

CAMPUS DATING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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introduction

Congress has appropriated over \$40 million in the fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 to reduce sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking on campuses by funding over 70 institutions of higher learning, technical assistance providers and other support services. Through a cooperative agreement with the Office on Violence Against Women, the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) assists the US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office on Violence Against Women with the provision of technical assistance

services to recipients of the "Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women on Campus Program". As a part of the Training and Technical Assistance, CALCASA will provide a series of information packets on emerging issues related to various campus programs including, but not limited to: campus victim advocacy programs, prevention programs, and disciplinary proceedings. This issue will focus on providing an overview of dating and domestic violence on campus.



Contents

Introduction	1
Introduction to the problem	2
Frequently Asked Questions	6
Myths and Facts	11
Statistics	13
Resources	15

introduction of the problem

"If you scream and no one helps and no one acknowledges it and people look right through you, you begin to feel you don't exist. If you existed and you screamed, someone would help you. If you existed and were visibly injured, someone would help you. If you existed and asked for help in escaping, someone would help you."

Andrea Dworkin

Addressing concept of dating and domestic violence is a fairly new idea for college campuses. Consequently the idea of dating and relationship violence did not exist. Although violence has been a part of intimate relationships in many societies since the beginning of time, society did not recognize dating violence as a problem until recently. The problem gained recognition in the 1970's; the first shelter to house women fleeing from domestic or dating violence was founded in 1972.

Interest in courtship violence began in the 1980's with one of the first publications on physical violence among college students. Since the 70's college campuses have struggled to recognize dating and domestic violence among college students. Stereotypes attributed to

domestic violence and misconceptions that violence does not happen on college campuses to college age women and men contributed to the problem. The authors of the article "Violence in the Lives of Young Women" produced by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence summarizes the problem well, writing "While many girls endure sexual violence, battering, and harassment, violence against women is typically cast as a problem facing adults." Although college students are legally considered adults, and should be treated respectfully as adults, the quoted statement sums up the perception that college students are somehow, because of their combined age and educational status, not adults and not victims of violence. While advocates against domestic violence countered that violence was happening on campuses with young women and men the campus community did little to address the problem. Some studies have shown that violence is, in fact, common in dating relationships.

Dating/Domestic Violence is defined as a pattern of controlling behavior in which an intimate partner uses

physical violence, and/or emotional, sexual, economic, or cultural abuse to control the other partner in the relationship.

- Physical violence includes kicking, pinching, hitting, choking, biting, shaking or otherwise using physical force to restrain or hurt a partner. Physical violence can be used against a victim with a physical disability by not allowing them access to equipment such as a wheelchair or similar items, which assist a person with a disability in daily living.
- Emotional violence (also verbal violence) is using isolation, intimidation, and threat of physical force or words to restrain or hurt a partner. This could include threatening to "out" a lesbian or gay partner. In some cultures family members may participate in emotionally abusing a partner. International students who are perpetrators may threaten their partners by telling them they will be sent back to their country of origin if they report acts of violence against them.

- Sexual violence is forcing a partner to engage in sexual acts against one's will.

- Economic abuse may not come into play in a dating relationship, but it is defined as withholding financial resources to intimidate, threaten or cause a partner to remain in a relationship because of lack of access to finances.

- Cultural abuse is defined as using one's culture against them to cause emotional harm. An example would be telling someone they are stupid or disrespected because of the color of their skin or culture from which they come.

Dating and domestic violence exist in society for many intricate reasons. Definitions of gender, the idea of power and control and oppression relate and cause a person in power to "control" a partner through violence. In Marilyn Frye's classic essay "Oppression" she discusses the idea of oppression by writing "(t)he experience of oppressed people is that the living of one's life is confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not accidental or occasional and hence avoidable, but are systematically

related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction." This quote is particularly beneficial when defining why violence can be a part of intimate relationships in society. Frye is clearly discussing the overriding problem of oppression and yet the quote is useful for summing up a violent relationship. Violence in a relationship is not "accidental" or "avoidable" for a victim or survivor of abuse. Some theorists argue that violence is used as a means to resolve conflict and is supported by the larger society as an appropriate communication tool. Historically relationships between two people have been defined by a dominant role and submissive role. The submissive player is "confined and shaped by forces and barriers" where as the dominant player confines and shapes roles in the relationship. Violence is the tool used to keep the submissive partner "in one's place." Ethnicity, sexuality, ability, age, race and other axis of diversity are intertwined and related to gender in violent relationships. They are inseparable. Power carries with it the ability to rule others and "restrict motion" at any cost. In summary, dating and domestic violence are not "accidental" or "occasional", but a part of a culture that promotes

violence even in intimate relationships.

Many students may not be victims of severe physical abuse, although some are, but they are victims of psychological and emotional abuse. The problem encountered by advocates and educators on campus is that students don't recognize all forms of dating and domestic violence as violence. Leading researchers all agree that while statistics may vary, all surveys have indicated that women are at risk of being abused by their dating partners. According to Bonnie E. Carlson in "Dating Violence: Student Beliefs About Consequences" authorities on campus "...must understand how students themselves think about violence in intimate relationships. Although we know a great deal about the problem's prevalence and correlates, we know much less about how young people view it." Carlson also asserts that most students don't seek any help after a violent incident and most relationships continue despite a violent incident. The stereotype still persists that domestic and dating violence happens to "battered women" who are low income, women of color and heterosexual. Dating and domestic violence happens in every segment of society regardless of age,

race, socioeconomic or education, sexual orientation, physical ability or religion. It is important to your campus community to keep in mind that students may still believe the above-mentioned stereotypes about domestic violence. Work closely with your community domestic violence agency to debunk the myths and develop appropriate educational materials for your entire campus community. Members of the campus community must learn to acknowledge the problem of dating and domestic violence among their

students by becoming educated about the problem. Assistance for the victim must be provided efficiently and completely. And, perpetrators of the violence must be held accountable for their actions. Everyone must do their part on campus to ensure that if a student "screams" as in the Dworkin quote at the beginning of this section states, if a student asks for help, that everyone on campus will acknowledge it and confirm that student's existence and get that student the help she or he needs to end the violence.

frequently asked questions

Why should an institution of higher education be concerned about dating and domestic violence on campus?

Domestic and dating violence take a tremendous toll on college students and the institution. Victims may suffer from physical injuries that endanger their health and well-being. They may suffer from short term and long-term emotional and psychological effects. Students affected by abuse can develop substance abuse problems, eating disorders or depression, which, ultimately, can lead to suicide. These effects will cause academic problems for the victim, which may result in lower grades and potentially withdrawing from school. Campuses can and will lose some excellent students if violence is not prevented and victims do not have the appropriate resources to turn to when they need help. For students perpetrating violence against another student, early intervention is crucial to ending future violent behavior. If perpetrators of violence are not held accountable for their behavior the violence may escalate and will lead to more victims and more serious

sanctions such as arrests, fines and jail sentences. The failure to address dating violence may also lead to institutional liability.

What can we do on campus to end dating or domestic violence?

- A great starting place to end dating and domestic violence on campus is to assess current efforts. Take a look at what is already offered on campus and in the community and find out what students know about these services and how useful they are. The "Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women on Campus" program encourages collaboration among various offices and programs including your community domestic violence organization.
- Establish a protocol that includes all of your grant partners to best serve survivors of dating or domestic violence on campus. Make sure the protocol includes a response team such as a local hospital to treat survivors, counseling services, a campus or community agency to provide education and 24 hour advocacy, and judicial affairs and law enforcement to provide judicial and legal remedies.
- Review judicial policies pertaining to dating/domestic violence and make appropriate changes.

- A shelter option must be available whether with a local domestic violence agency, new housing on campus, or a temporary room in a local hotel or on campus.

- Educating the campus community about dating and domestic violence is the key to ending the violence on campus. It is essential to cross train with the your local domestic violence agency. The agency has the information and tools you need and you have the information about your specific population that they will need.

- Provide campus peer educators with the information they need to educate all members of your community. If you don't have peer educators or counselors on campus develop a program.

- Make sure you can provide academic advocacy to survivors as well. Make sure the faculty and deans on campus have been trained to understand the impact dating or domestic violence can have on a student and their grades. This can include documenting absences, supporting petitions to drop a class or change a class if a perpetrator is in the same class as the survivor.

- Start a program for men on campus that educates the campus community while simultaneously

showing the campus that not all men are perpetrators. Teach the men strategies for confronting abusive peers and how to address the root causes of violence with their peers.

- Train the residence hall staff and directors to recognize dating and domestic violence.

- Incorporate education about dating and domestic violence to all incoming students so all students know how to recognize and define the violence and that violence will not be tolerated in any form on campus.

Why should I report abuse to law enforcement and/or judicial affairs?

Domestic and dating violence are criminal activities and in violation of most campus codes of conduct. If your campus does not have a domestic or dating violence policy refer to the section on violence against another student. Reporting the incident(s) to your judicial affairs office and/or law enforcement allows authorities to protect the victim and to hold the perpetrator of the violence responsible and accountable.

Should a victim obtain a protective/restraining/stay away order?

Obtaining a protective order from law enforcement or a stay away order from judicial affairs should be up to the victim. Either one of these orders may help the victim stay safe by ordering the perpetrator of the violence to not contact the victim and can be an effective tool as a part of a comprehensive response to dating or domestic violence. It is important to note that obtaining a protective order or stay away order may not be effective in every case and may, in fact, lead to the perpetrator of the violence engaging in more violent behavior as a reaction to the order.

What if a victim does not want police or judicial affairs involvement?

The victim should seek help from a campus or community advocate regardless of whether or not the police or judicial affairs have been contacted. Although most dating or domestic violence does not end of its own accord, an advocate can assist the victim with a safety plan, housing options and referrals.

What signs do I look for if I suspect someone I know is in a violent relationship?

Look for the following signs:

1. **Physical signs:** Bruises and injuries may occur frequently and in obvious places. In some cases bruises and injuries may never occur. When others can see frequent injuries, the one being abused may talk about being clumsy, and have elaborate stories of how the injuries occur.
2. **Psychological signs:** Some women have a low self esteem overall, while other women have confidence and esteem but not within their relationship, look for signs of change in esteem and personality changes such as a once very outgoing person suddenly becoming shy and quiet. Victims are often isolated from community and family so look for signs of withdrawal from everyday activities such as absence from class and co-curricular activities and work. Victims may become very self-deprecating due to the treatment they are receiving from their partner. They may refer to themselves as being fat, ugly and stupid because that is what they are being told they are from their partner.

What does a perpetrator act like?

A perpetrator's tactics may seem overly sensitive, attentive and overly jealous not letting his/her partner go out, keeps track of how long he/she is gone or goes everywhere with her/him. They may want a serious commitment early in the relationship, be highly critical of his/her partner, expresses derogatory attitudes towards women, be sexually coercive insisting on sexual interaction after a violent incident. The perpetrator may resent or undermine her/his outside life, exhibit violent anger physically to animals and children, to other drivers in cars, picking fights, etc. allow drugs or alcohol as an excuse for violence, espouse traditional sex roles expecting the victim to serve him/her.

How do I help a friend I think is in an abusive relationship?

Listen to her/him and give her/him your undivided attention. Your friend may deny over and over again that she/he is in an abusive relationship; just let them know that you are there to listen if they ever need to talk. Believe what she/he is saying. Recognize that disclosing to you takes a great deal of strength and energy. Help her/him get help

through campus services by having the appropriate phone numbers and referral information when she/he needs them. Help her/him understand that the violence is not their fault. Support the victims right to control her/his own life. Sometimes we think we know what is best for our friends. Don't expect your friend to follow your advice. Ultimately, we must all make our own decisions in life. Remember; don't ever put yourself in harms way by participating in an argument or incident between a couple. The perpetrator may enact violence against your friend as well as you in response to your intervention.

How do I know if I am in a violent relationship?

Ask yourself the following questions if you think you may be in an abusive relationship:

- **Does my partner push, shove, slap, hit, kick, punch, choke or restrain me against my will?**
- **Do conversations with my partner make me feel bad about myself?**

- Are interactions between my family and myself and friends flowing less freely now than before I met my partner?

- Do I engage in sex acts with which I am not completely comfortable?

- Does my partner force me to have sexual relations with him/her when I do not want to? If so, am I afraid to talk to him about this?

- Does my partner accuse me of having affairs with others?

- Does my partner keep track of where I go, whom I talk to, who I hang out with, what I wear and what I say?

- If I disagree with my partner about something, do I worry about a moody, threatening and/or violent response?

- If I told my partner that I wanted to end the relationship am I afraid of his/her response?

- Does my partner call me names that make me feel bad about myself?

If you answered, "yes" to these questions you may be in an abusive relationship. Please contact your campus advocate or local domestic violence agency for additional information or assistance.

myths and facts

Myth: College students do not have to worry about becoming victims of dating or domestic violence.

Fact: Dating and domestic abuse is a problem on college campuses and often an indication of abuse in subsequent relationships and marriages.

Myth: Violent relationships only happen in marriages.

Fact: An abusive or violent relationship can happen to anyone in an intimate relationship regardless of marital status. Domestic and relationship violence can begin when adolescents start dating. Relationship violence among teenagers exists and can include physical, sexual and emotional abuse. And, not all domestic partners can be or are married.

Myth: Jealousy is a sign of love.

Fact: When a person continually accuses their partner of flirting or having an affair, and is suspicious of everyone in their partner's life, it is possessing and controlling behavior, not love.

Myth: When their partner hits someone, they must have provoked the behavior in some way.

Fact: No one deserves to be hit. Whether or not there may have seemed to be provocation, violence is always wrong. It never solves problems, although it often silences the victim.

Myth: People in abusive relationships stay because they enjoy being abused.

Fact: People who are abused by their dating or domestic partner do not stay in the relationship because they like being bullied. Most victims want to improve their relationship rather than end it. Violence is often cyclical in abusive relationships. Consequently an apology and promise to end the behavior will often follow an episode of abuse which contributes to the attitude that the behavior may change. Unfortunately, without the will to change and the appropriate psychological assistance the abuse will not end. The victim may stay for practical or emotional reasons including love, fear of reprisal such as more injury or ultimately death, social isolation or shame.

Myth: "Name calling" doesn't hurt anyone.

Fact: Emotional abuse is often considered harmless "name calling". But name calling hurts; that's why people do it. Emotional abuse lowers the victim's self-esteem, sometimes permanently. For many victims it is the most damaging aspect of abusive relationships.

Myth: I can tell if someone is going to be a "hitter" just by looking at the person.

Fact: Abusers come in all sizes and shapes. They are not the stereotypical muscle-bound men portrayed in the media. They are women and men; they are in the classroom, in the next dorm room, or a friend of a friend.

Myth: Dating or domestic violence will never happen to you.

Fact: Dating violence can happen to you. It is not limited to a particular social class, or any single ethnic or racial group. Some people are victimized on their first date while others are assaulted after dating a long time.

Myth: A relationship is not abusive if there is no physical abuse.

Fact: Perpetrators of violence maintain control over the victim by using physical or sexual violence or by using emotional violence or the threat of physical or sexual violence. In some relationships, the threat of violence is enough to keep the abuser in control. The threat of violence and emotional violence can be just as hurtful or painful as physical violence.

statistics

The Bureau of Justice Statistics confirms that the highest rate of domestic violence applies to women ages 16-24.

Over 1/3 of both male and female college students report that they have either initiated or responded with some degree of violence to their partner (Koss, 1996).

More than 50% of women will experience some type of violence from an intimate partner (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1992).

While women are less likely than men to be victims of violent crimes overall, women are 5 to 8 times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner (Department of Justice, 1998).

Of women who reported being raped and/or physically assaulted since the age of 18, three quarters (76 percent) were victimized by a current or former husband, cohabitating partner, date or boyfriend (Department of Justice, 1998).

Between 25% and 33% of relationships between LGBT partners include abuse, a rate equal to that of heterosexual relationships (PRIDE Foundation).

Forty percent of teenage girls age 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend (Children Now/Kaiser Permanente poll, 1995).

Of women who reported being raped and/or physically assaulted since the age of 18, three quarters (76 percent) were victimized by a current or former husband, cohabitating partner, date or boyfriend (Department of Justice, 1998).

85% of women with disabilities are victims of domestic abuse, in comparison with, on average, 25 to 50 percent of the general population (Colorado Department of Health, 1997).

Violence by an intimate accounts for about 21% of violent crime experienced by women and about 2% of the violence experienced by men (Department of Justice, 1998).

While women are less likely than men to be victims of violent crimes overall, women are 5 to 8 times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner (Department of Justice, 1998).

resources

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National Coalition Against Domestic Violence "Violence in the Lives of Young Women" 11 Nov. 2002 <<http://www.ncadv.org>>

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

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