminal complaints. Prosecutors and judges should routinely encourage battered women to seek modification of child visitation agreements if such agreements are being abused, or if the child's or woman's physical safety is being jeopardized.

## **7. Substance abuse**

Research studies have varied findings about the degree of overlap between spouse abuse and substance abuse. One study found 70% of men arrested for domestic battery showed evidence of alcohol or drug abuse (Roberts, 1987). A survey of women who sought refuge in shelters for battered women found that 48% reported that their abusive husband abused alcohol. This variation in findings is attributable to the use of differing criteria in assessing the batterer's use or abuse of substances. There is also evidence to suggest that police are more likely to arrest a batterer when there is also evidence that he is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (Kantor & Straus, 1986).

Despite the high correlation, experts in the domestic violence field agree that alcohol or drug use does not cause men to batter their wives (Coleman & Straus, 1983). Acting as a socially approved disinhibitor, alcohol use becomes a convenient excuse for some men to hit their wives. The battering husband who abuses alcohol has two problems for which he must take responsibility. Alcohol or drug treatment alone will not stop the batterer's abusiveness. Recovering alcoholics exhibit high rates of abusive behavior. Despite this, one study found that courts in one state refer most alcohol/drug abusing batterers to alcohol or drug treatment programs only—without also referring to specialized batterer treatment programs (Roberts, 1987). Because probation officers and judges have been more sensitized to alcohol and drug problems, there is a danger of focusing exclusively on the substance abuse when the substance abuser is also abusive toward his wife. When the problems co-exist, it is critical for the individual to be evaluated for both kinds of treatment.

## **8. Resistance to change**

Like substance abusers who are still in the denial stage, most abusive husbands lack internal motivation to seek counseling or to change their behavior. It is estimated that less than 1% of men who batter are referred to specialized treatment programs for abusers. Approximately 20% of Emerge clients are court-ordered to attend the program. Though the rest, technically, are self-referred, most of these have sought counseling only once it became clear that their relationship would not continue unless they attended. For most of these men, the problem as they see it is that their wives have left them, not that they have been violent. Initially, the abusive man

bargains with his wife to change as little as possible (Adams, 1989). For instance, he may agree to attend one week of counseling in exchange for returning home or having criminal charges against him dropped. Fifty percent of Emerge clients drop out of treatment within the first month, a figure that is consistent with other programs. Some drop out as soon as they reconcile with their wives. Others drop out as soon as it becomes clear that reconciliation isn't possible. The typical battering man, like the alcoholic, brings a 'quick fix' mentality to counseling. His desire to restore the status quo outweighs his desire to change.

### **Summary**

For court workers to become aware of abusive behavior patterns does not condemn the abuser's chances for change. On the contrary, this insight helps interveners resist the abuser's manipulation patterns and more realistically appraise his suitability for rehabilitative efforts. Clearly, some perpetrators pose too great a danger to their wives for the courts to release them into the community. Assessments for potential lethality should be made in every spouse assault case. In my experience, the men who do make significant changes are those who accept legal sanctions and persevere with counseling. These men respect their wives' decisions concerning the amount and nature of contact she wishes to have with him. He learns to focus on his own rather than her behavior. Much depends on the public sanctions that the abuser encounters along the way. Courts have a critical role to play in this. They determine whether the abuser attends a treatment program, how long he stays in the program, and whether the victim's safety is ensured while he attends the program.

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## VOICES IN THE CLASSROOM: A HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

*"My older sister...her husband used to beat her up. One time he punched her in the face in front of the whole family at Thanksgiving. They are divorced now."*

*"Why didn't the police help them? They are supposed to help you."*

*"I think that we (students) should come up with a plan to help girls break up with boyfriends who hit them."*

These are a few of the many comments, feelings and suggestions of some Arlington High School students after watching the documentary film "Defending Our Lives." Margaret Graham, a Consumer and Life Studies teacher, and myself, a guidance counselor, wanted to educate our students on the reality of domestic violence--the leading cause of injury to young women between the ages of 15 and 44 (Surgeon General, 1992). Our intent was to teach how domestic violence is a reality in the lives of students of all ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds. We believe that teaching and understanding are the important ways to combat the ever increasing rates of domestic violence in our society. We knew that the Academy Award winning documentary, "Defending Our Lives," would be a valuable resource in raising student awareness on this issue.

While we wanted our students to feel safe in learning about domestic violence, we also wanted them to grasp the seriousness of the material in a way that they would feel it deeply, so that they would never become victims or hurt someone they love. Nearly all the victims of this social disease are women their own age, women who are their mothers and/or sisters, and women they could become. We developed a unit on domestic violence that grew out of our previous work on sexual harassment and gender violence. In piloting this new curriculum unit, instructors and students alike learned a great deal about domestic violence, each other, and ourselves. This piece tells how we met our goal.

Margaret introduced the topic to the 27 students in her Young Adult Living class by explaining how sexual harassment and gender violence affect them in school, the work place, and in dating relationships. Over the semester, these students expressed their feelings by coming up with their own projects ranging from an examination of the school's position on sexual harassment and inviting the Principal as a guest lecturer on the issue, to making their own video "Flirting or Hurting?". Initially, many of her students seemed to resist acknowledging the seriousness of sexual harassment because they thought of it as just "joking around" or "flirting."

In order to change some of these attitudes, we realized that students needed to understand that sexual harassment and domestic violence are closely related. Margaret introduced this new idea to the class by asking questions like, "What if your boss kept calling you and hanging up?" or "What if that football player won't take 'No' for an answer when you refuse to go out with him?" Through class

discussions, her students began to understand that sexual harassment is a serious matter and can be very scary. They shared stories from their own lives. One student mentioned an incident where she was thrown over someone's shoulder. She said, "At first I laughed, because everyone else was, but then he carried me away from everyone and still would not put me down when I asked. I was scared. I felt powerless." Other examples helped students realize that a simple shove from a high school boyfriend might just lead to a slap or a punch the next time he is angry or jealous.

Next, Margaret prepared her class to watch "Defending Our Lives" by helping her students define domestic violence through class discussion and journal writing. She gave the class a brief synopsis of the film, mentioned that the content was very emotional, stated that the 41 minute film would be shown in two class periods\* and provided the option of going to the media center if they did not want to view the film. All of the students remained.

In class the following day, Margaret introduced the visiting class facilitator, the filmmaker Margaret Lazarus, who would discuss the film and help process reactions. (We strongly suggest using a visiting facilitator--someone from a battered women's shelter, local women's center or hospital.) Margaret Graham began the discussion by assuring students that confidentiality would be respected by both students and adults, with the exception of life threatening issues that would be reported to the Department of Social Services or the police. She knew that young people often keep domestic violence a secret because they are afraid of being taken out of the home, and wanted to assure them that "telling" would be supported, and not punished.

Margaret Graham's very supportive class setting allowed students to voice concerns, express opinions and receive non-judgmental responses from her, the visiting facilitator, and myself. After viewing the film, students were sad, angry, disgusted and depressed. Initial silences of visibly upset students gave way to a genuine concern for the women in the film, as well as anger that no one, especially the police, was there to help them get out of the abusive situation.

When Margaret Lazarus asked if anyone in the class knew someone who had been in an abusive relationship, several students emerged as peer leaders, sharing intimate details of their experiences with siblings, mothers, and friends. They also talked about their own experiences with boyfriends. When other students saw that it was safe to speak and realized that they were not alone in their experiences, they too began to personalize domestic violence by sharing their stories. Students began to identify potentially dangerous relationships involving themselves, friends, and family, members. One of the male students asked, "Why do guys act this way?" This opened up a very fruitful discussion about gender issues.

Students wanted to provide solutions for the problem of domestic violence. Some students came up with the idea to publish a Safety Plan for female students at Arlington High called "Be safe: How to break up with a boyfriend safely." Other students wanted more information on how to support their friends who are in potentially dangerous relationships and how to counsel friends who might hurt someone they care about. Margaret Graham ended the class reminding students of the confidentiality agreement and that information about gender violence, battered women's shelters, police and legal procedures was always available in her classroom.

In the months after viewing the film, students continue to respond to their teacher's encouragement to express feelings on gender violence through class discussions and writing assignments. Since this is a curriculum in process, listening to students' voices is central. Our students conveyed to us that the problem of domestic violence is much deeper and more pervasive than we previously understood. Many felt that elementary and middle school students must learn that domestic violence is as dangerous to their health as is smoking

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\* Editor's Note: The film comes in a 30-minute version and a 42-minute version. Arlington High chose to show the longer version over two class periods. Other schools use the shorter film in one class period.



cigarettes or using alcohol and drugs. With deep compassion, they suggested that current K-12 health programs implement coping skills to deal with the violence children are experiencing at home and in society, as well as provide ways for them to resist dangerous dating relationships.

As high school educators for nearly 25 years, in what we consider a very typical town, we continually see many students whose lives are negatively impacted by gender violence. We think that the introduction of a domestic violence curriculum is essential. Such a curriculum will empower students' voices and can be readily implemented in Consumer and Life Studies classes like Margaret's, as well as in Health, Psychology, and Social Studies. Domestic violence is emotionally and physically damaging, a social ill, and a violation of human rights. Educational efforts are an important first step in ending this cyclical plague that does not discriminate by age, class, gender, sexual orientation, race, or religion.

We have developed a presentation on domestic violence for interested colleagues working with students on the K-12 level. The presentation is part of our school system's in-service professional development program. A more fully developed domestic violence curriculum is in process and we are actively seeking your experiences. Please write to us at Cambridge Documentary or fax us at (617) 492-7653.

Joanne Coakley, Ed.D.  
Margaret Graham

(Joanne Coakley is a guidance counselor and the co-director of EnGENDER, Inc. She has conducted numerous training sessions around gender related topics. Margaret Graham teaches in the Arlington school system.)

## **COPING WITH VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS: DATING VIOLENCE** by Carole Sousa

A Report Given at the Conference for Counseling Practitioners at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Though it is not surprising, given the extent to which our culture condones violence, it is particularly troubling that violence is a characteristic of many adolescent dating relationships. Like domestic violence, dating violence can include a continuum of behaviors. It may involve insults, embarrassment, rumors, name calling, suspicion or belittlement, all of which serve to undermine one partner's self-esteem and to establish the other's dominance and control. This control may reflect a need to have sexual access to the submissive partner or a desire to make the submissive partner conform to the dominant partner's wishes. The dominant partner may also use intimidation, threats, and physical abuse to control the submissive partner's behavior, body time, thoughts or sexuality.

Like domestic violence, dating violence is being reported by young people in every community, cutting across class, race, religion and sexual orientation. According to some studies:

- At least one in ten adolescents experience some form of violence in their dating relationships.
- In the majority of rapes reported to rape crisis centers, the victims are between the ages of 16 and 24.
- 60% of all rapes reported to rape crisis centers are perpetrated by acquaintances. (Sousa, 1993)

### **Consequences**

Like all violence, dating violence stifles a victim's psychological, social and academic development. Early evidence of dating violence may include changes in make-up and dress, truancy from classes and schools, sudden social isolation, difficulty with decision-making, changes in mood or personality, drug or alcohol use, and teenage pregnancy.

Many adolescents enjoy having a variety of relationships with peers and participating in several extra-curricular activities. But victims of dating violence frequently experience social isolation. They may withdraw from clubs and friendships, often because a jealous and domineering partner objects or will not tolerate interests outside the relationship.

Another consequence of dating violence may be failure in school. First experiencing problems with concentration and attention, victims may slowly withdraw from classes, be occasionally truant and eventually drop out of school altogether. Among girls, increased drug or alcohol use and teen pregnancy are possible reactions to dating violence.

Even for adults, verbal abuse and other forms of degradation injure self-esteem and self-confidence. For the young adolescent, the violent peer relationship is extremely frightening and confusing. Teenagers may not know how to protect themselves from dating violence. Young people who have been exposed to violence in the home may be unfamiliar with safe, trusting, respectful relationships. Violence in teenage dating relationships creates unhealthy cycles in which the submissive partner's wishes and opinions are discounted or ignored. Such injuries and imbalance increase the likelihood of future physical and sexual abuse.

### **Intervention**

Some adults don't take teen relationships seriously and overlook dating violence when it is reported to them. It may trigger uneasiness within them about hurtful relationships in which they have been involved. But dating violence is terribly damaging. Early intervention and protection are more likely to happen if adults are alert to the warning signs. Perpetrators of dating violence, who may have a history of harassment, sometimes exhibit warning signs too, including insulting remarks or references to women; reports of abuse, changes in patterns of alcohol or drug use, jealous behavior toward or sexual pressuring of a partner, suicide threats or attempts.

Schools and community organizations can help to prevent dating violence by teaching about it. Girls who feel good about themselves and their abilities are more likely to find mutually respectful relationships than those whose self-esteem is poor. Many boys need to learn that they have choices about whether or not to use violence in relationships. Both victims and perpetrators benefit from counseling. Some teaching programs like the "**Dating Violence Intervention Curriculum**" (available upon request from P.O. Box 530 Harvard Square Station, Cambridge MA 02238 617 868-8328--this is a three session curriculum for teaching adolescents called "Preventing Teen Dating Violence.") It is designed to help teachers and counselors address questions related to dating violence, such as:

- What is abuse?
- Who has the power?
- What cultural attitudes do young people pick up about how men and women are supposed to act in relationships? How do these attitudes lead to violence?
- What is an abusive relationship like?
- How can we prevent dating violence?

Schools need to discipline young people who hit others and make it very clear that violence is not acceptable. In addition to preventive education, teacher training, parent workshops, peer-led programs about dating violence we also need support groups for victims that can help restore self-esteem and teach girls that they have a right to feel safe in relationships with boys.

It should be noted that **mediation is not recommended as an intervention for dating violence**. Mediation may give the message that dangerous disagreements between two young people in a dating relationship are rather straightforward "conflicts" that need to be resolved. But the dynamics of dating violence are often very complex and dangerous. And, in fact, victims have every right to insist that manipulative or violent behavior directed toward them absolutely must stop.

## **SOME OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS FILM AS PART OF A SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

We recommend ordering the three-session curriculum "Preventing Teen Dating Violence" from the Dating Violence Project at P.O. Box 530, Harvard Square Station, Cambridge, Ma 02238. The following is a lesson from their curriculum and can be used with "Defending Our Lives"

### Defining Abuse and Respect:

Begin by writing the word Abuse on board and explain that you are going to begin by brainstorming together to create some lists. Explain that in a brainstorm everybody throws out whatever ideas they have, and there are no right or wrong answers; nobody's ideas get criticized and everyone can contribute. Tell the class that the aim of this particular brainstorm is to define the terms Abuse and Respect. State that we do this brainstorm because we have found that people do not always have an accurate or complete definition of these terms. Therefore, people are not always clear about the standards they have for the way they want to be treated. Then, if at all possible, divide the class with the boys and girls as far away from each other as possible. Explain that we do this because we want to compare the lists that the two groups create. Female and male presenters then can help their respective groups create the lists, writing student responses on the board as they go along.

Our goal is to get specific examples from all of the categories of abuse and to encourage the students to think of examples of abuse that occur in dating relationships and also abuse done by teachers, parents and other authority figures. Write the abuses on the board. The purpose is to get them to name forms of abuse in their own words. If the group needs prompting, ask questions about specific forms of abuse such as:

**Mental abuse-** mind games, manipulation, pressure, always being right and the other person wrong, twisting things around, accusing the other person of doing things that you are actually doing.

**Emotional abuse-** insults, ridicule, embarrassing in public, talking down to someone, not listening, not respecting feelings, ordering the other person around, checking up on the other person, hounding them, spying on them, ignoring the person, being jealous or possessive, ruining the person's reputation.

**Verbal abuse-**yelling, shouting, swearing, interrupting, talking over them, putting them down.

**Sexual abuse-**rape, unwanted sexual touch, vulgar comments, intense pressure for sex when the other person is not interested, not listening to "no," staring or leering, not bringing up the issue of birth control, making someone pregnant against their will, becoming pregnant against your partner's will, running out on someone who is pregnant.

**Physical abuse-** looming over the person, getting in the person's face, blocking a doorway, grabbing someone by the arm if they want to leave a conversation, following the person around, spitting, slapping, pulling hair, pushing, punching, beating, kicking, choking, threatening to harm, using weapons, throwing things, breaking things in sight of the other person, punching walls, driving in a reckless scary way.

These ideas are far from complete add anything that makes sense. When you write down what the student's say, use the same words, with discretion. After you've completed the Abuse list, ask your respective groups which of the abusive behaviors that they have listed affects their lives the most. Circle the behaviors they mention. Point out that no one deserves to be treated in these ways, and that whenever possible, they should choose not to be around people that do these things.

Brainstorming the respect list:

Next stay within your respective gender groups and start to create a list of respectful behaviors. We recommend that you ask them the general question: "How do you like to be treated by other people?"

Elicit examples of respectful treatment in all the categories where you've discussed abuse. If necessary, prompt the class with questions such as:

*"What do you consider respect around physical touch?"*

*"What do you consider respect around sex?"*

*"How do you like someone to talk to you?"*

*"How do you like someone to resolve conflicts with you."*

Again, make sure that their answers are as specific as possible. Then ask the groups which things on the respect list they feel as they don't get enough of. You can then talk about the importance of having standards for how we want to be treated. We should each have our own respect list to help us decide what we expect from people. The female facilitator may want to spend some time on this point, recognizing how difficult it often is for women to think about what they want and to insist on getting it. Suggest that they think about which items on their respect list they are willing to compromise and which are non-negotiable. It is also valuable to point out to girls that they can get the things on their respect list without being abused; for example they don't have to accept being beaten in order to get love.

Some people may define respect as something you demand from people in order to feel more powerful than they are. Some boys may be very invested in this position, particularly if they come from circumstances in which it is important to be "tough." They will be reluctant to accept behavioral definitions that they feel set them up to be abused or taken advantage of. Acknowledge the reality of the dangers they face, both physical dangers and the risks of humiliation, while also offering alternative respectful behaviors that do not mean they are weak or have no pride.

When you have finished with the two lists, bring the young men and women back together. The adult presenters then represent their respective groups by reading the lists aloud. Urge the class to note both the similarities and differences between the two lists. There are usually significant contrasts around sex, birth control, and other related issues. (One can do this exercise with only one teacher or presenter, it just takes more time and special awareness when working with the group that is a different sex from the presenter. It is also possible to do this exercise without separating the group into boys and girls, but the interesting contrasts will not be as easily seen.)

Who defines abuse?

At this point the presenters raise the question, "Who gets to define what is abusive?" For example girls will often list certain kinds of looks that boys give them on their Abuse list, and boys will argue that those looks are a compliment. The point to make is that the person who experiences the abuse is the one who gets to define it.

Be mindful of how sex roles are operating in the class and don't be afraid to point them out. For example, be aware of the tendency for the boys to become loud or to show other signs of discomfort when this exercise is going on. They can be reminded of the need to listen respectfully. The facilitator should make sure the girl's lists get taken seriously if the atmosphere becomes intimidating for the girls.

Wrap up by reviewing the Message of the Day:

**You should define for yourself how you are going to treat other people and how you want to be treated yourself, and then insist on sticking to those decisions. No one deserves to be abused.**

You may want to end the class by handing out the relationship contract in the student handouts that follow in this pamphlet.

(We think this exercise is good preparation for setting the next class to be a viewing of "Defending Our Lives.")

**These are just some of the student handouts from: "Preventing TEEN DATING VIOLENCE: A Three-Session Curriculum for Teaching Adolescents". Written and developed by: Carole Sousa, Lundy Bancroft, Ted German.**

## **RELATION SHIP CONTRACT**

This "Contract" is to help you know better what you want in your close relationships. Two people in a relationship can use this contract to understand what each person wants and where they disagree. Write your answer down and, if you want to, compare answers with your friends or boyfriend(s) or girlfriend(s). If the contract were assigned as homework, bring this sheet and your answers to class.

### **DATING**

1. Should every weekend and evening be spent with your girl/boyfriend?
2. Who decides what to do and where to go on a date?
3. What about expense? Should the boy be expected always to pay?
4. If your date always pays for expenses, are you obligated to go along with his or her sexual advances?
5. How much do you want you or your date to use alcohol or other drugs?
6. Is there any situation in which it would be okay for your date to push you around or to hit you?

### **SEXUAL RIGHTS**

1. Is either person free to say that don or don't want to go any further sexually?
2. At what point may a person refuse to have sex?
3. If both you and a person of the opposite sex agree to have intercourse, whose responsibility is it to use birth control or to protect against AIDS?

### **OTHER RELATIONSHIPS**

1. Are you or your boy/girlfriend free to make friendships with other people? If so, how will you deal with the jealousy?
2. Is it alright for you or your girl/boyfriend to make friends with those of the opposite sex?

3. Do you include each other in those relationships?

**PRIORITIES**

1. What qualities are most important to you in a boy/girlfriend?

2. What do you consider the most important in a relationship?



# THE MATHEMATICS OF BATTERING

TAKING CONTROL	+	UNFAIR EXPECTATIONS	+	NOT TAKING GIRLS & WOMEN SERIOUSLY	=	BATTERING
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**TAKING CONTROL MEANS:**

- ~Giving orders.
- ~Being the boss.
- you with out consulting the other.
- ~Being possessive, keeping track of where the other person is, who they talk to and what they do.
- ~Criticising her all the time.
- ~Ruining her reputation by spreading rumors.
- ~Getting her back for not doing

**UNFAIR EXPECTATIONS ARE:**

- ~Thinking she owes you sex.
- ~Believing she must agree with you
- ~Thinking she shouldn't contradict you in public.
- ~You can question her but she can't question you.
- ~She must be interested in everything you are interested in.
- ~Thinking you don't need to be interested in what she is interested in.
- ~Expecting her to put up with any mood your are in.
- ~When your unhappy, expecting her to feel responsible for making you feel better.
- ~Thinking you can cheat on her but she can't cheat on you.

~Making decisions for the two of all the time.

**NOT TAKING GIRLS AND BATTERING INCLUDES WOMEN SERIOUSLY MEANS:**

- ~Not listening.
- ~Seeing girls as sex objects.
- ~Thinking girls aren't as smart as boys.
- ~Thinking girls are too sensitive, overly emotional or irrational.
- ~Sexism.

- ~Hitting, shoving, pinching, burn--
- ~Not respecting their opinions. pushing, beating, throwing things, punching walls.
- ~Threatening to hurt someone.
- ~Destroying a person's property, hurting their pets, threatening their family
- ~Forcing Sex on another person.
- ~Keeping someone fearful of you.

## **INNER VOICES**

### **DIFFICULT ISSUES IN TEEN DATING RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **"I can't stop now."**

Some people believe that if a boy becomes sexually excited when he is with a girl, it's unfair or it is harmful to the boy if the girl chooses not to have sex with him. This is untrue. There is no physical reason a boy needs to have sex when he is excited. Boys and girls alike may feel frustrated when they want to have sex. However, they need to understand that their partners may have strong feelings and reasons for choosing not to have sex. Whatever their reasons, this choice must be respected.

#### **"She led me on."**

Sometimes boys claim that girls intentionally lead them on or tease them sexually then don't "deliver" or "Come through." But the truth is no matter how you feel about the way a person dresses or acts, they still have the absolute right to say no to sex at any time. No one should have sex unless they want to. Unless you are a mind-reader, there is no way you can know what a person wants. Communicating around sexual issues can be confusing and embarrassing, but trying to figure out what the other person wants isn't going to work if you don't talk.

#### **"She made me do it."**

Boys who think this way are assuming that girls don't have the right to say what's on their minds. Most girls are trying to figure out how to make the relationship work. They are confused by the violence and sometimes they take responsibility for things not working out. But no one likes getting hit. Often the girl is living in fear and is afraid to break off the relationship.

#### **"He must really love me."**

Everyone like attention and wants someone to care about them. But when a person needs to know every move you make and who you are with every moment, it is not a sign of caring or love. Jealous and possessive people cause problems for themselves and the people they are involved with. If a person attempts to control your life, they are treating you like a possession and not a person. A jealous person has a problem that has nothing to do with you. No matter what you do or how hard you try, you can't make a jealous person feel better.

#### **"She's just a slut."**

This is a powerful example of the male double standard. Boys who are sexually active are called studs. Girls are called trash and treated like meat. Sex without consent is rape. Rape is a violent crime and rapists sometimes go to jail for a very long time. But the consequences for a rapist are usually short compared to the emotional and physical consequences for the rape survivor, which can last a lifetime.

#### **"Am I doomed."**

Being violent is a choice. Many boys who come from violent homes choose not to be violent. If you do come from a violent home you may not have examples of violence-free relationships learn from. If you are worried about this talk to someone you trust and get some help to clarifying your thoughts and feelings.

Girls can choose to not to be treated abusively. If there is violence in your home that doesn't mean that it is right or it is the way things should be. Being abused is not the way anyone should be treated. No one deserves to be beaten. Again, it might be helpful to talk to a trusted adult, friend, or hotline worker about what is going on in your home and how you feel about it.

**"She really meant yes."**

"No" means exactly what it says. NO! If a boy doesn't listen to no, that's rape. If he hears "yes" when she says "no" he is only listening to the sound of his own voice. Also remember that people don't always say "no" directly. If there is the slightest doubt, ask.

**"But she hits too."**

Hitting is not okay. Unless she is defending herself, your girlfriend shouldn't hit you. Let her know in a clear, non-abusive voice, non-physical way that you will not accept being hit. If she is and abuser-which means she is trying to control you through a pattern of violence and fear- and you are afraid of her, call a hotline or talk to someone you trust. It is unusual, however, that girls are the abusers in relationships with boys, partly because of size difference, but mostly because girls are taught to be passive and boys to be aggressive. When a boy says, "But she hits me too," he needs to ask himself, "Is she defending herself?" and "Am I really afraid of her?" Even if she hits you, that doesn't give you the right to hit her back. You can always walk away.

**"I just lost control."**

When a person is violent they are not out of control. Most boys who say they lose control and hit their girlfriends don't "lose control" and hit their teachers or parents when they are angry at them. People are selectively violent. Violence is a choice. In fact, the person using violence is doing so in an attempt to get control of their partner.

**"It's just the liquor."**

Drinking doesn't make a person violent. Many people drink and don't get violent. But some boys use alcohol as an excuse to be violent. If you are involved with someone who drinks and is violent, it is unsafe to be around them at those times. But even if they promise to stop drinking, that doesn't necessarily mean they will stop being violent.

**"A baby will help."**

Unfortunately, just the opposite is true. Having a baby only increases the unresolved problems in a relationship. There is no time alone and almost no time to talk. The additional responsibility of having a baby places enormous stress on all parents, especially young parents. Another very important thing to know is that teen violence often begins, or gets worse during pregnancy. When you are pregnant, it's natural to pay attention to the changes in your body and start to think about the future. Your partner may feel threatened by no longer having 100% of your attention. He may use violence to get his control back. He also may punish you for the reluctance to take on the responsibilities of fatherhood, even though that is not your fault.

**"The baby will love me."**

There is no human being on that face of this earth more demanding of attention and requiring more care than a newborn infant. If you become pregnant thinking you will get love from the baby--it is a setup for a disappointment and frustration. It is also potentially unfair situation for both you and the baby. If you are feeling unloved or uncared for, talk to someone you trust about those feelings. They can be worked out in a less risky way than by getting pregnant.

**"I'd never let it happen to me."**

It's great when girls are really clear that they won't stand for any physical abuse. There are also other areas where girls can take a stand, such as not letting guys talk you down, call you names, insult you, or abuse other girls. Sometimes, however, people put up a really tough front to protect themselves. If your reputation is built on being tough, it can be hard to ask for help when you need it. But having pride in yourself also means being able to ask for help if you find yourself in an abusive situation.

**"I gay and I'm being abused."**

Abuse happens in gay relationships like any other relationships. One person uses violence or threats to control or coerce their partner. Because so many people are homophobic (afraid of and hateful toward gay people) it's hard to get help. Straight people may want to focus on your choices around sexuality instead of on the abuse. Try to get help from someone who can except your sexuality: for instance, a gay and lesbian counseling or health center. Some women's centers and battered women's programs are also sensitive to the issue of abuse in a gay relationship.

**"I can take it."**

Why would anyone want to put up with any abuse? When two people care about each other they work to make the other person feel good. If you have to be "tough" to stay involved with a guy, you should ask yourself if you really want to be in a relationship that's an ongoing battle. Every one can get a strong caring relationship. Don't settle for less.

**"I'm getting hit at home."**

The hitting is not your fault. It's a choice your parents make. Some parents hit for discipline because they don't know better ways to help you learn. Other parents use hitting to get a sense of power and control to their child. Whatever the case, your parents have a hitting problem which is not your fault. It's scary to be hurt by your parents; sometime it's even scarier to think your parents can love you and hurt you at the same time. Some kids turn the hurt into anger against other people. But then things never get better.

You may not be able to get your parents to change, but you can at least take care of yourself. Talk to someone you trust. Talking really can help you deal with your feelings. If you think your parents will listen, tell them you don't want to be hit. They could call Parent's Anonymous for help. Or ask a relative or community member to intervene. If it isn't safe to confront them, call the Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-792-5290

## **INFORMATION FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

edited by Kathleen Gaffney

Health care providers may encounter a number of barriers to recognizing and treating victims of domestic violence. These include: a lack of awareness among many health care providers; the notion that it is not a health care provider's place to intervene; a tendency to blame the victim; disbelief because the abuser is present and seems concerned and/or pleasant; the "tyranny of time;" and simply not knowing what to do. However, health care providers can and must play a crucial role in recognizing and protecting the victims of domestic violence.

- **In an average 12 month period in the United States approximately 2 million women are severely assaulted by their male partners.**
- **22 to 35% of all ER visits by women are due to ongoing abuse. (JAMA, 1992)**
- **Evidence suggests that battered women expect health care providers to initiate discussion about abuse and will respond if asked in an empathetic and non-judgmental manner. (JAMA, 1992)**
- **Abused women are twice as likely to begin prenatal care in the third trimester, denying both themselves and their fetuses prenatal care. (JAMA '92)**
- **Non-trauma treatment sites are the major source of medical care for abused women.**

Injuries, demeanor, and past medical history can aid health care practitioners in identifying abused women. Because the problem is widespread, every woman should be examined for domestic violence as a routine part of a check-up. The following guidelines were adapted from materials including: **Campaign Against Domestic Violence of the Massachusetts Medical Society ( prepared by Elaine J. Alpert, M.D. et. Al.); Lecture materials from William Kuyper, M.D.; Lecture materials from Annie Lewis-O'Connor, M.S., R.N.C.**

The following list contains characteristics commonly reported in case histories of battered women.

### **1. Injuries - Battered women may show one or a combination of the following:**

- central injuries, specifically to the face, head, neck, chest, breasts, abdomen, or genital areas;
- bilateral distribution of injuries or injury to multiple areas;
- contusions (bruises), lacerations (cuts), abrasions (scrapes), stab wounds, burns, human bites, fractures (particularly of the nose and orbits (ears), and spiral wrist fractures;
- complaints of acute or chronic pain without tissue injury;

- signs of sexual assault;
- injuries or vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, spontaneous or threatened miscarriage (a pregnant woman with injuries to her breast or abdomen is almost certainly being battered);
- the direct impact of domestic violence on pregnancy may include:
  - Abdominal trauma leading to abruption, pre-term labor, and delivery.
  - Fetal fractures
  - Ruptured maternal liver, spleen, uterus
- multiple injuries in different stages of healing;
- substantial delay between time of injury and presentation for treatment.

**2. Demeanor - Other indications may be observed in a patient's behavior, such as the following:**

- Evasiveness when describing the cause of injuries;
- Patient appears to be embarrassed, ashamed, frightened, disoriented or depressed;
- Patient's distress seems to be disproportional to injuries: excessive distress over a minor injury or little emotion over a serious injury;
- Inconsistent injury explanations;
- Injury explanation fails to justify injury.

**3. Illnesses/Medical History - It is important to not only treat and record current injuries, but to also investigate past medical histories.**

**The following symptoms are often reported in domestic violence patient histories:**

- headaches, migraines;
- musculoskeletal complaints (neckaches, backaches);
- malaise, fatigue
- insomnia;
- chest pain, palpitations;
- hyperventilation;
- gastrointestinal disorders (diarrhea, abdominal pain, colitis, ulcers);
- eating disorders;
- gynecological problems;
- chronic pain;
- depression;
- anxiety;
- sexually transmitted diseases, especially repeated episodes.

Talking with the patient is a crucial part of the medical examination for battered women. Often, these women are confiding in their health care practitioner. Do not be afraid to ask about domestic violence, especially when it is suspected; evidence shows that

battered women generally respond positively to questions from a concerned individual. Every female patient should be asked at least one routine question regarding abuse. The following strategies can help health care practitioners have successful patient interviews.

### **1. Strategies:**

- Tell patients that these questions are normal, i.e. "I ask all my patients the following questions."
- If a question doesn't work, try again later when the patient may feel more comfortable.
- Do not ask yes/no questions whenever possible.
- Keep interview gender neutral-use "partner" not "he."
- Encourage the patient: ("You're doing great, I realize this must be difficult...").
- Let her know that she is not alone.
- Validate the patient's testimony: ("I believe you, it wasn't your fault. It takes a lot of courage to tell me...").
- Check your own biases: Don't act shocked, do not assume you know what is best for the patient.

### **2. Things to Avoid:**

- Avoid questions that are negative or coercive: ("He didn't force you to touch him, did he?").
- Avoid looking down and writing during the interview.
- Avoid making promises.
- Avoid using the word should.
- Avoid making assumptions.
- Avoid telling the patient what is best for them.
- Avoid using the words "domestic violence," "battered," or "abused" when speaking with the patient.

### **3. Sample Questions:**

- How were you hurt?
- Has this happened before?
- When did it happen first?
- How badly have you been hurt in the past?
- Have you needed to go to the emergency room for treatment? Explain the circumstances.
- Have you ever been threatened with a weapon or has a weapon ever been used on you? What happened?
- Have the children ever seen you threatened or hurt? In what way?
- Have the children ever been threatened or hurt by your partner? When? What happened?

**Note:** If a patient is unwilling to talk and domestic violence is the diagnosis, still give her referrals and let her know you suspect domestic violence.

A thorough medical examination of a battered woman can play a key role in her defense against an assailant. Objective details should be recorded clearly and accurately in her medical record. Photographs can also provide good evidence of domestic violence. Guidelines concerning the examination are listed below:

**One important caveat: What you record in a medical record can be used to deny insurance. Some states are just now passing legislation to prevent this--Check your state legislature.**

### **1. Records**

- Record information in as much detail as possible.
- If the patient states abuse is the source of her injuries, state it in her chart. Use as much as the patient's own words as possible.
- Do not include information that is extraneous to medical fact or expert opinion. For example, the events leading up to the injury this may damage the patient's testimony.
- Use a body map to point out injuries.
- Relate physical findings to the type of instrument used whenever possible.
- Indicate "domestic violence" or "partner violence" as a diagnosis or problem when appropriate.

### **2. Photographing Injuries - All patients with visible injuries should be offered photography.**

- An instant color camera should be used.
- The patient's permission to photograph must be obtained on a signed waiver form. This waiver only gives permission to photograph, not permission to release photographs.
- Ideally, photographs should contain an identifiable feature of the patient, such as the face or a hand holding an identifying document.
- The photographer and the patient should sign and date the back of the photograph, and then store them in a dated, sealed envelope placed in the patient's records with the release form.

### **3. Explain the following to the patient:**

- This is a routine but important medical procedure.
- These photographs will become part of the patient's medical record and can only be released to the police or prosecutor with the patient's written permission.
- If the patient decides to prosecute the assailant, the photographs will be very useful as evidence.



It is important that a health care practitioner aid battered women in the following ways:

- **Make it clear that violent behavior is unacceptable and is criminal behavior.**
- **Help develop a safety plan for the patient.**
- **Give patient hotline and shelter information, stress that a phone call in no way commits her to a course of action.**
- **Contacting the Police**

-Never contact the police without the patient's consent. Inform the patient that she can contact the local police or district attorney's office to request that charges be filed against the abuser. Victims may also file a restraining order.

-In Massachusetts (in other states similar reporting must occur but the agencies have different titles and organizational structures) medical personnel must report the following:

- Cases involving gunshot wounds, powder burns, or burns covering five percent or more of the body must be reported to the Department of Public Safety, and cases involving stabbing must be reported to the local police authorities.
- Cases involving rape or sexual assault must be reported to the Commissioner of Public Safety and to the police of the town where the incident occurred without identifying the victim.
- Cases involving the suspected abuse, neglect or financial exploitation of an adult age 60 or over must be reported to the Elderly Services Protection Program.
- Cases involving the suspected abuse of a minor by her or his guardian caretaker must be reported to the Department of Social Services.
- Cases involving the suspected abuse or neglect of certain persons with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 59 must be reported to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission.

See the following article for information regarding legal information.

**For more information, please see the following articles:**

Randall, Teri; "Domestic Violence Intervention Calls for More Than Treating Injuries;" **JAMA**; August 22/29, 1990; Vol. 264; No. 8; pp.939-940.

McFarlane, Judith et. al.; "Assessing For Abuse During Pregnancy: Severity and Frequency of Injuries and Associated Entry Into Prenatal Care;" **JAMA**; June 17,1992; Vol.267; No. 23; pp. 3176-3178.

Sugg, Nancy Kathleen et. al.; "Primary Care Physicians' Response to Domestic Violence: Opening Pandora's Box;" **JAMA**; June 17, 1992; Vol. 267; No. 23; pp. 3157-3160.

Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; "Physicians and Domestic Violence: Ethical Considerations;" **JAMA**, June 17, 1992; Vol. 267; No. 23; pp.3190-3193.

**We also suggest contacting the following programs for more information about domestic violence training programs for health care providers:**

**Mass Medical Society 617 893-4610**

**Awake 617 735-7979**

**Physicians for a Violence Free Society 214 648-9214**

## LEGAL INFORMATION

Although social workers, health care providers, other concerned professionals and friends may not be directly involved in the legal procedures described, it is important to know of their existence and purpose. The most important thing you can do is to refer the victim to an advocate who will then advise an appropriate legal course of action. Documenting "domestic violence" or "partner violence" on a medical chart or service report will strengthen the victim's claim in a court of law. All states have legal provisions to protect individuals against the harassing and dangerous behavior of others. But it is important to remember that laws vary from state to state. It is best to contact your local battered women's shelter for the specific information you need. If you cannot reach them through the numbers on page 45, try your telephone directories.

A person in an abusive familial or dating relationship may obtain a "restraining order." Different kinds of orders exist, usually falling into one of three categories: an emergency restraining order, which can be obtained when court is not in session, such as on nights and weekends; a temporary restraining order can be obtained by filing a complaint in the appropriate court and telling the judge about the actual or threatened abuse; or a permanent restraining order can be obtained after a temporary restraining order has been served on the abuser. In most cases, the batterer has a right to appear at this hearing to tell his version of what happened. It is best if the victim does not go through this process alone, but rather, be accompanied by an advocate from a battered women's program, from the court, or by a friend or trusted family member.

It is a criminal offense to violate a restraining order. Criminal charges brought against a batterer can include

- Violation of a restraining order
- assault and battery
- assault with a deadly weapon
- breaking and entering
- trespassing, annoying telephone calls, threats, or stalking
- sexual assault

Criminal complaints are most often initiated by the arrest of the batterer by the police. A woman can seek a criminal complaint, however, through the clerk's office of the local district court. Upon conviction, the batterer receives a criminal record. A criminal complaint sends a clear message to the abuser that battering is considered a serious crime for which criminal penalties including fines and jail terms may be imposed. The victim must be aware that in some states the case can proceed without the victim's consent.

The stalking law was enacted in Massachusetts in 1992. It states that any person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows *or* harasses another person and who threatens that other person with death or serious bodily injury is guilty of the crime of "stalking." Most states do not have an anti-stalking law, however.

## **MODEL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS AFFILIATED WITH THE COURT SYSTEM**

If you are exploring ways to confront domestic violence in your community, it may be helpful to write to these programs for information about their innovative approaches to the problem.

This list was compiled from the following publication:

*Family Violence: State-of-the-Art Programs*. Reno, NV: National Council for Juvenile & Family Court Judges, 1992.

### **Comprehensive Programs**

A comprehensive program provides a variety of direct services to victims and batterers, as well as court, legal and social change advocacy, coordinated inter-agency and community response, training and publications.

1. Domestic Abuse Project  
204 West Franklin Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
(612) 874-7063
  
2. House of Ruth, Inc.  
Domestic Violence Legal Clinic  
2201 Argone Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(301) 889-0840
  
3. Templum  
P.O. Box 5466  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
(216) 634-7501

and

East Cleveland Domestic Violence Project  
14340 Euclid Avenue  
East Cleveland, OH 44112  
(216) 681-2176 or 681-2214

4. Project Safeguard  
1207 Pennsylvania Street  
Denver, CO 80203

(303) 863-7233

5. Family Court of the Second Circuit  
2145 Main Street, Suite 226  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793  
(808) 244-2290

and

Alternatives to Violence  
P.O. Box 909  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793  
(808) 242-9559

### **Statewide Court Programs**

These programs are created at the state level and encompass the entire state. They tend to be fairly comprehensive, but operate inside the system as opposed to outside it, and with public funding.

1. Hawaii Family Court, First Circuit  
777 Punch Bowl Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 548-6369
2. Connecticut Superior Court: Family Violence Intervention Units  
& Domestic Violence Projects  
28 Grand Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(203) 566-8187

### **Rural Programs**

These are programs devoted to serving rural areas, where protection and justice are far less available to victims.

1. Alternatives to Violence: East Hawaii  
P.O. Box 10448  
Hilo, HI 96721-5448; (808) 969-7798
2. Tri-State Coalition Against Family Violence  
P.O. Box 494  
Keokuk, IA 52632

(319) 524-4445

### **Civil Protection Order Programs**

These are programs that provide and enforce protection orders, or restraining orders, as they are often called. The two programs listed here also include a victim advocacy component.

1. Committee to Aid Abused Women  
2nd Judicial District Court Protection Order Program  
Protection Order Office  
Washoe County Courthouse  
75 Court Street, Room 103  
Reno, NV 89520  
(702) 328-3468
2. Protection Order Advocacy Program, Victim Assistance Unit  
King County Prosecuting Attorney  
E 223 King County Courthouse  
Seattle, WA 98104  
(206) 296-9547

### **Prosecution Programs**

The prosecution of domestic violence perpetrators presents unique challenges. These programs focus on developing effective judicial practices and emphasize a high level of coordination with other parts of the judicial system.

1. Domestic Violence Unit, Office of the San Diego City Attorney  
1010 Second Avenue, Suite 300  
San Diego, CA 92101-4903  
(619) 553-3076
2. San Francisco District Attorney's Domestic Violence Programs  
850 Bryant Street, 3rd Floor  
San Francisco CA, 94103  
Advocacy Unit: (415) 552-7550

Prosecution Unit (415) 553-9743  
and  
Family Violence Prevention Fund  
Building One, Suite 200  
1001 Potrero Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 821-4553

3. Prosecutor's Victim Assistance Program  
Municipal Courts Building  
1101 Locust Street  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 274-1517  
and  
Project Assist  
Legal Aid of Western Missouri  
1005 Grand Avenue, Suite 600  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 474-6750

### **Offender Accountability**

These are court-mandated and court-affiliated supervision and treatment programs for batterers.

1. Stipulated Order of Continuance Program  
Bellevue Probation Department  
P.O. Box 90012  
Bellevue, WA 98009-9012  
(206) 455-6956
2. Domestic Violence Prevention Program  
Quincy Division District  
Court Department  
One Dennis F. Ryan Parkway  
Quincy, MA 02169  
(617) 471-1650

and  
Domestic Violence Prevention Program  
Norfolk County District Attorney  
Office Family Services Unit  
No. 10 Granite Street  
Quincy, MA 02169  
(617) 472-0613

3. Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP)  
206 W. Fourth Street, Room 201  
Duluth, MN 55806  
(218) 722-2781 or (218) 723-0779 FAX

### **Coordinating Councils, Legislation & Policy Development**

These are coalitions of various groups, including courts and battered women's advocates, that work together to develop improved court practices, to provide training and to protect victims in violent families.

1. Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
2505 North Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-1111  
(717) 234-7353

and

Legal Advocacy Project  
524 McKnight Street  
Reading, PA 19601  
(215) 373-5697



## ***DEFENDING OUR LIVES UPDATE***

### **What has happened to the women featured in *Defending Our Lives*?**

- Former Assistant District Attorney Sarah Buel is currently writing, giving lectures and conducting legal and judicial training workshops all over the United States and is a faculty member of the law school at the University of Texas
- Meekah Scott was released on appeal with time served. She works on community education and speaks about domestic violence at conferences and benefits.
- Eugenia Moore's sentence was commuted by the Governor of Massachusetts and she is now living at home with her family.
- Lisa Grimshaw was released from prison on special parole and conducts community education in Massachusetts and across the country about domestic violence.
- Shannon Booker's was released from prison on early parole. Since her release, she has conducted community education and given lectures on domestic violence at locations ranging from shelters to international conferences.
- Patty Hennessy was released from prison in 2002!
- Three other women imprisoned in M.C.I. Framingham for killing their batterers were not featured in the film. Patricia Allen's sentence was commuted by the Governor of Massachusetts and she is working in Massachusetts. Elaine Hyde was paroled from the prison system and she is the director of a women's center and a domestic violence educator. Debra Reid, the only woman in the group imprisoned for killing her lesbian partner, was recently released from prison.

*In the Spring of 1994, the Massachusetts Legislature passed a ruling that makes prior abuse admissible evidence in the cases of battered women who kill their abusers.*

**There are hundreds of women in America who are still imprisoned for defending their lives.**

### **What has happened to the film?**

The overwhelming response to the film, we believe, signals a ground swell of public awareness and outcry about this human rights crisis. We hope that the continued widespread use of the film will further educate the public about domestic violence, and will spur people to take action in their own communities.

***Defending Our Lives*** has received numerous awards. In 1994 it won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject; the EMMA (Exceptional Merit in Media Award) from the National Women's Political Caucus; Outstanding Independent Film of the Year from the New England Film & Video Festival; the PASS Award from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency; the CHRIS Award/First Place at the Columbus International Film Festival; First Place at the National Council on Family Relations 25th Media Awards Competition; and others. It has been screened at many film festivals, including the Human Rights Watch International Film

Festival, the 16th Annual Denver International Film Festival, the Seattle Film Festival, the Edinburgh Film Festival, the International Women's Film Festival in Madrid, the Hot Springs Documentary Festival, and the Women in the Director's Chair International Film & Video Festival.

*Defending Our Lives* is currently being shown at numerous state legislatures, state boards of pardons, Attorney General's Offices, Police Academies, judicial training seminars, universities, law schools, hospitals, battered women's service agencies, and other organizations working for social change. The film has been used very successfully as a fund-raiser for battered women's shelters, and it has been featured at conferences and political forums across the country, including: The White House; The United Nations NGO Conference on Women in Copenhagen in 1995, The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee; The House of Representatives. Women's Congressional Task Force on Violence; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; National College of District Attorneys Conference on Domestic Violence; American Bar Association Conference, "Defending Battered Women in Criminal Cases"; National Legal Aid and Defenders Association Conference; American Public Health Association, "Building Healthy Environments"; American Psychological Association Annual Meeting; Texas N.O.W. State Conference; California Coalition for Battered Women in Prison Clemency Rally; Berkeley N.O.W. Symposium, "If Justice Is A Woman..."; Harvard University Graduate School of Education Conference, "Violence in the Schools and in Society"; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services First National Family Violence Conference; International Association of Women Judges Conference, in Rome, Italy; N.Y.C. Mayor Giuliani's Office as part of a forum on violence.

The film has also been shown at several museums and art centers, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Portland Arts Center and at theatrical screenings in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, San Jose, Portland, San Francisco, Berkeley, Seattle, San Diego and Austin. It has aired on WTTW in Chicago, KQED and KRON in San Francisco, WNET in New York, KPBS in San Diego, WFNX in Boston, WQED in Pittsburgh, and other public television stations. It is currently available in a Spanish version and has been seen on television stations in Europe.

Our goal is to make sure that everyone has access to this film. Please encourage your local public library to purchase a copy and urge your local public television station (PBS) to air it.

**SPEAKERS TO ACCOMPANY *Defending Our Lives***

Several individuals from the documentary or who worked on the documentary or women who were incarcerated in Massachusetts for defending their lives can be requested as speakers to lead discussions with the film. **Please leave numbers where you can be called collect.**

**Shannon Booker- Contact her through [speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org](mailto:speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org)** Shannon was released from prison and was trained by Casa Myrna Vasquez and several other domestic violence organizations to educate people about domestic violence. She has appeared on numerous national television programs, at schools and universities, in living rooms and community organizations to talk about domestic violence and street violence. She was a featured speaker at the 1995 United Nations NGO Conference in Copenhagen. She currently works for the Boston Community Center as a streetworker and educator.

**Sarah Buel- University of Texas at Austin**

A former Assistant District Attorney, Ms. Buel is a well-known national speaker who has been lecturing nationally on the subject of domestic violence for many years.

**Lisa Grimshaw--contact her through [speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org](mailto:speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org)**

Lisa Grimshaw was released from prison and has been the domestic violence training coordinator for the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Council. She received the Rika Rose Award for domestic violence education and speaks nationally on domestic violence.

**Elaine Hyde--508 876 5362**

Elaine Hyde was not in the documentary but she was one of the women in prison for killing her abuser in self-defense. She was released from prison and was at the University of Massachusetts Women's Center. She has appeared on television shows and at schools, universities, and community organizations to discuss domestic violence.

**Stacey Kabat-- contact at [speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org](mailto:speakers@cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org)**

Stacey Kabat was the founder and executive director of Peace at Home,(formerly Battered Women Fighting Back!, she was also one of the producers of the documentary. Ms. Kabat is a nurse and a nationally recognized speaker on domestic violence,

**Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich--617 484 3993 (Cambridge Documentary Films, Inc.)**

Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich are award-winning filmmakers and the producers of *Defending Our Lives*. Ms. Lazarus is one of the authors of the violence against women chapter of *The New Our Bodies, Ourselves* as well as numerous opinion editorials on domestic violence. Ms. Lazarus and Mr. Wunderlich lecture and speak nationally on social issue filmmaking and domestic violence.

**National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women--215 351 0010**

This organization can provide information about national speakers who can lead discussions about the defense of battered women.

## HOTLINE NUMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Updated by Peace at Home Inc., 2002.

Many hotlines that are not toll-free will accept collect calls.

Alabama	(205) 832-4842		
Alaska	(907) 272-0100		
Arizona	(602) 836-0858		
Arkansas	(800) 332-4443	(501) 376-3219	
California	(415) 469-7637	(916) 920-2952	(310) 392-9896
Colorado	(303) 573-9018	(719) 633-3819	
Connecticut	(203) 524-5890		
Delaware	(302) 762-6110		
District of Columbia	(202) 347-2777		
Florida	(800) 892-2849	(813) 344-5555	(305) 761-1133
Georgia	(706) 543-3331	(404) 524-3847	(912) 439-7094
Hawaii	(808) 595-3900	(808) 841-0822	
Idaho	(208) 525-1820		
Illinois	(217) 789-2830	(618) 465-1978	(708) 386-4225
	(312) 561-3500	(309) 582-7233	(815) 932-5814
Indiana	(812) 422-5622		
Iowa	(800) 942-0333	(515) 243-6147	
Kansas	(800) 794-4624	(316) 232-2757	(913) 625-4202
Kentucky	(502) 581-7222		
Louisiana	(504) 486-0377		
Maine	(207) 324-1957		
Maryland	(410) 757-8300	(301) 654-1881	

Massachusetts	(800) 992-2600	(617) 248-0922	(508) 342-2919	(413) 562-5739 and you can dial 411
Michigan	(800) 834-2098	(800) 292-3666	(616)965-7233 Minnesota	(800) 289-6177 (612) 646-6177
Mississippi	(601) 435-1968			
Missouri	(800) 548-2480 (417) 782-1772	(314) 634-4161	(816) 556-1000	
Montana	(406) 586-4111	(406) 259-8100		
Nebraska	(402) 463-4677			
Nevada	(800) 992-5757	(702) 423-1313		
New Hampshire	(800) 852-3388	(603) 224-8893		
New Jersey	(800) 572-7233	(201) 881-1450		
New Mexico	(505) 624-0666			
New York	(800) 942-6906	(315) 253-3356		
North Carolina	(919) 683-8628	(704) 885-7233		
North Dakota	(800) 472-2911	(701) 572-9111		
Ohio	(800) 543-1399	(419) 422-4766	(614) 354-1010	
Oklahoma	(918) 336-1188			
Oregon	(503) 239-4486	(503) 235-5333		
Pennsylvania	(800) 932-4632	(412) 349-4444		
Rhode Island	(401) 723-3051	(401) 723-3057	(401) 782-3990	
South Carolina	(800) 273-1820	(803) 669-4694		
South Dakota	(605) 698-4129			
Tennessee	(615) 327-0805	(901) 664-9727		
Texas	(800) 252-5400			
Utah	(801) 753-2500			
Vermont	(802) 223-1302	(802) 658-3131		
Virginia	(800) 838-8238	(804) 221-0990		

Washington	(800) 562-6025	(206) 734-3438	
West Virginia	(800) 352-6513	(304) 428-2333	
Wisconsin	(608) 255-0539	(414) 832-1666	(715) 623-5177
Wyoming	(307)235-2814		

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## RESOURCES

**AMEND**, 777 Grant Street, Room 600, Denver, CO 80203 (303) 832-6365 (offers programs for batterers)

**Battered Women's Hotline** (there is no national number at present; to reach a local battered women's program look in your phone book under abuse, crisis intervention, domestic or family violence, shelters or call directory assistance in your capital city for your state's domestic violence coalition)

**Battered Women's Justice Project**, (800) 903-0111 (a coalition of three organizations on legal & criminal justice information)

**Community United Against Violence**, 973 Market Street, Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 333-HELP (programs and assistance for gays and lesbians)

**Domestic Abuse Intervention Project**, 4032 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407 (612) 824-8768 (addresses criminal justice system's response to domestic violence including the development of batterers' programs)

**Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project**, 206 West Fourth Street, Duluth, MN 55806 (218) 722-2781 (groups for court ordered batterers and support groups for the women they batter)

**Emerge**, 2380 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02141 (617) 422-1550 (a batterers treatment program; for certified batterers treatment programs in your state call the Department of Public Health )

**Family Violence Prevention Fund**, 383 Rhode Island St., Ste. 304, San Francisco, CA 94103-5133 (extremely informative newsletter, resources, and many national educational projects, campaigns and initiatives aimed at ending domestic violence)

**Fenway Community Health Center's Victim Recovery Program**,

7 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115 (617) 267-0900 (offers programs and assistance for lesbians and gays)

**Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project**, 647 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014 (212) 807-0197 (offers programs and assistance for gays and lesbians)

**Jane Doe Safety Fund**, 210 Commercial Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02109, (800) JANEDOE or (617) 248-0922 (fundraising and community education about domestic violence)

**Manalive Marin County**, 903 Irwin Street, San Rafael, CA 94901  
(415) 924-1070 (offers programs for batterers)

**Mending the Sacred Hoop**, 206 West Fourth Street, Duluth, MN 55806 (218) 722-3414 (resources for Native Americans focusing on safety for victims and creating accountability within systems of abuse)

**National Center on Women and Family Law, Inc.**, 799 Broadway,  
Room 402, New York, NY 10003, (212) 674-8200 (provides legal information to domestic violence programs, lawyers, and policy makers. Also provides an excellent newsletter)

**National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women**, 125 S. 9th Street, Suite 302, Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215) 351-0010 (provides information and technical assistance to battered women charged with crimes and their defense teams)

**National Clearinghouse on Marital and Date Rape**, 2325 Oak Street, Berkeley, CA 94708 (510) 524-1582

**National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**, P.O. Box 34103, Washington, DC 20043-4103 (202) 638-6388 or 1202 E. Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80214 (303) 839-1852 (information and publications)

**National Council on Safe Families**, c/o My Sister's Place, P.O. Box 337, Tuckahoe, NY 10707 (914) 969-5800

**National Resource Center on Domestic Violence**, (800) 537-2238

**New York Asian Women's Center**, (212) 732-5230 (maintains shelters and 24-hour multilingual hotline)

**Peace at Home Inc.,(formerly known at Battered Women Fighting Back!** 95 Berkeley Street, Suite 107, Boston, MA 02116, (617) 482-9497 ( is a human rights agency focusing on domestic violence by identifying it as a violation of fundamental human rights; heightening cross-cultural awareness, implementing proactive multi-cultural education programs, and catalyzing community response and involvement. It provides technical and legal assistance to battered women, information and speakers on domestic violence)

**Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence**, 524 McKnight Street, Reading, PA 19601 (610) 373-5697 (addresses civil court access and legal representation issues of battered women)

**Women, Inc.** (support groups), (415) 864-4777