

Domestic Violence

Empowerment: Building
confidence and hope

Carole Bomba, RN, MSN, CNE
Associate Professor, Nursing

Objectives

Upon completion of this seminar the participants will have an understanding of the:

- various types of abuse
- warning signs of the perpetrator
- behaviors of the victim
- strategies to build confidence and hope
- opportunities for empowerment
- campus procedures

What is considered abuse?

- Physical: infliction of physical pain or bodily harm
- Emotional: infliction of mental anguish; threatening, humiliating, intimidating, isolating behavior
- Sexual: any form of sexual contact or exposure without consent
- Economic: illegal or improper exploitation of funds or other resources for own person gain or withholding of support

Warning signs (perpetrator)

- Their needs are more important than the needs of others
- Extreme pathological jealousy
- May control family finances
- Likely to abuse alcohol or drugs
- Poor social skills, relationship with partner enmeshed and codependent

Warning signs (victim)

- Anxious or depressed demeanor
- Bruises, unkempt appearance, withdrawn attitude
- Minor complaints (headaches, backaches, dizziness, “accident prone”)
- Non-verbal: Hesitation to answer, poor eye contact
- Eating disorders (binging, purging, loss of appetite)
- Low self-esteem

Stages of Change for Victim

- Precontemplation: minimizes or denies extent
- Contemplation: ambivalence, first attempt at leaving
- Determination/Preparation: increased commitment to leave
- Action: energy is directed toward goal
- Maintenance: prevent relapse to returning
- Termination: empowering: self-confidence

Building Confidence & Hope

- Believe the person
- Be understanding
- Be attentive
- Do not place blame or make judgments
- Do not allow the person to feel at fault or in trouble
- Do not probe for answers
- Inform that help is available (handout of services)
- Refer to psychological services or Woman's Program

Questions to ask (Nurse or therapist)

- Tell me about what happened to you.
- How do you and your partner resolve disagreements?
- What do you do for fun?
- What time do you have for yourself?

Intervention: Empowerment

- Safety plan (checklist)
- A plan for a fast escape when violence occurs
- Identified sign of escalation of violence and designate this as the time to leave
- Include in plan a destination and a way to get there
- Have the hotline referral telephone number of a shelter or safe house and a contact person
- Order of protection

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994

- President Bush signed the reauthorization (VAWA III) for \$3.9 billion for 2005-2010
- Provides resources and funding for: basic needs, education, counseling, and other interventions
- Victim's of Crime Act (VOCA) (1984): uses fines and penalties collected from offenders to assist victims in 4,400 agencies across the US
- President Obama (2009) provided \$325 million to VAWA & VOCA from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act and declared October Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Campus Procedures

- Refer student to Psychological Services and/or the Women's Program
- For immediate safety issues call Harper Police 6330 and 911
- Women's Program: grants cover single, divorced or divorce pending, low income, and marriages in jeopardy
- Lifespan & WINGS offer free counseling

References

- Bennett, L., Goodman, L., & Dutton, M. (1999). Systematic obstacles to the criminal prosecution of a battering partner. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14(7), 761-772.
- Ferraro, K. J. (1997). Battered women: Strategies for survival. In A.P. Cardarelli (Ed.), *Violence between intimate partners: Patterns, causes, and effects* (pp.120-140), Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Keeling, J., & Birch, L. (2004). Asking pregnant women about domestic abuse. *British Journal of Midwifery*, 12(12), 746-749.
- Roberts, A. (2007). *Battered Women and Their Families* (3rd edition). New York: Springer Publishing.
- Varacarolis, E. (2010). *Foundations of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* (6th edition). St. Louis: Saunders.
- <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/domviolence.htm>