

No Longer A Private Trouble:

**A Community Approach to Ending
Domestic Violence**

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The Ripple Effect

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Domestic Violence as a Major Public Health Issue

- **Prevalence**

- 4 million women in America experience a serious assault by an intimate partner during an average year.
- Nearly 1 in 3 adult women experience at least one physical assault by a partner in adulthood.

SOURCE: American Psychological Association, "Violence and the Family: Report of the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family" (1996).

Domestic Violence as a Major Public Health Issue

Risk Factors

- The chance of being victimized by an intimate is 10 times greater for a woman than a man.

SOURCE: Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: National Crime Victimization Survey, Violence Against Women (1994).

- Domestic violence is statistically consistent across racial & ethnic boundaries.

SOURCE: Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: Violence Against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey (1995).

Domestic Violence as a Major Public Health Issue

Morbidity

- Over 1.5 million women seek medical care each year for injuries related to domestic violence.
- 20% of female patient ER visits for injury are caused by DV.

SOURCE: Flitcraft, "Physicians and Domestic Violence: Challenges for Prevention." Health Affairs, Winter 1993.

Domestic Violence as a Major Public Health Issue

Mortality

- Homicides are the fourth leading cause of death of injury among females of childbearing age
- Half of all female homicides are battering-related.

SOURCE: Dannenberg, et al. "Intentional and Unintentional Injuries in Women: An Overview." *Annals of Epidemiology*, March 1994.

Domestic Violence: Cost to Society

Impact on the workplace

- Each physical assault victim averages productivity losses of \$476 per victim.
- Productivity losses per homicide average \$610,000.
- Lifetime costs paid by society for assault victims is estimated at \$96 billion.

SOURCE: Miller, et al. "Victim Costs of Violent Crime and Resulting Injuries," Health Affairs, Winter 1993.

Domestic Violence: Health Care Costs

- **Each year, DV injuries result in:**
 - 21,000 hospitalizations
 - 99,800 inpatient treatment days
 - 28,700 Emergency Room visits
 - 39,000 medical office visits.
 - Total medical costs exceeding \$44,393,700

SOURCE: Loring & Smith, "Health Care Barriers and interventions for Battered Women." Public Health Reports, May/June 1994.

An Ecological Perspective: Levels of Influence

- **Intrapersonal Factors** Individual characteristics that influence behavior, such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and personality traits
- **Interpersonal Factors** Interpersonal processes with peers, family, friends that provide social identity & role definition
- **Institutional Factors** Rules, regulations, policies and informal structures to constrain or promote behavior
- **Community Factors** Social networks and norms which exist as formal or informal groups and organizations
- **Public Policy** Local, state, and federal policies and laws for disease prevention, early detection, control and management

Domestic Violence & Health Education

Health educators' expertise needed in:

- Community education
- Media advocacy
- Public policy advocacy
- Strong theory base in prevention methods
- Community collaboration
- Evaluation

Domestic Violence: A Call to Action

“Of all the health and human services challenges we face, perhaps the most devastating, and ironically, most preventable is the epidemic of violence sweeping across this nation.”

--Donna Shalala, US Secretary, Health & Human Services

“Addressing the Crisis of Violence.” Health Affairs, Winter 1993.