

Domestic Violence



Domestic Violence



Introduction

This flipchart talks about Domestic Violence. We designed it to provide information to farmworkers and to encourage them to talk about this topic. We recommend that you divide the information up into several sections. Below are some suggestions. That way, you can pick the right amount of material for the time you have available.

Section One

What is Domestic Violence?
Types of Abuse
Myths About Abuse
Signs of Abuse

Section Two

Causes of Domestic Violence
Power and Control Wheel
Patterns of Abuse

Section Three

Getting Help
Giving Support
Legal Issues

Section Four

Effects on Children
Prevention

On some pages there are discussion questions which you can ask to get people talking. Feel free to add your own questions too.

As a Camp Health Aide, you may know people who are living with domestic violence. There are several things you can do to be supportive. You can listen and be a friend, you can learn about community and legal resources available for help, and you can encourage people to do everything possible to stay safe.

This flipchart was created by Lisa Luchsinger, Tanya Krupat, Asha Sharma; Dana Cruz Santana
Illustrations: Evelyn Mohalski
Translation: Kristin Borntreger

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Migrant Health Promotion *Promoviendo Vidas Saludables*
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(734) 944-0244 info@migranthealth.org Web site: migranthealth.org

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Domestic Violence



“Sometimes people think that abuse is only when someone hits you. There are lots of kinds of abuse. If someone makes you feel terrible and says you are nothing and keeps you in the house, that is also abuse.”

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is abuse that happens in the family and/or home.

The abuse can be between:

- husband-wife
- parent-child
- parent-elderly person
- girlfriend-boyfriend
- same-sex partners
- brother-sister

One common form of abuse occurs in a male-female relationship. In this flip chart, we will focus on the male-female relationship, where the wife or girlfriend is the victim or person being abused. The male is the one who does the abusing. He is called the **abuser**.

What is Domestic Violence?



“You hear all kinds of things about domestic violence and you believe some of them. I believed a myth because I wanted it to be true: I wanted the abuse to go away by itself, to disappear like a nightmare, but it didn’t.”

No matter where or how the abuse occurs, it is **wrong**. No person deserves to be hurt. Many people think of domestic violence as physical abuse. This is only one type of abuse.

Here are some examples of different types of abuse:

physical abuse-bodily harm occurring to another person
examples-hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, slapping

emotional/verbal abuse-putting down or insulting a person in such a way that it affects how the person thinks about her/himself
examples-name calling, making the person think she/he is bad, ugly, not smart, worthless

sexual abuse- taking advantage of a person’s body against her/his will
examples-making a person have sex or perform sexual activities without her/his consent

isolation-keeping a person away from other people or things the person needs
examples-not allowing the person to see friends and family, keeping the person from seeking medical attention

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

1. What are other examples of different types of domestic violence?

Types of Abuse



“You hear all kinds of things about domestic violence and you believe some of them. I believed a myth because I wanted it to be true: I wanted the abuse to go away by itself, to disappear like a nightmare, but it didn’t.”

Here are some **common myths** about domestic violence:

MYTH: “He was drinking. He didn’t mean to hit me.” **Alcohol and drug abuse cause domestic violence.**

FACT: Abusers may use drinking as an excuse not to take responsibility for their actions. Drinking or using drugs might make the abuse worse, **but they don’t cause it.** In most cases, stopping the drinking will not stop the abuse.

MYTH: “It just happened a couple of times. I’m sure it won’t happen again.” **Domestic violence will go away.**

FACT: Domestic violence is a pattern about power and control. Once it begins, it usually gets worse and happens more often over time. The abuse may take many forms (physical, emotional, sexual), but it rarely goes away.

MYTH: “He has so much to deal with. He works so hard and wants to take care of us. He yells and throws things at me because he is under a lot of stress.” **Stress causes domestic violence.**

FACT: Abusers may use stress as an excuse for their actions. Like alcohol and drug use, stress may make the abuse worse, but it does not cause it. There are many people who are under stress but they do not abuse other people. There are no reasons that make abuse okay; **abuse is never okay.**

Myths About Abuse



“I think it’s important to talk to someone about what happens in your home. It can be so lonely and you feel trapped in your mind and you think it’s all your fault. This is a myth though, it is not the woman’s fault; she never asked to be hurt and abused. And no-one deserves this.”

MYTH: “I feel so alone. I must be a failure. No one else has this problem in their home.” **Domestic violence is rare.**

FACT: Domestic violence happens in all types of families-- rich, poor, Latino, white, black. Unfortunately, it is very common in the United States. One research study in 1994 said that one in three migrant/seasonal farmworker women reported experiencing physical abuse within the past year, and one in five reported forced sexual activity within the past year. Part of the abuser’s pattern is to isolate his victim so she feels alone. This is why talking to someone about the abuse is so important.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are other myths about domestic violence?
2. What are some reasons why people believe these myths are true?

Myths About Abuse...



“I was worried about my friend. She was sick a lot but her husband never let her go to the doctor. She stopped talking to us and was always alone or with her family. Sometimes she had bruises, and most of the time she was quiet and kept her head down.”

What are the Signs of Abuse?

There are many signs of domestic violence. Some people are able to hide the fact that they are being abused, while others cannot. The signs of abuse are different for each woman, but here are some examples:

The woman might be:

- withdrawn
- crying a lot
- scared
- quiet
- worried
- angry

There are also physical signs of abuse, which are easier to recognize. However, even with these signs, a person may make up excuses for why she got hurt.

Physical signs:

- bruises on the body
- cuts/scratches
- deep cuts on the head/face
- burn marks

Not all physical signs are visible. Many times, the abuser will hurt the woman in areas where no one can see. For example, abusers will often hurt the woman in the stomach area or on the upper arms because these areas are often not seen by other people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it difficult to recognize signs of abuse?
2. How might someone in a domestic violence situation act?

Signs of Abuse



“My husband used to come home drunk and I would pretend that I was asleep so he wouldn’t hit me. I thought he hit me because he drank, but then he started hitting me even when he wasn’t drinking. I had to get help because I was worried about my children.”

Causes of Domestic Violence

Many people believe abusers abuse women because they are:

- stressed/frustrated
- drug abusers
- victims of childhood abuse
- mentally ill
- alcoholics
- angry

These may all contribute to someone becoming an abuser, **but they do not cause someone to abuse another person.** Abusers choose to abuse to get **power** and **control** over another person. Abusers do not take responsibility for their actions. Instead, they blame others and give excuses like:

- She made me angry.
- I told her to have dinner ready. She knew I would come home hungry.
- She was supposed to clean the house. She knows that I do not like the house when it is dirty.
- I did not mean to hit her. It must be from the pressures at work. I will never do it again, I promise.

These excuses do not make abuse right. **Domestic violence is WRONG**, regardless of the situation.

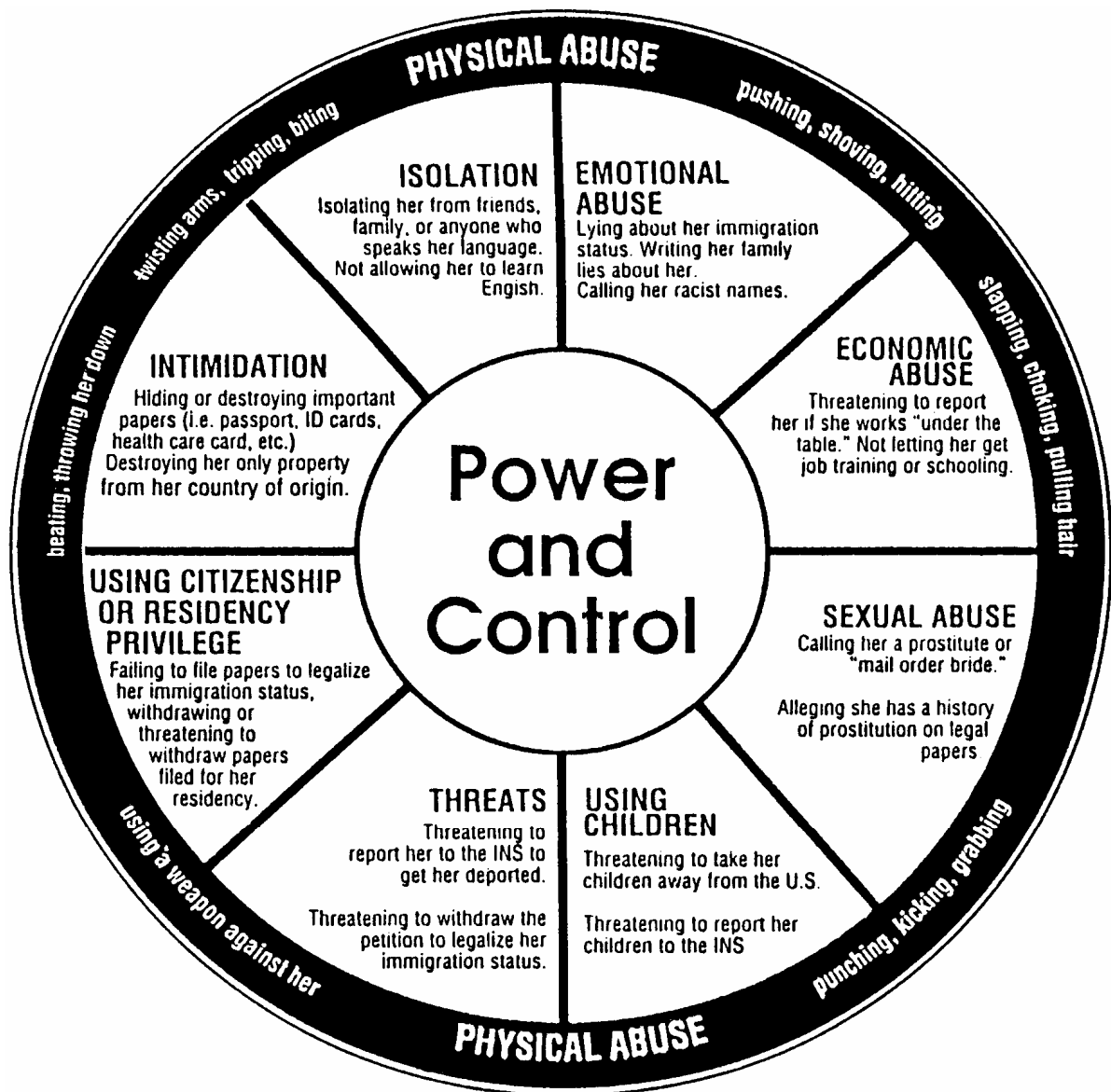
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are some excuses abusers use to explain their behaviors?

Causes of Domestic Violence



“At first I thought I was crazy and that he was right. I believed what he said; that it was all my fault. Now I know that was his way of having control over me. He felt powerful by making me feel bad. I wish more women knew this so they could get support and help.”

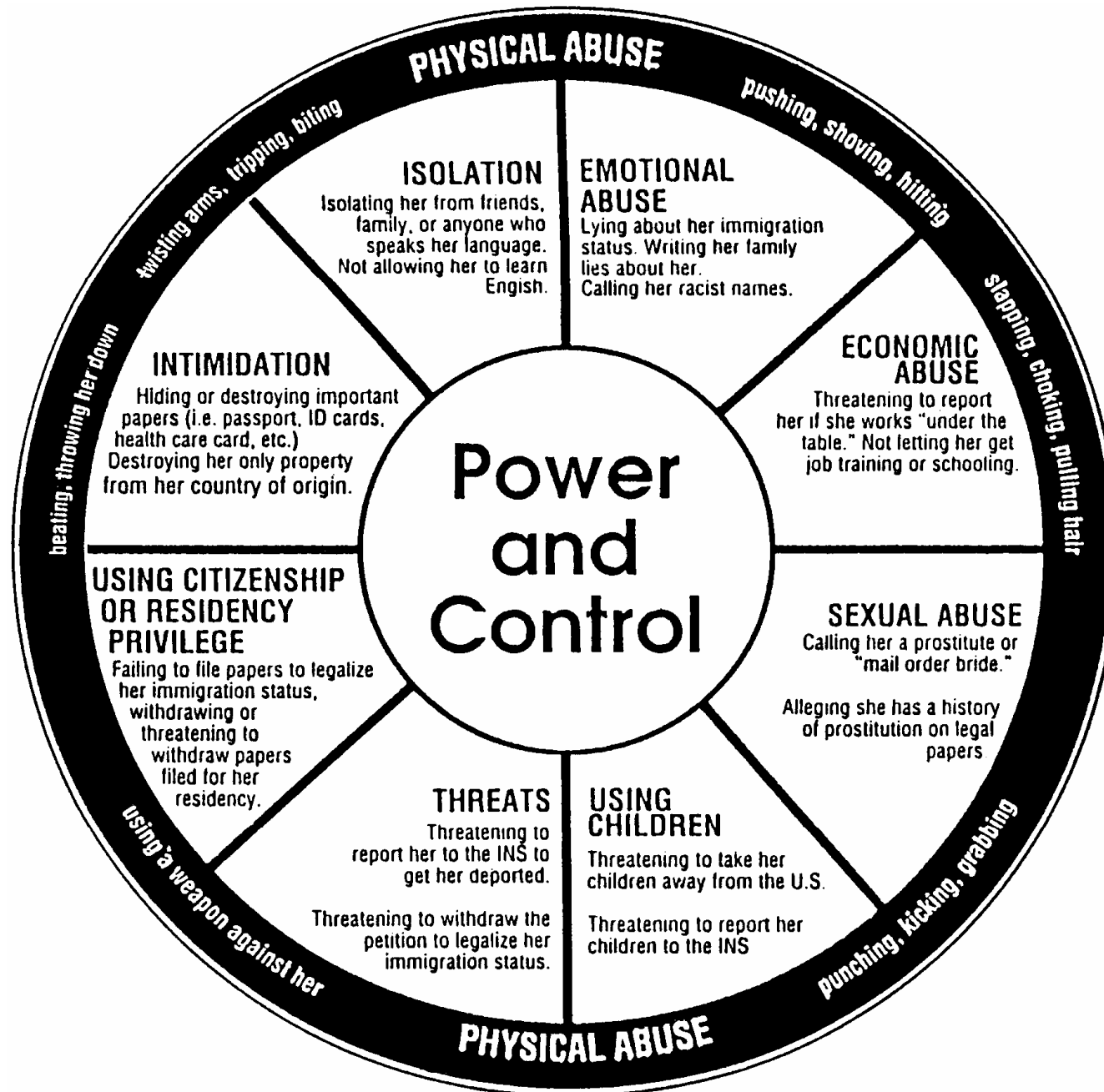


This wheel is called the **Power and Control Wheel**. It shows the different ways abusers try to get and keep power and control in a relationship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does the Power and Control Wheel explain why abuse occurs?
2. Were you surprised by anything in the Power and Control Wheel?

Power and Control Wheel



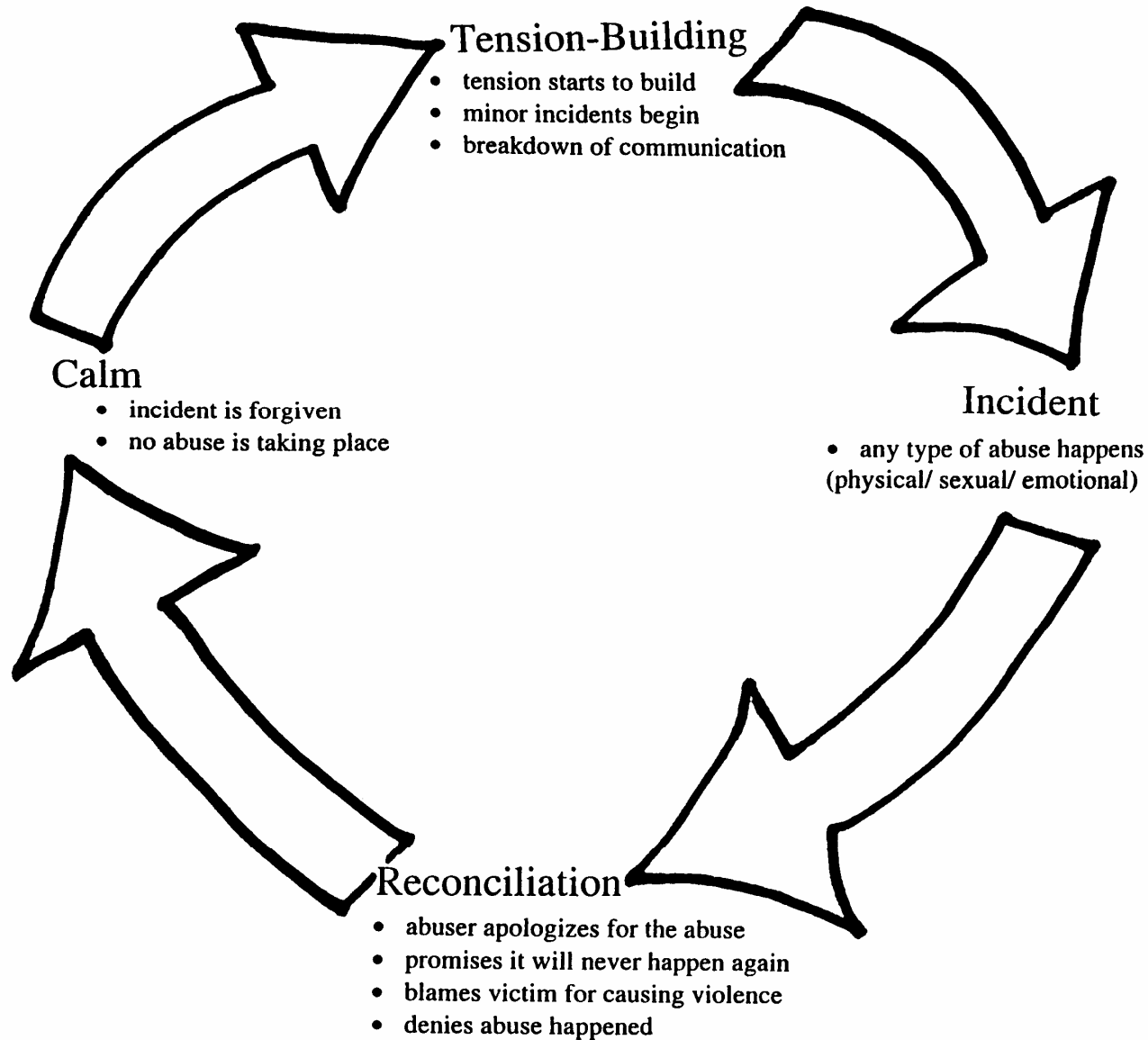
“When he first started to hit me, he would be so nice afterwards. He told me he loved me and he would give the children presents. I would forgive him. I thought this was part of love-- hitting and yelling and throwing things. It seemed normal and he said he was sorry. Later he stopped apologizing and the hitting got worse. Everything got worse and I needed help.”

Patterns of Abuse

Abuse usually happens in a cycle:

- First, the abuser becomes angry and as this anger grows, the woman may begin to fear for her safety. This is sometimes called the “tension-building” stage.
- Next, the anger explodes in some way (yelling, hitting, not letting her out of the house).
- After this is the “reconciliation” stage where both people may feel shocked, confused, angry, and/or hurt. The abuser may apologize, say that it won't happen again, give excuses for why it happened, and tell the woman that he loves her. The abuser may also threaten to hurt himself or her if she tells anyone or tries to leave.
- There may be a period of “calm” that comes next, when no abuse happens and what did happen is not talked about. As this cycle continues, the last two stages may not happen anymore.

Patterns of Abuse



Some reasons why it is hard for a woman to leave an abusive situation are:

- she is afraid of what he would do if she got help and/or left him
- she believes the excuses and apologies
- she believes he will change and the abuse will go away
- she loves him and does not want to admit what is happening
- she feels ashamed and blames herself
- she feels isolated and alone, with no support
- she is dependent on him for money, food, and shelter
- she is concerned for her children and does not want to break up
- the family or make things worse

For all of these reasons, it may be hard for a woman to leave. In fact, a woman is in the greatest danger of violence when she tries to leave. Another time when the woman is in great danger is when she is pregnant. During both of these times-- pregnancy and when she tries to leave-- abusers may become more violent and the abuse may increase. This is why it is important to talk to people for help and support; so that if a woman chooses to leave, she can do so in the safest way possible.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are examples of how the cycle of abuse becomes worse over time?

Patterns of Abuse...



“I’ve changed now because now I realize that to be a good wife doesn’t mean you have to bear all the hitting, or have to bow your head. I can still be a good woman, and I deserve to be respected.”

Getting Help

When domestic violence occurs, the person being abused may feel sad, afraid, angry, confused, ashamed, and depressed. It is important to realize that everyone feels differently and everyone’s situation is different. However, **no one** deserves to be abused.

When abuse happens to a woman, it is important that she:

- tell herself that it is not her fault
- seek help by telling someone she trusts; talking may be difficult but it can help
- understand that using alcohol and drugs make it harder for her to think clearly and to help herself and her children

She may also want to:

- contact the local domestic violence shelter or call a domestic violence hotline
- speak with a Camp Health Aide
- go to the local health clinic to make sure she gets help for any injuries she has
- develop a safety plan

Getting Help



“My neighbor asked me and my wife if she could keep a bag at our house. We know that her husband beats her. We can hear the noises in their house sometimes. She packed a bag with clothes, papers, and some other important things and we keep it for her. A few times we have dropped by to ask a question or borrow a bit of sugar just to see if she is okay.”

Safety Plan

A safety plan is a way for people who are being abused to prepare for the next time something happens and to try to protect themselves and their children. Every abused person's situation is different and not all of these ideas work for everyone. A person needs to think carefully about the danger she may put herself in and how best to protect herself. Only she knows what is best for her and her children.

Here are some ideas for a safety plan:

- memorize the telephone numbers of the nearest shelter, police, neighbor, health clinic, and Camp Health Aide
- have a safe place to go (like a friend's house)
- hide or get rid of things in the house that an abuser could use as weapons
- give a bag with clothes, money, important papers (copy of birth certificate, legal/documentation papers), and medicine to your neighbors or a friend for safe keeping.

Getting Help...



During an attack by an abuser, a woman can also try to keep herself safe by:

- getting away or defending herself the best she can
- calling the police
- if the police come and you feel safe, writing down officers' names and badge numbers so she has a record of the abuse
- taking the children and leaving the house
- getting medical help if necessary (her injuries may be more serious than she thinks)

“I used to feel frustrated and become violent. I saw my father hit my mother and I thought that’s what a man was supposed to do. It was very hard, but I got help and I learned that hurting your family doesn’t make you a strong man. I know now that violence is wrong.”

Getting Help: For Abusers

Many people believe that abusers cannot be helped; but, help is available. There are programs that help people learn to change their behavior and stop abusing others. For more information on these programs, contact a local domestic violence shelter or speak with a Camp Health Aide.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are ways a woman can protect herself and her children?

Getting Help...



“If a woman is being abused by her husband, I can tell her that there are shelters, that the police can also help, and that there are also doctors where she can go. I tell her there are places she can go to get help.”

Giving Support to Someone in an Abusive Situation

People who are being abused need your support. It may be hard for them to talk about what is happening and they may feel:

- embarrassed
- depressed
- scared
- ashamed

It is important for them to know that:

- you believe them and are there to listen
- it is not their fault and they did not cause the abuse
- no one deserves to be abused or abuse others
- you will not judge them or to tell them what to do
- you respect their choices
- you will keep what they tell you confidential
- you will do what you can to create a safe place for them to talk

In order to better offer help, the following are important:

- knowing where the abused person can go to get help
- educating people, men and women, that domestic violence never is ok
- knowing that the person helping the abused person also needs help. In this situation you can speak with a domestic violence shelter, a Camp Health Aide (*Promotor/a de Salud*), or with an agency like Migrant Health Promotion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. If a woman comes and tells you that she is being abused, what can you say or do?

Giving Support...



“I didn’t realize that I had any rights as a woman. I thought that it was my job to obey my husband. Now I know that no one has the right to hurt anyone else. I want my children to grow up knowing their rights. I want them to know it is wrong to hurt others.”

Legal Issues

In the United States, domestic violence is **against the law**. Anyone who abuses someone else can be arrested by the police. A woman who is being abused, neighbors, or family members can call the police for help. Here is a list of some legal actions that a woman can use to protect herself:

- Get a Civil Protection Order. These are also known as **restraining orders** or **personal protection orders**. Often the order will say that an abuser cannot contact, telephone, or come near the abused woman. If the abuser does not obey the order, he can be arrested. A civil protection order that is given in one state, is good for all states in the U.S.
- Many women are afraid that if they report domestic violence they will be deported. If a woman is a lawful permanent resident, who entered the U.S. legally and did not commit any serious crimes (like theft, murder, or terrorism), she cannot be deported for reporting domestic violence.
- The **Violence Against Women Act (1994)** is a federal law that helps women, who are not citizens but are being abused, apply for their own immigration status, without the help of the abusive husbands. However, this law is new and in many states, is not being used as it should be. For this reason, a person should talk to a Camp Health Aide about how to contact **an immigration lawyer or domestic violence shelter for advice on how to use this law**. A person should always try to contact a domestic violence shelter or immigration lawyer **before** contacting the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How can the Violence Against Women Act be used to protect abused women?

Legal Issues...



“I don’t think I would have gotten help except I saw my children hurting and was worried about them. They were learning violent ways and I knew they needed me there. I had to be strong so they would grow up healthy. It wasn’t easy to talk to people about what was happening, but I wanted to protect my children.”

Effects on the Children

Children living in homes where there is domestic violence are at high risk for being physically abused or neglected. They may also be physically hurt while trying to protect their mother.

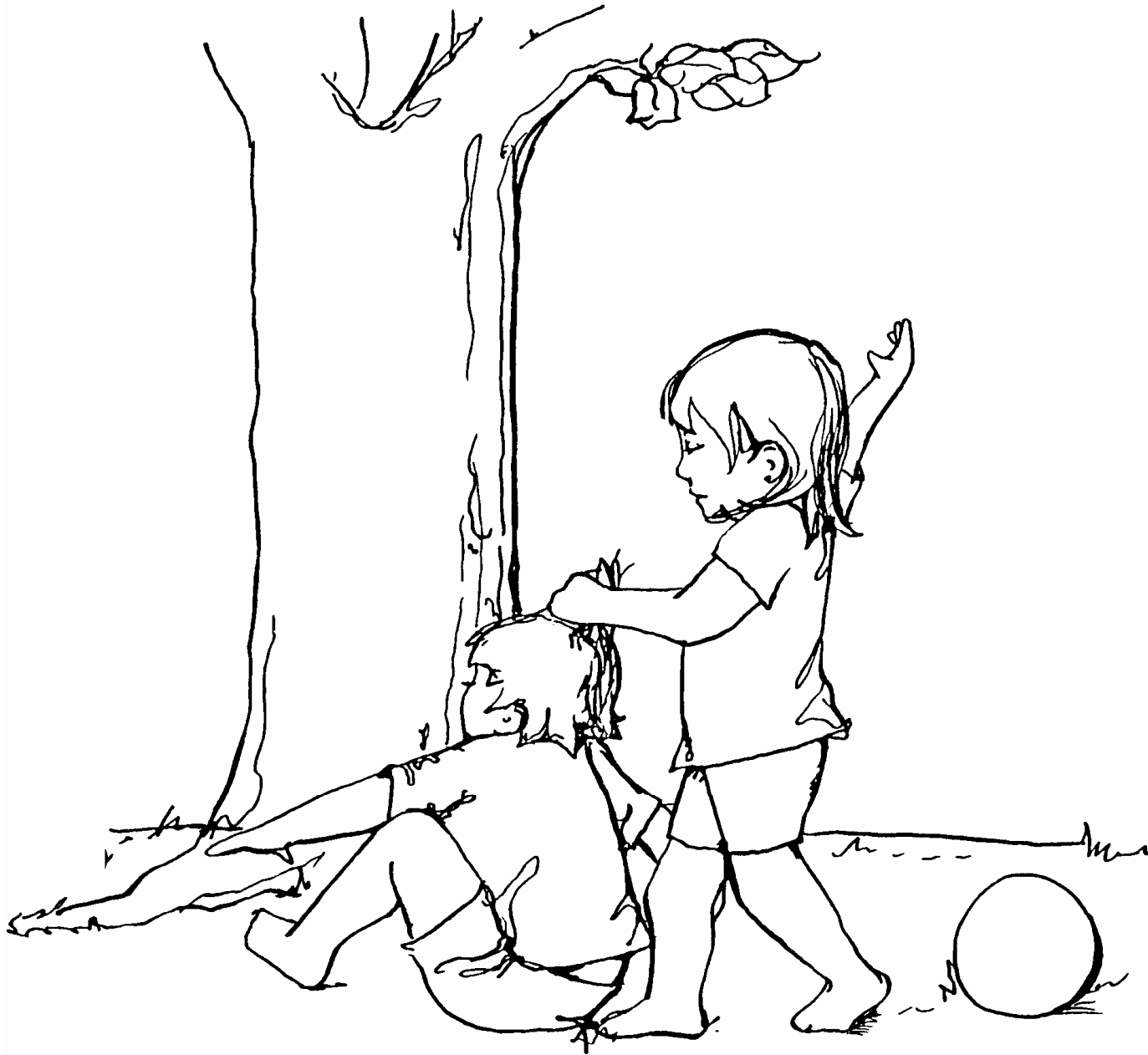
- Some of the emotional effects of domestic violence on children are:
 - feeling responsible for the abuse
 - feeling anxious
 - feeling afraid
 - feeling guilty for not being able to stop the abuse or for loving the abuser

Children from violent homes are more likely to use alcohol and drugs and commit crimes. When violence is part of the family, children learn to act violently. They may hit each other or talk in a mean way. Children copy what is around them so even if they are not being abused, they are learning that violence is acceptable.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What can we do to help children living in homes where there is domestic violence?

Effects on Children



“I feel good when I tell someone about a domestic violence shelter and help them find support. I talk to men and women and try to teach people that violence is not okay and that it hurts us all. I think we can help each other out and find a new, peaceful road to travel on if we work together to stop the violence against women and children.”

Prevention

Prevention of domestic violence is very important to stop the cycle of violence from spreading from one generation to the next. To prevent domestic violence from happening, it is important to educate people, especially children, about basic human rights, how to reject all forms of violence, and how to be independent.

- By talking about domestic violence, people in abusive situations may feel more comfortable asking for help.
- Rejecting violence means that a person, under no circumstances, will tolerate violence; especially against themselves and their children.
- Rejection of violence must be taught to children so that they know that it is never alright to intentionally hurt another person. This is most easily taught by actions; if a child’s family does not accept violence and shows respect for others and themselves, then that child will learn that violence is never the answer to difficult problems.

Prevention



- It is important to know what resources are in the community that help people in abusive situations. It is often helpful to make a community resource list so everyone knows where to seek help if they need to get out of a bad situation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What can we do to prevent domestic violence in the community?
2. What are resources in the community that help people in abusive situations?

Prevention...

FAMILY VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

EMERGENCY SERVICES (Write the telephone number here)

POLICE	911
HOSPITAL	
HOTLINE (24 HOURS)	

Los siguientes recursos pueden ser disponibles en su área. Pueden encontrar los números en el directorio.
(Escriba el número local aquí)

Child Protection Services		Food Bank	
Counseling Services (Children's Aid, Family Services, Private Counselors)		Immigrant Refugee Organizations	
Women's Shelters/Womens's Centers		Support Groups	
Sexual Assault Centers		Seniors' Services	
Medical Health Services			
Mental Health Services			
Legal Aid			
Financial Assistance			

Remember: if a particular resource is unable (or unwilling) to help, try other resources until you find the help you need.

“When I found out that there were places to go and people I could talk to, I was scared at first. It’s not easy to tell someone your husband hits you or that you feel afraid in your own house. I felt ashamed. But I want to tell all women, they are not failures if they are abused. They are strong and powerful. They did not make this happen and they can talk to someone to get help if they want to. Most of all, they should not blame themselves. They are not the problem; the violence is.”

Imagine...a world without domestic violence.

Imagine...

