

Domestic Violence Home Study Program One Hour CE Workshop.

Goals

At the end of this course the participant will be able to.
Describe the probable incidence of domestic violence
List three questions that aid in the assessment of domestic violence.
Specify interactive issues that contribute to domestic violence.
Provide referrals for domestic violence interventions.

Instructor

Michael Freeny, LCSW, has over 25 years experience as a clinician and professional educator, and helped establish one of the earliest domestic violence protocols at the UCLA Medical Center. He has worked extensively with couples in marital and sexual distress and with family violence issues in outpatient practice, in hospitals and in prisons. He has served as an expert witness in family violence cases and has worked with many victims of crime, violence, and trauma in the home and workplace. Mr. Freeny has also written on the social implications of domestic violence.

Readings and Resources

Linda G Mills, Ph.D. [Insult to Injury: Rethinking Our Responses to Intimate Abuse](#), Princeton University Press, 2003.

Shelly Jackson, Lynette Feder, David R. Forde, et.al. *“Batterer Intervention Programs: Where Do We Go From Here?”* National Institute of Justice, DOJ, June 2003

Jill Gordon, Laura Moriarty, Virginia Commonwealth Univ. *“The Effects of Domestic Violence Batterer Treatment on Domestic Violence Recidivism,”* Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol 30, No. 1, Feb. 2003.

Mary Ann Dutton, *“The Dynamics of Domestic Violence: Understanding the Response from Battered Women,”* 68(9) Fla.Bar J. 24

Daniel Brookoff, MD, Phd. et.al., *“Characteristics of Participants in Domestic Violence: Assessment at the Scene of Domestic Assault.”* JAMA, 1997.

Scott Sleek, *“‘Innocuous’ violence triggers the real thing,”* American Psych Assn. Monitor, April 1998.

Kim M. Feldhaus, MD, et. al. *“Accuracy of 3 Brief Screening Questions for Detecting Partner Violence in the Emergency Department,”* JAMA, May, 1997

Jean T. Penny, RN, PhD., *“Ruling with an Iron Fist: Domestic Violence,”* 1998.

Governor’s Task for on Domestic Violence, State of Florida, 1996.

“Facts about Family Violence,” APA Public Communications, April 1998.

Neil Jacobson and John Gottman, [When Men Batter Women: New Insights Into Ending Abusive Relationships](#), 1996
Abbott, et. al., *Domestic Violence Against Women: Incidence and Prevalence in ED Populations,* Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol 273, (22) 1995.

“How an Abuser Can discover Your Internet Activities,” Commission on Domestic Violence, American Bar Association. 1997.

National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-787-3224

Power and Control Wheel, Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth Mn.

Continuing Education Approving Authorities

Michael Freeny Associates is approved by the American Psychological Association to offer continuing education for psychologists. MF Associates maintains responsibility for the program

Florida Board of CSW/MFT/MHC. - BAP 318 expires. 3/05

Domestic Violence II

Michael Freeny, LCSW

The serious family and societal problem of domestic violence has gained national attention over the last 15 to 20 years. Clinicians, police, social service workers, health care workers, and citizens have taken up the cause of identifying and reducing violence and coercive control in intimate relationships and within families. Domestic violence was once considered a dirty little secret, a private family matter, and was often dismissed as simply the natural order of things. Through the efforts of thousands of people advocating for better treatment and protections for domestic abuse victims, the perceptions of this problem have changed dramatically, and will continue to grow and mature in the next decade.

Health care professionals have been flooded with information about domestic violence as this new practice specialty quickly evolves from a stage of “a plea for advocacy” to a formal behavioral science. As with any new discipline, it is experiencing growing pains in the efforts to specify a taxonomy, a vocabulary, and a theoretical framework. The descriptive terms are changing: from “wife battering” to “spouse abuse” to “domestic violence”. Definitions are not yet solidified, making research results hard to compare between studies. Advocacy statistics on domestic violence are sometimes inflated to garner media attention, funding, or political influence.

Groups as diverse as the Christian Coalition and the National Organization for Women have weighed in on the topic. Program “models” of victims and abusers attempt to classify the participants as spokes in a wheel of violence. Yet this may be premature, for we’re still not sure of the fundamentals of this new practice specialty. What are the categories of behavior, what are the frequencies of abuse, how do we classify victims and perpetrators?

These statistics are vitally important, for they would tell clinicians how often to expect domestic violence as a part of a client’s dynamic. Some advocates claim that one-half of all women are abused in relationships, yet this isn’t reflected in most clinician’s experience. Are we missing something, or are those numbers too high?

Good statistics are hard to come by, but we found some. For example, a survey, (discussed later) sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health, found that 84 percent of American families are not violent. In the 16 percent of families that do experience violence, the vast majority of that violence takes the form of slapping, shoving and grabbing. Only 3-4 percent of all families (a total of about 1.8 million) engage in "severe" violence: kicking, punching or using a weapon.

Additionally, quite a number of studies, including a recently published 20 year research project by Terrie Moffitt, Ph.D. at the Univ. of Wisconsin, repeatedly find one consistent singular fact: women hit men as often as men hit women. What does this mean? At the very least, that we should be gender equal in our inquiries.

We do know that the best way to screen for domestic violence in a couple’s relationship is in an individual session. Letting each party know that there will be a private time to review their individual history, even if it’s only half a session, split between the two, can provide a great opportunity to explore these sensitive issues.

What follows are some commonly cited authoritative sources for domestic violence information; what it is, how frequently it happens, how we can recognize it, and how we can help. This material is offered to give the learning professional a sense of the issues to consider as we wade into this new territory. As with most scientific inquiry, the data can be controversial, surprising, and strongly debated.

Welcome to the discussion.

Detecting Partner Violence in the Emergency Department

Three brief questions can detect a large number of women with a history of partner abuse, according to another study in this week's issue of JAMA.

Kim M. Feldhaus, M.D., of the Denver Health Medical Center, Colorado, and colleagues developed a three-question instrument called the partner violence screen (PVS). It was tested in the emergency departments at Denver General Hospital and University Hospital in Denver in the summer of 1994. Three hundred twenty-two women who sought emergency care during selected time blocks took part in the study.

Research assistants using the PVS asked the women these questions:

- (1) "Have you been hit, kicked, punched or otherwise hurt by someone within the past year? If so, by whom?"
- (2) "Do you feel safe in your current relationship?"
- (3) "Is there a partner from a previous relationship who is making you feel unsafe now?"

The women were then asked to complete the Index of Spouse Abuse (ISA) which measures the severity of physical and nonphysical abuse inflicted on a woman by her partner. Finally, the women were questioned using the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), which measures the use of reasoning, verbal aggression, and physical violence in resolving family conflicts.

The researchers found the brief PVS to be quite effective: "The three questions took an average of 20 seconds to administer, far less time than measuring the patient's routine vital signs. The three questions detected 71.4 percent of women identified as abused by the detailed 19-item CTS. The PVS also detected 64.5 percent of women who were identified as abused on the 30-item ISA."

The researchers point out that "the highest prevalence rate of partner violence was noted among women with only a previous relationship and no current partner." They conclude: "All women seeking care in emergency departments should be asked directly about partner violence, regardless of marital status or current relationships ... Patients with positive screens should have this history documented in the medical record, and they should be offered support, counseling, or at the very least, referrals to safe shelters and an action plan to ensure their future safety."

Advocacy Statistics and Clinical Realities.

Abused women and the Super Bowl: Where were the facts?

By HENRY McNULTY; Courant Reader Representative

The headline was: "For some women, Super Bowl Sunday means abuse." The story, stripped across the top of The Courant's front page Jan. 30, began by describing how a woman identified only as Sherry was beaten by the man she was living with. Each year, when the Super Bowl was on TV, she was insulted, humiliated and sometimes attacked by him.

"Thousands more women" suffer the same horrifying abuse on Super Bowl Sunday, the story maintained.

It wasn't until the 10th paragraph that the first qualifier appeared: "NBC executives are reluctant to say there is a correlation between football and domestic violence." But after that, there were more caveats: There is "very little statistical evidence of a link between the Super Bowl and an increase in domestic violence." Any such link is based on "anecdotal evidence." A spokeswoman from the group Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR) said "there isn't a nationwide study showing a direct link."

A Connecticut court official said the data have "not shown a noticeable increase in domestic violence cases related to Super Bowl Sunday." The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence "needs more statistics to determine whether those figures are higher [on Super Bowl Sunday] than [on] an average Sunday."

So is there an increase in domestic violence on Super Bowl Sunday or not? The Wall Street Journal, in a Feb. 5 editorial, said no: It called the phenomenon a myth spread by "an entirely credulous army of journalists" who were taken in by FAIR, a left-of-center media watch dog group. The Journal blasted several newspapers that had printed Super-Sunday-violence stories, but The Courant was not among them. Indeed, given the number of doubts raised by The Courant's coverage, it would be unreasonable to label the news staff here "entirely credulous."

Still, in this newspaper the story was at the top of Page A1, the prime display spot. Common sense says editors wouldn't put a story there if it were mostly a lot of hot air. I asked a couple of editors why the story was given such prominence. One factor, it seems, was the very coverage blasted by the Wall Street Journal. By the time The Courant's article appeared, other media had printed and broadcast their own reports on this topic, often without caveats and qualifiers. The Courant wanted to put things into perspective.

Did we succeed? I'd say mostly not.

The headline, for example, strongly implied that Super-Sunday abuse is real. Putting the story at the top of Page A1 implied that such abuse is a big problem.

A quote from an "expert on domestic violence" supporting the idea of an increase in violence was put into large type. The story began and ended with the story of Sherry, the beaten woman.

The fact is that The Courant couldn't find even one statistic to back up the idea that Super Bowl Sunday has more domestic violence than other football Sundays or holidays. I doubt many readers came away from our coverage with that fact firmly in mind.

Domestic Violence II: Review of New Statistics and Troubled Definitions

Michael Freeny, LCSW

“Women report using violence in their relationships more often than men!” This conclusion swirled through most major media outlets in 1999 after first appearing in Mother Jones Magazine. Although considered “news”, it was actually just another confirming report along the path of a 20 year study. Terrie Moffitt, Ph.D., a psychology professor at the University of Wisconsin, was reporting data for the Justice Department in her longitudinal study of 860 men and women followed since birth in New Zealand. These numbers are consistent with the Justice Departments statistics for the USA, gathered and sifted from many surveys.

The Moffitt study supports data taken from a 1980 study which concluded that wives hit their husbands at least as often as husbands hit their wives. When that study was released 20 years ago it caused a firestorm of controversy. Advocates for battered women called the report “sexist,” “demeaning,” and “ridiculous,” which is much the same reaction found in 1999. This data doesn’t support the image of helpless, submissive wives being beaten by brutish louts. It implies a mutuality in assault, equally initiated by men and women. Battered women advocates are fearful this data will be interpreted to mean the victims “brought it on themselves”, which is just a short conceptual step away from thinking they “deserved” it. This, they fear, could signal a return to a caveman mentality.

Yet the statistics are too strong and too consistent to be dismissed. Even controlling for women defending themselves or striking out in fear during an argument, the numbers hold steady. The incidence of lesbian domestic violence rivals heterosexual frequencies, and even supports an organization, Advocates for Abused and Battered Lesbians (www.aabl.org/).

Additionally, there is the lurking suggestion that many times victims of violence could be men. While being slapped, scratched, clawed, and pounded, men may feel trapped by prohibitions against hitting women, or feel too embarrassed to call for police protection. Where do they appear in the domestic violence statistics?

The statistics of family violence have always been difficult to obtain. There has been little consistency in definition from one jurisdiction to another, and sometimes data is lost in police statistics amid charges like “simple assault”. In fact, some early “retrospective” domestic violence researchers reviewed police records and decided to include cases of simple assault against a married woman “by an unspecified assailant” as wife battering.

Then there was the infamous 1993 claim, made by the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, that Super Bowl Sunday was the heaviest day of the year for the battering of women. It caught the media’s attention and played upon the popularity of the sports event. And it was completely false, a fabricated statistic used to turn the spotlight on an important social issue. Ultimately, a tragic loss of credibility when it was revealed as a hoax.

In 1994 the National Research Council, an independent think tank, was asked by Congress to evaluate the state of knowledge about domestic abuse. The NRC concluded, “this field of research is characterized by the absence of clear conceptual models, large-scale databases, longitudinal research, and reliable instrumentation.” Moffitt exemplifies other researchers who are trying to fix this problem with scientifically validated data.

The emerging data is as troubling as it is consistent. A story in the APA Monitor reports that Irene Frieze, a psychology professor at the University of Pittsburgh, and her colleagues have found in surveys of 300 college students that women appeared more likely than men to start physical altercations with a dating partner, usually in the form of slapping, shoving or pushing.

When a public relations officer learned of the data in October 1997 and decided to issue a press release on it, Frieze's reservations proved accurate. The National Organization for Women denounced the research as fraudulent, while a radio station exaggerated her results as showing that women 'cause most domestic violence.'

Frieze certainly wasn't the first person to make such a discovery about women's role in relationship violence, the article notes. In fact, many psychologists, including noted feminist researchers, have collected similar results with far larger sample sizes. But it's not an easy topic to discuss. Some feminists deride the validity of such results, while men's groups point to them as evidence that males are the unsung victims of domestic abuse.

But findings about women's use of violence needs to be discussed in context. True, a variety of studies dating to the late 1970s have shown that females are slightly more likely than males to acknowledge resorting to slapping, kicking or shoving romantic partners. Yet many researchers say romantic conflict is too complex and variable to say conclusively that one gender initiates it more often than the other. The article suggests that there might be gender differences in the motives for violence.

Women tend to be attracted to men who are bigger and stronger than themselves. If conflicts escalate to violence, the women are more likely to suffer physical injury. In fact, women who resort to aggression against a mate may face a greater risk of being severely battered than those who are more passive, Frieze speculates in the Monitor article. 'When I've talked about the results, I've heard women say, 'Yeah, I hit my boyfriend—it makes me feel powerful,' Frieze says. 'And the boys hold back. But what scares me is they're not going to do that forever.'

Some clinicians and researchers believe women aren't being held accountable for their physical aggression against their husbands and boyfriends. They suggest that studies may under report women's aggression because men may be too embarrassed to admit being hit or injured by a woman. Younger males may be an exception: Studies have shown that they are more likely to report being victims of moderate physical abuse than are their female peers. But the girls don't seem to be disagreeing with them. They acknowledge being the aggressors more often than the boys, studies show.

Female physical aggression is being role modeled in video games, like the popular Lara Croft adventure series. Television now offers little girl super-heros in the form of the "Power Puff Girls," a cartoon series that depicts a gang of young girls with super powers who physically battle and conquer evil villains "before bedtime".

Recall the Seinfeld character Elaine, who would often push, shove, or even punch her pals when they upset her. It was the stuff of comedy, supported by a laugh track. It would not have been funny if one of the males pushed or punched Elaine. In fact, a surefire comedic move is to kick a man in the groin, inflicting excruciating pain and hilarious laughter. Even if the "assault" is for a minor transgression, like a sexist slip of the tongue or ogling another woman, it is open season on male genitalia. There is absolutely no comedically equivalent assault on women.

Judith Sherven, PhD, a Los Angeles psychologist and outspoken advocate for victimized men, reports in the Monitor, that cultural norms make it more acceptable for women to hit men than vice versa, and women seem to be taking advantage of it. Statistics show that women are more likely than men to use a weapon in a domestic battle, perhaps to make up for their lesser strength, she adds.

Art may also be influencing life in the form of casual acceptance of violence. In another Monitor summary, Scott Sleek notes that increasingly, researchers find that the minor, mutual slaps, kicks and shoves depicted in television, movies and comic strips is an all-too-common, and all-too-destructive, feature of real-life love and marriage. Yet psychologists are shocked to find that many couples regard such actions as innocuous, even normal in any loving relationship.

"Low-level violence is an unspoken problem that occurs in many families," says Dina Vivian, PhD, who is a

psychologist at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and studies marital communication and conflict. “But most couples don’t see it as a big problem.”

Cultural and familial influence may change a couple’s perception of rough touching or hitting. It can be disguised as “playful” antics or roughhousing. For others, it represents a normal manifestation of anger or disappointment. It doesn’t rise to the level of physical injury, but may be a precursor for it. Psychologists, the Monitor reports, express particular concern about the interpretations many young people have about violence and romance. Francine Lavoie, PhD, a professor at the Université Laval in Quebec, has surveyed more than 1,000 high school students over the last several years and finds that more than half of them believe romantic jealousy—which they name as one of the biggest causes of violence—is actually a sign of love.

‘It’s disturbing to see that young people excuse violence by justifying it as a kind of evidence of love,’ Lavoie and her colleague Marie-Hélène Gagné wrote in Canada’s *Mental Health*, Fall 1993, p. 11-15.

Sleek reports that the interest in low-level or non-injurious physical aggression between romantic partners is growing out of psychologists’ longstanding work with battered women. K. Daniel O’Leary, PhD, for example, first became interested in the subject in the early ‘80s, when he was providing services in a battered women’s shelter. He wanted to find out how arguments degenerated into physical violence. In a variety of studies over the last 15 years, he’s found that people often become mired in low-level physical aggression as early as the dating stage. Couples often exchange slaps or shoves long before they exchange vows.

“In about two-thirds of the cases seen at our marital clinic, no one is really beaten up,” says O’Leary, a professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. “It’s just pushing, slapping or shoving in anger. But I worry that it could eventually lead to more severe abuse in the marriage. And it certainly can lead to marital deterioration and divorce.”

The Monitor research noted similarities about intimate partners who have minor physical confrontations. They tended to:

- Express a strong commitment to the relationship.

- Also engage in psychological abuse, such as insults and verbal threats.

- Dismiss the physical fighting as minor, infrequent, or secondary to other problems.

How does one distinguish between mutual passion or mutual abuse. It may be difficult for the treating therapist who is, for example, accustomed to reserved, non-demonstrative displays of affection, to try to affect the rules of interaction for a passionate, volatile couple who use physical contact in virtually all of their communication. Alerting the couple to the dangers of this behavior might be seen as a sensible caution or as an insensitive cultural offense.

Research into low level violence may someday provide better predictive measures about when such behavior is likely to escalate into full blown domestic abuse and when it won’t. Until that happens most clinicians may want to use an approach that provides some education about the potential consequences of low-level violence. Researchers like Dina Vivian at Stony Brook reported their belief that screening for domestic violence should be a standard component of every intake for couples, regardless of the presenting problem.

Mental health professionals are beginning to realize that domestic violence is not a single entity, but has many dimensions and surprising presentations. Fortunately, the professional knowledge base is growing to reflect this maturity and diversity.

ABA Commission on Domestic Violence

Important Phone Numbers

If you are in immediate danger, call 911 right away. Otherwise, you may want to contact any of the following organizations:

* National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE 1-800-787-3224 (TDD service) Providing emergency and non-emergency referrals to domestic violence resources in your area (multilingual service available)

* National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1-800-537--2238

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence Providing comprehensive information and resources, policy development and technical assistance designed to enhance community response to and prevention of domestic violence

* Battered Women's Justice Project 1-800-903-0111

Providing training, technical assistance and other resources through a partnership of three nationally recognized organizations: Domestic Abuse Intervention Project of Duluth National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

* Resource Center on Child Protection and Custody 1-800-527-3223

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Providing information, consultation, technical assistance and legal research related to child protection and custody issues within the context of domestic violence

* Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1-800-313-1310

Family Violence Prevention Fund Providing specialized information packets designed to strengthen the health care response to domestic violence, as well as technical assistance and library services to support health care-based domestic violence training and program development

For more information about the Commission and its activities, contact the Commission staff at

American Bar Association
Commission on Domestic Violence
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Washington, DC 20005-1022

Phone: 202/662-1737/1744

Fax: 202/662-1594

E-Mail: abacdv@abanet.org

Michael Freeny Associates - ClinicalCE.com
Domestic Violence Course Post-Course Exam

Signature and License # _____

My signature attests that I am the individual who completed the course.

Please circle the correct answer. (Requires 7 out of 9 correct)

1. According to the presenter the definition of domestic violence is
A. Expanding B. Becoming more precise C. limited to physical violence D. requires hitting
2. When police are called to a home on a domestic violence call their range of interventions include
A. assessing guilt B. arresting someone C. child care D. calming the couple
3. Victims often complain that after an alleged abuse is arrested they
A. have no control or influence over prosecution. B. are required to attend a victim' course.
C. a restraining order is put in place without against their will. D. claim all of these things happen.
4. Batterers Intervention Programs are regulated by the state and can not address these issues
A. Ways to deescalate violence. C. systems theories of couple conflict.
B. Poor impulse control. D. all of the above.
5. Domestic Violence advocacy groups circulated a statistic that more women are beaten and abused on Super Bowl Sunday than any other day of the year. This statistic was
A. confirmed by police statistics C. compiled from newspaper reports.
B. inferred from research data D. a completely false promotional ploy.
6. The domestic violence researcher Frieze concludes that
A. college women more often than men start physical altercations with a dating partners.
B. college men start physical altercations more often than women.
C. men and women start altercations about equally,
D. there are no clear conclusions from this study.
7. Researchers found that low level or non-injurious violence is considered by many couples
A. the beginning of the end of the relationship C. a severe violation of trust.
B. innocuous or normal in any loving relationship D. inherently abusive.
8. In the article JAMA article all but one of the following questions were considered very accurate in detecting a battering victim.
A. "Have you been hit, kicked, punched or otherwise hurt by someone within the past year. If so, by whom??"
B. "Do you feel safe in your current relationship?"
C. "Can you account for all of the injuries you've sustained in the last year?"
D. "Is there a partner from a previous relationship who is making you feel unsafe now?"
9. The best way to ask the above questions of a suspected victim is
A. in an individual session. C. with the domestic partner present
B. in a group D. in a family session.

Please return this test and your evaluation form to get your certificate (fax 407-884-6553)

