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RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Facts about battering for men



Local Program Contact Info
[Name, address, phone number]

Violence is a learned behavior

During our lives we are taught many ways to view our role as men in society. These teachings create a belief system that defines who we are and how we interact with our communities, families, and other individuals. Our Grandfathers, Uncles, Fathers, and other male relatives show us examples of how to be men. We also learn about being men from friends, acquaintances, and others in the community. What we learn from our environment tends to be a reflection of how we respond to the larger community.

Violence in the home disrupts the balance of the community. In all relationships between men and women there will be conflicts. People get angry, arguments happen, and feelings get hurt. During these conflicts we choose how we are going to act and react to the situation. Violence is a choice. When we focus only on what we want, or think we have to “win” the argument or come out on top during disagreements, this may lead us to use threats or violence to gain or maintain control of the situation.

This brochure is designed help us as men to think about our relationships with women and ask: “*How do I behave in my relationships?*” “*Do I hurt the people I say I love?*” “*What do I need to know in order to change my behavior?*”

Identifying abuse and violence

Physical abuse:

Slapped, punched, or kicked her
Pushed/shoved her
Restrained her

Intimidation:

Punched walls/doors
Smashed things
Frightened her by looks, gestures, or actions
Displayed weapons

Emotional abuse:

Put her down/used insults
Called her names
Accused her of flirting or cheating on you
Made her feel guilty

Isolation:

Kept her from going places (school, work, etc.)
Disapproved of her friends and relatives
Questioned her about her whereabouts
Kept her from using the car/truck

Minimizing, denying, blaming:

Made light of abuse
Said abuse was her fault
Blamed someone or something else

Using children:

Told children she was not a good mother
Threatened to take the children away
Told children they don’t need to follow her rules, undermining her authority

Male privilege

Acted like the “master of the castle”
Told her what her role/job is
Expected sex on demand
Didn’t respect her feelings about her sexuality

Sexual abuse

Treated her like a sex object by making sexual comments, groping, relentless unwanted touching
Made her engage in sexual acts against her will
Threatened to sleep with someone else if she didn’t have sex

Coercion and threats

Threatened to harm her
Threatened to harm friends or relatives
Made her do something illegal

Suggestions for change

Listed below are some examples of beliefs that set the foundation for respectful relationships and a non-violent lifestyle.

- A woman and man can have a partnership where the authority, responsibility, and leadership are shared.
- I can accept that often I am not going to get my way. I know I don’t always get my way with other people and I can accept that in my relationship also.
- In our culture we believe in equality and respect between males and females.
- In our culture we value physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional balance. Being balanced as an individual brings balance to the larger community.

When choosing to live a non-violent life style we have to be aware of our choice to use violence. We always have choices and violence is a choice. When you feel violent you have the power to choose to respond in a positive or non-abusive way. Think about the consequences of your violence to the people around you and to yourself.

Walking away from a difficult situation is only a short-term solution for stopping controlling behavior or violence. As you practice non-violent methods of communicating and negotiating you will notice that your need to remove yourself from high-conflict situations will decrease.

Domestic violence is not a Native tradition.