Assessment of Domestic Violence Cases
Supporting Offender Accountability, Victim Safety, and Effective Response

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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GH-HBYj1VGg
Intimate Partner Violence

- Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of nonfatal injury to women
- Intimate partner violence is rarely an isolated presenting problem but is a process – a series of connected problems
- A growing body of empirical research has convincingly demonstrated different types and patterns of intimate partner violence
- Lethality and Dangerousness
  - References provided upon request
What Does the Literature Tell Us?

• The estimated cost of meeting the mental and health care needs of women who are victimized by an intimate partner is nearly 4.1 billion annually.

• Homicide is the leading cause of premature death for all women in the U.S.

• Ninety percent of all women killed are murdered by men with whom they have or have had an intimate relationship.

• Violence against women is a significant social and public health problem virtually affecting all societies.

  References provided upon request
What Does the Literature Tell Us?

• 22-35% of ED visits by women are in response to partner violence.
• 53% of IPV victims present to physicians repeatedly (i.e. six times or more) with trauma related injuries.
• 33-50% of women who are physically assaulted by their partners also suffer sexual assault at their hands.
• Significant association between substance abuse and IPV.

References provided upon request
How do we Respond to Domestic Violence?

- Interprofessional response required
- Know your state statutes
- Felony and MD cases
- Be familiar with resources available
- Requirements/Legislative rules in place
- Mandatory Reporting laws
- Other
Violence and Aggression

• “Violence” is commonly used to indicate aggressive behavior by humans toward other humans.
• “Aggression” refers to behaviors that can result in both physical and psychological harm to oneself, other or objects in the environment. The expression of aggression can occur in a number of ways, including verbally, mentally and physically.
• Distinct epidemiological phenomena and one of the most important public health problems worldwide.
  • References provided upon request
Violence and Aggression

- Violence/aggressive behavior can take several forms:
  - In respect of the setting
  - The relationship between aggressor and victim
  - Type of aggressive act
Offender Typologies

- Growing body of evidence that IPV is not a unitary phenomenon – IPV can be differentiated with respect to partner dynamics, context, and consequences (Kelly & Johnson, 2008)
- Value in differentiating among types of IPV to lead to better decision making, appropriate sanctions, more effective treatment programs tailored to the different types of offender (Johnson, 2006)
- Appropriate processes can be recommended and more accurately address the central dynamics of the partner violence, context and consequences (Johnson, 2006)
## Offender Typologies

**Typology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Intimate terrorism (coercive control)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Violent Resistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Situational couple violence</td>
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<td>• Mutual violent control</td>
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**Description**

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<tr>
<td>• Individual is violent and controlling, partner is not</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The individual is violent but not controlling; partner is violent and controlling</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Although the individual is violent, neither the individual nor the partner is violent and controlling</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The individual and the partner are violent and controlling</td>
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Lethality

• Culmination of –Continuum or range of violence and women’s entrapment that occurs over time (1% of cases)

• Top Five Risk Factors for Domestic Violence Homicide
  (the number in parentheses indicate the factor by which a domestic violence victim’s risk of homicide is increased relative to other DV victims) (USDOJ Scale)
  – Threats to use a gun, knife, or other weapon against the victim (20.2x)
  – Threats to kill or injure victim (14.9x)
  – Attempt to strangle (choke) the victim (9.9x)
  – Constant and/or violent jealousy (9.2x)
  – Forced sex (7.6)
  – (USDOJ)
Most Prominent Antecedents

- A prior history of domestic violence
- Separation by the victim or filing for divorce
- A display of obsessiveness-possessiveness or morbid jealousy by the offender
- Threats of suicide, depression, disturbances and stalking
- Prior police contact with the parties (Websdale)
Other lethality risk factors

- Serious injury in prior abusive incidents
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Access to/ownership of guns
- Use of weapon in prior abusive incidents
- Depression on part of the abuser
  - References provided upon request
What is Domestic Violence?
Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any intimate relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over the other partner. Domestic violence can involve physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions. Several types of abusive behaviors may occur together and continue even after one partner has ended the relationship. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence regardless of age, gender, economic status, race, religion, sexual orientation, or education. Domestic violence is never the victim’s fault. It’s important for victims to know that they are not alone.

Domestic Violence in Idaho
- Each day in Idaho more than 830 victims of domestic violence and their children seek safety and services from community-based domestic violence programs.1
- Nationally, one in four women will experience domestic violence over her lifetime.1
- In 2011, there were 18 domestic violence related fatalities in Idaho – even one is too many!2
- In 2011, the Idaho State Police reported 5,716 incidents of violence between spouses, ex-spouses, and those in dating relationships.3 One reported violent incident every 68 minutes.
- In 2011, Idaho courts received 4,675 petitions for domestic violence civil protection orders. That is one civil protection order for every 340 people.4

One is Too Many: Connect to End Domestic Violence
Join us. Be a part of the solution. Individuals need to reach out to family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors who are in abusive relationships and encourage them to get help for themselves and their children. Criminal justice, health care, educational, governmental, and community-based systems need to work more closely together to enhance safety for victims and their children and to hold offenders accountable.

Idaho Risk Assessment of Dangerousness
While there is no way to predict an abusive partner's behavior, the following factors are warning signs of increased dangerousness in a relationship, with lethality factors in red:
1. History of Domestic Violence – forced sex or strangulation
2. Prior police contact of offender
3. Threats to Kill Victim or Children by offender
4. Threats of Suicide by offender
5. Separation – recent separation
6. Coercive/Controlling Behavior – extreme possessiveness
7. Alcohol or Drug Abuse

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1 (800) 799-7233 / 1(800) 787-3224 (TTY)
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence www.engagepolices.org

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Seven Idaho Risk Factors

• History of Domestic Violence
• Prior Police Contact
• Separation
• Obsessive and Controlling Behavior
• Threats to Kill Victim or Children
• Threats of Suicide
• Alcohol or Drug Abuse
Dangerousness
Risk of further injury, trauma and even death

- Risk Assessment - risk of recidivism
- Goal is to prevent violence
- Make informed decisions
- Help women understand their risk
- Ethics – responsible care, public safety
Requirements of an Evaluation under Rule 33.3

- Identifying information
- Risk assessment
- Substance abuse assessment
- Self assessment
- Test results
- Collateral information
- Behavioral observations/mental status
- Recommendations
Domestic Violence Evaluation

- Self report form
- Police Reports
- NCIC (National Crime Information Center)
- Victim statements
- Interview of offender
- Interview of victim (dynamic factors)
- Collateral contacts
- Current research and related literature
- Assessment and screening
- Substance abuse
Risk Assessment Tools

- Written or electronic inventories consisting of 10-50 questions that help practitioners determine what level of risk a case is at, make appropriate recommendations for intervention.
- All tools predict better than chance alone.
- Tools measure behaviors – not the factors that may contribute to them.
Risk/Assessment Tools

• Want to use structured, empirically based risk/assessment tools
• Danger Assessment (Campbell)
• Propensity of Abusiveness Scale (Dutton)
• ODARA (Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment)
• Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry)
• Accountability Scale (Babcock, Costa & Canady)
• Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (Kropp, Webster, & Eaves)
Comments regarding risk assessment

- Risk assessment tools in literature with strong psychometric properties assess core risk factors, criminal background, other forms of IPV (demographic and static markers of risk)
- Dynamic vs. Static factors – why victim interview is so important
- Alcohol/substance abuse
Alcohol use

• One of the key factors in aggression between intimate partners is alcohol consumption.
• Research has consistently found higher rates of violence by intimate partners who are heavy drinkers.
• Alcohol may not only be a risk factor for violence but may potentiate violence when it occurs.
• Aggression by a man toward a female partner is more severe and injury more likely if the man has been drinking.
Screening Tools/Assessment

- Beck II Depression Inventory (Beck)
- Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (Selzer)
- AUDIT Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (Babor et al.)
- DAST Drug Abuse Screening Test (Skinner)
- TBI
Best Practice

• Use of a psychometrically tested instrument
• Comprehensive collection of information – use multiple methods and sources of information
• The interview/assessment/ of the victim
• Sound clinical judgment
Other Important Considerations

• Social and family support
• Family context
• Driver’s license/vehicle
• Readiness for Change
• Health – mental and physical
Other

- Personality
- Literature on the role of personality suggest conclusively that antisocial and borderline traits relate closely to violence behavior
- Observation and Listening
- Expanded Collateral information
Pattern of Injury

• Injuries in various stages of healing, including new and old scars, contusions, wounds
Patterned Injury

• An injury where one has reasonable certainty of the object that caused the injury or by what mechanism an injury was caused
Accountability

• Coordinated Community Response
• DV Courts
• Hearing Reviews
• Family Justice Center Models
• Swift and Significant Sanctions
• Offender Intervention
• Hold offender accountable
  – Offender Intervention, sentencing and release decisions, evaluation and treatment planning, supervision strategies
Minimum Standards for Domestic Violence Offender Intervention Programs

- Revised Standards (07/11) approved
- ICDVVA has the responsibility to set standards for counseling and treatment (intervention) ordered for anyone who pleads guilty or is found guilty of DV
- Goals of standards: hold offender accountable, increase victim safety, help eliminate domestic violence, promote healthy relationships, foster and improve community response
Summary of Changes to the Standards

- Language
- Recognizes the decision of a family to remain together as a valid choice with safety a priority
- Length of treatment-careful ongoing assessment, documentation, obtain copy of the evaluation
- Assessment – change in treatment plan
- Group size
- Strengthen link with judicial system
- Requirements of Direct Service Provider and Program Supervisor
- Change in education and continuing education requirements
- Monitoring
Domestic Violence Courts

• Families are involved often in more than one court proceeding; coordinated family services

• Domestic violence courts work to hold offenders accountable, increase victim safety, provide greater judicial monitoring, coordinate information

• DV courts have been shown to reduce recidivism and increase victim safety
  - (Idaho Statutes Title 32 Domestic Relations)
Realities

- Social determinants of violent crime are interconnected
  - Poverty
  - Inability to acquire the basic necessities of life
  - Marital disruption
  - Single or no parent families
  - Substance abuse
  - Unemployment
  - Lack of education
Helping Women Understand Risk

- Three overlapping concerns;
- Risk Assessment
- Lethality Assessment
- Safety Assessment (Campbell)
Objectives of Process

• To prevent violence, not predict it
• Make informed decisions
• Help women understand their risk
• Ethics – responsible care, public safety
• Communication to keep women safe
• Positive not punitive outcomes
• Follow-up
Why Does She Stay?

- F
- F
- F
- F
- F

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