If Your Only Tool is a Hammer, Everything Looks like a Nail: How to Partner with and Equip Faith Leaders to Address Domestic and Sexual Violence

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Objectives
1) To identify the role faith plays for the victim and the community
2) To understand why DV/Rape Crisis Center’s/SART’s should partner with Faith Based Communities
3) To develop action steps in working with Spiritual Leaders
4) To identify training tools and resources

Our communities are torn by violence; our families are destroyed by violence; our faith is tested by violence. We have an obligation to respond.”

Pastoral Message, U.S. Catholic Conference, 1994
Faith instills hope for many survivors

43-60% of people who have emotional problems first turn to religious leaders for help

94% of Americans believe in God

Prayer and faith are the most widely used methods of coping with traumatic life events

Faith serves as the family nucleus

- Parents go to work, children go to school but the one place that the family as a whole assemble on a weekly basis is their church, synagogue, temple or mosque

- The place of worship centers around meaningful moments as a family:
  - Wedding/Marriage
  - Christening/Baptism
  - Baby Dedications
  - Blessing of their Home

Religious Leaders

- Primary function—the care of the soul
- Show compassion and empathy for people in times of crisis by offering comfort, support, clarity, direction and spiritual resources
- Uniquely positioned to respond to people impacted by crime or victimization because of established role, core of relationships and faith perspective that speaks to the need for meaning that is so pervasive in the human experience of suffering
Victims in Crisis

- Where do victims turn and why?
  - 2 out of every 3 Americans are affiliated with some type of faith based group and approximately 1 out of every 4 Americans is an active member of such a community.
  - Research shows that in times of crisis, Churches and Law Enforcement, interchangeably are the first place people turn.
  - Religious organizations and institutions are plentiful in number and they are as diverse as the people within their communities. They are uniquely positioned to minister to the hurting, and are instruments of healing in responding to the disparities in their communities.
    - Often serve the underserved communities addressing their physical, mental and spiritual needs.

Why the Divide?

Faith Leaders Beliefs:
- In cases of intimate partner violence (IPV):
  - Secular Advocates encourage the victim to leave and don’t advocate for the entire family.
  - Secular Advocates stress separation and divorce rather than reconciliation and restoration.
  - Secular Advocates do not take the role of faith in the lives of the victim or perpetrator seriously.
  - Secular Advocates discount the voice of the Faith Community.
  - Secular Advocates often times work with their heads and not their hearts.
  - Philosophical Differences
- Failure To Communicate = Hurting Victims = Lost Lives

Why the Divide?

Victim Advocates Beliefs:
- Faith Leaders lack knowledge about Sexual & Domestic Violence and the impact on the entire family.
- Faith Leaders embrace and perpetuate myths.
- Faith Leaders re-victimize victims.
- Faith Leaders don’t trust secular advocates.
- Faith Leaders lack knowledge about community resources.
- Faith Leaders do not understand the impact of their influence in the lives of victims and perpetrators.
- Faith Leaders believe that Sexual & Domestic Violence is a private family matter.
- Faith Leaders don’t see it as a major issue in their churches.
- Failure To Communicate = Hurting Victims = Lost Lives
The Challenge of Working Together:
Building Bridges for Collaborative Action

Two critical questions:
1. Are churches safe places to disclose that you have been violated?
2. Are community agencies safe places to disclose that you are religious?


Bridging The Divide

- Recognize that we speak different languages and codes but desire similar things
- Come to the table valuing and respecting one another’s experience
- Come to the table willing to share one another’s experience (recognizing that we all are experts within our own experiences)
- Come to the table willing to be a student
- Respect the different routes to the same destination

Faith & Compassion

“Compassion can’t be measured in dollars and cents. It does come with a price tag, but that price tag isn’t the amount of money spent. The price tag is love, being able to see people as they can be and not as they are.”

Former Congressman J.C. Watts, Faith In Action... A New Vision for Church-State Cooperation in Texas Executive Summary, December 1996
Joint Trainings of Faith Leaders and Victim Advocates

A Successful Collaboration

SART/CRCC Faith Based Partnerships
- What training and cross training opportunities might there be?
- Who could your champions be within the various Faith Communities?
- What communities would you like to be reaching?
- How can you build trust and rapport?
- How can we equip Faith leaders with the tools to work with victims and refer them for services?
- How can Faith leaders equip us to work with their congregations?
- How can you incorporate into your SART?
- How can you incorporate into ongoing activities in the Faith community?
Available Tools

- Clergy Tool Kit
- Clergy Point Card
- PSA’s

Clergy Tool Kit

- Can be used by anyone in leadership within the faith community
- Contains tools and knowledge to assist leaders when their parishioners are faced with DV or SA
- Series of trainings
- Best practices
- Community resources

Clergy Tool Kit

I. What is Domestic Violence?
II. The Intergenerational Impact of Domestic Violence
III. What Ministers and Clergy Should Know
IV. Proactive Strategies for Prevention, Protection and Collaboration
Training PSA

References

- Speaking of Faith: Domestic Violence Programs and the African American Church (2011) What Churches Can Do pp 60-70 (Institute on Domestic violence in the African American Community: University of Minnesota, Dr. Olver-Williams, Rev. J.R. Thicklin
- Toolkit to End Violence Against Women: Chapter 12: Engaging Religious, Spiritual and Faith Based Groups and Organizations (From the National Advisory Council on Violence Against Women)

Thank You

- A Special Thanks to End Violence Against Women International (EVAW) for the opportunity to present to the conference participants. We trust that you have been inspired to work together to end sexual and domestic violence and serve those impacted by it.
- Thank You for your dedication to building bridges and relationships.
- Destiny By Choice is available to come and speak to your organizations and or churches, synagogues, mosques or temples. We are available on a consultant basis as well, please inquire of your presenter about these and other opportunities.
- Contact Pastor J.R. Thicklin and have him and his organization come and address your organization, agency or church. www.destinybychoice.org pastorjthicklin@destinybychoice.org or (561) 439-3745 or Nicole Bishop at Nicoleb@pbcgov.org
**Do’s and Don’ts**

- **DON’T** offer couples counseling.
- **DO** assess for immediate danger.

- **DON’T** ask a congregant what she did to provoke the abuse. There is no excuse for domestic violence.
- **DO** place responsibility for the violence unequivocally on the perpetrator.

- **DON’T** pressure a victim to leave.
- **DO** educate them and provide them with appropriate resources.

- **DON’T** break confidentiality by disclosing information, discussing your concerns, or providing advice to the abuser without the victim’s explicit consent.
- **DO** assure confidentiality to the extent possible under the law.

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**Examples of safety planning include:**
- Obtaining a court order for protection
- Relocation to a safe place to stay
- Packing important belongings such as birth certificates and passports
- Keeping a bag packed and an extra set of keys available in case of emergency.

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**For proper safety planning and crisis intervention, refer a victim to:**

**Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center**

1-866-891-7273

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**Our communities are torn by violence, our families are destroyed by violence, our faith is tested by violence. We have an obligation to respond.”**

—Pastoral Message, U.S. Catholic Conference, 1994

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43-60% of people turn first to religious leaders during a crisis.

Prayer and faith are the most widely used methods of coping with traumatic life events.

Enhance victim safety and batterer accountability.

Provide helpful resources on domestic abuse.

Provide support and inspiration.

2 million injuries and 1,300 deaths of men and women are caused each year as a result of domestic violence. It is the most common cause of injury to women.

Women are 70x more likely to be killed after leaving than at any other time during the relationship.

29% of all sexual assaults of adult married women were perpetrated by her husband. The chances of spousal rape rise by 70% in DV relationships.

In over 50% of child sexual abuse cases where the victim knows his or her abuser, it’s a family member who has also committed acts of domestic abuse.

Power and control

Physical abuse (but not always physically violent)

Verbal abuse

Sexual abuse

Financial abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse

Intimidation and threats

Coercion

Accusations and jealousy

Constant togetherness or lack of independence

Abuse is cyclical and recurrent

Isolation and withdrawal from family and friends

Low self-esteem

Weight loss

Medical problems

Depression

Anger

Guilt and self-blame

Impulsive behaviors

Paranoia

Anxiety and fear
CLERGY TOOL KIT addressing
DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

“The Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence and Abuse”
Message from Palm Beach County Victim Services Director Nicole Bishop:

Palm Beach County Division of Victim Services developed this resource in partnership with Reverend J.R. Thicklin of Destiny by Choice as part of the Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program. Victim Service providers, members of our multidisciplinary teams such as the Sexual Assault Response Team and the Domestic Violence Council have seen firsthand how the role of faith impacts survivors. In our community, we wanted to find a way to bridge the unspoken divide between secular first responders and non-secular first responders. In doing so, our hope is to learn to value and respect one another’s experience and achieve our ultimate joint goal of healing for the survivor.

Nicole Bishop, M.S.W., Director
Palm Beach County Victim Services

Message from Destiny by Choice Chief Executive Officer Reverend J.R. Thicklin:

The Clergy Tool Kit is a resource anyone in leadership within the faith community can use. The kit includes tools and knowledge to assist leaders when their parishioner(s) are faced with the issue of domestic or sexual violence. It is accompanied by a series of trainings that are designed to bring a greater awareness of the dynamics of violence and how vital the role faith plays in the lives of those impacted. Faith Leaders are introduced to best practices used to address individuals and families that are affected and given a list of essential community resources designed to help address this serious social ill. This toolkit brings the Clergy/Faith leader alongside as an ally and a vital part of the safety and spiritual healing journey of victims. This toolkit is written in language that is an intersection between the faith and secular communities which can be used to assist anyone affected by domestic or sexual violence regardless of where they may be on the spiritual continuum.

Reverend J.R. Thicklin, CEO
Destiny by Choice, Inc.
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SECTION I:
WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?
PREFACE

There are many names, titles and descriptions that are associated with our Houses of Worship; including names like church, worship center, synagogue, temple and sanctuary just to mention a few. Regardless of what name one uses to identify their places of worship or center of faith, most would agree that they expect it to be a sanctuary from evil, a refuge and fortress of protection. The same should be found true when parishioners or members find themselves experiencing domestic and or sexual violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of gender, age, physical, mental or emotional ability, sexual orientation, gender expression/identity, socio-economic status, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, educational level or religious or political affiliation.

Based on the findings of the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2010 Executive Summary Violence by an Intimate Partner, more than one in three women (35.6%) and more than one in four men (28.5%) in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Among victims of intimate partner violence, more than 1 in 3 women experienced multiple forms of rape, stalking, or physical violence; 92.1% of male victims experienced physical violence alone, and 6.3% experienced physical violence and stalking. Nearly 1 in 10 women in the United States (9.4%) have been raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime and an estimated 16.9% of women and 8.0% of men have experienced sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. About 1 in 4 women (24.3%) and 1 in 7 men (13.8%) have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner (e.g., hit with a fist or something hard, beaten, slammed against something) at some point in their lifetime. An estimated 10.7% of women and 2.1% of men have been stalked by an intimate partner during their lifetime. Nearly half of all women and men in the United States have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime (48.4% and 48.8%, respectively). Most female and male victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner (69% of female victims; 53% of male victims) experienced some form of intimate partner violence for the first time before 25 years of age. Research shows that violence in one generation often continues into the next, creating a cycle of abuse; almost two-thirds of the men who abuse their partners were exposed to domestic violence, or were abused as children. In fact, exposure to domestic violence is the single best predictor of juvenile delinquency and adult criminality for males. Girls who are exposed to or experience teen dating or domestic violence are at increased risk for use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco use and engaging in sexually risky behavior. Therefore, it should be no surprise that domestic violence is an enormous public health and safety issue here in the state of Florida and the United States as a whole.

In 2016, 105,668 crimes of domestic violence were reported to Florida law enforcement agencies resulting in 63,193 arrests. During fiscal year 2015-2016, Florida's certified domestic violence centers provided 600,621 nights of emergency shelter to 16,362 survivors of domestic violence and their children. Advocates created 113,907 tailored safety plans, provided a total of 412,454 hours of advocacy and counseling services, and received 122,999 domestic violence hotline calls from individual seeking emergency services, information, and safety planning assistance.

Many more survivors of domestic violence do not report their abusers to the police or access services at due to reasons such as shame, fear, or being prevented from doing so by their abusers. For this reason, we may never know the true extent of abuse in our country and in our state.

Reducing and ultimately eradicating domestic violence cannot occur in its fullest measure without the commitment, dedication and collaboration of institutions rooted in the framework of our society wellbeing of our women, children and families. Leading that list should be the Communities of Faith,
educating communities to recognize the signs of domestic violence and meet the needs of victims and their families.

It would be grossly irresponsible of us to think none of our members or parishioners are represented in the mentioned statistical facts and numbers. Domestic & Sexual violence is equally prevalent within faith and secular communities. Although it is very tempting and easy to be blinded by the idea of only “picture-perfect” families attending our churches; the reality is, an abuser or victim can be someone in your classes, your committees and your sanctuary. You must know how to respond for the safety of the victim, the victim’s family and your faith community. We encourage you to use this Clergy Toolkit on Domestic & Sexual Violence as a guide to create additional policies on how your faith community will respond when faced with domestic and or sexual violence.

Put an action plan into place to decide, before there is a crisis:

• How will our congregation respond to victims of domestic violence?

• How will we respond to those who choose to use abuse or violence against their partners or families?

• How will we respond if the victim/abuser is a leader or staff person in our faith community? There are numerous resources in Florida that provide services to victims and families affected by domestic & sexual violence.

Palm Beach County Victim Service & Certified Rape Crisis Center along with our Faith Base Partner Destiny By Choice, Inc. exist to serve you and assist you through educating and empowering you with the tools to help respond to the issue of domestic and sexual violence.

We would like to acknowledge the work of NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR’S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROTOCOL COMMITTEE for their extensive work in developing protocols used to address the issue of domestic violence.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Recognizing that “Our families are torn by violence. Our communities are destroyed by violence. Our faith is tested by violence. We have an obligation to respond. Violence -- in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world -- is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers” (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops 1994. Confronting a Culture of Violence).

It is the cry of many but the responsibility of us all and especially those of the Community of Faith to provide guidance, assistance to those impacted by domestic & sexual violence and social ills that destroy families by inflicting pain and abuse.

By sharing the unequivocal message that God never intends for any human being to be abused or oppressed by another, clergy can support and strengthen a victim’s faith in a loving and just God. This conviction can serve as an important resource for victims as they undertake the journey from an abusive relationship to a life of peace. Your office or sanctuary may be the first place an abuser or victim of domestic violence seeks help. A person of faith will most likely reach out first to his/her own faith community in times of trouble. Therefore, well-informed, trained and committed faith leaders are often in the best position to provide immediate support and referrals to domestic and sexual violence crisis centers and other community resources. Appropriate response is crucial. This is the only hope for preventing further abuse. The Clergy Tool Kit for Domestic & Sexual Violence is a series of trainings and seminars
accompanied by educational materials that is designed to help equip the Clergy and the Faith Community to better serve in the capacity of being a Bridge to Hope & Healing in prevention and intervention of domestic and sexual violence. The intention and purpose of the Toolkit is to better inform, educate and empower clergy how to better define domestic and sexual violence, the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence and how to intervene and recognize it when you see or hear it, the Do’s and Don'ts of addressing this issue with victims, perpetrators and their congregation at large. The protocols is to provide all religious and lay leaders of Florida and nationally with an action plan to safely respond to families in their faith communities who are experiencing domestic violence. We invite and encourage you to participate in our state’s effort to end domestic and sexual violence by incorporating suggestions found here to develop your faith community’s response. To this end, these protocols will identify and discuss some key domestic and sexual violence related concerns, and outline specific points of action for prevention, crisis intervention and support. We have included a number of topics regarding religious rituals and themes, to assist faith leaders in identifying the numerous ways in which they can educate themselves and families on the issue of domestic violence. This is not an all-inclusive list and we encourage you to adapt these protocols in a way that will honor your tenets and beliefs, while supporting victims and holding batterers accountable. To avoid feeling shamed or re-victimized, victims of domestic violence need validation and support in concert with a communal response to their safety needs. The community must jointly deny abusers’ justifications and hold them accountable for their actions. This is the only hope for preventing further abuse. Develop your faith community’s response. To this end, these protocols will identify and discuss some key domestic violence related concerns, and outline specific points of action for prevention, crisis intervention and support. We have included a number of topics regarding religious rituals and themes, to assist faith leaders in identifying the numerous ways in which they can educate themselves and families on the issue of domestic violence. This is not an all-inclusive list and we encourage you to adapt these protocols in a way that will honor your tenets and beliefs, while supporting victims and holding batterers accountable. While this protocol has been written to address communities of all faiths, our focus must be to educate these communities about the most effective response to the needs of victims and their families, rather than engaging in theological debate or discourse.

Finally, we conclude by simply stating that the Clergy Toolkit on Domestic and Sexual Violence is designed to equip and empower the Faith Leader to be confident and competent as it relates to the issue of domestic and sexual violence. Faith Leaders who participate in the Trainings will receive the designation of having completed the protocol thereby giving their parishioners the confidence and assurance that their clergy is equipped to walk them through this matter. We recognize that there isn’t much, if any, course work on domestic and sexual violence offered in our seminaries or bible colleges, so we often lack knowledge to address domestic and sexual violence. Our ability to respond to this issue and all issues are predicated upon the tools that we have to work with. We believe that “if the only tool you have in your toolbox is a hammer, everything looks like a nail to you.” The Clergy Toolkit gives you more tools to better address this great issue.

I. WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

The Family Violence Prevention Fund defines domestic violence as “a pattern of coercive behavior that is used by one person to gain power and control over another, which may include physical violence, sexual
violence, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and economic control”. This definition is much broader than is typically recognized by our state laws for obtaining protective orders. In the state of Florida, Domestic Violence is defined under Florida Statue 741.28 as such “Domestic violence” means any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household member by another family or household member. “Family or household member” means spouses, former spouses, persons related by blood or marriage, persons who are presently residing together as if a family or who have resided together in the past as if a family, and persons who are parents of a child in common regardless of whether they have been married. With the exception of persons who have a child in common, the family or household members must be currently residing or have in the past resided together in the same single dwelling unit.

Domestic violence may differ in terms of the severity of abuse and there are instances in which there is no physical violence at all in the relationship. Below are some examples of the manipulative and coercive tactics that abusers may use:

- **Emotional Abuse**—criticizes or ridicules the victim and/or family and friends; yells or swears at the victim; sabotages the victim’s relationships with others; disregards the victim’s feelings.
- **Medical Abuse**—refuses to allow the victim to seek medical treatment for injuries or even for routine care; pushes the victim to use/abuse alcohol or other drugs.
- **Spiritual Abuse**—mocks the victim’s moral values and religious beliefs, and creates situations to test them; uses quotes and misconstrues scripture to justify abuse; will not let the victim practice her/his faith.
- **Economic Abuse**—maintains control over all household income, makes the financial decisions and withholds money from the victim; harasses the victim at work to get him/her fired.
- **Legal Abuse**—threatens to report victim to child protection services; threatens lengthy court battles if victim tries to leave; ignores restraining orders or child support orders.
- **Sexual Abuse**—feels entitled to sex and refuses to take ‘no’ for an answer, makes the victim participate in forced sexual acts that are shameful, demeaning and often painful to the victim.
- **Psychological Abuse**—minimizes or denies the abuse; deprives the victim of sleep; threatens to harm the victim or children; destroys the victim’s belongings; hurts pets.
- **Monitoring/Stalking**—tracks mileage on the victim’s vehicle; monitors the victim’s phone calls and computer usage; makes victim account for time spent during the day; and follows the victim.
- **Physical Abuse**—spits on, grabs, pinches, shoves, pulls, slaps, hits, elbows, knees, bites, kicks, punches, strangles, smothers, burns, stabs (etc.) the victim.

The terms “family violence”, “intimate partner violence” and “domestic abuse” are often used interchangeably to describe this pattern of power and control of one person over another within the context of a current or former intimate or familial relationship. The victim can be related to the abuser through blood or marriage, may have resided with the abuser or is/was in a dating relationship. Domestic violence can happen in any family dynamic.
The tactics used by abusive partners are often illustrated by the “Power and Control Wheel,” created by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota.

THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Lenore Walker first described the “Cycle of Violence” in her book, “The Battered Woman Syndrome.” While not true for all abusive relationships, abusive behavior often follows a cycle that increases in intensity and frequency over time. Without successful help or intervention, the violence is likely to get worse. These are the “phases” of abuse:

PHASE ONE: TENSION-BUILDING
Abuser is edgy, irritable, and possessive. The increasingly controlling behaviors may last for hours, days or even months. The victim may withdraw, sense the tension and may indicate a feeling of “walking on eggshells”.

PHASE TWO: EXPLOSION
The abuser’s aggression is evident and the violence may be explosive or unpredictable. This is when physical and/or sexual violence tends to occur. Violence may include breaking objects, abusing pets, threatening and/or strangling the victim.

PHASE THREE: CALM
Also known as the “honeymoon phase”. The abuser may act remorseful, apologize and make promises to the victim to get help or be a better partner. The victim often wants to believe the person due to love and hope that things will change. The abuser may deny or justify the abuse or blame the victim.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

A 2005 national survey conducted by Family Circle/Lifetime Television reports that 96% of adults believe that verbal abuse can do just as much damage as physical abuse. However, most victims of physical violence say that the emotional abuse is, by far, the worst to experience. Why? With broken bones or bruises, there is “proof” of their victimization. Physical scars usually heal over time, but if a
victim of emotional abuse does not get appropriate help for her/his psychological scars, the damage can last a lifetime.

Because there are no visible scars or wounds, victims of emotional abuse may have difficulty seeing themselves as victims of domestic violence. This is often true for the community-at-large as well; without physical proof of the abuse, communities may be less empathetic to a victim’s dilemma.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual abuse tactics can inflict considerable harm on victims of domestic violence, making them question their spiritual values and beliefs. Here are some examples of spiritual abuse used by a perpetrator:

- Abusers cite scripture to justify abusive, dominating or oppressive behavior.
- Abusers deny their partners the freedom to practice the religion of their choice.
- Abusers force their partners to violate their religious belief.
- Abusers shame or belittle their partners for their religious practices.
- Abusers make oppressive demands based on their interpretation of scriptures or other religious teachings (e.g., “the scriptures say that you need to obey me because you are my wife”).
- Abusers instill religious guilt for not doing what they want them to do (e.g., “How can you call yourself religious if you don’t forgive me?”)
- Abusers’ sense of marital entitlement causes them to justify their sexual demands, including forced sex (i.e., marital rape).
- Abusers involve or force children to witness ritual abuse (e.g., sacrificing pets).
- Abusers manipulate others in their religious communities to control and ostracize their partners.

Because abusers will misuse scriptures to justify physical, sexual and other abuses, spiritual leaders must guard against unwittingly corroborating an abuser’s claims of “head of household” without expounding upon their responsibilities in this role. They should be encouraged to model respect, mutuality and non-violence.

WHAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ISN’T

Domestic violence is not a disagreement, a marital spat or an anger management problem. An abuser is not out of control; in fact, abusers know that violence, or the threat of violence, will serve to control the victim. An abuser will make the choice about how much violence to use, and when and where to use it. This decision making process shows that an abuser is in fact, in control.

On occasion, when people have difficulty distinguishing the victim from the abuser, they will use the term “mutual domestic violence”. By definition, domestic violence cannot be mutual. However, there are many forms of violence that are described interchangeably as “domestic violence,” which often results in a victim being mislabeled as the abuser:

- **Resistance Violence**: Violence that is committed by a victim in reaction to the abuse that s/he is experiencing, and includes defending her/himself from an attack.
• **Pre-emptive Violence**: Violence that is committed by a victim because s/he is anticipating an attack by the abuser or has been “walking on eggshells” for so long, s/he is trying to precipitate an end to the tension. The victim often knows that the longer the tension builds; the risk of injury is increased.

• **Situational Violence**: Violence that happens in reaction to the victim’s circumstances; there is no pattern, or it is out of the victim’s character to use violence.

• **Mutual Violence**: This differs from domestic violence because violence or aggressive behaviors may be used but not in the context of one person using those behaviors to make the other partner feel afraid and controlled. Overall, the power imbalance and tactics found on the power and control wheel most often do not apply.

**WARNING SIGNS**

While every abuser is different, they might employ some of the same types of abusive and controlling tactics. Here are some signs to look for:

• Extreme jealousy: often mistaken for love, it is indicative of a lack of trust.
• Possessiveness: abuser views the partner as an object to be owned.
• Verbal abuse: meant to build up the abuser by tearing down the partner.
• Need to control: often explained as concern for the partner’s safety, it is actually a tactic meant to isolate partner from her or his support system.
• “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” personality: a manipulative method to get power and control over an intimate partner with alternate threats and kindness.
• Expectation of rigid gender roles: often use societal expectations of men’s and women’s roles and negative stereotypes to control their partners. Gender roles and expectations can use used in both heterosexual and same sex relationships.
• Cruelty to animals: shows a lack of empathy and complete disregard for another living being’s pain.
MAKING THE BREAK

Leaving is a process, not an event. Victims often need to overcome a number of issues when coming to a decision to find safety apart from their abuser. Victims may feel that they have to justify leaving someone they and their children may love. Victims also have to overcome the social, cultural and religious constraints of their relationships. They must then find all of the economic resources and support systems necessary to make it on their own.

Many victims who are parents finally decide to leave because they recognize that their children are hurting from the abuse that they are being exposed to and are potentially experiencing first hand. However, when courts become involved through protective orders or divorce actions, abusers maybe given equal rights to their children—and victims may feel that they cannot protect their children when they are alone with the abusers. When victims realize that they are powerless to protect their children in these circumstances, they often make the difficult decision to stay.

Once a victim gains the courage to make the break, community systems may give her/him conflicting messages about whether s/he should stay or go. Leaving the abusive relationship is often the most dangerous time. That is when the abuser has lost control, and is willing to do anything to gain back the power and control.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

Sexual Violence
For every single African American/Black woman that reports a rape, there are at least 15 who do not. Approximately 40% of Black women report coercive contact of a sexual nature by age 18. The National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) found that 18.8% of African American women reported rape in their lifetime. Stereotypes regarding African American women’s sexuality, including terms like “Black jezebel,” “promiscuous” and “exotic”, perpetuate the notion that African American women are willing participants in their own victimization. However, these myths only serve to demean, obstruct appropriate legal remedies and minimize the seriousness of sexual violence perpetrated against African American women.

Domestic Violence
Black and White American women reported similar rates of rape in national high school, college, and community samples. Moreover, Black victim-survivors suffered physical injuries at the same rate as their White counterparts and they both experienced many of the same immediate and long-term psychological responses to sexual victimization. However, similarities in the prevalence and the traumatic aftermath of sexual violence may conceal some unique racial experiences. Among African American women in contemporary U.S. society, most rapes are interracial which is Black-on-Black assaults rather than interracial, as is the case for most racial/ethnic groups, including White American women. Although Black women have been raped by strangers, more often their perpetrators were acquaintances such as intimate partners. Husbands also have sexually assaulted their wives. In a San Francisco sample, 18% of African American women had been raped by their spouse. Finally in a sample of predominantly low-income African American female veterans, the women who were sexually assaulted during active duty were victimized by a military peer or supervisor. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, an estimated 1.3 million American women experience Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence each year. Women make up 85% of the victims of
Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence. Despite this, most cases are never reported to police and most women are victimized by people they know.

Compared to white women, black women are almost three times as likely to experience death as a result of Domestic violence/Intimate Partner Violence (DV/IPV). And while Black women only make up 8% of the population, 22% of homicides that result from DV/IPV happen to Black Women and 29% of all victimized women, making it one of the leading causes of death for Black women ages 15 to 35. Statistically, Black Women experience sexual assault and DV/IPV at disproportionate rates and have the highest rates of intra-racial violence against us than any other group. They are also less likely to report or seek help when they are victimized.

Racism and sexism are two of the biggest obstacles that black women in America face and are the main reasons that they suffer disproportionate rates of abuse. However, because many Black women and men believe racism is a bigger issue than sexism, black women tend to feel obligated to put racial issues ahead of sex-based issues. For Black women, a strong sense of cultural affinity and loyalty to community and race renders many silent, their stories often go untold.

Spiritual beliefs and negative views about mental health services also factor into why many black women remain with abusive partners. One in three Black Americans who need mental health treatment actually receive it, and blacks are more likely to rely on religious guidance and faith-based practices when working through relationship issues. Religious beliefs often discourage divorce, encourage forgiveness and occasionally condemn those who seek psychiatric services instead of relying on faith. Black women’s perceptions of what constitutes abuse have been influenced by their negotiation of spiritual and mental health beliefs and how they have shaped paradigms in the black community. Researchers have also found that Black women report feeling more obligation to fight back than to report abuse and that is reflected in the disproportionate rates of DV/IPV reported by Black men. The black community attempts to embody the “strong black woman” stereotype have often done more harm than good. We must all work to end the marginalization of black women and focus more energy on amplifying community voices and sharing what we go through at home, at work and in our communities.

Perpetrators commit a wide range of sexually abusive behaviors. In addition to attempted and completed rape, Black adolescent and adult survivors reported forced oral sex and unwanted genital and breast fondling. In college samples, perpetrators used physical force or verbal threats to gain sexual compliance. Some Black female undergraduates submitted to sexual intercourse because they felt emotionally pressured or they believed that the rapist was so sexually aroused that it would be useless to try to resist. In a community sample, several Black women had survived brutal sexual assaults, including gang rapes and attacks by armed assailants.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN DIVERSE POPULATIONS

While anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, there are specific groups of people that may face more barriers in accessing and receiving assistance. This section briefly highlights some diverse populations and things to consider when addressing domestic violence within your faith community. Domestic violence victims come from diverse backgrounds and bring with them their own experiences, beliefs and values. While it may be difficult to know how to respond to all victims, understanding culturally competent practices may be helpful to faith leaders. Acknowledging and understanding how a victim self-identifies is important to building a relationship that is based on trust and respect. Some
diverse populations are difficult to reach in the community, due in part, to oppression and racism in our society. Some things to consider include:

- Domestic violence can happen in both heterosexual and same sex relationships. It is important not to force someone to disclose her/his sexual orientation or gender identity and to keep that information confidential. Using gender neutral language such as partner or mirroring the victim’s language can be helpful when discussing the abuser and the violence. Remember that regardless of the size or sex of a victim or an abuser, domestic violence is always about one person trying to gain and maintain power and control.

- If someone is an immigrant or refugee, learning more about her/his culture and identity may be helpful in responding to the abuse s/he is experiencing. Victims in the immigrant and refugee community may have limited to no English proficiency. If possible, use a certified or confidential interpreter to communicate with the victim. Try to avoid using family, friends and members of their community as interpreters, as it may not be safe for the victim. Immigrants may not understand what domestic violence is or may be fearful of deportation and arrest. If you are unsure of the domestic violence laws or how best to explain what domestic violence is, refer to your local crisis center.

- Many elders and other adults with disabilities are often dependent on caregivers to assist them with activities of daily living. These individuals are vulnerable to abuse and neglect by those entrusted with their care. The abuse may include physical abuse, harassment, emotional abuse, neglect that deprives the adult of needed service or support, sexual abuse or exploitation. Abuse may occur in a number of places including the adult’s home, a nursing home, group living home, or in a relative’s home. Faith leaders are among the few professionals whose responsibilities regularly take them into homes and care facilities and are in a position to observe signs of abuse and neglect by a family member or caregiver. Reinforce that the abuse is not the victim’s fault and that help is available.

The State of Florida has a mandatory elderly and incapacitated adult abuse reporting law, Florida law requires the reporting of known or suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect of vulnerable adults (elderly or disabled). The Florida Abuse Hotline receives reports 24 hours a day call 1-800-962-2873 or 1-800-96-ABUSE report online at https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us. If you suspect or know of a vulnerable adult in immediate danger, call 911.

ANIMAL ABUSE

Pet and animal abuse is cited as an early indicator for domestic violence. Abusers will often use violence against family pets and animals as a way to abuse his/her intimate partner and/or children. According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, “…numerous small studies have indicated that in homes where victims of domestic violence keep animals, anywhere from 70 to 80 percent of the animals have been abused or threatened with abuse”. Many victims may not want to leave their animals behind or with the abuser out of fear of the animal being harmed or even killed. It is important to acknowledge that many people have attachments to their pets and may even consider them part of the family. If a victim needs or wants to leave a violent relationship, help her/him to find resources for the temporary or long-term placement of their pets or animals.
SECTION II:
THE INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
II. THE INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Children, like adults, are affected by domestic violence. Each year, an estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence against their mothers or female caretakers by family members (American Psychological Association, Violence and the Family: Report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family (1996), p.11). Children who are impacted by domestic violence may have a variety of responses to what they are seeing, hearing and feeling. It is important to note that each child will have his/her own way of coping with the violence and behaviors associated with the exposure. Children may develop resiliency through positive interaction and relationships with their non-abusive parent, other trustworthy adults and peers. As a faith leader, you may have the opportunity to help children learn alternatives to violence to reinforce that their abused parent deserves respect and to reassure children that the violence is not their fault.

Studies have found that in 30-60% of families where there is an adult victim of violence, the children have also been abused (Edelson, 1999). Abused or neglected children can be reported to the Florida Department of Children & Families through the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE, TTY 1-800-955-8771, and fax at 1-800-914-0004 as well as the new online reporting tool at www.myflfamilies.com. This new reporting tool is available to professionally-mandated reporters, as well as the general public, as an additional avenue to report suspected cases of abuse, neglect, abandonment or exploitation of children or vulnerable adults.
CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Children who are exposed to domestic violence experience it in different ways. Children are remarkable in their resiliency, but they must be protected from continued exposure to the victim’s abuser in order to heal. It is particularly important to note changes in children’s behaviors. Here are some symptoms of children who live domestic violence.

**DEVELOPMENTAL:**
- Born with medical conditions
- Cognitive development is delayed
- Delay of self-care skills
- Develop more slowly vs. children from non-abusive homes
- Minimal/delayed speech, muteness
- Motor development delayed
- Delayed ability to toilet-train
- Incontinence (after previously being toilet-trained)
- Regression
- Inability to communicate needs
- Inability to develop sound reasoning/thinking skills
- Learn inappropriate ways to deal with the world

(Note: Look for behaviors in opposite extremes)

**COGNITIVE:**
- Attempts to understand/explain violence
- Intrusive thoughts and images of violence
- Develops tolerance for violence
- Understands that using violence gets needs/desires met
- Sees violence as a way to gain power
- Blames others for own behaviors
- Believes anger equals someone getting hurt
- Views assault as normal
- Confuses love and violence
- Limited understanding of violence
- “Black and white” thinking or reasoning
- Inflexibility in gender roles
- Blurred parental boundaries
- Concern about disrupted routines
- Fantasizes about rescuing victim/family
- Concentration and memory deficiencies
- Short-term memory of events
- Inability to express needs/wants
- Inability to learn “cause and effect”

**BEHAVIORAL:**
- Aggressive, acting out (usually boys)
- Withdrawn, unresponsive, passive (usually girls)
- Bedwetting (after toilet training)
- Disturbed sleep, sleepwalking, nightmares
- Changes in eating habits
- Crying, whining, distress
- Excessive/extreme attention seeking
- High risk play/activities
- Reenacts trauma through talk and play
- Hypervigilant, “startle” reactions
- Poor impulse control
- Rapid defenses—aloof, sarcastic, defensive
- Disobedient, defiant, tantrums
- Fighting with other children
- Uses violence to resolve conflict
- Hurting other children or animals
- Early interest in drugs/alcohol, substance abuse
- Premature/increased sexual activity, promiscuity
- Running away
- Self-abuse
- Stealing, shoplifting

**PHYSICAL:**
- Born prematurely
- Failure to thrive
- Asthma
- Chronic illness
- Headaches
- Range of physical ailments (stomachaches to ulcers)
- Becoming victim of child abuse (physical, sexual)
- Unintended injuries
- Desensitized to pain
- Eating disorders
- No energy for normal activities
- Tired, lethargic
- Sleeping disorders
- Poor personal hygiene
- Psychosomatic complaints
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Suicide

**EMOTIONALLY:**
- Anger, rage, irritability
- Explosive feelings
- Angry about violence/chaos in life
- Anxiety, fear, panic, nervousness
- Fear of abandonment/separation
- Fear of abuse/retaliation by abuser
- Fear of expressing feelings
- Fear of going to sleep
- Fear of personal injury
- Fear of male or loud voices
- Confusion, numbness
- Depression, sadness, listlessness
- Embarrassment, shame
- Emotionally (cont’d):
  - Guilt, self-blame
  - Helpless to intervene
  - Hopelessness, powerlessness
  - Insecure, low self-esteem
- Stressed, worried
- Feels responsible to stop violence
- Feels responsible to protect victim
- Grief over losing one parent/home
- Grief over losing positive image of abuser
- Conflicted feelings towards parents
- Suicidal ideation

**ACADEMICALLY:**
- Short attention span, inability to concentrate
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Over-achieving/under-achieving
- Declining school performance
- Absenteeism
- Delinquency/truancy

(Note: Later in life, over-achieving child tends to become perfectionist, causing problems with self image and adult relationships.)

**SOCIALLY:**
- Abusive towards victim
- Anger towards victim for allowing abuse
- Anger towards victim for not protecting child
- Acts out violently, sometimes to divert violence
- Aggression/cruelty towards others
- Ambivalent about family separation
- Ambivalent allegiance to one parent
- Anxious attachment to parents
  - Controlling, possessive, manipulative
  - Entitled; believes he has special rights and privileges, without responsibilities
  - Selfish and self-centered
  - Attitude of superiority
- Hypersensitive to danger cues
- May become family caretaker
- Parentification/role reversal
- Conflicted loyalties
- Ambivalent towards abuser
- Identifying with abuser
- Embarrassed by family
- Distrustful of adults
- Disturbed relationships with peers
- Problems with peers
- Inability to create/express/honor boundaries
- Engage in explosive relationships (as perpetrator or victim)
- Accepts violence/abuse in relationships
- Prematurely serious dating relationships
- Relationships are stormy, intense-end abruptly
- Explosive/violent interpersonal behavior
- Inhibited/passive social behavior
- Isolated, lonely
- Disassociative
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of social skills
- Poor anger managing/problem-solving skills
- Antisocial behavior
- Bullying, destruction of property
- Drawn into Violence by:
  - Seeing/hearing violence
  - Choosing one parent to defend
  - Attempting to intervene
  - Getting injured during violent incident toward victim
  - Being abused to gain compliance by victim
  - Being physically or sexually abused
  - Being coerced by abuser to abuse, or participate in attack
  - Attempting to killing the abuser
  - Being interrogated by abuser
  - Being used as a “spy”
  - Being used as a confidante
  - Having to call police for help
  - Running for help
  - Being removed from non-violent parent
  - Being restricted from contact with others

**THE BATTERER AS PARENT:**
- Won’t allow victim to meet children’s needs
- Is a negative parenting role model
- Is under involved/superficially involved in children’s education/activities
- Sabotages victim’s parent role by using physical/verbal abuse in front of children
- Behaviors contradict statements
- Externalizes responsibility for his behavior
- Denies, minimizes, and blames
TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Teens, just like adults, can be subjected to abusive tactics by their dating partners, including; emotional abuse, jealousy, isolation, stalking and physical violence (see Appendix H “Teen Power and Control Wheel”). In fact, a 2006 study conducted by Liz Claiborne Inc. noted that 1 in 5 teens who have been in a serious relationship report being hit, slapped or pushed by their partner. Teen dating violence is not acceptable and is a serious matter. Teens need to know that it is never their fault and that help is available to them.
SECTION III:
WHAT MINISTERS AND CLERGY SHOULD KNOW
III. WHAT MINISTERS AND CLERGY SHOULD KNOW

THE CLERGY COMMUNITY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Research supported that faith plays a vital role within our communities in times of crisis and trauma. Our communities are torn by violence, our families are destroyed by violence, our faith is tested by violence; it is incumbent upon us to respond to the violence. Clergy and the church cannot totally address issues alone. Destiny by Choice has provided some tips to aid clergy and members of the faith community addressing issues associated with domestic violence in their congregation and community.

Congregants value your leadership, guidance and need your support. “Start By Believing” Not believing the woman or victim who discloses abuse or control issues in their marriage or intimate relationship can be very disheartening and demoralizing to them. Victims, both women and men, need to be validated and believed by you without judgement. If you are uncomfortable or not knowledgeable about domestic violence; refer victims to a domestic violence agency for confidential counseling and support.

Confidentiality and safety must be a main priority in supporting the victim. Breaking confidentiality puts the victim/member at risk for harm and danger. Any victim dealing with physical or sexual abuse is in real danger. Safety must be the priority. Listen to the victim and offer support but do not share with his/her partner without getting permission to do so. This is a big issue. Use wisdom and do not violate the victim’s choice as it relates to confronting the abuser.
Do not confront an abusive husband or partner without regard for the safety of the wife or victim; one never knows how dangerous a situation might be in reality or how it could escalate. Confrontation may come later, but only when the victim is not in danger.

Don’t let your congregants perish for the lack of knowledge
Believing your church doesn't need to be educated about domestic violence or that education will a cause more harm, is like believing hearing the Word will cause less faith. There is evidence that domestic abuse education in churches actually helps women come forward and get help. In addition, education motivates men (abusers or potential abusers) to identify issues of anger and control. Keeping domestic abuse "swept under the rug" only enables the problem.

Empowering your congregants about domestic violence helps breaks the silence
Statistics prove that 1 out of 4 women have suffered from domestic violence. It is likely, therefore, that 25% of women in our churches have or have dealt with abuse by their partner; therefore, being in denial about it occurring in your church actually perpetuates hurt and harm rather than help and support to any victims or congregants in your church. Some research has shown that 95% of church women report they have never heard a specific message on abuse preached from the pulpit of their church.

Misinterpretation of the scriptures empowers the abuser and hurts the victim
Teaching a wrong emphasis of headship and submission justifies abuse to the abuser and puts the victim in spiritual and physical bondage. Many battered women have been encouraged to silently apply "the submissive wife" principle of first Peter third verse but have ignored Ephesians 5:21 “Submitting yourselves to one another in the reverence of Christ”. Many well-meaning pastors and counselors have sent wives back into abusive homes after quoting the apostle Peter's words in first Peter third verse which reads, , wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear" (1 Pet. 3:1-6).

Pastors and leaders need to emphasize that submission does not mean acceptance of disrespect and abuse in a marriage relationship but rather, to align oneself with one another.

Faith Leaders needs to be both understanding and empathetic to victims
Scolding a woman for returning to an abusive relationship does not minister Christ nor support. Women/victims tend to return to abusive relationships or repeat these relationships. It's important to recognize how powerless these women feel. Fear keeps them going back and fear tells them to leave. Continue to be involved with them. Pray for these victims that their eyes would be opened and they will have the courage to leave for good when the situation doesn't change and continues to be dangerous. Scolding the victim takes on the same tone as the abuser and causes the victim to feel both fearful and indecisive.

Faith Leaders need to know the far-reaching impact of domestic violence
Ministers need to know domestic violence impacts more than just the victim and perpetrator, but also children, that extended family and the church family. Remaining silent about the issue of domestic
violence only gives consent to abusive behavior. Speaking up and out about domestic violence from the pulpit helps to create an environment where victims feel safe to come forth and abusers hear God’s heart of disapproval of abusive relationships.

HOW TO RESPOND TO VICTIMS IN CRISIS

A thorough understanding of domestic abuse is essential when offering help to a victim. Often, victims are viewed to be responding in an irrational manner to what others may view as a rational situation. Victims of domestic abuse often use survival and coping skills that are very rational in the face of irrational situations. The victim is taking a very courageous step in coming to you for help and that courage must be met with equal compassion and understanding.

If you are working with the victim on an ongoing basis, you may need to limit your interactions with the abuser in order to assure the victim’s safety and trust. You receive a call from a victim who has been abused and is asking for help in the immediate crisis:

- First ask the victim if s/he is safe, and if the police need to be called.
- Do not go to the home.
- Do not attempt to work with both parties at the time of crisis. The abuser may still be dangerous to the victim and/or the children and may threaten or harm anyone who tries to interfere. Offer to call the police.
- Ask the victim if the immediate violence is over and what assistance is needed such as medical attention? Will the abuser come back if s/he has left? Are the children safe? Does the victim have somewhere safe to go and the means to get there?
- Provide the victim with the phone number for the 24-hour Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline (866-644-3574) to speak with a crisis center advocate. If you call on a victim’s behalf, you should know that domestic violence programs need to speak to the victim directly for intake into their shelters. Empower and encourage the victim to make the call.
- Take the lead from the victim to discern the victim’s needs. If the victim asks for privacy while talking to the crisis center, provide it. If the victim indicates that s/he does not want to be alone, give your support.
- If the victim chooses not to go into shelter or speak with a crisis center advocate, help the victim safety plan (see Appendix P “Personalized Safety Plan”).
- Recognize your limitations and do not give help beyond what you have been trained to do. If you need assistance to help the victim develop an effective safety plan, call the local crisis center for suggestions.

GUIDELINES FOR TALKING TO THE VICTIM

When a victim has finally made the decision to come forward for help, it is essential that you provide nonjudgmental support. How you react may determine whether or not the victim seeks help in the future.

The information you will receive from the victim may be sensitive and difficult to hear. Especially if you have an ongoing relationship with the entire family, the victim’s allegations may seem unbelievable or exaggerated.
If the victim is female and expresses discomfort in speaking with a male clergy person, make every effort to refer her to a woman clergy person. If one is not available, ask how you can provide her services in a way that would make her more comfortable. If you are a female working with a male victim who prefers to speak to a male clergy make every effort to accommodate his request.

**DO’S AND DON’TS WHEN TALKING TO THE VICTIM**

1. Protect confidentiality. The victim needs to know that information s/he shares with you will be protected by you, and only released to others when s/he has given you written permission to do so. Do let the victim know the limitations to confidentiality and your need to report any disclosure of child abuse/neglect. Do not confront the abuser with allegations or ask for the abuser’s side and do not share information with others who might bring information back to the abuser. Victim safety depends on this.

2. Believe the victim. The victim’s ability to trust you will grow in response to you expressing belief in all that the victim tells you. Remember that the victim is also likely to minimize, deny and blame him or herself for the violence done towards him or her. Doubting the victim will likely result in the victim not coming back for help and may make the victim feel cut off from other resources.

3. Listen with an open mind. Empty your mind of biases and prejudices; put aside your perceptions of this person and family. Focus your complete attention on all that the victim has to say; listen without judgment. Reiterate what the victim has said so s/he knows you have heard.

4. Ask direct and clarifying questions. Your ability to address this sensitive subject with candor will give the victim assurance that it is OK to talk about it. Do not use vague terms like ‘violence’ and ‘threats’. Help the victim name the abuse s/he is experiencing; use specific terms such as ‘hitting,’ ‘name-calling,’ ‘isolation,’ etc.

5. Be cautious in expressing emotion. It is good to be empathetic when listening to a victim recount his/her experiences. However, be careful not to react with disgust, anger, doubt or shock. Extreme reactions can trigger the victim or make the victim reluctant to continue to share her/his experience. Keep your emotions in check.

6. Address moral and religious concerns. A victim’s faith can be a powerful resource for survival or an unimaginable roadblock to safety. This is an opportunity to emphasize the love, safety and support found in faith traditions.

7. Give referrals, especially to the local crisis center. Offer to let the victim call the local crisis center to learn all of the options available to address the abuse and to create a safety plan. It is important for the victim to see that the faith community supports accessing outside resources to more completely address the victim’s needs. Have a resource handout ready and give appropriate referrals to community agencies, such as:
   a. Domestic violence service agencies
   b. Batterer intervention programs (call your local crisis center for contacts)
   c. Substance abuse programs (call your local crisis center for contacts)
   d. Counselors/therapists (call your local crisis center for contacts)
8. Express concern for the victim and children’s safety. Ask questions to better assess safety needs and help develop a safety plan. Encourage the victim to put away financial resources for an emergency. If the abuser remains in the faith community, plan ways to allow the victim to maintain fellowship while preserving safety. If the victim requests it, help the victim find a safe place to go.

9. Tell the victim s/he is not alone. Stress that domestic violence can happen to anyone. According to the 2000 Violence Against Women Survey, 24.8% of women and 7.6% of men will be physically and/or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Crisis centers provide peer support and information for all victims of domestic violence.

10. Respect and support the victim’s choices. Understand that the victim is the most knowledgeable about the relationship, and is capable of making the right decisions at the right time to protect her/himself and the family, even if that means staying with the abuser. Do not have expectations or pressure the victim to take action one way or another; outline the options and let the victim decide.

11. Acknowledge the victim’s courage and affirm that s/he is not responsible for the abuse. The best way to keep communication open is to let the victim know that faith tradition does not condone the abuser’s behavior, the victim did nothing to deserve the abuse and that the victim is doing the right thing by finding safety. Acknowledge the courage in coming forward; assure the victim that you will honor the disclosure and that the faith community will do what they can to provide support.

12. Set boundaries and know your limits. If something is beyond your expertise, make appropriate referrals and seek help from your local crisis center, community colleagues and other resources.

13. Do not physically touch a victim without permission. Many victims experience severe physical or sexual trauma and can be triggered by touch. Ask permission to hug, hold a victim’s hand, etc. Never become emotionally or sexually involved with a victim.

14. Do not ignore the abuse. Doing nothing may send a message to both the victim and the abuser that the abuse iscondoned by those who know about it. When someone says, “We don’t want to get involved” what the victim may hears is, “You’re not important enough for me to become involved” or “I don’t believe you”.
GUIDELINES FOR TALKING TO THE PARTNER WHO CHOOSES TO ABUSE

There is no typical abuser. Abusers can be any gender or of any sexual orientation. They are also from diverse socio-economic, racial, ethnic, religious and age groups. Many abusers are respected members of their community and are without criminal records. They are often well spoken and present very well to professionals evaluating their families.

Domestic abuse has no place in any loving, mutual, respectful partnership. It is not a family fight that has escalated out of control, nor is it caused by extreme stress. The victim or the victim’s personal problems do not cause domestic violence. Domestic violence is about entitlement—the abuser feels he/she has the right to treat their intimate partner in this manner.

The abuser is solely responsible for choosing to use violence against the victim and their children. The abuser alone should be held accountable for the behavior. Because abusers’ power and control depends on the violence being kept secret, they are vested in manipulating and controlling how you perceive them and their victims. They may disparage their victims, often in the guise of “just trying to help,” claiming that it is the victim who is the problem. From the outset, abusers may be charming. It is important that you recognize the various ways victims will minimize, deny and blame the victims for what they are perpetrate in their homes (see Appendix O, “Do’s and Don’ts with the Abusive Partner,” Faith Trust Institute).

DO’S AND DON’TS WHEN TALKING TO THE PARTNER WHO CHOOSES TO ABUSE

Do not disclose the victim’s allegations to the abuser and do not confront the abuser. Do not ask the abuser to confirm the victim’s story. To confront the abuser, even with the victim’s permission, puts the victim at great risk for harm. Never speak to the abuser unless the victim is first aware of your intentions and you know that the victim is safe. It is NOT your responsibility to confront the abuser. Do not reveal where the victim and/or children have gone for safety.

1. Meet in a public place or with other people around. Most abusers will only focus their rage on their intimate partner, but you still should be careful of your own safety. Prior to meeting with the abuser, find out the extent of the violence from the victim. Has the abuser assaulted anyone else? Under what circumstances?

2. Be prepared for the abuser to confront you. If the abuser becomes aware that the victim has spoken to you, s/he may seek you out to tell their ‘side’ of the story. The abuser may come to you to find out what the victim has said to you. The abuser needs you to believe that s/he is not at fault and will try to convince you that the fault for the abuse lies entirely with the victim or they will deny it altogether. Do not confirm or deny anything the victim has said to you or even whether you have spoken with the victim.

3. If the abuser is arrested, support accountability. It is inappropriate to advocate for the abuser to avoid legal consequences for the behavior or to provide a character witness for legal proceedings. The greatest chance for change lies with the abuser being held accountable for the violence.

4. If the abuser acknowledges any abusive behaviors, encourage him/her to accept responsibility. Let the abuser know unequivocally that violence is never okay, and that power and control have no part in a mutual, loving relationship. Ask the abuser to take responsibility for the behavior and invest the effort to change. Make appropriate referrals for services if the abuser is serious about his/her efforts to change his/her abusive behavior.
5. Beware of claims of a conversion experience. Often abusers will claim that they have “found God” in an attempt to gain access to the victim or persuade the faith leader to pressure the victim for reconciliation. Avoid urging the victim to reconcile based on this claim and don’t confuse remorse for getting caught with true repentance. If the repentance is genuine, it will be a great strength and comfort to the abuser as the accountability process progresses; if not, the abuser will seek to use this ‘conversion’ as a way to avoid the consequences of the actions. Also be aware that a ‘confession’ and request for ‘forgiveness’ may be another tactic designed to manipulate you to get the victim back under control. Know that repentance also means that an abuser can choose to change, despite whether the victim chooses to forgive.

6. Confront the abuser’s religious rationalizations for the abusive behaviors. Just like the victim, the abuser’s faith can be either a resource for change or a roadblock. Challenge the use of scripture to justify abusing the partner. Point out teachings that talk about the equality of men and women and the responsibilities the abuser has to the family.

7. Challenge the abuser’s excuses. The abuser will use a number of excuses for the behavior: alcohol or other drugs, an abusive parent, low self-esteem, stress, unemployment, provocation from the partner, etc. The abuser may minimize, deny, lie about or blame the violence on others. Do not allow the abuser to rationalize the behavior or lay the blame on the victim. Only the abuser can change the behavior.

8. Avoid labeling the abuser. Using the terms “batterer” or “abuser” makes a statement about who the person is, rather than confronting what the person has done. Using terms such as “men/women who batter” implies that the person can choose the behavior and thus, make a choice to change.

9. Reinforce his/her love for the family. Someone who uses abuse in a personal relationship is attempting to meet needs in a way that is harmful to others. Encourage the abuser to look at how the behavior affects the children and the partner to help him/her develop internal motivations to stop the abuse.

10. Help the abuser distinguish between feelings and behaviors. There is a difference between feeling angry and raging. No one can get hurt from another person feeling emotions; harm occurs when emotions are inappropriately expressed. Dispel the myth that the victim “makes” the abuser feel certain emotions, thus “causing the violence”.

11. If the abuser is male, help him redefine masculine thinking. Show him that “real men” do not need to use tactics of power and control within a relationship. Help him to understand that it takes as much strength to control his own behavior as it does to control his partner and that rigid sex roles are as harmful to him as they are to his partner. If you are a male faith leader, be a role model.

12. Assess for threats of suicide or homicide. If there are threats of suicide, follow your institution’s suicide protocol. Take all threats to safety seriously. If the abuser makes threats against the victim, warn her/him immediately. When some abusers are suicidal, there is an increased risk of them causing potential harm to their victims.

13. Refer to a batterer intervention program. This is the most appropriate intervention to address the abuser’s feelings of entitlement, “black-and-white” thinking and the abuse tactics. Some of these programs also integrate “parenting after violence” programs that can help the abuser recognize what effects the behavior has on the children. Contact your local crisis center to find reputable programs.
COMMUNITY REFERRALS

Many services are available to families to help address the domestic violence and co-occurring issues they are facing. To give families the most complete support system possible, relationships should be developed between your faith community and local services.

Crisis centers may be the single most valuable resource for victims and/or their family. Crisis center advocates receive extensive training on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, teen dating violence and sexual harassment and are a valuable 24-hour resource when you are looking for guidance. They can provide referrals to a variety of services and are often familiar with the best programs to fit your faith community member’s needs. They can also provide legal and social service advocacy for helping the victim navigate local community services. Crisis center services are free and confidential.

Services for children who are exposed to domestic violence and for abusers, vary across the state. Learn what resources and services are available to victims and abusers before you need to consult with or refer to them. In addition to domestic violence or sexual assault crisis centers, the community agencies you should be in contact with include:

- Local police department
- Batterer Intervention Programs
- Substance abuse counselors trained in domestic violence
- Therapists who specialize in domestic violence
- The local County Attorney’s Office
- The local Victim/Witness Assistance Program

Questions to ask community resources include:
- Are they trained to handle and do they have experience with domestic violence cases?
- Is there a waiting list? How long before a family can access services?
- What do they charge for their services, if anything? Do they assist low-income families?
- Do they offer couples counseling even with a current threat of violence? (If so, do not make that referral. See “Counseling Cautions”).

COUNSELING CAUTIONS

There are many types of counseling or therapy programs available; you may even consider providing counseling yourself, if qualified. Joint counseling sessions can be dangerous for couples in an abusive relationship and are not appropriate. Not all victims are in need of therapy. Care should be taken to make other referrals. When you recommend counseling to people living with domestic violence, keep these things in mind:

- Providing counseling to the couple/family: When an abuser hurts his/her partner, it is most important for you to be available to relate and counsel both parties in different roles: for the abuser as an agent of accountability and change, and for the victim as a safety net. Consider whether it is in anyone’s best interests—and/or whether it is safe—to provide counseling services to either party. If you do choose to provide counseling services, they should only be provided to each person individually and only if you have received training as a professional counselor, with additional training in domestic violence.

- Couples/marital counseling: For the victim of domestic abuse, couples or marital counseling is dangerous. An abuser relies on the victim to keep the abuse a secret. The abuser may subject the victim to further abuse if s/he discloses the truth about the abusive situation. An abuser may even be
willing to assault the victim during a counseling session, if the victim ignores the cues to “keep the secret”. If the victim cannot tell the truth, counseling does no good. Worse yet, if the counselor is not fully aware of the dynamics, the victim may hear victim-blaming messages. A responsible couples’ counselor should not provide services to a couple when domestic violence is an issue.

- Conflict resolution: This type of program is only viable for two individuals who have equal power and equal opportunity to express their opinions and concerns. Domestic violence is not about irresolvable conflict, it is about one person exerting power and control over another; equality is not possible when one person is abusing another in a relationship.

- Stress/anger management: Both of these programs take the focus off of the real problem—the abuser’s choice to use violence—and make excuses for the behavior. One of the result of anger management programs is that abusers become more emotionally and psychologically terrorizing towards the victim.

- Batterer’s intervention programs: Good programs hold abusers accountable for their actions, and refuse to allow victim-blaming, minimizing and denying behaviors that are their trademarks. Reputable batterer intervention programs will follow standards set by their respective states.

- Substance abuse programs: Because substance abuse does not cause domestic violence, it is not enough for abusers to receive only substance abuse treatment. In fact, some abusers become more violent after they become clean and sober. They must also be held accountable through a program that will address the entitlement and use of violence toward their intimate partner.

**CO-OCCURRING ISSUES: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Not all domestic violence victims experience substance abuse or mental health problems. Research shows us that victims who have extensive trauma histories, including physical and sexual violence, are at greater risk of having or developing co-occurring mental health issues and substance abuse problems. Some victims will use alcohol or other drugs as a coping mechanism in order to numb their pain or disconnect from what is happening to them. Victims may also be forced to use substances by their abusers.

Repeated exposure to physical and/or sexual abuse can significantly increase the likelihood of mental health problems, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety and panic attacks. Victims may engage in other activities that are also considered self-destructive, such as cutting, self-mutilation or eating disorders.

It is important to remember that victims of domestic violence respond to trauma and fear on a continuum. Each victim’s response to her/his situation will vary. It is also important to recommend treatment for mental health and substance abuse problems that will address trauma, which may be underlying the presenting problems. Regardless of whether the victim or the abuser obtains sobriety and/or mental health treatment, it does not mean that the violence will stop.
SAFETY PLANNING

Victims should be encouraged to develop a safety plan. Crisis center advocates have extensive experience working with victims to develop safety plans. If the victim asks for help, see the sample safety plan in the appendix or feel free to call a rape crisis center for assistance.

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

Suggestions for increasing safety in the relationship

• I will have important phone numbers available
• Police 9-1-1
• Hotline- 1-866-644-3574 (toll free)
• Friends

Crisis Center

• I can tell __________________________ and __________________________ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.

• If I leave my home, I can go to (choose a friend or neighbor at whose house you would feel safe, or contact the crisis center to see about shelter)

• I can leave extra money, car keys, clothing, and copies of documents with __________________________

• To ensure safety and independence I can: always keep change for phone calls with me; open my own savings account; rehearse my escape route with a support person; and review the safety plan on __________________________ (date)

PROTECTIVE ORDERS

New Hampshire law provides for protection of victims of domestic violence through protective orders. If the victim chooses to get a protective order, s/he should be supported fully in that endeavor. In order for the victim to have an understanding of all of the available options, encourage the victim to contact the local crisis center. An advocate can discuss with the victim all of her/his safety concerns and legal options and can assist the victim through the process of obtaining a protective order, if the victim chooses to do so.
SECTION IV:
PROACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION, PROTECTION AND COLLABORATION
IV. PROACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION, PROTECTION AND COLLABORATION

FORGIVENESS

While forgiveness may have value bringing healing to some victims of domestic violence, too often spiritual leaders advocate for the victim to forgive their abuser. The burden becomes the victim’s, to fix a relationship against which s/he is powerless.

The victim may already be facing internal and external pressures to forgive the abuser and reconcile. “Forgive and forget” is a phrase heard over and over by the victim, but rarely is forgiveness that simple. Forgiveness may be a long process for some victims and may not be possible for all.

It is important to be clear about what forgiveness is not. Forgiveness is not about pretending the violence never took place. Forgiveness is not excusing the abuser. It is not condoning the abusive behavior, and it does not give up on justice. Forgiveness is also different from reconciliation, which is a process where two people seek to restore a safe, compassionate, fair and kind relationship.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Any marriage preparation your faith community provides is an excellent forum to present domestic violence prevention and education. Having open and honest discussions about intimate partner abuse will provide valuable resources for all individuals in the event they, or someone they know, find themselves in a relationship with a violent partner.

Premarital counseling is a valuable opportunity for a faith counselor to assess how well each partner deals with a range of feelings including anger, fear, disappointment and frustration. It is also the time to detect warning signs such as alcohol or drug abuse, physical and non-physical abuse and cruelty to animals. Possessiveness and jealousy, history of violence, an inflated sense of entitlement and rigid sex roles are other red flags to assess while working with a couple.

Before or during the couple’s session, if there is any concern about domestic violence, meet with the couple individually first. Do not encourage the victim to speak of these issues together with the abusive partner, as that puts her/him at risk for further abuse.

INTERVIEWING THE COUPLE TOGETHER

It is good practice to meet with the couple several times before the wedding. Domestic violence and sexual assault should be discussed as part of this preparation phase. At sessions where both parties are present, discussions about general issues are appropriate. These issues include:

• Education about domestic violence;
• Teaching about healthy relationships;
• Their families of origin, except issues relating to violence and child sexual abuse;
• Roles and expectations.
INTERVIEWING THE COUPLE SEPARATELY

Interviews should also take place with each individual as a matter of practice. This gives each person an opportunity to talk freely with the spiritual counselor. If intimate partner violence is an issue, the victim will have a safe place to discuss concerns about his/her future.

Opening your door to each person individually lets both know that, should your time and assistance be needed in the future, you are available. Topics for individual discussion include:

• Current physical violence or other forms of abuse;
• Warning signs of potential abuse;
• Any history of abuse in this relationship or either party’s previous relationships.

If a person discloses s/he is currently or previously has been a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, make appropriate referrals to the local crisis center. Keep the shared information confidential.

PRE-MARITAL QUESTIONNAIRES

Pre-marriage questionnaires help to assess current attitudes and behaviors of both parties regarding domestic violence. They also provide a framework for prevention and education about intimate partner abuse, and the faith community’s teaching about domestic violence.

Organizations such as the Faith Trust Institute in Seattle can provide information about the questionnaires currently available to clergy. One such tool is the FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding Study) Program. This tool has been developed for a range of faith communities, and all versions are available online at www.foccusinc.com. It is a useful tool to help couples evaluate their relationships, identify their strengths and challenges and address areas of concern.

Group programs offered to engaged couples should include the following topics about domestic violence:

• Healthy communication skills and equality in the relationship;
• The importance of social support from family, friends and faith community;
• The nature of domestic violence and warning signs;
• Clear condemnation of violence in or out of marriage;
• Accepting responsibility for one’s own abusive behaviors;
• The impact of children’s exposure to domestic violence;
• A listing of resources for victims and perpetrators of abuse.

Faith leadership should invite participants to address any concerns privately and promise to provide confidentiality and assistance for those seeking help. Facilitate a discussion about domestic violence, giving special attention to the misuse of sacred texts and their true teachings about marriage and the responsibilities of both partners.

Information should be openly distributed to all participants and it should be explained that all materials are distributed to all couples as a matter of practice. This is a safety precaution, as some abusive partners may think they are the only ones receiving the information, causing suspicion that their partner divulged abuse in the relationship.

The preparation process should be sensitive to those who may be in an abusive relationship or who are in fear of violence. Individual sessions to facilitate referrals to domestic violence services should be provided.
Marriage preparation programs should also include opportunities to present information and to lead discussions with groups of women separately from groups of men. For instance, the men’s group can include a discussion of male response to anger, social conditioning, entitlement and the perceived need to dominate in a relationship. Men may feel less defensive when having these discussions with their peers.

**PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING**

Despite your efforts to educate or intervene victims of intimate partner violence may still choose to marry their abuser. It is important that you as the faith leader support that decision. It is okay to express your concerns for the victim’s safety and for the success of the relationship; you may even recommend postponing the wedding. Do not abandon the victim for their decision to stay in the relationship—the victim will or may depend on your unconditional support in the future.

**FOLLOW-UP**

Follow-up or aftercare is an important part of marriage preparation and consists of contact with and support for newly married couples during the first few years of marriage. Continue to share information about domestic violence, what healthy relationships look like and how to recognize warning signs of violence. Ask how each person is adjusting to married life.

Develop monthly support groups for newly married couples as part of the mission of the faith community, to give couple an opportunity to discuss topics that will help strengthen their relationships. Continue to disseminate information so that victims have continuous access to resources that may be able to help.

**ADDRESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A FAITH COMMUNITY**

Faith communities have an important role to play in addressing domestic violence. According to the March, 2005, Family Circle/Lifetime Television survey on family violence, 89% of adults believe that religious institutions should do more to combat violence in the home. By preaching against it, by making literature on the subject available to your faith community, by observing October as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” and by developing relationships with domestic violence centers, religious leaders can demonstrate that they take the issue seriously.

Most major denominations have policy statements regarding domestic violence and child abuse, and can provide you with direction in adapting these protocols to your faith traditions (see Appendix Q).

**POSITIVE STEPS FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

- Accept that domestic violence is a serious problem occurring in all facets of society—including your faith community.
- Support the victim when s/he comes forward to ask for help.
- Know what resources are available in your community to make appropriate and timely referrals.
- Understand that couple’s counseling is not an appropriate referral, because a victim is not safe to disclose abuse—the victim may suffer retaliation.
- Lead by example, and serve on the board of directors of your local domestic violence/sexual assault crisis center, or participate in a local domestic violence community council for training and access to resources.
- Participate in training from a domestic violence/sexual assault crisis center.
- Speak out against family violence. You can profoundly impact people’s attitudes and beliefs.
• Sponsor an awareness program or healing service for victims and survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault.
• Do the theological homework necessary to better respond to family violence and address the spiritual crisis of victims and perpetrators.
• Develop a resource center that includes books, videos and other materials addressing the subjects of family violence and sexual assault.
• Educate your fellowship through weekly announcements and monthly newsletters.

POSITIVE STEPS FOR YOUTH LEADERS
• Develop community activities such as anti-bullying, anti-violence and mentoring programs.
• Host education classes that address teen dating violence and domestic violence.
• Create a youth bulletin board and post local crisis line numbers and pamphlets. Address issues such as:
  o Teen dating violence and date/acquaintance rape (www.reachoutnh.com)
  o Domestic violence and getting help staying safe
  o Teen suicide
  o Drug and alcohol abuse intervention
• Designate a youth day to discuss these sensitive topics both from a spiritual and a secular viewpoint.
• Build an in-house Big Brother/Sister Program.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES
1. Participate in victims’ rights observances and other awareness programs:
   o The “Clothesline Project” coordinated by the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program
   o Child Abuse Prevention Month
   o Domestic Violence Awareness Month
   o National Crime Victim’s Rights Week
   o Sexual Assault Awareness Month
   o Stalking Awareness Month
   For more information on these projects, contact your local rape crisis center.

2. Reach out to same-sex couples in your faith community. Gay and lesbian couples experience domestic violence too. However, they may be particularly reluctant to seek help from the religious community for fear that they will be condemned for their lifestyle. Whether or not you agree with their lifestyle, they still need compassion and help to deal with violence in their homes.

3. Collaborate with your local crisis center and other community members to form a men’s group to develop training/education programs relating to violence against women. Violence against women is not just a women’s issue. Invite men in your faith community to come together to talk about how violence against women hurts men, to create programs for men by men to challenge and hold each other accountable for behaviors that minimize and devalue women.

COLLABORATING WITH CRISIS CENTERS AND OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS
To build the most effective collaborations, communication is key. Participate in a local domestic violence coordinating council or invite your local crisis center and other community services to come speak to your group. Learn the crisis center’s philosophies, how they operate and discover ways that your faith community can partner with the crisis center for services.
• Post emergency hotline numbers, victim services and batterer intervention program materials in prominent (but private) locations.
• Meet with community programs and their staff members.
• Find out what these programs need and challenge your congregation to help fill those needs.
• Recruit volunteers from within your congregation for community programs.
• Write to local, state and federal legislators, encouraging them to support local programs.
• Offer space at your meeting place for crisis centers to hold fundraisers, trainings and support groups.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES

Florida Domestic Violence Hotline:
http://fcasv.org
1-800- 500-1119

Florida Council Against Sexual Violence
http://fcadv.org
888-956-7273

DENOMINATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

Anglican: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

Assembly of God: http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/relations_08_abuse.cfm

Baptist:
American Baptist Churches:
http://70.84.25.226/%7Eabcusa/resources/resol/famviol.htm

Southern Baptist Convention:
www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=304
www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=1078

Bhai: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

Brethren:
Church of the Brethren:
www.brethren.org/genbd/washofc/alert/VAWA2.htm
www.brethren.org/ac/ac_statements/97ChildExploitation.htm

Buddhism: www.buddhanet.net

Catholic:
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:
www.usccb.org/laity/help.shtm

Charismatic: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

Christian Science: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.
Church of God in Christ (COGIC): At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

Episcopalian: www.episcopalchurch.org/ecw_8763_ENG_HTM.htm?menu=menu8593

Evangelical: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

Hinduism: www.hindunet.org

Islam: www.iiie.net; www.mwlusa.org

Jehovah’s Witness:
www.watchtower.org/library/g/1985/1/22/article_01.htm
www.watchtower.org/library/g/2001/11/8/article_01.htm

Judaism:
Jewish Women International: www.jewishwomen.org

Union of American Hebrew Congregations:
http://rac.org/advocacy/issues/issuedv/#position
http://urj.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=7424&pge_prg_id=29601&pge_id=4590

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism:
www.uscj.org/Domestic_Violence6732.html
www.uscj.org/DomVUSCJ_on_Domestic5325.html

Lutheran
American Lutheran Church:
www.elca.org/jle/alc/alc.families_violence.html

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:
www.elca.org/dcs/elca_actions/ca89_4_20.html
www.elca.org/youth/helpsheets/abuse.html

Methodist:
United Methodist Church:
http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?mid=1730
http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=4&mid=6732

Mormon:
www.mormon.org/question/faq/category/answer/0,9777,1601-1-62-1,00.html
www.mormon.org/learn/0,8672,1461-1,00.html

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA:

Pentecostal: At the time of publication, resource could not be located.
Presbyterian:
Presbyterian Church USA:
www.pcusa.org/family/guidance/datingviolence.pdf
www.pcusa.org/family/guidance/elderabuse.pdf
www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/dancing.pdf

**Quaker:**
Religious Society of Friends:
http://goals2000.quaker.org/Family.htm

**Russian Orthodox:** At the time of publication, resource could not be located.

**Seventh Day Adventist:**
http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat2.html
http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat51.html
http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat12.html
http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat41.html
http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat28.html

**Unitarian Universalist Association:**
http://www.uua.org/actions/women/79battered.html
http://www.uua.org/actions/women/93violence.html
http://www.uua.org/actions/youth/77abuse.html

**United Church of Christ:**
http://www.ucc.org/justice/children.htm
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