

October eNewsletter Excerpt
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What is Domestic Violence? Get the Facts!

- Domestic Violence (DV) is a pattern of behavior involving a victim and a perpetrator. Power and control over another person is established through fear and intimidation, often including the threat of violence or use of violence.
- Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, or other factors.
- Repeat: Both women and men can be victims of domestic violence.
- Note: Don't blame the victim! No victim is to blame for any occurrence of domestic abuse or violence.
- Women ages 18 to 34 are at greatest risk of domestic violence.
- 1 in 4 women & 1 in 7 men will experience domestic violence during their lifetime.
- Without help, girls who witness domestic violence are more vulnerable to abuse as teens and adults.
- Without help, boys who witness domestic violence are more likely to become abusers of their partners and/or children as adults, thus continuing the cycle of violence in the next generation.

What are the Effects of Domestic Violence on Health?

- Survivors face high rates of depression, sleep disturbances, anxiety, flashbacks, drug addiction, and other emotional distress.
- Poor health including STDs, chronic conditions such as heart disease or gastrointestinal disorders.

Know the Warning Signs

- The obvious: Hitting, Kicking, punching, anything that causes injury to the victim.
- The Not so obvious: jealousy and control, threats, forced sex, destruction of personal property, harm to pets, economic control, constant checking on victim via text messages or phone calls, refusal to let the victim see family or friends, not taking responsibility for actions, threats to take away children, threats to initiate deportation, constant criticism, extreme anger.

What Can you Do?

- Support a workplace environment safe from all forms of violence and have policies in place that support victims in accessing information, services and legal help.
- If you suspect that someone close to you is being abused, gently ask if you can help. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline for 24 hour assistance at 1-800-799-SAFE.
- Call 911 if you or someone else is in danger.
- Discuss ways in which your faith leaders & community can promote healthy relationships, provide support to victims and their children, and send clear messages that domestic violence is not acceptable.
- If a relative, friend, classmate, colleague, or teammate is abusing their partner -- or is disrespectful or abusive -- don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to them about it. Urge them to seek help. If you don't know what to do, consult a domestic violence program. Don't remain silent.
- Help boys and girls develop knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that lead to healthy relationships.
- Model nonviolent, respectful behavior in your family.
- Know the contact information for the domestic violence or child abuse prevention programs in your area.

Sources:

<http://www.safehorizon.org>

<http://www.dcadv.org>

<http://women.westchestergov.com>

Note: Information provided in this eNewsletter is designed to support, not replace the recommendation of your medical doctor or mental health provider.

See my website www.godsendpsychologist.com for other helpful articles and resources and information on a free 15 minute consultation.