DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Getting the Word Out is a statewide domestic violence public awareness campaign developed and implemented by the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The purpose of the project was to develop a set of awareness materials and distribution strategies specifically for use in rural areas.

This paper was adapted from a report authored by:
Diane Reese and Sue Julian
Project Coordinators
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC) was founded in 1993 as a key component in a national network of domestic violence resources. As a source of comprehensive information, training and technical assistance on community response to and prevention of domestic violence, the NRC exists to support the capacity of organizations and individuals working to end violence in the lives of women and their children. The NRC’s first priority is to proactively support the work of national, state and local domestic violence programs. It has placed an additional emphasis on increasing organizational responsiveness to the needs identified by communities of color and other traditionally underserved populations. The NRC exists as a project of the Pennsylvania Coalition on Domestic Violence, a pioneering leader in policy development, training and technical assistance in the movement to end domestic violence.

This paper is one of a series prepared for the Public Education Technical Assistance (PE) Project of the NRC. The PE Project was initiated with funding from the National Center on Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to support the public education efforts of state coalitions, community programs, and others working to end domestic violence. A major activity of the initial project was coordination of a series of demonstration projects created to develop new approaches for domestic violence public education. For additional information on these and other public education efforts, contact the NRC Public Education Specialist @ 1-800-537-2238.
Acknowledgments

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Diane Reese & Sue Julian

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Organizational Background: WVCADV

The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV) is a network of licensed domestic violence organizations serving the 55 counties of the state. Formed in the late 1970s and incorporated in 1981, the WVCADV has a stable history of service delivery. Each domestic violence organization serves an area ranging from two to eight counties. Since the early 1990s, the WVCADV member organizations have strived to meet the goal of having some form of direct services in each of the counties they service. Currently, there are 13 shelters and 22 satellite outreach centers, which provide many of the same services as the shelters except for emergency or transitional housing. Each outreach center is directly connected to a member organization. This means that all but 20 counties in the state have some form of direct service presence. Developing additional outreach centers in the remaining counties is a goal of the WVCADV state plan, with program directors and staff providing services in outlying areas on an as-needed or as-possible basis.

Although domestic violence organizations deliver services in a variety of ways based on the communities they serve, all programs throughout the state operate from a common mission statement: the elimination of personal and institutional violence against women, children, and men. Programs also subscribe to a shared Principles of Unity statement. While these principles affirm the autonomy of local organizations, they also affirm the value of networking and the right of all persons to obtain services to help them live free of domestic violence.

By developing a strong network of shared resources and support, the WVCADV provides safe space and quality services for victims of domestic violence, and advocates for systemic change to ensure that families have options for building lives free from violence.

In 1988, the WVCADV established a statewide central office with a focus on domestic violence prevention and education. The four goals of the statewide office are to:

- help give voice and visibility to battered persons and their children;
- provide training and technical assistance at the state level;
- develop public policy and legislative initiatives; and
- network with allied state, regional and national organizations.
West Virginia as a Rural Appalachian State

West Virginia has been called a land where “yesterday’s people” struggle for survival against forces making much of the state a “colony” of corporate powers. West Virginia is the only state within a 13-state geographical area that falls wholly under the jurisdiction of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The ARC was formed in the early 1960s in response to the poverty and underdevelopment common to this rural community whose natural resources, such as coal and timber, have been exploited by stakeholders living outside the region and often outside the country. The ARC gave national visibility to the needs of Appalachian people who lacked resources that were becoming standard in other states: access to water and sewer services, electricity, safe housing, interstate transportation systems and roads, hospitals, and social services.

Although the work of the ARC and other forces have raised the standard of living and employment rates, West Virginia remains largely an area where resources, though limited, are shaped by a culture and geography deeply Appalachian.

Because of the constraints of the mountains and roads, people often have limited contact with areas beyond their local community, or county. Many West Virginians have few experiences in distant parts of the state, let alone other states or other cultures. Although three interstate highways now cross the state, most transportation occurs on winding mountain, gravel or dirt roads. Except for the major cities, public transportation does not exist.

The largest city in the state, the Capitol city of Charleston, has fewer than 60,000 people. Most West Virginians live in unincorporated areas or county seats with populations ranging from 250 to 5,000 residents. People often have limited ability to move from one community to another quickly or easily. West Virginia’s prime value is placed on the land and the products of that land.

Given the landscape, the family and the community are nearly self-sufficient, self-contained and the base for a strong communal identity. The church and the courthouse play major roles in Appalachian culture. They can be institutions bringing growth and empowerment or a means of oppression serving to perpetuate rigid gender-based roles and sexual stereotyping.
Services and Public Education in Rural Communities

The realities of rural living as well as the history and culture of the area inform the kinds of domestic violence services developed and how they are delivered. Although rural communities throughout the state differ, they share one core fact: limited access to goods and services. The culture and the close-knit community structure shape perceptions and values as well as deter input from the broader world. Things taken for granted in urban areas are often not part of the rural experience.

For rural communities, it is important to understand how gender roles, family relationships, and problem-solving approaches are culturally shaped and impact how people think about violence in the home. The messages about domestic violence must reflect the daily realities of rural attitudes and living and be presented in ways that are relevant to their experiences. For example, an effective analogy to explain the abuse of power within the family might be to draw comparisons to the exploitation of rural land for profit and the effects of stripping and clear-cutting mountains. Since caring for the land is important for rural people, it is a practical example to teach about respectful relationships.

In addition to tailoring the message to the realities of rural peoples, domestic violence prevention efforts need to reflect the communications systems by which communities exchange information. Media campaigns, for example, that use bus stop posters, trolley signs, and video images set in large apartment complexes fail to impact rural folks whose neighbors are often out of view. While some cities in rural states may have malls where people gather, far more common gathering places are the general store, the post office, the beauty shop, the health clinic, the welfare office, and the community bulletin board near the parking lot of the grocery store. While most communities have newspapers, these papers are generally published weekly and have limited readership. Telephones and televisions are part of the rural landscape, but the primary sources of information for many people are the radio, citizen’s band (CB) radio, and — most common — word of mouth.
A Rural Public Education Project: Supporting Factors

Local and Statewide Networks

All domestic violence organizations in West Virginia were incorporated by the early 1980s, and all outreach centers are directly connected to a domestic violence organization. Each of these organizations has developed a strong local network of allied agencies that are interactive in service delivery. These include formal groups such as health systems, legal and social services, law enforcement, courts, churches, schools, media, and civic organizations. They also include informal centers where people gather or communicate such as the post office, libraries, restaurants, shops, malls, and community bulletin boards and centers. The coalition staff has developed a strong network of allied agencies at the state level. These include state agencies such as the state Department of Health and Human Resources, the family violence coordinating council, the hospital association and medical alliance, court and legal services administrations, and other nonprofit, professional, and governmental groups with interests in issues related to domestic violence, community-building, and empowerment.

Having connections to local and statewide networks provided two necessary supports for the Getting the Message Out campaign:

- an available source for input on the types of materials identified as needed and useful by these groups; and
- a ready means for the distribution and display of materials.

The development of strong networks of support at the local level is basic for any grassroots program depending upon volunteer services, in-kind donations, and an integrated approach to providing victim services and perpetrator accountability. All direct services programs have developed networks with long-term interactions, enhanced during the past two years by the evolution of outreach offices and the development of county or regional coordinating councils.

When the central office opened in 1988, the development of a similar network of coordinated efforts and support was a key program goal. At this point, the WVCADV office has a well-established history of working with a large number of statewide governmental and nonprofit groups.

Funding Sources

Although it coincides with the implementation of the WVCADV state service plan, the Getting the Message Out campaign could not have occurred without the financial resources to develop and distribute prevention education materials. In addition to funding from the NRC, the WVCADV tapped philanthropic foundations and local industry to help underwrite the project.
For example, a proposal to the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation added direct funds to the project. Because the Benedum Foundation had agreed to help fund the implementation of the state plan and this effort was a direct means of doing this, Benedum funds helped augment the project.

The partnership nature of this project was emphasized with local funders. Some groups provided money; AmeriCorps funded volunteer services; WVCADV provided staffing and coordination; local programs and outreach offices offered conduits for materials dissemination. Together this partnership produced a greater impact than could have been produced by any single entity alone.

Other Supports

During the implementation of this project, the WVCADV was entering its third year as an AmeriCorps project of the West Virginia Commission on National and Community Service. During the previous two years, 12 to 17 AmeriCorps service volunteers (members) were placed at local domestic violence organizations throughout the state. Although the services varied according to local need, all AmeriCorps members participated and were involved in outreach and educational programs. AmeriCorps members were also trained to incorporate domestic violence awareness and prevention within their work plan. As a result, the statewide AmeriCorps network served in the project by helping to identify the types of prevention materials needed in the field and helping to distribute those materials.

A vast amount of in-kind support was received from the staff of local programs who responded to questionnaires and helped in the distribution of materials. In addition to the opportunity given by the NRC to undertake this project, the WVCADV built upon the growing base of materials related to national domestic violence awareness and prevention. A number of resources and other materials such as those developed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund and by several national victims’ and children’s rights groups served as sources for ideas, strategies, examples, and graphics for the WVCADV campaign. Having access to these materials, especially those developed for Domestic Violence Awareness Month activities, helped the WVCADV plan a state project that could, in part, implement locally what was happening nationally.

Building on Existing Materials and Messages

The WVCADV identified national resources such as the Domestic Violence Awareness Month Project kit for ideas, strategies, examples, and graphics for the Getting the Word Out campaign. Once a significant number of resources were identified, the WVCADV adapted the materials from a national approach to a local one.
Structuring the Model: An Overview

Getting the Word Out Project Activities

The main objectives of the project focused on: developing domestic violence prevention materials that could be customized by specific organizations or agencies; identifying a network of information centers throughout the state; planning a distribution scheme utilizing that network; and evaluating the campaign’s effectiveness.

Specific project activities included:

- collecting and reviewing existing domestic violence awareness materials;
- implementing strategies such as statewide surveys and focus groups to gather information from domestic violence organizations and other agencies regarding types of materials most needed, target audiences, potential themes/messages, and distribution strategies for rural areas;
- developing a statewide database of information centers including government offices, domestic violence and allied organizations, and social service providers where materials could be displayed and distributed;
- creating designs and content for a variety of awareness materials including brochures, wallet cards, bookmarks, tray liners/place mats for restaurants, grocery inserts, posters, stickers, buttons, and a domestic violence booklet for service providers;
- distributing the materials through a statewide network of information centers during Domestic Violence Awareness Month; and
- convening local focus group discussions to assess the effectiveness of project materials and strategies.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Activities for the campaign were carried out primarily by the two full-time team coordinators of the WVCADV and a full-time AmeriCorps member. These staff worked together to develop workplans, timelines and strategies. Administrative tasks related to budget management, report writing, and ongoing and final evaluation were divided between team coordinators, who worked cooperatively with the AmeriCorps member in carrying out day-to-day project activities. About half of the AmeriCorps member’s time was devoted to this project. The coordinators spent about one-fifth of their time on the project, with most of that spent in the planning stage and the final implementation stage. A statewide network of contact persons from each domestic violence organization provided assistance in guiding the development of materials and in distributing
completed materials. Lastly, the services of a graphic artist were contracted for layout and design.

Project Time Line

All project activities took place within a 12-month period and were accomplished through various phases of project implementation. First quarter activities focused on development of a workplan and distribution of questionnaires to domestic violence organizations and other allies to gather preliminary information about materials to be created. In the second quarter of project implementation, staff identified statewide and local networks of other service providers and agencies and initiated local focus group discussions. The third quarter tasks included developing the content and format for new awareness materials. In the final months of the project, materials were printed and distributed to domestic violence organizations and other statewide contacts, and an informal evaluation of project materials was completed.

Investing Domestic Violence Organizations in the Project

Developing and carrying out the campaign through the Coalition was a major asset of the Getting the Word Out project. The WVCADV member organizations had already participated in and ratified the development of the statewide service plan, entitled Towards 2000. One goal of the plan was “to increase public awareness and understanding surrounding the occurrence of domestic violence and its impact in the public arena by providing statewide access to resources and materials on domestic violence.”

In addition, the plan objectives directed the WVCADV to “produce and distribute promotional information for domestic violence awareness month including cards, brochures, flyers, and posters designed to raise public awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence and about the services available.”

Prior to the Getting the Word Out project, member organizations had devoted significant time creating local domestic violence awareness materials in a wide variety of formats. However, without a coordinated statewide effort, materials varied greatly between service areas. One of the initial project decisions was to build upon what had already been done, and to select a consistent tag line, logo, style, or symbol, which would give a unified identity to all the materials created for the campaign.

In most cases, the types of materials developed by member domestic violence organizations were based on models produced by other groups, or as part of past domestic violence events. No formal process had been developed to determine the kinds of information materials that were or could be effective in their particular areas.
Recognizing the benefits of this project and that such a broad statewide effort was beyond the scope of any single program, member organizations provided strong support throughout the campaign. Each member organization was asked to support the project in a variety of ways:

- provide input into the types of materials needed and the focus of the content;
- identify one person — usually the staff person responsible for community education — to be the local contact between the central office and the program;
- aid in the actual distribution and placement of materials; and
- assist with the evaluation process.

Gathering Input: Questionnaires

The first task of the project staff was to gather input from organizations and allied groups. Two surveys were developed by project staff and distributed to domestic violence organizations and allied groups. The first was sent to local contacts from each member organization. The questionnaire asked respondents to list the types of public places available for materials display and distribution in their communities. The most common sites identified included the county courthouse, schools, general stores or malls, hospitals, health centers, churches, community bulletin boards, professional offices, police stations, and social services agencies (see Survey A in Appendices).

A second survey that was sent to domestic violence organizations and allied groups asked respondents to identify the specific types of information and materials they needed for awareness and prevention efforts. Information collected from this process was used as a base for determining what types of awareness materials would be developed. Project staff also compiled the information collected from both questionnaires and sent a summary of results back to each of the coalition organizations to provide ideas for local education efforts (see Survey B in Appendices).

Gathering Input: Focus Groups

Along with the questionnaires, local contact persons were asked to convene small “focus groups” in their areas. These were conceived as either formal or informal meetings of people within their organizations (staff, board, resident or non-resident clients, volunteers) or individuals from allied groups (Family Resource Networks, regional domestic violence coordinating councils, church or civic groups). The intent was to get input from a broad base of people about what seemed to work, what did not work, and
what was needed to raise awareness about domestic violence. The staff of the coalition office asked these questions of several statewide organizations including the West Virginia Family Violence Coordinating Council, and the Maternal and Child Health Division of the West Virginia Department of Public Health.

During this phase of the project, a wide range of ideas for materials was identified and developed along with the display/distribution sites for materials. Focus group discussions were very helpful in informing this phase of the project. For example, when a suggestion to place large billboards in each service region was made, members of an allied group shared that they had used billboards and found them effective but very costly and time-limited. Consequently, the allied group recommended using more durable and longer lasting resources such as brochures, wallet cards, and posters, which could be used throughout the year and reproduced as needed. In another example, a suggestion was made to enlist the cooperation of chain supermarkets and fast-food restaurants to distribute grocery bag inserts and tray covers. But, individuals who were working in rural areas suggested that mom-and-pop corner stores and local eateries were more appropriate sites for their communities. The key benefit to these focus group discussions and others like them was that they demonstrated how to tailor broad-based approaches to the local level.
Materials Development

Determining Content

One of the main tasks of this phase was deciding what information would be disseminated and to whom. Staff worked to maintain common themes among the materials, while at the same time customizing the content and the formats of each item to the appropriate audience.

Utilizing Survey and Focus Group Input. Ideas from the questionnaires and focus groups largely informed these decisions. Materials selected for development included:

- brochures (the topics most requested were: Protection Orders, Safety Planning, Elder Abuse, Impact on Children, Tactics of Control, Lesbian and Gay Relationships, and the WVCADV network and services);
- wallet cards for battered women (because they were small and easy to conceal);
- promotional items such as buttons, bookmarks, and stickers;
- grocery/shopping bag inserts and restaurant tray liners/placemats for mass distribution;
- general domestic violence posters for public display in offices of allied organizations; and
- a handbook for professionals, advocates, and helping agencies about basic domestic violence information.

Suggestions that were submitted but were not implemented during this campaign included billboards, bumper stickers, television advertisements with a rural focus, street banners (22’) and parade banners (8’), and small handouts such as pencils, key chains, desk or wall calendars with a domestic violence focus.

Identifying Existing Materials. During this phase, staff also identified existing domestic violence awareness products from which project materials could be modeled. This was accomplished by contacting local and national domestic violence organizations and searching the Internet.

Reflecting on Themes

Themes for materials emphasized the unity, scope, and core mission of the WVCADV. Project staff identified three elements that would be included in all information developed by the project:
• a listing of the WVCADV member organizations and phone numbers;
• reference to national efforts to end domestic violence such as using the theme, *There’s No Excuse for Domestic Violence*, or publicizing the National Domestic Violence Hotline number; and
• use of a common logo and design that would identify materials as part of the unified statewide effort.

Project staff sought the expertise of a graphic artist to develop appropriate formats for information, suggest options for logo, color, and design and to help obtain bids from various printers for the cost of producing the materials.

**Developing a Distribution Plan**

**Distribution through Domestic Violence Organizations.** Project staff concentrated efforts on producing materials to be distributed primarily by domestic violence organizations using existing local networks. Each of the 13 shelters and 22 outreach centers were identified as a distribution site. The AmeriCorps members throughout the state also participated in outreach to groups, agencies, and individuals. Many materials developed were distributed during October, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, along with local materials and previously developed information (particularly two booklets seen as adjuncts to this project: *Stop the Hurt, A Handbook for Victims*, and *Trust Betrayed, a Handbook on Dating Relationships*). Materials were distributed in proportion to the population size of the service area.

Since October was the target distribution date for materials, staff planned to have all materials available for distribution by the fall WVCADV Board Meeting in early October. Sticking to this plan was challenging, but with hard work and a team effort, project staff were able to meet the deadline.

**Distributing Handbooks.** One part of the project was to distribute handbooks on the dynamics of domestic violence to professional groups throughout the state, e.g. county commissions, police and sheriff departments, courthouses, boards of education, health care facilities, and legal services. To accomplish this, staff developed a computerized database with the addresses of these statewide agencies and their local affiliates. Entering contact information proved to be a monumental task as the database quickly grew to include over 5,000 entries.
Designing and Printing Materials

The next phase of the project expanded the working team to include an experienced graphic artist. Project staff participated actively in reviewing possible layouts to ensure that the design was appropriate to the message and audience, and could be easily reproduced. Materials were not time-dated or copyrighted. This was decided to encourage other groups to reproduce/copy materials as needed (with an acknowledgment of the source). Some materials were made available in electronic format (i.e., as computer files) to enable other groups (e.g., health centers or outreach offices) to add appropriate local information or contact numbers and to reproduce them as needed.

As part of her contract, the graphic designer secured a number of printing bids and eventually worked out contracts with two printers to bring the project through the production phase. In all, close to 755,000 items were produced.

Editing, Proofing, and Packaging

The less-than-energizing parts of the project, as one might expect, were completed under the pressure of deadlines. All three project staff helped with the editing process, with one person responsible for a final edition. Drafts were given to the graphic artist and the equally tedious process of proofreading the galleys, re-editing, and re-proofing began. This process took longer than anticipated and therefore delayed the delivery date of the materials. Staff enlisted volunteers to help with the packaging of the materials. Using the distribution plan created earlier in the project, staff and volunteers prepared boxes of materials for each program and outreach office in the state for distribution at the October board meeting. Handbooks for other professionals dealing with domestic violence were also packaged separately and mailed to 2,000 agencies throughout the state. One lesson learned from this project was that preparing and distributing materials is a major, time-consuming task that requires realistic planning.

Expenses

The majority of expenses for this project related to the actual production of materials. The WVCADV purchased a computer system for the development of materials, and contracted with a graphic artist. The major expenses incurred were printing costs. Significant savings to the total project cost were achieved by using an AmeriCorps member involved in the project, sparing the cost of hiring a project director, or shifting assignments to a current staff person. Significant in-kind contributions were also made by the programs who subsequently played major roles in the dissemination of materials.
Looking Back

Evaluating Project Approach and Timeline

The project was successful in completing the majority of projected activities. This was, in part, due to a number of pre-existing resources. Staff identified the following elements as key:

- having the support of coalition member organizations for prevention efforts;
- access to a “ready-made” network (of domestic violence organizations) for input and distribution;
- incorporating the project into the team management structure of the central coalition office;
- involving the AmeriCorps member in the coalition office as volunteer support and including the other 16 AmeriCorps members in planning and distribution; and
- access to a variety of resources and funding sources for the project.

Despite its success, there are aspects of project implementation that could have been improved. First, the original workplan included development and distribution of seasonally-appropriate awareness materials monthly. However, as the project unfolded, it became unrealistic because staff lacked the capacity and the time to accomplish this. The project timeline presented a second obstacle. Although conceived as a 12-month process, the actual time to implement the project was less. Materials were scheduled for distribution in September, which allowed three months for finalizing content and production. Three months, however, was not a realistic timeframe.

Additional delays caused by the printers were not factored into the plan. In future efforts, staff plan to build in lead-time or advance the distribution date by at least a month to accommodate unexpected and uncontrollable delays. Lastly, the methods and timeline proposed for project evaluation (using focus groups similar to those in the preliminary phase) were unrealistic. The project timeline made that impossible, given the October distribution date (see page 14).

Evaluating Products

There are a number of ways to evaluate educational materials. In this project, staff had planned to conduct focus groups in a manner similar to groups employed in the initial planning phases of the project. Since this was not feasible to complete within the project timeline, staff collected information about product format, content and effective-
ness in informal ways. This included gathering input from coalition staff and board members, all of whom had very positive reactions to the materials, including the layout, colors, and graphics. As a coalition, organizations had never before had materials of this quality, in such quantity, and free of charge. Having these materials for use during October was especially useful to domestic violence organizations involved in a variety of awareness activities. Another positive was the fact that the content of the information was not time-specific. The information was generic enough to be used throughout the year and was in a form that allowed local programs and other agencies to reproduce or customize materials as needed. Some organizations needed guidance on ways to use the new materials.

A major drawback of the project is that a thoughtful evaluation of the products cannot occur until member organizations have time to do so at the local level. Focus groups have not been convened for this purpose at this point, and more importantly, survivors of domestic violence have not had time to add their reflections to the evaluation process. Core to planning future Domestic Violence Awareness Month activities will be an evaluation of this particular year’s efforts (Note: That evaluation has since taken place and is included in the Appendices).

Lessons Learned

In addition to the points made above, the project directors have learned many other things. One is the centrality of putting efforts and resources into the prevention of domestic violence. When the possibility arose for the coalition central office to expand staff, the team coordinators hired a new full-time employee for the ongoing work of public education and domestic violence prevention.

Another thing learned by the project directors has been the importance of matching roles and responsibilities to the capacity of the individuals. This was a major project, one really beyond the responsibility of the AmeriCorps member who took it on as part of her service. The project timeline was tight with a clearly delineated deadline. Were the coalition to undertake this type of project again, staff would either contract additional staff assistance or assign additional duties to existing staff.

Some of the project goals were unrealistic given the timeline and the limited staff. This is particularly clear in the area of product evaluation. In addition, the project required more time for the distribution of materials and the formal evaluation or focus group process. To evaluate the project at a statewide level using the existing community network would have required an additional three months.

Certainly one of the most dramatic, possibly traumatic, lessons learned during the *Getting the Message Out* campaign has been to avoid undertaking other major projects at
the same time as a project of this scope or else adjust timelines accordingly. The WVCADV ended up relocating its central office site and expanding the staff during the final two months of the project, which were two unplanned events. At the time of the initial distribution of materials, the Handbook for Professionals was still pending production and subsequently required a separate distribution process (included in the Attachments section). Although this does not lessen the value or the impact of this part of the project, it would have been preferable to reach the professional population at the same time as the general public.

Suggestions for Future Adaptation

After reflection on the last months of developing and implementing this project, WVCADV staff offer the following suggestions to others seeking to implement a rural public awareness project:

1) Adapt the project approaches to the local reality. Rural areas can be defined by a common characteristic: rural people lack access to resources. This is true for those in the southwest desert areas, those in remote fishing communities along the Atlantic or Alaskan coast, those on tribal reservations far from urban centers, and those in Appalachia. What is equally evident is the uniqueness of each community. Getting the word out in your community may be very different from the approach described in this paper. However, you can use these ideas as a starting point for your own efforts. To adapt approaches, think about the cultural attitudes and ways that information is communicated, formally and informally, in the area and tailor measures to them.

2) Seek ways to assure broad-based participation and ownership of the project. For the WVCADV, this meant getting all of the member organizations as well as other allied groups involved in providing input and distributing materials. Expanding networks beyond regular staff contacts had value in itself as well as adding a wider range of ideas and options. Seeking support from other sources also gave a broader base of input as well as additional impetus for success. In particular, project staff valued the contribution made by the AmeriCorps program, but it is also important to recognize the obvious limits of non-specialized volunteer services.

3) Be realistic in setting goals, workplans and timelines. Although workplans appeared realistic on paper, this project did not have the flexibility needed for unplanned events and delays. In particular, extra time should be built in for the process of developing and revising content, printing/production and distribution.
4) **Set clear priorities.** Although project staff considered a wide range of content and types of materials, it was necessary to determine specific needs, messages and formats for materials. Multiple options and possibilities must, at some point, become choices. This project developed many ideas that were in fact not implemented, but will become a springboard for continued work. Education is an ongoing process. Rather than trying to accomplish everything all at once, start by selecting achievable goals when starting this work.

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**Addendum**

*From the Authors....*

Reflecting on *Getting the Word Out* from a later perspective reveals impacts that were unintended but which greatly enhanced the long-term results of the project. One of these is the importance of the centrality of this office for producing and distributing public education/awareness materials. We had viewed this part of our mission as desirable when we had the funds; we now see this as a core responsibility if we are serious about statewide prevention efforts. A second result was an expansion of our staff to include a person trained in and committed to the production of quality educational materials for use throughout the state. This year we have added two additional brochures - one on communities of faith and one on health issues - to the series begun by the project. Our local programs know that have access to quality materials professionally developed to assist in the work they do. Although we had not planned to tie these materials together graphically, the project showed us the value and impact of doing this. We have taken pride in seeing these easily identifiable materials throughout the state. In summary, what began as a “project” has in truth evolved into an intrinsic aspect of our work in moving toward our mission.

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**For More Information**

For information about domestic violence, community organizing and outreach strategies, public awareness materials, working within rural communities, or further information and documentation about the *Getting the Word Out* Project, please contact the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence at 800-537-2238 / TTY 800-553-2508, or contact the WVCADV central service office directly at (304) 965-3552.
WVCADV Central Office AmeriCorps and office personnel will be developing a database of county sites where prevention and public awareness materials can be displayed. Please help us by identifying where in your catchment counties you place your domestic violence public awareness and prevention materials. Please be specific. **Please return by December 20, 1996. Thank you again for assisting!!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business/Organization</th>
<th>Type of Business</th>
<th>Location (County/City)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Example) Go Mart</td>
<td>Convenience Store</td>
<td>Braxton-Sutton &amp; Gassa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey B

To: All WVCADV Programs and Outreach Directors
From: Patty Fussell, WVCADV AmeriCorps
Date: December 9, 1996

Dear Directors:

Please check the specific materials you find useful in your service area:

TYPES OF MATERIALS most useful:

_____ Banners
_____ Bookmarks
_____ Buttons
_____ General domestic violence brochures
_____ Flyers
_____ Inserts (Church bulletins, grocery bags, bank statement, utility bills)
_____ Signs
_____ Public service announcement
_____ Other (________________________________) Please be specific.
_____ Other (________________________________)

CONTENT FOCUS most useful:

_____ Dating violence
_____ General prevention
_____ Health related issues
_____ Legal advocacy
_____ School related
_____ Other (________________________________) Please be specific.
_____ Other (________________________________)

Do you have any additional suggestions for what would be useful in the area of domestic violence and prevention public awareness materials?
Overview of Project

In October 1997, a series of professionally designed and printed domestic violence awareness materials were provided to each member program of the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. These materials were the products of approximately nine months of collaborative research and development by the WVCADV Central Service Office, domestic violence programs, and allied organizations around the state. In May 1998 —after programs had had approximately six months to use the materials— an evaluation was conducted to assess the usefulness of those materials to domestic violence program staff. This report presents a summary of that evaluation data.

Evaluation Process

The Public Awareness and Education Specialist developed a six-page survey instrument for this evaluation (Appendix A) using evaluation criteria specified in the grant report for this project. In addition to those criteria, the survey asked respondents to 1) evaluate the quantities they received of each item; and 2) suggest content and appearance changes for each item. The purpose of the latter was to provide data that could be used to revise and improve the items for subsequent printings.

A total of 47 surveys were mailed out—one to each of the domestic violence programs and outreach offices connected to those programs—and a reminder was mailed to those who had not responded by one week before the deadline. Thirty-five of the 47 surveys were returned, for a 74.4 percent response rate. The Public Awareness and Education Specialist compiled responses.

Evaluation Results

Evaluation Criterion #1: Type and Number of Materials Developed

A total of 15 items were developed for this project. Table 1 lists the items developed and the total number of each that were produced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Number Printed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Tactics of Control&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Personalized Safety Planning&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Protection Order&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;DV in Lesbian and Gay Relationships&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;DV and its Impact on Children&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Elder Abuse&quot; Brochure</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVCADV Brochure</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Plan Palm Card</td>
<td>78,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What You Can Do&quot; Poster</td>
<td>1,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tray Liner</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Bag Insert</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Peace in the World Begins at Home&quot; Button</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;For a Safer State of Family&quot; Sticker</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;For a Safer State of Family&quot; Booklet</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Domestic Violence Hotline Bookmark</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL NUMBER OF PIECES</strong></td>
<td><strong>754,950</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Type and Number of Items Produced
In order to determine which items were used most by domestic violence program staff, survey respondents were asked to identify for each of the items whether they “needed more,” had “just enough,” or had “too many” of the item. Table 2 summarizes those results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage Who Responded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needed More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tactics of Control” Brochure</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Personalized Safety Planning” Brochure</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Protection Order” Brochure</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“DV in Lesbian and Gay Relationships” Brochure</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“DV and Its Impact on Children” Brochure</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Elder Abuse” Brochure</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“WVADV” Brochure</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Plan Palm Card</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Domestic Violence Hotline Bookmark</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tray Liner</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Bag Insert</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What You Can Do” Poster</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button/Sticker</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“For a Safer State of Family” Booklet</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Respondents’ Assessment of Quantity Received

While responses to this question do not indicate the relative usefulness of each item, they can be used to determine which of the items are most and least “in demand,” and that will help determine how many quantities of each are produced in subsequent printings.

Criteria #2 and #3: Groups Contacted and Most Effective Distribution Strategies

Early in the project, domestic violence program staff were asked to identify locations within their counties where information about domestic violence could be made available. In this survey, respondents were provided with a list of those locations and asked to check off the ones in which they had placed the materials since receiving them. Table 3 shows where materials were placed, in order of frequency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Location</th>
<th>Number Who Reported Placing Materials There (n=36)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government offices</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health organizations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social service agencies</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement offices</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational facilities</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches/religious organizations</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and civic organizations</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundromats</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing areas</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail stores</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/fast food places</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber and beauty shops</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and financial institutions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (included industrial home, Family Resource Network meetings, senior centers, gas stations, jails, festivals and street fairs, school job fairs, tanning bed facilities, taverns and clubs, mall information booths, telephone booths, and auto parts stores.)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Locations Where Items Were Placed
Respondents also were asked to identify the strategies they used to distribute the materials and to indicate which strategies they felt were most effective. Table 4 summarizes those responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Strategy</th>
<th>Number of Respondents Who Reported Using That Strategy (n=36)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using materials as handouts during presentations</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handing out materials at exhibits</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having domestic violence program staff place materials in</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distribution locations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributing materials within the shelter/outreach office</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking staff of other community businesses and organizations to distribute materials</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placing materials in restrooms</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Distribution Strategies

The strategies that respondents listed as "most effective" were using the materials as handouts during presentations (n=8), handing them out at exhibits (n=7), placing them in restrooms (n=5), asking staff of other community businesses and organizations to distribute them (n=2), having domestic violence program staff place them in distribution locations (n=2), and distributing them within the shelter or outreach office (n=1).

**Suggested Revisions**

Finally, respondents were asked to suggest revisions in the content and/or appearance of the items. Many suggestions were provided, including updating the brochures and booklet to reflect recent changes in state law, and adding or changing information that respondents felt would make the materials more accurate and helpful to those who receive them.

One of the most frequent suggestions was to include space on each item for outreach offices to place contact information. Each item included a list of the 13 shelter programs around the state, but no space was provided for outreach office information. As one respondent wrote, "In outreach counties, victims often cannot call the shelter for the area because the number will show up as a long-distance charge on their phone bill [which would tip off the abuser that the call was made]. Leaving space for outreach office numbers will make it easier for victims to gain assistance without risking their safety."

**Conclusions**

This survey generated a wealth of information that will be used to improve the public awareness and prevention materials for future printings. The information is particularly valuable because it was provided by those who work each day to educate their communities about domestic violence. While there are a number of improvements to be made, these high-quality materials are clearly valued – and used – in those efforts.
Attachments
The brochures and materials that appear on the following pages are the products of the Getting the Word Out... project.

The following are included:

- General Domestic Violence/WVCADV Information
- Personalized Safety Planning
- Tactics of Control
- Impact on Children
- Protection Orders
- Elder Abuse
- Lesbian and Gay Relationships

Also included are examples of an insert card, trifolded resource card and the poster that was used for public displays (reduced in size for this publication). A copy of the Handbook for Professionals appears at the end.
Supporting Membership Form

Your contribution brings you the periodic Coalition newsletter, including announcements of conferences, trends in the field, and updates on the issues of domestic violence in West Virginia. Additionally, your contribution supports legislative advocacy, training, resource development, technical assistance to domestic violence programs, public education and research related to family violence.

Name ____________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
Phone ____________________________________________

Enclosed are my annual membership dues, according to my ability to pay:

☐ $250  ☐ $100  ☐ $50  ☐ $25  ☐ $15

Please return this form with payment to: WVCADV, Elk Office Center, 4710 Chimney Drive, Suite A, Charleston, WV 25302

THANK YOU

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Beckley Area
Charleston Area
Elkins Area
Fairmont Area
Huntington Area
Keyser Area
Lewisburg Area
Martinsburg Area
Morgantown Area
Parkersburg Area
Welch Area
Wheeling Area
Williamson Area

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

(304)255-2559  (304)340-3549  (304)452-2382  (304)788-6061  (304)263-8292  (304)645-6334  (304)290-8000  (304)428-2333  (304)436-8117  (304)232-2748  (304)235-6121

WEST VIRGINIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

§Elk Office Center • 4710 Chimney Drive, Suite A • Charleston, WV 25302 • (304)965-3552

There's no EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
**WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?**

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive control that one person uses in intimate relationships in order to control another individual. Domestic violence includes emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Domestic violence violates the basic trust and respect which we expect from people we love. Domestic violence knows no barriers. Battering can happen to anyone regardless of race, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, educational background, or marital status.

Although factors such as alcohol, a history of abuse or drugs may be involved, domestic violence is at core an issue of power and control.

Hitting hurts. Violence destroys the body, the spirit, the family, the future. WV CADV works to stop violence in intimate relationships. WV CADV is committed to personal and institutional change that affirms equality and mutuality in relationships.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FACTS**

- Domestic violence has persisted for centuries, and only recently have people begun to recognize it as a dangerous social problem and a crime.
- Domestic violence is a problem of staggering proportions. Every 15 seconds in this country a woman is assaulted by her husband or intimate partner.
- About 95% of the victims of domestic violence are women; 3-4 million American women are battered each year by their partners.
- The quality of our communities suffers when the health and well-being of individuals and families are destroyed by domestic violence.
- The FBI reports that 30% of female homicide victims are killed by their husbands or boyfriends, and 6% of male homicide victims are killed by their wives or girlfriends.
- Violence can pass from generation to generation. Children witnessing the violence may learn that violence is a way to resolve problems and conflicts.
- Children of violent homes are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1500% higher than the national average.
- Without intervention, domestic violence becomes more frequent and more severe over time.
- One in 25 elderly persons in the U.S. will meet physical abuse at the hands of her or his adult children.

**WHAT IS WV CADV?**

The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a network of non-profit domestic violence programs located statewide and a Central Service Office. Direct service programs respond on a 24-hour basis, providing safe shelter and emotional support, advocacy, referrals to other social services, and information on victims’ rights. The Central Service Office focuses on working for systemic change that insures victims’ rights while holding offenders accountable for their behavior.

**WHAT DOES THE CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE DO?**

- Collaborates with public policy makers in developing laws and procedures which provide protection and support for survivors of domestic violence.
- Provides training opportunities and technical assistance for shelters and domestic violence programs.
- Responds to local, state, and national inquiries relating to domestic violence.
- Coordinates conferences, community seminars, and presentations designed to broaden the public’s awareness of domestic violence and related issues.
- Maintains a centralized database that tracks the occurrence of domestic violence in West Virginia.
- Serves on state and national committees, task forces, and special domestic violence projects.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

- Become informed and know the facts. Raise community awareness by informing others. Distribute materials that tell the facts about domestic violence.
- Know the dangers of battering and where to seek help in your community. Share your time and resources with your local domestic violence program.
- Teach children that violence is not an acceptable way to handle conflicts and problems.
- Hold batterers accountable for their violence. Let them know that the community condemns this behavior.

There's no excuse for domestic violence.
There's no excuse for domestic violence.

Personalized safety plan.

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PROGRAMS

Beckley Area   (304)255-2559
Charleston Area (304)340-3549
Elkins Area    (304)636-8433
Fairmont Area  (304)367-1100
Huntington Area (304)529-2382
Keyser Area    (304)788-6061
Lewisburg Area (304)645-6334
Martinsburg Area (304)263-8292
Morgantown Area (304)292-5100
Parkersburg Area (304)428-2333
Welch Area     (304)436-8117
Wheeling Area  (304)232-0511
Williamson Area (304)235-6121

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE

STATEWIDE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
Prevention Office
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Drive,
Suite A
Charleston, WV 25302
(304)965-3552
(304)965-3572 fax

CHECKLIST OF ITEMS TO TAKE WHEN LEAVING

- Copy of Protective Order
- Keys, house/office
- Driver's license and registration
- Medication
- Insurance papers
- Lease/rental agreement
- Divorce papers
- Record of birth certificates
- School and vaccination records
- Social security cards
- Children's birth certificates
- Welfare identification
- Work permits
- Money
- Checkbook, ATM card
- Credit cards, bank books
- Money
- Divorce papers
- Passport(s)
- Divorce papers
- Children's favorite toys
- Blankets
- Children's favorite toys
- Blankets
SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

A. If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area that has access to an exit and not in a bathroom, kitchen, or anywhere near weapons.
B. Practice how to get out safely: what doors, windows, elevators, stair wells or fire escapes to use.
C. Keep purse and car keys ready in order to leave quickly.
D. Tell a friend or neighbor about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from the home.
E. Teach children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.

F. Use a code with children or friends so they can call for help.
G. Teach some of these strategies to some/all of the children.
H. Use judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, give the abuser what is wanted.

PROTECT YOURSELF UNTIL YOU AND THE CHILDREN ARE OUT OF DANGER.

SAFETY WITH AN ORDER OF PROTECTION

- Keep the protection order on or near you all times.
- Give their protection order to police departments in the communities where you visit family or friends.
- Most counties have a county registry of protection orders that all police departments can call to confirm a protection order. Check to make sure that your order is in registry.
- Inform your employer, minister, closest friend and relatives that they have a protection order in effect. If the abuser destroys your protection order, you can get another copy from the County Circuit clerk or magistrates office.
- If the abuser violates the protection order, call the police and report a violation, contact an attorney, call a domestic violence advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation.
- If the police do not help, contact a domestic violence advocate or attorney and file a complaint with the chief of the police department.

SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

- Leave money, an extra set of keys, extra clothing, and keep copies of important documents with relatives or friends so you can leave quickly.
- Open a savings account to increase independence.
- The National Domestic Violence hot line number is 1-800-799-SAFE. Memorize it.
- Keep change for phone calls at all times.
- Understand that by using a telephone credit card, the following month the telephone bill will list those numbers called. To keep telephone communications confidential, either use coins or get a friend’s permission to use their telephone credit card.
- Rehearse an escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with the children.

SAFETY IN THE HOME

- Change the locks on doors and windows as soon as possible.
- Replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- Install security systems, additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- Purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
- Install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in the house/apartment.
- Install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to the house.
- Teach the children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to a friend, minister or relative in the event the abuser takes the children.
- Tell people who take care of the children which people have permission to pick up the children and that the abuser is not permitted to do so.

SAFETY ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC

A. Discuss who at work you will inform of your situation - supervisor, trusted co-worker.
B. Inform the security supervisor at work of your situation. Provide a picture of the abuser, if possible.
C. Ask for help screening telephone calls at work.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive control that one person uses in an intimate relationship in order to control another person. Domestic violence includes emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Domestic violence violates the basic trust and respect which we expect from the people we love. Domestic violence knows no barriers. Battering can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, educational background or marital status. Although factors such as alcohol, a history of abuse or drugs may be involved, domestic violence is at core an issue of power and control. Batterers choose to be controlling and manipulative.

Hitting hurts. Violence and abuse destroys the body, the spirit, the family, the future.

“Violence in the home strikes at the heart of our society. Children who are abused or who live in homes where parents are battered carry the terrible lessons of violence with them into adulthood.... To tolerate family violence is to allow the seeds of violence to be sown into the next generation.”

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TACTICS OF CONTROL

There's no excuse for domestic violence.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Putting you down
- Making you feel bad about yourself
- Calling you names
- Making you think you're crazy
- Playing mind games
- Humiliating you
- Making you feel guilty

USING MALE PRIVILEGE

- Treating you like a servant
- Making all the big decisions
- Acting like the "Master of the Castle"
- Being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

- Preventing you from getting or keeping a job
- Making you ask for money
- Giving you an allowance
- Taking your money
- Not letting you know about or have access to family income

USING COERCION AND THREATS

- Making or carrying out threats to do something to hurt you
- Threatening to leave you, to commit suicide, to report you to welfare
- Making you drop charges
- Making you do illegal things
- Using intimidation
- Making you afraid by using looks, gestures, or actions
- Smashing things
- Abusing pets
- Displaying weapons

USING CHILDREN

- Making you feel guilty about the children
- Using the children to relay messages
- Using visitation to harass you
- Threatening to take the children away

USING ISOLATION

- Controlling what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read, and where you go
- Limiting your outside involvement
- Using jealousy to justify actions

MINIMIZING, DENYING, BLAMING

- Making light of the abuse and not taking your concerns about it seriously
- Saying the abuse didn't happen
- Shifting responsibility for abusive behavior
- Saying you caused it

THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
The IMPACT of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE on Children

- In a national survey of over 6,000 American families, 50% of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children.
- Children who witness violence at home display emotional and behavioral disturbances as diverse as withdrawal, low self-esteem, nightmares, self-blame and aggression against peers, family members and property.
- A comparison of delinquent and non-delinquent youth found that a history of family violence or abuse is the most significant difference between the two groups.
- Over 3 million children are at risk of exposure to parental violence each year.

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Beckley Area
Charleston Area
Elkins Area
Fairmont Area
Huntington Area
Keyser Area
Lewisburg Area
Martinsburg Area
Morgantown Area
Parkersburg Area
Welch Area
Wheeling Area
Williamson Area


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and its IMPACT on CHILDREN

There's NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
SIGNS TO LOOK FOR

EMOTIONAL ABANDONMENT
Fighting parents cannot attend to the child's emotional needs. Often, the ups and downs of abusive homes are ignored. The child feels anxiety as the tension builds. Next, the child feels fear and helplessness during the battering. Finally, the child may feel guilt for not being able to stop the batterer.

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS
Children of violence are at risk for alcohol and drug abuse. They may also develop eating or sleeping disorders, stress-related headaches, ulcers, or rashes. Family violence may result in fear driven perfectionism or over achieving. Conversely, others fail to perform well in school. Unresolved feeling of guilt and shame can last a lifetime.

CONSTANT ANXIETY
Violence in the home means being jumpy, watchful, and on guard at all times. It means learning to read your parent/abuser’s every move. Battering means learning strategies to keep out of harm’s way, and not daring to sleep until the fighting is over.

CONSTANT FEAR
Children feel panic during each battering episode. They may fear that the abuser will turn on them next. Children also fear what will happen to them if their mother is hurt or if their father is taken to jail.

ISOLATION
Violence interferes with the child’s ability to get close to his or her parents. Because trust in parents has been violated, a child of abuse is frequently unable to trust others. Closeness equals emotional or physical devastation, and the child’s deepest fear is that others will beat him, torture him, abandon him, or emotionally destroy him the way his parent(s) did.

ADULT RESPONSIBILITIES
Children may spend a lot of time trying to make peace. They may separate the fighting parents, call the police, or try to defend the abused parent. In addition, children often become caretakers, comforting the abused parent or siblings. Throughout these efforts, the child may be manipulated by the abuser and may be the only comfort and companion to the abused parent.

VIOLENCE TOWARDS OTHERS
Children in violent homes can learn to treat others as objects. They learn specific techniques to hurt and humiliate others. They learn that violence is a way to settle problems, punish family members, or gain control of a situation. Violence becomes an easy way to get what you want or to make things go the way you want.

SELF HATRED
Instead of self-love, children exposed to violence learn self-abuse and may adopt self-mutilating behaviors. Unable to externalize the vengeful child within, the child may turn the rage inward and harm him/herself. Emotional pain may be too hard to discuss so the child may harm himself/herself in hopes that the parent will notice that they are hurting.

FEELING POWERLESS
Children of abuse feel a complete sense of powerlessness. They cannot stop the abuse; they cannot fix the parents’ abusive relationship; and they cannot save the parent or siblings who are abused. Untreated, this feeling of powerlessness will continue into adulthood.

STRESS & DEPRESSION
Abused children experience long-term depression. Many experience flashbacks of violent episodes. A child also may block out violent scenes for years. Repeated exposure to violence overwhelms and exhausts the child’s nervous system. The result may be a child whose nervous system is “shot” by age four, or a child who knows how it feels like to want to die by the age of six.

EXTREME BEHAVIOR
Children who see a parent rage out of control do not learn positive ways to express their emotions. They do not have good role models for important skills such as resolving conflict, solving problems with other people, or for building close relationships. The child does not learn how to express anger without being cruel or abusive.

LACK OF BOUNDARIES
Children in violent homes grow up watching other people’s boundaries being violated. They have difficulty understanding and respecting physical and verbal boundaries. Some children do not learn that reacting to someone abusively is wrong while other children do not learn that having their own physical and verbal boundaries violated by others is wrong.
WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Beckley Area (304)255-2559
Charleston Area (304)340-3549
Elkins Area (304)636-8433
Fairmont Area (304)367-1100
Huntington Area (304)529-2382
Keyser Area (304)788-6061
Lewisburg Area (304)645-6334
Martinsburg Area (304)263-8292
Morgantown Area (304)292-5100
Parkersburg Area (304)428-2333
Welch Area (304)436-8117
Wheeling Area (304)232-2748
Williamson Area (304)235-6121

1-800-799-SAFE

STATEWIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION OFFICE
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Drive,
Suite A
Charleston, WV 25302
(304)965-3552
(304)965-3572 fax
WHAT IS A PROTECTION ORDER?
A domestic violence protection order is a civil order that can:
- Order the abuser not to hurt or harass you
- Give you temporary custody of your children
- Give you temporary possession of your residence
- Order child and spouse support
- Order the abuser to stay away from your place of employment
- Order the abuser to stay away from your children’s school
You can get a protection order against:
- Anyone related to you
- Anyone with whom you live or used to live
- Anyone with whom you are or used to be intimately involved

HOW TO GET A PROTECTION ORDER

1. Go to magistrate court and tell the clerk that you want to file a petition for a domestic violence protection order.
2. Explain your need for protection to the clerk and asked for help in completing the forms required. You do not need witnesses, an attorney or a police report to file. Filing for a protection order is free.
3. You will need to a) put your initials in front of all statements that are true; b) describe the violence your abuser threatened to do or did; c) initial what action you want the court to take.
4. After completing the forms, you will have a hearing with the judge that day. Try to explain the exact time, date and extent of your injuries and why you fear the abuser. If a temporary order is granted you will receive a copy of the order and the abuser will be served with an order to appear in court within 5 days.
5. At the second hearing, the magistrate will listen and question both you and the abuser. Be prepared to tell the judge when, where and with what you were beaten and why you are afraid of the abuser. If you have any witnesses take them to court with you. The judge will then decide whether to issue a final protection order that will last for either 90 or 180 days.
6. Keep a certified copy of the protection order with you at all times. A valid protection order is effective in every county in West Virginia and every state in the United States.

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW
If the abuser breaks the protection order, call the police and go back to magistrate court to file a contempt charge.

The police can file a charge of domestic assault (threats or attempt of physical abuse) or domestic battery (actual physical contact). A police officer can file these charges when probable cause exists that the crime of domestic battery or domestic assault occurred. The police officer need not witness the crime.

A form (No. SCA-M1237) can be filled out to extend the order if you file for divorce before the order expires. File this form in magistrate court.

For further information, help in filling out the forms, or someone to go with you to magistrate court call the domestic violence program nearest you.

THERE'S
No EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS YOU MAY HAVE

* If you are elderly and abused, you may hope that your abusive spouse/care giver may change.

* If you are elderly and abused, you may profess love for your spouse/care giver while feeling fear, shame and humiliation.

* If you are have endured years of abuse, you may believe that it is impossible to leave the abusive situation. You cannot imagine surviving outside of the family.

* If you have endured years of abuse from a spouse/care giver, you may minimize your own need for safety.

* You may have been brought up to believe that seeking help to end the violence is a sign of weakness.

* If you are elderly and abused, you may be dependent on others to provide physical care, and may fear being placed in a nursing care facility if you report the violence.

* If you are elderly and battered, you are not alone. You can get the help you deserve.

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Beckley Area
Charleston Area
Elkins Area
Fairmont Area
Huntington Area
Keyser Area
Lewisburg Area
Martinsburg Area
Parkersburg Area
Welch Area
Wheeling Area
Williamson Area

WEST VIRGINIA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATEWIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Drive Suite A
Charleston, WV 25302
(304)965-3552
(304)965-3572 fax

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and ELMER AND ABUSE

There's no EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
Elder Abuse

Physical Abuse

Any physical pain or injury which is willfully inflicted upon an elder by a person who has care or custody of, or who stands in a position of trust with that elder, constitutes physical abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, direct beatings, sexual assault, unreasonable physical restraint, and prolonged deprivation of food or water.

Financial Abuse

Any theft or misuse of an elder’s money or property, by a person in a position of trust with an elder, constitutes financial abuse.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse

The willful infliction of mental suffering, by a person in a position of trust with an elder, constitutes psychological/ emotional abuses. Examples of such abuse are: verbal assaults, threats, instilling fear, humiliation, intimidation, or isolation of an elder.

Neglect

The failure of any person having the care or custody of an elder to provide that degree of care which a reasonable person in a like position would provide constitutes neglect. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Failure to assist in personal hygiene or the provision of clothing for an elder.
- Failure to provide medical care for the physical and mental health needs of an elder. This does not include instances in which an elder refuses treatment.
- Failure to protect an elder from health and safety hazards.

Self-Neglect

Failure to provide for self through inattention or dissipation. The identification of this type of case depends on assessing the elder’s ability to choose a lifestyle versus a recent change in the elder’s ability to manage.

Abandonment

Abandonment constitutes the desertion or willful forsaking of an elder by any person having the care and custody of that elder, under circumstances in which a reasonable person would continue to provide care of custody.

Myths and Facts of Elder Abuse

Myth: Battering is younger person’s problem.

Fact: Older persons are battered, too. Two-thirds of elder domestic abuse and neglect victims are women. More than half of all reported elder abuse is caused by family members—children (33%), spouses (15%), and other relatives (13%).

Myth: Older persons are trapped by economic circumstances to remain in abusive situations.

Fact: The vast majority of older persons using domestic abuse services have made or are working now on changes in their relationships and themselves. They are creative, joyful and energetic despite the ravages of abuse on their bodies, minds and hearts.

Myth: Older persons who have endured decades of violence cannot be expected to change.

Fact: Domestic violence programs which directly address the issue of battered elderly have discovered that most older persons are eager to learn and happy to change when their goal is to live free from violence and abuse.

If You Are Elderly and Battered

- You are not responsible for the violence. Your spouse or care giver may tell you it is your fault, but the abuser is the only one responsible for the choice to batter.
- You have the right to a safe, healthy relationship and to have your own life, free of violence.
- You are not alone. There is support available. You can get help.

You can protect your safety by:

- Establishing contacts with friends and family so you have a place to go in an emergency.
- Developing a safety plan in case you need to leave quickly.
- Consider obtaining a restraining order to protect yourself.

There’s No Excuse for Domestic Violence
MYTH
Battering and abuse do not exist in lesbian and gay communities.

FACT
Domestic violence does exist in lesbian and gay communities; it is not a problem limited to heterosexual relationships. Despite fear and community denial, more and more lesbians and gay men are breaking silence and speaking out about violence and abuse in their relationships.

MYTH
In lesbian and gay relationships, the problem is “mutual battering” and not domestic violence.

FACT
Domestic violence is an issue of power and control. A survivor’s needs are subordinated and behavior is changed in order to accommodate or anticipate the abuser’s demands. This unequal power relationship distinguishes battering from fighting. In an abusive relationship, fighting back is self-defense not “mutual battering.”

MYTH
Lesbian and gay men can easily leave an abusive or violent relationship.

FACT
Battering relationships are rarely only violent or abusive. Love, caring and remorse are often part of the cyclical pattern of abuse. This can leave a survivor feeling emotionally confused and ambivalent about what to do. Shame, isolation and fear can make leaving seem impossible.

WEST VIRGINIA LICENSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Beckley Area
Elkins Area
Fairmont Area
Huntington Area
Keyser Area
Lewisburg Area
Martinsburg Area
Morgantown Area
Parkersburg Area
Welch Area
Wheeling Area
Williamson Area

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(304)788-6061
(304)645-6334
(304)263-8292
(304)292-5100
(304)428-2333
(304)436-8117
(304)232-0511
(304)235-6121

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE
1-800-799-SAFE

STATE WIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION OFFICE
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Drive Suite A
Charleston, WV 25302
(304)965-3552
(304)965-3572 fax

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN LESBIAN AND GAY RELATIONSHIPS

There's NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior used to maintain power and control in a relationship. Lesbians and gays can be battered or abused by a lover, ex-lover, former spouse, roommate or family member.

BREAK THE SILENCE

In West Virginia domestic violence is a crime that will no longer be tolerated or excused. While looking for solutions to end the violence keep these things in mind:
- No one has the right to batter or abuse you.
- You are not responsible for the violence or abuse perpetrated against you.
- Confide in a trusted friend or family member.
- Contact the domestic violence program nearest you for support, safety and advocacy.
- Legal protections exist for battered lesbians and gay men in West Virginia. You have the right to file for an Order of Protection in the magistrate court of any county.

BUILD SAFE COMMUNITIES

Family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and concerned citizens are key to increasing public awareness about domestic violence and to creating communities that are safer for all people.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:
- Dispel the myths of lesbian and gay battering.
- Become familiar with local and statewide domestic violence services.
- Volunteer time, donate services or make a financial contribution to a domestic violence program.
- Learn about homophobia and its impact in the lives of us all, gay as well as straight.
- Consider becoming a member of the Board of Directors of a local domestic violence program.
- Support the WV Human Rights Commission’s statewide campaign, “Not in Our State.”
- Keep in mind the ancient African proverb that still holds true today: “The destruction of a nation begins in the homes of its people.

DEVLOP A SAFETY PLAN

- Plan a strategy ahead of time in case you have to leave quickly.
- Establish contacts with family and friends; know where you can go in an emergency.
- Have essential papers with you or easily accessible.
- Get information on your legal rights.

TACTICS OF CONTROL

PHYSICAL ABUSE:
- Hitting, pushing, choking, slapping, burning, punching, kicking

ISOLATION:
- Controlling personal and social contacts, access to information, and participation in groups and organizations

EMOTIONAL ABUSE:
- Constantly criticizing, ridiculing, trying to humiliate or degrade, lying, undermining self-esteem

THREATS:
- Threatening physical harm to you, your children, family or friends, threatening to make reports to authorities in order to jeopardize child custody, immigration or legal status

HETEROSEXIST INTIMIDATION:
- Threatening to reveal lesbian or gay identity to family, neighbors, employers, ex-spouses and/or city, state or federal authorities

ECONOMIC ABUSE:
- Controlling resources, fostering dependence, stealing money, running up debt

SEXUAL ABUSE:
- Forcing sex or specific sexual acts, assaulting “sexual parts” of partner, withholding sex, criticizing sexual performance in order to humiliate

PROPERTY DESTRUCTION:
- Destroying mementos and cherished items, hurting pets
There's a SAFER FAMILY 1-800-799-SAFE

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE

Fax: 304-555-3552

According to the report, the hotline received over 1 million calls in 2020. More information can be found at their website: www.thelifehotline.com
WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Learn about domestic violence.
Teach children that violence is NOT an acceptable way to resolve conflict.
Volunteer your time, talent and skills at a domestic violence program near you.
October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Participate in local and statewide activities.
Help organize a fundraiser or awareness activity for the local domestic violence program.
Offer to serve on the Board of Directors of a domestic violence program.
Memorize the National Domestic Violence Hotline number:

1 800 799 SAFE

Know what your local schools are teaching about family violence issues.
Use local media as a means of getting the word out that domestic violence is a crime and will not be tolerated in your community.
Encourage employers throughout the community to have domestic violence materials and resources available for workers.

There's NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
For a Safer State of Family

There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence
INTRODUCTION

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is happy to share with you during this month the enclosed materials related to one of the serious issues impacting West Virginia families today: domestic violence. As services to victims/survivors of family violence have expanded throughout the state a core truth has emerged. Family violence is a problem that cannot be resolved without the collaborative efforts of communities, agencies, professionals, and individuals.

The materials contained in this informational booklet are intended to give you a source for better understanding the dynamics of family violence, the scope of this problem, the various areas impacted by this betrayal of trust and relationship, and resources for your professional and personal use. We recognize the fact that written materials, no matter how effective in themselves, have no life until they are used. We trust that you will share this information with your colleagues and we encourage you to use, reproduce, or adapt this information as needed.

Although these materials are not copyrighted, we ask that when reproducing them you acknowledge their source as the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. We also invite your comments on how we can improve our efforts to prevent domestic violence through the distribution of materials such as these. Finally, we acknowledge the essential contributions of our partners in producing this packet and express publicly our gratitude to the following:

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation
The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation
The WV Commission on National and Community Service AmeriCorps Program
Leigh Taylor, Graphic Artist

For further information contact:
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Elk Office Center, 4710 Chimney Drive, Suite A
Charleston, WV 25302
Phone: 304-965-3552
Fax: 304-965-3572
E-mail: dreese@WNPB.WVNET.edu
sjulian@WNPB.WVNET.edu

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FACTS AND STATISTICS


■ A woman is battered every 15 seconds in the U.S. (FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1991.)

■ Every year between 2 and 4 million American women are battered by their husbands or boyfriends. (Novello, Antonia C. “From the Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service, A Medical Response to Domestic Violence,” Journal of the American Medical Association, June 17, 1992.)

■ At least 25% of domestic violence victims are pregnant when beaten. (Helton, A., McFarlane, J. and Anderson, E. Prevention of Battering During Pregnancy: Focus on Behavioral Change, Public Health Nursing, Vol. 4 (3), September 1987.)


■ Nearly half of all incidents of domestic violence against women discovered in the National Crime Survey (48%) were not reported to police. (Langan, P.A. and Innes, C.A. Preventing Domestic Violence Against Women. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1986.)


■ Violent youth are four times more likely to come from homes in which their fathers beat their mothers than are nonviolent youth. (Lewis, Dorothy, et. al.”Homicidally Aggressive Young Children: Neuropsychiatric and Experiential Corre-
Domestic violence is repetitive in nature: about one in five women victimized by her spouse or ex-spouse reported that she had been a victim of a series of at least three assaults in the last six months. (Zawitz, M., et al. Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims: The National Crime Victimization Survey, 1973-92. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1993.)

Women are most likely to be murdered when attempting to report abuse or to leave an abusive relationship. (Browne, A. When Battered Women Kill. New York: Free Press, 1987.)

Four women are killed every day in America by a husband or boyfriend. (Stout, Karen. "Intimate Femicide: A National Demographic Overview," Violence Update, Vol. 1 (6), February 1991.)

In West Virginia, a domestic homicide occurs every 10 days. (Analysis of data from Uniform Crime Reports, WV Department of Public Safety, 1993-1994.)

Forty-two percent of murdered women are killed by their intimate male partners. (Data from FBI's 1988-91 Uniform Crime Reports. Analysis by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Institute for Behavioral Science at the University of Colorado.)

Sixty-six percent of all violent crimes committed against women are committed by husbands, boyfriends or someone else known to the victim. (U.S. Justice Department.)

Approximately 2,000 American women die of abuse each year. (The Commonwealth Fund 93 and the Family Violence Prevention Fund.)

Fourteen percent of American women acknowledge having been violently abused by a husband or partner. (The Commonwealth Fund 93 and the Family Violence Prevention Fund.)

Of husbands who physically abuse their wives 47% do so three or more times a year. (The Commonwealth Fund 93 and the Family Violence Prevention Fund.)

Fourteen percent of women who have ever been married report having been raped by their current or former husbands. (The Commonwealth Fund 93 and the Family Violence Prevention Fund.)

Rape is a significant form of abuse in 54% of marriages. (The Commonwealth Fund 93 and the Family Violence Prevention Fund.)

Fifteen percent of all emergency department visits by women can be attributed to domestic violence. (American Medical Association.)

Twenty-eight percent of women seen in ambulatory clinics have been battered at some time during their lives. (American Medical Association.)

Physically abused women account for 25% of all women who attempt suicide. (American Medical Association.)

Fifty percent of mothers of abused children are abused themselves by the perpetrator. (American Medical Association.)

Battered women seek medical attention for injuries sustained as a consequence of domestic violence significantly more often after separation than during cohabitation; about 75% of the visits to emergency rooms by battered women occur after separation. (Stark and Flicraft, 1988.)

About 75% of the calls to law enforcement for intervention and assistance in domestic violence incidents occur after separation from beaters. One study revealed that half of the homicides of female spouses and partners were committed by men after the couple separated. (Barbara Hart, Remarks to the Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, April 1992.)

There are 1,500 shelters for battered women in the United States. There are 3,800 animal shelters. (Schneider, 1990.)

Each year, medical expenses related to domestic violence total at least $3 to $5 billion. Businesses forfeit another $100 million in lost wages, sick leave, absenteeism and non-productivity. (Domestic Violence for Health Care Providers, 3rd Edition. Colorado Domestic Violence Coalition, 1991.)

It is estimated that 25% of workplace problems such as absenteeism, lower productivity, turnover and excessive use of medical benefits are due to family violence. (Employee Assistance Providers/MN.)
WHAT ARE THE STATISTICS FOR WEST VIRGINIA?

WEST VIRGINIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
SERVICES SUMMARY

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Data trends during the past five years indicate a steady provision of residential emergency services, with children being the larger proportion of the residential service group. The data also indicates a steady rise in services provided to persons not needing emergency shelter. These services include various forms of advocacy, counseling, information and referral, social services assistance, individual and group support. Increases in services to those not seeking shelter may reflect an increase in the number of staffed outreach offices and volunteers. Initial or hotline contacts have increased by 59 percent since 1992, possibly reflecting the impact of community prevention education. The numbers of protection orders filed with assistance from domestic violence programs has also risen significantly. (This number is only a portion of the total number of orders filed each year.) The average number of families provided with residential services annually during the past five years has been 1,811. An average of 11,847 families not needing emergency shelter have received other domestic violence services through the programs and outreach centers.

DOMESTIC HOMICIDE IN WEST VIRGINIA:
WV UNIFORM CRIME REPORT

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The number of domestic related homicides as related to the total number of murders in WV has remained at about one-third. This number reflects the deaths of family members or partners only; it does not include others who were killed in relation to the do-
domestic homicide, e.g. a friend or non-family member, nor does it include suicide of a perpetrator after committing homicide of family member(s). Homicide/suicide incidents such as these have occurred several times during the past five years.

| WEST VIRGINIA COALITION  |
| AGAINST DOMESTIC COMMUNITY SERVICES |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Count | 503  | 683  | 679  | 955  | 876  |
| Men  | 18,955 | 20,025 | 21,580 | 29,392 | 32,745 |
| Women | 41,735 | 46,395 | 52,213 | 53,839 | 51,990 |
| Total | $275,562 | $387,807 | $485,586 | $610,120 | $1,019,191 |

The trend in community/school presentations reveals a steady commitment on the part of domestic violence programs to community educational efforts. A noticeable increase in these activities in 1995 may reflect the increase in numbers of outreach staff or AmeriCorps Members working in West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence programs. The number of hours donated by community volunteers has steadily risen. Each volunteer service hour has a monetary value of at least five dollars. This means that in 1996, volunteers provided more than $250,000 worth of services. The value of community donations of goods also has increased steadily, nearly quadrupling in five years, and bringing the value of non-cash community support to over one and a quarter million dollars.

- Isn’t domestic violence mostly a low-income or minority issue?

  Domestic violence occurs among all sectors of society. It happens to people of all racial, economic, and religious groups. For example, police in the mostly white, upper-class Washington, D.C., suburb of Montgomery County, Maryland, received as many domestic disturbance calls as were received in the same period in Harlem, New York City. However, low-income battered women are more likely to seek assistance from public agencies, such as shelters and hospital emergency rooms, because they have fewer private resources than middle- and upper-income women. They are therefore more likely to be counted in official reporting statistics. In at least 90% of incidents of adult battering, the victim is a female battered by a male partner. Women of every kind have been battered at the hands of doctors, lawyers, judges, police professionals, clerics, teachers, coal miners, etc. Middle and upper-class women often have other options open to them, like a few days away in a hotel, and are less likely to seek assistance from public agencies and shelters. Many women are afraid of damaging their husband’s career or reputation and are pressured to “keep up appearances” at all costs, especially for the sake of the children. Others may have the skills and resources that give them access to financial independence, making them less dependent on social service agencies, and less likely to be evident in statistics involving battering compiled by service agencies.
MYTH #1:
Battering overstates the case. Few women are beaten, although a lot of them may get slapped around a little now and then.

Some women do get slapped or hit and leave the violent situation immediately. But most often battering escalates once it starts. Battering brutally violates a woman’s rights over her body and her life. It can involve severe violence or the threat of violence, physical or mental torture, use of weapons, and sexual assault. It is not an isolated act but a pattern of power and control over another. Men who batter usually deny their behavior to themselves and to others. Battering may escalate into murder. In a Kansas study, 85% of domestic homicides involved prior police summons; in 50% of these cases police had been called five times before the murder happened. One third of all homicides in WV during the past six years have been domestic homicides. (WVUCR Report)

MYTH #2:
Battering is a family matter.

No act which can leave another permanently injured physically or mentally or which can lead to death is a “family matter.” Assault is assault; rape is rape; murder is murder regardless of the relationship between people. These are criminal acts. Traditionally women have been encouraged by family, clergy, and other “professionals” to remain in violent homes in order to preserve the family unit. Recently people have begun to recognize that violence within the family is unjustifiable and inherently destructive.

MYTH #3:
Battering happens only in “problem” families.

To identify a “problem” family assumes that most families are “normal.” This ignores the statistics on woman abuse. It also ignores the fact that our society has tolerated, even encouraged, violence against women on a wide-scale basis through media images of women as victims, through the reinforcement of male privilege, and through the refusal to treat violence against women as any other violent crime. Men were legally able to use the “rule of thumb” (no weapon larger than the diameter of the thumb) on their wives until this century and able to exercise marital rape without legal consequences until 1984 in WV.

WV acknowledged domestic battering as a crime in the Family Protection Act of 1992, and legislated proarrest in 1994. Battering cuts across all lines: cultural, social, economic, religious, educational, ethnic, etc. The myth that only “problem” families experience violence encourages police, court personnel, and social services workers to explain away violence by finding “problems” such as drug or alcohol abuse, stress, or dysfunctional background, all of which may be factors in abusive situations but do not actually cause the abuse. The reality is that men who are abusive when under the influence of drugs or alcohol also batter when they are sober and rational.

MYTH #4:
Battering occurs only in low-income and working class families.

Women of every kind have been battered at the hands of doctors, lawyers, judges, police professionals, clerics, teachers, coal miners, etc. Middle and upper class women often have many options open to them and are less likely to seek assistance from public agen-
cies and shelters. Many middle class women are also afraid of damaging their husband’s career or reputation and are pressured to “keep up appearances” at all costs, especially for the sake of the children. Others may have the skills and resources that give them access to financial independence, making them less dependent on social service agencies, and less likely to be evident in statistics involving battering compiled by service agencies.

**MYTH #5:**

Battered women constitute a particular and easily definable group.

The “battered woman” stereotype is that of a passive woman between 20 and 35 years old who is unemployed, has two or more children, and lives with an alcoholic husband. In WV she is from “up a holler,” has had little education, and is lacking in most skills. The facts indicate, however, that women are as likely to be battered as they are to be raped. They may be elderly, teenaged, professionals or laborers. They fit no stereotype. So too there is no single type of relationship. “Wife abuse” distorts the truth. Women are battered by male spouses, male or female lovers, relatives, neighbors; prostitutes are beaten by their pimps or customers who get sick gratification from violence. Teen battering and date rape are as possible as older women being battered by sons or other younger relatives.

**MYTH #6:**

She asked for it.

Of all the myths this is the most degrading and insensitive, yet many battered women are accused of deserving or asking for abuse, often from those to whom they turn for help: clergy, police, the courts, social workers, relatives. They are asked what they did to provoke the violence and to change their behavior in order to avoid abuse.

They are depicted as wanting to be physically abused and dominated and therefore the cause of the violence. Those who hold this theory call a woman masochistic when she attempts to escape a violent man and ignore the danger that women face when they attempt to leave an abusive situation.

**MYTH #7:**

It can’t really be that bad or she would leave.

The assumption that women can easily leave abusive situations fails to look at reality. Many women are economically dependent and the primary caretaker of the children. Until shelters came into existence in the late 1970’s there were few places a woman and her children could go for refuge and assistance. Even if a woman finds emergency shelter, it is just that: what about the long range implications of her leaving for herself and her children? Furthermore, her feelings about the relationship and her fear must be dealt with. If she gets a job, she will probably earn less than the man she left. Day care is expensive if it is available at all. Finally, she must face the loneliness of leaving old connections with family and friends who encourage her to stay for the sake of the children.

**MYTH #8:**

There is a pattern to violence.

Many professionals assert that there is a pattern to violence: boys from violent homes grow up to be batterers; girls, to be victims. While there is truth to the assertion that environment and learning are major factors in development, this theory is deterministic. Many men from violent homes do not batter. Many women from nonviolent homes are battered. Another facet of this theory asserts that all women who are bat-
tered in turn batter their children, although no evidence exists to support this belief. What is important in the analysis of violence is to separate the cause of violence - a pattern of power and control - from factors that can be involved in abuse.

**SOME WAYS**

in which myths are expressed....

- He'll stop when we're married.
- The children come first.
- I made him do it.
- She likes it.
- She deserves it.
- You must be crazy/sick.
- Once a batterer always a batterer.
- It is only a domestic dispute.
- It is a family matter.
- Batterers are "losers" and can't cope.
- He was on drugs.
- He was drank.
- They are poor.
- She is black.
- He doesn't have a job or an education.
- I can't live without him.
- Faith in God will make things right.
- He will change.
- I can change him.
- If I change, he will.
- It will get better because he said he was sorry.
- He grew up in a bad home.
- She likes being controlled.
- I have the right to control her.
- My home is my castle.
- Families must stay together.

- Marriage counseling will work.
- He always abuses.
- They do not love one another.
- Words will never hurt.
- Threats are not violent.
- She can leave anytime she wants.
- Divorce will solve the problem.
- Children need a father.
- It will stop when I learn to be a better wife/mother/partner.
- This is the way life is.
- It happens in every home.
DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior used by one person in order to maintain power and control in a relationship. Batterers repeatedly subject their victims to any forceful physical or psychological behavior in order to coerce them to do something batterers want them to do without regard to the victims' rights or well-being.

Domestic violence cuts across all age groups and social classes. It also goes beyond physical abuse. It includes emotional abuse (threats, isolation, extreme jealousy, and humiliation) and sexual abuse. Whenever a woman is placed in physical danger or controlled by threat or use of physical force, she has been abused. The risk for abuse is greatest when a woman is separated from supportive networks.

"Violence in the home strikes at the heart of our society. Children who are abused or who live in homes where parents are battered carry the terrible lessons of violence with them into adulthood...To tolerate family violence is to allow the seeds of violence to be sown into the next generation."(U.S. Department of Justice, Attorney General's Task Force on Family Violence, Washington, D.C., 1984)

PRACTICES OF CONTROL

Using Emotional Abuse
- Putting a partner down
- Making a partner feel bad about herself
- Calling a partner names
- Playing mind games
- Humiliating one's partner
- Making a partner feel guilty

Using Male Privilege
- Treating a woman like a servant
- Making all the big decisions
- Acting like the "Master of the Castle"
- Being the one to define men's and women's roles

Using Economic Abuse
- Preventing a partner from getting or keeping a job
- Making a partner ask for money
- Giving a partner an allowance
- Taking a partner's money
- Not letting a partner know about or have access to family income

Using Coercion and Threats
- Making or carrying out threats to do something to hurt one's partner
- Threatening to leave a partner, to commit suicide, to report a partner to welfare
- Making a partner drop charges
- Making a partner do illegal things
**The Cycle of Violence**

Developed by Dr. Lenore Walker

Battering is often depicted in cyclic form with three phases of abuse. A more accurate depiction is that of a spiral with a broad base moving into smaller circles. Incidents of battering often escalate in frequency and severity as battering continues; ultimately, battering can lead to murder, suicide, or both.

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**Using Intimidation**
- Making a partner afraid by using looks, gestures, or actions
- Smashing things
- Abusing pets
- Displaying weapons

**Using Children**
- Making a partner feel guilty about the children
- Using the children to relay messages
- Using visitation to harass a partner
- Threatening to take the children away

**Using Isolation**
- Controlling what a partner does, who a partner sees and talks to, what that partner reads, and where the partner goes
- Limiting a partner's outside involvement
- Using jealousy to justify actions

**Minimizing, Denying, Blaming**
- Making light of the abuse and not taking a partner's concerns about it seriously
- Saying the abuse didn’t happen
- Shifting responsibility for abusive behavior
- Saying one's partner caused the abuse

There's no excuse for domestic violence.
**PHASE ONE:**

Tension Building

During this phase the victim senses an edginess in her partner and tries to respond with compliance and nurturing. Although battering crosses gender lines, statistics revealed that in at least 90% of incidents of adult battering the victim is a female battered by a male partner. She will try to cover up tension with family and friends. She will try to cope by denying her feelings of rejection and anger, to make excuses, to meet the expectations of her partner. She will often try to compromise, to keep the peace, to accept blame for any situation. The perpetrator knows that his behavior is wrong but fears rejection and loss of control. She reinforces his fear by withdrawing to avoid setting him off. He gets increasingly jealous and verbally abusive. She is constantly “walking on eggshells.”

**PHASE TWO:**

Battering

The perpetrator may not want to injure his partner so much as to teach her a lesson and support his need to be in control. She may feel the need to release anger and fight back. She may feel unable to cope with terror, anxiety, and anger and push to get the inevitable over with. He may batter her even after she is severely injured. Some women report that they simply wait it out, disassociate from their bodies and feel nothing. She will often deny the severity of her injuries to soothe her partner and be assured that this violent phase ends.

**PHASE THREE:**

Reconciliation or Honeymoon

Both welcome this stage. He is extremely sorry, loving, kind. He gives her candy, flowers, cards protesting his sorrow and love. He asserts his dependence upon her: he needs her and would fall apart without her support. She ends up feeling responsible for his action and for her victimization. He begs forgiveness, knowing that she has been taught a lesson. He believes he can control himself and will never again hurt the person he loves. He promises to change, convincing her and everyone else (including himself) that he means it. She wants to believe him, to rebound to the person she loves. Her hope in the man she loves is reborn. She can become angry if others attack her lover and strongly defend this “changed and repentant person.” They rebound in warmth and intimacy. (Often intervention agents arrive at this phase and are confused by the victim’s emotions.)

Unless intervention occurs the cycle repeats itself in a variety of forms; the one constant seems to be an increase in frequency and severity over time.

In West Virginia this pattern of abuse has resulted in a domestic homicide rate equal to one-third of all state murders. (This figure does not include suicide of the perpetrator or murder of non-intimates who happen to be involved.)
REASONS WHY VICTIMS STAY IN A BATTERING RELATIONSHIP

1. Low Self-Esteem: Batterers often begin psychological abuse before the physical violence. Excessive criticism, extreme jealousy, name-calling, withholding of compliments, and blaming the victim for all of the couple’s problems contribute to the victim feeling incompetent. Many battered women believe they are failures as wives, mothers, and women because they do not know how to stop the abuse.

2. Promises of Change: After the violence, many batterers exhibit loving, contrite behavior, promising that it will never happen again. This reinforces the victim’s hope that the abuse really will stop and belief that the batterer is sincere and wants to maintain the relationship. For the abuser, promises are often simply one more tactic to prolong the misuse of power and control.

3. Hope: Sociology reveals that women are often socialized to be forgiving, to give one more chance, and have faith that relationships can be salvaged. When the batterer promises the abuse will stop, the victim has renewed hope that this time he means it. Especially without viable options for escape, hope can help the victim cope.

4. The Power, Influence or Wealth of the Batterer: Victims whose batterers are powerful politicians, community leaders, gang members, law enforcement or corrections officers, judges, lawyers, clergy, etc. experience added risk when attempting to leave. The victim has likely seen the deference afforded such perpetrators, and fears that even if there is evidence of the abuse, no one will be willing to protect her at the expense of taking on the batterer.

5. Denial and Minimization: Often the pattern of violence begins with slapping, hitting and shoving, which can be viewed by the victim and batterer as aberrant behavior. The batterer usually has ready explanations, which the victim wants to believe. As the violence becomes more severe, it can be dangerous for the victim to contradict the batterer’s assertions that the abuse was unintentional. Until others treat the violence as the crime that it is, victims cannot be expected to recognize and respond to it.

6. Fear: Victims’ fears of reprisal for calling the police, going to court or leaving are not unfounded. Dr. Angela Browne documents that more battered women are killed in the process of fleeing the abuse than at any other time. Many batterers begin stalking and abusing their victims after separation in an attempt to coerce them back into the relationship.

7. Isolation: Most batterers systematically destroy the victim’s friendships and family ties. Eventually the batterer might forbid the victim to see family and friends, but early on in the relationship such control is exerted through manipulation. Batterers may intentionally abuse the victim in front of friends since most people feel uncomfortable around family conflict. The resulting isolation can leave the victim vulnerable to the batterer’s psychological abuse since she has no other reality checks by which to measure her mistreatment.

8. Prior Lack of Intervention by Authorities: In the past the victim may have attempted to obtain help from friends, police and/or the courts, to no avail. Based on these inadequate responses, which may have further endangered her, the victim may now assume that no one will treat the abuse seriously.

9. Lack of Emergency Shelter Space: While the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports there are almost 1,500 shelters for abuse victims and their children, the American Humane Society
says there are almost four thousand animal shelters. While in no way advocating for a decrease in funding for the animal shelters, it is, nonetheless, instructive to identify the disparity between how we treat homeless animals and how we treat homeless battered women and their children. West Virginia should be proud of its determination to not turn away victims seeking help and to have outreach services in every county.

Lack of Affordable Housing: The Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that most public housing authorities have a minimum of a three-year waiting list and that almost all communities lack sufficient stock of affordable housing. The inability to provide a home for herself and her children is a key obstacle to a victim’s ability to become self-sufficient, and thus, stay away from the batterer.

Lack of Trained Advocates and Legal Counsel: A skilled advocate or attorney can help the victim navigate the complex legal system, whether to obtain a protection order or keep custody of her children. For low- and middle-income victims there are a limited number of advocates or lawyers available to assist them.

Lack of Financial Resources: Given that there is frequently no work or affordable child care available, TANF (formerly AFDC/welfare) becomes the only available option, at least on any emergency basis. However, West Virginia provides just $253 a month plus food stamps for a family of three. Compounding the problem is the difficulty most battered mothers have in obtaining child support payments. The highest predictor of whether a battered woman can permanently leave her abuser is economic resources.

Wanting to Keep the Family Together: The victim may believe that the children will benefit from having their parents together, especially if she can figure out how to stop the abuse. Family, friends, judges and child protection agencies continu-

ally give the message that preservation of the family is paramount.

Religious Beliefs or Advice: Many abuse victims mistakenly believe that their religion dictates that they remain with the batterer, regardless of the danger. Increasingly, most denominations are trying to educate their priests, rabbis and ministers to provide safety planning for members who are being abused, instead of simply telling them to try harder to please the batterer.

Alcohol or Substance Abuse: Some adult domestic violence victims may self-medicate as a coping mechanism, possibly because they are also child incest or abuse survivors. Other victims' physicians have routinely prescribed tranquilizers and/or anti-depressants, while failing to provide safety planning and resource information. Too often substance abuse treatment providers focus only on the addiction, never asking about the victim’s current safety or the origins of the substance abuse.

Love: While victims report they want the violence to stop, many say they do want the relationship to continue, in part because they still love their partners. Keeping in mind that most batterers are not abusive all the time, and, in fact, can be charming and promise it will never happen again, it is not so surprising that victims can continue caring for the abuser.

Prior Conflict With the Law/ Own Record: Sometimes the victim has a criminal record, usually for substance abuse or property crimes, such as writing bad checks or shoplifting. The victim believes that if she attempts to get a protection order or testify at trial, her abuser will alert the authorities and she will end up in jail.

Added Obstacles For Underserved Victims: Additional obstacles can seem insurmountable for those who are elders, teens, disabled, of color, immigrants and refugees, lesbian, gay, prostitutes, mentally ill, drug addicted, alcoholic, non-English speak-
Fear of Change: Psychologists tell us that most people are averse to change; that is, even when they know that change would greatly improve their situation, it is still difficult to get to the action phase. Change is difficult for all of us, and the more dramatic the change, the harder it is to get through the necessary stages to action. Victims often leave many times before they can make a final break.

THE LETHALITY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Without effective early intervention, domestic violence can escalate in severity and lead to death. When domestic violence results in homicide, it is often a reflection of the community’s failure to recognize the severity and potential lethality of the problem, and to address its critical role in intervention.

SEPARATION VIOLENCE

Many, perhaps most, people believe that battered women will be safe once they separate from the batterer. They also believe that women are free to leave abusers at any time. However, leaving does not usually put an end to the violence. Batterers may, in fact, escalate their violence to coerce a battered woman into reconciliation or to retaliate for the battered woman’s perceived rejection or abandonment of the batterer. Men who believe they are entitled to relationship with battered women or that they “own” their female partner view women’s departure as an ultimate betrayal which justifies retaliation. (Saunders & Browne, 1990; Dutton, 1988; Bernard et al, 1982)

Although leaving may be dangerous, it does not mean that the battered woman should stay. Cohabitating with the batterer is highly dangerous. Violence usually increases in frequency and severity over time. A batterer may engage in preemptive strikes, fearing abandonment or anticipating separation even before the battered woman reaches a decision to leave. Although leaving may pose additional hazards, at least in the short run, the research data and the experience of advocates for battered women demonstrate that ultimately a battered woman can best achieve safety and freedom apart from the batterer.
WHEN BATTERED WOMEN ARE KILLED

When battered women are killed by their abusers, it frequently occurs after they have been separated from them or have taken other action to end the relationship. Since society continues to question why women remain in abusive relationships, it is essential to consider how dangerous and difficult it often is for battered women to leave abusive partners. Many women stay because of a reasonable fear that they will suffer injury or death if they attempt to end the relationship.

Unfortunately, when batterers murder their partners these tragedies are usually portrayed as unintentional “crimes of passion” caused by a man’s intense love for the woman and inability to live without her. Murder is, however, the ultimate expression of the batterer’s need to control the woman’s behavior.

Available statistics present a chilling picture of the potential lethality of male violence against female partners:

■ FBI data indicate that 30% of female homicide victims are killed by their husbands or boyfriends. This translates into the death of four women per day at the hands of male partners.
■ In West Virginia, one third of all homicides are domestic violence related. (Uniform Crime Reports, WV State Police, 1989 - 1995)

BATTERED WOMEN WHO KILL

Research shows that when women kill it is likely to be in self-defense. Battered women who resort to homicide have often tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to obtain protection from their abusers. If the community fails to help ensure battered women’s safety through law enforcement and other systems, it runs the risk that lives will be lost. Leaving will require strategic planning and legal intervention to avert separation violence and to safeguard victims and their children. Law enforcement, and battered women's advocates must work in partnership to assure that the separation process is safeguarded against batterer violence.

EVIDENCE OF THE GRAVITY OF SEPARATION VIOLENCE IS OVERWHELMING.

Up to 3/4 of domestic assaults reported to law enforcement agencies were inflicted after the couple separated. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1983) One study reveals that 73% of the battered women seeking emergency medical services sustained injuries after leaving the batterer. (Starks et al, 1981) Women are most likely to be murdered when attempting to report abuse or to leave an abusive relationship. (Sonkin et al, 1985; Browne.)
SIGN TO LOOK FOR IN A BATTERING PERSONALITY

JEALOUSY:

At the beginning of a relationship, an abuser will often say that jealousy is a sign of love. Jealousy has nothing to do with love. It is a sign of insecurity and possessiveness. At first the attention is experienced as a sign of love. Then it becomes a tactic of control. The abuser controls who a person talks to and spends time with - including family, friends, and children. As jealousy progresses, the abuser may call frequently during the day or drop by unexpectedly to check on the partner.

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR:

At first the batterer will say that his or her behavior is "for your safety," because "you need to use time well," or "you need to make good decisions." The abuser will be angry if the partner is late coming back from the store or an appointment. If the partner had to break a date, he or she will be questioned closely about where they went, and to whom they talked.

QUICK INVOLVEMENT:

Many battered victims dated or knew their abusers for less than six months before they were engaged or living together. The batterer comes on like a whirlwind, saying "You're the only person I could ever talk to," or "I've never felt loved like this by anyone." The batterer desperately needs someone and will pressure another to make a commitment. The batterer may say things will be better if the other makes that commitment. The truth is it will not make things better; the abuse will get even worse.

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:

The batterer is very dependent on the partner for all needs. He or she is expected to be the perfect girlfriend/boyfriend, wife/husband, lover, or friend. The abuser will say things like, "If you love me, I'm all you need and you're all I need." The abuser expects the other to take care of everything for them emotionally. But no matter how hard the other tries, he/she can't make or keep an abuser happy. True happiness comes from within.

ISOLATION:

This may start slowly with the abuser saying, "If you really loved me you would want to spend more time with just me." Soon the abuser says if you want to spend time with your family, "You are tied to the apron strings." If you have a friend of the same sex, "You are gay." If you have friends of the opposite sex, "You are sleeping around." To try to keep the abuser happy a person must stop seeing anyone but (him/her). Now the person is truly isolated with no friends close enough to talk to about what's going on. At this stage the victim really needs a friend to talk with and share feelings about what is happening.

BLAMES OTHERS FOR (HIS/HER) PROBLEMS:

If the abuser is failing in school or work he/she will say the system is ripping him/her off. Any mistakes made by the batterer will be blamed on someone else. The batterer will say it is the other's fault for almost anything that goes wrong.
BLAMES OTHERS FOR HIS/HER FEELINGS:

The batterer will say things like, "you make me mad," "you're hurting me by not doing what I ask," or "I can't help being angry." The batterer is really using feelings to manipulate the other.

HYPERSENSITIVITY:

The batterer is easily insulted, becoming very angry over things that most people would not get angry over. The batterer will "rant and rave" about the injustice of things that have happened even if it is a normal part of life. The batterer will become excessively angry over little things.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS OR CHILDREN:

A batterer is often a person who punishes animals brutally or is insensitive to their pain or suffering. Batters may expect children to be capable of doing things far beyond their ability or may tease children or younger people until they cry. Batterers are more likely to also batter their own children.

THE BATTERER MAY USE FORCE IN SEX:

The batterer may show little concern about whether the other wants to have sex and use anger to get the other to give into sex.

VERBAL ABUSE:

In addition to saying things meant to be cruel and hurtful, the abuser can be degrading, cursing, running down your accomplishments, making one feel unable to do anything right. The batterer will say things like "you are stupid," "no one else would have you" or "even a two year old could do better than you." When someone says these things over and over, the victim starts to believe them and agrees. The abused person thinks the statement must be true.

RIGID SEX ROLES:

If the abuser is male, he may believe that a woman should stay home and take care of the house and children, and that men should rule the household and earn the money. If the abuser is female she may have an equally rigid understanding of sex roles. Having rigid sex roles alone doesn't mean someone is a batterer, but if they also have other traits, there is cause for concern.

LOW OPINION OF THE OPPOSITE SEX:

The batterer may believe the opposite sex to be stupid, inferior, unable to function without help, unable to be a whole person without a relationship with the opposite sex.

DR. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde:

Batterers will change moods "suddenly." One minute they may be nice and loving and the next, explosive. Mood swings and explosiveness are typical of a battering personality. These behaviors are related to other characteristics such as hypersensitivity.

PAST BATTERING:

If the person you are dating tells you, "I really had to put the last person I dated in line," be aware. If you hear that the previous person with whom the abuser was involved, experienced verbal or physical abuse, it is very likely that abuse will continue.
THREATS OF VIOLENCE:

Any threat of physical force is meant to control. Batterers make comments such as “I’ll slap your mouth off,” “I’ll kill you,” “I’ll break your neck,” “If I can’t have you, no one will,” or “If you leave me, I’ll kill you.”

BREAKING OR STRIKING OBJECT:

Destroying possessions is sometimes used as a punishment or as a way to terrorize another into submission. The batterer may also break objects or throw objects around. These behaviors are used to threaten and control.

ANY FORCE USED DURING AN ARGUMENT:

The abuser may hold one down, restraining the other from leaving the room, push or shove.

THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN:

- In a national survey of over 6,000 American families, 50% of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children.

- Child abuse is 15 times more likely to occur in families where domestic violence is present.

- Men who have witnessed their parents’ domestic violence are three times more likely to abuse their own wives than children of non-violent parents, with the sons of the most violent parents being 1000 times more likely to become wife beaters.

- Children who witness violence at home display emotional and behavioral disturbances as diverse as withdrawal, low self-esteem, nightmares, self-blame and aggression against peers, family members and property.

- A comparison of delinquent and non-delinquent youth found that a history of family violence or abuse is the most significant difference between the two groups.

- Over 3 million children are at risk of exposure to parental violence each year.

“Families under stress produce children under stress. If a spouse is being abused and there are children in the home, the children are affected by the abuse. Moreover, spouse abuse is a form of child abuse. Hurting someone the child loves also hurts the child” (Ackerman and Pickering, 1989). It is often assumed that
domestic violence shelters are only for battered women. The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence Annual Data Report states that between July 1, 1995 and June 30, 1996, the total number of child residents was 1,777 and children were sheltered for a total of 16,574 nights. For this reason more and more shelter programs are placing emphasis on child advocacy and child-related services. Following are some of the most prominent effects of domestic violence on children. They highlight only a few of the impacts of violence on children.

DISTRESS TO THE FETUS

Whatever affects the mother affects the fetus. The fetus receives direct/indirect injuries during battering including but not limited to injuries to the nervous system, disruption of sleeping patterns and birth defects. Just as the fetus hears pleasant sounds such as music, it hears anger and it feels pain.

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

If incidents of battering are the infant's earliest images and experiences, his or her first and longest-lasting impression is that the world is a dangerous place. Moreover, because the young child is helpless to leave the violent scenes, both terror and powerlessness are imprinted into the child's being.

OLDER CHILDREN

Older children experience unresolved feelings of mistrust and fear. They see a parent sustain cuts, bruises, black eyes, or more serious injuries and may witness law enforcement, family or friends do little to protect the victim/parent. Often, children experience the same abusive behavior used against the spouse, i.e., the abuser may embarrass, hit, or threaten the child.

EMOTIONAL ABANDONMENT

Fighting parents cannot attend to the child's emotional needs. Often, the ups and downs of abusive homes are ignored. The child feels anxiety as the tension builds. Next, the child feels fear and helplessness during the battering. Finally, the child may feel guilt for not being able to stop the batterer.

CONSTANT FEAR

Children feel panic during each battering episode. They may fear that the abuser will turn on them next. Children also fear what will happen to them if their mother is hurt or if their father is taken to jail.

CONSTANT ANXIETY

Violence in the home means being jumpy, watchful, and on guard at all times. It means learning to read your parent/abuser's every move. Battering means learning strategies to keep out of harm's way, and not daring to sleep until the fighting is over.

LOW SELF ESTEEM

Children of abuse do not develop healthy self-esteem. They often blame themselves for the arguments and the violence. They may believe it is their own failing that they receive little love. Children often learn to deny their own needs. They also may learn to get needs met through manipulation or other indirect means.

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Children of violence are at risk for alcohol and drug abuse. They may also develop eating or sleeping disorders, stress-related headaches, ulcers, or rashes. Family violence may result in fear-driven perfectionism or over achieving. Conversely, others fail to perform well in school. Unresolved feelings of guilt and shame can last a lifetime.
ISOLATION

Violence interferes with the child’s ability to get close to his or her parents. Because trust in parents has been violated, a child of abuse is frequently unable to trust others. Closeness equals emotional or physical devastation, and the child’s deepest fear is that others will beat him, torture him, abandon him, or emotionally destroy him the way his parent(s) did.

ADULT RESPONSIBILITIES

Children may spend a lot of time trying to make peace. They may separate the fighting parents, call the police, or try to defend the abused parent. In addition, children often become caretakers, comforting the abused parent or siblings. Throughout these efforts, the child may be manipulated by the abuser and may be the only comfort and companion to the abused parent.

VIOLENCE TOWARDS OTHERS

Children in violent homes can learn to treat others as objects. They learn specific techniques to hurt and humiliate others. They learn that violence is a way to settle problems, punish family members, or gain control of a situation. Violence becomes an easy way to get what you want or to make things go the way you want.

SELF-HATRED

Instead of self-love, children exposed to violence learn self-abuse and may adopt self-mutilating behaviors. Unable to externalize the vengeful child within, the child may turn the rage inward and harm him/herself. Emotional pain may be too hard to discuss so the child may harm him/herself in hopes that the parent will notice that they are hurting.

FEELING POWERLESS

Children of abuse feel a complete sense of powerlessness. They cannot stop the abuse; they cannot fix the parents’ abusive relationship; and they cannot save the parent or siblings who are abused. Untreated, this feeling of powerlessness will continue into adulthood.

STRESS & DEPRESSION

Abused children experience long-term depression. Many experience flashbacks of violent episodes. A child also may block out violent scenes for years. Repeated exposure to violence overwhelms and exhausts the child’s nervous system. The result may be a child whose nervous system is “shot” by age four, or a child who knows how it feels to want to die by the age of six.

EXTREME BEHAVIOR

Children who see a parent rage out of control do not learn positive ways to express their emotions. They do not have good role models for important skills such as resolving conflict, solving problems with other people, or for building close relationships. The child does not learn how to express anger without being cruel or abusive.

LACK OF BOUNDARIES

Children in violent homes grow up watching other people’s boundaries being violated. They have difficulty understanding and respecting physical and verbal boundaries. Some children do not learn that reacting to someone abusively is wrong while other children do not learn that having their own physical and verbal boundaries violated by others is wrong.

This article taken from Safepassages, A Publication of the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Adapted from Second Hand Abuse: The Painful Legacy of Witnessing Domestic Violence, Barbara Corry, M.A. Permission for use granted by Barbara Corry.
PROTECTIVE ORDER

If someone you know is being abused, they may be able to get a family protective order through magistrate court. If the magistrate issues the protective order, it will be in effect for up to 90 days and it will order their abuser not to hurt or bother the victim. The victim can get a protective order against:

Anyone related to them.

Anyone they live with or used to live with.

Anyone they are or used to be romantically involved with.

Victims can get a protective order if they can show that their partner has abused them physically, sexually, or emotionally. That is, even if their partner has not physically hurt them, they still may be able to get a protective order. Just as violence is illegal, threats of violence are illegal. It can be more difficult to convince the magistrate of the seriousness of this kind of abuse however.

FILING A PETITION

The first step in getting a protective order is filing a family violence petition with the magistrate. The victim of abuse may file in the county where the abuser lives, the county where the abuse occurred or the county where the victims live. The victim can get the petition form in the circuit clerk or magistrate court clerk’s office in their county. There aren’t any fees when one files the petition. If they don’t think they will be able to pay any court costs, they may also file a financial affidavit. These forms are also at the clerk’s office. The affidavit says the victim doesn’t have the money to pay for these costs and asks that they do not have to do so.

The magistrate assistant clerk will help them fill out the petition but may not tell them what to say or give them advice. If the magistrate assistant clerk does not offer help, the person may ask for it. They must describe the violence or threats that caused them to file the petition. The advocate will ask them to be as specific as they can be in describing what happened, using exact dates and quotes if the victim can remember them.

- Persons should tell what their injuries were and what kind of medical treatment they required. They should tell whether their abuser has ever used a weapon against them or whether they have ever called the police for help. They should note if their partner has threatened to kill them or if they fear he or she might try to.

- If their partner has abused them often in the past, the petitioners should state this.

- In the petition, persons must state what they want the protective order to do. It won’t include anything they don’t ask for, so advocates should make sure the victim requests everything they need.

THE TEMPORARY ORDER

When the victim has filed their petition, the magistrate will give them a protective order right away if he/she believes they are in danger. It may be helpful to show the magistrate the injuries. If the magistrate gives a person a protective order, it is only a temporary order. The abuser has the right to tell his/her side of the story at a hearing before the magistrate decides whether to give a final protective order.

THE HEARING

The magistrate will schedule a hearing within five days. Here, the victim will tell their side of the story and the abuser will get to tell his/her side. The abused does not have to inform the abuser of the hearing. The abuser will be given this information, with a copy of the petition and a copy of the temporary order (if one has been granted). At this hearing the magistrate will decide whether to give the victim a final protective
order, which will last up to 90 days. If there is good reason the victim cannot go to the hearing, they will need to file a written motion to ask for a continuance. If the magistrate grants the victim's request, the hearing will be rescheduled. If you are in a position to do so, encourage the victim to bring evidence of abuse to the hearing.

- If someone saw the abuser hit the victim, heard the victim call for help or saw the injuries, ask that person to accompany the victim to the hearing.
- If the victim kept a journal or photographs of the abuse, be sure to instruct the victim to bring those.
- If a doctor ever treated the victim for abuse, get their medical records and bring those. If necessary, they can be subpoenaed (ordered into court).
- Police records are important evidence if the police have ever been called. These records can be subpoenaed as well as the officer/officers who responded to the call.
- Instruct victims that if possible they should not go to court alone. Bring a friend, or ask the family violence organization in their area if they can send someone from their staff to accompany them. If victims feel they are in danger in the courtroom, they may request a police officer or bailiff be present at the hearing. The magistrate will ask them about the abuse they reported on their petition. Tell them to answer the questions fully and honestly.

THE FINAL ORDER

At the end of the hearing, the magistrate will tell them whether they will receive a final protective order and how long it will be effective. If the magistrate does award a final protective order it will last up to 90 days.

- It will order their abuser not to hurt the victim or their children, and may order other things as well such as temporary custody of the home, car, or child.

- These arrangements are only effective as long as the protective order is valid.
- The victim will be given a copy of the protective order. The victim should keep it with them at all times.
- A protective order is valid in every county in WV and every state in the United States.
- If the victim relocated to another state, he/she must give the local police a copy of the protection order so they know he/she does have a valid protective order.

EXTENDING A PROTECTIVE ORDER

If the magistrate issues an order for less than 90 days and the victim needs further protection, they can ask the court to extend the order to 90 days. They will need to file a motion to extend with their magistrate court one week prior to expiration of the order. If the victim is married to their abuser and he/she files for divorce before the 90 days are expired, the order will automatically be extended until a temporary or final order is decided in the divorce. In the divorce order a judge can also declare a permanent statement that the abuser is not to harass or abuse the victim.

APPEALING THE DECISION

If the magistrate denies a protective order, the victim can appeal. Their appeal will be heard in circuit court within ten days.

If the magistrate gives a protective order and either the victim or the abuser is unhappy with it, in the next five days either of them can appeal to change the order. If the victim's situation changes while they have the protective order and they need the protective order changed as a result, they can file in magistrate court a motion to amend or change the protective order.
WHAT IF THE ABUSER BREAKS THE PROTECTIVE ORDER?

Not all persons obey protective orders. Inform a victim to protect themselves by taking such precautions as changing the locks on their home and asking neighbors to check in on them regularly. When the magistrate gives the victim a protective order, he/she should offer them a form called a consent to enter affidavit. This order gives the police permission to enter the victim’s home without a warrant to enforce the protective order. If the abuser breaks the protective order, the victim should call the police immediately. If the police see the abuser disobeying the protective order, they must arrest the abuser immediately. If the police do not see the abuser violating the protective order, there are two options. These options may be used one at a time or both at once.

1 Civil contempt. The victim may file a civil contempt petition for any violation of the protective order. The victim should read the protective order carefully to know what the abuser can and cannot do. When the victim files a contempt petition, the magistrate must order the abuser to appear at a show cause hearing within five days. At this hearing the abuser must explain why the court should not hold him in contempt.

2 Criminal complaint. If the abuser has disobeyed the order and abused the victim or has come to the victim’s home, to the victim’s place of work, or any other place the abuser was ordered not to be, the victim may also file a criminal complaint against the abuser. Based on this complaint, the magistrate will decide whether to issue a warrant for arrest of the abuser. In the complaint, the victim should ask the magistrate to deny bail or grant it only on the condition that the abuser does not come in contact with the victim. If the abuser is found guilty of violation of a protective order, he/she must spend at least 24 hours in jail and pay a fine of at least $250. He/she could be sentenced to up to a year in jail.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

STEP 1:

Safety during a violent incident.
Victims of domestic violence cannot always avoid violent incidents. In order to increase safety, victims may use a variety of strategies. Encourage victims of violence to:

- Practice how to get out safely. (What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells or fire escapes would they use?)
- Keep purse and car keys ready in order to leave quickly.
- Tell a friend or neighbor about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from the home.
- Teach their children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.
- Use a code with children or friends so they can call for help.
- Teach some of these strategies to some/all of their children.
- Use their judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, give the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down. Protect themselves until they and their children are out of danger.

STEP 2:

Safety when preparing to leave.
Victims frequently leave the residence they share with the abuser. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Batterers often strike back when they believe that a victim is leaving the relationship. Encourage victims of violence to:
Leave money, an extra set of keys, extra clothing, and keep copies of important documents with relatives or friends so they can leave quickly.

Open a savings account to increase independence.

The National Domestic Violence hot line number is 1-800-799-SAFE. Encourage victims to memorize it.

Keep change for phone calls handy at all times.

Understand that if a victim uses a telephone credit card, the following month the telephone bill will list those numbers called. To keep telephone communications confidential, victims should either use coins or get a friend’s permission to use their telephone credit card.

Rehearse an escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with the children.

STEP 3:

Safety in the home.

There are many things that a victim can do to increase their safety in their own residence. It may be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step. Encourage victims of violence to:

- Change the locks on doors and windows as soon as possible.
- Replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- Install security systems, additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- Purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
- Install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in the house/apartment.

STEP 4:

Safety with an order of protection.

- Keep the protection order on or near you at all times.
- Give their protection order to police departments in the communities where you visit family or friends.
- Most counties have a county registry of protection orders that all police departments can call to confirm a protection order. Check to make sure that your order is in the registry.
- Inform your employer, minister, closest friend and relatives that you have a protection order in effect. If the abuser destroys your protection order, you can get another copy from the County Circuit clerk or magistrates office.
- If the abuser violates the protection order, call the police and report a violation, contact an attorney, call a domestic violence advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation.
- If the police do not help, contact a domestic violence advocate or attorney and file a complaint with the chief of the police department.
- They can also file a private criminal complaint with the circuit court judge in the jurisdiction where the violation occurred or with the district attorney. They can charge the abuser with a violation of the Order of Protection and all the crimes that he commits in violating the order. The domestic violence advocate can help with this.

STEP 5:

Safety on the job and in public.

Each victim must decide if and when they will tell others about the abuse. Friends, family and co-workers can help to protect victims. Each victim should consider carefully which people to invite to
Help secure safety. Encourage victims of violence to:

- Inform their supervisor, and the security supervisor at work of their situation.
- Ask for help screening telephone calls at work.

**STEP 6:**

**Items to take when leaving.**
When victims leave partners, it is important to take certain items with them. Beyond this, victims sometimes give an extra copy of papers and an extra set of clothing to a friend just in case they have to leave quickly.

When leaving, take the following:

- Personal identification
- Children's birth certificates
- Victim's birth certificate
- Social security cards
- School and vaccination records
- Money, checkbook, ATM (Automatic Tellers Machine) card, Credit cards, bank books
- Keys - house/car/office
- Driver's license and registration
- Welfare identification, work permits, divorce papers
- Green card, passport(s)
- Medication and medical records - for all family members
- Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book, Insurance papers
- Address book
- Children's favorite toys and/or blankets
- Items of special sentimental value

**Important Telephone numbers:**
- State/City Police
- County Sheriff/Magistrate
- Domestic Violence program

**National Domestic Violence Hotline Number**

1-800-799-SAFE

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**FEDERAL LAW**

**VIOLANCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (1994)**

**FULL FAITH AND CREDIT**

A significant tool in the array of legal protections for victims of domestic violence is the provision that all state, territorial and tribal courts afford "full faith and credit" to orders of protection issued by all other state, territorial and tribal courts. This means that a valid protection order issued in one state is enforceable in any other state where the victim of domestic violence travels.

**CIVIL RIGHTS REMEDY**

The Violence Against Women Act says that "all persons within the United States shall have the right to be free from crimes of violence motivated by gender." The Act not only declares the right, it creates a civil remedy for gender motivated violence for those victims who have been denied that right.

The person who commits the act of violence does not have to be convicted or prosecuted in criminal court in order for the victim to bring a civil rights suit under the Violence Against Women Act. The new law allows victims of gender-motivated violent crimes to bring civil lawsuits "whether or not those acts actually resulted in criminal charges, prosecution, or conviction."

If successful in proving in court that a person was a victim of gender-motivated violent crime, a victim may be awarded:

- compensatory damages;
- punitive damages;
- injunctive relief;
- attorney's fees.
What to do if the person is a victim of gender-motivated violent crime:
- Report the crime to law enforcement
- Seek medical treatment
- Preserve evidence or get a list of witnesses
- Make notes about what exactly happened
- Tell someone - a rape crisis counselor, a victim's advocate or other confidant

**INTERSTATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRIMES**

The Violence Against Women Act created two new federal crimes. The first federal crime is “interstate domestic violence,” which prohibits a) traveling across a state line with the “intent to injure, harass, or intimidate a person’s spouse or intimate partner” or b) forcing a person’s spouse or intimate partner to cross state lines in the course of committing domestic violence.

The second new federal crime is “interstate violation of a protection order.” This law prohibits a) crossing state lines with the intent to violate a valid protection order or b) forcing a spouse or intimate partner to cross a state line in violation of a valid protection order.

**FIREARMS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

In the context of domestic violence, firearms present a serious threat to the safety and welfare of victims of domestic violence and their children. Perpetrators of domestic violence use firearms not only to maim and kill but also to intimidate and threaten their intimate partners.

The Violence Against Women Act added individuals who are the subject of final restraining orders to the list of persons prohibited from purchasing, receiving and possessing firearms.

**BATTERED IMMIGRANT SPOUSES**

Since 1994, provisions of the Violence Against Women Act provide for abused non-citizen spouses and their children to gain legal status independent of their abusers by self-petitioning the courts without the assistance of their spouse who is a lawful permanent resident or a United States citizen.
IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING ABUSED

- Ask and listen. Many battered persons have waited until someone addressed them directly about violence. Let victims/survivors tell you what they need and want.

- Believe the victim/survivor. Even if the abuser seems charming and attentive, even if the abuser is also your friend.

- Educate yourself. Realize that battering exists in our community and to ignore and deny that fact further isolates the victim/survivor.

- Understand that leaving an abusive relationship is difficult. Encourage victims/survivors to make their own decisions and to take back control of their lives at their own pace. Avoid judging or condemning them.

- Offer a victim a place to stay if it is safe for both of you. Let them store their emergency items with you in case they decide to leave quickly.

- If you witness abuse, don’t act like it is not happening. If it is safe, react to it in the moment; if not, address it with the battered victim and/or the batterer at another time.

- Refuse to protect batterers. We must hold batterers accountable for their actions. Battering is a choice.

- Speak out that violence is unacceptable. Refuse to buy into batterers’ attempts to excuse, disguise, explain away or blame someone else for the abusive behavior.

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE

WEST VIRGINIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a network of community-based groups serving survivors of family violence throughout the fifty-five counties of this state. Thirteen of these programs provide emergency shelter services on a 24 hour basis seven days a week as well as information and referral, legal advocacy, community education, and a range of support services. Most shelters also staff one or more outreach offices. These offices are county-based and provide similar services except for 24-hour emergency shelter.

For more information pertaining to training, technical assistance, information and referral, public education, state and national networking, and legislative/public policy development contact:

The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Statewide Prevention Office:

Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Drive, Suite A
Charleston, West Virginia 25302
Telephone - 304•965•3552
Fax - 304•965•3572
WVCADV licensed member programs:

Women's Resource Center 304-255-2559
Serving: Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, Summers Counties

Resolve Family Abuse Program 304-340-3549
Serving: Boone, Clay, Kanawha Counties

Women's Aid in Crisis 304-636-8433
Serving: Barbour, Braxton, Tucker, Randolph, Upshur, Webster Counties

HOPE, Inc. Fairmont Area 304-367-1100
Serving: Doddridge, Gilmer, Harrison, Lewis, Marion Counties

Branches, Inc. Huntington Area 304-529-2382
Serving: Cabell, Lincoln, Mason, Putnam, Wayne Counties

Family Crisis Center Keyser Area 304-788-6061
Serving: Grant, Hardy, Hampshire, Mineral, Pendleton Counties

Family Refuge Center 304-645-6334
Serving: Greenbrier, Monroe, Pocahontas Counties

Shenandoah Women's Center 304-263-8292
Serving: Berkeley, Jefferson, Morgan Counties

Rape & Domestic Violence Information Center Morgantown Area 304-292-5100
Serving: Monongalia, Preston, Taylor Counties

Family Crisis Intervention Center Parkersburg Area 304-428-2333
Serving: Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Tyler, Wirt, Wood Counties

Stop Abusive Family Environments 304-436-8117
Serving: McDowell, Mercer, Wyoming Counties

Family Violence Prevention Program 304-232-2748
Serving: Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, Wetzel Counties

Tug Valley Recovery Shelter 304-235-6121
Serving: Mingo, Logan Counties

National Domestic Violence Resource Phone Numbers

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE
1-800-787-3224 (TDD service)
Providing emergency and non-emergency referrals to domestic violence resources in your area including multilingual services.

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
1-800-537-2238
Providing comprehensive information and resources, policy development and technical assistance designed to enhance community response to and prevention of domestic violence.

Battered Women's Justice Project
1-800-903-0111 Providing training, technical assistance and other resources through a partnership of three nationally recognized organizations: Domestic Abuse Intervention Project of Duluth, National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Resource Center on Child Protection and Custody
1-800-527-3223
Providing information, consultation, technical assistance and legal research related to child protection and custody issues within the context of domestic violence.

Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence
1-888-792-2873
Providing specialized information packets designed to strengthen the health care response to domestic violence, as well as technical assistance and library services to support health-based domestic violence training and program development.