

Breaking the Silence: Dealing with Domestic Violence

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Our Theological Description...

Verbal Abuse

Physical Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Married Women

**Emergency
Situations**

Building a Curriculum...

Pastoral Training

Definitions that are developed from rigorous research and are regularly reviewed...

Who is impacted?

What are the consequences?

Actions: Pastoral Support & Speaking Out...

Prevalence & Definitions:

- *“Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a prevalent problem that has serious adverse effects on human wellbeing. (Karakut et al, 2016)*
- *“Despite extensive prevention campaigns, IPV is still present at different intensities in approximately **24%** of all relationships.” (Godbout et al, 2007)*

Two types of Intimate Partner Violence:

CHARACTEROLOGICAL

SITUATIONAL

Two Types...

CHARACTEROLOGICAL

- Asymmetrical - identifiable abuser and target
- Motivated by power & control
- Intention to dominate
- Generates fear
- May not be limited to the family
- Abuser minimizes the violence and its impact
- Abuser thinks the violence is justified and shows little remorse

SITUATIONAL

- Also called Common Couple Violence - the couple share the abusive behaviours in common
- Reciprocal - perpetrator and victim not clearly identifiable
- Poorly managed conflict escalates to violence - followed by remorse
- Not intended to provoke fear
- Limited to the family
- Not control-motivated
- Responds to conjoint therapy

Legislation Keeping Pace...

- **Formal recognition of ‘Coercive Control’**
 - *“Emotional & psychological abuse designed to intimidate, isolate, humiliate, exploit, regulate and micromanage women’s enactment of everyday life”*
(Stark, 2007, p. 171)
- **Levels of abuse in relationships of young couples**
 - *“54% of all domestic violence court cases (in Canada 2005-2011) involved violence between dating partners”* (Hayes, 2018)
 - March 2013, the United Kingdom government redefined domestic abuse legislation to extend protection to those aged 16 & 17

Taking Stock - what is already in place?

Specialist Couples Counselling

- Many situational abusers can, following assessment, work safely together in this setting. 60 to 70% of those presenting for couples and relationships counselling have some elements of domestic abuse in their relationship

Front-line Services

What services are available? How can we ensure that the most vulnerable are aware of them? How can we work together to find **safe ways** for targets of abuse **to make contact** with the highly confidential help they need?

Motivation for Action...

- **Witnessing parental violence** has been shown to cause **insecure attachment** in children - and to significantly increase the likelihood that they will use Intimate Partner Violence in their future adult relationships;
- If 24% of all relationships have elements of Intimate Partner Violence then **more than a quarter of all children is living with the consequences of this day-to-day...**
- **We must speak out on their behalf...**

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