



Improving Probation Response to Domestic Violence

**Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils
*2014-WE-AX-0025 Office of Violence Against
Women Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies
and Enforcement of Protection Orders***






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Probation


Promising Practices Mini-Toolkit

- 4 Sections
 - Title and Section pages (for those who want to print them all out)
 - Quick Reference Guide Component
 - Training Component (including PowerPoint and handouts)
 - Resources Component
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Probation Promising Practices Training Teams

- Probation Officer from your community
 - Ideally would have two or three of the following Protocol Training Team members present the training:
 - DV advocate
 - Law Enforcement
 - Representative from Disabilities and/or Older Adult Agency
 - Prosecutor
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Tips for Training

- Notes on PowerPoint
 - Handouts
 - Customize PowerPoint for your local area
 - Audience Participation
 - Answer Questions periodically and at the end of presentation
 - Include information on domestic violence, abuse against people with disabilities and abuse of older adults
- 





IL Domestic Violence Act

- IDVA covers many relationships:
 - Intimate partner
 - Current and past relationships
 - Relationships with child in common
 - Caregivers
 - Familial relationships
 - Cohabiting relationships



ROLE OF PROBATION

- Probation has a defined role in supervising offenders
- Officers come in contact with victims and offenders.
- Wear 2 hats
 - Offender accountability
 - Victim Safety
 - Communication with victim
 - Providing resources to victim
 - Referring to services for victim



ROLE OF PROBATION

- While conducting routine duties, a probation officer must use powers of observation to “read between lines” and be alert to clues of domestic violence with the abuser and the victim.
- Look and Listen
 - What do I see which might be an indicator of DV?
 - What do I hear which might be an indicator of DV?



Role of Probation


- According to APPA, “domestic violence supervision requires a unique blend of community correction practices.

These practices attempt to incorporate:

- multiple agencies;
- supervision and intervention components for offenders;
- concerted attempts to contact and interact with victims.”



Points of Entry

- Intake interview
 - Pretrial assessment
 - Presentence investigation
 - Anytime during probationary sentence
 - For domestic violence offender on probation
 - For victim of domestic violence on probation
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Power and Control Wheel



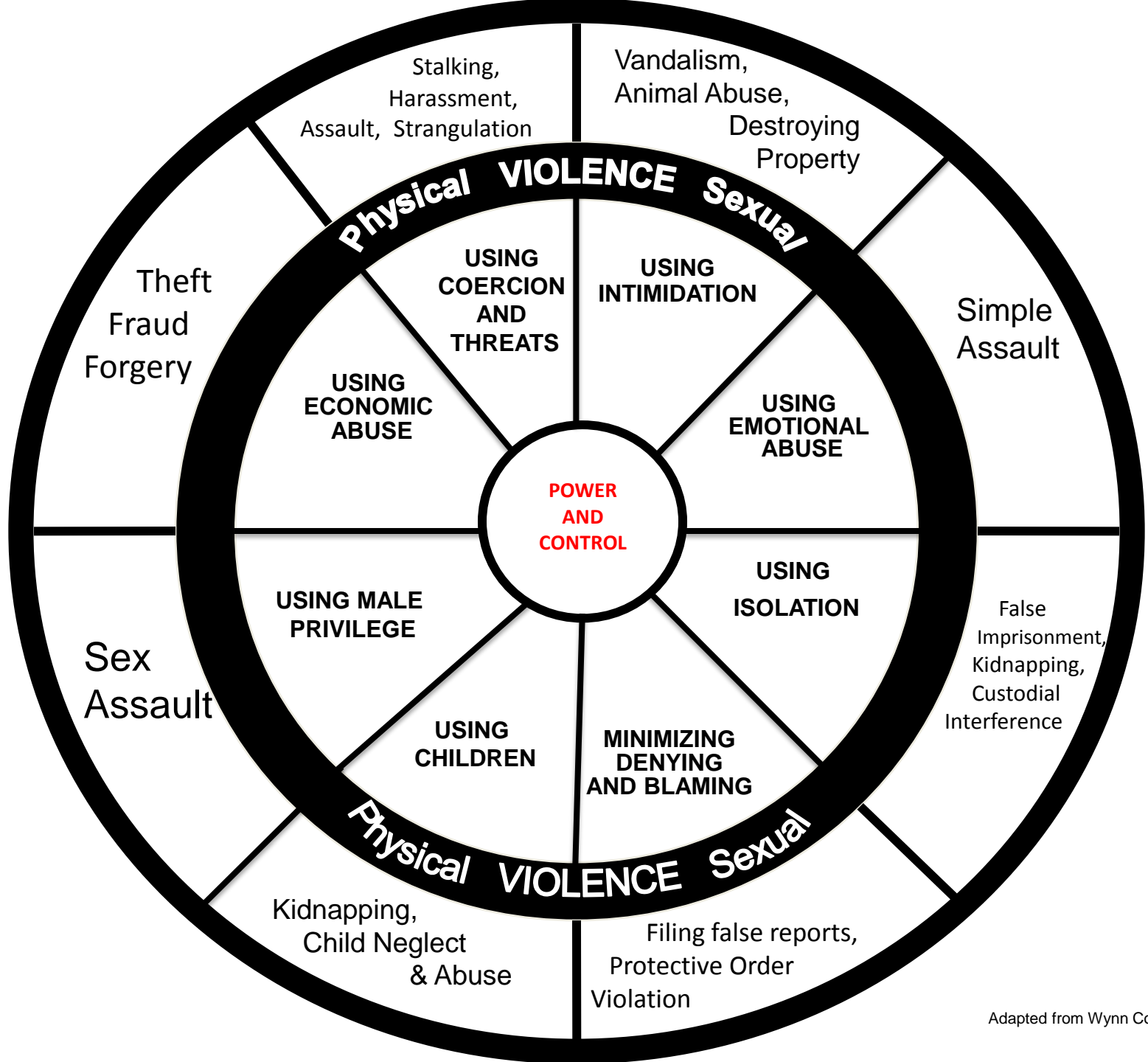
Courtesy Domestic
Abuse Intervention
Project

Duluth, MN



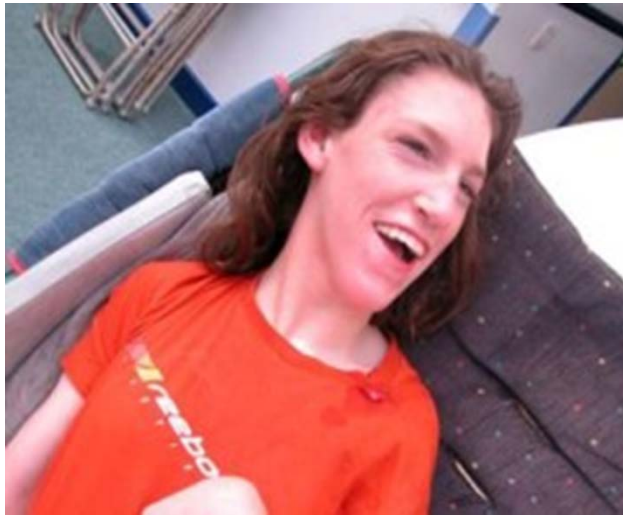
P & C activity







How might power & control look for a person with a disability or older adult?






Tips for Working with Older Adults and People with Disabilities

- Determine if the individual needs any accommodations
- The person is the expert on what they need; it is okay to ask
- Create a safe, accessible environment with limited distractions
- Presume competence



Tactics – People with Disabilities and Older Adults

- Seeks guardianship or power of attorney
 - Withhold care & denying basics
 - Threatens to end relationship and leave the person unattended
 - Threatens to have person institutionalized
 - Taking assistive devices away
 - Exposes disability (AIDS, mental illness)
 - Blames disability/age for abuse
- 



QUESTIONS





Victim?






How is the victim acting?

- Fearful, anxious.
- Reluctant to respond when questioned or hesitates in providing info.
- Reluctant to speak in front of her partner.
- Unusually isolated, unhealthy.




What is the victim saying?

- Victim denies or minimizes violence/injuries.
 - Victim and other household members give conflicting accounts of incident. Victim blames self for injuries/health.
 - Victim is reluctant and/or embarrassed to talk about injuries and/or abuse.
 - Victim may admit to hitting partner.
- 



What is the abuser saying?

- Answers for victim or controls communication with victim.
 - Statements convey being in charge.
 - Denial or minimization of injuries/violence
 - Talks about own problems.
 - Speaks disrespectfully or belittles the victim.
- 



What can you see?

- Injuries at various stages of healing
- Patterned injuries
- Injuries relating to restraint
- Defensive wounds
- Repeated or chronic injuries

What does the environment tell you? What do you see?



What does the environment tell you? What's missing? – access issues





How are others acting?

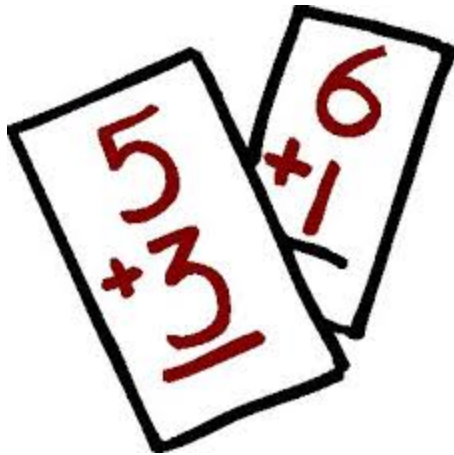
- If a probationer is accompanied to the office or someone else is present during a home visit, observe the interaction to identify possible indicators of domestic violence.





Whole Picture

Like a math problem. Add all the pieces together:



Victim behavior
Victim statements
Abuser statements
+ Environmental Factors




= Domestic Violence






Assessment questions

- Are there times you have felt afraid of your partner/caregiver?”
 - “Has anyone in your household hurt you or threatened to hurt you?”
 - “Sometimes when others are over-protective and jealous, they react strongly and violently. Has this happened to you?”
- 




Assessment questions

- “Because domestic violence is so common in today’s world, I’ve begun to ask about it routinely.”
 - “We often see people with injuries such as yours which are caused by someone they know. Could this be happening to you?”
 - “You seem frightened and anxious. Has someone hurt you?”
- 



Assessment questions

- “What happens when you and your partner disagree?”
 - “Have you ever had sex with your partner when you did not want to?”
 - Has your caregiver ever treated you roughly, not given you the medicine you need, threatened to stop taking care of you or put you in an institution?
- 



Victim – has more pieces of the puzzle you don't have

- You may be concerned about physical injuries and she/he doesn't seem to care.
- You may see options for her/him that they either don't see or don't feel are options for them at that time.





Role of Probation

- Victim has intimate awareness of the offender's activities, patterns, behaviors and triggers.
 - Provides a better understanding about the dangerousness of ongoing situations
 - Helps identify particular signs that might signal reoccurring violence or probation violations



Role of Probation

- When engaging with victims, be an “information provider.”
 - Inform and educate victims about abuse and risks
 - Remind and reassure victims that they did not cause the abuse
 - Victim’s safety & the safety of her children are probation’s chief concern
 - Link victim to local advocacy resources
- Documentation
 - Factual and objective
 - Consider victim





Role of Probation

- Probation Officers are uniquely positioned to provide victims with support and understanding.
- Why Contact with the Victim is Important
 - Promotes victim safety & autonomy
 - Assists in effective case management
 - Supports a coordinated community response



QUESTIONS



Talking to victims



- Compassion
 - Validate feelings.
 - “I’m sorry this happened to you”
 - “You don’t deserve to be treated this way”
 - “Help is available to you”
 - Empathy and active listening skills




Talking to victims

- Be non-judgmental
- Restore control to the victim
- Encourage to talk in a confidential setting
– privately
- Don't take it personally
- Check your attitude
- Ask victim what they would like to do next



Victim is the Expert

- Victim knows their situation better than anyone.
 - May not be an option to leave the relationship
 - Physical abilities
 - Ask the victim what they need or want.
 - They may know strategies that work
 - What is important to you may not be important to the victim.
- 



Safety Planning for Victims

- Friends/Family with whom she can stay
- Shelter
- Counseling
- Report to police
- Order of Protection



Domestic Violence Services

- Domestic Violence Shelter and Victim Services
- Adult Protective Services
- Rape Victim Services





Support Services

- Area Agency on Aging
- Care Coordination Units
- Centers for Independent Living
- Disabilities Service Providers





Barriers to Leaving

Why Does the Victim Stay?

- The abuser may blame the abuse on substance abuse issues or job stress, leading the victim to believe that if these problems can be solved, the violence would end.
- The abuser promises to change.
- An abuser may threaten to fight for sole custody of the children.



Barriers to Leaving

Why Does the Victim Stay?

- The abuser is the source of income for the family and the victim may not have job skills or financial resources if she/he leaves.
- Prior negative experiences with the criminal justice system may cause the victim to be skeptical of the system's ability or willingness to offer assistance.
- The victim may not be aware that abuse constitutes a criminal offense, or that services are available in the community.



Barriers to Leaving

Why Does the Victim Stay?

- The abuser has isolated the victim and she fears no one will believe or support her/him.
- The abuser may threaten homicide and/or suicide if the victim leaves.
- The batterer may begin to stalk the victim – following her/him to work and other places, making harassing phone calls.



Barriers to Leaving

Why Does the Victim Stay?

In cases involving an older victim or person with a disability:

- The victim may be afraid that they will lose their home or be placed in a nursing home if they report the abuse.
- The victim may be dependent on their abuser for daily care or necessities.
- The victim may have been isolated from family or friends by the abuser and have no way of leaving the situation.
- Medical problems may cause the victim to stay with the abuser in order to maintain insurance coverage.



Why does the victim stay?...

The better question is:

“Why does the abuser do this and how can I help the survivor gain access to safety?”





The victim may feel it is safer for her/him to remain in the situation.

Leaving an abusive situation is the most dangerous time for a battered person.





Leaving is a process rather than an event.







DV Interventions

- Couples counseling and anger management should never be recommended in a domestic violence situation!
- A partner abuse intervention program is the most appropriate option.

National Resources for Victims

- National Domestic Violence Hotline
 - 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)
 - <http://www.thehotline.org/>
 - National Sexual Assault Hotline – RAINN
 - 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
 - <https://rainn.org/>
 - National Center on Elder Abuse
 - 1-800-677-1116
 - <http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/>
 - National Child Abuse Hotline
 - 1-800-422-4453
 - <https://www.childhelp.org/>
 - National Center on Criminal Justice and Disabilities
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National Resources for Victims

- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
 - 1-866-331-9474 1-866-331-8453 (TTY)
 - <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>
 - Stalking Resource Center
 - <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - 1-800-273-TALK (8255) [24/7 hotline]
 - 1-888-628-9454 (Spanish)
 - 1-800-799-4889 (TTY)
 - <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
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QUESTIONS



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- Illinois Department of Public Health,
<http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/womenshealth/factsheets/dv.htm>
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence,
[http://www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet\(National\).pdf](http://www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet(National).pdf)
- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Manual for Mandated Reporters – September 2006
- *Civil Protective Orders: Improved Safety for Victims & Cost Effective for State Governments* New Research Findings on Effectiveness, Dr. TK Logan, Department of Behavioral Science, University of Kentucky

Thank you for what you do.

You make a difference in the lives of victims.

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