

Domestic Violence – Economic Security  
WPTA Webinar – February 16, 2012  
Questions & Answers

**1. Is Domestic Violence a learned behavior? Can it be unlearned with the right intervention?** *(originally submitted as a statement, not a question)*

Ghada Zahdan ([gzahdan27@gmail.com](mailto:gzahdan27@gmail.com)); Arab American Family Services

Although research does indicate that boys who witness abuse in the home are significantly more likely to batter in their adult relationships, many men who witnessed violence as children vow not to emulate what they saw and do not bring violence into their interpersonal relationships. It has been theorized that exposure to domestic violence as a child is but one source of information shaping the behavior of batterers. Boys are also often exposed to gender role socialization that emphasizes male dominance and female subservience as well as societal messages suggesting that it is a man's right -- and even obligation -- to control his girlfriend or wife and to enforce this control through violence and abuse. Many batterers' intervention programs are structured around the premise that such learning can in fact be unlearned, although the right combination of interventions and sanctions is still being determined.

See also the following Applied Research papers:

"Emerging Responses to Children Exposed to Domestic Violence" at [http://www.vawnet.org/Assoc\\_Files\\_VAWnet/AR\\_ChildrensExposure.pdf](http://www.vawnet.org/Assoc_Files_VAWnet/AR_ChildrensExposure.pdf).

"Groupwork with Men Who Batter: What the Research Literature Indicates" at [http://www.vawnet.org/Assoc\\_Files\\_VAWnet/AR\\_GroupworkMenWhoBatter.pdf](http://www.vawnet.org/Assoc_Files_VAWnet/AR_GroupworkMenWhoBatter.pdf)

**2. If collecting child support places the individual at risk of future abuse, then the obligor is not responsible to pay?**

Nicole Riddle ([riddln01@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:riddln01@odjfs.state.oh.us)); Delaware County Job & Family Services

This is an astute observation. Yes, in those children support enforcement cases where the danger to the victim or the children involved is considered too great, and adequate safeguards cannot be put in place, child support enforcement is stopped for safety reasons. We know that over 90% of women with current/former abusive partners indicate an interest in pursuing child support *if they can do so safely*. They not only saw

child support as an important source of income for their family, but also did not want their abusive partners to escape their child support obligations because of violence. (See Pearson, J., & Thoennes, N. (2000). New directions for child support agencies when domestic violence is an issue. *Policy and Practice*, 58, 29-36.)

**3. How can we get law enforcement to take protective orders of domestic violence victims seriously?**

Petra Kay ([pw\\_kay@bellsouth.net](mailto:pw_kay@bellsouth.net)); Northtown Family First Resource Center (FFRC)

There are two resources for you to tap:

- The Family Violence Department at the National Center for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) has recently released “Civil Protection Orders: A Guide for Improving Practice” (2010), which can be found at [www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/civil-protection-orders-guide-improving-practice](http://www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/civil-protection-orders-guide-improving-practice). The Guide provides for advocates, attorneys, judges, law enforcement personnel, and prosecutors to help ensure that protection orders are effectively issued, served, and enforced across the country.
- The Battered Women’s Justice Project ([www.bwjp.org](http://www.bwjp.org)) has a wealth of training resources and other materials to support effective law enforcement response to domestic violence.

**4. Are there programs directed to high school students on this subject?**

Stanley De Veaux ([pastorsed@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsed@gmail.com)); Agape Church of the Savior

There is increasing attention to providing high schools, as well as students in much earlier grades, with information about healthy relationships and how to avoid dating violence and abuse. February has been declared Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, and there were considerable public education activities in many communities across the country.

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC DV) has organized a special collection of resources, awareness materials, and links to key websites for teens, parents, teachers, professionals and health care professionals on VAWnet, the NRC DV’s online resource center, found at [www.vawnet.org/special-collections/TDV.php](http://www.vawnet.org/special-collections/TDV.php).

The National Dating Abuse Helpline -- [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org) -- is an important new resource for teens for help and information.

**5. How can we educate the judges more on domestic violence relationships and what is best for the children?**

*Petra Kay ([pw\\_kay@bellsouth.net](mailto:pw_kay@bellsouth.net)); Northtown Family First Resource Center (FFRC)*

There are many domestic violence advocates asking this question as well! The best resource for training judges on domestic violence issues is the Family Violence Department at the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges ([www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/domestic-violence](http://www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/domestic-violence)). They have resource materials, including judicial training curricula and programs, as well as technical assistance available that may be helpful to you.

**6. How should visitation work when one party has a protective order?**

*Petra Kay ([pw\\_kay@bellsouth.net](mailto:pw_kay@bellsouth.net)); Northtown Family First Resource Center (FFRC)*

Designing safe visitation approaches for families dealing with domestic violence has been the focus of considerable attention over the last several years, particularly in communities receiving Safe Haven grants from the Office on Violence against Women, U.S. Department of Justice ([www.ovw.usdoj.gov/safehaven\\_desc.htm](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/safehaven_desc.htm)).

Two resources that might be of particular interest are:

“Guiding Principles: Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program” at [www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/guiding-principles032608.pdf](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/guiding-principles032608.pdf)

The resources developed by the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community (IDVAAC - [www.idvaac.org](http://www.idvaac.org)) related to cultural responsiveness and supervised visitation and safe exchange, at [www.idvaac.org/Currentinitiatives/safehaven.html](http://www.idvaac.org/Currentinitiatives/safehaven.html)

**7. What are the unique issues you have encountered when working with Latino clients on these issues?**

*Greta Holt ([greta.holt11@gmail.com](mailto:greta.holt11@gmail.com)); Graduate student*

This is a large question and raises the importance of ensuring that response to domestic violence, by any organization or system, be both victim-centered and culturally relevant and responsive. Certainly Latino/a clients are as interested in economic security for themselves and their families as those from any other group, although opportunities, challenges and barriers are often culturally-defined. One of the best resources I can provide is one of our partner resource centers--Casa de Esperanza and its newly developed National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities ([www.casadeesperanza.org/national-latino-network/](http://www.casadeesperanza.org/national-latino-network/)). They are building on a strong foundation of local and national level research, policy advocacy, organizing and technical assistance to “support families, end domestic violence, and increase meaningful access to services for Latinos.”

**8. Can we use parts of this presentation in domestic violence presentations for TANF workers?**

Rodney Wright ([Rodney.A.Wright@wv.gov](mailto:Rodney.A.Wright@wv.gov)); Upshur DHHR

Yes, absolutely, but please feel to contact the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) for additional information and resources. You can contact us at 800-537-2238 (TTY: 1-800-553-2508), and via email at [nrcdvTA@nrcdv.org](mailto:nrcdvTA@nrcdv.org). Please also go to our online resource center at [www.VAWnet.org](http://www.VAWnet.org).

**9. How do I address my clients when they report that their domestic abuser is highly recognized in the community, such as an officer, District Court Judge, guardian ad litem, Child Protective Services, etc.? Who do they go to if they feel that one of these individuals did not represent them or their children correctly?**

Paula Rohl ([paula.rohl@nebraska.gov](mailto:paula.rohl@nebraska.gov)); CBI Probation Officer, Nebraska

Domestic violence advocates can be an important resource for all victims and survivors who need support, information on their options, or services such as advocacy, counseling or emergency shelter. They can be particularly helpful to victims facing safety risks that require specialized responses. In the instance Paula is describing, which is unfortunately not uncommon, it will be important to confidentially explore all the options and the risks associated with each, including safety strategies that can mitigate these risks. I would encourage you to refer these victims to your local domestic violence program (and preferably one with whom you have a pre-existing relationship) or to the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224. They can also be reached at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org).

To find the nearest domestic violence program, find a listing from your state domestic violence coalition at [www.vawnet.org/links/state-coalitions.php](http://www.vawnet.org/links/state-coalitions.php).

**10. Is there a resource for domestic violence victims to represent themselves and utilize pro se documents and the law if they are financially distressed/abused?**

Paula Rohl ([paula.rohl@nebraska.gov](mailto:paula.rohl@nebraska.gov)); CBI Probation Officer, Nebraska

There are number of resources available for victims who are interested in representing themselves *pro se* (on their own), although most are state specific. Please contact your state domestic violence coalition ([www.vawnet.org/links/state-coalitions.php](http://www.vawnet.org/links/state-coalitions.php)) or the local court system for these resources. The following manual, developed by the American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence, may also be of assistance:

“Best Practices for Lawyers Assisting Pro Se Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking with Civil Protection Cases”

[www.vaw.umn.edu/documents/bestpracticesforlawyers/bestpracticesforlawyers.pdf](http://www.vaw.umn.edu/documents/bestpracticesforlawyers/bestpracticesforlawyers.pdf)

**11. Can you share the following resource with attendees: [www.assetplatform.org](http://www.assetplatform.org)?**

*(restated)*

*Jan Simpson ([jan.simpson@aspeninst.org](mailto:jan.simpson@aspeninst.org)); Aspen Institute*

**12. Can you share the following Web site? It may be helpful for Native women: Mending the Sacred Hoop: <http://www.mshoop.org/>**

*Lindy Lucas ([lucasl@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:lucasl@odjfs.state.oh.us)); Trumbull County One Stop*

In addition to Mending the Sacred Hoop, which has a rich set of resources in this area, you will find other helpful information and technical assistance at the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center: The National Resource Center to Enhance Safety of Native Women and their Children at [www.niwrc.org](http://www.niwrc.org).